

## ***American Journal of Physical Anthropology, Editor-in-chief's Report, 2016***

### **1. General Remarks**

The December 2015 issue was the last regular print issue of *AJPA*. Beginning with the January 2016 issue the journal has only been published in a digital, on-line version. Members may order print versions of the journal for an additional fee. The impact of this change on the journal's impact and visibility remains to be seen. It is likely that the number of people outside the AAPA who have recently been reading the journal in print form is small, so the impact may be minimal. It is also certain that the trend towards digital-only publication of most academic journals will continue.

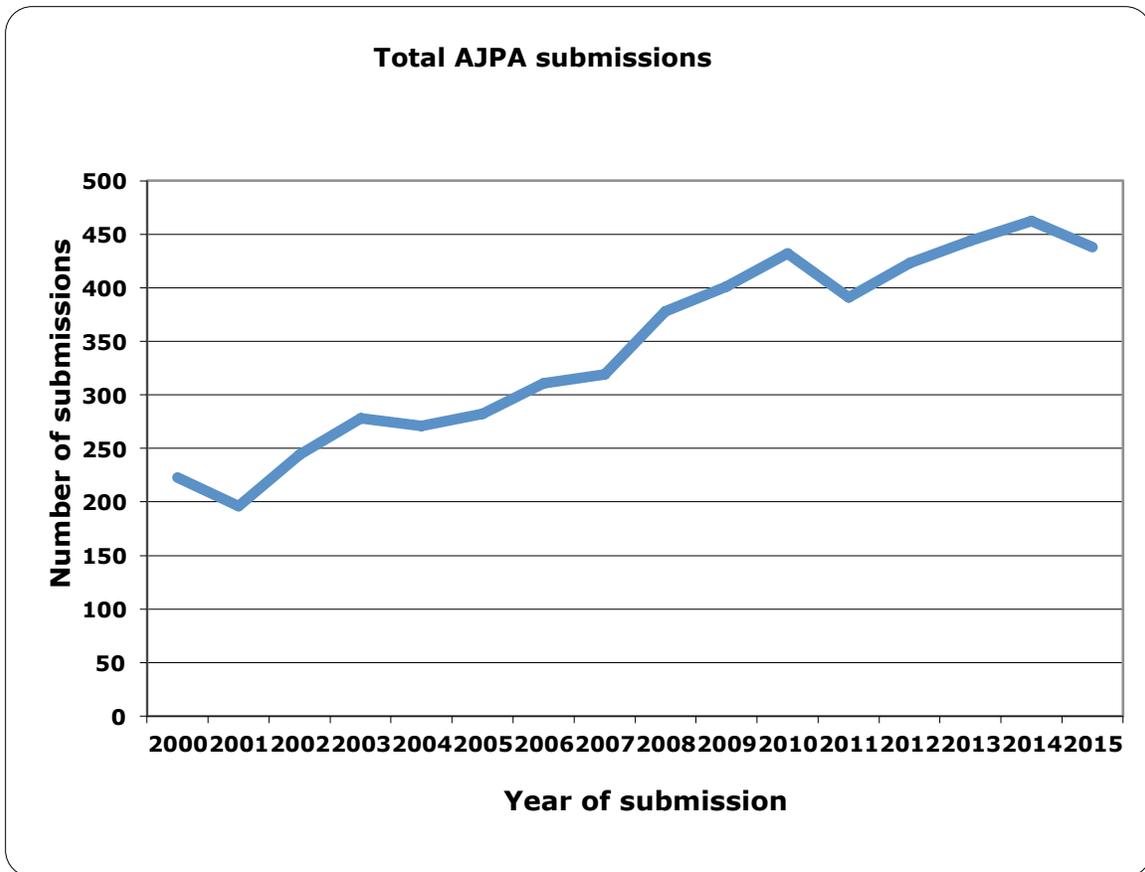
In another change, the *Yearbook of Physical Anthropology*, although continuing to be managed by its own Editor-in-chief and Editorial Board, is now considered a supplement of *AJPA* for calculation of impact factors and other publishing metrics.

The landscape of academic publishing continues to evolve and the future remains difficult to predict. A new preprint archive specializing in the biological sciences, BioRxiv (biorxiv.org) has been started at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, modeled on the successful and well-established arXiv.org which serves the physical sciences, mathematics, and computer sciences. In conjunction with other institutional archives that conform to the "Green" Open Access guidelines mandated for published results from federally funded research, preprint archives are intensifying the challenges to traditional, commercially mediated, vetting and circulation of research findings.

