Monster Carnivals:
Guidelines for Submission

What is a Monster Carnival?

An online event on the many-headed monster blog that offers a platform for scholars of history, especially but not exclusively newer researchers, and those who study the late fifteenth to eighteenth centuries. The Carnivals provide a forum for addressing critically important themes in current scholarship.

The Monster Carnivals will have something in common with conventional academic events and may sometimes be accompanied by online or in-person meetings. They will also share some features with issues of an academic journal, and we hope that they will be read and used by students as well as scholars. Their open-access nature means that they will also have plenty of readers beyond academia, as we have regularly discovered in our own blogging. And of course you'll be able to follow along and join in the conversation via #MonsterCarnival on twitter.

Author guidelines:

- word count: posts must be a maximum of 1200 words
- should be aimed at a non-specialist audience
- must speak to the relevant 'Monster Carnival' theme (see the blog for details of current calls
- title should not be too long (easier to share on social media) and with some keywords (that search engines will pick up)
- you may (but don't have to) include a list of up to 5 items of further reading
- include a one-line author bio (can include profile hyperlink, twitter handle, etc)
- please proof-read before submission
- footnotes: maximum of 3; hyperlinks can also be used (you should embed these)
- images: send us any images you wish to use; it is up to you to secure permissions
- submit as a Word document (any images submit as separate items)

What you get:

A no-frills peer-review/editorial service: if we like it we will post it; if it doesn't meet the above criteria or fit with the blog's general ethos we will send it back with a brief explanation but without detailed revision suggestions. Authors are welcome to revise and resubmit though.

The chance to try your hand at blogging.

The opportunity to reach a wider, more diverse audience: the blog currently averages c. 5,000 views per month.

Unfortunately because we do not receive any income from our blog, we can only offer our platform, time, and expertise, we cannot pay contributors.

Submit your post and images to manyheadedblog@gmail.com

Advice for aspiring bloggers:

Below is a brief explanation of some of the key principles behind our own blogging. It aims to familiarise potential contributors (or anyone else thinking of venturing into blog writing) with the reasons why we have come to write for the monster in the way that we do. As you will see, most of them relate to our sense of who reads the blog, when and why.

We've come to think of the monster as a 'magazine', rather than a research blog, so we ask for short, succinct posts no longer than 1,200 words, and potentially significantly shorter. As blog readers, we all know that once you get the gist of a post, you are unlikely to read right to the end of longer pieces unless you have a particular interest in the subject matter. So shorter is better when writing for a non-specialist audience, and fits with blog reading as a 'supplementary' research activity that scholars use to fill in gaps between other tasks. A neat side effect is that blog posts can serve as excellent brief introductions to topics for undergraduate students, so they work well as a teaching resource.

We've also found that it's a good idea to approach a blog post in a different way to other writing, and indeed to make a virtue of the freedom the format gives you. A more conversational style, colloquialisms, and jokey asides can all find a place, or perhaps you want to write a [listicle](), or experiment by [storifying]() or [playing with genres](). One of the reasons the monster has lasted so long is undoubtedly the enjoyment we get from speaking to a different and wider range of readers, and writing just for the pleasure of it. This also explains why we want you to keep footnotes to a minimum – posts are not intended to replicate or ape conference papers or research articles.

We know that many of our readers are not early modern specialists, nor are they all historians, so writing with this audience in mind and avoiding or explaining technical language and key concepts will expand the reach of a post.