

RESEARCHING BOOK REVIEWS

An enlightening book review is both science and art.¹
There are books of which the backs and covers are by far the best
portion.²

Goal: To know how to evaluate a book.
Objective 1. Evaluate a book by its internal features.
Objective 2. Evaluate a book by its content.
Objective 3. Locate scholarly evaluations of books.

In cyberspace, everyone can become a critic; as one author comments, “It used to be that everyone had a book in them; today everyone has a book critic in them.”³ Nowhere is this more apparent than Amazon.com’s controversial “customer reviews.” At its best, it provides a forum for which readers can bypass established critical forms and anonymously voice alternative perspectives. At its worst, readers trash or rave about books based on incompetent reasoning and bias. The ugly side of anonymous reviewing was revealed in February 2004 when Amazon.com inadvertently posted the identities of anonymous commentators. Apparently, authors, in attempt to boost sales, had friends write—or they themselves had written—

anonymous reviews touting their own books. For example, novelist John Rechy gave himself a glowing review, signing himself as “a reader from Chicago.” When he was outed, he reportedly laughed, saying, “That anybody is allowed to come in and anonymously trash a book to me is absurd. . . . How to strike back? Just go in and rebut every single [reviewer].”⁴ In an attempt to protect against reviewer fraud and the quality of its product, Amazon no longer accepts anonymous reviews; reviewers must establish their identity with a credit card. But beyond biased reviewing, the sales, or the bottom line, engender the importance of consumer opinion of books.

To determine the best product, whether it be a watermelon or a healthcare plan, we as consumers rely on a variety of sources: friends, family, chat room buddies, product-rating sources, and advertisements. Consumers consult these sources with the hope of getting the edge on the best product. Likewise, skeptical researchers use a variety of sources to appraise the scholarly value of a book: they may consult colleagues, elicit comments from professional listservs, and seek out book reviews. The latter especially is an important component to the scholarly communication process. Upon a book’s publication, scholars and professors react to it in several ways. They may comment on it initially through book reviews and review essays and later incorporate data from the book into an article or monograph they are writing or into the lectures they deliver. Moreover, book reviews promote scholarship and help professors and scholars keep abreast of what is new in their field.

Students use book reviews much differently than their instructors. Many students have little experience with reviews beyond those in *People* magazine or the “customer reviews” that Amazon.com posts. The latter especially reinforces the belief that all opinions are privileged, but as students become acquainted with well-written, thoughtful book reviews, they begin to realize that not all opinions are privileged and that, while everyone is entitled to his or her opinion, these opinions are useless unless backed by careful judgment.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITIES

The art of determining the authority and usefulness of a book involves two processes: scrutinizing the book’s internal features (objective 1) and assessing the value of its content (objective 2).

Objective 1: Evaluate a Book by Its Internal Features.

While a book's internal features do not reveal the authoritativeness of a book, they help to ascertain whether the book is scholarly. Unlike popular books, most scholarly books contain a preface, foreword, introduction, or any combination of these three; copious notes; works cited; and possibly a bibliography, review of the literature, or bibliographical essay. Tables 8.1 and 8.2 delineate the title page and other front matter of a book. Each piece of the front matter reveals a part of the "character" of a book. Asking questions about these pieces can reveal a great deal about the internal features of a book.

Who Is the Author?

- What are his or her credentials?
- Is he or she trained in the area covered by the book?
- Has he or she published other materials?

Table 8.1. What the Title Page Reveals

<i>Information on Title Page</i>	<i>What the Information Says about a Book</i>
Title, subtitle, author	Describes book's content and identifies author
Publisher	Different types of publishers (e.g., university, commercial, trade, society, subsidized, vanity)
Edition	Various types of editions (e.g., monograph, anthology, festschrift, revised, reprint)
Date	May indicate both publication date and copyright dates

