

Historical Studies in Witchcraft and Magic

The history of European witchcraft and magic continues to fascinate and challenge students and scholars. There is certainly no shortage of books on the subject. Several general surveys of the witch trials and numerous regional and micro studies have been published for an English-speaking readership. While the quality of publications on witchcraft has been high, some regions and topics have received less attention over the years. The aim of this series is to help illuminate these lesser-known or little studied aspects of the history of witchcraft and magic. It will also encourage the development of a broader corpus of work in other related areas of magic and the supernatural, such as angels, devils, spirits, ghosts, folk healing and divination. To help further our understanding and interest in this wider history of beliefs and practices, the series will include research that looks beyond the usual focus on Western Europe and that also explores their relevance and influence from the medieval to the modern period.

The series is interdisciplinary and includes history, as well as literary and folklore studies. We also publish translations of books previously not available in English, as long as the original publisher of the foreign-language version is happy for us to do so.

Whether you will be offered a book contract for the series *Historical Studies in Witchcraft and Magic* depends significantly on the quality of your book proposal. The other main factor is a report from a referee or referees (the editors will choose the referee or referees).

A proposal needs to consist of the following elements:

Title

The main title has to be succinct and clearly signal the main themes of the book, to enable it to be identified by online searches, so please avoid quotations or evocative titles which are not specific to the book's subject. A subtitle is not obligatory; if provided, it should also help to explain the scope and significance of the book.

Summary

Four or five sentences that show the gist of the book.

Review of publications

This should show the distinctiveness of your book, as well as your command of the wider field your book should be situated in. About a page long (not much more). The focus here is on the intellectual contribution to the subject, whereas the competition section below considers the 'market' position of the volume.

Aims and approach

A further elaboration of the summary where the i's are dotted and the t's are crossed. If this is an edited volume, it is particularly important that you explain the overall coherence and significance of the volume, and explain the rationale for the selection, ordering and interrelationship of the individual contributions.

Chapter Outline

About 400 to 500 words for each chapter to explain the content of the successive chapters. This should convince us (series editors) and referees why your book is worth publishing in the series. Take at least four pages for this, or more if required. Please make sure (especially for edited collections where different people may be contributing chapter summaries) that there is a consistency of information across the chapter summaries and in particular that any issues of overlap between chapters is addressed either within these summaries, or in the author/editor's overall

statement (under ‘aims and approaches’). Inadequate chapter summaries are the main cause of negative or uncertain referee’s reports, so please ensure you have given all the information that you would wish to have if you were refereeing a similar proposal.

Competition

This section also serves to inform the publisher about the competition or its absence, so that we can judge the market. You may wish to refer back to the discussion under ‘Review of publications’ above, but here you should focus on likely sales among different audiences (see also ‘Market’ below).

Illustrations

A rough indication of amount and kind. Colour plates are highly unusual and need extra negotiation. Publication rights need to be secured (by you) before your book goes into production.

Expected date of completion

At this stage this an approximate date (but please be realistic) to help us judge the likely future flow of volumes within the series. If it is an edited collection, it is always helpful to know whether draft versions of each contribution are already available to the editor. If you are offered a contract, then we will agree a firm date with you, and adherence to this is important for the publishing process.

Length

Guess the number of words. Generally there is a limit of 120,000 words; a special case would have to be made for any longer volume. Shorter volumes are fine; note that we can also include within our series Palgrave’s Pivot publications (upto 50,000 words) which can be published more quickly than standard volumes (twelve weeks from delivery of the approved text).

Markets

You will be asked to give the marketing department something to build on. On the whole the books in the series will not cater for the taste of the general public (though some volumes may appeal to specialist lay audiences, and you should identify these if appropriate) and they will be too expensive for students (though a future paperback version might). But featuring it in your course will help convince your library that it is unmissable.

Copyrights

In case you include new versions of previously published chapters or articles, make sure that there are no copyright claims hovering around. The same applies to translations. You should keep your own copyright anyway.

Author data

Previous publications, affiliation and the lot. If you are a starting author we will ask for a sample chapter. If your book is based on your Ph. D. thesis, please expect a lengthy reworking to turn it into a book. When you are offered a contract, the publisher will want a few more details.

We realise this is a lot and that we are asking you to have written the book before you have actually done so. However, when we trust you will produce something new and exiting, we (or one of us) will help you every step of the way. If in doubt about how to complete the proposal form, ask us.

Jonathan Barry - J.Barry@exeter.ac.uk

Willem de Blécourt - wjcdeb@historicalanthropologist.eu

Owen Davies - o.davies@herts.ac.uk