

Statement by the Editor-in-Chief of JPAM in response to Larry Mead's Commentary in Society

JPAM condemns and repudiates all acts of racism, whether in the form of thinly veiled forms of scholarly bigotry or the treatment of people of color in the U.S., highlighted in recent protests across the country. At JPAM, we are committed to remaining a foundation of knowledge, grounded in the scientific pursuit of evidence and rigorous scholarship, and nothing else. In keeping with these principles, as the Editor-in-Chief of JPAM, I released a statement several weeks ago in response to the racist and violent acts committed against African Americans. I copy this statement below to reiterate where we stand at JPAM and what our values are:

JPAM's Statement In Response to the Recent Acts of Racism and Violence

At JPAM, we are deeply saddened by the recent horrific acts of violence against African Americans. These acts have reminded us once again that racism is not a problem of the past, it is a real and present danger that we all must wrestle with. We condemn and repudiate police brutality and all racially motivated violent acts aimed at minority populations. At JPAM, we view it as our responsibility to steadfastly remain a platform for rigorous scholarship that would further our understanding of the structural and institutional inequities and injustices in our society as well as to explore policies and programs designed to eliminate them. Publishing such scholarship will not single-handedly erase racism and racial injustice, but hopefully it will help us work toward a more just and equal society.

I am deeply troubled by the racialized assertions implicit in a recent commentary by Larry Mead published in *Society*, and I steadfastly reject them. I must admit, I was unfamiliar with the disturbing aspects of Larry Mead's work until this past weekend. Needless to say, I was taken aback by the racist and offensive views expressed in the commentary.

There have been questions regarding Larry Mead's previous position on the JPAM's editorial board. As a point of clarification, I would like to outline the timeline of my role as the Editor-in-Chief, Larry Mead's membership in the editorial board, and the process that led to his removal from the board.

It is my understanding that Larry Mead had been a member of the JPAM editorial board continuously between 2006 and the beginning of 2020. I became the Editor-in-Chief of JPAM in July 2018 with no prior role in JPAM or APPAM. As the editor, I occasionally go through an assessment of the editorial board. As part of this review, I determined after the 2019 APPAM meetings that Larry Mead's term as a board member should expire effective January 2020. I elected to remove him from the board based on my assessment of the composition of the board and my desire to work with people who share a common vision for the journal. Under my editorship, Larry Mead did not handle any manuscripts as submissions are only processed by co-editors and associate editors.

I am a firm believer in the power of evidence-based science and policy to advance the interests of society, including that of social justice. At this juncture, it is imperative for us to promote evidence-based scholarship that challenges the kind of hurtful rhetoric advanced by some scholars in our community. The lesson should be to get inspired to engage in rigorous and data-driven conversations about these important questions, no matter how difficult they may be, rather than giving any credence to non-scientific rhetoric.

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