SOMIOTICS: RHETORIC, MEDICINE AND HERMENEUTICS IN JOHN DONNE

by

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This study explores the interrelations of rhetoric, medicine and hermeneutics in the poetry and prose of John Donne. The opening chapter establishes medical thought as a key concept in Donne's hermeneutics by examining his interpretation of Scripture in the *Essays in Divinity*. I explore the role of Augustinian hermeneutics and the development of prudence and decorum as aspects of Donne's *interpretatio scripti*. I argue that medical thought provides Donne with a ground on which to build an understanding of textual interpretation.

Chapter two explores Donne's celebrated use of anatomical imagery in the *Anniversaries*. I argue that, for Donne, anatomy represents a static, normative conception of knowledge. In order to understand a living, afflicted body, Donne turns to somiotics, a term for a cluster of discursive practices that scrutinize the human body as an agglomeration of lisible signs. However, somiotics is fraught with presumption and conjecture; medicine itself is an uncertain art. Thus various interpretive tools were imported into medicine from other disciplines concerned with the judicious interpretation of probable signs. Chapter three establishes both early modern physicians' indebtedness to rhetoric and hermeneutics and early modern writers' indebtedness to medicine thought as a means to envision relationships between cause and effect.

In order to understand Donne's use of specialized medical terminology, chapter four explores the relationship between medicine, rhetoric and hermeneutics in antiquity. I examine the ways in which, from antiquity until the Renaissance, 'indications' function as arch-symptoms that afforded physicians access to the relationship between cause and effect in the living body. The testing ground for Donne's conception of indication is his own, afflicted body.
Chapter five brings together my argument in chapters one to four and explores the habits of thought and discursive and rhetorical techniques (exemplarity, 'indication' and the discourse of affliction) that underlie Donne's assertions about the relative effectiveness of sign-inference in relation to his own illness in 1623. In the Devotions, the concepts I have explored are woven together into an ethical fabric.

My epilogue argues that Donne used medicine, medical semiotics and medical history to argue about the problems and possibilities of human knowledge with a pleasing economy of scale. I conclude by identifying several forms of 'symptom history' both in the early modern period and in modern literary history.
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What escapes our vision we must grasp by mental sight, and the physician, being unable to see the nature of the disease nor to be told of it, must have recourse to reasoning from the symptoms with which he is presented. ... By weighing up the significance of various signs it is possible to deduce of what disease they are the result, what has happened in the past and to prognosticate the future course of the malady.


You may esteem your bodily qualities as highly as you like as long as you admit that these things you admire so much can be destroyed by the trifling heat of a three-day fever.


Where philosophy leaves off, medicine begins [*illa medicum informat ubi namque desinit Philosophus ibi incipit Medicus*].


What is all the peace of the world to me, if I have the rebellions and earth-quake of shaking and burning Feavers in my body?

John Donne, *Sermons*, 3.82-83.

In this world we see but outsides[.]


No discipline is more subject to deception with regard to cause, than is medicine.


The art of discovering the causes of phenomena, or true hypotheses, is like the art of deciphering, in which an ingenious conjecture often greatly shortens the road.


Our most sacred convictions, the unchanging elements in our supreme values, are judgements of our muscles.


By following the labyrinth of fever that runs through the body, by exploring the "seats of fever," or the pains that inhabit a hollow tooth, we should learn that the imagination localizes suffering and creates and recreates imaginary anatomies.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Devotions  

Sermons  

Essays  

Letters  

Bald  

Gosse  

All citations of Donne’s verse include title and line numbers and are taken from one of the following editions, to which page numbers in the citations refer:

Grierson  

Gardner  

Divine  

John Donne was seriously ill in November 1623.¹ "I am surpriz'd with a sodaine change, & alteration to the worst," Donne writes, "and can impute it to no cause, nor call it by any name" (Devotions, 7).

