## Suggestions for Nominating Committee Welcomed

APSA's Nominating Committee, chaired by Joseph Cooper, Johns Hopkins University, seeks suggestions for nominees to APSA offices.

The Committee will make nominations for eight Council persons, as well as the offices of secretary, vice president (three positions) and president-elect. The Committee will meet in February in Washington and report to the President no later than April 15.

Other members of the Nominating Committee are Robert Bates, Duke University; Benjamin Ginsberg, Cornell University; Paula D. McClain, University of Virginia; Ellen Frankel Paul, Bowling Green State University; and Donald L. Robinson, Smith College.

## The Impact of the *American Political Science Review*

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What impact does a scholarly journal have upon its discipline? It could be argued that a journal's influence, if any, is reactive—that it mainly reflects through time the character of scholars' research and thought, and the quanta of scholarly enterprise and effort. If it is true that a scholarly journal rarely innovates and only occasionally stimulates a line of theorizing or a thread of research, a journal can facilitate research development, disseminate ideas, and help to establish and maintain standards of inquiry. In fact, gauging the impact of an instrument of scholarly communication is a matter of some complexity. When we speak of the impact of a journal like the *American Political Science Review,* we may have in mind how positively political scientists evaluate it compared to other journals, and how relatively familiar scholars are with the various journals in their discipline. This subjective approach yields very strong standing for the *APSR.* In 1988, 550 political scientists were asked to rate 78 journals on a scale ranging from 0–10, and indicate their familiarity with them; 215 scholars responded. Their evaluative and familiarity ratings accorded the highest standing to the *Review,* which scored more than 15 out of a possible 20 points; the *Journal of Politics* and the *American Journal of Political Science* were next in these ratings, scoring about 14 points each (see Garand 1990; Giles, Mizell, and Patterson 1989; Giles and Wright 1975). Almost all political scientists are familiar with the *APSR,* and evaluate it favorably.

But the impact of a scholarly journal entails more than merely subjective assessment. Impact may involve the quantity and quality of inputs in the form of manuscripts submitted to a journal; it may involve the professional performance and effectiveness of the publication decision process; and it may concern various outcomes of journal publication (see Lester 1990). How many manuscripts does the journal receive, and to what extent is the work of high quality? How effectively are the editorial functions and peer review processes performing? How widely is the research and writing published in the journal used by other scholars? These questions are worthy of answers in any analysis of the impact of a scholarly publication. We aim to offer answers on behalf of the *American Political Science Review.*

### The Inputs: Manuscripts Submitted and Appraised

The impact of a scholarly journal may be felt in terms of the propensity of scholars to submit their work to it, and this predisposition may be grounded in the belief that this is the "leading journal," the "journal of choice" in the discipline. The rate of submission of manuscripts to the *APSR* has climbed substantially over the years since World War II. In the 1950s and 1960s, the average manuscript submission rate was 260-270 per year. In the late 1960s political science began to grow as a profession, and this growth was reflected in rather sharp growth in *APSR* manuscript submission in the early 1970s (see Figure 1). This growth in sub-

**FIGURE 1.**
**Manuscripts Submitted to the *APSR,* 1962–1991**

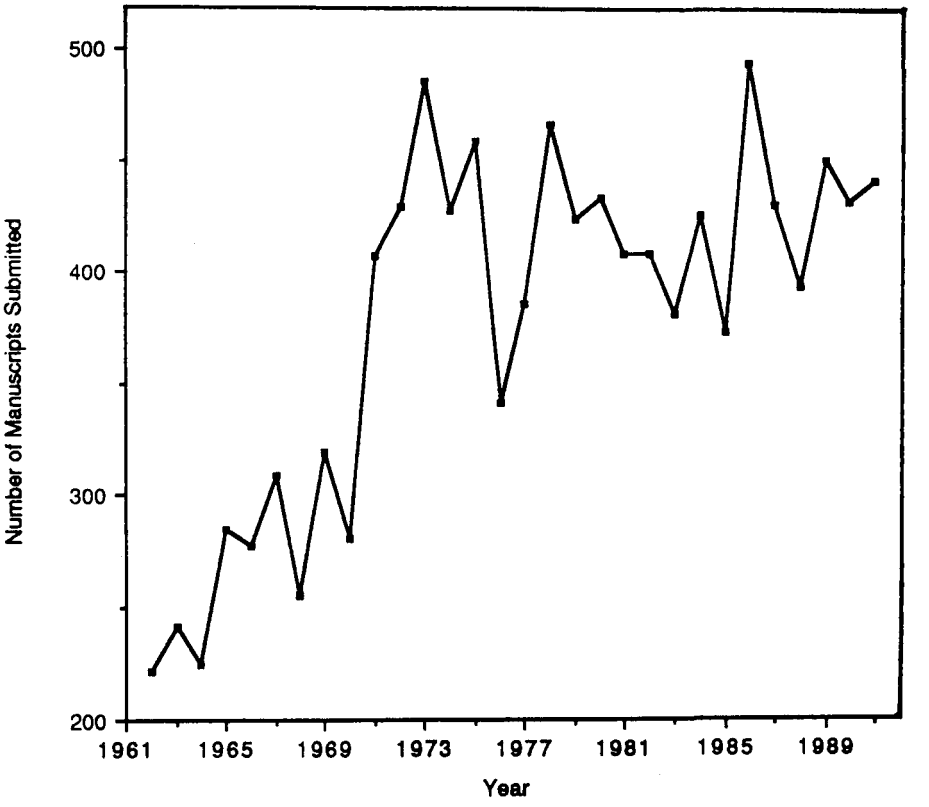




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**TABLE 1.**
**Distribution of Manuscripts Submitted to the *APSR* by Subfield, 1985–1991** (in percentages)

| Subfield | 1985–86 | 1986–87 | 1987–88 | 1988–89 | 1989–90 | 1990–91 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| American Politics & Public Policy | 40.2 | 44.2 | 37.9 | 40.5 | 45.8 | 39.8 |
| Comparative Politics | 14.1 | 11.5 | 19.3 | 17.9 | 18.2 | 21.7 |
| Normative Political Theory | 22.6 | 23.0 | 17.2 | 17.6 | 16.6 | 17.1 |
| International Relations | 8.6 | 10.8 | 9.7 | 11.9 | 9.1 | 8.7 |
| Formal Theory & Methodology | 14.3 | 10.5 | 15.9 | 11.5 | 10.3 | 12.8 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 99.4 | 100.0 | 100.1 |
| Number of manuscripts | 545 | 427 | 391 | 447 | 428 | 438 |

