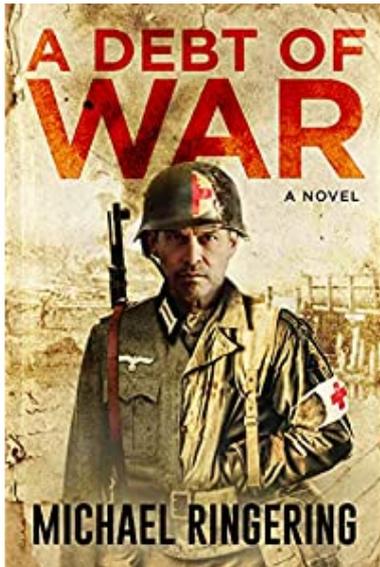




Readers' Favorite[®]

Book Reviews and Award Contest

Book Review Mini-Critique



Below you will find ratings (scale of 1-5) with descriptions for the major parts of your book followed by your Readers' Favorite review. Although these are general ratings we hope they will give you an insight into how others may view the different components of your book.

These are the opinions of your reviewer, and although your reviewer is not an expert literary critic or professional editor, they are at the very least, an avid reader of books just like yours.

Title: A Debt of War
Author: Michael Ringering
Genre: Fiction - Historical - Event/Era



Appearance: The appearance of a book can make a significant impact on the experience of a reader, whose enjoyment is often enhanced by an enticing cover, an intriguing table of contents, interesting chapter headings, and when possible, eye-catching illustrations.

5

Plot: The characters of a book should be well defined with strengths and flaws, and while they do not have to be likable, the reader does have to be able to form a connection with them. The tone should be consistent, the theme should be clear, and the plot should be original or told from a unique perspective. For informative books -- those without plot and characters--this rating refers primarily to your concept and how well you presented it.

5

Development: Development refers to how effectively you told your story or discussed your topic. The dialogue should be realistic, the descriptions should be vivid, and the material should be concise and coherent. Organization is also a key factor, especially for informative books -- those without plot and characters. The order in which you tell your story or explain your topic and how smoothly it flows can have a huge impact on the reader's understanding and enjoyment of the material.

5

Formatting: Formatting is the single most overlooked area by authors. The way in which you describe scenes, display dialogue, and shift point of view can make or break your story. In addition, excessive grammatical errors and typos can give your book an amateurish feel and even put off readers completely.

5

Marketability: Marketability refers to how effectively you wrote your book for your target audience. Authors may include content that is above or below the understanding of their target reader, or include concepts, opinions or language that can accidentally confuse or alienate some readers. Although by its nature this rating is very subjective, a very low rating here and poor reviews may indicate an issue with your book in this area.

5

Overall Opinion: The overall starred rating takes into account all these elements and describes the overall reading experience of your reviewer. This is the official Readers' Favorite review rating for your book.

5

Review:

Reviewed by Tom Gauthier for Readers' Favorite

As the family is leaving the burial service, a mysterious man in a military uniform decorated with the story of war and service is seen at the fresh grave of Paul Bacca's mother. He is holding a crudely wrapped package. Later the man arrives at the family home, explaining that he had known Paul's mother for many years. The package he held is a manuscript, a novel written by an acclaimed poet. It was Paul's mother's dying wish that it be delivered to the family. Paul is a publisher and is skeptical that such a well-known poet had authored a novel and not published it. But he agrees to read it ... and the story within a story begins. Puzzled by the very detailed and poignant story he has read, Paul confronts the stranger and learns secrets of his family's history revealed in the novel, the truth of friendships and lives entwined in mutual debts owed among enemies. The stranger's revelations of the truths hidden in the manuscript change Paul's life and the lives of his siblings forever.

Michael Ringering has created a masterly work in his novel, *Debt of War*. In a story within a story, Ringering blends the mystery of an unpublished manuscript, which puzzles the family of Paul Bacca with its curious delivery and its contents, with the deeply emotional personal soldiers' experiences of the horrors of combat, the gut-wrenching experiences of the victims of war, and the mirror image experiences of the enemies - all victims of their circumstances. I repeat the word 'experiences' because it is the core of the emotions, reactions, and the entwined, all-enveloping love that reading *Debt of War* engenders. The rough and tumble interactions of soldiers in deadly combat with its "foxhole humor" and incidents twist the lives and fortunes of captors and prisoners into mutual struggles to survive, some successful, others tragically not successful. Herein grows the debt of war among the soldiers. The mysterious manuscript is explained, and its true author revealed in a conclusion that rivals the tales of William Sydney Porter, better known by his pen name O. Henry. The comparison is not offered lightly as Michael Ringering has earned it fair and square with this brilliant, compelling tale of the entanglements of life and death - and the debts to be paid.