

FR335U term paper:  
Book review option

## Book review

### **Organization**

Write about the book first (4 pages), the article second (1-2 pages). If, however, you have a justifiable reason for reversing this order, you may do so. You may treat the reviews as separate and distinct pieces.

### **Length**

- Approximately 1250-1500 words (not including bibliography)

### **Content**

- Begin with a summary of the book's content and a judgment of its quality.
- If available (perhaps in the book's preface or introduction), provide a statement of why it was written, of what the author's scholarly purpose is. (e.g., Does s/he seek to answer a particular question, new or old? to provide an alternative to existing accounts of the subject? to present new material or ideas that have not been previously available?) This should be mentioned in the first 1-2 paragraphs of your review.
- Give a linear summary of the major content areas.
- Conclude with a more nuanced judgment on the book: indicate its strengths and weaknesses, and explain what readers of this book will learn by reading it.

Be sure to address and include answers to the following questions:

- Does the book have a clear thesis statement? If so, what is it? How is it supported?
- What primary and secondary sources does the author rely on?
- Is the author consistent in her/his reasoning?
- Is the work clearly written? Well organized?
- What did you learn from it that was interesting? Where did you find it tedious or difficult to understand? These markers of your own experience in reading are an essential component of the review.

### **Documentation**

- Provide a bibliographic entry at the beginning of each review, as in the two model reviews provided.
- It is not necessary to provide documentation as in a regular research paper, since it is clear that you are basing your article on the referenced work. However, **do include a few representative quotations** (not too long) to sum up the author's purpose and/or a statement of key ideas. Quotes should be referenced by their page number, in parentheses. Example: (Nelson 27).
- If you do use any sources besides the works you review, then you must attribute any ideas or statements, either quoted directly or paraphrased, by providing the source and the page number and a bibliographic entry. **Failure to do so is plagiarism.** The use of plagiarized material will result in a grade of "zero" for this assignment.

## Article review

Here your aim is 1) to summarize the article, and 2) indicate its purpose and its thesis and the sources used. You should provide some judgment on the merit of the article and whether its reasoning is solid. It is not necessary to provide the additional information that you put into the book review (concerning readers, writing quality, etc.). However, if possible, try to make some connection between the content of the article and the content of the book, and include a sentence or two in this regard at the beginning of the article review.

As in the book review, a quote or two may be useful to sum up key aspects of the article.

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**Format:**

- 1-inch margins, 12-point font
- Double-spaced (not single or 1-½ spaces)
- Pages **MUST** be numbered
- Use footnotes (bottom of page), not endnotes
- Use MLA guidelines for documenting your sources (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>).

Caution: do not wait until the day your paper is due to learn about MLA format.

**Due date:** Friday, June 7

- Provide a **hard copy** (no electronic submissions); double-sided printing encouraged.
- If you want your paper returned, also provide a stamped, addressed envelope.
- If you submit by 5:00 pm, turn it in to the WLL office, NH491.
- If you submit after 5:00 pm, slide it under my office door (NH451-G).

**Documentation:**

You must attribute any ideas or statements, either quoted directly or paraphrased, by providing the source and the page number. Failure to do so is plagiarism. The use of plagiarized material will result in a grade of “zero” for this assignment.

**Title:**

Give your paper a descriptive title that accurately represents the content. The title is the first thing a reader sees; it can make a bad impression or a good impression. It should be concise. If it has some interest, all the better.

**Expectations for writing:**

- Your writing should be clear, with proper punctuation, correct word-usage, and without sentence fragments or run-on sentences.
- Before turning in your paper, let it rest, and let yourself rest. Then re-read it, correct errors and change wording as necessary to improve clarity.
- Do not try to put too many ideas in one sentence: this often leads to confusion on the part of the reader. A single sentence cannot bear too much weight: if you have multiple ideas, distribute them over multiple, linked sentences.
- “Make the paragraph the unit of composition: one paragraph to each topic” (Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*).
- The research and writing of this paper is to be your own work. You are not allowed to engage the services of a term-paper writer or a professional editor. If you need help with your writing, I strongly urge you to make use of the services of the PSU **writing center** (Cramer 188, 725-3570; <http://www.writingcenter.pdx.edu/>). Anyone who makes use of the services of the Writing Center may ask for and will be granted an extension on the due date for their paper.