

Sample format for Ohioana book reviews

AuthorLastName, AuthorFirstName. *The Title of the Book*. The Name of the Publisher (Anytown, OH) 2017 PB/HB \$57.49.

Thank you! When you write a review, you put a book in front of Ohio librarians who can then recommend a book to their patrons. You let the readership of the *Ohioana Quarterly* know about a book they should be reading. You support an Ohio writer or the topic of Ohio by giving it some much-deserved attention. Writing a book is one heck of an undertaking, and we wish we could review them all.

Accentuate the positive. Ideally, your review will have something positive to say. At Ohioana, we support and promote authors and want to help them succeed. This is the point of the book festival in the spring and the awards in the fall. But if you really don't like the book, let the editor know and we'll try and find something else that you might like better. It's OK to not like a book, by the way. You won't be judged!

Thoughtful and useful. We'd like to see something more than a book report. Some analysis would be helpful. Think of yourself as a tour guide for the reader. Why would a reader appreciate the book? If you're reviewing fiction, no need to give the plot away. But we'd also like more than the publicity blurb. You could talk about the way the author constructs scenes in a novel, creates characters, uses language, is adept at creating plot twists, etc. Look at book reviews in your favorite publications (or even your unfavorite ones) if you are feeling stumped.

If your book is non-fiction, you could evaluate it against other books in the same category. If you are a subject matter expert in the topic or know just enough to be dangerous, you can draw on your knowledge and experience in reviewing the book.

The Ohio thing. If it's not obvious from a title like *Hep Cats of Cleveland* or *Hell in Columbus: A Novel of Old German Village* (not real books!) then mention the Ohio connection in a couple of sentences in your review. Always feel free to mention the author's Ohio connection: "Laddie Writer spent his entire life within a quarter mile of the intersection of East North Broadway and High Street in the Columbus neighborhood of Clintonville, where he found the inspiration for his masterful biography of Leon Trotsky." (also not real!)

Length. It depends. Longer than 750 words we probably don't need. Aim for 350 - 500. A picture book review might be just fine at 200 words.

Font. Times New Roman 12 pt or some other nice serif font (This is Baskerville, by the way). You won't lose points for Helvetica: serif fonts are just easier to read.

Last thing. Please add a once-sentence bio that includes your bona fides.

And thank you, thank you, thank you.

Reviewed by Ima Reviewer, professional farrier and harp enthusiast