

## Guidelines for Review of Essays for *BAMS*

Thank you for agreeing to review this essay for BAMS. Essays in BAMS are often opinionated and personal. They are signed and therefore do not necessarily reflect the official stances of the AMS, other institutions, or prevailing opinion. These articles are designated in print by the heading “Forum” on the title page.

You need not be concerned if the opinions are unusual or provocative or speculative. In fact, this is often desirable. You should comment on the opinions expressed in these essays; even to offer opposing opinions. You are not, however, free to demand changes to an author’s opinion or topic simply because you disagree or have better ideas. (We’d much rather you write an essay of your own in response.) We do ask that in addition you focus on accuracy, style, length, suitability, and other quality issues:

**Accuracy.** However, BAMS represents the community of meteorologists, hydrologists, oceanographers, and related scientists as a whole. Its quality implies the quality of work and thinking in the field. For this reason, peer review remains essential in several ways. Most importantly, any statement about scientific understanding or operational procedure should reflect the current state of the field. We are relying on reviewers to safeguard the quality of BAMS by making sure that what is published is scientifically accurate.

**Style.** General statements about scientific understanding may be necessary in this relatively nontechnical format, but reviewers are expected to point out where generalization strays into inaccuracy. They are also expected to point out where controversial ideas are errantly presented as wholly accepted or intuitive. We shouldn’t shy away from demanding honesty from our writers.

Since essays are argumentative by nature, it is important that you make sure that the argumentation is logical and fair. In other words, we ask you to represent knowledgeable readers to safeguard not only BAMS but also, in a way, the reputations of the authors themselves. We encourage reviewers to rein in speculation that seems unlikely or ill-founded. The article should be interesting and intelligent. It should also be very clear, even to non specialists and (if at all possible) to second-year undergraduates in science.

**Length.** Suggest ways to make the article concise. “Forum” essays should be shorter than technical articles—less than 5,000 words and averaging about 3,500 words (not counting references, figures, or abstract). Exceptions should be justifiable.

**Citations.** Essays will not reference relevant literature as completely as technical articles. It is understood that authors are building on the work of others, and essay style is designed to present reasoning clearly, without diversions. Still, we encourage you to point out where a reader might benefit from a reference. Even more importantly, we expect the reviewer to warn the author where an opinion or fact or hypothesis has improper or insufficient attribution. For instance, if the author cites an obscure finding or unusual study, it would help readers to have a reference. If the author cites a relatively well-known result or intuitive concept, a reference is probably unnecessary. It should be sufficient if the author clearly states the origin of an idea or finding even if he or she does not specifically cite the exact literature. Some informality in the manner of referencing should be tolerated as long as the text is honest and informative.

**Suitability.** Essays in BAMS will not be confused with science papers. It is essential that the community have can tell the difference at a glance. We encourage reviewers to alert us if a manuscript seems to be in a format that is unsuited for its content. Authors often mistakenly write for BAMS in a technical format when an essay format would be more appropriate. The opposite mistake is also possible. We expect reviewers to help BAMS safeguard against such confusion of genres.

All reviews should be submitted through the Editorial Manager system at <http://www.editorialmanager.com/bams/>. There you will find spaces for confidential comments to the editor, comments for the author and specific questions to be completed. You will also have the option to upload attachments (your formal review, or an annotated manuscript, for example).

We greatly appreciate your time and effort in preparing the review. Please contact Melissa Fernau in the *Bulletin* office if you have any questions. e-mail: [melissa.fernau@ametsoc.org](mailto:melissa.fernau@ametsoc.org) Phone: 617-226-3954 Fax: 617-742-8718

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