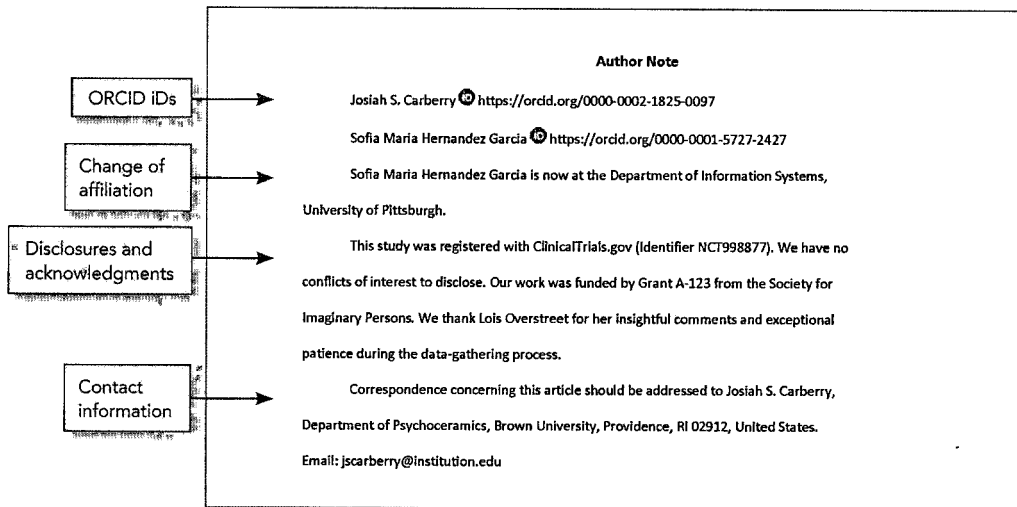


**Figure 2.3** Sample Author Note

## 2.9 Abstract

An *abstract* is a brief, comprehensive summary of the contents of the paper. Authors writing for publication should follow the reporting standards for abstracts presented in Section 3.3. Most scholarly journals require an abstract. For any journal-specific instructions, consult the instructions for authors or the webpage of the journal to which you plan to submit your article. For example, some journals publish a public significance statement, which summarizes the significance of the study for a general audience, along with the abstract. An abstract is not usually required for student papers unless requested by the instructor or institution.

**Format.** Abstracts typically are limited to no more than 250 words. If you are submitting a work for publication, check the journal's instructions for authors for abstract length and formatting requirements, which may be different from those of APA journals. Place the abstract on its own page after the title page (i.e., page 2). Write the section label "Abstract" in bold title case, centered at the top of the page, and place the abstract below the label.

Abstracts may appear in paragraph or structured format. Abstracts in paragraph format are written as a single paragraph without indentation of the first line. Structured abstracts are also written as a single paragraph without indentation, and labels are inserted to identify various sections (e.g., Objective, Method, Results, Conclusions); use the labels and formatting prescribed by the journal to which you are submitting your manuscript (e.g., APA journals use bold italic for the labels).

## 2.10 Keywords

Keywords are words, phrases, or acronyms that describe the most important aspects of your paper. They are used for indexing in databases and help readers

find your work during a search. For manuscripts being submitted to APA journals, provide three to five keywords describing the content. Keywords are not required for student papers unless requested by the instructor or institution.

**Format.** Write the label “*Keywords:*” (in italic) one line below the abstract, indented 0.5 in. like a regular paragraph, followed by the keywords in lowercase (but capitalize proper nouns; see Section 6.14), separated by commas. The keywords can be listed in any order. Do not use a period or other punctuation after the last keyword (see the sample professional paper at the end of this chapter). If the keywords run onto a second line, the second line is not indented.

## 2.11 Text (Body)

The *text*, or body of the paper, contains the authors’ main contribution to the literature. Both professional and student authors should follow the content and formatting guidelines described in this chapter and the citation principles described in Chapters 8 and 9; researchers preparing manuscripts for publication should also review the reporting standards for quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods research, as appropriate, described in Chapter 3. For guidance on the contents of various types of papers, see Sections 1.1 to 1.10.

The text can be organized in many ways, and the organization generally depends on the paper type (see also Sections 1.1–1.10). Most papers include an introduction that addresses the importance of the work, contextualizes the work within the existing literature, and states the aims of the work. Beyond the introduction, the paper should include paragraphs or sections explaining the main premises of the paper. There are many possible formats for the rest of the text; for example, a quantitative research paper typically includes sections called “Method,” “Results,” and “Discussion,” whereas a qualitative research paper may include a section called “Findings” instead of “Results,” or it may have different section headings altogether, depending on the nature of the inquiry. A brief student paper (e.g., a response paper) may not have section headings or may have sections with headings different from those described in this manual. See Section 2.26 for more on organization.

**Format.** The text should start on a new page after the title page and abstract (if the paper includes an abstract). On the first line of the first page of the text, write the title of the paper in title case, bold, and centered. The text should be left-aligned, double-spaced paragraphs, with the first line of each paragraph indented by one tab key (0.5 in.; see Sections 2.23–2.24). Use headings as needed and appropriate within the text to separate sections and to reflect the organizational structure of the content (see Sections 2.26–2.27). Do not start a new page or add extra line breaks when a new heading occurs; each section of the text should follow the next without a break.

## 2.12 Reference List

The *reference list* provides a reliable way for readers to locate the works authors cite to acknowledge previous scholarship. References are used to document and substantiate statements made about the literature, just as data in the paper are used to support interpretations and conclusions. The references cited in the paper do not need to be exhaustive but should be sufficient to support the need