

BOOK REVIEW GUIDELINES

Dr. Haskins

The critical book review should be **five double-spaced** typewritten pages in length utilizing the standard font as on this sheet. The topic of the book must fall within the scope and nature of the course. Your book must be a secondary source, either a monographic study or a biography. **Do not review** a primary source, edited work, multiauthor compilation, or general survey. The book you review **must** contain a bibliography and/or footnotes showing references. **NOTE: your book must be approved by the instructor by mid-semester.** Your report should cover each of the categories below and should be in a narrative format (not outline) that is normal for published reviews.

1. **Correct Citation.** Placed at the top of the first page.
A.J.P. Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe: 1848-1918. 1st ed. London: Oxford University Press, 1954.
 2. **Biographical/professional information about the author** (one or two paragraphs).
 - *3.**Purpose for writing the book.** Does the text carry out the basic objective as defined by the author? Does the title accurately describe the content of the book?
 - *4. **Author's thesis.** What is the primary argument that the author is trying to prove. Is the thesis proven in the text? (NOTE: this point must be carefully assessed by the reviewer; all books have a primary argument about the subject).
 5. **Brief summary of the scope of the book.** This section should not be a factual summary, but should focus on interpretative questions that the author goes into. Note if the author proves his statements or simply asserts them. Are any important subjects relevant to topic omitted? Can you determine any points in which the author differs with other writers, or accepted viewpoints covering the same subject?
 - 6.**Author's bias, point of view, etc.** (NOTE: all authors write from a particular perspective that might cause a bias, such as nationality, date of the research, etc)
 - *7.**Analysis of the sources.** Is the research thorough? Is the source material appropriate for the subject? Has the author ignored any works or types of materials? Did he/she get into the archives? Did the author depend too much on secondary sources? Note any of the sources that the author uses extensively. Is the text fully and clearly documented?
 - 8.**Evaluation of the author's writing style.** Note the usage of words, grammar, and the author's ability to make the text "flow." Is the text clearly and logically organized?
 9. **Value of the work** Brief statement about the book's contribution, if any, to historical knowledge. For whom is this book most profitable (college students, graduate students, laymen)?
- *a careful analysis of these items is a requisite for an "A" paper.

Do not copy book reviews. Plagiarism will be grounds for failure. If you wish to comment on what a critic has to say about the book, indicate the source by a footnote. Do not submit reviews written in connection with other courses. This report will be equal to one half of one exam. LATE PAPERS WILL BE PENALIZED.