

Winner

A SPECTATOR'S GUIDE TO WORLD RELIGIONS: an introduction to the big five
by John Dickson + Workbook by Simon Smart / ISBN 1920935428 + 1920935436
Blue Bottle Press + CEP

Extract from the judges' comments-

This engaging, well-written book provides a clear, accessible, unbiased and balanced presentation of the major faiths. The history and belief systems of Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam are outlined without attempting to critique them from a Christian viewpoint. The section for each major religion comprises sections on its origins and an overview of its history, surveys its major teachings, identifies its major streams or types, then concludes with a single page summary and a list of helpful and official Websites.

The workbook accompanying this book is an exceptional resource. Interviews with Australian members of the major religions give authentic expression to their beliefs and spiritual practices. Although designed for use with secondary school students, it would work equally well for mature adult groups.

Joint 2nd Prize

BEYOND GREED
by Brian Rosner / ISBN 187632676X
Matthias Media

This book hits a nerve in all Australians without inducing a guilt trip. By looking carefully at the driving forces behind the culture which affects the every day choices of each Australian (of whatever age) via school or employment priorities; life-style, health care, housing or transport choices; educational or vocational priorities; or retirement plans and expectations; 'greed' is exposed as an underlying principle.

Engagingly well written, and easy to read and ponder, the book considers relevant biblical materials, and proposes how we should deal with the issues raised. We need reminding again and again that Christians are to live demonstrably different lives, and this book highlights the attitudes and behaviour that will help us to do so.

Joint 2nd Prize

EXPLORING RELIGION IN SCHOOL: a national priority
by Brian Hill / ISBN 085910978X
OpenBook

This important contribution to the debate about religion in schools, is also a thoughtful and extremely useful resource for Australian educators. Drawing upon up-to-date social and statistical analysis, the author presents a cogent educational case for religious education having core status in a general curriculum. He presents a clear framework by which educators and governments could effectively address moral and values issues, via religious education into our schools nationally. The 240 pages of meticulously researched material is very well presented, making it engaging and easy to read even for the non specialist reader.

It will strengthen and motivate Christian teachers as well as supply (and challenge) valuable concepts for non Christian teachers. Great value for all involved in the field. There is a helpful index, glossary and bibliography.

Third Prize

LOVE IS THE SPUR
by Geoffrey Bingham / 1876730064
Eyrie Books

This powerful evocation life in the WWII Japanese POW camps of Kranji and Changi ministers to the heart, by presenting a unique account of a Christian struggling with his faith under extreme circumstances, while thinking about the big issues of good and evil, sin and God. The negative effects of the self-interest of some chaplains under pressure is boldly treated, as is the life-giving effect of Christian hope in survival. This is a remarkable account of the difference it makes to follow Jesus Christ in the most terrible circumstances. Geoff Bingham gives an unmistakable Australian Christian voice to a pivotal period of history. A slightly old fashioned writing style may alienate some of the younger generation, and further editing could have made the theological framework a little more accessible.

Judges - 2005

John Calvert - Currently Dean of Students at Bible College of South Australia

Mamie Long - Freelance editor and general manager of Moore Books, Sydney

Lyn Sarah - Lectures at BCSA, and is pastoral care coordinator at Holy Trinity Adelaide

Co-ordinator: Len Woodley -National Secretary of SPCK-Australia

Judging

Entries were read and judged with an eye to:

- . The original nature of the work

- . The literary style, including suitability for the target audience
- . The competence and expertise displayed by the author in writing the book and examining the underlying thesis

- . The overall design, layout, cover, text and illustrations
- . The contribution that the book makes in meeting a need in Christian writing for the Australian situation

Judges Comments on short-listed titles:

A passion for evangelism: turning vision into action edited by Bronwyn Hughes & John Bellamy - OpenBook et al

A clearly presented broad-ranging summary of practical leadership experience from a wide variety of churches, which summarises facts about evangelism in Australia and will prove a useful reference book. Many church leaders will study and discuss the writers' findings. The research has been well done and presents practical chapters on developing evangelism in local churches. The approach used is more along the lines of business methodology than biblically based. It proposes a process - based on research and experience - intended to translate a church's vision for evangelism into congregational commitment.

A spectator's guide to world religions: an introduction to the big five by John Dickson - Blue Bottle Books

This engaging, well-written book provides a clear, accessible, unbiased and balanced presentation of the major faiths. The history and belief systems of Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam are outlined without attempting to critique them from a Christian viewpoint. The section for each major religion comprises sections on its origins and an overview of its history, surveys its major teachings, identifies its major streams or types, then concludes with a single page summary and a list of helpful and official Websites.

