

From Dissertation to Christian Book: A Guide on Using a Thesis to Produce a Readable Publication by Ian Darke

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From Dissertation to Christian Book: A Guide on Using a Thesis to Produce a Readable Publication by Ian Darke (2024) is an important small book about books that have not yet been published. The book focuses on the vast number of academic theses, many of which have the potential to be published, but not in their original form. It is one of the practical guides now provided by Regnum at the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies in the United Kingdom. While the book is primarily directed at the Christian market, it has a much wider relevance. The book focuses on accessibility of language, marketing outreach and a desire to be part of the work of global mission through the publication of appropriate and deserving research. It is a means of sharing respectable academic research in an alternative format as well as the gospel.

Academic theses remain a rather arcane form of literature from which the “ordinary reader” is largely denied access. Darke’s book, by comparison, is not only the result of years of experience; it is revelatory as it seeks to enable the “translation” of abstruse and complex academic ideas into more succinct and readable forms.

Darke takes the reader through the processes involved in converting a thesis or dissertation into a publishable text, beginning with the importance of writing and moving through the target market; the author’s motivation for engaging in the work; bringing the text alive for the reader; publishing options; working with a publisher including hybrid publishing; building a platform; and clarifying the purpose of the proposed publication, to the publication and promotion of the work. An appendix of



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case studies is included along with lists of resources – both written and electronic – and a bibliography.

Without an aid such as this, the lengthy process of converting a thesis into a publishable book can be long, wearying, frustrating and off-putting as the process can be extremely complex for beginners who simply wish to share their new and exciting learning.

Darke's meticulous explanations, particularly with regard to predatory publishing, are very insightful, particularly for unsuspecting academics who can so easily be lured into thinking their publication alone has been just what publishers are waiting for, and are susceptible to flattery. Confidence in their own work, despite any personal reservations, should be the source of self-promotion which is now an integral part of the publishing function.

The book is replete with good ideas and guidance which can help to relieve the frustration arising out of failure to publish what are essentially good ideas leading to good practices in ministry. It is not a quick fix to making money or to make the author better known; it involves hard work and the ability to work through disappointment if a manuscript is rejected. It should be read by all who have any hopes or expectations of entering the publishing market. For Christians, it is an act of faithfulness in their own potential to promote the coming kingdom.