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Research Article

Power in Editorial Positions: A Feminist Critique of Public Administration

Abstract: *Journal editors serve a vital, powerful role in academic fields. They set research priorities, serve as gatekeepers for research, play a critical role in advancing junior scholars as reviewers and eventually into editorial roles, build extensive networks, and gain valuable insight into the behavior and preferences of reviewers and scholars. This article analyzes data collected from leading public administration journals in 2017 to investigate the role of women as gatekeepers of public administration knowledge. The data illustrate a clear underrepresentation of women on editorial boards. Drawing from these data, research on journal editorships, and feminist theory, the authors present a critique of the current state of public administration research and a discussion of a way forward. They conclude with a proposal for how all public administration scholars (junior, senior, men, and women), journal leadership, and academic departments can move toward increasing women's representation in these important positions.*

Evidence for Practice

- Of the top 24 public administration journals, six have women editors, six have no women in editorial leadership positions, and six have only one woman in an editorial leadership position. The underrepresentation of women in public administration journals is structural and thus changeable.
- Women are overrepresented in lower-status positions such as book review editors and underrepresented in editorships.
- Journals can use transparency policies when selecting editors, building editorial boards, and thanking reviewers to reduce gender bias and increase balanced representation.
- Gender equity in academic journal editorships relies on personal, interpersonal, and structural strategies that include encouraging women candidates, ensuring departmental support, and developing transparent journal management and selection processes.

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Academic journals play a crucial role in both the creation of knowledge within scientific fields and the career advancement of individuals. Journal editors and editorial boards therefore play important roles as gatekeepers of knowledge within fields and the academic marketplace more broadly. Although we have seen reports of increased gender equality in academic journal editorial boards (e.g., Addis and Villa 2003; Metz and Harzing 2012; Metz, Harzing, and Zyphur 2016), these increases have not kept pace with the proportion of female scholars in various fields. In fact, "there is still substantial variability in women's level of representation on EBs [editorial boards] across journals in the same field of study" (Metz, Harzing, and Zyphur 2016, 712). This lack of female representation in editorial roles is important because evidence suggests that a lack of diversity can lead to a focus on particular topics or theories (Burgess and Shaw 2010), inhibit knowledge creation (Konrad 2008), create gender bias in reviewer selection (Lerbac and Hanson 2017), and indicate to women that submissions are not welcome (Feldman 2008), thus exacerbating existing inequitable representation.

In the context of public administration (PA), women are increasingly moving up the ranks of the field in terms of faculty positions. Yet women remain half as likely as men to hold leadership roles in departments, making up about 33 percent of department heads and chairs (Sabharwal 2013, 85). Numerous rationales have been put forward in support of increasing representation of women in leadership positions in PA, all of which typically stress that attaining greater diversity should improve the overall performance of the field (see Oldfield, Candler, and Johnson 2006; Sabharwal 2013). In this article, we explore the degree to which equal representation of men and women exists in journal leadership. We draw on data from 24 of the top PA journals and explore the proportion of women in editor in chief roles, leadership teams, book review editors, and editorial boards. We find that women are significantly underrepresented in editor,

leadership, and board roles and overrepresented in less prestigious roles, such as book review editors. Having described the state of the field in terms of women's representation in journal roles, we draw from feminist literature to consider explanations for this pattern and offer potential solutions toward advancing female representation.

Editorial Roles

Journals play a key role in the creation of scientific knowledge, acting as an avenue by which research is shared and comes under discussion and scrutiny (Beyer, Chanove, and Fox 1995). Journal editors are gatekeepers in the academic marketplace, helping shape the direction of research in a field by determining what types of work will be published, or not (Spender 1981). Historically, scholars have questioned the criteria used to attract men and women to editorial boards and the relative power of male and female editors (Eigenberg and Baro 1992; Over 1981; White 1985). Feminist scholars have critiqued male bias in research, as well as the male-dominated nature and coercive power of editorial boards (Grant and Ward 1991; Spender 1981). When editorial boards and editorial leadership teams are dominated by men, women are more likely to be viewed as "tokens" or pressured to assimilate and adopt the dominant culture and viewpoint (Kanter 1977). Without a critical mass of representation, it remains difficult for women (e.g., the minority group) to advocate for other women or advance alternative, less popular research methods and topics—especially those that may be viewed by the dominant group as "gendered."

Editors make decisions about what will be reviewed (e.g., the desk reject), who will conduct reviews, and which peer-review recommendations will stand and which will not. While double-blind review reduces bias across reviewers (Budden et al. 2008), bias can emerge when editors select reviewers who have particular theoretical or methodological orientations or preference senior, well-known authors and those at high-ranked institutions (Blank 1991; Okike et al. 2016; Tomkins, Zhang, and Heavlin 2007). Recent research indicates that gender bias occurs in reviewer selection for both male and female editors; both are more likely to select reviewers of their same gender (Lerbac and Hanson 2017). Editors determine who will be invited to serve on the editorial board, and in some cases, they select their successors.

