Proposal for the Editorship of *Social Psychology Quarterly* 2025-2027

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*Social Psychology Quarterly* (then *Sociometry*) began publication in 1937, the year after *American Sociological Review* began, and has since established itself as the premier specialty journal of the American Sociological Association. For many years, *SPQ* has accepted only about ten to fifteen percent of the submissions it receives, showing both its desirability to authors and its importance in the field. Papers published in *SPQ* can rightly claim to be the most highly selected in sociological social psychology. As a baseline, the next editor must ensure that these admirable accomplishments will be supported and continued.

The mission of *Social Psychology Quarterly* is to publish “theoretical and empirical papers on the link between the individual and society” (from the masthead). Other journals espouse somewhat similar goals. However, two important differences between *SPQ* and all the other journals in social psychology make *SPQ* unique. (1) *SPQ* papers reflect much stronger theoretical concerns than do other journals, and (2) *SPQ* papers reflect the distinctive sociological focus on the effects of social structure and culture on interpersonal and intrapersonal processes. The first point has been vital in developing sociological social psychology as a field where explicit, testable theory grows and guides research. The second point—which was already evident in the “sociograms” drawn by the journal’s founder—distinguishes sociological social psychology from psychology, which often emphasizes individual differences and experiences and ignores social structural elements such as network position, status differences, and stratification systems. The mission of *SPQ* links the articles published there to interests of sociologists more broadly and not just those who are social psychologists. *SPQ*’s focus also appeals to researchers in kindred disciplines such as political science, communications, and economics. We would seek to strengthen these characteristics of *SPQ*.

Overall, *SPQ* appears to be in very good shape, with no major changes needed. Over the past decade, *SPQ* has developed a reputation as an efficient journal, with average times between submission and initial decision less than nine weeks. Additionally, in 2022, Journal Citation Reports listed *SPQ*’s impact factor at 2.7, which is the highest impact factor for *SPQ* on record (at least dating back to the mid-1990s), and places it within the top 10 percent of all social psychology journals. These accomplishments are due to the efforts of a continuous string of exceptional editorial teams, whose hard work has raised *SPQ*’s profile within sociology and social psychology, and has positioned the journal for continued success moving forward. Recognizing that we would be taking the reins of an already well-functioning publication, we would aim first and foremost to continue to grow *SPQ*’s profile by maintaining the diligence, thoughtfulness, and organization of those who have served in this role before us.

Aside from maintaining *SPQ*’s reputation for efficiency by following in the footsteps of previous editors, we also have a clear vision for how we can expand the journal’s impact, value, and reach. Our vision centers around three principle themes: 1) promoting diversity, in terms of the
methods, viewpoints, and theories published in *SPQ*, as well as increasing representativeness among authors from historically underrepresented groups; 2) promoting standards of replicability and open science with regard to data transparency, journal access, and current best practices as they relate to methodological and statistical reporting; and 3) expanding the journal’s social media presence in a way that communicates research effectively to both academic and lay audiences. We expand on each of these three themes below.

**Diversity:** Diversity is vital for fostering a rich and inclusive intellectual environment. A diverse range of perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences among contributors and the editorial team enhances the breadth and depth of research published. This diversity extends beyond demographic factors to include variations in theoretical orientations, methodological approaches, and cultural contexts, ensuring a more comprehensive understanding of human behavior. By actively seeking contributions from researchers with different viewpoints, as editors we would foster a more nuanced and well-rounded exploration of social psychological phenomena. Moreover, a commitment to diversity for *SPQ* is not only about representation but also about addressing systemic biases and inequalities within the field. Encouraging submissions that explore topics related to underrepresented populations, challenging existing paradigms, and highlighting social justice issues would help to bridge gaps in knowledge and facilitate a more equitable distribution of research attention. The journal can serve as a platform for amplifying voices that have historically been marginalized, fostering a more inclusive scholarly community that reflects the complexity and diversity of the human experience. Embracing diversity in both content and contributors adds to the overall advancement of social psychology as a field, promoting a more holistic and accurate understanding of social phenomena.

**Promoting Open Science:** As scientific publishing standards continue to shift toward increased transparency, availability, and replicability, we intend to emphasize these principles in the papers published in *SPQ*. In terms of transparency, the journal currently encourages authors to make their data and code publicly available. We will continue this initiative and add to it by creating a centralized database with links to all publicly available data used in analyses in *SPQ*. Authors will still be free to house their data wherever they deem best (e.g., GitHub, Dataverse, etc.), and we will make these data easier for readers to locate by providing a page of searchable links on the *SPQ* website. Furthermore, we seek to bring *SPQ* more in line with current best practices for data reporting by encouraging authors who present quantitative results to report and discuss effect sizes in addition to tests of statistical significance. Although some authors appropriately report common measures of effect sizes (e.g., $r^2$), some either do not report effect sizes or do not discuss them effectively. Emphasizing the importance of reporting effect sizes will put *SPQ* in step with current reporting standards.

Regarding availability, we will emphasize the importance of research availability by encouraging authors, when it is feasible, to publish their work with open access. Sage currently provides this option (Sage Choice) for almost all journals it publishes, including *SPQ*. We will provide authors, both at time of submission and after final acceptance, with information regarding the value and benefits of open access publishing. And concerning replicability, current discourse around trust and legitimacy in science has called attention to the need for replication studies across the social sciences. This is apparent in such research initiatives as the Center for Open
Science’s Reproducibility Project. For our part, we will make it an explicit component of *SPQ*’s mission to publish well-designed and useful replication studies.

