

# BOOK REVIEW



# RESOURCES

## What is a book review?

An evaluation of a recently-published fiction, nonfiction, scholarly, or popular work. Book reviews are published in a journal, magazine, newspaper or on the Web. Although a book review analyzes content, style and merit of the work, it is not as in-depth and scholarly as a literary criticism.

## Print resources in the ACC Library

### Reference books:

- > *Book Review Digest* REF Z1219.C95 [1947-2003]  
Yearly volumes containing citations and one-paragraph summaries and excerpts of reviews. Entries in body arranged by name of author (or title if work created by editors). Each volume has a subject and title index. Subjects in index include literary genres, e.g., short stories, fiction, mystery fiction, poetry, plays, etc.
- > *Book Review Index* REF Z1035.A1 B6 [1983-2001]
- > *Humanities Index* REF AI3.H85 [1984-2003]
- > *Magill's Literary Annual* REF PN44.M3 [1977- ]
- > *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* REF AI3.R4 [book reviews 1976-2002]

### Periodicals:

- > *The Bloomsbury Review* [ACC carries 1 year]
- > *Choice* [ACC carries 3 years]
- > *The New York Review of Books* [ACC carries 1 year hard copy, 1992-1998 microfiche]
- > *The New York Times Book Review* [ACC carries 1 year hard copy, 1997–2002 fiche & film]
- > *The Times Literary Supplement* [1990-2002 microfilm]

## Online resources

- > ACC Library databases on the ACC Library homepage (ProQuest, EBSCOhost, etc.) ([www.arapahoe.edu/lrc](http://www.arapahoe.edu/lrc))  
When searching ProQuest for review of novels, use the following search terms:  
*[title of book] AND (novels OR book reviews)*  
You can also click *More Search Options* and select *book reviews* from pulldown menu.
- > **Amazon.com** [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), **Barnes and Noble** [www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com)
- > **The New York Times** <http://nytimes.com>
- > **AcqWeb's Directory of Book Reviews on the Web**  
<http://acqweb.library.vanderbilt.edu/bookrev.html>
- > **Google** or **Yahoo!** search: *[title of book] review*
- > **Google Web Directory** <http://directory.google.com/Top/Arts/Literature/Reviews>  
(or Arts>Literature>Reviews and Criticism)
- > **Yahoo!** <http://dir.yahoo.com/arts/humanities/reviews>  
(or Arts>Humanities>Literature>Reviews)

## BOOK REVIEW RESOURCES

### Searching for book reviews....

- > A good place for an overview of book reviews is Amazon.com. Amazon.com, which is a comprehensive catalog of published books, has excerpts of reviews of popular books from various publications, as well reviews submitted by readers.
- > When reading book reviews at Amazon.com, be aware of the distinction between publication reviews and reader reviews (anyone can submit a review to Amazon.com).
- > A quick way to find a book review is to "Google it." In Google (or Yahoo!) type in the title of the book and the word "review" for a list of pages with reviews.
- > If you just need one good book review, a good source is *The New York Times* at nyt.com. Click "Books" under "Features" to do a search for free full-text reviews since 1996. Older reviews are available for a fee.
- > For obscure books or those that are not particularly popular, it may be harder to find book reviews. In that case, try the resources compiled in AcqWeb, Yahoo! and Google (see other side of this handout).
- > Some book reviews are compiled over time in print resources such as *Book Review Digest* (brief summaries) or in *Book Review Index* (citations only). These resources point you to the original publication for the full review.

### Did you know....

- > Many, but not all, books get reviewed.
- > Some book reviews appear first in respected trade journals, then in local or popular publications.
- > Book reviews can be a few sentences in length, to several pages.
- > Published book reviews are written by journalists, free-lance writers, columnists, as well as scholars in literature and other academic fields.
- > There are websites where anyone can submit a book review (such as Amazon.com).
- > Book reviews are harder to find the further back in time you go. The further back in time, the less information is stored and archived. Current information is more broadly available than information from the past.
- > Books that rise to the highest echelon of literature (covered in scholarly literary criticisms) start as subjects of book reviews.
- > Novels that initially received mixed reviews, but have carved out a permanent place in literature, include Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*.
- > Some people can't seem to agree about what constitutes a good book review: <http://CollectedMiscellany.com/archives/000545.php>

For more copies of ACC library handouts, go to  
[www.KnowledgeResearch.homestead.com/ACC.html](http://www.KnowledgeResearch.homestead.com/ACC.html)