

Does the prospect
of writing a
book/article review
make you feel like this...?



BOOK/ARTICLE REVIEW

- Book/Article reviews are usually one of the first assignments given in the course of the semester.
- A book/article review looks at the quality, meaning, and significance of a work of literature. It is a reaction paper – focusing on purpose, content, and authority – in which strengths and weaknesses of the material are analyzed.
- It should examine what the author has tried to do, evaluate how well the author has succeeded, and presents evidence to support this evaluation.

BOOK/ARTICLE REVIEW

- The first step is to *READ* the book/article.
- Allow yourself enough *TIME* to be able to thoroughly read and evaluate the book/article.
- Read *ACTIVELY* and *CRITICALLY*!
 - Engage with the text
 - Highlight and Underline passages
 - Write in the margins
 - Make predictions (and test them)
 - Ask questions (and answer them)

BOOK/ARTICLE REVIEW

- Typical book/article reviews consist of two parts:
 - Summary & Analysis
- Occasionally a professor will want additional info.
 - Bibliographical Material
 - Personal Opinion
 - Career/Ministry Application
- There is no standard, discipline-specific way to write a book/article review.
 - Often a professor will provide guidelines and format.
 - Otherwise, you may create your own outline.

BOOK/ARTICLE REVIEW

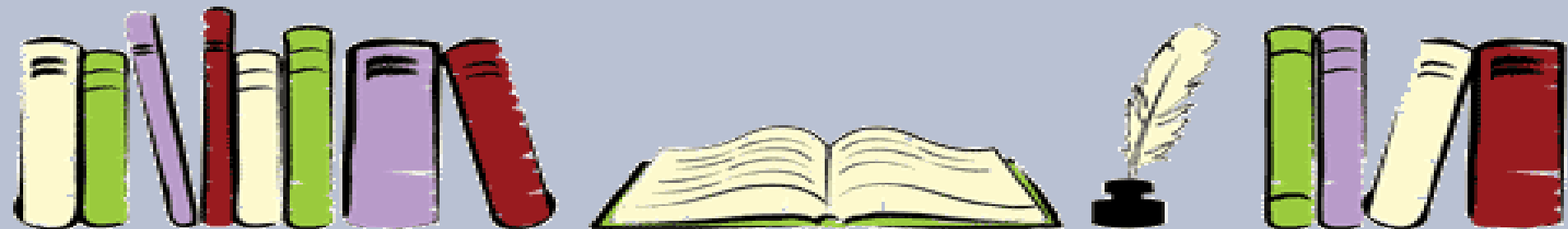


Sample Outline

- I. Introduction
- II. Summary
- III. Analysis
 - A. Strengths
 - B. Weaknesses
- IV. Conclusion

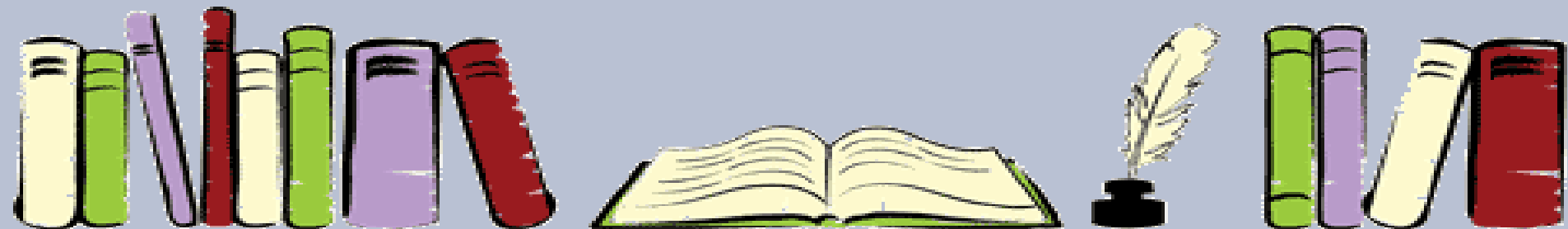
BOOK/ARTICLE REVIEW

- Summary
 - A summary is a brief, concisely written synopsis of the book/article.
 - A summary restates the author's main point, purpose, intent, and supporting details in your own words.
 - Summaries are written to help you gain a better grasp of the original, as well as show that you have read and understand the assigned material.



