Appendix N. Sample Rejection Letter

Dear Prof. XXX:

The reviews are in on your manuscript, "XXXX" and it is time for us to make a decision. After careful reading and consideration, we have decided not to accept your manuscript for publication in American Sociological Review (ASR). Our decision is based on the reviewers’ comments, our reading of the manuscript, an overall assessment of the significance of the contribution of the manuscript to sociological knowledge, and an estimate of the likelihood of a successful revision.

The reviewers found much of interest in your manuscript. Nevertheless, they raise significant concerns pertaining to the conceptual framing of the research question and also to some of the analytic decisions. While not necessarily agreeing with each one of these concerns, we generally concur that the conceptual framing could benefit from greater clarity and rigor and that significant analytic limitations exist. Perhaps most central were concerns about the weak motivation for the study, weak substantive meaning of the findings, and the lack of a compelling contribution to sociological theory.

To put this decision in context, it should be noted that ASR has space to publish only a small fraction of the manuscripts submitted. The current acceptance rate is less than 10 percent. We hope that this outcome will not dissuade you from further work in this area. We also hope that the reviewers’ comments will prove useful in that work.

We truly appreciate the opportunity to review your manuscript, and hope that you will continue to think of ASR for your future research. Let us close by saying we think this line of research is a very important one and we hope that you will continue in it. All of the reviewers were supportive of your project but felt it has just not come together yet at the level needed.

Sincerely,
Tony N. Brown, Katharine M. Donato, Larry W. Isaac, Holly J. McCammon
Editors, American Sociological Review
ASR@vanderbilt.edu