

Some example academic book proposal forms in case they help

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Image: A stack of books (Kimberly Farmer on Unsplash)

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A pivotal moment in my academic career, or at least one I remember clearly, was when a very senior professor in the US sent me his book proposal for an academic book/monograph on the author Thomas Pynchon. The other thing he included was a crossed off list of all the presses he had courted with the proposal and with whom he had not succeeded. This cemented in my mind the fact that if even the top profs can be given rejections, nobody else should be resentful of them or consider them problematic. It can just be part of the process.

The other part of the process though is writing a good book proposal and there is nobody who will teach you how to do this. It's not often part of training in doctoral spaces and most people feel their way through this by seeking behind closed doors the proposals of other academics. There are of course some books on writing a book proposal, but I thought it might be helpful if I shared some of the book proposals that I have written over the years and that have succeeded. Some of these books ended up being very different from the published versions, but I don't think that matters and actually shows, as [Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe suggested to me](#), that it's okay for organic change to take place while you write a book. I hope these might help. Dates shown are when I wrote/sent the proposal, to the best of my recollection. Not all my published books are listed here, as some were the results of collaborations and so the proposals are not wholly owned by me.

- *Theses on the Metaphors of Digital-Textual History* proposal (Stanford University Press, 2020). Pitched to SUP. [Download at KC Works](#) or [download direct](#).
- *The Digital Humanities and Literary Studies* proposal (Oxford University Press, 2018). Pitched to OUP. [Download at KC Works](#) or [download direct](#).
- *Warez* proposal (punctum books, 2017). Pitched to punctum books. [Download at KC Works](#) or [download direct](#).
- *Close Reading with Computers* proposal (Stanford UP, 2017). Pitched to Stanford University Press. [Download at KC Works](#) or [download direct](#).
- *Literature Against Criticism* proposal (Open Book Publishers, 2016?). Pitched straight to Open Book Publishers. [Download at KC Works](#) or [download direct](#).

- *Password* (Bloomsbury, 2016). For Bloomsbury’s “Object Lessons” series. [Download at KC Works](#) or [download direct](#).
- *Open Access and the Humanities* proposal (Cambridge University Press, 2014). Pitched straight to Cambridge UP. [Download at KC Works](#) or [download direct](#).
- *Pynchon and Philosophy* proposal (Palgrave, 2013). My first book, for Palgrave. Download at [KC Works](#) or [download direct](#).

I hope, as I say, that this might help someone.

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