

General Remarks

The *American Journal of Biological Anthropology* (AJBA) continues its 100+ year tradition of being a strong, vibrant and engaged voice for the biological anthropology community. Everyone associated with the journal, from editorial board members and associate editors to staff at Wiley, remain committed to providing the best possible science in a timely manner. This process is dependent in large part on our community—on all of you—who provide us with the reviews that allow the process to work. We all understand the task we are asking you to perform, the time it takes and the burden it is to perform this task. Everyone at the journal is incredibly grateful for your generosity and support. I continually marvel at reviews that exhibit both generosity and grace and I thank you for them. It ensures the strength of our discipline.

We were extremely pleased that we were able to publish two special issues of the journal this year. The first was “Evolutionary, ecological and biocultural perspectives on infectious disease and pandemics”, edited by Andrew Kim and Sabrina Agarwal. The second, recently released, was “A special issue in honor of the life and scientific contributions of Professor Mary Marzke”, a pioneer and innovator in the study of the evolution of the human hand, edited by Caley Orr, Tracy Kivell and Matthew Tocheri. We currently have four special issues that are in the process of reviewing articles and four additional special issues that will be accepting manuscripts in the very near future. We are very excited about all these topics and look forward to seeing them appear. If you have any suggestions for special issues, please get in touch with me.

One of the most exciting things for us has been the increase in Open Access manuscripts published (see Figure 1). Last year I reported that approximately one third of the manuscripts we published were open access and I set a goal of a ten percent increase in OA articles a year for the rest of my tenure as Editor-in-Chief. I am very happy to report that we have far exceeded that goal for 2023. This year nearly half (48%) of the articles we published were OA. Almost all of these, 81 out of 84 articles, were able to take advantage of Wiley’s transformational agreements. These agreements are contracts between institutions such as libraries, national, and regional consortia and publishers that transition the business model over time from one based on a paywall to one where publishers are paid for open access publishing services. Authors taking advantage of these agreements do not pay OA fees individually; they are paid for by the consortia at reduced rates. At present, Wiley has 79 transformational agreements with countries and institutions around the world. This number is increasing yearly. If you have a question as to whether your institution is covered, you can go to the Wiley website and submit a question. Please take advantage of this.

We would like to remind the community that an article must have a data availability statement in place to be published. This year the editorial board of the journal will

discuss shifting from a model of “expects data sharing” to “mandates data sharing”. The difference between these models is that in mandates data sharing, the links to data in the data availability statement are checked to ensure that they work in the way the authors intend, and if data is shared in a repository, the data availability statement includes a permanent link to the data. As always, we welcome comments from our community. Please feel free to contact me if you have any comments on this policy.

This year we fully implemented the requirement for additional information on genetic studies using human subjects. The editorial board will review the results of the implementation of this requirement and its applicability to all studies using human subjects. At present, the implementation requires the actions of editorial board members and associate editors. We are looking into ways to make this more automatic for all submissions.

We try to offer a workshop at every annual meeting. This year, Tracy Prowse, Daniel Temple and I offered a workshop on Publishing in the *American Journal of Biological Anthropology: Advice for Forensic Anthropologists and Bioarchaeologists*. If you have any ideas for future workshops, please feel free to contact me.

Metrics

In 2023 the journal published three volumes (180-182), each of which had four issues. These do not include the two supplements: the annual meeting issue and the *Yearbook of Biological Anthropology*. Since there is effectively no longer a page limit to issues, Wiley no longer routinely reports the number of pages published. We received 352 submissions and published 176 articles. The acceptance rate is 52%. The number of submissions and the number of articles published both decreased by approximately 5%. This is consistent with all Wiley journals. All Wiley journals saw an increase in submissions in 2020 followed by a post-Covid decline. Unlike many journals, the *AJBA* rebounded quickly and has remained relatively steady since the rebound. All of this points to the health of the journal.

The published content of the journal included: research articles (69.3%), brief communication (8.5%), media review (5.9%), technical note (4.8%), synthesis (3.6%), commentary (2.8%), letters to the editor (1.4%), reviews (1.1%) and other, including obituary, resources, and editorials (2.6%). The time from submission to first decision is 50 days. We are continually trying to find ways to reduce this number by setting short term reminders for editorial board members, providing multiple databases for accessing reviewers, and harmonizing decision terms, but we are limited by reviewer turn-around times.

The number of articles we publish in the subfields of biological anthropology has remained relatively stable over the past five years (see Figure 2). For 2023, we published the following: Bioarchaeology/Paleopathology/Forensics (36%), Skeletal Biology (22%), Paleoanthropology (6%), Human Biology (9%), Genetics (9%), Primatology (9%) and Other (10%).

The journal received submissions from 40 countries. Slightly over one-third (35.3%) of submitted articles are from the United States. The countries with the greatest number of submissions are China, United Kingdom, Spain, Brazil, Argentina, Italy, Australia, France, Germany, Canada, Japan and Poland. Even though we had a significant number of submissions from China, we did not publish many of these articles. This seems to be primarily due to the articles being outside the scope of the *AJBA*. It is one of our goals to encourage international submissions that adhere to the aims and scope of the journal. We are hoping that our editorial board members can interact with colleagues to encourage appropriate submissions.

This year we transferred or referred 52 articles. If a manuscript is clearly out of scope for the journal, I can immediately transfer it to a Wiley service that will try to place the manuscript appropriately. If the manuscript is potentially of interest to the readers of the journal, I will confer with an Associate Editor and together we will decide whether to have the manuscript reviewed or referred to a journal with a cascading agreement. We can refer manuscripts to the *Yearbook of Biological Anthropology*, the *American Journal of Human Biology*, the *American Journal of Primatology*, *The International Journal of Osteoarchaeology*, the *Journal of Forensic Science* and the *Anatomical Record*. Half of the articles we refer or transfer are submitted elsewhere.