BOOK/ARTICLE REVIEW

- Summary Tips
 - Summaries should be no longer than a quarter of your paper.
 - Usually a page or a two of summary is sufficient.
 - The majority of your paper should be devoted to the analysis.
 - Avoid a chapter-by-chapter summary.
 - Avoid quoting heavily from the source.
 - The summary should be in your own words.



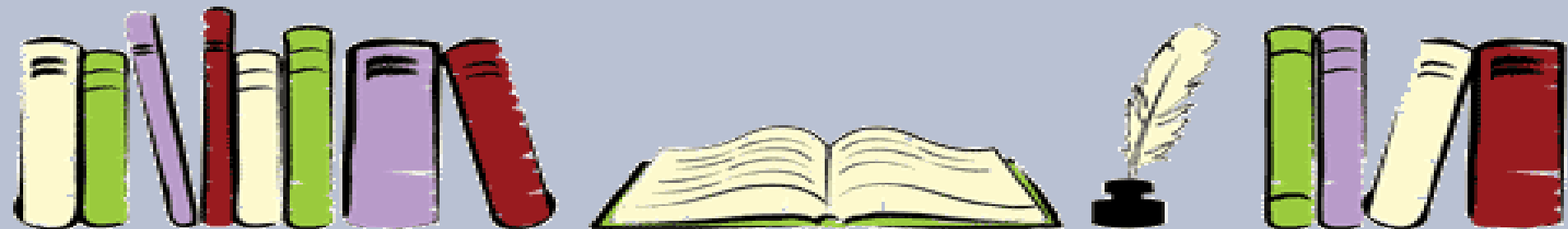
*I have made this letter longer than usual,
only because I have not had time
to make it shorter.*



Blaise Pascal (1623-1662)

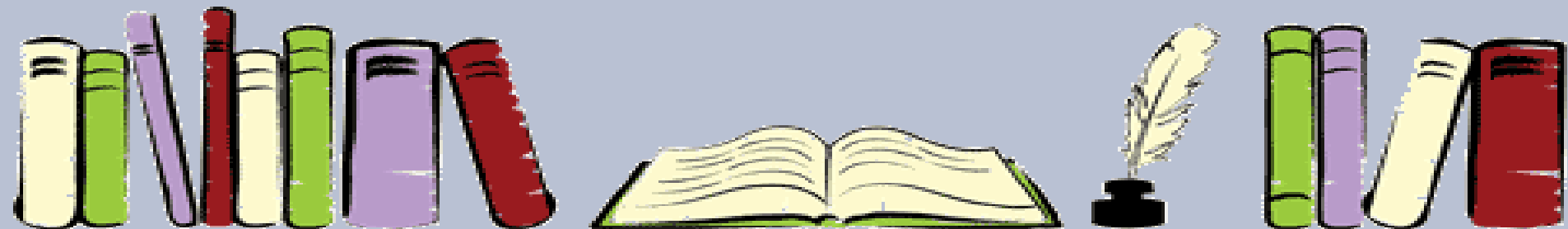
BOOK/ARTICLE REVIEW

- Analysis
 - An analysis is a detailed evaluation of the thesis (arguments) presented by the author.
 - Relate the strengths and weaknesses of the book/article.
 - What is good and what is bad?
 - What did the author do well? Not well?
 - This does not communicate if you liked it or not.