Table 8.2. Additional Front Matter

<i>Front Matter</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Usefulness</i>
Acknowledgments	Lists individuals and institutions that assisted the author	Identifies experts, archives, and collections the author consulted
Preface/Foreword	Explains purpose, origins of book, intended audience, coverage, what is excluded, and biases of the author	determines if book is relevant to the needs of the researcher
Table of Contents	Indicates organization of information	Identifies key points of the book
Introduction	Introduces thesis and discusses the treatment or approach	Provides overview of the book's content

Answers to these questions may be found in basic reference tools such as:

- Marquis Who's Who series
- *Contemporary Authors*
- *Directory of American Scholars*

In addition, students may explore whether the author's work has been discussed by others. An excellent place to start searching is by entering the author's name as subject in relevant periodical databases. If authors' profiles mention professional memberships, the following sources can help determine author's interests and perspectives:

- *Encyclopedia of Associations* (Thomson Gale)
- Associations on the Net (www.ipl.org/div/aon)
- Scholarly Societies Project (www.scholarly-societies.org)

What Does the Publication Date and Edition Tell Me? How old is the book? For some disciplines, reading dated material can be hazardous. This is especially true in the sciences, where advances in research nullify older information. However, older research in the humanities often is as relevant now as it was when it was first published. Nonetheless, students should be reminded that any material gleaned from older books should be verified with more current research. Another clue to the currency of a book is its edition. If a book has been revised and published again, subsequent substantial revisions indicate that information has been updated, mistakes have been rectified, and new material has been incorporated. Books that have undergone several editions may indicate a standard in the field.

What Does the Publisher Tell Me? Most students are not aware of the different types of publishers, ranging from university to academic to commercial to vanity. While most books published by university presses can be considered scholarly, one cannot automatically assume that they are free of errors or poor research and methodology. For more on verifying and corroborating sources, see chapter 10. Following are basic resources that provide information about publishers:

- *International Directory of Small Presses and Little Magazines* (W. W. Norton)
- *Publisher's Directory* (Thomson Gale)
- *Research Centers and Services Directory* (DialogWeb)
- *Research Centers Directory* (Thomson Gale)
- *International Research Centers Directory* (Thomson Gale)
- *Literary Market Place (LMP)* (Information Today)
- *The Writer's Market* (Writer's Digest Books)

Table 8.3 describe a book's back matter and how the information found here can prove useful to the student.

Objective 2: Evaluate a Book by Its Content.

Novice researchers rarely question the authority of a book. They assume that the author's arguments are well reasoned and supported by an ample amount of evidence. But as seasoned researchers know, this is a false assumption, even with scholarly sources. Some books are replete with factual errors, illogical arguments, or arguments unsupported by adequate data. Using this material can adversely affect the quality of students' papers, not to mention their standing with their instructors. So, how do undergraduates ascertain the authority of book? Without advanced degrees, how can they avoid using sources that may embarrass them academically? One obvious answer is to encourage them to read critiques of books by experts in the field. Book reviews can assist students in determining how:

- documentation is handled (or mishandled);
- the book fits within a canon or field of inquiry;
- a book contributes to scholarship;
- content fits into prevailing theories, ideas, and trends;
- arguments may be used to support or refute an assertion;

Table 8.3. Back Matter of a Book

<i>Back Matter</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Usefulness</i>
Endnotes, Footnotes, References	Explains text and cites sources	Follows up on data used to substantiate assertions or facts; lists sources for research project

- key scholars, experts, and research in the field affects a book; and
- controversies, debates, and disagreements pertain to a book.

While a book review can be a powerful tool in determining the credibility of a source, it is important to impress upon students that they should examine multiple reviews. As with film reviewers, academic reviewers disagree with each other and approach content with different perspectives. Examining two or more reviews will most likely protect the student from biased or poorly written critiques. Unfortunately, the scholarly community is not immune to bad reviewers. Some reviewers have specific agendas embedded in their reviews; others want to show off their intellectual superiority or ingratiate themselves with the author; and still others seek revenge to compensate for slights or to suppress competition. Some, as Chekhov observes, just want “buzz,” as if to say, “See, I can buzz too, buzz about anything.”⁵ Yet, as David Henige points out in his provocative article on the “psycho-politics” of book reviewing, most scholarly reviews avoid these extremes and attempt to structure the review: “A few sentences set the stage, followed by a brief description, and perhaps, an analysis of the book’s contents and arguments. Then, for balance, a few nits are picked, to be succeeded by a ‘despite these, this is a useful contribution to knowledge’ conclusion.”⁶

