



2015

Eckles' "Simply Salsa: Dancing Without Fear at God's Fiesta" (Book Review)

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Recommended Citation

Denison, Deborah L. (2015) "Eckles' "Simply Salsa: Dancing Without Fear at God's Fiesta" (Book Review)," *The Christian Librarian*: Vol. 58: Iss. 2, Article 86.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.55221/2572-7478.1321>

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Simply Salsa: Dancing Without Fear at God's Fiesta,

by Janet Perez Eckles, Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2011. 143 pp. \$13.99.

ISBN 9780917017019

Reviewed by Deborah L. Denison, Madigan Army Medical Center, Tacoma, WA

Janet Perez Eckles has written a book that invites women to accept God's call to dance. Despite losing her eyesight at age 32, suffering financial devastation, enduring the heartbreak of infidelity, facing incomprehensible grief after her son's murder and the anguish that followed the acquittal of the individual responsible, Janet lives a dance-filled life. Throughout *Simple Salsa*, Janet provides examples when busyness, tragedy, anxiety, guilt or fear threatens to silence the music within our hearts and the rhythm of our lives.

Eckles' writing style is passionate, humorous, engaging and creative. Spanish words and terms are liberally used, allowing the reader to better experience the "flavor" of Eckles' voice as an author. Her transparency in sharing her feeling of anger and bitterness towards God, especially after He did not heal her from blindness, is both relatable and admirable.

Despite being only 143 pages long, the ten chapters of *Simply Salsa* are chock-full of profound truths that speak to women at every level. A Spanish-language glossary is included. *Simply Salsa* is an inspiring book of hope for all *chicas*.

The Smart Stepfamily: Seven Steps to a Healthy Family,

by R.L. Deal. Ada, MI: Bethany House Publishers, 2014. 320 pp. \$16.99.

ISBN 9780764212062

Reviewed by Schylon Kubic, Women's Foundation of Greater Kansas City, Kansas City, MO

The Smart Stepfamily is a valuable contribution to the literature on the family ministry of the church and to living a Christian life. Deal, an experienced and highly regarded expert on stepfamilies, argues that churches have an obligation to devote greater time, energy, and love to the nurturing of stepfamilies. Although many churches have taken great strides forward in the work to minister to the needs and challenges of families, Deal maintains that nearly all of these efforts have intentionally or unwittingly excluded "blended" or stepfamilies. Stepfamilies, stepparents, and stepchildren face serious and unique challenges; having strong support from their churches can be an essential ingredient in the success and happiness of these families. Deal helpfully provides a number of concrete steps that churches and family ministries can take to serve the needs of stepfamilies. Although some of these steps are common sense, the