**TABLE 2.**
**Distribution of Manuscripts Accepted for Publication by Subfield, 1985–1991** (in percentages)

| Subfield | 1985–86 | 1986–87 | 1987–88 | 1988–89 | 1989–90 | 1990–91 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| American Politics & Public Policy | 47.1 | 44.0 | 47.1 | 36.4 | 35.9 | 41.9 |
| Comparative Politics | 13.7 | 14.0 | 13.7 | 20.0 | 10.3 | 22.6 |
| Normative Political Theory | 17.6 | 20.0 | 17.6 | 18.2 | 30.8 | 12.9 |
| International Relations | 11.8 | 10.0 | 5.9 | 10.9 | 12.8 | 6.5 |
| Formal Theory & Methodology | 9.8 | 12.0 | 15.7 | 14.5 | 10.3 | 16.1 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.1 | 100.0 |
| Number of manuscripts | 51 | 50 | 51 | 55 | 39 | 31 |

missions reflected the fact that in the 1970s the number of Ph.D.s conferred in political science doubled over Ph.D. production in the 1960s (Lynn 1983, 107). In the 1960s, manuscript submission averaged 266 per year. This average shot up to 409 for the 1970s, but the elevation of the submission rate occurred almost overnight, between 1970 (N = 280) and 1971 (N = 407), just as Nelson W. Polsby began his watch as managing editor. In the 1980s and 1990s the average number of manuscripts submitted to the *Review* each year has grown incrementally ($\bar{X}$ = 418 for the 1980s; $\bar{X}$ = 433 for the 1990s).

Over the 1980s the distribution of manuscripts submitted to the *Review* has held remarkably stable, as Table 1 illustrates. About two-fifths of the submitted manuscripts reside in the general field of U.S. politics and public policy, an unsurprising constancy given that the preponderance of political scientists study American politics, and that the U.S. policy is highly porous to scholarly investigation. But a substantial trend in the 1980s has been the increasing representation of comparative politics research in the *Review*. In the early 1980s, only 13-14% of submitted manuscripts fell within the rubric "comparative politics"; by 1990-91, fully a fifth of the submissions were in the comparative politics subfield (Patterson, Poe, and Borelli 1986, 977). With respect to theory, the pages of the *APSR* have reflected some subsidence of normative theory and some increase in the work of positive theorists and political economists. Research in international relations has, in the 1980s, comprised about 10% of the submissions to the *Review*.

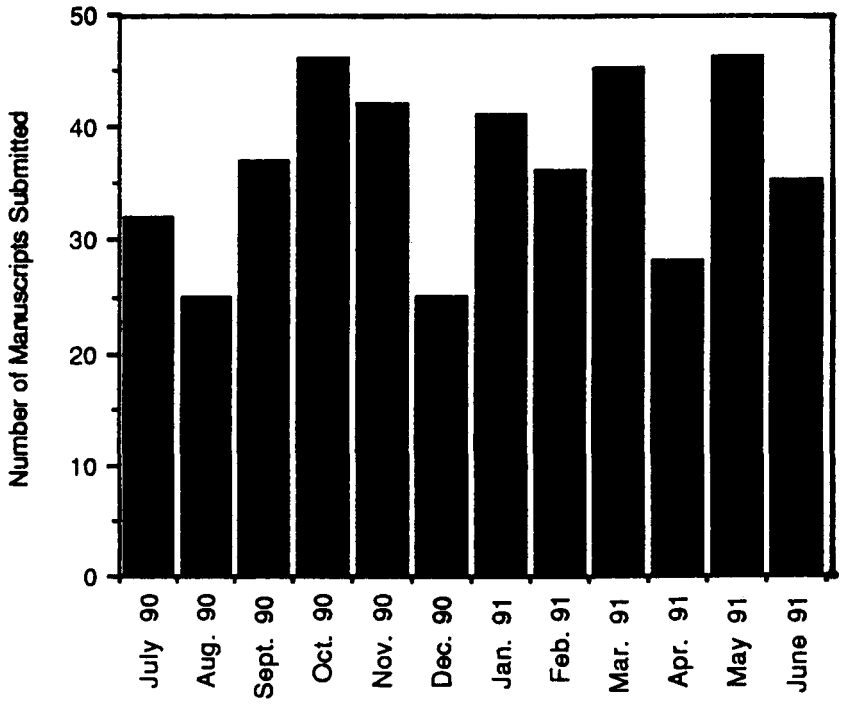
The subfield distribution of acceptances for publication in the *Review* shadows the submission rates, as Table 2 demonstrates. For 1985 to 1991, about 42% of the articles published were in the domain of U.S. politics and public policy; normative political theory contributed about 20% of the published articles; nearly 16% were comparative politics articles; 13% represented formal theory or methodology; and almost 10% came from the field of international relations. In the 1980s the *Review* carried fewer articles about American politics and more in the comparative and international politics fields, and in both normative and formal theory, than either of the two other leading general journals—the *American Journal of Political Science,* and the *Journal of Politics* (see Patterson, Adolino, and McGuire 1989, 870). The subfields of political science probably are represented in the pages of the journal in about the proportions that would be expected from the sizes of the various tribes. And this claim is underscored by the rather astonishing lack of much cross-subfield variation in acceptance rates (see Table 3). Year-to-year fluctuations in these matters are not very consequential, often merely reflecting the vagaries of timing and publication deadlines. But at the mean there is no significant variation across subfields in acceptance rates. All are in the neighborhood of 11-12% (omitting the bumper 1986-87 year for formal theory, clearly an outlier).