In sum, journal editors set the priorities and preferences for what will be reviewed and by whom and, ultimately, what gets published. These decisions have an important impact beyond simply the quality of scientific discussion within a particular field. Publication in peer-reviewed journals plays an important part in determining the rankings of universities in many systems (Frey 2003) and can affect individual career development, progression, and salary (Ketchen and Ireland 2010; Miller 2006).

Many scholars have a love-hate relationship with the journal process. There is general acceptance of the value of the peer-review system, but constant tension and awareness that this system has flaws and is certainly not perfectly objective (Kassirer and Campion 1994; Wennerås and Wold 2001). Even when journals ostensibly operate a "double-blind" process for reviewers, editors and editorial boards make decisions about submissions, reviewers, and reviews that are neither neutral nor completely value-free (Beyer, Chanove, and Fox 1995; Miller 2006).

Critics of the peer-review system argue that journal editors favor people within their own networks (e.g., colleagues and former students). Laband and Piette (1994) empirically investigated this form of favoritism through a citation analysis and found that journal editors used their networks to identify and capture higher-impact articles. They argued that their findings showed the key role that editors play in enhancing efficiency in the marketplace of scholarly knowledge. Editors can use their professional networks to advance the production of high-quality knowledge. Editors are essentially nodes for the field, bringing together and connecting influential, high-quality scholars who then produce more high-quality articles—thus pointing to the importance of placing top scholars in editorial positions in order to leverage their networks to advance the field.

Consider the journal editor's access to networks and information. The journal editor sees, scans, and reads hundreds of submissions, serving as the first line of decision making for a manuscript—the desk reject or sending it out for review. The editor then uses the network of editorial board members, the journal database, and the reference section of each submission to identify potential reviewers. Contacting each reviewer increases the profile of the editor, as each reviewer sees the editor's signature. The editor essentially interacts with every author and reviewer in the system (even if that interaction is through an administrative assistant), and the interactions raise the profile of the editor.

Once the article is reviewed, the editor sees the reviewer comments, getting an inside view of the level of effort, skill, and thoughtfulness put forth by each reviewer. The editor not only has access to the network of paper submitters but also a view of the productivity and contributions of hundreds of reviewers in the field. Serving as a journal editor not only means setting standards at the individual journal and bounding the direction of the journal's publications but also gives the editor insight into the production and contribution of individual scholars in the field including top authors, reviewers, and budding junior scholars, and identification of departments that are churning out higher rates of submissions. Finally, the editor often has the power to select associate editors, editorial board members, and subsequent candidates for editorship (Metz, Harzing, and Zyphur 2016), thus potentially perpetuating power imbalances in the field.

Diversity in Public Administration

Theories of diversity lead us to believe that a plurality of thinking will result in the best types of published research (Alvesson and Gabriel 2013). There is a growing body of evidence to suggest that more diverse organizations, and particularly greater diversity in senior leadership positions and boards, enhances the performance of organizations (Adams and Ferreira 2009). Academic diversity can take a number of forms, including specialization, intellectual approach, methodological and theoretical approaches, institution, geography, sex, race, and ethnicity. While diversity is an important goal, many journals reflect the tendencies of the field they serve, preferences for particular methodological or theoretical approaches, an imbalance toward higher-ranked institutions based in the United States, and lower representation of women and minority scholars (Addis and Villa 2003; Mauleón et al. 2013).

In public administration, we have come a long way toward increased gender balance in the field. Women make up the majority of the undergraduate and master's degree students in our programs. According to the Council of Graduate Schools, in the United States in the fall of 2015, there were a total of 27,993 first-time enrolments in "Public Administration and Services," of which 78 percent were women (Okahana, Feaster, and Allum 2016, 29). During the 2014–15 academic year, women were awarded 78 percent of master's degrees and 66 percent of PA doctoral degrees (Okahana, Feaster, and Allum 2016, 42–43).

Women also make up increasing percentages of faculty. For example, as of July 2017, women accounted for 56 percent of tenured and tenure-track faculty at the University of Kansas (School of Public Affairs and Administration) and 31 percent at Indiana University (School of Public and Environmental Affairs). Women make up an increasing proportion of faculty at leading PA departments in Europe, for example, 28 percent at Aarhus University (Political Science), 34 percent at Cardiff Business School, 46 percent at Utrecht University (School of Governance), and 36 percent at Leiden University (Institute of Public Administration). In Australia, women hold 50 percent of positions at the University of Melbourne (School of Government) and 36 percent at Australian National University (School of Public Policy). Women account for 29 percent of the faculty at the University of Hong Kong (Department of Politics and Public Administration) and 37 percent of faculty at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (National University of Singapore). Thus, women are increasingly reaching representation with regard to degree earning and professional position. This article explores women's representation in leadership of PA journals.

