

# *My Readers*

Authors all want their books to sell well. But authors also want readers to enjoy their books. The first step in meeting both these objectives, naturally, is having a book whose content and style people will find pleasing, interesting, exciting, etc. But the next step is making people aware that the book exists, and that others who have read it have good things to say.

There are professional book reviewers, and their reviews are important. But there are so many books that could be reviewed, and only a few of them will end up being selected by reviewers. And, let's face it, first time authors are unknown quantities. Will a reviewer commit time to a book by one of these authors? Some will, but it can be a crap shoot.

On the other hand, there are readers.

Readers of books are an amazing bunch.

They have a huge range of tastes, they know what they like, and they can respond in the most positive, gratifying ways when they find what they do like.

Are the comments of friends and acquaintances a good indication of the quality, the appeal of a book? Some people say no, that friends will just tell an author what he or she would like to hear.

I disagree.

If a friend doesn't like your book, or is indifferent to it, they tend just not to say anything. But if they do like your book, many will say so, and in terms that reflect pretty closely in just which ways they liked it.

An author can't be, and shouldn't be, shy about blowing his or her own horn, but this has to be done in a way that's useful to potential readers.

I have received some astonishing review comments from friends and acquaintances. A few of these comments appear below.

## From A Reader in Australia:

"What a great job you've done. It kept me turning the pages almost round waking hours and I could see that you had a lot of fun researching and writing it. So much detail combining many of your favourite interests but I bet lots of hard work, too. It's not my preferred genre, however (I can't remember when I last read a mystery) so I'm not the best reviewer. There was much to entertain and keep me reading."..." Wonderful to be included on your list of readers, however:

something very intimate about the sharing of yourself that's involved that I very much appreciate. Thanks for that. And overall, as I'm sure many other readers will have told you, you should keep at it."

### From Another Reader in Australia:

"I enjoyed your book immensely. What an amazing undertaking! How long were you working on it? Is it your first attempt - I wouldn't think so, too polished. I've more questions but some will have to wait till I see you."

### From A Reader in the US:

"I read your book over the last couple of days. It was a real pleasure to read. So many things to like. I was surprised and pleased at the high level of suspense. Great descriptions of food. A really satisfying, detailed account of the restoration of the mill. Interesting friendships. An intense climax. I am very very impressed."..." I'm already looking forward to the next one."

### From A Reader in Ontario:

"I just finished your book. I was slow to get into it, since I've been coming and going a fair bit."..."It has a wonderfully clever, inventive plot, that is the equal to that of many well established authors. A wonderful effort."

### From A Reader In Toronto:

"I LOVED it."..." Richard is a really nice guy. I wished I would have come across someone like him. Great cook, great brain, although his TO DO lists would drive me bonkers."..."The characters of Werner, and Greg and his wife are delightful. Most of all Keith I ADORED the humour of your writing, it is so you."

### From A Reader in British Columbia:

"I just wanted to let you know that I finished your book the night before last. I tried to read it very slowly to savour every word."..." I was expecting it to be wonderful and it was. I am in awe of anyone who can write a story like that."

### From A Reader in Toronto:

"I should take the opportunity to say that your book was captivating"..." I think it would make a great TV series (on CBC perhaps). Competition for BBC mystery/murder story series?"

### A Short Book Review From A Reader in Bronte:

“Have you seriously pondered what you will do in retirement? “Richard Gould” could not have predicted what he would find in his quest to achieve self-actualization. Engineers are often thought to be calculating, predictable and have a true sense of project management, so the years following the end of a career should have been well thought out with a probable path of execution. Not so in this gripping thriller, which at times is bucolic, enviable and gratifying. Then comes the mystery of a discovery which leads our character to a chase of some urgency and of biblical proportions and takes the reader to a European country, whilst involving a long standing friendship, new alliances and tragedy. As the quest is unraveling abroad, plans are in the works at home, encompassing community, a timeless pastime and of course romance. Our very own Keith Weaver is an emerging writer who has nailed the compelling formula of the elements of suspense and page turning. The book’s title is “An Uncompromising Place.” Literary alert! ...Next book is imminent! He is and will become a beloved author whose work you will anticipate.”

### From A Reader in Ottawa:

“The first thing that intrigued me was the location. Although I’m unfamiliar with the Belleville area, in the summer of 2014 I attended a gathering in the country just north of Belleville.”... “So I kept imagining the rolling hills area that I saw. I loved how descriptive you are! Places, people and food!!!”

### From A Reader in Toronto:

I put aside An Uncompromising Place for later reading when I received it.... Eventually, I decided I would save your book until the summer. So now I have finished reading your first work and I enjoyed it enormously. Thank you.

No one would ever think that I was interested in my appearance and everyone who knows me knows that I have little interest in cooking, but these facts do not mean that I don't enjoy a well-dressed person or a good meal. What I particularly enjoyed about your book was all the details on what greeted so many senses. I liked knowing the lay-out of the town, what people looked like and what they had on, what meals were served, what breads were prepared for that day. I didn't know so many of the wines but I did well on knowing the music, and I could quite visualize the skies as you described them. I thank you for all those details.

I also like that there are a few loose ends, which are tantalizing. I assume that you intend to follow up on those in a second and maybe more volumes. I encourage you to pursue those leads!

### From A Reader in Central Ontario:

“Not that I doubted it, but you are an excellent writer! My sister-in-law made off with your book, based on my recommendation. It was a very interesting read. You write beautifully of nature, food and renovations, not to mention murder and mayhem. Can't do much better than that.”

### From A Reader in Ontario:

“I have just finished reading your book. It was incredible. I couldn't put it down. I love words so enjoyed your descriptive sections which were picturesque but not overly detailed. My favourite one was the "gangs of leaves huddled fugitively in corners." I appreciated a limited number of characters. I sometimes have difficulties following character development but not in your book. Your love of cooking and baking was evident as you described meals and your breads, well, what can one say? You have a very smooth and flowing style. I certainly look forward to your next book.

Coincidentally, I have been following Canada Reads again this year, all the time thinking that your book should appear on the list one year.

Congratulations. A job well done. I am recommending it to all my friends. I certainly await your second book with great anticipation.”

### From A Reader in Ottawa:

“Wow!! You are Canada's Robert Galbraith...soooooo descriptive!!! Finished reading it [Balsam Sirens] this morning. I noticed your underlying food theme all through the book...like in the previous two :-)  
So...is there a 4th...?”

What can an author say about readers like this?

They offer encouragement and validation. And they demonstrate clearly enough that readers are very special people.

None of these comments was solicited, either directly or indirectly. That's one of the things that makes them special to me.

I hope they might be useful to prospective readers as well.