Sometimes it is difficult to tell a book review from a critical essay. In fact, some reviews have become so influential, they become part of the critical canon. For example, Edgar Allan Poe articulated his theory of the short story in his 1842 review of Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *Twice Told Tales*. However, there are some basic differences between the two forms.⁷ Critical essays differ from book reviews in that they are published long after the book has been published and focus on a facet of the book—its theme or thesis, the author’s style or perspective, or the ability of an author’s premise, method, and research to stand the test of time. A book review, however, is about a recently published book. While it explains what the book is about, it is supposed to focus on a critical evaluation of the content. A scholarly book review generally evaluates the following:

- significance of the thesis or premises
- methods by which the author supported his or her thesis and arguments

- the author's intended purpose
- strengths and weaknesses in argumentation, method, or research
- biases in approach or perspective
- the work in context to other similar works
- the usefulness of the work's demonstration and argument of the thesis
- theoretical issues and topics for further discussion raised by the work
- theoretical assumptions

The process by which reviewers are selected differs among journals. Generally, journal editors seek reviewers who are experts in their field, meaning that they have contributed significantly to the field through scholarly publications. As for the format, reviews range from brief notices to full-length reviews (five hundred to two thousand words). Some journals publish "review essays" that assess the significance of several works linked topically. Moreover, some disciplines have journals devoted specifically to book reviews such as *Contemporary Sociology*, *Envoi: A Review Journal of Medieval Literature*, *Reviews in American History*, and *Reviews in Anthropology*. Furthermore, another format is coming of age on the Internet:

- electronic review journals, such as the *The Medieval Review* (TMR) (www.hti.umich.edu/t/tmr)
- reviews as subscriber e-mails
- electronic review databases, such as the *Anthropology Review Database* (wings.buffalo.edu/ARD)
- discussion networks, such as *H-Net Online: Humanities and Social Sciences* (www.h-net.org/reviews)

While these electronic mediums cannot replace traditional formats, they make book reviews available much faster as well as create a forum for discussion among scholars. Albrecht Classen observes that electronic distribution of reviews "tears down the traditional barriers between reviewers and authors and transforms the reviews into critical statements regarding specific issues first discussed and examined by an author and then thrown into the public sphere. This new media thus provides new

channels of communication for the scholarly community which have never before existed in this form.”⁸

Objective 3: Locate Scholarly Evaluations of Books.

There is no direct path to finding scholarly book reviews; instead students must take a circuitous route using a several electronic and print indexes. A student needs two things before starting the search. First, bibliographic details of the book, including the publication date. The date determines which tools will most likely include a review. Initial reaction to just-published books often appears in the trades and mainstream press, generally within two months of the book's publication; whereas reviews in the scholarly press—sometimes notoriously slow in bringing out reviews—may appear anywhere from six months to three years. Furthermore, publication dates are important because they will dictate which tools can be used to find them. For example, reviews of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, first published in 1963, cannot be found in *Book Review Index* because it did not begin indexing reviews until 1965.

Scholarly books are assessed, not only by the professional press, but also by the mainstream media. The bulk of these reviews are in trade magazines such as *Booklist*, *Kirkus*, *Library Journal*, *Publisher's Weekly*, and *Choice*. Many of these reviews end up in book review indexes, especially *Book Review Index* and *Book Review Digest*, and general periodical databases. For the most part, these reviews provide a brief description of the book with a dash of evaluative comment. While these reviews come out quickly (especially as compared to the scholarly press), they are of little use to researchers.