The last two chapters "Letting the Religions have their say" includes a chapter on "What's Wrong with Jesus" from the points of view of the various other faiths, and particularly relevant for pluralistic Australian society, is the way the vital issue of tolerance, is often miss-applied or misunderstood.

The workbook accompanying this book is an exceptional resource. Interviews with Australian members of the major religions give authentic expression to their beliefs and spiritual practices. Although designed for use with secondary school students, it would work equally well for mature adult groups.

Beyond Greed by Brian Rosner - Matthias Media

This book hits a nerve in all Australians without inducing a guilt trip. By looking carefully at the driving forces behind the culture which affects the every day choices of each Australian (of whatever age) via school or employment priorities; life-style, health care, housing or transport choices; educational or vocational priorities; or retirement plans and expectations; 'greed' is exposed as an underlying principle.

Engagingly well written, and easy to read and ponder, the book considers relevant biblical materials, and proposes how we should deal with the issues raised.

Sir Fred Catherwood's succinct foreword says "If Brian Rosner's well reasoned appeal to the conscience can influence individuals, it may succeed in making an impact on government policies which promote greed". Supporting articles by other Australian writers add to the argument. We need reminding again and again that Christians are to live demonstrably different lives, and this book highlights the attitudes and behaviour that will help us to do so.

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Exploring religion in School: a national priority by Brian Hill - OpenBook

This important contribution to the debate about religion in schools, is also a thoughtful and extremely useful resource for Australian educators. After carefully examining the purposes of religious education in schools; faiths in conflict; and the consequences of a generation with ill-founded or non-existent values; and after drawing upon up-to-date social and statistical analysis, the author presents a cogent educational case for religious education having core status in a general curriculum. As well as urging a national reassessment of the purposes and politics of religious education in schools, he presents a clear framework by which educators and governments could effectively address moral and values issues, via religious education into our schools nationally.

A significant portion of the book is devoted to appendices which explore relativism; dealing with controversial issues; and tables for an "Agreed minimum values framework".

The 240 pages of meticulously researched material is very well presented, making it engaging and easy to read even for the non specialist reader. It will strengthen and motivate Christian teachers as well as supply (and challenge) valuable concepts for non Christian teachers. Great value for all involved in the field. There is a helpful index, glossary and bibliography.

Forgetting but not forgotten (understanding support and spiritual care for people with dementia and those who care for them) by Noel Schultz - OpenBook

The subtitle of this book 'Understanding support and spiritual care for people with dementia and those who care for them' clearly states the purpose of this book, which is achieved with excellence. It addresses the issues of the nature of dementia and the feelings engendered by it; the obstacles to be overcome in order to address the spiritual needs and total care of persons with dementia; the attitudes and skills needed for spiritual care; support for family carers, and guidance of providing opportunities for worship.

Written by an Australian on an increasingly important subject, the book reminds us that the spiritual dimension of people is precious. This is a resource which deserves to be promoted widely for its clearly and compassionately presented practical guidelines offered to professional carers and family. While the spirituality is consonant with a Christian perspective the language is more theistic than Christian. It is a plea to acknowledge that people suffering, are whole spiritual beings deserving of our special care.

Fully Human, Fully Divine (An interactive Christology) by Michael Casey - John Garratt Publishing

This is a book for personal growth and reflection. The subtitle (an interactive Christology) is intended to describe the author's technique of alternating chapters between penetrating exposition of Mark's Gospel, and chapters illustrating the application of the principles of Jesus' humanity, to our human condition as his followers.

The book commences with a helpful exposition on Cistercian spirituality, and brief biographical details of 16 Church Fathers or monastic authors spanning 185AD to 1267AD upon whose writings the reflections have been based. Examples from monastic wisdom and the writer's Cistercian background, contribute to a book which is designed to help the reader to understand more fully the reality of our rebirth and God's new act of creation, and of who we are in Jesus; as well as to see Jesus' humanity and divinity more clearly.

Love is the Spur by Geoffrey Bingham - Eyrle Books

This powerful evocation of life in the WWII Japanese POW camps of Kranji and Changi ministers to the heart, by presenting a unique account of a Christian struggling with his faith under extreme circumstances, while thinking about the big issues of good and evil, sin and God. The negative effects human depravity, and of the self-interest of some chaplains under pressure is boldly treated, as is the life-giving effect of Christian hope in survival. This is a remarkable account of the difference it makes to follow Jesus Christ in the most terrible circumstances.

