



left: **Jona Frank**, *Justin, 19, Freshman, Spring 2006*. Image courtesy Sherry Frumkin Gallery.

right: **Jona Frank**, *Juli with dance card, Liberty Ball Spring 2007*. Image courtesy Sherry Frumkin Gallery.

Right: Portraits from the Evangelical Ivy League by Jona Frank

Introduction by Hanna Rosin, Essay by Colin Westerbeck
 Chronicle Books, 2008

Jona Frank's monograph *Right: Portraits from the Evangelical Ivy League* documents a group of students from Patrick Henry College, a small, conservative, evangelical Christian school in Virginia. *Right* is filled with vividly colored formal portraits of the students and their families, along with photographs of campus activities and home life. Hanna Rosin's introduction paints the students as disciplined, articulate, and highly ambitious. By contrast, Frank's photographic style—characterized by uniformly even lighting (whether inside or out), neutral backdrops, and the students' odd, mannered postures—creates a claustrophobic consistency of tone. Frank does not invent this highly stilted homogeneity, though, as the students themselves are a study in uniformity. The men (boys?) dress in suits and ties, the women in neat dresses or skirts. Their hairstyles and jewelry are highly conventional; nary a piercing, tattoo, or even artificial hair color are in evidence, to the extent that the viewer becomes compelled to examine each image for any outward signs of divergence or individuality. The subjects' adherence to the visual mores established by their community seems absolute, and Frank's photographs maximize that monotony. Her insightful interviews allow the students to articulate their religious values and aspirations, broadening our view of their lives. Most seem to have received an almost enviable amount of nurturance and mentoring from their homeschooling parents and the attentive faculty at the college. In exchange, however, they agree to live by a staggeringly rigid set of moral rules while carrying forward the school's stated mission, "to shape the culture and take back the nation," presumably by seeking the high-level government and entertainment industry jobs for which they have been so carefully groomed.

—Julia Schlosser