Yet, within the mainstream media, there are several review publications that provide lengthy reviews of scholarly books, such as *Times Literary Supplement* (reviews are almost exclusively scholarly), *New York Review of Books*, *New Republic*, *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, and, to a lesser extent, *New York Times Book Review*. While some contributors are professors, editors often engage cultural/intellectual essayists and novelists to assess the value of a scholarly work. Hence, their approach and viewpoints often differ from those within the scholarly community, which may explain why many academics are suspicious of mainstream reviewers: they lack background in the area, their assessments lack

scholarly rigor, and some are antagonistic to the academic community. On the other hand, many editors of mainstream review publications perceive scholars as pedantic as well as stodgy. As Mark Bauerlein points out, editors prefer books that are “relevant and accessible” and not the “picayune” and “bloviated” books that clog their mailrooms.⁹

When searching print sources such as *Book Review Index*, remind students to search for reviews within twelve to thirty-six months of the book’s publication. The earliest reviews usually are from the popular press and trades; later reviews are from the scholarly press.

CLASS ACTIVITIES

One-Hour Sessions

Generally, one-hour sessions do not allow sufficient time to discuss book reviews and their role in the research process. However, when discussing book research, the advantages of book reviews should be mentioned and supplemented with information in handouts, pathfinders, or via a Web tutorial.

Multiple Sessions and Courses

1. Compare and contrast the depth and quality of book reviews published in the trades (e.g., *Publisher’s Weekly*), scholarly journals, mainstream press, and Amazon.com. So that students can visualize the differences, display copies of periodicals that contain reviews or reproduce examples on handouts, PowerPoint, or Web pages.
2. Ask students to bring to class a book that they might use for their research. Have them practice evaluating a book by its internal features (see objective 1). Then, ask them to try to locate at least two scholarly reviews of the book.

INSTRUCTOR GUIDES, HANDOUTS, AND EXERCISES

1. Example 8.1: Background Assignment
2. Example 8.2: Researching Book Reviews
3. Example 8.3: Book Review Indexes, A Checklist

Websites on Book Reviews

The following sources provide guidelines on how to write a critical book review:

1. Dalhousie University Libraries, "How to Write a Book Review," www.library.dal.ca/how/bookrev.htm. Provides specific guidelines for reviews in fiction, biography, poetry, and history.
2. Fort Lewis College, John F. Reed Library, "Evaluating Book Sources: A Guide to Writing Your Book Source Evaluation," library.fortlewis.edu/instruct/lib150/bookeval.asp?tcgCache=Go&.
3. Indiana University, Herman B. Wells Library, "How to Write a Thesis Statement," www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets.shtml.
4. University of Alberta, "Writing a Critical Book Review," www.library.ualberta.ca/guides/bookreview/index.cfm. See also, "Book Reviewing Writing Guide," www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/historyandclassics/bookreviewguide.cfm.
5. University of Waterloo Library, "Writing Book Reviews," www.lib.uwaterloo.ca/libguides/1-12.html.

The following are tutorials for book reviews:

1. Cornell University, Olin and Uris Libraries, "Critically Analyzing Information Sources." www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/research/skill26.htm#LinkAuthor, and "Book Reviews: A Finding Guide," www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/bookreviews.html. Includes a brief discussion on the differences between book reviews and literary criticism.
2. Iowa State University Library, "Evaluating Books and Journal Articles Information," www.lib.iastate.edu/commons/old_resources/printeval. Provides a set of questions for evaluating books and articles, covering authorship, publisher, peer review, purpose, and usefulness.
3. Ohio State University Libraries, "Net Tutor: History Research: Finding Book Reviews," liblearn.osu.edu/tutor/history/pg3.html. Includes activity and quiz.
4. Purdue University, "Owl Writing Online Lab: Evaluating Content in the Source," owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research

- [/r_evalsource3.html](#). Provides indicators on how to ascertain accuracy and objectivity.
5. Skyline College Library, "Finding Evaluations of Books from Book Reviews," www.smccd.net/accounts/skylib/evaluate.html#reviews. Provides a set of questions covering author's intentions and conclusions.
 6. University of California, Berkeley, "Finding Book Reviews," www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/BookReviews.html. Covers the basics of locating book reviews.
 7. University of Minnesota Libraries, "QuickStudy: Finding Book Reviews," tutorial.lib.umn.edu/infomachine.asp?moduleID=8&lessonID=26. Includes a brief discussion on scholarly vs. popular reviews.
 8. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Library, "Evaluating Books" (2004), www.lib.unc.edu/instruct/evaluate. Provides a tutorial and quiz.
 9. University of Portsmouth, "Evaluating Books," infoskills.port.ac.uk/useinfo/prelim.htm. Provides brief discussions and questions to help students evaluate the content of a book.