Geoff Bingham gives an unmistakable Australian Christian voice to a pivotal period of history. A slightly old fashioned writing style may alienate some of the younger generation, and further editing could have made the theological framework a little more accessible.

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The Chosen Ones: the politics of salvation in the Anglican church by Chris McGillion - Allen & Unwin
This is a very good book for those wanting to understand Sydney diocese and its politics. A professionally written analysis of a part of recent Australian history (relating principally to the Anglican Diocese of Sydney) which presents an objective and unbiased analysis of key developments between 1991 and 2004. Statements by major figures in most spheres of church activity are quoted and presented in context. A claim in the conclusion that this is a study of ecclesiastical politics with implications for the Christian church worldwide may be questionable since it assumes wide interest in Sydney Anglican activities. But his concluding chapter "The Politics of Salvation" perceptively outlines the possible outcomes for the Anglican Church in Australia.

Two edged by Janette Fernando - Poetica Christi Press
Janette Fernando avoids self-indulgence and makes some wonderful pictures from contemporary life with original ways of thinking about God. Some of the poems use language beautifully to conjure up images which have a powerful and sometimes quite confronting impact.

Some items are presented with a parallelism which provides fresh images of God's work in the world. Honesty and integrity facilitate the combining of a fresh and original skill with words, with clearly delineated Christian orthodoxy. The judges felt that the impact of the poetry could have been further enhanced by better typesetting and layout.

Complete list of entries submitted for 2005

Acorn Press

Memoirs of a Loose Canon by Stuart Barton Babbage

Allen & Unwin

The Chosen Ones: The Politics of Salvation in the Anglican Church by Chris McGillion

Ark House Press

Daniel's Diet by Philip Bridgeman

Parenting Inc by Terri Hardwick

The Road Rising by Tony R Woods

Blue Bottle Books

A Spectator's Guide to World Religions: an introduction to the big five by John Dickson

CEP

A Spectator's Guide to World Religions: an introduction to the big five - Student Handbook by Simon Smart

David Lovell Publishing

Fresh Words and Deeds: The McCaughey Papers ed. Peter Matheson & Christiaan Mostert

Jewish-Christian Relations ed. Maurice Ryan

Dell Tobin

From the Heart by Dell Tobin

Eyrie Books

Love is the Spur by Geoffrey Bingham

HarperCollins Publishers

Mirror Mirror by Dianne Wilson

When I Talk to You: A cartoonist talks to God by Michael Leung

Inspire Publishing

Searching for a God You're Supposed to Have Found by Ben Windle

The Jesus Life by Grant Windle

John Garratt Publishing

Fully Human, Fully Divine: An Interactive Christology by Michael Casey

God's Next Big Thing: Discovering the Future Church by Scott Cowdell

The Gift of Julian of Norwich by Karen Manton; Illustrated by Lynne Muir

Matthias Media

Beyond Greed by Brian Rosner
Fatherhood: What it is and what it's for by Tony Payne
The Essence of Family by Kirsten Birkett

New Creation Publications

The Artist in the Garden by Geoffrey C Bingham

Openbook Publishers

A Passion for Evangelism: Turning Vision into Action eds Bronwyn Hughes & John Bellamy
Exploring Religion in School: A National Priority by Brian V Hill
Forgetting but not Forgotten by Noel C Schultz
Meeting Emma: A Story of Spiritual Discovery by Michael Spyker

Penguin

Walk in My Shoes by Alwyn Evans

Peranga Post Publishers

For Heaven's Sake!!: Creation to Destiny by Ivan Rudolph

Poetica Christi Press

An Embrace of Morning by Kathryn Hamann
Two Edged by Janette Fernando

Puffin Books

A Wisp of Smoke by Patricia Wrightson
Clair de Lune by Cassandra Golds

Strand Publishing

Inspirational Australian Stories Various
Spirit of a Nation: The Story of Australia's Christian Heritage by Stuart Piggin

Thomson Social Science Press

Heartlines ed Maurice Ryan

Trafford

It's About Time by Bill Pearcy

Viking

The Silver Donkey by Sonya Hartnett

Willow Publishing

Sanctuary: Where Heaven touchest Earth [book & CD] by Trisha Watts & Gabrielle Lord

Writers Exchange E-Publishing

Mary Anne (CD format) by Daphne Saxby Taylor

The Australian Christian Book of the Year Awards
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Australian Christian Literature Society
(a special unit of SPCK-Australia)
The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge - Australia

SPCK was established in London on 8th March 1698.
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Through SPCK-A and ACLS you can give practical support to
Christians involved in making literature available, accessible and
affordable in many of the world's more difficult areas.

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