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The Body in Swift and Defoe

This original book takes a new look at problems surrounding the physical, material nature of the human body in eighteenth-century England, in particular as represented in the works of Jonathan Swift and Daniel Defoe. It examines the role that literary invention (with its rhetorical and linguistic strategies) plays in expressing and exploring the problems of physicality, and deals with issues such as sexuality, cannibalism, scatology and the fear of contagion. Swift and Defoe are seen as writers confronting the essentially modern problem of what it is to be human in a rapidly developing consumer economy, where individual bodies, beset by poverty and disease, are felt to be threatened by the enveloping masses of urban crowds. In an eclectic synthesis of recent approaches, Carol Flynn works into her study the insights provided by biographical and psychoanalytic criticism, Marxism and social history, studies of eighteenth-century philosophy, and feminist readings. Her challenging approach reviews the cost of being human, the “expense” of material as opposed to spiritual life in eighteenth-century society, as it is revealed in its literature.

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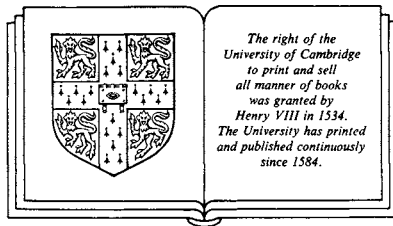
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CAROL HOULIHAN FLYNN
Tufts University



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For my parents
 Mildred and Arthur Houlihan

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Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used throughout in references to Defoe's major texts:

- CL:* *Conjugal Lewdness; or, Matrimonial Whoredom, A Treatise concerning the Use and Abuse of the Marriage Bed*, ed. Maximillian Novak, Gainesville FL, 1967.
- DP:* *Due Preparations for the Plague as well for Soul as Body*, ed. George Aitken, London, 1905.
- JPY:* *A Journal of the Plague Year*, ed. Louis Landa, Oxford, 1969.
- MF:* *Moll Flanders*, ed. G. A. Starr, Oxford, 1981.
- RC:* *Robinson Crusoe*, ed. J. Donald Crowley, Oxford, 1981.
- R:* *Roxana*, ed. Jane Jack, Oxford, 1981.

When textual references follow logically, I have merely given page numbers.

The following abbreviations are used throughout in references to Swift's major texts:

- Corr:* *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift*, 5 vols., ed. Harold Williams, Oxford, 1963–65.
- GT:* *Gulliver's Travels, Prose Writings*, III.
- JS:* *Journal to Stella*, 2 vols., ed. Harold Williams, Oxford, 1948.
- Poems:* *The Poems of Jonathan Swift*, 3 vols., ed. Harold Williams, Oxford, 1937.
- PW:* *Prose Writings*, 14 vols., ed. Herbert Davis *et al.*, Oxford, 1939–68.
- Tale:* *A Tale of a Tub*, ed. A. C. Guthkelch and D. Nichol Smith, Oxford, 1958.