

how to be a better commenter

some tips

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start with sympathy

- "In studying a philosopher, the right attitude is neither reverence nor contempt, but first a kind of hypothetical sympathy, until it is possible to know what it feels like to believe in his theories, and only then a revival of the critical attitude, which should resemble, as far as possible, the state of mind of a person abandoning opinions which he has hitherto held. Contempt interferes with the first part of this process, and reverence with the second."

Bertrand Russell, *The History of Western Philosophy*

Sympathetic Questions

- identify some basic facts about the object and make your comment with those conditions in mind
 - what is the author's intent or goal for writing?
 - what kind of article is the author writing? Be aware of genre (e.g. lit. review, theory, empirical) as well as field (e.g. sociology, health science).
 - what knowledge does this article impart?

Critical ('critique-able') questions

- Does the author achieve their stated goal?
 - flawed vs. successful articles
- How far does this author's argument/finding carry?
 - limitations of research, scope conditions
- How does this research fit in the collective enterprise of knowledge?
 - misunderstandings, elisions, opacities
 - possible future directions, extensions

NIGHT MARKET

- “I'll start by saying that I think this place caters to a very specific crowd. It might not offer the most romantic date night or the most elegant dining experience, but as a casual, fusion restaurant, I think it does a great job. [...] I'd happily return here with friends for a casual dinner, but I've heard they have sake slushies also, which sound to me like a good start to a night out.” -- LOGAN J. 2/3/17

Good job, Logan!

Logan does a great job helping us understand what kind of restaurant he is reviewing and configuring our expectations for his evaluations within this type (genre).

SHAKE SHACK

- "Eww this place was so greasy I can't believe people would want to eat it, it's like diabetes on a plate. If you want to be healthy don't even walk near this place" DAVID G. 10/25/15

David, not so helpful :-/

Is it fair to expect a burger place to be healthy? David does not say anything specific about Shake Shack.

FLOUR

- " I can't even eat wheat and I still love this bakery. [...] The coffee drinks are great. The location is great--right by the busline into Cambridge. My only wish is that they had a second floor and some gluten free bakery items." KYLIE S. 12/3/16

Fair enough, Kylie.

Kylie gives plenty of relevant feedback on Flour's food offerings, beverages and location and rates Flour at five stars on that basis, so her wishes about a second floor and gluten-free items are a colorful and personal addition to a review well-grounded in fact.