



http://www.keystone.edu/Miller_Library

When you need to know about the critical reception of a book, the Miller Library has many sources to consult. The listing below is an overview of sources that contain reviews about books from many subject areas. If you are looking for reviews in a specific discipline, please ask a reference librarian for assistance.

When searching the indexes listed below, it is important to recognize the sources publishing the book reviews. There are many journals, such as *Library Journal*, *Choice*, *Booklist*, and *Publishers' Weekly*, which serve as tools for individuals involved in the purchasing of books (like librarians for libraries). While the reviews may still be useful, they are often very short and may not contain as much critical evaluation as other sources. If you are not familiar with a particular title, most of the indexes listed below contain a word count of each review. This makes it very easy to discern the long from the short reviews.

The New York Times Book Review and the *TLS* (Times Literary Supplement) are standards in the field and are indexed by the majority of the sources listed below. Other popular titles known for extensive reviews include *The New Republic*, *The Atlantic*, & *Harper's Magazine*. Also, some of the indexes include citations to book reviews from journals in specific disciplines, like *The Journal of American History*. These are excellent reviews to consult because they are most often written by experts in the fields.

Establishing Publication Dates

Reviews are often—though not always—tied to the publication date of the book as most reviews occur shortly after the title's release. If you need help identifying the date of publication, websites like Barnes & Noble and Amazon are helpful. Also, releases of the title in alternate formats i.e. film or theater and/or current events may spark a renewed interest in the title that often results in another wave of reviews.

Print Sources

Book Review Digest

Access is by author, title, and subject. Excerpts of the reviews are included. It should be noted that the majority of the reviews indexed do not come from scholarly, academic journals.

Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature

Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature is produced by the same publisher, H.W. Wilson, which publishes Book Review Digest. Citations to book reviews, therefore, were generally omitted until March 1976 (vol. 36). Beginning with that volume, citations to book reviews are listed in a separate section at the end of each volume. It is an author/editor index with title access only if the publication has no author/editor.

Electronic Sources

Expanded Academic ASAP (1980 to present, some full text)

Expanded Academic ASAP, an index to hundreds of periodicals, also includes book reviews, some of which are full text. The best way to search for reviews is by using a combination of the book title and the word **review!** in the keyword mode. The exclamation point is a wildcard and allows for the retrieval of both **review** and **reviews**. You can also identify reviews by searching for the author of the book as a subject.

Ebsco's MasterFile Premiere (varies by title with some dating as far back as 1975, updated daily).

Ebsco's MasterFile Premiere provides full text for nearly 2,000 general periodicals covering a broad range of disciplines including general reference, business, education, health, general science, multi-cultural issues and much more. This database features 5,000 full text *Magill Book Reviews* and offers PDF backfiles as far back as 1975 for key publications including *American Libraries*, *Foreign Affairs*, *History Today*, *Judaism*, *Library Journal*, *National Review* and *Natural History*. The best way to search for reviews is by using a combination of the book title and the word **review**.

Lexis Nexis@Academic Universe (coverage depends on title; most indexed from the early 1990s, updated continuously)
 Lexis/Nexis provides access to articles from hundreds of newspapers and journals, the majority of which are full text. To access book reviews, select the **News** category from the main screen. From the next screen, select **Arts & Sports**. Below is a sample search for reviews of Philip Kerr's *Second Angel*. Be sure that **Book, movie, music & play reviews** is selected in the source field. The date range can be changed either through the pull-down menu or a date range can be inputted. For additional tips on finding book reviews in this database, consult a reference librarian

The screenshot shows a search form with the following fields and options:

- Keyword:** second angel (with a red "Entry Required" note and "e.g. Titanic" example)
- Narrow search with additional terms:** kerr (with "e.g. oscar OR academy award" example)
- Source:** Book, movie, music & play reviews (with a "Source List" link)
- Date:** Previous year (selected), with options for "From:" and "To:" (with an "Examples" link)
- Buttons:** Search and Clear Form

Proquest (1971 to present, some full text)
 Proquest indexes book reviews from hundreds of journals and newspapers, some of which are available in full text. For the easiest method to access book reviews, place your cursor on the box labeled **Search Methods**, which is located along the top of the screen. From here, select the **Guided** option. In the article type field, you can limit your search to book reviews. An example is shown below.
Note: Be sure to make changes to the date range as needed.

The screenshot shows a guided search form with the following fields and options:

- Search for:** theodore rex
- AND** [dropdown] in the **All Basic Search Fields*** field.
- AND** [dropdown] in the **All Basic Search Fields*** field.
- AND** [dropdown] in the **All Basic Search Fields*** field.
- AND** [dropdown] All [dropdown] in the **Publication type** field.
- AND** [dropdown] book review [dropdown] in the **Article type** field.
- AND Date range:** Current [dropdown] Any Month [dropdown] 1999 [dropdown] to Any Month [dropdown] 2003 [dropdown]
- Show results with full text availability only
- Show peer reviewed articles
- Show total number of articles

Social Science Index & Humanities Index (1974 to current)
 Both of these indexes include reviews of books, videos, sound recordings, etc. in the areas of Social Science (anthropology, economics, geography, law and criminology, political science, social work, sociology and international relations) and Humanities (Literature, Communications, Linguistics, History, Fine Arts, Film, Religion, Journalism, Popular Culture and Philosophy). When searching, enter the title and select **Book Review** from the drop-down menu labeled **Document Type**.

Document Type: Book review [dropdown]

World Wide Web Sites

H-Net Reviews in the Humanities and Social Sciences (1993 to present)

H-Net Reviews is an online scholarly review journal that publishes not only book reviews but also reviews of film, software, museum exhibits, and World Wide Web sites. You can search by keyword or browse by year or review publication.