Nor, apparently, could his physicians. How "intricate a worke then have they," he declared, "who are gone to consult, which of these sicknesses mine is, and then which of these fevers, and then what it would do, and then how may it be countermind" (46). Although earlier in his life Donne claimed that assiduous medical practice afforded physicians a certain knowledge of disease, in 1623 his "perplex'd discomposition" muted his view.² No physician "can say ... here lay the coale, the fuell, the occasion of all bodily diseases," he writes, for "What Hypocrates, what Galen, could shew mee that in my body?" (118). Disease had established its "Arcana Imperii," its secrets of state, in his body; his faculties "see, that invisibly, & I feele, that insensibly the disease prevails" (52).³ Suturing hypotheses to the probable evidence of signs and symptoms, Donne's physicians might imagine the causes of his illness but could not demonstrate them: there is no certain knowledge of a living, diseased body.

¹The illness has been variously diagnosed as relapsing fever or typhus. For a cogent account of recent scholarship on Donne's illness, see Devotions, introduction, xiii-xix. The actual nature of his condition still troubles contemporary criticism; for a full account the literature, see chapter four, below. It will become clear, I hope, that I disagree with Raspa, who asserts that "Donne's reason for failing to identify his illness in Devotions is difficult to imagine" (xv). Here and in the chapters that follow, I offer several reasons for Donne's 'failure.'

²"Of our bodies infirmities," Donne wrote to Sir Henry Goodyer in March 1608, "though our knowledge be partly ab extrinseco, from the opinion of the Physitian, and that the subject and matter be flexible, and various; yet their rules are certain and if the matter be writely applyed to the rule, our knowledge thereof is also certain" (Letters, 70-71). The phrase "perplex'd discomposition" is from Devotions, 8. Donne's infirmity may have resulted from an epidemic of "spotted fever" in the autumn of 1623; for the epidemic and contemporary accounts, including John Chamberlain's, see Bald, 450-451.

³Donne's oxymorons --- seeing invisibly and feeling insensibly --- will be discussed below.
Faced with the difficulty of discerning the causes of disease in a living body, Donne frequently turns to the dead. Borrowing terms and concepts from both early modern medicine and traditional homiletics, Donne probes the causes of physical and spiritual disease using the methods and metaphors of anatomy and dissection, mooring his inquiries to the dissected parts of a cadaver rather than the tractable signs of a thinking and feeling human body. Unfolding a dead body, exposing its interior to view, might disclose its secrets. "[W]e better discern our selves in singulis, then in omnibus," Donne writes in 1618, "better by taking ourselves in pieces, then altogether." One dissection, he continued, teaches more than drilling an army of living men. "Let every one of us therefore dissect and cut up himself" (Sermons, 1.273). Roughly eight years later, in the Devotions, Donne exposed his own "ruinous Anatomie" in a metaphorical anatomy theatre, offering his febrile body as evidence. Charting the contours of sickness or identifying and describing the soul via dissection was dependent on a visceral avatar, a revelation of parts. Anatomy was a discourse of the perceptible, an *anatomia sensibilis*.

While Donne is keen to exploit the discursive and argumentative potential of anatomy and dissection, opening the body did not obviate the need to infer causation from physical evidence, it merely exposed other, hidden surfaces to view, broadening and intensifying a hermeneutical problem. A cadaver must be *read*, its signs must be sifted, weighed and judged; also, an audience must be convinced of one's reading. Yet the "body will not last out, to have read / on every part,"

