

The Next Chapter at PSPR

Dear Readers,

The story of Personality and Social Psychology Review is one of flourishing. In the quarter century since the Executive Committee of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP) decided to launch a theory journal as a companion to its first empirical journal, PSPR's impact has experienced a meteoric rise. For each year in the past decade, PSPR has held the highest impact factor of the more than 60 scholarly journals ranked in its category (according to Clarivate Analytics). For 2020 (the last year for which we have data), the impact factor was 18.46. As we all know, the impact factor is a deeply flawed metric (e.g., Allen & Iliescu, 2021), but at least it offers one suggestion that the articles that appear in PSPR are shaping the field.

The story of PSPR's ascent has also been one of continuity. The prior incoming editorials published in the journal all comment on the success of the journal and all essentially pledge not to mess with things too much. There have certainly been important refinements, including the adoption of transparency and openness standards that apply to the small number of articles that report the results of quantitative analyses, such as meta-analyses. And the prior editorial teams have been adept stewards of the journal. They have shepherded its continued rise with unfailing attention to quality, allowing the journal to remain a beacon for our field. I want to especially thank Heejung Kim and David Sherman, the outgoing Co-Editors, who have not only been fantastic editors, but also astoundingly supportive partners in the transition to our editorial term. They are everything I would have wished for in colleagues and I am deeply grateful.

With this editorial, I want to both celebrate PSPR's success and to use its solid foundation to galvanize the journal in a somewhat new direction. This is a goal I am deeply familiar with, as it's something Olin College of Engineering, where I work, is actively engaged in pursuing (e.g., Barabino et al., 2021). Olin College has been recognized as the global leader in undergraduate engineering education (Graham, 2018), but shortly after taking office last year, Gilda Barabino, our second President, said "nothing makes you so conservative as having something to conserve." She didn't mean that politically, she meant that once you develop a reputation for something, people expect you to keep doing it, but then you miss out on opportunities for innovation. Like Olin College, PSPR has developed a strong reputation, and like Olin College, it's time for PSPR to lead in a new direction.

As you know, our field is in transition. The primary impetus for this transition, and the central core of it, have focused on *how* we conduct our work. I am speaking, of course, of the open science revolution. And I am incredibly supportive of the efforts many of our colleagues have taken to do what Brent Roberts, in his Presidential Address at the Association for Research in Personality's 2019 conference, labeled "dedicating ourselves to shifting from getting it significant to getting it right."

From my perspective, "getting it right" needs to be about more than just *how* we conduct our science, it also needs to be about *what* we study, *who* has the opportunity to enter and eventually lead our field, and *why*. And focusing on these issues is absolutely urgent – no less urgent than the shift towards open science – so, alongside an emphasis on *how*, *what*, *who*, and *why*, the *when* has to be *now*. I am not the first person to assert this, and I am happy to join the chorus of others calling for change (see Atherton et al., 2021; Buchanan et al., in press; Cheek, 2017; Funder et al., 2014; Ledgerwood et al., in press; Murphy et al., 2020; Plaut, 2010; Roberts et al., 2020; Spellman, 2015; Syed, 2021; Syed & McLean, in press; Thalmayer, Toscanelli, & Arnett, 2021; Winston, 2020, as just a handful of examples of others issuing similar calls). The practice of science is inextricably cultural. The pursuit of excellent work therefore demands a pairing of the continual improvement of our methods with an enhanced attention to the social implications of our work, both for the people doing the work and the broader publics we hope to impact through the products of our work.

