EDITOR'S CORNER

Robert L. Kelly

It is a pleasure to take over editorship of *American Antiquity*. Previous editors have tried to live up to the goal of the journal's first editor, W.C. McKern, and make it "a publication of outstanding interest and sterling scientific worth." My predecessor, Ken Sassaman, certainly hit the mark, and I thank him for his service. I also thank Victor Thompson for stepping into the role of book editor, and the members of the editorial board whose names appear on the masthead.

Colleagues have asked me why I would take on such a time-consuming task as editor of *AQ*. The answer is: pure selfishness. A couple of years ago a Japanese colleague asked me to write an overview of recent North American archaeology. To do so, I laid 5 years of *AQ* on my office floor and started reading. I discovered some fascinating work, and that was exciting but also depressing. How could I be the archaeologist I wanted to be and yet be ignorant of so much? I figured becoming editor was one way to guarantee, for at least 3 years, that I would know much of what was going on in North American archaeology.

I don't want to take much of your time, but let me make some brief comments.

Authors: Pay attention to the style guide and to word limits: 10,000 for articles (including abstracts, text, references, and notes), 1,000 for comments, 750 for book reviews, and preferably 3,000 for reports. Why this concern with length? Someone once asked Abraham Lincoln how tall a man should be. His answer was: tall enough to reach from his hat to his shoes. And that's how long a contribution to *AQ* should be: long enough and no longer. Doing so lets us pack more into each issue and get your colleagues' and *your* manuscript into print sooner. Although reducing a manuscript is not easy, there is a payoff: it creates a better-written contribution, and that means *people will read it*. Excise unnecessary words; root out the passive voice; drop extraneous adjectives. And don't feel compelled to cite every reference; just stick to the necessary ones.

We also make room by reducing the white space in illustrations and tables. Please create these with the journal's column and page widths in mind. Remember that additional material (including color illustrations) can go into the Supplemental Information online. As a reminder, we do have to charge for color illustrations in the print version, but they are free online.

If you are asked to make revisions, please address reviewers' comments *explicitly* in the letter that accompanies your re-submission and make sure that letter is included at the front of the PDF that is built. Cut and paste significant reviewer comments (don't worry about minor edits) and add your response below each one. I ask this, and in fact will insist on it, because the manuscript will go back to those initial reviewers and addressing comments explicitly allows reviewers to do their job quickly.

The abstract: include conclusions! Don't write "the concept of technological organization will be discussed in light of the experiment's results." Instead, tell the reader (without the passive voice) what changes your research necessitates. Also, please have a native speaker who knows the terminology of archaeology provide the Spanish abstract. Too many of the Spanish abstracts published are embarrassingly poor Spanish.

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Finally, I aim to start the review process within 24 hours of a manuscript's submission. However, holdups will occur when I am in the field or traveling and away from e-mail.

Reviewers: Please respond ASAP to a request for a review. Even if it's to decline, that's fine; the faster I know, the quicker I can move on to another. And if you accept, please complete the review within 30 days. Treat your colleagues' submissions the way you would want yours treated.

Readers: If you ever have a problem with something published in the journal, contact me. I'll do my best to rectify the problem quickly. Otherwise, happy reading!

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