

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

