



WORKSHEET FOR BOOK ANALYSIS

by Lindsay Longford

MARKETING POINTS:

1. Why do you think this book achieved success? (Remember, *you* didn't necessarily have to like it.)

Author's name, prior history/success

Theme of book? Subject?

Something that resonates w/the current zeitgeist?

Genre/type of book?

The market it was directed towards—in other words, was it a book written
TO a market?

The characters or style?

Anything else that you can identify that caused it to go gangbusters?

2. What one thing in it would have caused you specifically to throw down your dollars and buy it? In other words, were you the market for this book?

WRITING TECHNIQUES:

1. What in this book got to you?

1. Part of marketing depends on the writer's ability to reach her/his market.

Looking at the characters in this book, what has the author done to make them resonate w/a big audience?

3. How many pages/paragraphs before the author had you hooked?

4. How did the author handle backstory?

5. What did you notice about the percentage of dialogue to narrative? How did the author deliver the dialogue—i.e., with tags, with "beats"? What was the effect?

6. How many main/secondary characters? What was the effect of whatever choice the author made to restrict # of characters or widen her/his canvas? IF the characters were two-dimensional, cardboard, what kept you interested in them?
7. How complicated was the plotting? Could you identify a clear goal for each character, even minor ones? If not, did it matter? And if goals weren't clearly defined, what did the author do to make the story come alive and keep your interest?
8. What about the pacing? What did the paragraphing look like? The sentence lengths? What about the sentence structures, ie, are they mostly subject verb? Introductory phrases, clauses? If you notice a pattern in the sentences, what's your conclusion about the effect?

Did the plotting affect the pacing? If so, what did the author do w/plot points to speed up/slow down the pacing?

9. What was the PULL THROUGH for you in this book? Whether you adored it or hated it (and neither reaction is important, really, to the figuring out of what made it work for others), what did the author *do*?
10. So-POV...was it distanced? A mind meld w/the characters? And...did it matter to the story's impact? If not, how did the author manage that?
11. Finally, is there anything you particularly admired in the author's storytelling? Is there any technique you noticed re POV or anything else that drew you into the book/characters?

For example, in a discussion a number of years ago, Myrna Topol pointed out that she had observed that Mary Balogh, a writer of intensely emotional books, consistently showed a scene first from either the heroine or hero's POV, then retold the scene from the other character's, thus enriching the story and involving us w/the characters and their emotions.