Who Gets to Be an Editor?

Many scholars implicitly understand the important, powerful role of the journal editor. At the same time, many have no desire to serve in this position. Being a journal editor, in some ways, is a thankless job. It requires a vast amount of time, energy, and resources. In PA, it is often a nonpaying position. Serving as a journal editor requires a thick skin and the ability to check one's bias and preferences. Many scholars want journal editors to serve as disinterested gatekeepers (Crane 1967), fearing journal editors who are self-serving or advancing a narrow theoretical or methodological agenda. And nearly everyone fears the journal editor who is inefficient and unable to quickly process submissions, reviews, and revisions (Kulkarni 2016).

The process for becoming a journal editor varies across publishers, although the process has generally become more formalized over time for most journals (Cascio 2008). Some journals invite nominations for the position, asking editorial board members and journal subscribers to submit names to be considered for the position. Most journals accept self-nominations. Other journals actively recruit editors, either from their ranks of associate editors and board members or from the community of senior scholars. Most of the higher-quality journals, if not all, limit chief editor and managing editor positions to senior faculty (e.g., full professors and senior associate professors). Research indicates that the selection of journal editors can also occur outside a formal, regulated process. In a 1994 study of peer-reviewed clinical journals, Garrow et al. (1998) found that of 191 editors, 49 (30 percent) were elected by a scientific society or editorial board committee and 41 (25 percent) were nominated by the previous editor. In PA, managing editors are sometimes selected by the editor in chief or through a less than transparent process, while in other cases—typically when a professional association is involved—there is a search committee established that conducts an open search through a call for editors.

While many journals have a formal process for identifying editor candidates, it is often the case that positions fall to candidates who are able to negotiate departmental support. In some cases, candidates are eager and willing to serve in the position, but they turn down the nomination for personal or professional reasons. There needs to be considerable support from departments to enable faculty members to take on editorial positions. Some departments actively encourage faculty to pursue journal editorships, as this can raise the prestige of the department, while others discourage faculty because it takes away from traditional faculty responsibilities. Editorial positions require a 12-month, multiyear commitment (five years is not untypical) that takes a scholar away from other professional and personal responsibilities. Many universities are unwilling to offer support for staffing, course releases, or graduate research assistants to offset workload. Without substantial support, editorships remain unattainable for many faculty.

While individual candidates can negotiate for more resources, it is surprising that some departments do not view hosting a top journal as a beneficial activity. Research has found strong correlations between the institutional affiliations of editors and authors (Hodgson and Rothman 1999; Laband and Piette 1994), hinting at the possibility of institutional bias, but also showing that institutions can benefit from hosting journals. Laband and Piette (1994) suggest that the correlation between institutional connections and citations might point to the important role that editors play in the prominence of an article and its future impact. Perhaps path dependence plays a role in the prominence of particular institutions and authors, but still, hosting a journal raises the reputation of the department while, at the same time, increasing prominence for the editor and the probability that other department members will be tapped to serve on the editorial board, edit special issues, review, and publish in that journal.

Research indicates that departmental resources often dictate senior editorial appointments (Garrow et al. 1998). When approached with the opportunity to serve as a managing or chief editor, talented scholars are faced with giving up research time. While putting aside research time to serve as an editor may seem detrimental to a scholar's career, the time that one serves as an editor may very well serve to advance a scholar's professional networks and increase the scholar's influence and embeddedness in the field. It is possible that talented scholars are not lining up for editorial positions because they are not thinking strategically about the potential professional benefits of editorial service. It is also possible that talented scholars consider editorships, turn them down for practical reasons, and then are not reconsidered for the position in future years.

Data and Method

Our analysis is informed by structural and liberal feminist theory, particularly critical mass theory, which indicates that proportional representation of socially and culturally different

people in a group is critical to shaping interaction dynamics and decision-making (Acker 1990; Kanter 1977; Stivers 1993) and that underrepresentation of women in decision-making positions furthers the cycle of problems associated with tokenism (Guy 2011). Given the concern that traditional notions of gender (and gendered research) influence the selection of board members and that women are often not treated equally in the academic workplace (Addis and Villa 2003), assessing women's representation in journals is important to assessing diversity, inclusion, and potential problems that emerge when structural design enables dominant-type groups to control decision-making (Kanter 1977).