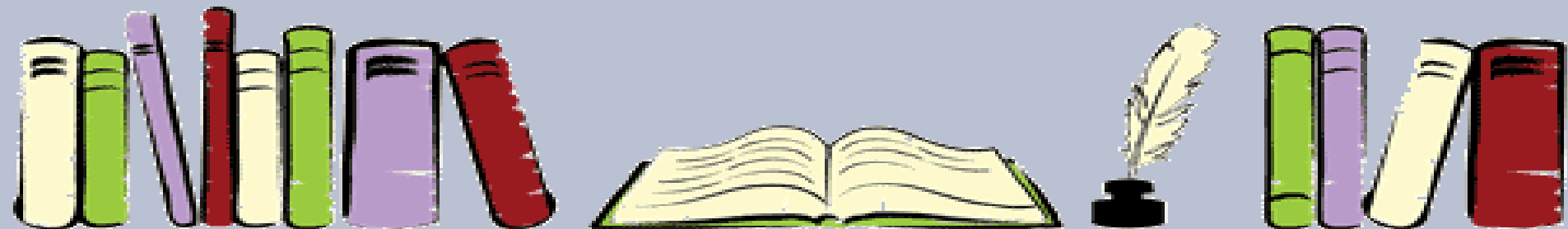
BOOK/ARTICLE REVIEW

- Analysis Tips
 - You do not necessarily need to work chronologically through the book/article as you discuss it.
 - You can organize your paragraphs more usefully by themes, methods, or other elements of the book.
 - Keep comparisons to other books/articles brief so that the book under review remains in the spotlight.
 - Avoid excessive quotations or block quotes.



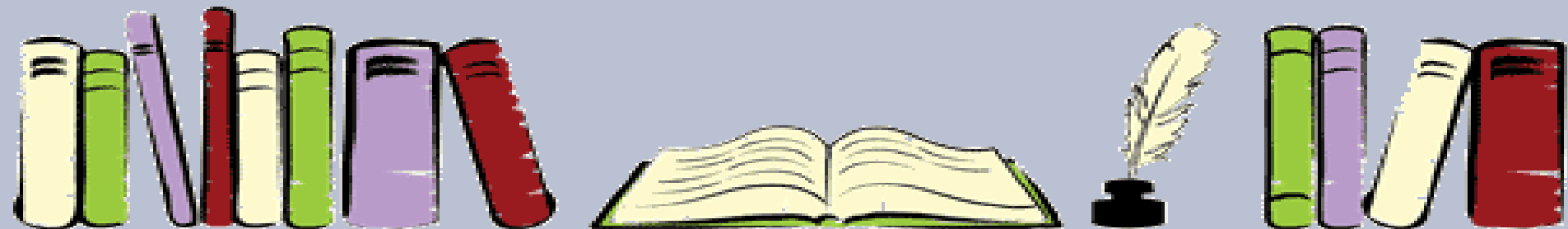
BOOK/ARTICLE REVIEW

- Analysis Tips
 - Review the book in front of you, not the book you wish the author had written.
 - Do not criticize the book for not being something it was never intended to be.
 - Present a balanced analysis.
 - Avoid voicing strong agreement or disagreement.
 - Harsh judgments are difficult to prove and can give readers the sense that you were unfair in your assessment.



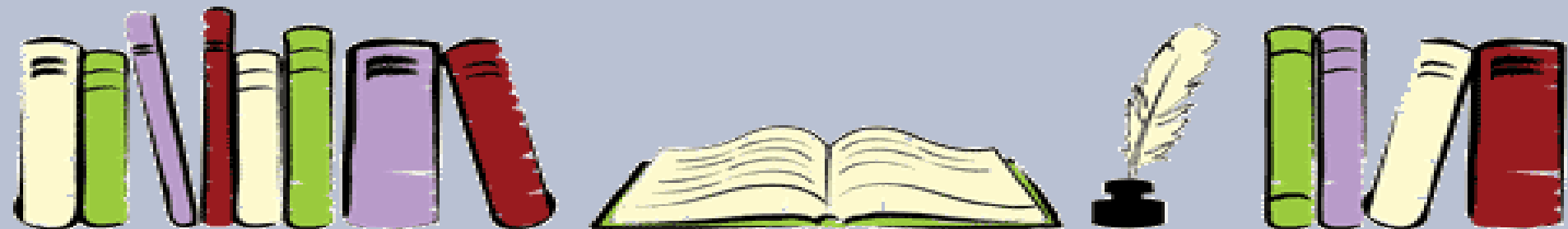
BOOK/ARTICLE REVIEW

- Analysis Tips
 - Don't be afraid to disagree with the author.
 - Cite specific examples to back up your assertions.
 - A good analysis requires time and critical thinking.
 - You must look “below the surface” and focus on the deeper issues present in the book/article.
 - As you read, constantly evaluate what you have read and make notes of your questions and thoughts.