Assessment Tools

1. See examples 8.1 and 8.2 for book review assignments.
2. Review the reviewers. Have students critique two or more reviewers of one book. The critique might include the following questions:
 - a. How does each reviewer approach the book?
 - b. What aspect of the book does each focus on?
 - c. Do they emphasize a summary of the book over critical comment?
 - d. What are their respective attitudes toward the book?
 - e. Is each reviewer fair and balanced? Do they balance the book's strengths and weakness?
 - f. Do the reviewers support their comments using textual evidence or outside sources?
3. Ask students to develop an annotated bibliography of books that they are considering using in their research. Each annotation should address the following:

- a. Why are you using this source?
- b. Is the source current? If not, why is the information still useful?
- c. Are there any scholarly reviews on this book? If so, cite two reviews.

The following websites provide quizzes and exercises:

1. Ohio State University Libraries, "Net Tutor: History Research: Finding Book Reviews," liblearn.osu.edu/tutor/history/pg3.html. Includes activity and quiz.
2. Regis College Library, "Quiz: Evaluating Sources," regisnet.regiscollege.edu/library/infolit/evalquiz2.htm.
3. State University of New York, Oswego Library, "Practice Evaluating Books" (September 6, 2003), www.oswego.edu/library/tutorial/choosbks.html. Very brief quiz on a book's appropriateness for a paper, timeliness, and intended audience.
4. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Library, "Evaluating Books" (2004), www.lib.unc.edu/instruct/evaluate. Provides a tutorial and quiz.

APPENDIX: EXAMPLES

Example 8.1: Background Assignment

The following assignment is to help you prepare for the bibliographical essay assignment, which requires that you select a work published prior to 1900. For each source, explain in one to two fully developed paragraphs why you have chosen a particular book as the best resource for each of the categories. For questions 1 through 4, incorporate comments from at least *two* book reviews. Cite reviews and essays where appropriate. For the author you have selected, choose the best:

1. edition of one creative work or collected works;
2. edition of collected letters *or* memoirs *or* autobiography;
3. biography;

4. literary history related to your author (Literary histories discuss an author's work from a literary/intellectual or sociological/political perspective. For example, one of the best literary histories on the work of Sir Walter Scott is Gary Kelly's *English Fiction of the Romantic Period, 1789–1830* [1989]. Kelly's book was discovered by consulting O'Neill's bibliographical guide, *Literature of the Romantic Period*); and
5. bibliography of secondary sources on the author's work (book-length, article, or chapter; do not include primary or descriptive bibliographies).
Also, please identify:
6. the institution(s) that possesses substantial archives of the author's papers; and
7. a scholarly website devoted to your author. (Describe the focus of the site and explain why it is scholarly.)

Be sure to include a works cited page (MLA style) that includes books and book reviews.

Example 8.2: Researching Book Reviews

1. Locate a scholarly review on the book *Victorian Women Writers and the Woman Question* (1999).
 - 1a. Search the *Humanities Abstracts* (*WilsonWeb*)
 - Reviewer:
 - Journal in which review appears:
 - Date of journal issue:
 - Does the library have this journal?
 - 1b. Search *Academic Search Elite*
 - Reviewer:
 - Journal in which review appears:
 - Date of journal issue:
 - Does the library have this journal?
 - 1c. Compare the results of both databases. Do they both list the same sources?
2. Locate older scholarly reviews for Neil Roberts's *George Eliot: Her Beliefs and Her Art* (1975).

