



God and Grace of Body: Sacrament in Ordinary

By David Brown

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David Brown explores the ways in which the symbolic associations of the body and what we do with it have helped shape religious experience and continue to do so. A Church narrowly focused on Christ's body wracked in pain needs to be reminded that the body as beautiful and sexual has also played a crucial role not only in other religions but also in the history of Christianity itself. Dance was one way in which the connection was expressed. The irony is not that such a connection has gone but that it now exists almost wholly outside the Church. Much the same could be said about music more generally, and Brown writes excitingly about the spiritual potential of not just classical music but also pop, jazz, musicals, and opera. Like Brown's much-praised earlier volumes, *God and Enchantment of Place, Tradition and Imagination*, and *Discipleship and Imagination*, the present book will enlarge horizons and challenge the narrowness of much theological thinking.

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Editorial Review

Review

Brown has made a bold claim and given us a well-argued and finely-crafted argument to consider. His method includes a generous amount of valuable insights into art works of various media. In this he has greatly advanced the field of theological aesthetics. Alejandro Garcia-Rivera, *Modern Theology*. Christianity and sex are awkward bedfellows, but they need not be, according to David Brown's exhilarating new book... [his] aim to reclaim the body, positively, for Christian purposes, is ambitious, and sets about it with enormous relish. Revd Richard Coles, *Church Times* This book has a huge range of references to cultures ancient and modern, both European and from other continents. The footnotes are an Aladdin's cave of erudition... much...to fascinate and follow up. Richard Chartres, *The Journal of Theological Studies* As with Brown's earlier volumes, the range of reading and subject matter with which he engages is remarkable, with many reminders of how things once so close, such as religion and dance, are now sadly compartmentalised...A necessarily short review cannot do justice to the wide range of these two volumes, which witness to an impressive mastery of multi-faceted material, as well as Brown's ability to present it in highly readable and engaging style...warmly commended, and it is to be hoped that others will follow where David Brown has led. Geoffrey Rowell, *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* I hope that this short piece might at least encourage those who have yet to benefit from Brown's writing to do so and then commend it to others...This is a book of beauty to be revered, relished and digested with delight- a sacrament in ordinary. John Inge *Theology* Christianity and sex are awkward bedfellows, but they need not be, according to David Brown's exhilarating book. Richard Coles *The Church Times* David Brown is tuning into some significant areas which those who only reiterate religious texts may miss. His learning is phenomenal and matches the task he has set himself...a powerful and much-needed experiment. Ivor Jones, *The Methodist Recorder* Had the word eclectic not existed, it would have been necessary to invent it, in order to describe the mind of David Brown. Few scholars can have his breadth of knowledge and interest, and be able to deploy it with such dexterity. To use a more seasonal image: this is a Fortnum and Mason Christmas hamper of a book, packed with treats and goodies. *New Directions* Brown has given us a wonderful book that ranges over a vast amount of material. He shows knowledge not just of classical music but of pop music and explores the work of the Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen as well as Bach and Beethoven. Paul Richardson, *Church of England Newspaper* Brown takes the reader on an impressive and often detailed journey through classical and contemporary religious and cultural manifestations of the sacred and the divine. Werner G. Jeanrond, *Scottish Journal of Theology*

About the Author

David Brown is Van Mildert Professor of Divinity at the University of Durham, and a Fellow of the British Academy.

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