What

Alongside the broader field of psychology, personality and social psychology are becoming increasingly fractured. The proliferation of journals, the prioritization of brief reporting formats, and the incentivizing of quantity over quality in hiring and promotion decisions are conspiring against the cumulative nature of science. PSPR is one of the only outlets in personality and social psychology (and one among very few in the broader field) that serves primarily as a force for *integration*. Theoretical papers weave together entire disciplines and serve as foundations for future programs of

research. As such, I believe PSPR is better-situated than any other journal in personality and social psychology to practice what Danielle Allen, Director of the Safra Center for Ethics at Harvard University, calls “prophetic frame shifting” (Allen, 2016). Allen, a humanist, describes prophetic frame shifting with illustrations such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton suggesting in 1870 that girls ought to understand themselves “not as adjectives, but as nouns,” or the Occupy Wall Street movement’s 2011 assertion “we are the 99%.” These rhetorical reframings summon a public; they create a social group. I believe that our scholarly journals are in a constant process of prophetic framing (and occasionally frame shifting). With each editorial decision and each table of contents, our journals frame the landscape of academic publishing in personality and social psychology and, in doing so, summon a public by implicitly demonstrating what kinds of papers (and, even more implicitly, what kinds of authors) ought to publish in a certain outlet. For better and for worse, scholarly publication is the currency of our field. Individual personality and social psychologists’ careers are made and broken by their ability to publish in particular outlets. As such, editors are among the key power brokers in our academic culture and I believe they ought to take their role in prophetic frame shifting seriously. As I have articulated above, we are at a moment in history as a field – and, of course, also nationally and globally – when it is time for risk-taking innovation. I aspire for PSPR to become the premier outlet for original theoretical scholarship that offers fundamentally new ways of thinking about the field, and about the world. I aspire for PSPR to become a force for integration, not balkanization, weaving together disparate ideas such that new directions open up. I aspire for PSPR to become a leader in publishing theoretical reviews that address the most pressing social issues of our moment in history, including climate change, systemic racism, social and economic inequalities, and many more, using innovative interpretive methods and tools, including those that put psychological science in dialogue with other fields, from the humanities and arts to other social sciences and STEM disciplines. I aspire for PSPR to play a key role in responding to the challenges our field is facing today by amplifying the development of open science practices and by enlivening that work with new viewpoints. I aspire for PSPR to publish work that actively embraces the twin perspectives of critique and repair, critically deconstructing prevailing notions that no longer serve us while simultaneously suggesting new futures, inviting possibility, and enchanting with questions of “what if?” (Hendren, 2020). I aspire for PSPR to take the work of prophetic frame shifting as its central mission.

Who

The content of the next chapter in PSPR’s story is inseparable from the people responsible for implementing its vision. In assembling the journal’s incoming editorial stewards, I have sought to embody the kinds of changes I’d like to see in our field. Let me introduce the team.

Editor. To start, I want to acknowledge that I was an extremely unlikely choice as Editor (and I’m profoundly grateful to the SPSP Publications Committee for taking a chance on me!). I am the first Editor in the journal’s history who does not work at a large research university; I work at a small college known for its investment in creative pedagogy. I was trained at the intersection of personality and clinical psychology and I actively maintain my clinical license. My research focuses on the relationship between narrative identity development in adulthood and psychological well-being. I have used multiple approaches in my research, including longitudinal modeling as well as psychobiography and qualitative methods. Outside of Olin I work closely with a non-profit organization, Health Story Collaborative, to marshal the research literature in service of medical patients as they navigate experiences of illness and healing. And I’m also a playwright, and a theater director, and a parent to two young kids. Despite my non-traditional background, I have remained deeply invested in the direction of our field of personality and social psychology since I was as a graduate student, having served several of our professional organizations and journals in a variety of capacities, while publishing my research and speaking at conferences. I have benefited from – and experienced the world through – the privileges of my whiteness, my maleness, and my American-ness. And I have also experienced our field through the eyes of a gay person during a period of astonishing historical transformation, and as a scholar whose research emphasis (narrative identity) has steadily progressed from the margins to the mainstream. Our field has made it possible for me to thrive and I want to ensure it fosters opportunities for everyone else who also doesn’t feel like the prototypical social or personality psychologist.

