



## Book Review Guidelines

### Characteristics of a good review:

The review should introduce the reader to the book's content and focus on the subject of the book being reviewed.

Include an exposition of how the book fits into the current thinking on the subject (e.g., a novel approach, an introduction, a magisterial review, the finest book on the subject ever written, etc.).

Avoid repeating its table of contents; rather, give the reader some idea of the author's thesis and how he or she develops it.

Focus on specific chapters you consider particularly significant or worthwhile.

Inform the reader about what is happening in the area of academic activity the book addresses; what the state of knowledge is in the subject; and how this new book adds, changes, or breaks new ground in our knowledge of this subject. The review should be fair to the author.

Tell readers who the intended audience is.

Convey the content of the book, not chapter by chapter so much as the entire book.

Add flavor to the review by including pungent or revealing quotations from the book or notable facts or findings.

Be specific. Give details. Try not to be too abstract or vague (e.g., avoid writing "interesting observations," "lots of arresting data," or "a strange view of campus design" unless you complement this with specific examples). You should submerge your own opinions or reaction.

Write the review about the book and its contribution to the subject, not about the reviewer's feelings on having read the book.

The reviewer's appraisal is valuable, but should be secondary.