

***Reading Religion* Book Review Guidelines**

Last Updated: 21 May 2019

Reading Religion is the AAR's online book review website. Since its launch in July 2016 *Reading Religion* has emerged as one of the leading forums for scholarly reviews in religious studies and related sub-disciplines. *Reading Religion* is a globally available, open-access publication and scholarly resource for all members of the academic community.

Reviewers have the opportunity to request to review a particular book for *Reading Religion*. This can be either a title already included in our online [Available for Review](#) inventory or you can request a scholarly title (published since January 1, 2015) by sending an email to readingreligion@aarweb.org, including the author/title/publisher/ISBN and your contact information. There are a variety of reasons why *Reading Religion* may not grant your request, so please do not let that discourage you from submitting future requests to review.

Mission Statement

The mission of *Reading Religion* (RR) is to provide critical book reviews on all scholarly titles published in English in the field of religious studies and various related sub-disciplines in a timely manner. Books reviewed range from narrowing monographs to introductory texts directed primarily at students and for the general public. RR solicits reviews from qualified graduate-level students, postdoctoral, independent, and mid-level scholars as well as senior and emeritus faculty based in the US and around the world. In so doing, RR enhances the access and visibility for scholarly works in religious studies, enlarges the public conversations for books on religion, and provides a forum for scholars in all phases of the academy to interact not only within their specific subfields but also across all related disciplines.

Requirements

- **Academic Background/Training:** Graduate and doctoral students may review books for RR. However, we do expect that reviewers will have done advanced academic work on religion, either in a religious studies department or in a related field.
- **Conflicts of Interest:** We ask that you disclose any possible conflicts that might be seen as influencing your review (reviewing your advisor's latest work, reviewing books you have blurbed, etc.). This may not disqualify you from writing a review, but we need to know about potential conflicts in advance; failing to disclose this information will disqualify your review.
- **Review Due Dates:** If you agree to review a book for RR, please be attentive to the due date. We all know that in academia, sometimes a due date is a due date; sometimes it is a mild suggestion; and other times it is a joke. With RR, the due dates actually mean something. We are trying to close the gap between publication dates and reviews.

Guidelines

- **Length:** 600-1000 words. Reviews longer than 1000 words may be edited down to size, in consultation with the reviewer.
- **Submission Procedure:** Reviews should be emailed to readingreligion@aarweb.org on or before the review due date.
- **File Format:** Please use the following naming convention: Last Name, First Name – Book Title, and submit it in the file formats of .docx, .doc, or .rtf.

- **Content:** No critical orientation is privileged or excluded. However, the reviews must be more than a summary of the book, and should engage with the material in a way that is both meaningful and relevant to the book's purpose.
 - Your review should identify the author/editor's objectives and/or thesis, how well (or insufficiently) the work achieves those goals, and examples or citations supporting your viewpoint. A good review recognizes its obligations to the author, the book, and to RR's readership. Please remember that RR reviews are not the place for personal polemics—this is not a venue for your engagement with the subject matter—and such reviews will not be published.
 - Do not include rote listings of sections/chapters; there are two links on the book page itself directing readers to the publisher's website and Table of Contents, your review should draw attention to those sections/chapters through specific points of reference.
 - Do not list the author/editor's titles or affiliations; a brief biography of each author/editor already appears on the book page.
- **Reviewing Anthologies:** Reviewing edited volumes can be tricky. The variety and quantity of material can make it difficult to summarize. Please do not feel obliged to attend to every contribution to the volume. Choose to highlight specific topical themes, trends in scholarship, and the effectiveness of the selection of essays.
- **Audience:** Although RR is written *by* scholars of religion it is not written exclusively *for* scholars of religion. One of the objectives of RR is to ensure that non-specialists (both inside and outside of the academy) have a reliable resource to help them evaluate the most current books on religion. The style of your review should be as accessible as the material permits.
- **Footnotes:** *No footnotes, please.* If you cite from the book you are reviewing, insert the page number(s) in parentheses at the end of the quotation or sentence in which the quoted material appears; if you are citing from another book, put its publication information (author, title, publisher, year) in parentheses.
- **Name:** Please provide your name, title, and your institutional affiliation (if you have one) or you may use "Independent Scholar." You may also include a single URL that can be hyperlinked to your name.
- **Book Information:** There is no need to provide any information about the book or the author in the header or footer of your review.
- **Proofread:** Reviews should be proofread carefully. While the editorial team copyedits all reviews, excessive errors in grammar, style, or diction—especially those that impede comprehension—will be returned to the author for revision. Please retain a copy of your work until it has been published.
- **Extensions:** At the discretion of the editor, a single extension of the review deadline may be granted. Please request extensions by email to readingreligion@aarweb.org and include your name, book title/author, original review due date, and proposed revised due date. If an extension is not granted and the review is going to be more than 30 days late, the reviewer must return the book to the RR offices (address below) at their own expense.
- **Acceptance of Review:** Once reviews are received, they are copy-edited and returned to you for your approval before they are published on the website. Though we fully expect to publish your review, ultimately that decision remains at the sole discretion of the editors of *Reading Religion*.
- **Citation of Published Reviews:** RR publishes a subscriber newsletter on the 1st and 16th of each month which includes stable hyperlinks to all reviews published during the previous 15-day period. These newsletters are index-able with volume and edition numbers which can be used in standard citation formats (CMOS, MLA, APA, etc). Be sure to [subscribe to this newsletter](#) prior to submitting your review.