Two additional remarks can be made about submissions to the *Review*, concerning their composition and timing. During 1990-91, the flow of manuscript submissions ran at an average of 36.5 per month, and this flow has remained quite steady for a number of years. Most of these submissions are essays or research reports intended to be considered as ordinary journal articles. But a slowly growing number of submitted papers are research notes or controversy offerings (in 1990-91, about 8% of submitted manuscripts were research notes, about 4% were controversies). Moreover, the rhythm varies over the course of the year, as illustrated in Figure 2. Although

**TABLE 3.**
**Publication Acceptance Rates by Subfield, 1985–1991** (in percentages)

| Subfield | 1985–86 | 1986–87 | 1987–88 | 1988–89 | 1989–90 | 1990–91 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| American Politics & Public Policy | 13.1 | 12.1 | 14.6 | 11.2 | 8.5 | 8.8 |
| Comparative Politics | 9.9 | 14.3 | 10.3 | 15.9 | 5.3 | 9.7 |
| Normative Political Theory | 8.0 | 10.2 | 12.2 | 13.0 | 16.9 | 6.7 |
| International Relations | 15.0 | 11.0 | 7.5 | 11.5 | 13.9 | 8.3 |
| Formal Theory & Methodology | 8.9 | 17.6 | 14.5 | 14.8 | 9.8 | 11.6 |
| Overall | 10.5 | 13.0 | 12.7 | 12.3 | 10.2 | 8.9 |

**FIGURE 2.**
**Manuscript Submission by Month, 1990–1991**




cross-month oscillations in submissions have not been completely consistent over the years, normally there is an October "high," reflecting scholars' preparation of papers for the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association the month before. The December "low" presumably indicates a profession at rest during the end-of-year holidays, and frequently this foreshadows rather high submission rates early in the next year. But as Figure 2 dramatizes, scholars are quite productive throughout the year, and variation around the average submission flow is not so very large.

## The Decision Process: Seminar by Mail

The basic decision process for a scholarly journal is *peer review.* Such a system of "institutionalized skepticism" subjects manuscripts submitted to the journal to the judgment and evaluation of their authors' peers in a research subfield, invisible college, specialized network, or focus of study. Peer review appears to have its roots in the innovative 17th-century practice of *Philosophical Transactions,* the journal of the British Royal Society. That journal sought to protect itself from the widespread plagiarism in the science of the time —called "philosophicall robbery" by Robert Boyle (1627-91), the founder of modern chemistry. The Society adopted the practice of requiring that articles be published only after "being first reviewed by some of the members of the same" (quoted in Merton 1973, 463).

In American political science systematic peer review is, in fact, a recent development. There is no record of the particulars of editorial practice by the *Review* in the early years of this century. Frederic A. Ogg of the University of Wisconsin, the third managing editor, controlled the *Review* from 1925 until he relinquished the editorship in 1949. It appears that he alone read and passed judgment on all submitted manuscripts, although he may, of course, have consulted his colleagues in the Wisconsin political science department from time to time. A publications committee of the American Political Science Association reported in 1935 that the "Managing Editor . . . handles almost alone the reading and evaluation of manuscripts" (quoted in Somit and Tanenhaus 1967, 96). In political science, peer review appears to have been a development of the 1950s. Ohio State University's Harvey Mansfield is reputed to have regularly consulted one or more specialists in evaluating manuscripts for the *Review* during his decade as managing editor beginning in 1955. A fully established system of peer review came when Austin Ranney, then at Wisconsin, became managing editor in 1965 (for a historical analysis, see Patterson, Ripley, and Trish 1988).

The system of peer review calls upon a large number of scholars to render professional advice and judgment of papers submitted to the journal, and most scholars are responsive. In one year (1987-88), for instance, the *Review* solicited 854 appraisals for newly submitted manuscripts and received 712 (83%) completed evaluations from the initial request for reviews. The cancellation rate has run at about 13% (only in a handful of cases is there no response at all), whereupon new referees are assigned. Moreover, manuscript referees are, in general, highly responsive. A careful audit of manuscript turnaround by referees in 1987-88 showed a median response by referees of 24 working days—about five weeks—with little variation across political science subfields (Patterson, Ripley, and Trish 1988, 911-12). We have monitored the overall efficiency of manuscript processing, and these results are shown in Table 4. Roughly speaking, the average turnaround time—from receipt of the manuscript in the editorial office to notification of the author of the publication decision—has been two and one-half months (51 working days in 1990-91).

However efficient the system may be, peer review performs two distinct scholarly functions. First, it provides the sifting and winnowing, the process of selecting the very best work for publication in the journal. Second, it entails a "seminar by mail" for a scholarly discipline, affording professional advice, consultation, suggestions, and judgment to the vast majority of scholars whose work is

**TABLE 4.**
**Elapsed Time in the Review Process** (in days)

| Stage | 1985–86 | 1986–87 | 1987–88 | 1988–89 | 1989–90 | 1990–91 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| From receipt to referee assignment | 4.0 | 7.0 | 11.0 | 12.2 | 10.5 | 9.2 |
| From assignment to last review | 53.0 | 47.0 | 35.0 | 37.4 | 39.4 | 41.7 |
| From last review to decision | 2.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 8.2 | 6.0 | 6.2 |
| From receipt to final decision | 59.0 | 58.0 | 49.0 | 52.2 | 52.3 | 51.4 |

Note: For 1985–88, the numbers are medians; thereafter, we calculated performance as means. The total time entry may not equal the sum of the three phases, since some manuscripts were not sent out for review. Days are calculated as working days (Monday through Friday).

not to be published in the journal. How effectively are these two functions performed?

Above all, scholars expect their work to be considered by journal editors and referees in a manner that is fair, constructive, honest, and based on high professional standards. The professional quality and fairness of the peer review system is crucial to the integrity of a scholarly research journal. In order to assess the effectiveness of the *APSR*'s peer review processes, in 1987 we conducted a content-analytic study of 200 written peer evaluations drawn from 1,323 reviews in the journal's files (see Patterson, Bailey, Martinez, and Angel 1987). Each sample review was coded in terms of (1) manuscript properties —if the review dealt with the theory presented, or the methodology used; (2) referees' evaluative criteria— logic, importance, suitability, organization, etc.; (3) the positivity or negativity of the evaluation; and (4) inter-reviewer agreement. The 200 manuscript reviews yielded 2,982 coded units of evaluation (displayed in Table 5). More than a fourth of all evaluative comments were positive, and about three-fourths were negative. Positive evaluations stress the perceived importance of the research as a contribution to knowledge, the originality and creativity of the work, and its overall quality. Negative appraisals are more particular, emphasizing the logic of the argument, the accuracy and thoroughness of the research, and the quality, clarity, and effectiveness of the writing. In the end, it is the general scientific or theoretical importance of a paper and its interest value that are most highly correlated with the decision to accept or reject it for publication in the *Review* (compare Bakanic, McPhail, and Simon 1989).

