

UKirk Lit Review Guide

Please review the following rubric and read/write your book review with these categories in mind. The reviews should be around 1,000 words (approximately 3 pages double spaced/1.5 single spaced, using standard fonts with a 10-12 point size). Please include the bibliographic information (publisher, year of publication, editions, etc.) at the top of the page.

Most importantly, please break your lit review down by the bolded headings below. This will allow readers to create categories in their mind of what the book is about and enable them to process the information more readily.

1. **THESIS**

Identify the central thesis of the book. In one or two sentences, summarize what this book is about and what the author is trying to address. What claim is he or she making? In other words, complete the sentence: “The author of this book thinks that....”

(This can often be located by only reading the Introduction, the Preface and the Conclusion.)

2. **BOOK DEVELOPMENT**

Identify and elucidate how the author develops the identified thesis. Include a statement about the structure of the argument (and if there are any unique features) and please include a chapter breakdown, summarizing each chapter and clearly demonstrating how each chapter builds or advances the argument. *(Pay particular attention to the Table of Contents, the Introduction and any chapter summaries at the end of each chapter.)*

3. **AUTHOR PRESUPPOSITIONS**

Describe the author with a short bio and identify any presuppositions (explicit or implicit) upon which the author is building his or her argument. What is really operating in the back of his or her mind? Put differently, why does he or she feel compelled to address this subject? What experiences in his or her life is he or she reacting against?

(This will often not be explicit, but you can intuit this information from the personal stories or narratives interspersed in the text.)

4. **THEOLOGICAL NORMS**

Identify (if they're present) any theological norms that undergird the author's work. Name specific doctrines and demonstrate how they are connected to the development of the argument or the author's surmised presuppositions. In other words, help the reader understand the implicit theological perspectives present.

(Link specific passages or quotations to these doctrines, including page numbers.)

5. **AIM OF BOOK**

Identify and list in a concise manner what the author hopes to accomplish in the book. Pay special attention to the latter chapters and note where the author emphasizes words or phrases.

(Carefully read the Introduction, conclusion and thoughtfully survey the last few chapters of the book.)

6. **STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES**

Identify the strengths and weaknesses in this book and then write a short concluding paragraph (150 to 200 words) on why you think this book will be successful or unsuccessful for helping collegiate ministers working with young adults.

(The depth of this final step will vary for different people because it places the author's work in conversation with the reader's own background.)