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2In a sermon preached before the King in 1621, Donne wrote: "We know the receipt, the capacity of the Ventricle, the stomach of man, how much it can hold; and we know the receipt of all the receptacles of blood, how much blood the body can have; so do we of all the other conduits and cisterns of the body; but this infinite Hive of honey, this insatiable whirlpool of the covetous mind, no anatomy, no dissection, hath discovered to us" (Sermons, 3.235).
Donne writes, so men direct "Their speech to parts, that are of most effect." Even with the difficulty of imputing cause to a disease or assigning it a name, Donne proposes the living body, especially a diseased body, as the primary ground of legitimate somatic and spiritual knowledge. Against the apparent certainties offered by anatomy and dissection, it is the examination of the diseased, living body that focuses Donne's attention on the relationship between bodies and souls, language and sickness, epistemology and ontology. As Terry Sherwood has argued, the "anatomy, physiology, pathology and medicinal needs" of the human body are perhaps the most important elements of Donne's thought. Donne finds an epistemological foothold in the world by exploring "the direct and universal experience of bodily life" while utilizing temporal, sense experience as a vehicle to investigate "fuller, parallel realities." "I know," Donne writes, addressing God, "that in the state of my body, which is more discernible, than that of my soule, thou dost effigiate my Soule to me" (Devotions, 119). The iconic dimension of Donne's suggestion is clear: in its "Valley of sicknesse" his living body represents his soul. Effigiation, or the notion that spiritual sickness of the soul is manifest on the body, that its crises are mapped on skin, has profound epistemological implications.

In order to know the soul and discern an individual sinner's relationship with God, a knowledge of temporal, embodied experience --- especially sickness and suffering, as we shall see --- is paramount. If a diseased body is assessed only tentatively through indications, symptoms and effects,

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6Anatotnie ofthe World, ll. 436-438; Grierson, 220.

7Terry G. Sherwood, Fulfilling the Circle: a Study of John Donne's Thought (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 63, 68. David Hirsch has pointed to the way in which Donne materializes virtue, the soul or the essence of "individual identity" into "a permanent engraving or bodily component." Even in religious meditation, Donne "cannot escape" a "fundamental concern with physicality." (David A. Hedrich Hirsch, "Donne's Atomies and Anatomies: Deconstructed Bodies and the Resurrection of Atomic Theory," Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900 31 [1991]: 87, 80). Barbara Kiefer Lewalski comments on the "incarnational direction of Donne's symbolism" (Donne's Anniversaries and the Poetry of Praise: the Creation of a Symbolic Mode [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973], 265).
how does one determine its "state" with any certitude? If causes cannot be ascertained from "intestine Conspiracies" and "outward declarations," the operation and progress of disease remain stubbornly opaque (Devotions, 68). In order to treat its underlying causes, not merely the "accidents" that accompany his illness, Donne's physicians were compelled to reason from visible signs to invisible causes. In turn, Donne embraced the strictures of effigiation. Inference of this sort --- what has been called "transdiction" --- was their intricate work.\(^8\) His physicians' conjectures, hypotheses and therapies, however, did little to relieve his misery, nor did they cure his fever; moreover, their variance of opinion intensified Donne's suffering and fear. Donne's and his physicians' failure to identify the causes of fever confirm the deficiency of contemporary medical heuristics. Little wonder Donne thought his disease prevailed.

This dissertation explores the ways in which John Donne and his near-contemporaries enlisted the discourses of symptomatology and anatomy in an effort to imagine and represent the mercurial relationship between cause and effect, syndrome and symptom in a living, afflicted human body. In the early modern period, physicians, poets, divines and philosophers spent an enormous amount of critical energy on a persistent problem: interpreting the thinking and feeling human body and its relation to God, language and sickness. The keys to this relationship are signs, symptoms and indications.

As Donne's work amply illustrates, whether examining a fever or the pox, early modern writers attempted to discern specific pathologies via forms of inference based on an assumption that