Do the two or three referees for a scholarly paper agree, in general, in their evaluations? There is, indeed, considerable variation among referees regarding reasons for, or the bases of, publication recommendations. But there is widespread agreement on the question of publication itself. Our referee sample included 53 pairs of referees for the same manuscript, a result determined by our sampling procedures. Publication decisions recommended by referees were coded into three categories: publish, revise and resubmit, and reject. Each pair of referees were in "high agreement" if they fully agreed (publish/publish, revise/revise, or reject/reject); in "moderate agreement" if there was disagreement by only one category (publish/revise or revise/reject); and in "low agreement" if they substantially disagreed (publish/reject). High agreement accounted for 43% of the referee pairs, moderate agreement for 42% of the pairs, and low agreement for only 15% of the pairs of referees. Because peer reviewers are overwhelming in substantial agreement in their evaluations of manuscripts, their judgments carry very heavy weight in editorial decision-making (for comparative analyses of referee influence, see Bakanic, McPhail, and Simon 1987; Giles, Patterson, and Mizell 1989). Moreover, authors of papers submitted to the *Review* exhibit substantial satisfaction with the review process; a study of 380 rejected authors conducted in 1990 showed that only 40% were dissatisfied, and understandably so (see Patterson and Smithey 1990, 653-55). The authors whose work is published are, of course, highly satisfied. But even those whose submissions are not accepted for publication are generally satisfied with peer review.

The peer review system is a "seminar by mail." The editor is the "professor," and the seminar members include authors who submit papers and referees who comment on them. It is impossible to exaggerate the pedagogical function of peer review. Almost all papers ultimately published in the *Review* are strengthened and improved as a result of critiques by referees and editor. But what about the "rejected" authors— scholars who submit papers to the *APSR* that are not accepted for publication? After all, these scholars

**TABLE 5.**
**Criteria Referees Use to Evaluate *APSR* Manuscripts** (in percentages)

| Criterion | Positive Assessments | Negative Assessments |
|---|---|---|
| Logic: support, continuity, and rationale of argument | 8 | 19 |
| Comprehension: interpretation of information and literature | 3 | 6 |
| Accuracy: correctness of factual information, procedures, and definitions | 5 | 12 |
| Thoroughness: completeness of information, including acknowledgement of relevant research | 5 | 22 |
| Importance: contribution to field and usefulness of information | 20 | 7 |
| Interest value: originality of research, ability to generate new, intriguing ideas, appropriateness for the *Review* | 21 | 7 |
| Presentation: organization, clarity of expression, effectiveness of writing | 9 | 19 |
| Reviewer bias: comments on identity of authors or their institutions; comments reflecting personal biases regarding theory, methodology, etc. | 9 | 2 |
| General comments (e.g., "the methodology is good," or "the paper is disappointing," etc.) | 20 | 6 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |
| Number of cases | 805 | 2,177 |

make up the overwhelming majority of participants in the seminar by mail.

In 1990, we conducted a study of rejected authors and the fate of their manuscripts. We mailed questionnaires to a sample of 596 rejected authors drawn from the manuscript files of the previous two years; 380 scholars, or about 64%, responded. From their responses, we were able to learn a number of interesting things about the process of scholarly communication, and the dynamics of the cycle of submission-evaluation-rejection-revision-resubmission. We learned that:

- 60% were "regulars" who had submitted a paper before, and 40% had previously been published in the *Review*;
- 57% of the rejected authors used referee and editor critiques in order to revise their papers;
- 8% resubmitted the paper to the *APSR* despite the fact that they had not been invited to "revise and resubmit";
- 70% submitted their paper to another journal following rejection by the *Review,* and three-fourths of these were published eventually;
- After *APSR* rejection, almost half of the authors submit their work to one of the other general political science journals, and four-fifths of these go to the *Journal of Politics* or the *American Journal of Political Science*;
- In the end, somewhat over half (50.5%) of the total number of manuscripts from the sample of authors whose papers were rejected by the *APSR* ultimately were published somewhere, either as journal articles or as chapters in books.

Rejected authors fall into three broad types. About a third are *novices* who have not previously submitted work to the *Review,* and many are fledgling scholars. In contrast, 25-30% are *hardcore professionals*—regular submitters whose previous work has been published in the *Review,* and who are fully socialized to professional practice. Between *novices* and *hardcore professionals* lie most research-oriented political scientists—the *working scholars,* who try out the *Review* occasionally but whose work is more often published in other journals (Patterson and Smithey 1990, 651-53).

**TABLE 6.**
**Subfield Distribution of Books Reviewed in the *APSR*, 1985–1991**
(in percentages)

| Subfield | 1985 | 1986 | 1987 | 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| American politics | 32 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 31 | 36 | 31 |
| Comparative politics | 28 | 25 | 31 | 28 | 27 | 25 | 29 |
| Political theory | 21 | 18 | 17 | 19 | 18 | 16 | 23 |
| International relations | 19 | 24 | 16 | 19 | 24 | 19 | 17 |
| Political economy, public policy | * | 7 | 9 | * | * | 5 | * |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 101 | 100 |
| Number of books reviewed | 453 | 380 | 351 | 320 | 402 | 459 | 374 |

*Included in other subfields.

Note: For 1986–1988, political economy books were reviewed in a separate section; for 1990, some public policy books were reviewed separately.

But the *Review*'s pages contain more than scholarly articles—the journal now shoulders the lion's share of book reviewing in political science. During the 1980s the *APSR* reviewed an average of more than 350 books per year (see Table 6), well distributed across the major subfields of the discipline. We know the book review section of the journal is important—readership surveys indicate that political scientists are more likely to read the book reviews in the *APSR* than they are to read the scientific articles. But it is not so easy, or so pressing, to evaluate the impact of book reviews, compared to articles. Reviews are invited, not refereed, so peer review is not at issue; and book reviews are seldom cited, so they have no measurable impact in references and footnotes. The book review section of the *Review* provides an important information service to the political science discipline, but book reviewing, if not virtually a lost art, does not appear to have a very substantial impact upon scholarly research.

## The Outcome: Citation of *APSR* Articles

The impact of a scholarly journal can be investigated in the light of the influences of its contents upon the research enterprise. In some hands, this takes the form of subjective evaluation of the journals *in toto*. Surveys of samples of political science professionals have been invoked in order to derive rankings of the journals (Giles, Mizell, and Patterson 1989; Giles and Wright 1975). At its best, this approach combines measures both of subjective assessment (e.g., on a scale from 0-10, where 0 is poor and 10 is outstanding), and familiarity or visibility. Accordingly, "two journals with similar evaluation levels might have very different impacts on the profession, depending upon the number of political scientists who regularly read articles in the journal and find the journal articles useful in their own professional work" (Garand 1990, 448). Such an analysis accords the highest score and ranking to the *American Political Science Review,* with the *Journal of Politics,* the *American Journal of Political Science,* and *World Politics* following along, ranking second, third, and fourth (see Garand 1990).

