

Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations

The electronic journal of the Council of Centers in Jewish-Christian Relations



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Guidelines for Book Reviews

Purpose of a Book Review:

A book review should convey clearly and concisely the value of the book to a reader who may not be familiar with its topic. You should describe its accuracy, readability, and pertinence to the various audiences of *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations*, including academicians, their students, clergy, and other practitioners of Christian-Jewish relations.

Contents of a Book Review:

You should briefly and succinctly summarize the book, noting especially its main topics, theses, and conclusions. You should also critically evaluate the book, perhaps in comparison to other major works in the field.

Format of a Book Review:

- The review should normally be about 750-1000 words.
- Submit the review as an attached Word document to the Book Review editor, Adam Gregerman, scjrbks_at_bc.edu (supply the "@" sign).
- Please format your file as follows:
 - Text should be justified (i.e., flush with both the left and right margins).
 - Your font should be Arial 11 pt.
 - Do not indent paragraphs. Single space your text and double space between paragraphs.
 - Use 1 inch margins.
 - On Word's Page Layout tab, under the Hyphenation option please choose "automatic."
 - Please insert one space (not two) after a period.
- Begin the review with the bibliographic citation of the book, followed by "by YOUR NAME, AFFILIATION." For example, from a published review:

REVIEW

Peter Schäfer, *Jesus in the Talmud*
(Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2007), hardcover, xv+189 pp.

Reviewed by John Doe, Anycollege, johndoe@anycollege.edu

- Be certain to indicate page numbers for any quotation from the reviewed book in parentheses following the quotation mark and before the period; e.g., "end of quotation" (p. 8). or (pp. 8-10).
- For comma usage, "Mary, Joe, and Bill" is preferred to "Mary, Joe and Bill."
- Avoid, as much as possible, the need for citations to other literature. If you do need to cite another work, state, within the body of the review (no footnotes) the author and title, then publisher, city, and date in parentheses.
- SCJR employs American norms for spelling, punctuation, footnotes, etc. For more specific formatting instructions, such as on abbreviations for books of the Bible, follow the journal's style sheet, at http://escholarship.bc.edu/scjr/Manuscript_format.pdf.
- **Please include your preferred email in the review.**
- For additional questions about style, please consult one of our recently published book reviews or contact the Book Review editor.

Some Caveats:

- A fair appraisal of a book is neither overly laudatory nor excessively critical. Rather, it assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the book, e.g., Were the right questions asked? Was the reasoning sound? Were the appropriate conclusions drawn? Does the work break any new ground? If you fear your review might fall into the “overly critical” category, consult with the Book Review editor and we will together assess whether or not the book ought to be reviewed.
- A request to write a book review is **not** an invitation to debate the author(s). Please do **not** take this opportunity to present your own views on the topic or to promote your own work. Avoid self-citations and keep your commentary focused on the book itself.
- If you are unable, for any reason, to complete the review, please return the review copy to us so that we may ask someone else to review it.

Edited volumes

Conference volumes and edited collections are especially difficult to review. The goal is to strike a balance between giving a sense of the overall volume and giving enough detail that the review is substantive. These guidelines may be helpful:

- In the first paragraph, give a brief overview of the type of essays in the book and the identities of the contributors, and then list the contributors’ names and chapter titles (within reason; if there are more than about a dozen, you might simply note that there are a large number of contributors, e.g., “There are twenty-four essays by prominent Protestant theologians...”).
- Concentrate on the strengths of the volume by highlighting certain essays that make a significant contribution.
- Don’t hesitate to note weak contributions.
- You need not give equal attention to each contribution.

Revised 08-12-2010