- 2a. Search the *Book Review Index*
 - Reviewer:
 - Journal in which review appears:
 - Date of journal issue:
 - Does the library have this journal?
- 2b. Search *JSTOR*
 - Reviewer:
 - Journal in which review appears:
 - Date of journal issue:
 - Does the library have this journal?
- 2c. Compare the results of both databases. Do they both list the same sources?

Researching Book Reviews

3. Search for reviews of Andrew Brown's 1993 edition of George Eliot's novel *Romola*.
 - 3a. Search *Humanities Abstracts*
 - How many reviews are listed?
 - 3b. Search *Book Review Index*
 - How many reviews are listed?
 - 3c. Compare results in both databases. Do both databases list the same reviews?
 - *American Libraries*
 - *Booklist*
 - *Kirkus Reviews*
 - *Library Journal*
 - *Publisher's Weekly*
 - *School Library Journal*

Example 8.3: Book Review Indexes, A Checklist

Book Review Indexes

- *Book Review Digest*, 1905–
- *Book Review Index*, 1965–
- *Canadian Book Review Annual*
- *CBCA Reference* (Canadian)

- *Cumulative Book Review Index*, 1905–1974 (indexes *BRD*, *Saturday Review*, *LJ*, and *Choice*)

General Periodical Indexes

- *Academic Search Premier* (EbscoHost)
- *Academic Search Elite* (EbscoHost)
- *Expanded Academic ASAP*
- *Google Scholar*
- *Lexis/Nexis Academic*
- *OmniFILE* (WilsonWeb)
- *PCI Full Text (Periodicals Content Index)* (ProQuest), 1770–
- *Palmer's Full Text Online (Times of London)*, 1790–1905
- *Nineteenth-Century Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*, 1890–1899 (H. W. Wilson)
- *Poole's Index to Periodical Literature*, 1802–1881, supplements, 1888–1906
- *Readers Guide to Periodical Literature* (WilsonWeb)
- *Reader's Guide Retrospective*, 1890–1992

Newspaper Indexes

- *Los Angeles Times* (ProQuest Historical Newspapers)
- *New York Times* (ProQuest Historical Newspapers)
- *New York Times Book Review Index*, 1896–1970
- *TLS Centenary Archive (Times Literary Supplement)*, 1902–1990

Arts and Humanities

- *Africana Book Reviews, 1885–1945: An Index of Books Reviewed in Selected English Language Publications*
- *America History and Life* (ABC-CLIO)
- *American Literary and Drama Reviews: An Index to Late Nineteenth-Century Periodicals, 1880–1900*
- *ATLA Religion Database*
- *Art Full Text* (WilsonWeb)

- *Art Abstracts Retrospective, 1929–1984 (WilsonWeb)*
- *Arts and Humanities Citation Index*
- *Children's Book Review Index, 1975–*
- *Civil War Book Review, 1999–*
- *Combined Retrospective Index to Book Reviews in Scholarly Journals, 1866–1974*
- *Combined Retrospective Index to Book Reviews in Humanities Journals, 1802–1974*
- *Critical Heritage Series (Routledge and Kagan Paul)*
- *Current Contents (ISI)*
- *Current Book Review Citations, 1976–1982 (Citations from Wilson periodical indexes)*
- *Early American Periodicals Index to 1850*
- *H-Net Reviews in the Social Sciences and Humanities (www.h-net.org/reviews)*
- *Historical Abstracts (ABC-CLIO)*
- *History of Sub-Saharan Africa: Selected Bibliography of Books and Reviews, 1945–1975*
- *History Reviews of New Books*
- *Index to Book Reviews in England, 1749–1774, supplement, 1775–1800*
- *Humanities Full Text (WilsonWeb)*
- *Index to Black Periodicals*
- *Index to Book Reviews in Historical Periodicals, 1972–1977*
- *Index to Book Reviews in the Humanities, 1960–*
- *Project Muse: Scholarly Journals Online*
- *JSTOR: Scholarly Journal Archive*
- *Literature Online (LION)*
- *Literary Reviews in British Periodicals, 1798–1820: A Bibliography*
- *Literary Reviews in British Periodicals, 1821–1826: A Bibliography*
- *Index to Southeast Asian journals, 1960–1974: A Guide to Articles, Book Reviews, and Composite Works, supplement, 1975–1979*
- *Philosopher's Index*
- *Reviews in American History (JSTOR)*
- *The Romantics Reviewed: Contemporary Reviews of British Romantic Writers, 1793–1824*
- *Women's Studies International*