Another, and less subjective, approach to the appraisal of journal impact is to evaluate the journals in terms of the extent to which authors and articles published by them are cited by others. Laponce has done this kind of work on the basis of footnote counts for the 1970s, and found the *APSR* to be a diverse importer of citations from other journals, and the largest exporter of information in terms of citations in other national journals (Laponce 1980). For the 1980s, Laponce's (1990) research showed the substantial importation into the *Review* of work in economics and psychology. Of course, Laponce was interested primarily in what scholarly work from other disciplines is imported into the pages of the *APSR* and

other selected journals. In contrast, we are concerned with the extent to which the *Review* is cited in other journals.

This mode of impact evaluation has been made much more feasible, and possible on a much wider scale, by the compilation of journal citations in the *Social Science Citation Index* (*SCCI*). From the *SSCI* an "impact factor score" can be calculated that indicates the "average citation rate per published article" (Garfield 1972, 474). The impact factor score for the *APSR* is a measure of the number of times that *Review* articles from two previous years have been cited in other journals in a given year, divided by the number of articles in that two-year period. For instance, one can count the raw number of times that 1978 and 1979 *APSR* articles were cited by 1980 articles in other political or social science journals. Then, this number is divided by the total number of articles published in the *APSR* in 1978 and 1979. And so on. This score provides a measure of the "citedness" of *Review* articles that controls for the size of the journal. We can make use of these impact factor scores to determine the extent to which *Review* articles are cited, comparing across journals and over time (*SSCI* data are available from 1977 onward).

From the *SSCI* it is also possible to calculate a "citation half-life score." This is a measure of the long-lastingness of *APSR* articles in the citation context. It is a measure of how many *Review* publication years are required to account for 50% of all citations of *Review* articles in a given year. In 1988, for example, articles in the *Review* had been cited 1,936 times in the journals included in the *SSCI*. It took 9.9 publication years (going back to 1979) to account for 50% of the 1988 *APSR* citations. The half-life score enables us to make interesting comparisons across time and journals in the longevity of journal impact.

*SSCI*-derived measures, such as the impact factor score and the citation half-life score, have been invoked in appraising the impact of scholarly work. Close to home, one study demonstrated a moderately strong correlation between the subjective ratings of political science journal prestige and their impact factor scores; frequently cited journals tend to be more prestigious or, perhaps, high-status journals get more ready citation (see Christensen and Sigelman 1985). But similar research in other social sciences—correlating subjective journal ratings and citation indicators—shows considerable variation, ranging from very low correlations for education journals to very high correlations for economics journals (see Gordon 1982; McDonough 1975; Roche and Smith 1978; Rushton and Roediger 1978; Smart 1983; White and White 1977). Rankings have been calculated from citations for both economics and sociology journals (e.g., Liebowitz and Palmer 1984). Various efforts have been made for other social sciences to chart diffusion of research findings through journal citation, or to track the emerging impact of new journals (see Crane 1972, esp. ch. 6; Clausen and Wu 1988). Some social scientists have investigated the relative openness of journals in their field to work in other disciplines (Crane 1972, 100-04; Laponce 1990; So 1988), finding fairly wide variations in receptiveness, innovativeness, and diffusion potential across social science disciplines.

The scholarly and scientific disciplines vary amazingly in the extent to which papers published in their journals are subsequently cited. A study that permits comparisons among scientific disciplines reports that only about a third of published articles in physics and chemistry go uncited up to five years after they are published (see Hamilton 1991). But on the average about 72% of engineering journal articles go uncited (from 50% in biomedical engineering to 78% in civil engineering). In the social sciences, many more journal articles go uncited, with political science topping the list at 90% uncited (compared to sociology, 77%; in the arts and humanities, well over 90% are uncited).

Within the orbit of citations of articles from political science journals, the *American Political Science Review* is the most widely cited. This is unsurprising inasmuch as the *Review* has the largest circulation among political science journals (perhaps with the exception of the *Political Science Quarterly*, not included in our analysis). Table 7 displays the mean impact factor and half-life scores over the past decade for major political science journals, a small sampling of specialized journals, and selected journals in other social sciences. The *Review* substantially exceeds the other political science journals in terms of impact factor scores, but *World Politics* and the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* have nearly as much staying power, indicated by half-life scores. Of the other social science journals examined, the *APSR*'s impact is greater than that of the *American Economic Review*, but less than the impact of the *American Sociological Review* or the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

In general, authors of articles published in a journal tend to cite other work published in that journal. This certainly is true of the *APSR*. In the 1980s the *Review* was cited a total of 15,751 times, according to the *SSCI*. Eleven political science journals accounted for 5,872 of these *APSR* citations (about 37%). Figure 3 shows the distribution of *APSR* citations in these political science journals. The *Review* carries 22% of these citations, followed closely by the *American Journal of Political Science*, and then by the *Journal of Politics*. Other journals follow in turn. Obviously, the impact of the *Review* is most pervasive in the pages of the major general political science journals, led by the *Review* itself.

What about patterns of journal impact over time? We have drawn upon the impact factor scores for selected social and political science journals since 1977, the first year for which such data are available. Figure 4 shows the trace lines for the *APSR* compared to three other major social science journals—the *American Economic Review*, the *American Sociological Review*, and the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. The *APSR* experienced some decline in citation impact in the late 1970s, and then showed some recovery in the 1980s. The same pattern holds for the economics and psychology journals which, along with the *APSR*, exhibit a fairly steady rate of citation impact. In the late 1980s the *American Sociological Review*'s im-

pact score was within the range of the other social science journals, but it had taken a considerable tumble before 1987. We do not know why the *APSR* experienced such a dramatic decline in citation impact since the mid-1970s.