Associate Editors. Our four Associate Editors each come to the journal with distinctive perspectives as well. (In alphabetical order by last name...) Kathleen Bogart (Oregon State University) has led the psychological study of disability, ableism, and rare disorders such as facial paralysis. She is a social and health psychologist and one of the co-founders of SPSP’s Disability Advocacy and Research Network. Cindy McPherson Frantz (Oberlin College) has forged new directions in efforts to deploy social psychological insights to reshape humans’ relationship with the natural world. She is a social and environmental psychologist committed to interdisciplinary theory building to address real problems and directs the Community Based Social Marketing Lab at Oberlin. Phia Salter (Davidson College) has built vital connections between the psychological study of race and systematic racism with critical perspectives from the

humanities and other social sciences. She is a social and cultural psychologist who also works to influence diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts in higher education as well as K-12 teacher-training programs. Amber Gayle Thalmayer (University of Zürich) has conducted groundbreaking research aimed at understanding the extent to which prevailing models of personality traits and mental health replicate in African and other majority-world contexts. She is a personality and cultural psychologist with a strong interest in measurement and seeking to identify what is more universal, versus more culturally specific, in personality, mental health, and their development across the lifespan.

You will notice that each of the four Associate Editors and I are hyphenated academics: we are each a personality or social psychologist and something else (clinical, health, environmental, cultural). Considering there are only five of us, we also bring perspectives from a wide range of positions along the intersecting dimensions of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, career trajectory, etc., as well as coming from different types of institutions (small colleges, large research universities, nationality of workplace, etc.). We aspire to represent the breadth of our field's reach, including who ought to be shaping our field's leading journals.

Editorial Board. While the four Associate Editors and I will be guiding PSPR during this next chapter, every journal is deeply dependent on the volunteer contributions of a huge number of people. The most visible volunteer contributors are the journal's Editorial Board. I want to extend humungous appreciation to the 76 scholars who served on PSPR's Editorial Board over the previous four years, for they have played a fundamental role in maintaining the high quality of the articles published in this journal. As we begin this new chapter in PSPR's history, we have decided to assemble an Editorial Board with a distinctive intentionality. Editorial Board membership is often deployed for two reasons. First, as a recognition of impact and status, an opportunity to formally demarcate whose ideas have been pivotal in shaping the field. Second, it secures expert peer reviewers for incoming manuscripts. In practice, my experience (and data from the prior four years at PSPR suggest) this approach has traditionally been more successful at the former than the latter. The Associate Editors and I have decided to assemble an Editorial Board that prioritizes the future of the field; we intend to use the PSPR Editorial Board to cultivate future editorial leaders. As such, we have sought out scholars who we believe amplify and extend the kinds of perspectival diversity represented in the Editor/Associate Editor team. The incoming Editorial Board includes scholars from every continent (except Antarctica), from a huge range of institutions (including those working outside academia but whose work is shaped by scholarship), and at many career stages. They have agreed to accept invitations to review manuscripts for the journal and we intend to hold them to this commitment.

We are also in the process of establishing a Graduate Student/Post-Doctoral Fellow Editorial Board. If one of the primary aims of our Editorial Board is to cultivate future editorial leaders, we ought to begin that process while scholars are in their most formative stage of development. Oftentimes emerging scholars are the most attentive Reviewers and provide the most innovative insights. Obviously we do not expect Graduate Students and Post-Doctoral Fellows to have the depth of experience as more senior scholars, so we will be taking a developmental approach to working with these Editorial Board members. Every manuscript that is sent out for peer review at PSPR will be assigned to one member of our Graduate Student/Post-Doctoral Fellow Editorial Board. The Associate Editors and I will provide feedback on their reviews while taking their perspective into account as we reach a decision on the manuscript they have reviewed. I believe this approach is quite unusual in academic psychology, but other fields have engaged in similar practices, like the longstanding tradition of law review journals being overseen by law students. The composition of our Editorial Board and the role of the Graduate Student/Post-Doctoral Fellow Editorial Board represent our efforts to cultivate future editorial leaders for our field and we feel incredibly fortunate to have this broad and diverse group of volunteers to work alongside.

