FAMILY COURT REVIEW POLICY ON BOOK REVIEWS

At its annual meeting at the AFCC Conference in May 2004 the FCR Editorial Board discussed the role of book reviews in FCR and adapted a statement of policy on the subject. The Board believes that a statement of policy was important so that readers understood what they are getting when they read a book review in this Journal. Reader comments and questions are welcome, as the Policy will be reviewed and refined in future years.

I. SELECTION OF BOOKS FOR REVIEW

- Book reviews can be of significant value to FCR readers and the family court community by alerting them to important trends and practices.
- Authors and publishers are encouraged to submit books to FCR for review consideration.
- The amount of space that FCR can devote to book reviews is limited. Typically, no more than one or two books will be reviewed in a single issue.
- Selection of books for review is in the sole discretion of FCR’s Editor.

II. SELECTION OF REVIEWERS

- Selection of reviewers is the responsibility and at the discretion of FCR’s Editor or his or her designee.
- The author or publisher of a book can suggest a reviewer, but must disclose any connection or relationship that the author has with the suggested reviewer.

III. NATURE AND SCOPE OF BOOK REVIEWS PUBLISHED IN FCR

- FCR encourages reviewers to write analytical rather than simply descriptive book reviews.
- Reviews should be as objective as possible, describing the book’s content, strengths, and deficits, and can ultimately be critical of a book.
- Book reviews have no predetermined length.
- An author will generally not be given the opportunity to respond to a critical review. Opportunities to respond will be provided only if a reviewer makes a serious factual error or distortion of a central premise of a book’s meaning and purpose. The decision to allow a response by an author is left to the Editor.

IV. CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICIES AND PRACTICES

- Reviews must contain a description of any connection that the author of the book has with AFCC or FCR that an FCR reader might reasonably think relevant to the reviewer’s appraisal of the book. All doubts should be resolved in favor of disclosure. A review of an Editorial Board member’s book must disclose that the author of the book is an Editorial Board member.
member. Reviewers who have a question about whether to disclose a relationship between the author and AFCC and FCR should consult with FCR’s Editor.

- Reviews must contain a description of any connection or relationship the reviewer has with the book’s author or publisher that could reasonably be thought relevant to the reviewer’s appraisal by an FCR reader. All doubts should be resolved in favor of disclosure. Reviewers who have a question about whether to disclose a relationship with the book author or publisher should consult with FCR’s Editor.

- FCR will not review books written by a paid staff member, editor, or employee of AFCC or FCR.

- A guest editor of a special issue of FCR cannot include a review of a book he or she authored in the special issue.