These structural issues of gender representation in PA journals and how they may translate to marginalizing women's scholarship should be of particular interest to PA scholars, who often use the theory of representative bureaucracy to argue that institutions should represent the populations they serve (Kellough and Naff 2004). Representative bureaucracy research has shown the tangible benefits that derive from representative leadership, including legitimacy, empowerment, social equity responsiveness, and increased performance (Gade and Wilkins 2013; Meier and Nicholson-Crotty 2006; Meier, O'Toole, and Goerdel 2006; Riccucci and Van Ryzin 2017). Moreover, Guy (1993) notes that when women do lead, they do so with different styles and higher levels of commitment to equal opportunity. Thus, we pay close attention to issues of gatekeeping, as the relationship between participation in editorial processes and publication rates is an important indicator of women's opportunity to publish (Eigenberg and Baro 1992, 299) and potential bias in the system (Stoye 2017). As Spender notes, feminist attention is required "when it is mostly men who are in the position to decide what gets published and what does not" (1981, 187).

In order to ascertain the state of the field with relation to the representation of women in editor and editorial board representation, in 2017, we identified the leading journals in public administration, searched their websites, and coded editorial roles. We designed an approach that would capture the most influential journals in terms of impact while covering a range of countries (although we focused only on English-language journals). It is important to note that we focus only on the representation of women and men. Intersection of race, sexuality, ability, and other important categories that advance diversity are beyond the scope of this article but require further research.

We searched Scopus, Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI), and Scimago for the subject area/subject category "public administration" in June 2017. This yielded between 32 (SSCI) and 117 (Scimago) items in total. We combined the three lists, removed duplicates, and excluded those journals that focus solely on a singular policy issue (e.g., health policy, environmental policy) and narrow subfield journals (e.g., information technology in government). Our analysis focuses on 24 core PA journals that are listed in major journal-tracking programs (see table 1).

We searched each journal website to download all editorial board information (e.g., editor in chief, associate editors, board of editors, assorted editorial positions). We coded the lists by noting whether the individual occupying each position is male or female. We identified gender through a multistage process. First, we coded individuals we knew. Second, we coded clearly gendered names (e.g., Mary = female, John = male). Third, we did online searches of university websites and publications to identify and cross-reference individuals based on written biographical information that referenced "he" or "she" and on images. Our coding only accounts for binary representations and does not capture those who may identify as nonbinary genders.

Table 1 Public Administration Journals Included in Sample

1.	*Administration & Society (A&S)*
2.	*Administrative Science Quarterly (ASQ)*
3.	*American Review of Public Administration (ARPA)*
4.	*Australian Journal of Public Administration (AJPA)*
5.	*Canadian Public Administration (CPA)*
6.	*Governance (Gov)*
7.	*Information Polity (IP)*
8.	*International Journal of Public Administration (IJPA)*
9.	*International Journal of Public Sector Management (IJPSM)*
10.	*International Public Management Journal (IPMJ)*
11.	*International Review of Administrative Sciences (IRAS)*
12.	*Journal of Policy Analysis and Management (JPAM)*
13.	*Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory (JPART)*
14.	*Journal of Public Affairs (JPA)*
15.	*Local Government Studies (LGS)*
16.	*Public Administration (PA)*
17.	*Public Administration and Development (PAD)*
18.	*Public Administration Review (PAR)*
19.	*Public Management Review (PMR)*
20.	*Public Money & Management (PMM)*
21.	*Public Performance & Management Review (PPMR)*
22.	*Public Personnel Management (PPM)*
23.	*Regulation & Governance (R&G)*
24.	*Review of Public Personnel Administration (RoPPA)*

Based on the available information, we broadly established the gender representation of various roles within typical editorial positions. There is some variation across editorial position titles, depending on the scope, scale, and nature of the particular journal. Therefore, we collected data using the roles listed for each journal, which was rather straightforward for identifying the positions of editor, book review editor, and editorial board. For the data on leadership positions, we devised a criterion for what constitutes such positions, which broadly included lead editorial positions, among others (for a full description, see table 2).

Editorship in Public Administration Journals

Of the 24 journals examined, 20 operate a model in which they have an editor in chief, and the remaining four specify a team. Of the 20 journals with an editor in chief model, two (10 percent) have a woman in this role (*Information Polity* and *International Journal of Public Sector Management*). Of those that operate a team approach to the editorial role, all have at least one woman on the team. Thus, editorial teams create space for gender balance, with women making up 20 percent to 50 percent of editorial teams.

