



CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF A NON-FICTION BOOK: FINDING BOOK REVIEWS, AUTHOR INFORMATION, ETC AT DOHERTY LIBRARY

GETTING STARTED: SUGGESTIONS FOR FINDING A GOOD BOOK ...

- ▶ Keyword search the [library's catalog](#). Use simple words that best describe your subject(s). Jot down several call numbers then browse these areas of the book stacks.
- ▶ Use subject bibliographies in the library's reference collection. Find great history books in *The American Historical Association's Guide to Historical Literature* (REF D 20 .A55 1995), or try the *Reader's Guide to the Social Sciences* (REF H 41 .R45 2001). Ask the librarian how to find others.
- ▶ Scholarly journals are filled with book reviews. Peruse titles appropriate to your course assignment. Are you interested in 19th Century history? Browse back issues of [Victorian Studies](#). Women's history? Try the *Journal of Women's History*. The library also has: *New York Times Book Review* (Sunday edition of the *New York Times*), the *Times Literary Supplement* and the *New York Review of Books*.
- ▶ Read an award winning book. What's controversial? What's making news?
[Pulitzer Prize](#) - <http://www.pulitzer.org/>
[National Book Critics Circle](#) - <http://www.bookcritics.org/> (select NBC Circle Award link)
[Los Angeles Times Book Awards](#) - <http://www.latimes.com/extras/bookprizes/>
American Booksellers Association: Book Sense Book of the Year Award -
<http://www.bookweb.org/news/awards/3433.html>
The Bancroft Prize from Columbia University (American History)-
<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/eguides/amerihist/bancroftlist.html>
American Historical Association's prizes for best history books (all fields)-
<http://www.historians.org/prizes/awarded/index.htm>
 AHA's [John H. Dunning Prize](#) for U.S. History -
<http://www.historians.org/prizes/awarded/DunningWinner.htm>

FINDING BOOK REVIEWS OF YOUR ASSIGNED BOOK



USING THE LIBRARY DATABASES:

You may prefer heading straight to the library's [online databases](#). Some of these databases will provide the full text reviews, others only the citation. Databases most popular for finding book reviews are:

[Academic Search Premier](#) – Thousands of journals; all subject areas.

Search tips:

A basic keyword search works fine here.

Use your author last name AND a keyword or two from the title.

Try adding the keyword [review] to your search.

JSTOR – Full text scholarly journals; most subject areas covered.

Search tips:

Go to the Advanced Search screen and use simple keywords just like above - author last name, title words.

Narrow your “types” to review

Further limit your search to a discipline (e.g. history) .

Social Science Abstracts Plus Full-text – Multi-disciplinary focusing on the social sciences.

Search tips:

In Basic search, use your author last name AND a keyword or two from the title.

Click on the grey More Search Options tab towards the bottom of the screen. Under Document type: select “review”

America: History and Life (U.S. and Canadian history from pre-historic times to the present)

Historical Abstracts (World history from 1450 to the present)

- Quality history journals are indexed in these complementary databases.

Search tips:

Try the author’s last name AND a keyword from the book’s title in the keywords search box

Select Book Reviews under the “limit to” options, OR just add the keyword [review] to your search.

Lexis Nexis Academic – major newspapers and periodicals

Search tips:

Go to the News section of the database.

Select the news category – “Arts & Sports News”

Select the news source – “book, movie, music, and play reviews”

Enter your author last name and a keyword from the book’s title in the search terms field.

Select the appropriate date range

Note: Only a few of the Library’s nearly 80 databases are listed here. Explore the Library’s

Databases by Subject list to find more indexes in your book’s subject area.



STANDARD BOOK REVIEW INDEXES:

The library’s standard book review indexes are ***The Book Review Index*** and the ***Book Review Digest***. These indexes are kept in paper format - not online. Find them in the Reference Indexes area, along the south wall of the Silent Reading Room in Doherty Library.

Book Review Index – REF Z 1035 .A1 B6. (We have from 1965 to the near present)

How to Use: Choose the volumes for the year your book was published and the year following; our copies go back to 1965. Look up your book’s author or title. You will find a brief citation to each book review. Journal titles are also abbreviated – so use the key at the front of the book. The title key at the front of each volume explains the abbreviations for the journals indexed. You will need the entire citation (journal title, date, volume, page #s, etc) to find the review.

Book Review Digest - REF Z 1219 .B72. (We have from 1905 to 2001)

How to Use: Use this the same way you use *Book Review Index* – searching for your author’s name around the years their book was published and using the key at the front of the book to verify the publication title.

 **FINDING BOOK REVIEWS CONTINUED**
**GETTING THE REVIEW WHEN ALL YOU HAVE IS THE CITATION:**

Use the library's online [journal holdings A to Z](#) list on the library's web page. This is a master list of all the periodicals we own, no matter what their format (e.g. paper, microform, online etc).

▶ Perform a title search for the title of the magazine, periodical or newspaper in which your book review appeared. Remember to check the date range to see if we have the year / month / issue that you need.

 **AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES: LEARNING ABOUT YOUR AUTHOR...**

[Biography and Genealogy Master Index](#) This database indexes reference books and other biographical sources including individual volumes of *Contemporary Authors*, *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, the *Directory of American Scholars* (REF LA 2311 .D57) and more.

Search tips:

Use your author's last name. Be aware of any variations in the spelling or format of your author's name that might occur (use of just a first initial instead of full name, etc.).

Use the [library's catalog](#) to locate any materials listed in the index.

[Literature Reference Center](#) Easy to use, full-text database providing online access to Gale literary reference sets such as the *Dictionary of Literary Biography* and the *Contemporary Authors* series.

Search tip: Enter your author's last name at the initial search screen.

▶ If you prefer print, use the latest index volume from the *Contemporary Authors* set (REF Z 1224.C62 Index) in the library's Silent Reading Room. Use it to identify the any Gale sets in which your author appears.

The Internet - Search [Google](#) (Tip: type your author's name in "quotes") or use a meta-search site like [Dogpile](#).

▶ An author may have his/her own web site or be featured on a publisher's web site.
▶ Many non-fiction writers are also teachers, as they rarely live off of book sales alone. Their credentials and a brief biography might appear on a college or university web site. You might even find their email address...