Reviewers. While we will strive to get feedback from Editorial Board members on every manuscript, ultimately the quality of the editorial process rests with the Reviewers. If one of our Associate Editors or I ask you to review a manuscript for PSPR, we certainly hope you will say yes! We will strive to foster a culture of peer review that prioritizes kind, constructive, generative, and actionable feedback. In many ways, the project of reviewing a theory manuscript is different from the project of reviewing an empirical manuscript; it can be much harder to point to specific deal-breakers and it can be much easier to make overly-general pronouncements or advance personal agendas rather than meeting the manuscript on its terms. The editorial team will work to scaffold our requests for peer review to generate the kinds of feedback that will be most constructive. We look forward to working with you in this process!

Authors. As an editorial team, we have little say over who submits to the journal. But all of our intentions will fall short if PSPR doesn't continue to receive a torrent of exciting, original theoretical scholarship. As we hope this editorial makes clear, the editorial team is open and excited to engage with innovative perspectives that might reshape our field. That means that we want your best ideas, even if they don't look like the kinds of ideas that have appeared in PSPR's pages in the past. Our initial effort (beyond this editorial) will be a session titled "PSPR is for You!" at the first meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology during our editorial term. We want to broaden the range of scholars who think about PSPR as the best outlet for their theoretical scholarship. We encourage you to look at the people who are

servicing the journal as Associate Editors and on the Editorial Board – these are the people who will be handling and reviewing your manuscripts. We have invited them because they represent the kind of work we want to see in the pages of PSPR. Please join us in this next chapter by submitting your work!

How

Culture. As I've outlined above, the major tool we plan to use in pursuing this vision for the journal's next chapter is the cultivation of an editorial culture that supports a new direction. The editorial team and Editorial Board represent the direction we'd like the journal to head and we are committed to fostering an editorial culture that supports this development. Two of our primary tools for developing and maintaining this editorial culture will be collaboration and assessment. The four Associate Editors and I have already met to discuss our shared vision for the journal, something we will continue to collaboratively create. We are actively working to interrogate the systems and structures that maintain established power dynamics and to intervene in ways that feel meaningful. Our approach to assembling the Editorial Board is one tangible example of this work. We are also committed to assessing our progress towards our goals of fostering a more diverse editorial team and set of authors who submit their work to PSPR. As one example, we will begin tracking demographic information on both Editorial Board members and submitting authors so we can evaluate whether we are making progress towards our goals of diversity and inclusion. (We are also beginning to look retrospectively at who has historically published in the journal, to provide context for our efforts.) We also need to acknowledge that PSPR is embedded within the broader cultures and histories of personality and social psychology (and, as an official journal of SPSP, this segment of personality and social psychology in particular), of social science more broadly, and of academic publishing (Sage is our publisher). As a result, we will certainly encounter frictions, both anticipated and unforeseen, and we will do the best we can within the constraints we are given, recognizing that we cannot do it all, and we certainly cannot do it all at once. As we get up to speed we hope there will be opportunities to launch new initiatives we could not envision before getting started.

Different types of tools. Every article published in PSPR will describe theoretical integrations of prior scholarship. As in the past, a small minority of those articles will use meta-analysis or systematic reviews as the foundation for their theoretical integration. These methods are certainly welcome as tools for theory development, though it is important for us to be explicit that the kinds of theoretical contributions we seek to publish require more than summary. In addition, for manuscripts including meta-analyses or systematic reviews, PSPR is now adopting a combination of Level II and Level III guidelines from the Transparency and Openness Promotion Factors (<https://topfactor.org/>). Furthermore, such manuscripts will be required to discuss the limits to generalizability posed by the samples included in their reviews and to evaluate the diversity of the citations they use to build theory. These requirements represent an increase from what the journal has historically required and sets an equivalent or more stringent set of requirements to those outlined in the SPSP Publication Policies. Please see the PSPR Manuscript Guidelines, where we have made a number of changes, for more specific information (<https://journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/PSR>). Theory and data are in perpetual dialogue and PSPR aspires to elevate the quality of both.

