

## Editor's Note

This issue begins the fifth volume of *Political Analysis* in its guise as a quarterly journal after an earlier incarnation as an annual review. For these past four years, *PA* has made steady progress. One indicator of *PA*'s maturity is that it has been added to the family of journals monitored by the *Social Science Citation Index*. Another is that, even though still in its infant years, *PA* has made it into one list of the top 20 journals in political science. Even without these formal indicators, we know that *PA* is succeeding. It is the premier journal for political methodology. Our colleagues in political science, methodologists and non-methodologists alike, recognize its importance and its standing as a prestige source for publishing important work.

In part, this success is due to the community of scholars who contribute to the journal as authors, reviewers, and consumers. But most of the thanks go to Neal Beck, whose nurturing as Editor has made the journal what it is today. *PA* could not be the success it is without Neal's energy, vision, and hands-on management.

Now Neal's term has ended and I have been asked to serve as Editor in his stead. This is a special challenge. On the one hand, it will not be possible to match Neal's prowess as Editor. On the other hand, it will matter less who is at the editorial helm, now that *PA*'s niche has become firmly established.

This change of editors portends no change of mission for *Political Analysis*. We do not plan to tamper with success. The subject matter of this journal is causal inference in political science. This often means technical discussions of statistical issues—perhaps the development of new techniques appropriate for political science research, or perhaps borrowing from statistical work in other disciplines. And sometimes it means discussions of research design that involve few or no statistics at all.

As envisioned by its founders and endorsed by both the past and current Editor, the mission of *Political Analysis* is broader than it is sometimes perceived. We understand that the subfield of political methodology exists to serve the substantive interests of political science in all its empirical subfields. *Political Analysis* maintains a strong interest in the creative use of methodological innovations to solve difficult but important substantive empirical problems. And *Political Analysis* maintains a strong interest in the role of theory in the empirical enterprise. Relevant theory can range from statistical theory to formal empirical theory as it is applied in political science. Our interest in the latter centers on bridging the gap between theory and hypothesis testing.

A change of editors is normally accompanied by a change in the composition of the editorial board. Following this tradition, a new editorial board comes on with this issue. Members of the board are frequently relied on for manuscript reviews and frequently consulted regarding issues affecting the journal.

Along with the continuity of purpose, one important innovation has been initiated in the running of *Political Analysis*. No editor could possibly keep current regarding all the issues involving political methodology today. (At least that is true for the current occupant of that chair.) Accordingly, to broaden the expertise and judgment regarding the major decisions of the journal, I have appointed three associate editors to work directly with me

regarding editorial decisions. The three associate editors are all broadly steeped in contemporary methodological issues within political science while bringing to the table their unique and complementary specialties. The three associate editors are Suzanna De Boef of Penn State University, Jeff Gill of UC-Davis, and John Londregan of Princeton University.

**Robert S. Erikson**  
Editor-in-Chief