How does the *Review* compare with other general political science journals in terms of citation impact? It is not surprising that the *APSR* leads other political science journals in citations; Table 7 demonstrated this at the mean for 1978-88, and Figure 5 shows that the *Review* has been the clear citation leader over the years. In their citation impacts, the *American Journal of Political Science* has ranked second, the *Journal of Politics* third, and the *Western Political Quarterly* fourth. Year-to-year fluctuations are not easy to interpret in these trend data, but it is the case that the *Journal of Politics* experienced a considerable improvement in its citation impact after 1982 (when, incidentally, under Editor Alan Kornberg's leadership, the journal became more professionalized, and acquired a new, modern look).

**TABLE 7.**
**Mean Impact of Selected Political and Social Science Journals, 1978–1988**

| Journal | Impact Factor Score | Half-life |
|---|---|---|
| General political science journals | | |
| *American Political Science Review* | 2.03 | 9.47 |
| *American Journal of Political Science* | 1.28 | 4.95 |
| *Journal of Politics* | .62 | 8.00 |
| *Western Political Quarterly* | .36 | 8.30 |
| *Polity* | .21 | 7.95 |
| International relations journals | | |
| *International Organization* | 1.20 | 4.83 |
| *World Politics* | 1.49 | 9.10 |
| *International Studies Quarterly* | .77 | 4.87 |
| *Journal of Conflict Resolution* | .75 | 9.18 |
| Comparative politics journals | | |
| *Comparative Politics* | .51 | 6.90 |
| *Comparative Political Studies* | .52 | 6.80 |
| Specialized political science journals | | |
| *Political Theory* | .34 | 5.90 |
| *American Politics Quarterly* | .45 | 5.60 |
| *Legislative Studies Quarterly* | .59 | 5.20 |
| Social science journals | | |
| *American Sociological Review* | 3.13 | 10.00 |
| *American Economic Review* | 1.77 | 8.79 |
| *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology* | 2.35 | 7.22 |
| *Public Choice* | .51 | 5.93 |
| *Public Opinion Quarterly* | .83 | 10.00 |

Note: The half-life calculation is not made if a journal is cited less than 100 times in a year. The averages in the table are based on the number of times the half-life was calculated. The maximum half-life attainable is 10 years.

**FIGURE 3.**
**Sources of *APSR* Citations in the 1980s**

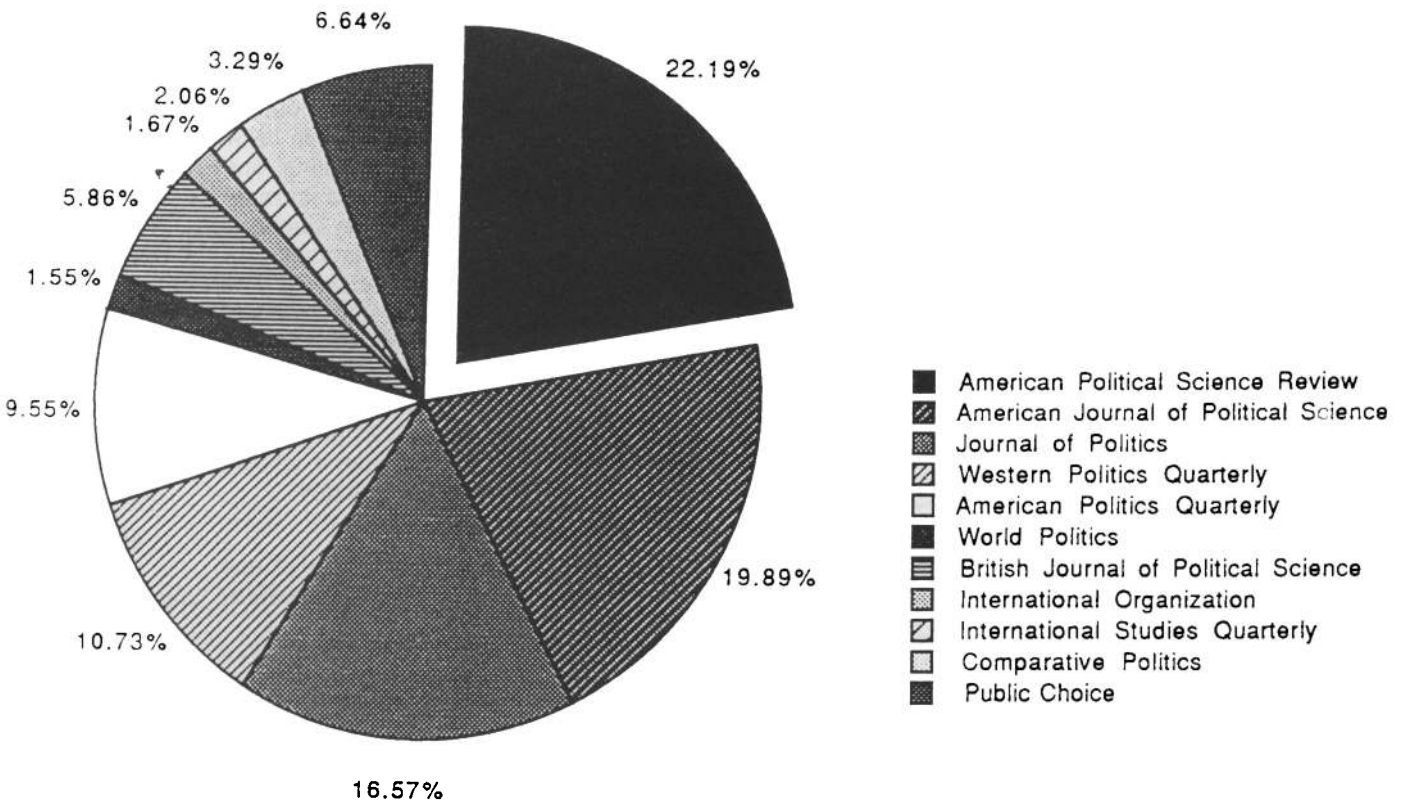





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**FIGURE 4.**
**Impact Factor Scores for Social Science Journals, 1977–1988**

