

From the editor

Six years and change

With this issue I conclude my second consecutive term as editor-in-chief of *POLITICS AND THE LIFE SCIENCES* and set off with my wife and kids for a sabbatical year at Dartmouth. Thanks to the ASSOCIATION FOR POLITICS AND THE LIFE SCIENCES for asking me to edit, to our associate and contributing editors for helping me do my job, and to our authors for submitting their work. Thanks also to the University of Maryland School of Public Policy; to University of Maryland Printing Services, where PLS was produced when printing had to be relocated in a pinch from England; to Allen Press, where PLS has found what feels to all like a long-term home; to MEDLINE and EBSCOhost indexes — the latter including International Political Science Abstracts, Psychology & Behavioral Sciences Collection, and Social Sciences Abstracts — which welcomed us back after a publication delay; to BioOne, which in collaboration with Allen Press is bringing our authors to new readers in new forms worldwide; and to JSTOR, which is adding our papers to its archives.

Becoming an editor-in-chief of anything small and self-supported in 2001 meant learning HTML, graphic design, and website management and devising an online-before-print strategy. It also meant adapting to rapid environmental change in a world unto itself: scholarly publishing. An unexpected but not unappreciated education I have had. Sure to help my successors avoid repeating large parts of it are recently implemented efficiencies in workflow: copy-editing before content-editing; generating a digital object identifier, a DOI, for every paper at the moment of its individual emergence from pre-press; routinizing indexer fulfillment; posting XML full-text along with plain-text abstracts and PDFs; archiving our back list permanently as scanned images; offering paper-by-paper pay-per-view — and, soon, print-on-demand — to anyone anywhere. We are a small self-publisher, but we have formidable allies.

Becoming an editor-in-chief of anything like PLS — a not-so-pedestrian journal standing at a hazardous intersection — in 2001 meant dealing with chronic controversies grown acute, from A to Z, from anthrax to zealotry. PLS 26:1 shows a persistence of this traffic.

Semih Semin and Sahbal Aras open with an analysis of bioethics in Turkey, explaining much but finding far too much, in their reasoned judgment, needing explanation. Organ trading is one item on their problem list but is the sole focus of two following commentaries, the first

by Mohammad A. Rai and Omer Afzal from Pakistan and the second by Mohammed I. Khalili from Jordan.

Filippa Lentzos then describes the American bio-defense industry, status-post Amerithrax, finding it still “in a nascent stage, with most firms small, precariously financed, and more responsive to funders’ announcements and solicitations than to opportunities for self-directed innovation.”

Rebecca Katz and Burton Singer present a systematic reanalysis of a long-contentious chemical-and-biological-weapons use investigation, asking if an attribution assessment can at last be made in the Yellow Rain case and proposing standards for attribution assessment generally. Their premise, question, methods, results, and conclusions will be much discussed within the arms-control community and by Cold War historians. Critiques and responses can be expected. Fortunately for interested scholars, the authors managed to secure from the United States government 562 documents through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request; less fortunately, as will be noted by friends of candor, many passages have been blacked out. We have arranged to host these documents — a mass amounting to 337 megabytes — at our website. APLS members, scholars at PLS-subscribing institutions, and, pending logistical arrangements with BioOne, anyone anywhere can sample this evidence.

Bonnie Stabile contributes a demographic profile of states with human cloning laws — some restrictive, some permissive — finding that “morality policy” has met but has not easily mastered political economy.

Laurette T. Liesen offers an intricate analysis of a long and oft-punctuated debate between feminist evolutionists and evolutionary psychologists. She finds that the perspectives of these two scholarly communities are distinctly different, with many feminist evolutionists migrating toward behavioral ecology, primatology, and evolutionary biology, wherein social-behavioral and environmental factors are fully regarded, whereas evolutionary psychologists have come to rely on assumptions de-emphasizing the pliability of psychological mechanisms and the flexibility of human behavior. This divergence has been painful but not unfruitful.

Johan van der Dennen reviews three works on war, in the process illuminating from many angles a centerpiece of our readership’s study.

Editing *POLITICS AND THE LIFE SCIENCES* has been a privilege, one I now confidently pass along.

R. H. Sprinkle
Editor-in-chief, 2001–2007

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