Editorial Leadership Positions

Editorial leadership positions vary in terms of their titles across journals, including managing editor, senior editor, associate editor, regional editor, consulting editor, and coeditor. For example, *JPART* has a director and an editor, with the editor playing the primary role of article review and selection. *ARPA* has two coeditors who share the editorial role. *PMR* has an editor in chief and five

Table 2 Public Administration Journals and Women in Leadership Roles*

	Woman Editors		Women in Leadership Roles	Women in Leadership Roles	
Journal	Yes/No	Count	Count	Count	%
A&S	No	0	6	0	0%
ASQ	No	0	18	6	33%
ARPA	Yes	1 of 2	5	2	40%
AJPA	Yes	4 of 5	5	4	67%
CPA	No	0	6	1	17%
Gov	No	0	10	0	0%
IP	Yes	1	3	1	33%
IJPA	No	0	1	0	0%
IJPSM	Yes	1	4	4	100%
IPMJ	No	0	10	3	30%
IRAS	No	0	5	1	20%
JPAM	No	0	19	5	26%
JPART	No	0	9	3	33%
JPA	No	0	6	0	0%
LGS	Yes	1 of 4	7	2	29%
PA	No	0	8	2	25%
PAD	No	0	9	1	11%
PAR	No	0	23	9	39%
PMR	No	0	6	1	17%
PMM	No	0	3	1	33%
PPMR	No	0	5	0	0%
PPM	No	0	1	0	0%
R&G	Yes	1 of 3	11	3	27%
RoPPA	No	0	19	9	47%

Note: Data were collected July 2017.
*Leadership roles include the positions of "Editor," "Editor in Chief," "Managing Editor," "Senior Editor," "Associate Managing Editor," "Associate Editor," "Regional Editor," "Consulting Editor," "Book Review Editor," "Methods Advisory Panel," "Director," "Coeditor," "Editor Emeritus," "Executive Board," "Honorary Editor in Chief," "Honorary Advisory Editor," "Reviews Editor," "Theory to Practice Editor," "Public Administration and the Disciplines Editors," "International Editor," "Administrative Profile Editor," "Perspective and Commentary Editor," "Research Synthesis Editor," "Evidence in Public Administration Editors," "Transparency and Openness Promotions Editor," "Emerging Issues Editor," "Board of Editors," "Chair of Editorial Board," "Deputy Editors," "Reviews Editor," and "Associate Editor and Book Review Editor." Leadership roles do not include positions such as "Book Review Assistant," "Editorial Assistant," "Assistant Editor," "Editorial Associate," "Founding Editor," "Copy Editor," "Social Media Editor," "Graduate Student Advisory Board," "Journal Manager," "Publisher," "Content Editor," "Administrator," "Board Member," and "Public Management Research Association Board of Directors."

regional editors. Table 2 notes the number of women in leadership positions in the 24 public administration journals in this study. Of the 24 journals in our sample, six have no female representation in any leadership role (*Gov, A&S, PPMR, IJPA, JPA,* and *PPM*). One journal in the sample, *IJPSM,* has no male representation on its editorial team. Of the entire sample, only two journals have 50 percent or more female representation in leadership roles (*IJPSM* and *AJPA*). Taking the sample as a whole, women occupy 25 percent of leadership roles for PA journals.

Book Review Editors

We coded book review editors separately from editorial leadership positions, although both are reflected in overall leadership positions. Book reviews, while an important professional endeavor, do not directly serve the research interests of the reviewers and are typically considered to be of lower currency than other publications. When asked to do a book review, many PA practitioners and scholars are too busy or turn down the request because it does not result in direct career benefits. Because there is little to no incentive to engage in the activity, book review editors must rely on personal and professional networks to request reviews and then spend a good amount of their time reminding reviewers of deadlines and editing those reviews. Serving as a book review editor requires asking colleagues to engage in an activity that does not directly contribute to tenure and promotion.

Table 3 Women Book Review Editors for PA Journals

Journal	Number of Book Review Editors	Number of Women in Book Review Editor Role
ASQ	1	0
ARPA	1	1
AJPA	1	1
CPA	2	2
Gov	1	0
IPJM	2	2
JPAM	1	1
JPART	1	1
LGS	1	0
PA	1	1
PAR	1	1
RoPPA	1	1

Note: Journals that do not have book reviews are not included in this table.

Women occupy a higher proportion of service-oriented positions in PA journals compared with editorial positions that make decisions about peer-reviewed research. Women are overrepresented as book review editors, as noted in table 3. The lower value of book review editorships in the journal landscape is indicated by the fact that just half of the journals in this study have book review editors. Of the 12 journals that have a book review editor (two of which have two book review editors), nine have women serving in these roles.

The high presence of women in the position of book review editor (75 percent) might also be an indicator of the lower value of book review editors. One might argue that book review editorships have fallen into the category of "women's work," a task that requires recruiting, nagging, and convincing colleagues to engage in an activity that does not directly advance their careers. Additionally, there is typically little to no administrative support provided to book review editors. Thus, without automated solicitation and reminder services, this position amounts to "housekeeping." The overrepresentation of women book review editors, compared with the underrepresentation of women in research-oriented editorships, sends a clear message to PA scholars.