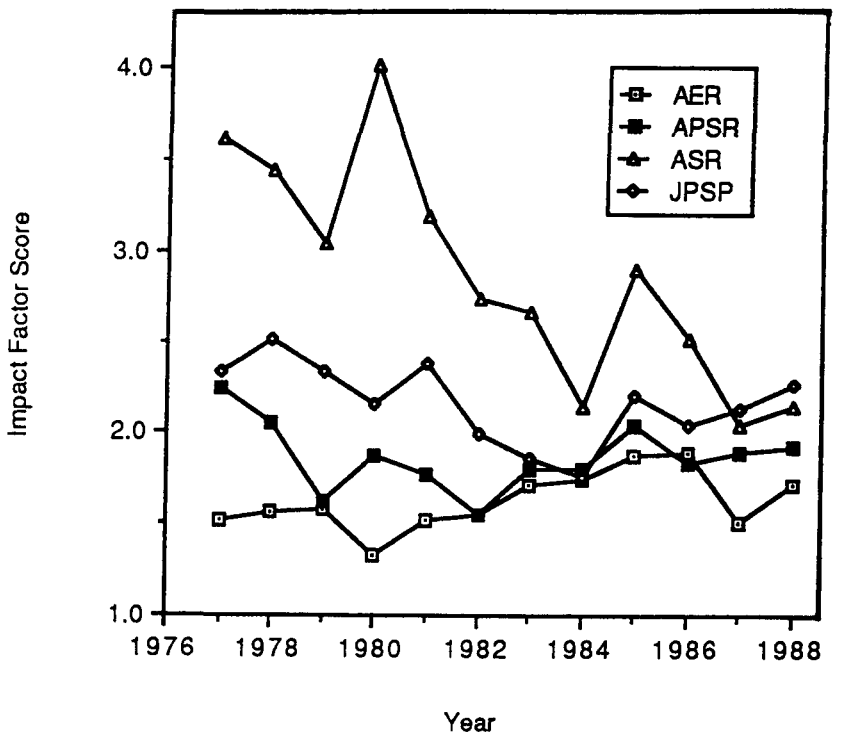
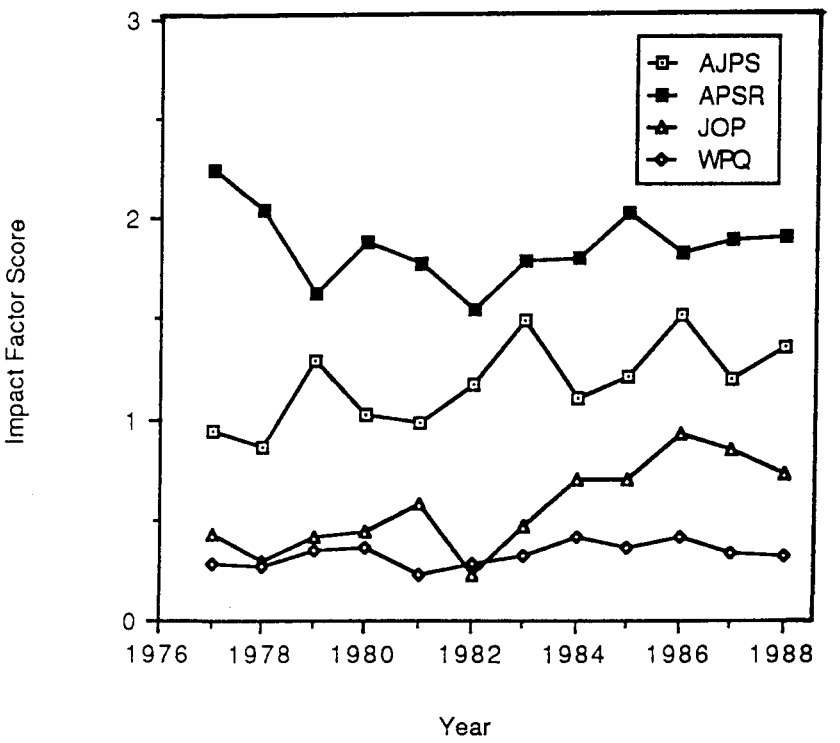



**FIGURE 5.**
**Impact Factor Scores for General Political Science Journals, 1977–1988**




The citation half-life data for these social science and general political science journals provide a somewhat different perspective on journal impact. As Figure 6 shows, the political science, economics, and psychology journals recorded steady growth in the long-lastingness of citations from them during the 1970s and 1980s; the *American Sociological Review* reached the maximum half-life of 10 by 1978. The *APSR* has hovered at about maximum half-life since the mid-1980s. The contrast of citation half-life in the *Review* compared to other general political science journals is portrayed in Figure 7. These comparisons suggest that the staying power of articles published in the *Journal of Politics,* and perhaps the *Western Political Quarterly,* has diminished over the 1980s. It is not clear why this should be the case. In contrast, the American Journal of Political Science has been a rising star; its citation half-life nearly doubled over the decade.

Frequency of citation and long half-life reflect the value accorded to a journal and the extent to which it is used in emergent scholarship. But there are, of course, many valuable journals that are not cited frequently, perhaps not at all. Some of these are highly specialized but very competent journals—like the *Legislative Studies Quarterly,* or *Public Choice*—with relatively few but devoted subscribers. Other journals may be widely read to keep up with developments in the discipline, but readers may not cite these journals frequently in their scholarly publications. A popular informational journal, like *PS: Political Science & Politics,* may be avidly read and generally influential, but rarely cited. Nevertheless, citation impact analysis underscores the comparative centrality and importance of articles published in the *APSR,* and indicates a scholarly journal of very high quality.

## The Future of the *American Political Science Review*

The *APSR* has evolved impressively over the years. It always has been an excellent scholarly journal, in the contexts of changing scholarly and scientific times. It has become a highly professional journal, well-



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respected by scholars, effectively handling a relatively substantial workload of articles, comments, and book reviews, and showing a marked impact upon research and writing in political science. The *American Political Science Review* sets a high standard for other journals in political science, and in the social sciences generally. This is good.

The *Review* is a reflection of a profession. The contents of the journal reverberate the research foci, theoretical development, scholarly interests, paradigms, fads and foibles of the scholarly enterprise. Perhaps the *Review* has come to accomplish its reflection of the discipline more professionally over the years. And, in the future, it should increasingly capitalize upon technological opportunities. A future *Review* may receive manuscripts on computer diskettes, conduct peer review through electronic mail, edit and perfect accepted papers in-house by invoking computer-based composition, and publish articles in more than one medium. In shepherding and capitalizing on these technetronic possibilities in journal publishing, high standards of excellence in political science research can, and should be, reinforced and sustained. As things stand at the outset of the 1990s, the *Review* and the political science discipline are well-prepared to accommodate to the scholarly and scientific future.

