

Book Evaluation Form

The following outline might be helpful when writing a book review. The text boxes provided are meant to give the writer an idea of how much to write about each of those sections. After the outline, please note the definitions of the terms listed.

NAME:

DATE:

CITATION:

SCOPE, THEME, & AUDIENCE:

QUESTIONS & THESIS:

EVALUATION:

CITATION: A full bibliographic citation of the book in the *Chicago* style (from the *Chicago Manual of Style*; same as *Turabian's Guide*); also include the number of pages.

SCOPE, THEME, & AUDIENCE: State the topical and chronological limits of the book. What did the author write about, and when did it happen historically? Also, who is the proper audience of the book?

QUESTIONS & THESIS: This is the most important part of a book review! If you are not able to determine the author's questions or thesis, then you cannot evaluate whether or not the author has answered the question(s) or proven the thesis. Simply put, the question (or questions) is whatever the author set out to find out about the scope and theme. The thesis is the answer, that is, the argument, or assertion, or conclusion that the author is trying to prove to the reader. It is not the same as the scope and theme. A good way to determine the thesis is to read the introduction and conclusion first, to see exactly what the author wrote about, and what arguments the author made about the chosen topic.

SUMMARY OF ARGUMENTS & USE OF EVIDENCE: Explain the various points as well as the kinds of evidence (both sources and examples) cited by the author in support of the thesis. Because of the limited amount of space to cover this section, focus on the main points used by your author in proof of the thesis. If you use direct quotes from your author, enclose them in quotation marks, and provide the page number (in parentheses) where the quote appears in the text.

EVALUATION: Give the impression of the book. Was it clearly written and easy to understand? Was it unclear or vague? Did the author prove his or her thesis? Were maps, graphs, or glossaries provided to help in your understanding of the book? How does this book relate to other books you have read on this or related topics? What further avenues of inquiry can be inferred? Whatever you contend in your evaluation, you should cite specific examples. For example, if the author uses verbose sentences, then provide one.

Created by Professor Andrew Schocket, BGSU History Department.
Presented by Brittney Bayless, September 2004.