

*James Baldwin Review (JBR)*  
Refereeing guidelines

*James Baldwin Review (JBR)* is an annual journal that brings together a wide array of peer-reviewed critical and creative work on the life, writings, and legacies of James Baldwin. It is the aim of *James Baldwin Review* to provide a vibrant and multidisciplinary forum for the international community of Baldwin scholars, students, and enthusiasts.

We rely on experts for candid but fair advice in our review process. We operate a 'double-blind' refereeing process whereby author(s) and reviewers never know each other's identities.

Timeliness and the ability to meet deadlines is an absolutely integral component of refereeing for *JBR*. We seek referees who can provide input within an agreed-upon time frame, usually within 4-5 weeks.

The prime task of a referee is to assess the originality and the literary/scholarly merit of a presentation and argument.

It should be clear how the essay connects to (recognizes & advances) existing arguments & debates ('the literature'). The quality of the evidence is crucial; the integrity and careful interpretation of archival or other textual, numerical and photographic sources are of key importance; the flow and readability of the argument is decisive.

Obtuse jargon should be avoided. Analyses and interpretations should be logical and systematic, nuanced, and free of overt generalizations. The selection and use made of tabulations, maps and illustrations should be limited and pertinent. Language must not be sexist or racist. References should be topical.

The editors seek a formal written report that should include the following information:

- title of paper
- name of referee
- report and suggested outcome

The key requirement here is a clear recommendation that *JBR* either publish, encourage revision and re-submission, or reject the submission.

In addition, the referee will prepare a separate document, which will be sent anonymously to the author. Constructive criticism, from half a page to two pages, should be offered here in the spirit of collegiality. Most referees like to offer their own summary of the piece, noting strengths before commenting on matters such as flawed argument/logic, hidden assumptions, unsupported conclusions, inappropriate illustration, redundancies, contorted/impenetrable language, missing context, etc.

The referee shall attach **both** of these documents in Microsoft Word format to an email to the editors within the agreed-upon timeframe.

*JBR* prefers papers around 8,000 words in length; suggesting ways of shortening longer pieces is useful.

Referees may also write a confidential report to the editor (in case of suspected plagiarism, for instance).

Referees are expected to respect the intellectual property of the author(s) whose work they are invited to assess. They should treat a fellow researcher's submission to *JBR* as they would like their own work to be treated. Hence they may not use, circulate or refer to a submission until after its publication, and then only in the ways available to a general audience, or in the ways that do not disclose their role as referees.