### **2. Metrics**

During 2015 the *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* published three volumes (156-158) of four numbers each, totaling 2,155 pages, not including the Annual Meeting supplement or the *Yearbook*. The published content included 144 Research Articles, 27 Brief Communications, 4 Technical Notes, 1 Perspectives, 1 News and Views, 1 Theory and Synthesis, 10 Book Reviews, 3 Obituaries, 4 Letters to the Editor, 1 Editorial, and 8 Errata.

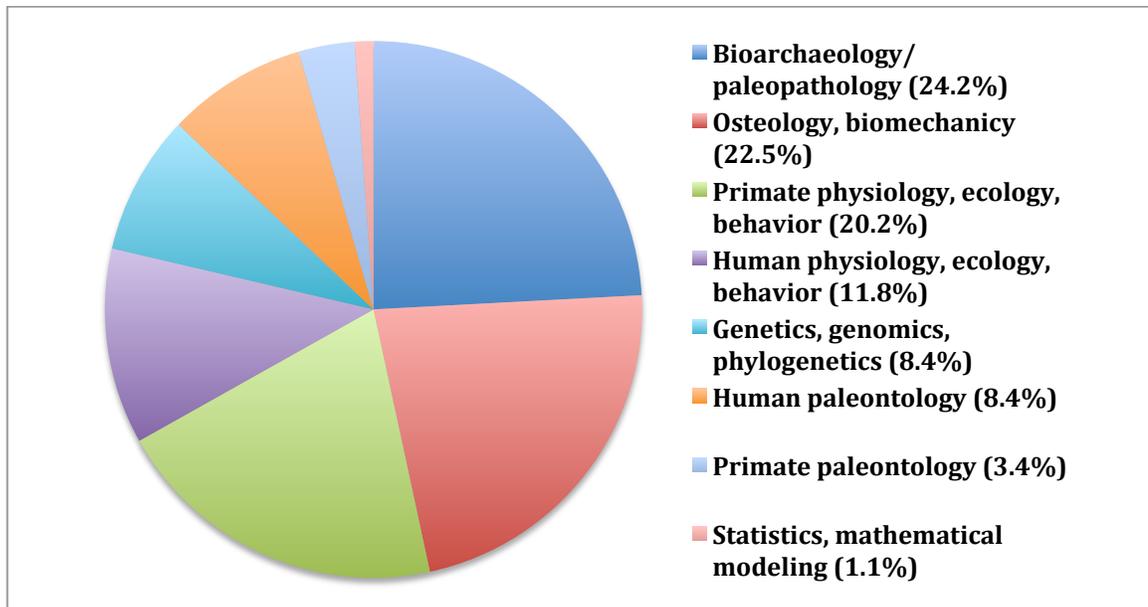
The flow of manuscripts in 2015 remained high with a total of 438 manuscripts received (not including book reviews) (Figure 1). Manuscripts originated from 52 different countries, with the major sources, after the United States (169), being the UK (48), Germany (27), Spain (26), Japan (20), Italy (19), Canada (18), France (17), China (16), and Poland (15).



