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Comments From A Book Reviewer

By Norm Goldman

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Comments from a Book Reviewer– Norm Goldman Editor of Bookpleasures.com and sketchandtravel.com

For the past several years I have been reviewing books for my own site, Bookpleasures.com, as well as many other sites. I am also a regular contributor to the Canadian Book Review Annual. As editor of Bookpleasures.com, I would like to make a few comments about book reviewing and what to expect, particularly from Bookpleasures.com.

Today, with the advent of the Internet, there has been a proliferation of book reviewers, whom I shall classify as the good, the bad and the ugly.

Those falling within the last category are ones that you have to be particularly on the look out for, as their only interest is to receive complimentary books without bothering to review them, or if they do review them, their reviews are very short and without substance.

On the other hand, there are many serious and excellent reviewers, who devote a great deal of their time and energy in reading and writing a review.

Unfortunately for the authors, sometimes reviews are not exactly very complimentary. However, it is to be noted that it is not the objective of a reviewer to be a salesperson or a public relations representative for the author. If the criticism is constructive, a great deal can be learned from the review, particularly if the reviewer is also an author.

From the point of view of a reviewer, what I find most annoying is receiving a book without first asking me if I would accept to review it.

Bookpleasures receives on average about 20–30 email requests per week. These requests are forwarded to our reviewers, who communicate directly with the sender of the email.

In all probability, there is a 20%–30% chance that a request to review will be accepted by a reviewer. The reason why a book is not accepted is wide and varied. Many of our reviewers have a backlog that they would like to clear before accepting new assignments, or the subject matter is not one that interests any of them.

What I like to see in a request is not "hype" but rather a brief resumé of the contents of the book, who the author is, if the book is published by a main stream publisher or is it self-published, and if the book is available on Amazon.

Bookpleasures also conducts e-interviews with some authors, and if the author is open to have himself or herself interviewed, please indicate.

If you are a publicist or publisher, don't be afraid to put Bookpleasures as well as other book reviewing sites on your emailing list. You never know when something catches our eyes. Sometimes you may be publicizing a particular book, and our reviewers will look to your site and see something else that interests them.

As for the time frame, this all depends on the reviewer. Anywhere from one week to three months is the norm. You can ask the reviewer to give you some idea as to his or her time frame. You can also inquire as to his or her credentials. Bookpleasures does provide links to the reviewers' site that should give you some idea as to their experience.

I do hope this is of help to some of you.

Norm Goldman is editor of bookpleasures.com, a book reviewing site, and sketchandtravel.com, a travel site. Norm is a regular book reviewer for his own site, bookpleasures.com, as well as for Amazon.com: Blether.com: Bookideas.com: Midwestbookreview.com: and many others. To find out more about Norm, refer to Bookpleasures.com or Sketchandtravel.com

A Bad Book Review? You Aren't Doomed. Here's Why.

By Laura Hickey

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When you get a bad book review

You've just been notified a review of your book has been posted. You're all excited and can't wait to see what has been written. You're clicking onto your book's page when...Oh no! They hated your book! This bad review is going to turn away customers from buying your book. Wait! This isn't the end of the world. Here's 3 tips to deal when you get a bad review.

1. You can't please everyone!

Example: One of my favorite authors is a bestseller but the author didn't receive such hot customer reviews.

Another example: I was reading some book reviews and one of the books had one of the worst ratings ever. I clicked the link with curiosity to find over 20 customers had reviewed the book and loved it. In life, you can't please everyone. Will a bad review discourage future customers? On to my next tip.

2. A bad review doesn't have to mean bad profit.

Not all customers look at a bad review as their only guide to buying. In fact, if your review is so awful, they may even buy the book to see if it's really as bad as the reviewer rated it. There's the saying that curiosity killed the cat, curiosity in this case could help you. Customers also realize that everyone has different tastes. Maybe the reviewer didn't like your book, but who's to say someone different won't? It may be bad publicity, but none the less it may help you. In fact, sometimes a customer may have read the bad review but only remembers your name and or the book's title.

3. If you're getting more than one bad review.

It's understandable if you're disappointed. It's expected, but do not allow yourself to become discouraged. If you've published an e-book and can easily edit your work, bad reviews can actually help your writing. Now don't go crazy and change everything! But if reviews are constantly pin pointing on one certain area, review your work and see if and how you could improve it. I know reviewing repeatedly can be hurtful but if it can help your e-book, isn't it worth considering? Also, don't start picking apart reviews right away, give yourself time to go over them. Picking apart your reviews the moment you receive them could prove fatal to your self esteem.

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