**Expanding Social Media Presence:** Social media has become one of the most important tools that a journal has to promote its papers and expand its reach. *SPQ* currently uses Twitter (X) and Facebook to publicize recent publications, typically by disseminating links to articles. We will continue this practice and add to it in a few ways. First, we will expand the number of platforms where we publicize work to include LinkedIn, which has the potential to reach a broader audience of applied sociologists, and Instagram, which has a younger user base than Facebook. Second, aside from providing links to articles, we will provide bite-sized distillations of the work we publicize. These “lay summaries” will highlight the scientific or practical implications of the work for a non-academic audience. We will request these brief summaries from authors, or if they are unable to provide them, the editorial team will generate the content.

In addition to publicizing links and written summaries, borrowing a tool that other journals have used, we will encourage authors to record brief (five-minute) video abstracts that we can host on YouTube and distribute via other social media channels. We will invite all authors (or first authors in the case of collaborative research) whose work is published in *SPQ* to record a video abstract. We will provide a general template for these abstracts that emphasizes the importance of making the content accessible to a general audience. We anticipate that video abstracts can be a useful tool not only for reaching the public more broadly, but also as a classroom tool.

**Editorial Team**

*Editors.* As an editorial team, we have extensive experience working together as departmental colleagues. We co-organized the 2015 Group Processes Conference, and are currently co-organizing the same conference for 2024, we have served on multiple departmental committees together, and have shared mentoring experiences with several graduate students. Furthermore, our backgrounds in publishing, reviewing, serving on editorial boards, editing journals and editing collected volumes position us well to step into the role of co-editors of *SPQ*. Certainly, any transition between editorial teams involves a learning curve for the incoming editors, but we believe that our involvement within the social psychology community and our substantial administrative experience make us strong candidates for a smooth transition and continued efficiency.

**Lisa Slattery Walker** is Interim Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and Dean of University College (returning to regular faculty in June 2024) and Professor of Sociology and Organizational Science at UNC Charlotte. She received her Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Arizona in 1998, where she studied under Lynn Smith-Lovin. She came to UNC Charlotte as an assistant professor in 1998, was tenured in 2004, and promoted to professor in 2010. She served as Chair of the Department of Sociology from 2008-2014 and was President of the Faculty 2016-2017. She served as Associate Dean for Advising and Graduation in the Office of Undergraduate Education from 2017-22.

Dr. Walker’s editorial experience includes serving on the editorial board of *SPQ* (2022-2024 and 2010-2012). She has also served on the editorial boards of *Emotions and Society, Social Science*
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Research, and American Sociological Review. In addition, she was the co-editor of the social psychology and family section of Sociology Compass, where she was responsible for all aspects of the process, from soliciting manuscripts, identifying and assigning reviewers, overseeing the revise and resubmit process, making final decisions on manuscripts, and stewarding papers through to publication.

Her research focuses on small group interaction, nonverbal behaviors, identity, emotions, gender, and expectations. Her work has appeared in Social Psychology Quarterly, Social Science Research, Social Forces, Sex Roles and numerous other journals. Dr. Walker has been PI or co-PI on six NSF-funded projects and has served on numerous NSF panels. Recently, with Dr. Murray Webster, she has been conducting projects on the effect of nonverbal behaviors on inequality structures in small groups and how characteristics come to have status value. Current work with Dr. Anita Blanchard examines how groups develop in online environments.

Joseph Dippong studied under Will Kalkhoff and Richard Serpe at Kent State University and received his PhD in sociology in 2013. He started as an assistant professor at UNC Charlotte in 2013 and has been an associate professor with appointments in sociology and public policy since 2019. He is currently the director of graduate studies in the Department of Sociology at UNC Charlotte.

Dr. Dippong’s research centers on examining small group status and power structures, with particular emphases on developing unobtrusive measures of status and power structures and on examining how emotional processes arise from and reinforce status and power dynamics. His research has been funded by the National Science Foundation and the Army Research Office and has appeared in top journals, including Social Psychology Quarterly and Social Science Research. Dr. Dippong serves on the editorial boards of Social Science Research and Advances in Group Processes, has served on the NSF Sociology Grant Review panel, and regularly provides reviews for a variety of sociology journals and the NSF. He is currently co-editing the second edition of the Handbook of Neurosociology with Will Kalkhoff and Rengin Firat.

Deputy Editors. Social Psychology Quarterly has always published papers representing all the theoretical orientations and research methods in sociology, and it should continue to do so. As noted above, SPQ papers are among the best in our discipline. To continue those traditions of diversity and excellence, we plan to select an Editorial Board representing excellent work in all the diversity of sociological social psychology, including Deputy Editors who are known for using research styles different from ours.. We intend to utilize our deputy editors in much the same way that other editors have: to provide substantive, theoretical, and methodological expertise on manuscripts that fall outside our collective expertise, and for handling and making decisions on manuscripts for which both of the co-editors have a conflict of interest.

To continue and strengthen the theoretical emphasis, we would continue the practice of publishing theoretical papers and notes. To encourage diversity in methods, in addition to working with the Editorial Board members to stimulate submissions, we would consider special issues on topics using under-represented theoretical and empirical approaches. We would also announce a solicitation for short methodological notes, comparable to the theoretical notes that have appeared the past few years.
Summary
In sum, we propose to serve as the new co-editors of *SPQ* when the current editors’ term ends. We have substantial background in social psychology, administration, reviewing, and editing. We have strong institutional buy-in. We have a clear vision for the future direction of *SPQ*, while also recognizing that we do not want to act too ambitiously with such a well-running journal. We have identified strong candidates to serve as deputy editors and believe that we are in an excellent position to continue *SPQ*’s run of excellent editorial teams.