\(^8\)"Transdiction" is a term that denotes prediction or retrodiction (inference forward or backward in time, diagnosis and prognosis) that Maurice Mandelbaum uses to describe Boyle's, Locke's and Newton's justification of their belief in atomic constitutions or corpuscularianism. Mandelbaum proposes "transdiction" to mark inferences about data that "lay beyond the bounds of possible experiences" in early modern science (atoms, for example). Transdiction, as we shall see, resonates with ancient notions of analogimos and endeixis as well as with repérage. See Mandelbaum, Philosophy, Science and Sense Perception: Historical and Critical Studies (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1964), 61-62.
somatic signs were indices of hidden causes. Manifest physical evidence in some way signified the obscure interior of the living body. Reasoning from the variable signs and symptoms of a sick body to the causes of illness is fraught with difficulty, incertitude and guesswork; probable sign-inference is indirect, presumptive and conjectural. Unable to demonstrate the causal link between his symptoms and his specific fever (his exterior and interior), in 1623 Donne's physicians proceeded by analogy, reasoning from effects, signs and symptoms to an imagined, but inaccessible cause. When his physicians prescribed purgatives based on their assessment of various symptoms, Donne was skeptical. "Wee cannot alwaies say," he writes, "this was concluded; actions are alwaies determined in effects" (Devotions, 105). The effects Donne and his physicians observed on his body functioned as signs which, if assembled into a coherent picture of disease, might reveal its underlying cause: interpreting illness was thus dependent on semiosis, signification and inference. If the soul was "effigiate[d]" in the body, the body itself presented a grave hermeneutical problem. Both spiritual and medical diagnosis were problems of reading.⁹

Focusing on these interrelations and intersections in Donne and his contemporaries, I make three claims: first, I argue that the living, sick body provided a potent site on which to negotiate the

relationship between cause and effect, inside and outside, that resonated with larger epistemological questions. The ways in which the outside of a body is figuratively sutured to its inside is predicated on an uncertain and frequently contested somiotics. Imputing causes and naming diseases necessitated a careful tabulation of signs and symptoms based on forms of inference inflected with the historical and spiritual meanings of sickness itself. Central to this relationship is the notion of endeixis or indication. The ways in which the outside of a body is figuratively sutured to its inside is predicated on an uncertain and frequently contested somiotics. Imputing causes and naming diseases necessitated a careful tabulation of signs and symptoms based on forms of inference inflected with the historical and spiritual meanings of sickness itself. Central to this relationship is the notion of endeixis or indication. The forms of intellection applied to the afflicted body establish a colloquy between the visible and invisible, the obscure and the manifest, in the living human body. The axis of this colloquy is sign-inference. While no single, normative mode of somiotics emerges in the early modern period, each reading of a particular body presents us with clues about the habits of thought by which it is informed.

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10Somiotics is a neologism that combines Greek terms for the body (soma) and semiotikos (meaning "significant" or concerned with symptoms). The term is useful, I think, because it marks the human body as an agglomeration of symptoms and signs open to variant interpretations. It proposes the body (and embodiment, the sense of occupying corporeal space) as historical and hermeneutic problems. In early modern England, somiotics encompassed various disciplines and discourses, from medical semiotics to physiognomy. I envision this dissertation as, in part, a contribution to the growing critical and historical literature on the history of the human body.

11Negotiating the perilous straits of cultural poetics, historical materialism and "historically-situated language," Deborah Shuger has usefully proposed the term "habit of thought" to designate the "thickening of boundaries" in the Renaissance between individual acts, textual or otherwise, and dominant cultural formations or ideologies. Shuger describes a "habit of thought" as an "ideology," but it is ideology inflected by the subaltern world of emotion, habit, fear, desire and other incendiary pulsions. It is, she says, "an attempt precisely to denote this indissoluble mixture of feeling and ideation that constitutes experience --- where 'experience' is not simply elemental feeling but feeling that has become meaningful by being interpreted" (Deborah Kuller Shuger, Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance: Religion, Politics, and the Dominant Culture [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990], chapter 1; 254). Gail Kern Paster has coined the phrase "early modern habits of bodily thought and sensation" ("Nervous Tension: Networks of Blood and Spirit in Early Modern England," in The Body in Parts: Fantasies of Corporeality in Early Modern Europe, ed. David Hillman and Carla Mazzio [London and New York: Routledge, 1997], 107) to apply to the ways in which imagined physiological systems (the vital and animal spirits, for example) intersect with culture and political organization. Elsewhere, Paster has proposed "humoralism" as the habit of thought that "had broad and pervasive effects on the discourse, experience and expression of bodiliness and on the enculturation process in general" (The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993], 17).
about the relationship between the visible and the invisible (object and subject, not-mind and mind), analogy, synthesis and analysis in the early modern human sciences. Donne's somiotics is inextricably linked to his epistemology and psychology.

