

Call for Papers
for a 2010 Special Issue of *Integral Review*

“Emerging Perspectives on Metatheory and Theory”

Submission deadline: July 31, 2009

Special Issue Editors:

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Rationale

In the same sense that data may be understood as “theory laden,” we may also understand theory to be “metatheory laden.” By understanding one, we gain insight into the other.

The goal of this Special Issue is to encourage critical reflection on the writings of metatheorists and to enable significant contributions to the growing discourse on metatheory – including (but not limited to) conversations on the creation, structure, change, testing, and application of theory. This Special Issue asks contributors to submit papers that will extend and deepen our understanding of metatheory and theory.

In today’s world, we need more effective theory; and, the ability to build effective theory rests on our understanding of metatheory. So we might ask, is there anything so practical as a good metatheory? There are many approaches to metatheory. A metatheorist may build overarching frameworks, investigate the structure, evolution or history of theory, or critically evaluate theories. We might generally understand a metatheoretical approach as one that addresses all theory, or a specific set of theories.

While metatheory, as an integrative form of knowledge building, has a long and rich history, it is only in recent years that specific works have identified metatheory as a field of scientific study. Seminal works on metatheory include:

- Fiske, D. W. & Shweder, R. A. (1986). *Metatheory in social science: Pluralisms and subjectivities*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- Ritzer, G. (1991). *Metatheorizing in sociology*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.
- Ritzer, G. (1992). *Metatheorizing*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

And of course there has been a serious critique of metatheory coming from postmodern writers. Some important works critiquing meta-perspectives include:

- Lyotard, J. (1984). *The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Nagel, T. (1986). *The view from nowhere*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Contributions

We are looking for quality contributions from an international range of authors and contexts.

These should meet *Integral Review's* general acceptance criteria (see link, below) and respond to the purposes of this Special Issue.

Submissions may be drawn from any discipline and any scale of focus. Our goal is to gain fresh perspectives on this important topic. To that end, we encourage authors to submit papers that are innovative and deep and which challenge assumptions and accepted definitions. We are looking for insightful works of metatheory and, particularly, investigations into the works of metatheoreticians.

Given the depth and novelty of this topic, substantial lead-time is provided for submissions. Additionally, you are encouraged to engage the editors with questions and conversations around the topic to clarify your approach. For example, authors are encouraged (but not required) to submit an abstract or outline for consideration. Some possible topics include:

Partial list of examples of works that we welcome

- Innovations in research: What informs improvements in metatheory?
- How can metatheories be evaluated, critiqued and tested?
- Building metatheory: What is valid and when?
- If every study is at least partially theoretical, than every theory is at least partially metatheoretical. Where do we draw the line – or should we?
- What is our shared understanding of metatheory?
- When should metatheory be used – when avoided?
- What is the history of metatheory, and what insights might we draw?
- Does metatheory evolve in stages – what might be expected in the near and far future?
- To what extent is metatheory from one disciplines applicable in another?
- Is metatheory advancing purposefully, reactive, or wandering in the wilderness?
- Competing theories and competing metatheories: What might be the absolute and relative measures of success?
- Is it possible to develop the ultimate metatheory, (Metatheory of Everything) i.e. one that can accommodate all theories in some way?
- What lessons of theorizing have we learned, and how might we apply them to metatheorizing?
- What is properly included in a discussion on metatheory, what should be excluded?
- From where might we (or should we) draw our metaphors of metatheory – physics, practice, or somewhere else?
- What is the best way to engage in metatheory; philosophy, empirical studies, the background of the theorists, or something else)?
- Ritzer suggested three forms of metatheorizing (discrediting a fourth). How might his view be challenged or further developed?
- Evaluating theory: Can we ever prove what works?
- What counts as “advancement” of one theory to another?

We are not looking for desktop, blog-type opinion pieces.

Submissions in languages other than English are welcomed if they are accompanied by an extended three-page abstract in English (single spaced).

Our Expectations of Authors

Authors whose academic works are accepted for this Special Issue may be called upon to serve as one of two peer reviewers of one other work accepted into the issue, depending on matches among areas of expertise.

Before planning to submit a paper, we expect authors to become familiar with *Integral Review's* submissions criteria and processes and formatting instructions (see below for links)

Submissions process

1. Refer to *Integral Review's* regular submission guidelines and processes linked below. We draw your attention in particular to IR's *Integral Evaluation Process*.
2. All submissions to this special issue must be accompanied by the [Special Issue Author Submission Checklist. Download](#) it in Word format here.
3. The **email address** for *inquiries and submissions* to this special issue is Meta-theory@integral-review.org. *Note that this email address is different* from IR's regular submissions emails listed on the general submissions webpage above.

Manuscript format

Page limits:

There is no page minimum or maximum. Longer length works are expected to justify their length by addressing a subject that cannot be adequately addressed without a longer treatment. Length is justified by making a meaningful, substantive contribution and by writing that is exceptionally coherent, well-organized, and methodologically rigorous.

Style guidelines: APA 5th Ed. *and* see link below.

Document formatting:

Cover page that includes:

- For author or each co-author: name, affiliation, geographical address, email address, and the phone number of primary contact author.
- Statement that the fully completed *Special Issue Author Submission Checklist* accompanies the manuscript
- Statement that the submission has not been previously published and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere in either print or electronic form.

For English language submissions, an abstract up to 500 words that performs the traditional functions of an abstract, followed by keywords.

Continued.

For non-English language submissions:

- An abstract up to 500 words in the manuscript's language that performs the traditional functions of an abstract, followed by keywords, *and*
- An English-language abstract of 1500-2000 words (approximately 3 pages) followed by keywords.

Single-spaced, 11 or 12 point Times New Roman font (and see style link below)

Electronic form only: MS Word document or rich text format (RTF)

The links below convey information that will help in preparing submissions for acceptance.

[General submission guidelines](#)

[Types of submissions IR welcomes](#)

[IR's review process - overview](#)

[Orientation to the *Integral Evaluation Process*^{tm,sm}](#)

[Integral Evaluation Process^{tm,sm} for submissions](#)

[Style guidelines](#)

EMAIL FOR SPECIAL ISSUE ONLY

For all correspondence, questions and to submit manuscripts to:

Meta-theory@integral-review.org