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Editor's Letter

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EDITOR'S LETTER

In taking on the editorship of *AJP*, I want to acknowledge and accept the responsibility that this prominent journal has in reflecting and shaping the identity of the discipline. When I met with members of the editorial board on January 4, 2019 at the most recent annual meeting of the Society for Classical Studies, central to our discussion were measures that the journal might take to address the issues of racism, elitism, and other forms of exclusion in our field. Then, as many readers will be aware, just a day later, at a panel on “The Future of Classics,” Professor Dan-el Padilla Peralta of Princeton University gave a paper that offered a statistical analysis of the extreme, chronic under-representation of scholars of color in three leading American Classics journals, including this one.¹

The stark clarity of this evidence challenges all of us to reflect on what it means to teach and write scholarship on Classics in the wake of history, including the history of the discipline and its institutions. This history involves ideologically-driven exclusions based on race, gender, class, and sexuality. It has left us with a state of affairs in which a set of unstated norms have a virtual monopoly on the scholarship produced within the field. As I begin my term as editor, I have no desire to defend or to shore up this state of affairs or to evade ethical and professional responsibility for working with colleagues to change it.

Unless we attend to the authenticating institutional role of journals in reflecting and shaping disciplinary norms and expectations, then we perpetuate, whether we want to or not, the ways in which Classics has been and continues to be raced as white in the history of the United States and other nations. With the support of the editorial team, I am resolved that the *AJP* should play its part in helping to transform the practice and the identity of our discipline so that it both reflects and engenders greater intellectual diversity and becomes an exciting venue for the work of scholars of all backgrounds. I am aware that readers will judge the good faith of this commitment by the content of the journal. You will see more and more evidence of our determination to meet the challenge in each coming issue of *AJP*.

Joseph Farrell
Editor, *AJP*

¹A number of comments on these events can be found on the SCS website (<https://classicalstudies.org/node/31569>). The text of Professor Padilla Peralta's intervention is also available online (<https://tinyurl.com/y99vzyl8>).