

This is my first issue as editor of *American Antiquity*. To prepare this issue, I read all of the editorials written by *American Antiquity* editors for the past 20 years. Each editor begins his or her term with great hopes and promises, and each has guaranteed a better level of service. Given this history and a comment sent to the SAA office recommending that *American Antiquity* could gain more space for articles by eliminating editorials, I was somewhat reluctant to prepare an editorial promising new directions and policies that everyone will assume is just the standard line coming from a new editor.

Nonetheless, with all good intentions, I want to inform SAA members and the general readership that a number of changes have been made in the day-to-day operation of the journal, and I hope that these changes will be seen as positive steps toward increasing speed of publication and maintaining *American Antiquity*'s position as one of the world's preeminent archaeology journals:

1. We acknowledge and try to respond to all correspondence, messages, faxes, etc., within a week or less of receipt.
2. We track all correspondence and make sure that we schedule and follow through on our promises and actions.
3. All manuscripts will be reviewed and evaluated within 60–90 days of receipt. Occasionally (and only very occasionally) there are unavoidable delays, but we inform the author(s) when this is the case. For example, fieldwork and teaching schedules can sometimes make summer reviewing problematic.
4. In general, four reviewers are asked to evaluate each manuscript we receive. We actively track the review process and encourage prompt response times.
5. Given our attempt to establish quick response times, we do not ask reviewers for their permission before sending them a manuscript. However, we recommend that reviewers return manuscripts if they cannot complete the review within our required time frame.
6. We want to know if you are interested in reviewing manuscripts for *American Antiquity*. Although we do not necessarily agree with and follow the suggestions of every reviewer, we read reviews carefully and take your comments into consideration in making our final decisions on manuscripts and in making recommendations to authors.
7. If you submit a manuscript, we encourage you to provide a list of recommended reviewers. We cannot guarantee that we will always or exclusively use the list of reviewers you provide, but we will consult your list in making reviewer selections.

This issue includes manuscripts that were submitted both during and after Michael Graves's term as editor. In putting together the issue, however, I was struck by a trend that I found repeated in a number of the manuscripts. More than a few authors (e.g., Brumfiel, Waters and Kuehn, Will and Clark, and Schreiber and Kintigh) discuss how the evidence we find may look like one thing but may really represent something else. These papers could be seen as cautionary tales but, more importantly, represent an increasing sophistication and tendency in archaeology to look for alternative explanations and to test for other possibilities. The authors do not simply point out those possibilities, they try to outline ways to both identify and evaluate the alternatives. Although such work may result in our discarding some

widely held views and interpretations, the interpretations that hold are much stronger for the scrutiny.

Joining me in preparing this issue are the new associate editor for book reviews, Carla Sinopoli, and my assistant editor, Peter Cunningham. They have already more than demonstrated their able support, assistance, and contributions in preparing this issue.

As of August 1, 1996, *American Antiquity* and I will be in a new home at Michigan State University. Our new address and phone number are as follows: Lynne Goldstein, Editor, *American Antiquity*, Department of Anthropology, Michigan State University, Baker Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824-1118, (517)353-2950.

Lynne Goldstein
Editor