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0521669022 - Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton

Michael C. Schoenfeldt

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Michael Schoenfeldt's fascinating study explores the close relationship between selves and bodies, psychological inwardness and corporeal processes, as they are represented in early modern literature. After Galen, the predominant medical paradigm of the period envisaged a self governed by humors, literally embodying inner emotion by locating and explaining human passion within a taxonomy of internal organs and fluids. It thus bestowed a profoundly material basis upon behavioral phenomena, giving the poets of the period a vital and compelling vocabulary for describing the ways in which selves inhabit and experience bodies. In contrast to much recent work on the body which has emphasized its exuberant leakiness as a principle of social liberation amid oppressive regimes, Schoenfeldt establishes the emancipatory value that the Renaissance frequently located not in moments of festive release, but in the exercise of regulation, temperance, and self-control.

MICHAEL C. SCHOENFELDT is Professor of English at the University of Michigan. He is the author of *Prayer and Power: George Herbert and Renaissance Courtship* (1991) and of numerous published essays on Spenser, Shakespeare, Jonson, Donne, Herrick, Milton, and Amelia Lanyer.

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*Self-Portrait of the Sick Dürer, c. 1512–13*

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## Preface

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This project began in a year at Clare Hall, Cambridge, and was enriched by a variety of conversations that took place that year, particularly with Michael McVaugh, Gillian Beer, Paul Marquis, Terri Apter, Catherine Bates, Victor Caston, Dympna Callaghan, Richard Todd, Lori Anne Ferrell, and Jeremy Maule. It is my deep personal regret that Jeremy did not live to see the book published, so that he could tell me all that was wrong and right with it. He did help the manuscript as much as he could along the way.

I have been blessed with many patient and probing audiences as I worked out the ideas that congealed into this project. I would like to thank in particular audiences at the University of Reading, Oxford University, Cambridge University, Keele University, the University of Chicago, Sarah Lawrence University, the University of London, the British Milton Seminar, and the University of Michigan. The wonderfully informal Works-in-Progress group in the Department of English at the University of Michigan has been a feast for mind and body; thanks to Tobin and Jill Siebers for supplying the venue and the desserts. I continue to learn much from my splendid colleagues in early modern studies at the University of Michigan: Steven Mullaney, John Knott, Linda Gregerson, Ejner Jensen, Carla Mazzio, Ralph Williams, P. A. Skantze, David Porter, and Bill Ingram. Valerie Traub deserves special mention here, for generously demanding of this project the kind of theoretical rigor that her own work always exhibits. Many individuals have read and responded to portions of the manuscript, including David Loewenstein, Richard Strier, William Shullenberger, Debora Shuger, Leonard Barkan, George Bornstein, Claude Summers, Sidney Gottlieb, Jonathan Post, David Hillman, Ted-Larry Pebworth, Russell Fraser, Donald Friedman, Michael MacDonald, Richard Burt, Robert Appelbaum, and Neils Herold. Elise Frasier proved an able editor and critic, and Angela Balla was a blessedly fastidious proofreader. Patrick Cheney ruined a summer vacation by reading the entire manuscript, for which I, and any readers the book happens to muster, must be grateful. I have learned much about the connections among literature, history, and medicine in conversations with Dr. Howard Markel. I have benefited from

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the unerring and enabling support of departmental chairs while I worked on this project; Robert Weisbuch was Chair when I began, and Martha Vicinus when I finished. I owe a debt of gratitude to the Michigan Institute for Humanities, where the initial thinking that led to this project began; and to the Office of the Vice President for Research at the University of Michigan, for the two grants that gave me the time off to begin and conclude the project. Josie Dixon, my editor at Cambridge, showed great faith in the project, even in its early stages, and continually offered insight as the manuscript progressed. As an early reader of selected chapters for the Press, Katharine Maus graciously saw virtues in the project I had been unable to grasp, and insightfully pointed me in the directions that occupied my next two years. As its last, best reader, Stephen Orgel saved the manuscript from several infelicities, and urged me to follow through on several missed opportunities.

Friends who have cheered and sustained me while I worked on this book include John Wagner, John Whittier-Ferguson, Kerry Larson, John Kucich, Jonathan Freedman, and Leslie Atzmon. I regret that my mother did not live to see this book, since she taught me much about the way selves can inhabit afflicted bodies with patience and grace. My father and step-mother, Charles and Charlene Schoenfeldt, bolstered me with love and encouragement as I worked on this book. My brother Patrick reminds me continually of the abiding affection that flesh is also heir to. I dedicate the book with pleasure to Ben and Aaron Schoenfeldt, whose own precious, messy bodies and sweet original selves have taught me so much while they redeemed the pain of living, laboring, and learning.

For permission to reprint, I owe thanks to Routledge, which published a shorter version of Chapter 1 in *The Body in Parts: Fantasies of Corporeality in Early Modern Europe*, ed. David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (1997); to the University Press of Kentucky, which published a shorter version of Chapter 2 in *Worldmaking Spenser: Explorations in the Early Modern Age*, ed. Patrick Cheney and Lauren Silberman (1999); to Garland, which published a shorter version of Chapter 3 in *Shakespeare's Sonnets: Critical Essays*, ed. James Schiffer (1998); and to *The George Herbert Journal*, which published a shorter version of Chapter 4 in *George Herbert in the Nineties: Reflections and Reassessments*, ed. Jonathan F. S. Post and Sidney Gottlieb (1995).

All references to the Bible are to the 1611 Authorized Version. All references to Shakespeare's plays are to *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans *et al.* (Houghton Mifflin, 1974). Spelling and punctuation have been kept as close as possible to the originals, but I have modernized *u, v, w, i, j*.

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To Ben and Aaron