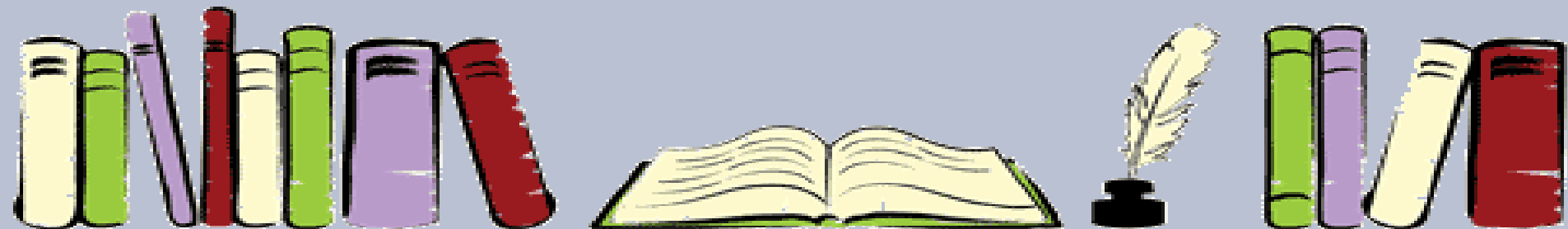
BOOK/ARTICLE REVIEW

- Analysis Questions:
 - Who is the audience? Did the author communicate effectively to that audience?
 - What sources were used? Does the author use many quality academic sources to support what was written?
 - What are the authors presuppositions/preconceived notions? Does the author assume his/her readers to have a certain background or information?



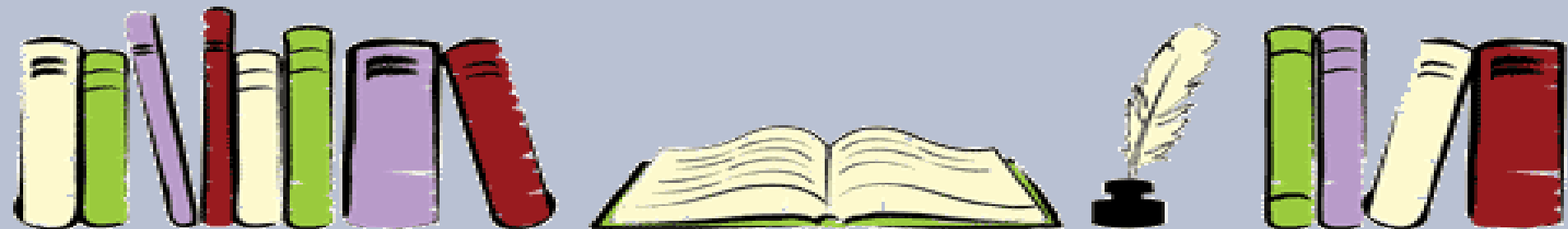
BOOK/ARTICLE REVIEW

- Analysis Questions:
 - Does the author have the necessary expertise to write the book/article?
 - How does this book/article relate to other sources on the same topic?
 - Does the author define and use appropriate, academic terminology?

