

Editorial

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This eighth issue of the Journal of Controversial Ideas includes only four articles, which is substantially fewer articles than previous issues. One might think that the fact that we are not publishing as many articles as other journals do, or as we ourselves did in previous issues, is evidence of an improvement with respect to academic freedom, and possibly a sign that this journal is no longer needed. Although, as we stated in our [first editorial](#), when we launched the journal, our hope is that the time will come when this journal is no longer needed, we don't believe that this time has come yet. Threats to academic freedom are still coming, from various sources, both old and new.

Here is one recent example. On April 21, 2025, U.S. researchers holding grants from the National Institutes of Health were notified that if they engage in a program that promotes diversity, equity and inclusion, their grant will be cancelled.¹ That is a clear restriction of academic freedom, and if any grant-holders wish to exercise that freedom to advocate diversity, equity and inclusion in an academic article, they might welcome the opportunity of publishing under a pseudonym provided by the Journal of Controversial Ideas.

The small number of papers in this issue is due in part to our strict peer review process, which aims to ensure that only the best papers among those submitted are published (around 14% of all submissions), and in part to unpredictable circumstances, mainly difficulties finding reviewers and delays from authors who have been invited to revise and resubmit papers.

¹ National Institutes of Health, "Notice of Civil Rights Term and Condition of Award, NOT-OD-25-090 (April 21, 2025), [link to the article](#).

On the other hand, if you enjoy reading our journal, you can look forward to a special issue later this year featuring proceedings from a [conference on censorship in the sciences](#). We expect to publish this special issue in September.

We are aware that the publication, in our previous issue, of the [paper](#) on the “Intelligence of Refugees in Germany: Levels, Differences and Possible Determinants” has generated controversy and upset some. It has even been suggested that, on the basis of the criticisms advanced by Turkheimer and Harden in their [commentary](#) published in the same issue, the original article should be retracted. The authors of the original paper have now submitted a lengthy response to Turkheimer and Harden. This response is at present under review. If the reviewers consider that it has sufficient merit to warrant publication, we expect it to appear in our regular October issue.

Notwithstanding the criticism we received for publishing this paper, we believe that its publication was consistent with our mission, which is to publish articles that meet the academic standards for publication, but which other journals would not publish for fear of backlash. The fact that we published Turkheimer and Harden's very critical views both about the paper and about our own editorial judgment in accepting the paper (which, we remind our readers, is always based on the reviewers' recommendations and not on our own evaluation of the claims defended in the papers) is proof of our commitment to promote open debate on controversial topics, and to provide a forum for uncomfortable conversations.

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