

Political Science 201—Introduction to Government and Politics

For this particular assignment, you are required to write a book review that draws on other book reviews. This guide will help you understand the distinctions between the various resources and how you can find them.

SEARCH TERMS FOR LOCATING CRITICAL INFORMATION ON BOOKS

It is relatively easy to locate reviews of books, whether they are located in the library (in electronic or print formats) or through the World Wide Web. In either instance, you will need to employ a series of terms that will help you locate the materials. Keywords that you should consider employing to locate general sources include:

- ~ book(s)
- ~ literary
- ~ literature
- ~ publication
- ~ specify the name of your book (i.e., *What is America?*, etc.)

The preceding terms can be paired with the following terms to help you narrow your search:

- ~ review
- ~ critique
- ~ critic
- ~ commentary
- ~ evaluation
- ~ analysis
- ~ history/historic
- ~ authenticity
- ~ inaccuracies

It is important to note that there is more than one way to describe anything, so mix and match your terms to yield the best possible search results.

In the library's online catalogue (<http://darius.uleth.ca/search~S2>), use the word AND to connect terms from one list to another when employing a keyword search to find print resources in the library.

If you cannot find enough information in the library's print resources, use any of the databases/online periodical indexes (<http://www.mhc.ab.ca/library/databases/>). Databases that you might want to use include:

- ~ any under the *General/ Multidisciplinary* heading
- ~ most under the *English (Language and Literature)* heading
- ~ any under the *Canadian Studies* heading (with the possible exception of *E-STAT*)
- ~ any under the *Political Science* heading

You might need to use the Interlibrary Loan Service (<http://www.mhc.ab.ca/library/interlibraryloans.html>) to order articles that are not full-text in the database or library.

Online search engines (i.e., A9, Google, Yahoo, etc.) do not require you to use AND to connect terms—those search tools assume that for you.

AUTHOR INFORMATION

When searching for information about the author, consider the following resources:

- ~ *Contemporary Authors* database
- ~ "Who's Who" books
- ~ Author's personal or publisher Web pages (contact either directly via e-mail)
- ~ Other/past book reviews or articles

SEARCHING FOR HISTORICAL RESOURCES

All of the books in this particular assignment are centered in the midst of historical and political events. If you are unfamiliar with the general events of a particular era, consider employing a bibliographic dictionary (“Who’s Who” books), chronologies, or encyclopedias. From these types of sources, principle events, movements, and figures in particular eras can become more apparent.

Regardless of the search tool you employ, whether it is the library’s online catalogue, databases or Web search engines, you will need to locate historical resources to subjectively evaluate the accuracy of the books that you are reviewing.

You should consider the events, people and places that are depicted or mentioned in the book—context is all-important. Some names that some of you might consider employing include:

- ~ Obama, Barack
- ~ Harper, Stephen
- ~ Khadr, Omar
- ~ Suzuki, David

Also consider employing geographic or event names, either singularly or in combination with a historic figure, to help define the dates and events mention in the books. Some terms for events that you could employ include:

- ~ twentieth (20th) century (1900s)
- ~ water and environmentalism
- ~ U.S. Presidential Election—2008
- ~ Canada and politics
- ~ Guantanamo Bay

PHRASE SEARCHING

Phrase searching allows you to look for very specific information. By putting a series of words between quotation marks, a search tool (such as the library’s online catalogue or Google Scholar) will look for that particular set of words.

- ~ “blue covenant”
- ~ “growing tiger”
- ~ “while canada slept”

RESOURCES IN THE LIBRARY’S COLLECTION

The Book Review Digest (1940-current), *Canadian Book Review Annual* (1975-current)

These publications (located at the front of the “Periodical Back Issues” collection in the Library) contain a variety of book reviews.

Books in Canada (1971-current)

This publication is located in the “Periodical Back Issues”. It is indexed in the *Canadian Periodical Index* (CPI.Q.) database.

Literary Review of Canada (1995-current)

This periodical is located in the Library’s periodical collection. It is indexed in the *CBCA Reference* database.

Quill & Quire (1977-current)

This periodical contains information and reviews relating to Canadian publishing. It is indexed in the *CBCA Reference* database.

WEBSITES FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

Amazon.ca/Amazon.com

<http://www.amazon.ca> OR <http://www.amazon.com>

These websites often contain reviews by publications and readers. Many reviews were originally in print format, and references can be found. Those submitted by Amazon customers are not really desirable for this project.

Bowker's Global Books in Print

<http://www.globalbooksinprint.com/>

This website is only accessible on campus without a password. Locate the book's entry and you will find a host of information about the title.

Chapters/Indigo

<http://www.chapters.indigo.ca>

Like Amazon, this bookseller will contain many reader reviews, as well as reviews from other media.

Choice Reviews Online

<http://www.cro2.org/>

Like *Bowker's Global Books in Print*, this website is only accessible on campus without a password. Locate the book's entry and you will find a host of information about the title.

Kirkus Reviews

<http://www.kirkusreviews.com/>

This site provides reviews for more than 5,000 titles per year. Kirkus writes that its reviews are "reliable and authoritative, written by specialists selected for their knowledge and expertise in a particular field." Kirkus Reviews are also indexed and in full-text from 2001-2008 via the *Academic Search Complete* database.

Search Engines

<http://scholar.google.ca>; <http://bing.com>; <http://www.yahoo.com>; <http://www.a9.com/>

Try these search engines using the title of your book and the phrase "book review" (or some variation of that phrase). Each search engine will yield different results so try different terms in different engines for the best results. You might want to locate the publisher of each particular book. Publishers will often post reviews of their publications on their sites. Some books will have their own websites.