

American Journal of Biological Anthropology
Connie J. Mulligan, Editor-in-Chief

General Remarks

I began my term as Editor-in-Chief (EIC) of the *American Journal of Biological Anthropology (AJBA)* on January 1, 2026. It is an honor to serve in this position and I am excited to oversee *AJBA* as the world of academic publishing changes with the emergence of AI, open access, preprint archives, data sharing, and other challenges. Although I have been in the role of EIC for less than two months, I am already impressed by and appreciative of the amazing editorial board we have – their hard work, dedication, and expertise cannot be overstated. We currently have 50 board members, listed in Table 1. These individuals and the many reviewers and the entire biological anthropology community who give their time and expertise are essential to the success of *AJBA*.

As EIC, I am continuing the tiered and expanded structure of the editorial board established by former EIC Trudy Turner. There are seven Associate Editors (AEs) who oversee the following topical areas: bioarchaeology, genetics, human biology, primatology, and skeletal/paleoanthropology. The AEs work with a group of Editorial Board Members (EBMs) who handle the review of manuscripts. The board has gender parity and ~20% are international scholars. The international EBMs are important to globalize submissions to the journal as well as take advantage of Wiley's transformational agreements to cover the cost of open access publication. There are ten Early Career EBMs, who are early-career scholars and are mentored by an AE. The intent is to train a new generation of scholars with experience in academic publishing and ensure there is a talented pool of EBMs for *AJBA*. One change is the creation of a Special Editor position to oversee submissions by AEs or the EIC. Some journals do not allow members of their editorial board to submit papers to the journal, but I believe that practice robs the journal of research by some of the field's best scholars. *AJBA* has always accepted submissions from EBMs, but there has not been an official policy with respect to submissions by AEs or EIC. In discussions with Trudy Turner and Wiley, we decided that former EICs are in an ideal position to serve as special editors to oversee submissions by AEs and the current EIC to ensure those submissions are handled start-to-finish without any input from the submitting AE or EIC.

With respect to data sharing policies, *AJBA* currently "expects data sharing". There is a move to change the policy to "requires data sharing" because there is a wealth of research demonstrating that open data sharing leads to increased publications, citations, collaborations, and improved access to data, which may particularly benefit junior scholars. That said, not all data need to be shared, and data sharing guidelines must allow for restrictions on sharing sensitive data and ensure that study participants and stakeholders have a voice in data sharing practices. At the 2025 AABA meeting, we participated in a session on "Balancing public data sharing and data sovereignty: Ethical considerations in biological anthropology" that was very well-attended. There were productive talks and conversations that made clear there are discipline-specific challenges that must be addressed and resolved. The discussion on data sharing in biological anthropology will continue and *AJBA* should play a central role.

My main goals for *AJBA* are to increase the number of quality submissions, increase the number of highly cited publications, and reduce the time from submission to publication. Reducing the time to publication will encourage people to submit their best work to *AJBA*. The production process is efficient and accepted manuscripts are typically published within two weeks (that process can take longer if authors do not return proofs and sign licenses promptly). Finding reviewers for manuscripts and getting reviewers to submit their reviews on time has become increasingly difficult and can add significant time

to the review process. That said, there is a lot I can do as EIC to ensure that the review process is as efficient and productive as possible and that manuscripts are published as quickly as possible. The goal of a speedy review process is to publish the most relevant, timely, and impactful research possible.

There are several initiatives to increase submissions with a focus on impactful, highly cited articles. Articles in special issues are more high profile and more highly cited than regular articles and Wiley has a dedicated staff to help researchers develop special issues. *AJBA* published three special issues in 2025 and five more issues are in progress. We will also expand the use of the new Resources manuscript category for researchers to report datasets, collections, and software that they have collected or developed as a means of alerting the scientific community to these valuable resources and to ensure that researchers are credited, i.e. cited, for making these resources available.

Metrics (submitted by Trudy Turner)

In 2025 the journal published three volumes (186-188), each of which had four issues. These do not include the two supplements: the annual meeting issue and the *Yearbook of Biological Anthropology*. In 2025, we received 398 submissions and published 195 articles. This represents a nearly 30% increase in both submissions and published material over 2024. This has reversed a trend we have seen since the post-Covid decline, and we are now close to the pre-Covid numbers. This is welcome news for the journal and the association and argues for the strength of our publications.

The published content of the journal included: research articles (69%), brief communication (9%), technical note (5%), synthesis (7%), commentary (3%), letters to the editor (1%), and others, including media reviews, obituary, resources, and editorials (6%). The time from submission to first decision is 49 days. This is a considerable improvement over 2024. Over half of the articles in the *AJBA* are Open Access. Of the 105 articles published Open Access, all but four were funded by Wiley transformational agreements. Wiley currently has more than 125 transformational agreements in place.