**FIGURE 6.**
**Citation Half-lives for Political Science Journals, 1978–1988**

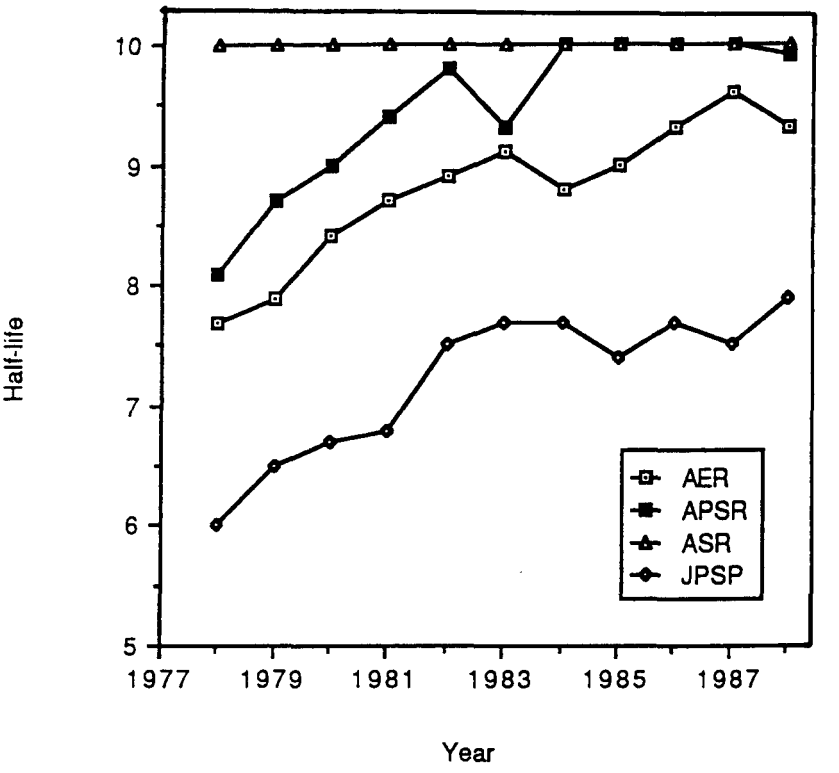
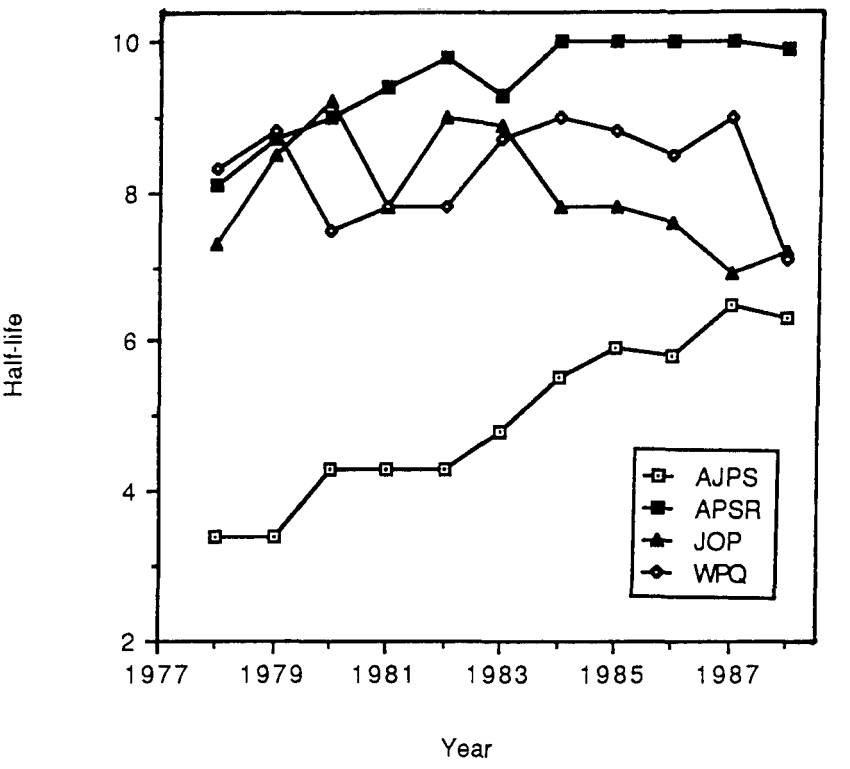



**FIGURE 7.**
**Citation Half-lives for General Political Science Journals, 1978–1988**




## Note

This article constitutes the 1990-91 annual report of the managing editor of the *American Political Science Review*. Samuel C. Patterson served as managing editor of the *Review* from 1985 to 1991. John M. Bruce and Martha Ellis Crone served on the staff as *APSR* interns during 1990-91. We appreciate the advice and assistance of associate editor Christine M. Harrington, and the counsel of Aage R. Clausen.

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# Report of the Treasurer of the American Political Science Association, 1989-91

**David Brady,** *Stanford University*

The Association's balance sheet speaks for itself (Table 1): it shows an extremely healthy financial situation marked by an extraordinary increase in assets. A good deal of the Association's strength is attributable to the generous $5 million endowment of the Congressional Fellowship Program by the MCI Communications Corporation. On a more modest, but no less important, scale, the Association has fended off two anticipated deficits and continued the decade-long trend of financial surpluses (Table 2).

## Council Budget Actions

The Council took several important steps toward maintaining the financial health of the organization. Individual and institutional membership fees were increased, as were registration fees for the annual meeting.

The Association had not increased members' dues for over a decade; inflation alone during this period exceeded 40%, and the average cost per member was $131 so that in 1990

**TABLE 1.**
**APSA Balance Sheet**

| | June 30, 1991 | | | Total All Funds, June 30, | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | General Operating Fund | Trust and Development Fund | Endowed Program Funds | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 |
| Assets: | | | | | | |
| Current Assets | $1,072,708 | $1,621,720 | $5,538,190 | $3,115,228 | $3,101,902 | $8,232,618 |
| Property and Equipment | 453,087 | | | 479,335 | 502,963 | 453,087 |
| Liabilities and Fund Balances: | | | | | | |
| Current Liabilities | 524,890 | | | 738,509 | 573,029 | 524,890 |
| Fund Balances | 1,000,905 | 1,621,720 | 5,538,190 | 2,856,054 | 3,031,835 | 8,160,815 |
| Total | $1,525,795 | $1,621,720 | $5,538,190 | $3,594,563 | $3,604,864 | $8,685,705 |



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