Editorial Boards

Editorial boards play a variety of roles in the development and direction of journals. Editorial board members are typically included extensively in the article review process, are invited to participate in annual meetings, and often serve on journal award committees. While most of the day-to-day operations of a journal fall to the managing editor, and in some cases to coeditors or associate editors, the editorial board is an important indicator of the community that the journal serves—its audience, contributors, and reviewers. The board is typically composed of scholars who are exemplary in the field and represent a variety of subject areas and diversity of institutions. Generally, editorial board members are full, associate, and advanced assistant professors, with assistant professors making up the minority of editorial board members. In PA, editorial boards can also include practitioners. Previous

Table 4 Proportion of Women on Public Administration Journal Editorial Boards

Journal	Women on Editorial Board	Total Board Membership	Share of Women (%)
A&S	15	45	33%
ASQ	34	91	37%
ARPA	22	76	29%
AJPA	13	36	36%
CPA	8	30	27%
Gov	11	30	36%
IP	12	48	25%
IJPA	26	97	27%
IJPSM	4	35	11%
IPMJ	23	101	23%
IRAS	13	59	22%
JPAM	13	32	40%
JPART	21	66	32%
JPA	19	82	23%
LGS	13	29	45%
PA	13	50	26%
PAD	0	17	0%
PAR	37	74	50%
PMR	11	46	24%
PMM	7	43	16%
PPMR	20	72	28%
PPM	18	44	41%
R&G	11	39	28%
RoPPA	15	50	30%
		Average	**28.7%**

editors of *PAR* have described the editorial board as consisting of scholars and practitioners with regard given to balancing region, area of specialized expertise, and social factors such as gender, age, race and ethnicity, ensuring that all "top academic public administration programs have at least one faculty member on the board" (Rosenbloom and Dubnick 1994, 52). At that time, the *PAR* editorial board membership selection was the prerogative of the editor in chief in consultation with the American Society for Public Administration president.

Table 4 notes the number and percentage of women serving on each journal board. Women are present on all editorial boards apart from one (*PAD*). On average, there is a higher proportion of women on editorial boards (28 percent) compared with editorial leadership positions (25 percent). However, it is important to note that this count inevitably includes women who serve on multiple boards. The representation of women on editorial boards ranges from 0 percent to 50 percent. According to critical mass theory, the proportion of representation is an important indicator of power and empowerment in groups, with balanced and tilted groups being more likely to reflect culture and interaction balance and numerically dominant groups resulting in power and control conflict (Kanter 1977). Among these 24 journals, four are balanced (40:60 to 50:50) and three are tilted (65:35). Seventeen journals are skewed or uniform in gender representation and thus more likely to result in women being viewed as token members.

Discussion: Where Are the Women?

Whether in business, law, science, or academia, there are a number of common explanations used to explain the lack of women in leadership positions (Bismark et al. 2015; Pinnington and Sandberg 2013; Tomenendal and Boyoglu 2014). Typical explanations include: women do not make good leaders, there are too few top women candidates for the position, women leave the leadership track to focus on family, or women do not want leadership positions. In the case of lower numbers of women in journal leadership positions, possible explanations include: women are less likely to hold faculty positions; when they are on faculty, women are more likely to hold junior positions; women are not nominated for these positions; when they are nominated, women turn down the offer; departments and colleges do not offer the support necessary to enable women to take editorial positions; or women simply do not want to serve as editors. A reading of the broader literature suggests (Stivers 1993) that the justification for many of these statements is thin and that the solutions to structural barriers are often things we—women, men, journal editors, authors, reviewers, faculty, deans, and department administrators—could easily address.

There is no one explanation as to why women are underrepresented in terms of journal leadership and board roles. There are a broad range of factors that lead us to this situation, including cultural and structural issues (Etzkowitz, Kemelgor, and Uzzi 2000; Johns 2013). In their study of the underrepresentation of women in medical leadership roles, Bismark et al. (2015) argue that there are internalized, interpersonal, and structural barriers for women seeking to take on these roles and that these take place across three broad domains—perceptions of capability, capacity, and credibility. These barriers and domains have relevance in the context of academia, a similarly professionalized field.

One potential explanation offered for the lack of women in journal leadership positions is that there are fewer women in PA faculty positions, thus fewer female candidates. To compound this, some note women are more likely to hold junior positions and therefore are not be eligible to be journal editors. The significant expansion of women in these roles is more recent, and it is only a matter of time and patience until we see these representations level out. This is often described as the "pipeline" argument (van Anders 2004). However, these reasons do not quite stand up to scrutiny. Women have made up a sizable proportion of the academic workforce for some time now, but they are not moving into journal leadership roles at a rate that reflects their presence in the workforce (Kulis, Sicotte, and Collins 2002). This problem is not restricted to academia and is reflected across a number of other professionalized industries in which there is a preponderance of men in formal positions of authority (e.g., Weinacker and Stapleton 2013). Furthermore, the current overrepresentation of women in book review editor roles counters this view that there are not enough women—instead, women are making gains in nonresearch, lower-status positions.

