

The Compleat Anachronist Writers' Guidelines

Updated: February 2015

The Compleat Anachronist is a quarterly 'monographic series', in that each volume can stand on its own as a separate publication. Each issue focuses on a topic relevant to the time period 600 C.E. to 1600 C.E. The Compleat Anachronist gives readers an opportunity to review a subject in much more detail than Tournaments Illuminated, Kingdom Arts and Sciences publications, or local newsletters can provide.

CA is happy to publish both individual manuscripts and compilations of 3-4 shorter articles on a topic. CA contributors should be prepared to anchor their subject in research while to some extent making it relevant to the readers' activities in the SCA.

PUBLICATION CYCLE

The Compleat Anachronist is published four times per year. The intended publication/in-mail dates are the 7th of the month in January, April, July, and October. The manuscript is due to the printer four weeks prior to that. This means that an author needs to have a complete, finalized draft of their manuscript, including artwork, illustrations, photographs (and if necessary, permission to use them), author bio and photograph and all references, etc. finished about eight weeks prior to the intended in-mail date to allow time for layout.

All "typesetting" and other final formatting of the manuscript, including editing and placement of photographs and illustrations or other artwork are done by *The Compleat Anachronist* editor and art director. Authors are welcome to place images in their manuscripts as place holders or to see how everything looks together, but please submit separate files of UN-RETOUCHED photographs and images with your manuscript.

In general, a manuscript is dropped into the earliest available slot for publication after the editor receives the final complete draft of the manuscript. We may have three authors writing with the intention of publishing the October issue, but whichever one of them finishes first will be put in that slot, with whatever manuscripts follow being assigned to the next available slots.

COPYRIGHT

The author of a CA retains publication rights and you can do anything with your work that you want to outside of the CA.

PROPOSALS

The first step to publishing an issue of the CA is to send a proposal to the editor. A proposal is generally a description of your topic. It can be as brief as a few paragraphs, a little more developed as an outline, or a completed draft of your manuscript. I prefer outlines over completed manuscripts unless you already have a large body of research already put together. This helps prevent a potential author from spending a lot of time writing a manuscript that cannot be used for some reason.

Before you send in a proposal, please check the index of published CAs online for other issues that are the same or closely related to your topic of interest. We don't publish new issues on the same topics as previously published issues. Exceptions can be made in cases where the body of knowledge of a topic has progressed significantly. The index is updated periodically and may not include the last few issues published. If you have already published a CA and want to update your issue, please contact the editor.

If your topic has not already been written about, please submit your proposal to the editor at: caeditor@sca.org

Keep in mind that while the CA is an SCA publication, our readers are not all SCA, and we want the publication to be useful to non-SCA readers. When writing your manuscript, please write to a general audience and not specifically to an SCA one.

THE EDITING AND REVIEW PROCESS

Each manuscript is reviewed by the editor and three other anonymous peer reviewers during the editing phase of a submission. This review process is done with EVERY manuscript, regardless of any other editing or reviewing that may have been done for the author prior to submission. How long this part of the process takes varies greatly, depending on how quickly everyone works. Please note that "peer" in this sense refers to someone who is knowledgeable or an "expert" in the topic, not a peer in the SCA.

A good rule of thumb is to plan on at least two to four months of editing and reviewing before you will be able to really put together a final, publishable draft of your manuscript. Again, this may take far more or far less time, depending on how quickly everyone does their part of the job.

The editing process can be a very tough experience for some writers. It can be hard to have your work scrutinized word by word, regardless of how tactful and encouraging the editor and reviewers are. I have both edited for and been edited by other people, and I understand how hard this can be. The writers who tend to sail right through the editing process are generally the ones who are able to listen to feedback with an open mind. They are able to accept constructive criticism and make corrections or other changes based on feedback without getting overly upset by the whole process, can dialog about changes, and ask questions when they have them.

It is very important to communicate with the editor when you feel overwhelmed by feedback, or when you feel like changes that are being recommended (or in some cases, demanded) are not in the best interest of your manuscript. Don't just disappear off the face of the earth because you are discouraged, upset, or even angry about manuscript feedback. Talk to me, and we'll work it through.

DEADLINES

Deadlines are a tough issue. The SCA is a volunteer organization, and our publications live or die on the generous donations of time and effort of our participants. Many people believe that since

writing for the CA is a volunteer effort, that they can drop the ball at any time without it making any difference. The bottom line is, if an author doesn't follow through, an issue of the CA may very well not be published as a result. In short, without you, the CA would not exist.

I really want to emphasize approaching writing, reviewing and illustrating for the CA by taking a good hard look at what it means in the overall context of your life. If you're raising three kids, working full time, and holding an office in your local SCA group, trying to crank out a manuscript for the CA in two months may not be a reasonable task. Six months to a year or even two might be far more do-able.

Once you do agree to commit to writing a manuscript, you will be hearing from me on a regular basis to check on your progress and intended date of submission of a rough draft of your manuscript. If you change your mind about submitting a rough draft, let me know so I do not continue to bother you.