Social Sciences

- *Book Review Index to Social Science Periodicals*
- *Business Full Text (WilsonWeb)*
- *Econlit (EbscoHost)*
- *Education Full Text (WilsonWeb)*
- *Science Direct (Elsevier)*
- ERIC
- *H-Net Reviews in the Social Sciences and Humanities* (www.h-net.org/reviews)
- *Physical Education Index*
- *Reviews in Anthropology*
- *Social Sciences Citation Index*
- *Social Sciences Full Text (WilsonWeb)*
- *Sociological Abstracts*
- *Web of Science (Thomson ISI)*
- *Worldwide Political Science Abstracts*

Science

- *Biological and Agricultural Index (WilsonWeb)*
- *Science Direct (Elsevier)*
- *General Science Full Text (WilsonWeb)*
- *Index to Book Reviews in the Sciences, 1980–1981*
- *Science Citation Index*
- *Web of Science (Thomson ISI)*

The following indexes list books reviews prior to 1980:

- *Africana Book Reviews, 1885–1945: An Index of Books Reviewed in Selected English Language Publications*
- *America History and Life (ABC-CLIO)*
- *American Literary and Drama Reviews: An Index to Late Nineteenth-Century Periodicals, 1880–1900*
- *Combined Retrospective Index to Book Reviews in Scholarly Journals, 1866–1974*
- *Combined Retrospective Index to Book Reviews in Humanities Journals, 1802–1974*

- *Critical Heritage series (Routledge and Kagan)*
- *Current Book Review Citations, 1976–1982* (Citations from Wilson periodical indexes)
- *Cumulative Book Review Index, 1905–1974*
- *Early American Periodicals Index to 1850*
- *Index to Book Reviews in England, 1749–1774*, supplement, 1775–1800
- *Index to Book Reviews in Historical Periodicals, 1972–1977*
- *Index to Book Reviews in the Humanities, 1960–*
- *JSTOR*
- *Literature Online (LION)*
- *Nineteenth-Century Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, 1890–1899* (H. W. Wilson)
- *PCI Full Text (Periodicals Content Index) (ProQuest), 1770–*
- *Palmer's Full Text Online (Times of London), 1790–1905*
- *Poole's Index to Periodical Literature, 1802–1881*, supplements, 1888–1906
- *Reader's Guide Retrospective, 1890–1992*
- *The Romantics Reviewed: Contemporary Reviews of British*

NOTES

1. Malcolm J. Ree, "Why Review Books?" *Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics* 28, no. 1 (2003): 71.
2. Charles Dickens, *The New Illustrated Oliver Twist*, vol. 16. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951–1959), 95.
3. Ben MacIntyre, "You May Be Incompetent or Illiterate, but You Can Be a Book Critic Too," *The Times* (London), Features, May 22, 2004, 26.
4. Amy Harmon, "Amazon Glitch Unmasks War of Reviewers," *New York Times*, February 14, 2004.
5. Maxim Gorky, *On Literature: Selected Articles* (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, n.d.), 280.
6. David Henige, "Reviewing, Reviewing," *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 33, no. 1 (2001): 23–36.
7. Edgar Allan Poe, "Edgar Allan Poe: A Review in Graham's Magazine," in *Hawthorne: The Critical Heritage*, ed. J. Donald Crowley (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1970), 87–94.

8. Albrecht Classen, "Electronic Publishing and the Tenure Clock: Book Reviews and the Electronic Book Review as a New Scholarly Medium of the New Millennium" *LASIE* (June 2000), 56

9. Mark Bauerlein, "Ignore Fast-Track Assessments of Scholarly Books at Your Peril," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, July 19, 2002, B7.

