

Tips for authors

Submitting a Manuscript

- Know your journal. Acquaint yourself with the scope and limits of a journal's subject field before you submit your manuscript.
- Consult the submission procedures outlined in the latest copy of the journal. If the editor requires three copies of a manuscript, send them. Observe stated word or page limits. Most editors will respond to telephone inquiries. Many journals, on request, will provide guidelines for the preparation of manuscripts.
- Look at the footnote form employed by the journal to which you are submitting your manuscript and model your notes accordingly.
- Double space your entire manuscript, including text, block quotations, tables, and notes.
- Use endnotes rather than footnotes. **Please limit your endnotes to one per paragraph.**
- Many historical journals practice double-blind peer review. Authors should therefore take steps to preserve their anonymity. The author's name and affiliation should appear only on a separate title page. Do not place your name on the first page of the manuscript or in the running heads. Do not reveal your identity in the notes through the use of the first person (such as, "In my recent article in the *Journal of American History*, I concluded that this hypothesis was balderdash").
- Do not send your manuscript to more than one editor at a time. Historical journals frown on simultaneous submissions.
- If submitting illustrations with your essay, send photocopies, not original photographs or artwork.
- Most historical journals do not accept material that has appeared in substantially the same form elsewhere or is about to do so.
- Always include a cover letter in which you outline the substance and significance of your work. What makes your research different from everyone else's? You should also identify anyone who has critiqued your manuscript. If the editors know who has read the work, they will not have to waste time asking someone to comment on an essay only to have that person decline because he or she has already read it.
- Include in your cover letter your full physical address, phone number, FAX number, and e-mail address.
- If you want your materials returned to you, enclose sufficient postage.
- Be patient. The solicitation of qualified outside readers and the gathering of evaluations often takes two to three months and sometimes more.

After Acceptance

- It is the author's responsibility to obtain the necessary permissions to quote or cite copyrighted or manuscript materials or to reproduce illustrations. As a courtesy, provide copies of the permission letters to the editor.
- Tables are expensive to set, and some journals require authors who cannot provide camera-ready copy of their tables to pay for composition. Clarify this point with your editor to prevent surprises.

- Once a manuscript has been set in type, do not try to rewrite it. Correct only errors in fact, grammar, usage, and spelling.

Reviewing Books

- Most history journals do not accept unsolicited book reviews or requests by potential reviewers to review a particular title.
- Always include the page numbers of quotations from the work under review and the title and page numbers from other works. The reference will allow editors to check for accuracy even if the journal does not footnote reviews.
- Be prompt. The historical profession is a small one. Authors and reviewers who are continually late get reputations among editors.
- If for personal or professional reasons you cannot complete an assignment, return the review copy at the earliest possible date so that the editor may find another reviewer. Remember that tenures and promotions are often affected by having one's book reviewed.
- If you decline an invitation to review, editors welcome suggestions for alternative reviewers.

(Compiled for the Conference of Historical Journals by Sara B. Bearss, former associate editor of the *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, with the assistance of Roger D. Adelson, editor of *The Historian*; John C. Inscoe, editor of the *Georgia Historical Quarterly*; Nelson D. Lankford, Virginius Dabney Editor of the *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*; and Michael McGiffert, editor, Ann Gross, managing editor, and John E. Selby, book review editor, of the *William and Mary Quarterly*. These guidelines were published in *Perspectives: American Historical Association Newsletter* 33, no. 8 [November 1995]: 19.)

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