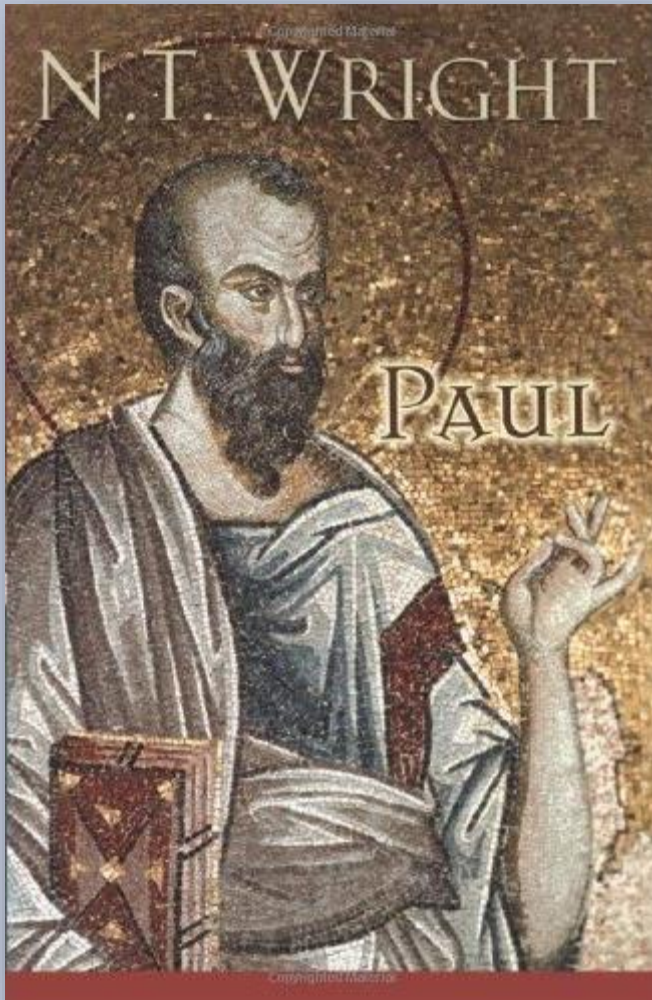


BOOK/ARTICLE REVIEW

- Analysis Questions:
 - Does the author present a clear thesis (argument)?
What is the purpose of the book/article?
 - Does the author contribute anything new to the field?
 - Does the author exhibit any bias? Does the author have an inclusive worldview/writing style?
 - Are there errors in the author's logic?



SAMPLE BOOK REVIEW



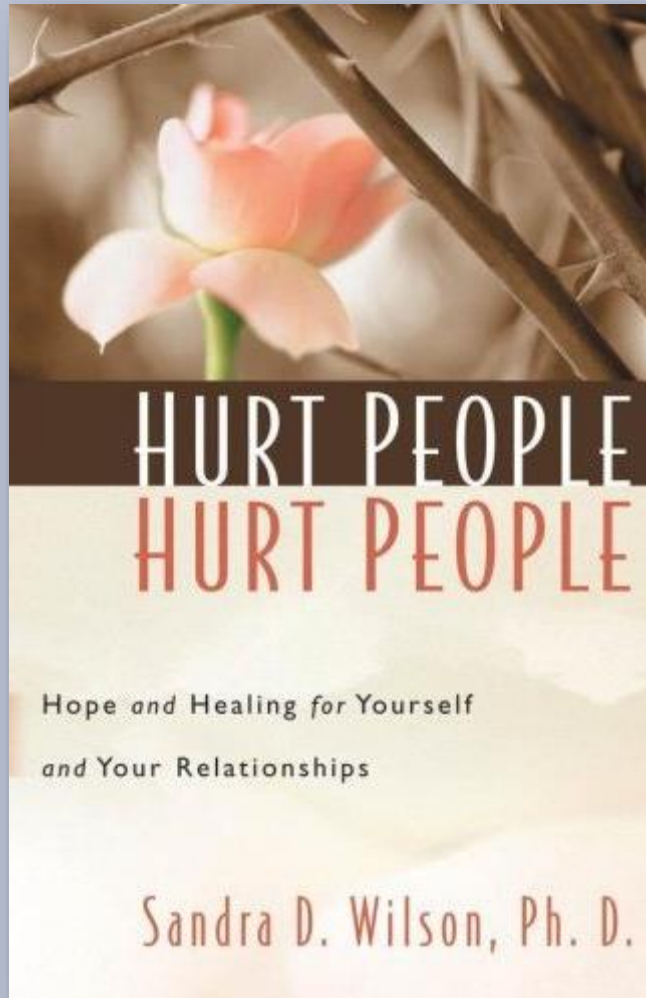
N. T. Wright

Paul: In Fresh Perspective

Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press

© 2006

SAMPLE BOOK REVIEW



Sandra D. Wilson, Ph. D.

