

Peer Review Code of Practice

The *Journal of American Studies* is greatly indebted to its anonymous expert readers in helping to ensure that articles accepted for publication in *JAS* meet the highest scholarly standards and, moreover, that they speak to [the aims and mission of the Journal](#). The Co-Editors of *JAS* do not believe that providing robust and rigorous critique in a supportive and courteous tone are mutually exclusive endeavours. With the aim of generating reports for our authors that are as constructive as possible, we invite expert readers to review our Peer Review Code of Practice and to reflect on the quality, quantity and tone of the feedback they provide before submitting their final reader's report.

1. **Length.** Please provide a review of at least 500 words. We do not wish to be prescriptive about maximum length but if you have a lot to say, please consider organising your thoughts under subheadings or bullet points so that authors can easily parse the feedback. (If you are re-reading a revised manuscript for us, we don't expect your report to be 500 words in length).
2. **Content.** While authors often appreciate reader(s) identifying typographical, bibliographical (or, indeed, factual) errors, please keep the content of your report substantive. Line editing should be kept to a minimum.
3. **Comments to Editor.** This box can provide a very useful steer to the Co-Editors upon receipt of both readers' reports. If you are torn between recommending "Revise and Resubmit" versus either an "Accept" or "Reject," please use this box to let us know. If you would like to contextualise your report in any helpful way, this is the place to do so.
4. **Turnaround.** We try to balance the time commitment required of our readers with an effort to deliver timely reports to our authors. We normally extend a deadline of four weeks for reviews; however, we can easily extend this deadline to six weeks if you need more time.
5. **Tone.** Please compose a review of the sort you yourself would like to receive. Ensure that you highlight areas of strength and/or contribution as well as weakness, and never resort to personal criticisms of the author(s).
6. **Due Consideration.** While we recognise that all of our readers are hugely busy, we suggest that if your response to an article is very negative, that you postpone writing (and certainly submitting) your report for 24 hours in order to offer a period of reflection, and, possibly, reconsideration.
7. **Sharing Reports.** Please be aware that, in the interests of transparency and good peer review practice, we will shortly be piloting a process whereby the final decision reached by the Co-Editors is shared with the expert readers of a given article, along with the anonymised feedback that they provided.

Sinéad Moynihan and Nick Witham
Co-Editors-in-Chief
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