The number of articles we publish in the subfields of biological anthropology has changed somewhat this year. While the number of articles in most subfields has remained stable, the number of submissions in paleoanthropology has dramatically increased from 5% in 2024 to 19% in 2025. In 2025, we published the following: Bioarchaeology/Paleopathology/Forensics (33%), Skeletal Biology (17%), Paleoanthropology (19%), Human Biology (7%), Genetics (7%), Primatology (7%) and Special Issues (13%). This year 33 manuscripts were contributed to 7 special issues. Special issues can be found on their own tab on the *AJBA* website. Articles are added to Special Issues as soon as they are completed.

The journal received submissions from 40 countries. Slightly more than half (51%) of submitted articles are from the United States. The countries with the next greatest number of submissions are United Kingdom, Spain, Australia, Canada, Italy and China.

If a manuscript is clearly out of scope for the journal, it can be immediately referred 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, members of the editorial board can decide whether to have the manuscript reviewed or transferred to a journal with a cascading agreement with the *AJBA*. We can transfer manuscripts to the *Yearbook of Biological Anthropology*, *American Journal of Human Biology*, *American Journal of Primatology*, *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology*, *Journal of Forensic Science* and *Anatomical Record*. This year we referred or transferred 82 articles. Thirty-five of the manuscripts that were offered a transfer were submitted to another journal in our cascade.

The AJBA reports 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 (IF), to multiple other means of assessing research. These metrics can be found on the *AJBA* webpage. One of the newer metrics is Cite Score which is administered by Scopus. Cite Score is calculated on four years of citations instead of two for the Impact Factor. Almost all journals have a higher Cite Score than IF. The *AJBA* Cite Score is 4.7.

We are in the final year of having two Impact Factors. When the name of the journal was changed, the change was filed and recorded with Clarivate, the organization that maintains the IF statistic. From 2023 to 2025 there were two values for IFs since there were two titles, and citations and published articles were spread across the two journal titles. The *AJBAs* IF for 2024 was 2, up from 1.7 for 2023. This number does not include any citations for *AJPA*. All citations and published articles should be unified under *AJBA* in the 2025 IF which will be released in 2026. In 2025 there were 829,137 downloads of articles. This represents a slight increase over 2024.

Acknowledgements

First of all, I am beholden to Trudy Turner, whose vision for a more global and more representative journal has transformed *AJBA*. Trudy asked me to join her team as an AE when she became EIC in 2019 and she has been an incredible, generous mentor. My appreciation goes to the entire editorial board. I am grateful to AE Dan Temple for helping me quickly get up to speed as EIC and to all the AEs for teaching me the nuanced differences in sub-disciplines with respect to manuscript assignment. Appreciation goes to departing AEs Lynne Isbell, Grazyna Jasienska, and Tracy Prowse and departing EBMs Florent Detroit, Rebecca Lewis, JD Pampush, and Zewdi Tsegai. There have been a few other changes to the editorial board. John Lindo, Cyndie Thompson, and Kathy Wander agreed to move up from EBM to AE and Sharon DeWitte returned to the editorial board as AE. Trudy Turner will be Special Editor to handle submissions from AEs and EIC. Eric Bartelink and Nick Holowka have joined as EBMs. I look forward to working with our expert and dedicated editorial board.

I am also grateful to our publishers at Wiley. Kirsten Barr has replaced Avriel Licciardi as our publishing lead and I am very grateful for her rapid response to my endless emails. I also appreciate Tyrone Prescod, Deepa Rajamanickam, and Tom Cannon for their great work in production. Callum Scott is the new lead on special issues and he has a very enthusiastic and proactive approach. Niviga Arulpathi is the editorial assistant in charge of fixing all the problems that arise through the peer review process. Sarah Hafeez and Katie Simmons are filling in as peer review leads while Bethany Lawson is on maternity leave. Wiley has a great team and I enjoy working with all of them.

Table 1. Editorial Board Members, 2026

Eric Bartelink
Marianne Brasil
Laura Buck
Andre Luiz Campelo dos Santos
Elizabeth Clausing
Zachary Cofran
Susanne Cote
Libby Cowgill
Sharon DeWitte
Kanya Godde Chrisco
Rolando Gonzalez-Jose
Neysa Grider Potter
Goro Hanya
Jamie Hodgkins
Nick Holowka
Mark Hubbe
Alexandros-Fotios Karakostis
Jason Kamilar
Arwa Kharobi
Helen Kurki
Myra Laird
John Lindo
Christopher Lynn
Scott Maddux
Patrick Mahoney
Emily Middleton
Aida Miro-Herrans
Tesla Monson
Martin Muller
Betsy Nelson
Amy Non
Mario Novak
Kathleen Paul
Marin Pilloud
Dario Piombino-Mascali
Clara Scarry
Eric Shattuck
Larissa Swedell
Dan Temple
Cyndie Thompson
Marla Toyne
Trudy Turner

Taylor Van Doren
Krishna Veeramah
Noreen Von Cramon-Taubadel
Kathy Wander
Andrea Waters-Rist
Christopher Wolfe
Samantha (Sam) Yaussy
Molly Zuckerman