

## **Specifications for Book Reviews**

An optional, soft-points assignment in HIST 431 is to write a book review and post it to the designated forum of the HIST 431 Facebook page. The book is to be chosen from the course bibliography. (Any selection not listed in the bibliography to be approved by instructor.)

### **Purposes of Book Reviews**

1. To allow you to read further on a topic of particular interest.
2. To inform the other class members. (They can read your review on the board and respond to it.)
3. To learn how to review books. This is a survival skill for college course work, but it also is a life skill in civil society.

### **Guidelines for Reviews**

1. Choose a book from the bibliography of the course.
2. Read the book with its purpose in mind. It is easy to get bogged down taking notes as you go unless you determine at the outset what the author is trying to do. Keeping the purpose of the book in mind will help you know what is central and significant in the hundreds of pages of material.
3. Take notes as you read. Include quotations (keep them brief) you may wish to use in the review.
4. Write the review from your notes, to a length of 300 words. (The standard length of book reviews is 500 words, but for purposes of this course, we need to keep them brief.)
5. Summarize the content, but do more than just summarize. You should point out particular features of interest and give an evaluation of the work. Any evaluation of a book must be based on the purpose of the author.

## Submission

Submit your review by posting to the designated forum of the HIST 431 Facebook page. Put a heading on it. For example,

WALLACE STEGNER: HIS LIFE AND WORK. By Jackson Benson.  
New York: Penguin, 1996.

<b>Rubric for Evaluation of Book Reviews</b>		
<b>Summary</b>	A good summary captures intent and major points of the author.	14
<b>Critical Evaluation</b>	A critical review points out strengths and weaknesses of the book and, most important, its value to us as students of the history of the Great Plains.	10
<b>Appropriate Length</b>	Target length: 300 words	3
<b>Matters of Style</b>	Composition, grammar, and punctuation are important to communication.	3
<b>Points Possible for Review</b>		<b>30</b>