Outside of meta-analytic and systematic review scholarship, we will also welcome submissions that are aligned with the energetic movement towards the formalization of theory, producing mathematical or computational models to represent and explain their assertions (see the July 2021 special issue of *Perspectives on Psychological Science* focused on theory for many excellent examples). That being said, just as we will require manuscripts relying on meta-analytic or systematic review methods to declare the limitations of their constituent samples, we will require manuscripts focused on formalized theory generation to declare the constraints introduced by translating psychological phenomena into formalized statements. Formalized theory often depends on prevailing ways of translating the phenomena of the world into data – the task of operationalization and measurement. We would also like to see attention to alternative approaches of operationalization and measurement before foreclosing on the formalization of theory. The push for methodological reform in our field ought to be paired with a push for diversification of ways of knowing. If, as some formalized theorists state, the foundation of theory in our field is crumbling, we ought to recruit additional tools, not just call a mason. To that end, we are interested in receiving manuscripts that look to neighboring disciplines in the humanities and the arts, as well as to real-world practice, not just to other STEM disciplines, for connection and inspiration. Yes, we certainly need Paul Meehl and his wisdom for formalized theory generation. But we also need paradigm-shifting perspectives like Cross, Parham, and Helms' (1991) notion of nigrescence, Crenshaw's (1990) theory of intersectionality, Graham, Haidt, and Nosek's (2009) moral foundations construct, Baumann and Murray's (2014) concept of Deaf Gain, and many more. These ideas are not best represented in mathematical or computational language – at least not yet – however they engage in the kinds of prophetic frame shifting the journal aspires to promote. PSPR will seek to publish theory presented in its most compelling form, whatever shape that takes.

Speeding up and slowing down. It is typical for editorials like this one to declare a commitment to speed in the editorial process. Speed is a proxy for multiple variables, some of which are central to our ambitions at PSPR and some of which are less relevant. Timely editorial action, perhaps especially in situations when the journal is going to decline a submission, demonstrates respect for the authors. Certainly this will be central to our editorial culture. But the kinds of papers we seek to cultivate do not face the same urgency to publish as papers that report the results of empirical scholarship. The pace of science depends in large part on the pace of scientific publishing, but theory takes time. Big ideas benefit from iteration. The editorial team will commit to minimizing all unnecessary delays in the process. We will strive not to let manuscripts linger in our inboxes, we won't invite revised resubmission unless we think a manuscript has a strong shot at ultimate acceptance, and we won't invite multiple rounds of external peer review unless absolutely necessary. But we will take our time in crafting decision letters, we will deeply engage in the revision process, and we will expect authors to do the same.

Any effort at culture change emerges from the active engagement of those concerned. Ultimately, the vision I have outlined in this editorial is up to *you* to engage with. This editorial provides the initiating guide, but the arc of this new chapter at PSPR will materialize as we do this work, together.

Why

Personality and social psychology are absolutely fundamental to building the world we need. PSPR plays a unique role in the personality and social psychology ecosystem. Whereas our field's many stellar empirical journals provide the building blocks of our science, PSPR articles meld those building blocks into integrated lenses that offer us new ways of seeing the direction we might head. While trying to avoid being naïvely ahistorical or overly grandiose, I believe we are at an exceptional moment in history, when the pursuit of the world we need is dependent on new ways of seeing our direction. Addressing the issues of our time require integrative perspectives that weave together disparate ideas into holistic, systemic directions. Scholars, and especially personality and social psychologists, have a unique role to play in that endeavor. We do not always have traditional levers of power, like capital, at our disposal, but we do have rigorous, vigorous insight. The capacity for insight is not dependent on career stage, or personal demographics, or nationality, or scholarly lineage. These kinds of insights prophetically shift our frame of understanding; they are immensely powerful tools for change. If you've been working on marshaling personality and social psychology to envision a different world, please send your work to PSPR.

When

Now! Our editorial team begins handling manuscripts on January 1, 2022. We've been given four years in this role. We're ready for you and excited to engage. We're looking forward to working with you. Please, come join us!

Jonathan M. Adler
Editor, *Personality and Social Psychology Review*

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