

## FM REVIEW 2015 15 COMMENTS

**COMMENTS TO EDITOR:** This is a well-written essay about the experience of the author on a medical mission in Uganda. I agree with the first reviewer, who recognizes its potential but also suggests major revisions. As written, the essay is unbalanced, and the "lead" is buried. In reviewer 1 and my read, the heart of the essay has to do with realizing that this sort of medical mission is about learning as much as serving. Yet this point is expressed in only two brief paragraphs. Too many words are expended on setting the stage and explaining the NGO. I do think that with revision, this will make an excellent contribution to the narrative essay section.

**COMMENTS TO AUTHOR:** This is a lovely essay with great potential, but we would like to request some substantive revisions. In particular is the issue of balance. The first page is devoted to "setting the stage," but given the word limitations, despite the lyrical writing, it needs to be shortened. Similarly, the description of the NGO and your role, while important context to understanding the rest of the essay, feel tangential. Please figure out how to convey why you're there with less detail.

The heart of your essay is your insight about the final exchange with Sam. This is beautifully written and very moving, but it doesn't say enough. Help us see in more detail what you learned, how it has changed you as a physician, and what you anticipate your learners will discover on subsequent trips to Bwindi. If you are able to do this, I think a stronger concluding sentence will also emerge.

Please pay attention to the excellent suggestions of reviewer 1 (as well as the attached comments). Personally, I like the title of the essay very much; and think you could retain the Medicine in the Mist, while revising the subtitle to emphasize hope and humility.

Thank you for considering these revisions.

**COMMENTS TO EDITOR II:** The author is a beautiful writer and tells a powerful story of the collision and hope involved in the intersection of developed and developing countries. He has done a masterful job of revision. Reviewer 1 and I were both concerned about a lack of balance - the essay as originally written "buried the lead" in the sense that it spent too much time setting the stage in Bwindi and describing the NGO, and not enough time unpacking the meaning of the compelling exchange between the author and the local health care worker Sam.

I am enthusiastically recommending publication. However, there are a few sentences I am requesting the author revisit once more to see if he can improve clarity and avoid run-ons. This essay will make a terrific contribution to the journal.

**COMMENTS TO AUTHOR II:** Thank you so much for your thoughtful revisions that are so responsive to the concerns of reviewers and asst editor. The revision submitted is wonderful. It now succeeds in highlighting the compelling exchange between the narrator and the local health care worker Sam, and unpacking its rich meanings. The paragraph addressing what you wished you had said to Sam is passionate, and raises many questions for all of us to consider. Finally, your interpretation that the

title has both literal and metaphorical meanings is brilliant (I did not see this first time around, and this version makes it much clearer that the reference works on multiple levels).

We will be honored to accept this essay. I would like to request that you consider three small changes, at your discretion. They are indicated on the attached version.

1) I still feel the "reverie of violence" needs a clearer referent to the region.

2) The reference to "illusion of the commonplace" rests within a magnificent paragraph. However, although I have a general feel for what you mean, it is somewhat ambiguous. Can you take another look?

3) The concluding sentence, while expressing exactly the right hope and danger, is very long. Perhaps it can become two sentences. Also, consider whether you can tie it back to the title without being too obvious.

Again, thank you for this thought-provoking and beautifully written piece.

COMMENTS TO EDITOR III: This started off as a good essay and has morphed into a superb one. It is well-written and communicates a strong message of global social justice. I particularly like the way the essay complicates the idea of how doctors from a developed country like the US "help" more resource-poor denizens of other parts of the world. I also very much appreciate the multiple meanings which the author brings to the idea of "mist," but literal and metaphorical. The author has done a beautiful job of reworking three awkwardly crafted sentences, and the result is a seamlessly moving essay. Please accept.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR III: Thank you for the word craft demonstrated in each of these revised sentences. The first clarifies very well the narrator's meditation on the region's history of violence. The second indeed conveys the assumption of privilege which most of us making without thinking. The final sentence, with its introduction of the word "mystifications," is fabulous - as you say, it tries together the title as well as the various ways in which you've used "mist," both literally and metaphorically. This is a powerful essay that challenges readers to consider their relationship to global social justice. Bravo.