A further explanation is that women are not nominated for these positions. Here we may find cultural and social explanations. Although it is well established in the literature that leadership is not an inherent trait that one is born with (Peck and Dickinson 2009), stereotypes of who leaders are (e.g., white, male, tall) have a stubborn hold on our societies (Western 2013). Within this context, women are less likely to be attributed with leadership qualities or potential as they do not necessarily fit these stereotypical traits of what a leader looks like. This is not to say that this is always a conscious process, as the burgeoning literature on unconscious (Easterly and Ricard 2011) and gender bias illustrates (Hogue and Lord 2007). Here we see the impact that interpersonal and

structural barriers have, but it is also possible that some of these have become internalized to the extent that women may not recognize themselves to be leaders. This may serve as a partial explanation as to why when women are nominated to journal leadership roles, they turn down the offer.

Other potential explanations of the seeming unwillingness of women to take on these roles may come from attempting to balance an array of personal and professional commitments. It is well established in the literature that women in the workplace face inadequate child care, inflexible working hours, and a lack of appropriate mentoring arrangements (Hymowitz and Schellhardt 1986). Of course, men also seek to achieve a balance between their personal and professional lives. Yet the impact of these barriers remains disproportionately greater for women (Duke 1992; Purcell and Baldwin 2003). For example, research on the relationship between parenthood and career growth has found that productivity and visibility declines more for women than for men after the birth of a child (Hunter and Leahey 2010). Research also indicates that when family-friendly policies exist in the academy, they often disproportionately support male parents and exacerbate gender workload differences (Feeney, Bernal, and Bowman 2014). The drivers of workplace gender inequality are often structural, not biological.

Organizations are the creation and embodiment of the people they represent (Hutchinson 2017). The lack of women in visible leadership positions sends a signal to everyone in the field. Women scholars submit articles to these journals, review for them, and serve on the editorial boards. But women do these activities without full representation. The barriers to women gaining greater representation in leadership roles are not insurmountable, but may require targeted attention and effort from those in positions of power.

There are a number of steps each of us can take to bring these changes. PA journals should aim to have gender representation in leadership and on their editorial boards that matches the general composition of the field. A goal of 40 percent women on editorial boards would be reasonable, but 50 percent, a broader representation of society, would be an even better aspiration. How do we achieve this goal? First, journal editors and professional associations should make a formal commitment to achieving balanced gender representation on their boards. Second, we can make a conscious effort to nominate women scholars to editorial boards. Third, while many journals typically invite members to the board based on publication patterns, they can also draw from their top reviewer pool—rewarding women scholars who are doing above-average service. Fourth, women scholars, when asked to serve, can say yes more often—or clearly articulate the structural barriers that are preventing them from saying yes. If the barrier to editorial leadership is department support, journal leaders and associations can advocate for departmental support of candidates. Fifth, departments can provide the support (financial, teaching relief, service relief) necessary to take on this important role. Sixth, departments, senior scholars, mentors, and colleagues can be more cognizant of the potential benefits to the scholar and the department that has the opportunity to host a journal. Finally, journals and professional associations should develop more transparent processes for nominating and selecting candidates for these positions.

Journal leadership and associations that control journals should consider adopting measures similar to equal employment opportunity efforts, which introduced the need for intentional steps to eliminate discrimination against women and minority groups (Strachan, Burgess, and Henderson 2007). This means ensuring fair selection practices. Editorships should be openly advertised with specified criteria for the position. Rather than relying on friendship networks, journals should use a gender balanced search committee to review applications and select finalists. This would enable the field to have a more transparent conversation about whether the underrepresentation of women in editorial positions is a case of women not being considered, women not being pursued, women saying no, or departments blocking potential candidates from saying yes. Similarly, journals can adopt standards of ethics to ensure fairness in editorial board and reviewer selection and work to eliminate implicit bias (Battarbee 2017; Lerbac and Hanson 2017; Stoye 2017). In box 1, we outline strategies to increase the number of women in leadership roles in PA journals.

Box 1: Strategies to Improve Representation of Women in Journal Editorial Roles

Personal and Interpersonal

1. Consider the benefits of saying yes to editorial opportunities, and then ask for the resources required to say yes.
2. Advise talented women scholars to make the "right" decisions to balance service and research activities (e.g., saying no to other positions).
3. Ask to be added to editorial boards (especially if undertaking many reviews for the journal).

