

Guidelines for Journal Book Reviews

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Purpose: The book review section of the journal is a major resource for scholars, pastors, students and lay people in identifying and assessing informative and well-written books related to youth ministry education, research, theology, and praxis.

Guidelines

- An excellent book review, while setting forth the key ideas of a book, must go beyond extended publicity. It should be more than a mere summary of the book's contents. The review should set forth the relative strengths and weaknesses of the argument made by the author(s) of the book.
- Describe the purpose of the text and its intended audience.
- Explain how the author attempts to accomplish the stated purpose. Assess the author's effectiveness regarding achieving the purpose of the text.
- Highlight the key ideas of the book. **Avoid chapter by chapter descriptions.**
- The review should assess the value and potential impact the book will have and specify the audience that will most likely benefit from it.
- The reviewer should also locate the book in relation to similar publications and note the specific contributions it makes to the field of study.
- Write with academic style. Develop strong theses about the book and defend them with examples. **Avoid personal comments ("In my opinion," "I liked the feature," "To me the book lacked").** Avoid overuse of adverbs ("very," "largely").
- Write the review with purpose; get right to the point. Reviews should be conducted with decorum. Resist any temptation to be "cute," "trendy," or too casual.
- Suggest how the reader might use the book in a teaching setting.

Format

- Reviews must be submitted as MS Word documents.
- The review must begin with an emboldened formal citation of the book. These citations must be formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style (Turabian, 8th Ed.).

Example: Cannister, Mark. *Teenagers Matter: Making Student Ministry a Priority in the Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013. 288 pp., \$24.00

- Reviews should be between 800-1000 words.
- Use a page number in parentheses (8) to indicate that pages in the text you are reviewing. Please avoid endnotes.
- Upon conclusion of the review, place your name (no titles or degrees) in the lower right corner, followed by your institutional affiliation (college/university, church, organization) and its geographic location (city, state).

Example: Steven Bonner, Lipscomb University, Nashville TN.

Submission

- All book reviews should be submitted electronically to Dr. Nancy Going at ngoing@vibrantfaith.org.
- To be considered for inclusion in the journal, reviews must be submitted to the editor by July 15th for the fall issue and February 1 for the spring issue.