

to other sections of the book, so that the reader can follow the strains of the argument more easily. Scholars in the fields of sacramental theology, phenomenology, and philosophical theology should devour *The Wedding Feast of the Lamb*. The book is suitable for the graduate classroom, especially in courses on the Eucharist and on contemporary philosophy. It is one I see myself coming back to again and again.

TIMOTHY R. GABRIELLI  
*Seton Hill University*

*When Art Disrupts Religion: Aesthetic Experience and the Evangelical Mind*. By Philip Salim Francis. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. 203 pages. \$29.95. doi: 10.1017/hor.2018.22

In his admirable work, *When Art Disrupts Religion*, Philip Salim Francis draws upon ethnographic fieldwork to explore the power of the arts in challenging fundamentalist Christian moorings. With an extensive collection of narratives from two unique college field sites, Francis explores how aesthetic experiences both unsettled Evangelical identities and played a substantial role in the reorientation of their lives.

Francis focuses his attention on collected narratives from two field sites: a bastion of fundamentalism, Bob Jones University, and a small semester-away program called the Oregon Extension (in which Francis himself participated). In spite of the dramatic differences between these sites, the arts play a key role in the lives of their respective students. While the Oregon Extension hosted twenty-five to forty students a semester, Bob Jones University boasts a remarkable School of Fine Arts, widely known for its collection of European masters and its premier Shakespeare and musical productions. The School of Fine Arts also has the largest undergraduate faculty in the university.

Three interests guide Francis' readings of the collected narratives: life in transition, aesthetic disruption, and the secular religion of art. He examines these narratives of transition and identity preservation within a framework shaped by Ralph Waldo Emerson, William James, and John Dewey. Chapters 2 through 5 focus on how aesthetic experiences undid various aspects of fundamentalist identity, including an absolute certainty in religious belief and practice, strict division of insiders and outsiders, an all-or-nothing faith commitment, and fear of losing one's God.

Drawing upon a range of modern aesthetic theorists, Francis is interested in the disruptive capacity of the arts to unsettle and reshape deeply rooted concepts, categories, and presuppositions. Aesthetic disruption, or experience, involves a deeper participation through the creation of or engagement

with artwork to shake the foundations of belief and practice. While some of Francis' memoirists dove deeper into a life of faith, others adopted a thoroughly modern perspective through which the arts became a surrogate form of enchantment and transcendence. In exploring the narratives through a performative lens, Francis reflects on not only the difficulties of conversion but also how the arts become part of new strategies for rebuilding identities.

Two minor dissatisfactions detract from the high-quality work done in this book. First, while the depth of ethnographic work at the two field sites is substantial, should its breadth have been expanded to include other Christian colleges and universities? Although this is not quantitative work, the Oregon Extension introduces a looser population set, in which students (1) entered a semester-away experience, which often produces profound life changes regardless of study content; (2) came from various Christian colleges likely with different theological outlooks; (3) were likely familiar with the school's reputation, which suggests that the students may have already been seeking such change. While these issues do not invalidate the Oregon Extension student narratives, they do raise questions in contrast to the stable student population of Bob Jones University. Would we see similar tendencies among students at more moderate colleges or just among those from staunch fundamentalist backgrounds?

Second, there is a disparity between Francis' broad use of "the arts" to include high-, middle-, and lowbrow forms of visual art, music, film, theater, poetry, and fiction and the focus of the student narratives on primarily modern and postmodern works. Francis' generalized definition raises the question: does a Gainsborough, a Norman Rockwell, or a Thomas Kinkaid work of art have the same disruptive power as artwork by Rothko or Richard Serra? While the particularity of student narratives begs the question, what in Rothko, Dostoevsky, and the others mentioned becomes the fulcrum that pries the fundamentalist free? A clearer engagement with the arts, their histories, genres, and theories, particularly those referenced by student narratives, would be a welcome addition to the text.

In spite of these concerns, Francis' fascinating work offered me new ways to remember and reframe my own art education within an Evangelical college. As an artist and Evangelical, I found the book an encouraging reminder of art's power to disrupt and reorient people's lives. The text is an enjoyable read and may be especially appealing to those interested in the arts, aesthetic experience, conversions, fundamentalism, and higher education.

RYAN STANDER  
*Minot State University*