Hurt People Hurt People

Grand Rapids, MI:

Discovery House Publishers

© 2001

SAMPLE ARTICLE REVIEW



Mark Driscoll

*Answers to Common Questions
about Creation*

TheResurgence.com

© 2006

SAMPLE ARTICLE REVIEW

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Contents lists available at SciVerse ScienceDirect

Addictive Behaviors



Marijuana use among traumatic event-exposed adolescents: Posttraumatic stress symptom frequency predicts coping motivations for use

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Marijuana
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Posttraumatic stress
Substance use

ABSTRACT

Contemporary comorbidity theory postulates that people suffering from posttraumatic stress symptoms may use substances to cope with negative affect generally and posttraumatic stress symptoms specifically. The present study involves the examination of the unique relation between past two-week posttraumatic stress symptom frequency and motives for marijuana use after accounting for general levels of negative affectivity as well as variability associated with gender. Participants were 61 marijuana-using adolescents ($M_{age} = 15.81$) who reported experiencing lifetime exposure to at least one traumatic event. Consistent with predictions, past two-week posttraumatic stress symptoms significantly predicted coping motives for marijuana use and were not associated with social, enhancement, or conformity motives for use. These findings are consistent with theoretical work suggesting people suffering from posttraumatic stress use substances to regulate symptoms.

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1. Introduction

Rates of traumatic event exposure among adolescents range between 68% and 92% in community (Copeland, Keeler, Angold, & Costello, 2007) and high-risk samples (e.g., inner-city youth; Lipschitz et al., 2003), respectively. Increasingly, researchers are examining links between posttraumatic stress symptoms and substance use among adolescents (Blumenthal et al., 2008). Research suggests that adolescents exposed to a traumatic event are more likely to use substances compared to those who have not experienced a traumatic event (Giaconia et al., 2000). Furthermore, adolescents who endorse elevated levels of posttraumatic stress symptoms (as indexed by the presence of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), for example) are particularly likely to use both licit and illicit substances (Blumenthal et al., 2008; Giaconia

et al., 2000). exposure is linked to problematic substance use, and the presence of PTSD predicts a two-fold increase in the likelihood of developing marijuana dependence in adolescents (Kilpatrick et al., 2000).

Research suggests that substance use may function as a method to reduce posttraumatic stress symptoms. For instance, recent empirical work suggests that elevated levels of posttraumatic stress symptoms relate positively to coping-related motives for alcohol use (Dixon, Leen-Feldner, Ham, Feldner, & Lewis, 2009). A recent study demonstrated that levels of substance use strongly correlated with levels of childhood physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, as well as current symptoms of PTSD (Khoury, Tang, Bradley, Cubells, & Ressler, 2010). Further, exposure to a natural disaster relates to significant increases in marijuana use (Rohrbach, Grana, Verneberg, Sussman, & Sun, 2009). Finally, studies among adult clinical samples have shown PTSD symp-

S. J. Bujarski, et al.

Marijuana use among traumatic event-exposed adolescents: Posttraumatic stress symptom frequency predicts coping motivations for use

Addictive Behaviors

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http://www.chicano.ucla.edu/press/siteart/jli_bookreviewguidelines.pdf
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- The Writing Center at UNC-Chapel Hill, “Book Reviews.”
<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/resources/handouts-demos/specific-writing-assignments/book-reviews>
- The University of New South Wales, Learning Centre, “Writing a Critical Review.”
<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/onlib/critrev.html>
- Columbia University Writing Center,
<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/ssw/write/handouts/summary.html>
- Los Angeles Valley College Library, <http://www.lavc.edu/library/bookreview.htm>
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Writing Center,
<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/review.html>
<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/fallacies.html>