This year the *AJBA* has started reporting a number of additional metrics on journal performance. Wiley has endorsed the Declaration of Research Assessment or DORA agreement. The goal of DORA was to shift emphasis from a single journal-based metric, such as the Impact Factor, to multiple other means of assessing research. To accomplish this, journals will greatly reduce emphasis on IF as a promotional tool, make available a range of article-level metrics and encourage responsible authorship practices that highlight the specific contributions of each author. If you go to the *AJBA* homepage you will notice a series of additional metrics. We will still report IF. This year, there has been some confusion as to the impact factor of the *AJBA* that is tied to the change of the journal name. When the name of the journal changed from the *AJPA* to the *AJBA*, this change was filed and recorded with Clarivate, the organization that maintains the IF statistic. *AJBA*'s Impact Factor, under its previous title *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, is 2.8 for 2022. As the journal went through a name change in 2022, the new title *American Journal of Biological Anthropology* has no 2022 Impact Factor, but the 2022 Impact Factor for *AJPA* is still valid, as it is the same journal. When the 2023 Impact Factors are released, there will be two values for the two titles as the citations and published articles are spread across both. All citations and published articles will be unified under the new title in the 2024 Impact Factor which will be released in 2025. The main take-home message is that the *AJBA* maintains its IF rating and has never lost it.

One of the new metrics is Cite Score which is administered by Scopus. The difference between the Impact Factor and Cite Score is that Cite Score is calculated on four years of citations instead of two. Almost all journals have a higher Cite Score than they do an

Impact Factor. The *AJBA* Cite Score is 4.6. Last year there were 822,067 downloads of articles. This is approximately a 10% increase from 2022.

Acknowledgments

I am extremely grateful to the seven Associate Editors and thirty-five Editorial Board Members, eight Early Career Editorial Board Members, two Media review editors and a digital fellow of the Journal. It is an honor to work with a wonderful group of dedicated, careful, insightful and caring individuals. This past year Claudia Valeggia, an Associate Editor, and Julia Fischer, an Editorial Board Member, both completed their terms. We welcomed: Associate Editors Noreen von Cramon-Taubadel, and Grazyna Jasienska; Editorial Board Members Susanne Cote, Hanya Goro, Jason Kamilar, Stanislaus Kivai, James Pampush, Dario Piombino-Mascali, Zewdi Tsegai, Krishna Veeramah, Katherine Wander, Andrea Waters-Rist, Qian Wang, and Molly Zuckerman; and Early Career Editorial Board Member Elizabeth Nelson to the board. I look forward to continuing to work with all of them. We will have some individuals completing their terms on the board in the next several months. We will be asking for applications for both editorial board members and early career editorial board members. We will publicize the call for applications and nominations on the AABA website and through social media. Please be on the look-out for the announcement and please apply.

I am also grateful to our publishers at Wiley. Gillian Greenough was recently replaced by Genevieve Richards. I very much look forward to continuing to work with Genevieve – she has been extremely helpful so far in navigating the many issues the journal faces. I am also grateful to Karthiga Pughalendhi, Xinrui Wang, Reeni Sunder and Tom Cannon for all their work for the office, production and special issues. I am mostly grateful for the biological anthropology community that graciously and generously gives of their time to ensure that the review process and the journal succeed. Thank you for the opportunity to edit the journal.

Figure 1

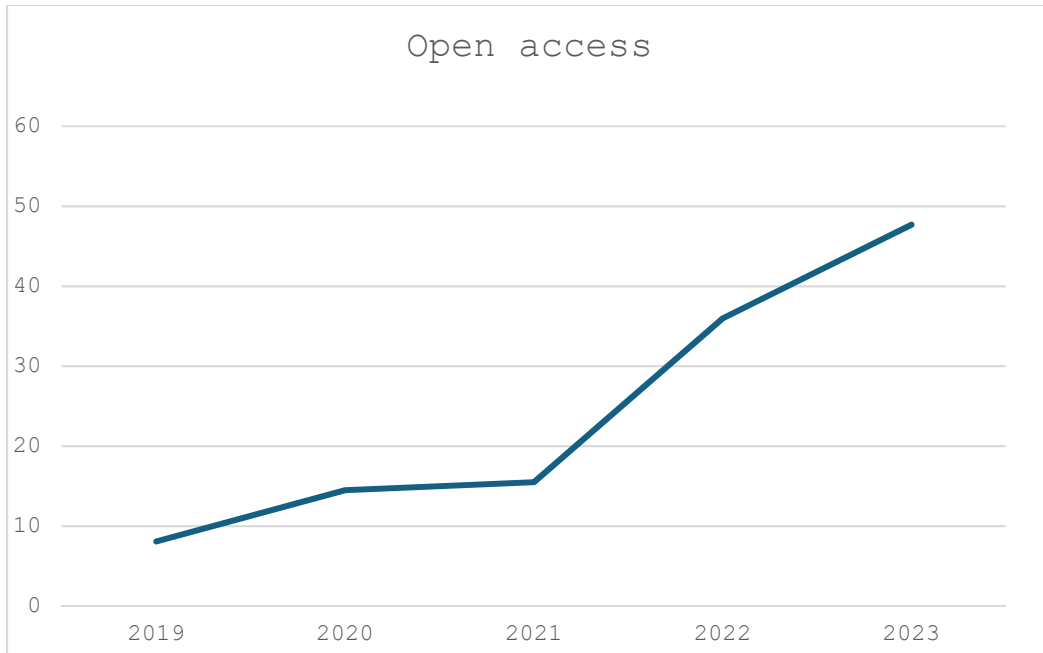


Figure 2