**Figure 1: Number of submissions per year since 2000**

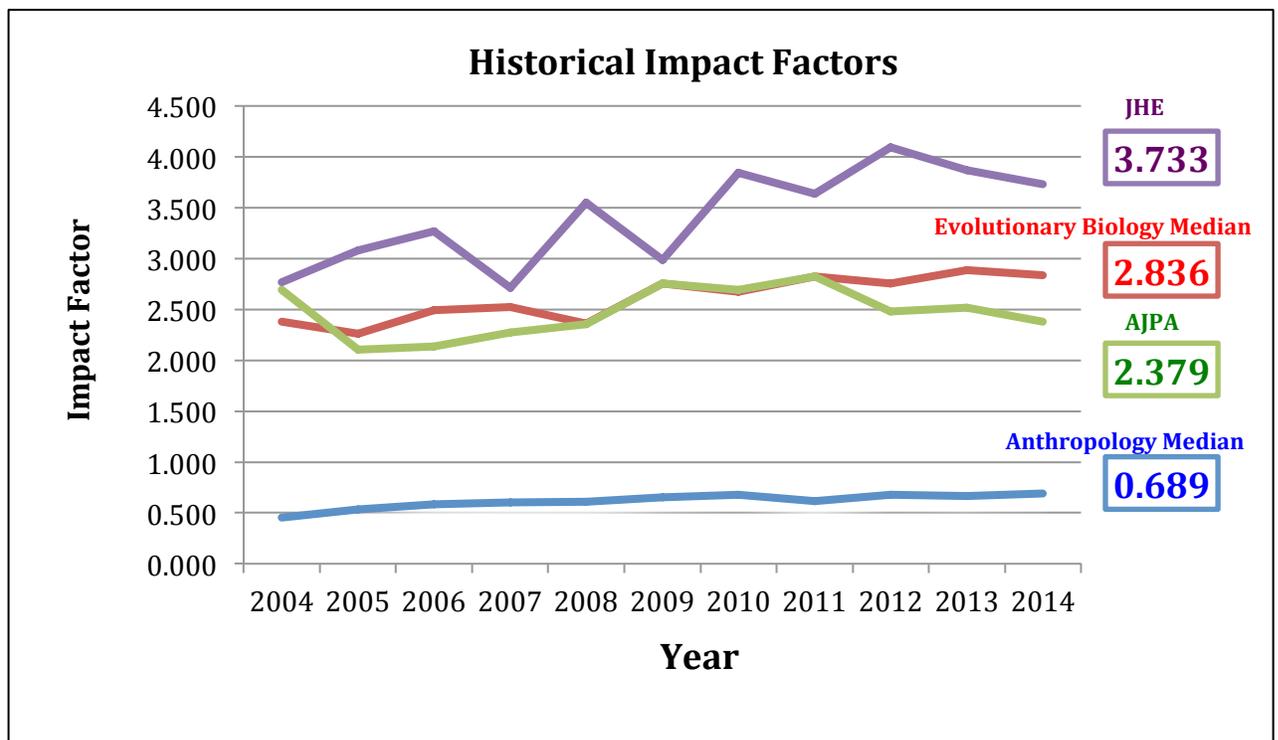
The acceptance rate for manuscripts during 2015 was 47%, slightly higher than the previous year (44%). Currently, the average time from submission to first decision is 34.0 days, and the average time from submission to final decision is 57.9 days. This represents a slight decline from last year's report (34.2 days and 60.7 days respectively), maintaining the significant improvement over the past when mean time from receipt to final decision was nearly three times as long. Appearance of accepted articles on line in Early View (at which point the publication is official, searchable, and citable) is slightly over two weeks after acceptance on average, the major variable being the speed with which proofs are returned by authors.

The breakdown of publications in *AJPA* (excluding book reviews) by major subject area is provided in Figure 2. Four broad areas dominate the distribution: bioarchaeology/paleopathology, osteology/biomechanics, human physiology/ecology/behavior, primate physiology/ecology/behavior. If primate and human paleontology are combined, that category would be comparable to the first four.



**Figure 2: Break down of published articles by subject area**

The impact factor for *AJPA* calculated by ISI/Web of Science for 2014 (the index is always lagged two years) was 2.379, a 5.4% decrease from 2013 (2.514)(Figure 3). *JHE* saw another decline in impact factor this year as well, though it is not clear whether these changes represent new trends or merely statistical fluctuations.



**Figure 3: Impact factors for *AJPA* and benchmarks since 2003**

### **3. Acknowledgements**

I am very grateful to the Associate Editors of the journal for their diligent efforts in shepherding the review process for so many submissions and for helping to significantly reduce the time manuscripts spend in review. Three Associate Editors are rotating off the Editorial Board and deserve special thanks for their service: Tosha Dupras, Trent Holliday, and Laura MacLatchy. Three new Associate Editors join the board this year: Ben Auerbach, Kieran McNulty, and Jean-Luc Voisin. I would like to extend special thanks to Assistant Editor Pippi Ellison, our editors at Wiley, Golda Thomas and Tiffany McKerahan and our production editors and Cenveo, Thomas Manbeck and Logeswari Jayachandran. I would like to thank the membership of the AAPA for their participation in the process of peer review. For all its faults, peer review remains the foundation of integrity in scientific publishing. I hope everyone takes their responsibility to participate seriously as a major element of their professional duties. And finally I thank the AAPA for the opportunity to serve as Editor-in-chief of *AJPA*.