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Senior Editor's Note

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SENIOR EDITOR'S NOTE

I am pleased to present Volume 20 (2017) of the *Journal of the Indiana Academy of the Social Sciences*. Our latest issue leads off with a thought-provoking essay about disaster management and the roles of nongovernmental organizations and local government with a case study of several catastrophes that struck Japan in March 2011. Although this article focuses on Japan, it is not hard to see how it might be applied to the very recent situation of Hurricanes Harvey and Irma hitting Texas and Florida this past September, demonstrating the relevance of a social science perspective for understanding our contemporary world.

In addition, Volume 20 (2017) of JIASS offers eight impressive research articles exploring a wide variety of topics from several different social science perspectives. Professors Dulaney and Gunn analyze the strategic use of apologies by businesses in response to several food-poisoning incidents. Professor Gao examines the emergence and development of a public sphere during China's May Fourth Era (1915–1926). Professor Hare reports on her interesting study of the gender ratio of characters in more than 100 popular animated films from 1980 through 2016, asking whether any significant change has occurred during this long period. Professor Kordsmeier offers an in-depth analysis based on participant observation and interviews with theater workers about how stage managers establish leadership authority informally through emotion work. Professors Schnarre and Adam address parasocial relationships (perceived friendships with media figures that are not reciprocated), comparing men's and women's views of such relationships. Professors Statham and Greider offer a compelling analysis of the importance of unions in contemporary times, focusing on UAW Local 72, which represents factory workers in Kenosha, Wisconsin, based on qualitative data collected over a 20-year period. Professors VanAlstine, Cox, and Roden, with Doctor Boothby, continue in their study of the social impacts of diversity (ethnicity, religion, and language), with a focus on Indiana. Finally, Doctors Vergo and Poulakis, along with several graduate students, explore African American undergraduate students' perceptions of factors that influence their decisions to attend doctoral programs in psychology. All of these papers represent a wide-ranging and provocative set of studies sure to be of interest to all social scientists!

The current volume represents the second issue published since I was reelected as senior editor in chief, and the seventh volume I have edited and published since I assumed the editor's role in 2010. Much has been accomplished over the past seven years, including moving the journal to an online as well as a print publication. Since my first year as editor, beginning with Volume 14 (2010–2011), papers submitted to JIASS are no longer limited to those presented at the annual meeting and conference. While authors of papers presented at our annual conference continue to be encouraged to submit their work for possible publication, we also encourage social scientists from anywhere in the world to submit papers for review. To ensure quality and fairness, papers submitted for possible publication undergo, after a preliminary review by the editorial staff, a double-blind peer-review process involving two referees. The high quality of submitted papers

has increased in recent years, with the pleasing result of an abundance of extremely fine selections for the journal and its readers.

The journal no longer identifies papers as it once did by disciplinary subject heading. This is because we no longer attempt to publish in every volume at least one paper from each or most of the disciplines represented by the IASS. Since 2010, we have published papers strictly on the basis of merit, with the result that in some issues, some disciplines have more than one paper represented and other disciplines, none. We encourage submission of exceptional research by students and over the years have published more than a few outstanding examples of student scholarship.

JIASS is published simultaneously online, as previously noted, and in an attractive print edition. As of this past summer, the online edition of our journal has been moved to and is available at digitalcommons.butler.edu/JIASS and includes back issues. The hosting of our journal at the Digital Commons website makes our journal available to a very large national and international audience and provides tracking of downloads (currently 1,595).

Print copies are no longer mailed to members; instead, copies are available for members to pick up at the annual meeting (print copies may be ordered for additional cost plus a shipping-and-handling charge). Volume 20 will, as usual, be indexed and available through EBSCO. JIASS is also listed in Cabell's directory (of special interest for scholars in business, economics, and finance). All of these developments represent important milestones for both the journal and the Academy and will ensure their successful transition to the 21st century of scholarly communication.

I have been fortunate during my time as senior editor to have been able to work with a talented and dedicated staff of coeditors, referee-reviewers, and, of course, authors. I would like to publicly acknowledge and thank my editorial staff in particular for their assistance, insight, and guidance throughout the previous year. The editorial staff underwent some change this year, as I welcomed a new senior deputy editor, Surekha Rao (Indiana University Northwest), who has served for several years as deputy editor. Surekha has been an outstanding editor over the years, and I am very happy to have her ongoing support as a senior editor, where she may continue to contribute her good judgment and hard work, helping to make every issue of JIASS a success.

I have also been very fortunate to have the editorial assistance of Stephanie Seifert Stringham, who has been our copy editor since 2010 (Volume 14). Stephanie continues to be a major editorial presence and power behind the scene, ensuring that every graph, table, bibliographic reference, and line of text meets all professional and technical standards prior to publication. Stephanie's perseverance, intelligence, dedication, and competence all seem just as amazing to me today as they did seven years ago. *Thank you, Stephanie!*

I also want to publicly recognize and thank the many *referees* who serve without fanfare, reading and evaluating papers submitted for publication. Quite simply, JIASS would not be possible without their professional dedication and commitment. Our reviewers deserve everyone's thanks; their names are published at the end of the journal.

Last but not least, I would like to acknowledge and thank Jay Howard, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Butler University, for his support of IASS and

of my work as editor since I took the role in 2010. Dean Howard has provided some modest funds to support the hiring of a student to assist my editorial work, and I am grateful for his support.

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