Structural

Departments

1. Support women who are offered editorial positions.

Journals and Professional Associations

1. Establish transparent search and selection criteria for editorships.
2. Actively recruit and consider women candidates for editorial and leadership positions.
3. Develop strategies and policies for enhancing diversity at the journal.
4. Disperse decision-making power to an editorial team, thus encouraging various avenues of diversity.
5. Increase transparent search and selection criteria for editorships.
6. Require transparency in journal reviewer reports.
7. Publicly acknowledge reviewer service.
8. Present evidence and articulate clear arguments about the return on investment of editorial positions to help generate departmental support and enthusiasm for hosting a journal.
9. Educate departments as to the value of hosting journals.
10. Disperse decision-making power to a set of managing coeditors, thus encouraging various avenues of diversity.

Conclusion

Editors and editorial boards play a critical role in governing scholarly content, setting the direction of journals, and advancing the field. Journals indicate not only research trends but also signal the leaders in a field. Journal board members are typically well-published scholars in the field, people who actively submit to, publish in, and review for that journal. Research indicates that institutional concentration of journal editors and authors is largely explained by the fact that the most prestigious scholars are concentrated at a few institutions (Hodgson and Rothman 1999). Of course, these patterns might also be the result of dense or closed professional networks, in which journals favor a set of scholars doing a particular type of work or focus on specific theoretical or methodological values. Recent research also shows that male editors are more likely to select male reviewers, that women are underrepresented in reviewer and author pools, and that female editors are more likely to recruit female reviewers (Lerbac and Hanson 2017; Stoye 2017).

If we are a field that values diversity of research approach, with the understanding that pluralism enhances the emergence of more, alternative, and better ideas, addressing representation in our academic journals is an important step toward achieving that type of pluralism. Our journals are the creation and embodiment of the people they represent—thus we must work on making them more representative. Of additional concern is how the leadership of our journals sends a message to those both inside and outside our field about the type of work and people that we value. For women scholars in our field, the lack of women in editorial leadership positions can be particularly disheartening. Research testing critical mass theory notes that when women make up a minority of a group (less than 15 percent) they are more likely to be perceived as tokens and will have fewer opportunities to influence the organization (Guy 2011; Kanter 1977; Torchia, Calabrò, and Huse 2011). A critical component of retention and promotion of women's scholarship and junior women in PA is having women in leadership, which includes seeing women's names on journal correspondence and women on journal editor conference panels. For those outside of our academic field, especially those in practice, women in leadership signals the valuing of women experts.

Variety and diversity are essential to novelty, innovation, and, ultimately, the performance of the field. Research finds that academic journals often reduce pluralism and diversity of analytical concerns and approaches (Hodgson and Rothman 1999). In the case of PA, our journals reduce gender diversity. Public administration has come a long way toward achieving gender diversity in our classrooms and increasingly in our faculty ranks, but this progress has not made its way to our journal leadership. Making a conscious effort to increase gender diversity among editorial leadership would demonstrate a clear shift in gender diversity and inclusion among those who set research priorities and potentially increase plurality and diversity in our research approaches.

As a field that advocates for transparency in government practice, it is time that we collectively raise our expectations for transparency in our scholarship and knowledge dissemination. Professional associations can take the lead by setting higher expectations for fairness in their journals and the elimination of bias. A statement from the journal *Biology Letters* on gender bias in peer review is a useful example (Battarbee 2017). In an attempt to reduce gender bias and increase transparency, the Royal Society asked panels, committees, and editorial teams to review its statement on unconscious bias (Royal Society 2015). In response, the editors at *Biology Letters* are investigating gender bias in its review process, increasing gender equity on the board (in response to research indicating editors often select reviewers of the same gender), publicly thanking individual reviewers, and publishing the names of top reviewers. This level of transparency enables the field and the public to see gender balance or imbalance and enables volunteer laborers to assess their contributions in comparison to others. It is possible that by advancing gender equity and transparency in our journals, we might push other academic institutions (associations, academic departments, and universities) to critically reflect on these issues.

Editorial positions are key in an academic field. Journal editors are gatekeepers of knowledge who shape research production and have access to vast social and professional networks. Rosenbloom and Dubnick (1994, 52) note that editing a journal is inevitably a "people process," requiring regular interaction with authors and reviewers and substantial reliance on professional networks. Serving as a journal editor is an important career step for a scholar, signaling to the field the importance of the candidate who is selected for that position. Of the 377 women serving on the editorial boards of these 24 journals, certainly some, if not many, are qualified to be managing editors and editors in chief, and a portion of those would be willing to serve. Gender diversity in the workplace is a complicated issue, with historical, structural, cultural, and personal factors shaping decisions to serve. Here we outline some of the ways that public administration scholars can increase transparency, reduce bias, and increase our ethical standards for fairness. The goal of this article is to raise awareness of the dearth of women in journal leadership in our field, increase consciousness of the potential power and prestige that comes with editing a journal, and push all of us—as a field—to think about ways that we can help increase diversity, inclusion, transparency, and equity in key leadership positions, so that our future research endeavors are advanced and strengthened by a plurality of perspectives.

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