

FM REVIEW 2017 3 COMMENTS

COMMENTS TO EDITOR: This essay, "A Model for Implicit Acceptance," suggests an interesting topic: implicit acceptance as an antidote or alternative to implicit bias. As we discussed, unfortunately this is not primarily a narrative essay as written. It provides a very rudimentary review of the concept of implicit bias, which is not appropriate for a narrative essay in any case. It also incorporates testimonials from two colleagues about facing racial bias as a physician. It does have a personal story embedded in it; and although to my recollection we have published a couple of essays about the difficulties facing minority physicians, I don't think another would be misplaced. These voices are still too often not heard. Also, both reviewers liked the piece, only disagreed about its appropriateness as a narrative essay. Therefore, I recommend reject and resubmit, encouraging the author to focus on the narrative aspect.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR: The concept of implicit acceptance is an intriguing one, and certainly one meriting serious scholarship and research. However, as written, this submission is not appropriate for the narrative essay section of the journal. A narrative essay should tell a story - your story - of a meaningful and significant interaction with patients, family members, students, colleagues or staff. The opening paragraph is an excellent example of this. As the essay proceeds, unfortunately, this story is lost. The paragraph discussing and referencing the theory of implicit bias does not belong in a narrative essay. Similarly, the quotes from your colleagues actually do not add to your story in their present form.

For these reasons, we ask that you consider a major reworking of this essay. You might consider starting by sharing a story from your own life about how implicit bias (whether positive or negative) has affected you in deleterious ways. In shorter form, here you might weave in reference to your colleagues' negative experiences with bias. This could lead into your thoughts about how implicit acceptance could serve as an antidote or deterrent, and you could tell this story as well.

If you would like this to be a truly three person authored essay, then you might consider a dialogue among you, sharing examples of both implicit bias and implicit acceptance, how these affected you, and how important sharing and support is in navigating the difficult slights and celebrating the affirmations.

The main point to keep in mind is that the narrative essay is not a forum to offer opinions or develop theoretical models. It is intended to be written in an informal style, using the first person voice, and telling a story that will resonate with readers, or make them think about situations in a different light.