Once you submit a rough draft/first draft of your manuscript, my expectation of you, barring a life crisis, will be that you are going to stay the course and finish the process by a projected deadline. While some deadlines are flexible, some are not. Delays on your end may very well mean that a quarter's issue of the CA doesn't happen. This reflects very badly on the CA staff. If you agree to have something done by a given date, I expect it to be done by that date. This publication depends on it. I realize that "life happens" and we may not always be able to get things done as quickly as we hope. We can always work around unforeseen setbacks, as long as you stay in touch with me about what's going on.

I will nurture, help, support, cheer on, and provide an occasional needed kick in the pants (who doesn't need one from time to time?), and gladly do so for any author. It is my great pleasure to work with the very talented people of this organization, but for me to do that, you need to do your part. I am looking for committed, motivated, enthusiastic writers, who are looking for an equally committed, motivated, and enthusiastic editor. It's up to you to decide whether you are one of them.

I know this sounds very hard-nosed, and it is. I need twelve of the very best manuscripts I can get my hands on for the three years of my tenure as editor. If you have the heart and the soul to be one of those twelve, I want to work with you.

MANUSCRIPT LAYOUT AND FORMAT

Here are the general guidelines:

- Chicago Manual of Style guidelines for organization of work, formatting of citations and references, etc. Not having reference sources for Chicago style is not an acceptable reason for not submitting your manuscript in this style. Books that detail this style are readily available in libraries and bookstores, and information can also be found online. Try looking here to start: [CMS Citation Quick Guide](#) or [CMS Guide: Notes & Bibliography](#)
- Word document or text format (please do NOT send your manuscript as a PDF file or as a type-set file of any sort.)

- 8.5" x 11" paper
- 1" margins all the way around
- Double-spaced
- 10-point font
- Times New Roman or similar font
- Material should be suitable in depth and breadth to fill 50-55 pages formatted as described above, including illustrations/photos and references. Our absolute minimum is 50 pages due to printer constraints with the type of binding we are using. 60 pages is the outside limit for our budget. Longer manuscripts that are more than 100 pages in length and tightly written may be considered for publication in two volumes.
- Each chapter should begin on a new page. Do not butt them up against the end of the previous chapter.
- References, Appendixes and Endnotes should all begin on a new page.
- ENDNOTES are the preferred citation style. DO NOT USE INTERNAL (PARENTHETICAL) CITATIONS. Do not use Word's citation manager to insert parenthetical citations. If using a citation manager, be sure to use Chicago 16th, Notes and Bibliography, (usually called 16A)
- All citations in the body of the paper should be listed in the reference/bibliography section.
- All references listed in the bibliography should be cited in the text of the paper.
- Authors are responsible for producing ALL parts of their manuscripts, including reference lists, tables of contents, lists of figures, etc.

ILLUSTRATIONS, PHOTOGRAPHS, COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL, AND RELEASE FORMS

Release Forms for authors, artists, photographers, and models are available on the SCA.org website's Document Library page.

- Your submission must be accompanied by a signed *Compleat Anachronist* Creative Work Release Form.
- Photographs, if applicable, are allowed and encouraged. Photos are preferred over illustrations whenever they are available.
 - Submit photos in separate files for each image.
 - Photos should be as high a resolution as possible.
 - Any photograph submitted with identifiable individual facial features (not obscured by helmets, garb or shadowing) require a signed *Compleat Anachronist* Model's Release Form from each person whose features can be recognized.
 - We need permission from the copyright owner to print copyrighted photos in the CA. For personal photographs of artifacts owned by someone else (museums, private collections, etc.), we need permission from the owner of the item to be used. For all images, we need a signed *Compleat Anachronist* Photographer Release Form.
- The author is generally responsible for supplying any illustrations or artwork desired to be included in the CA, however, I can help contact illustrators to help if needed. I strongly prefer artwork that is relevant to the piece rather than merely for decorative use.

- Please include a *Compleat Anachronist* Creative Work release form for any artwork. The author is responsible for obtaining and paying for necessary permissions to reproduce copyrighted material. I can assist with obtaining permissions if the author has difficulty doing so.

Contact information for the editor:

E-mail: caeditor@sca.org

Mail:

Ellen Rawson

3 Campion Way

Lymington, Hampshire S041 9LS

United Kingdom

I believe in staying in touch and keeping the lines of communication open. You can expect responses to e-mail within 1 week unless unforeseen circumstances prevent it - if you do not hear from me within a week, message me again.. Writers who have submitted proposals will be contacted once every 30-60 days asking for updates on their manuscripts, and inviting questions. Authors whose manuscripts are currently being reviewed can expect more frequent communication. This is not intended to nag or pressure you. If you want less frequent communication, please let me know, and I will do everything I can to give you the amount of attention you prefer.

I generally address authors and reviewers by their modern names and encourage you to do the same with me. The author's modern name is used in publication.

Questions are always welcome. If you need additional guidance with preparing your manuscript than what is included here, let me know what your questions are.