Second, I argue that Donne's engagement with the living body obliges him to enlist the metaphors and methods of medicine in his examination of the relationship between the body, the soul and God. Whether discussing his auditors' salvation or meditating on his own illness, medicine affords Donne the tools to interpret embodied experience and its importance to the virtuous, Christian life. Yet, without the aid of interpretive practices borrowed from rhetoric and hermeneutics, medicine offered little more than a variously effective supplement to his affliction. As a consequence, Donne develops his own "rhetoricized logic" structured around the limited but legitimate claims of reason developed in his early engagement with Scriptural hermeneutics. I place medicine in Donne's hierarchy of sense, reason and divine certainty and argue that it functioned as a vehicle to focus his meditation on the spiritual as well as the physical meanings of affliction. Third, with these claims in mind, I argue for a close relationship between reading, rhetoric and science in the understanding of the human body in early modern England. In these intersections, a neotenous somiotics was born.

Various forms of interpretation were brought to bear on the relationship between the thinking feeling complex of body and soul and its relationship to sickness, language and God. Central to my concerns are forms of reasoning present in three disciplines or practices dedicated to reading and interpreting somatic and linguistic signs: medicine, rhetoric and hermeneutics. Each discipline promised to reconcile the differences between inside and outside by showing how one might reason from exterior signs (symptoms, gestures, texts) to an interior state (sickness, emotion, intention). Each was profoundly historical, arguing that the interpretation of illness and the production and interpretation of speech or writing was dependent on context and circumstance. For rhetoricians, grammarians and hermeneuts, medicine provided decisive means for discussing signification and
reasoning; in particular, symptomatology offered a useful model for the relationship between signs, signifiers and signified. Conversely, methods of interpretation drawn from rhetoric and hermeneutics influenced the ways in which causes were linked with effects in the scrutiny of the living body. My use of these terms to designate particular interpretive practices requires definition.

Early modern English medicine was an enormously complex and variegated discipline. The range of theories, practices and therapies available to various classes in this period was astonishing; also "medicine" differed significantly from "physic" in the period. However, it is not my purpose here to render a coherent account of the "medical marketplace" in early modern England; nor do I analyze in depth medical treatment or specific schools of medical thought. Rather, my concern is "medical epistemology" or the learned tradition of theoretical speculation about the causes and cures of illness, along with the practical, interpretive tools (medical semiotics, symptomatology and anatomy) assembled to aid that speculation. I focus on the interpretation of signs and symptoms in early modern medicine. Thus, while I discuss some of the most celebrated medical writers of the period, I do so in order to demonstrate the pervasiveness and tenacity of specific intellectual habits shared with other disciplines.

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Similarly, my use of the term rhetoric is specialized. I isolate one aspect of rhetoric as it was understood in the Aristotelian tradition: what one might call "rhetorized logic" or elements of the rhetorical tradition moored to the theory and practice of interpretation. Rhetoric in this sense was an assemblage of interpretive, argumentative and discursive techniques available to an orator independent of the situation at hand. Rhetoric is a "method for dealing with a domain apparently beyond method" --- ethics, politics and medicine. In Aristotelian terms, discourse should reflect "the subject matter; and questions about action and expediency, like questions about health" have no fixed, invariable answers. While its overall goal is persuasion, rhetoric also encompasses a practical, prudential interpretation of probable signs directed toward intervention in a given situation; because its object is persuasion, it is perforce concerned with action. Rhetorical argument defends the probable against claims that truth can only contain propositions that can be tested and demonstrated. Its instruments --- enthymeme and example, inference and practical wisdom ---

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15Eugene Garver, Aristotle's Rhetoric: an Art of Character (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 41. In this and previous work, Garver is concerned with recovering the practical aspects of rhetoric. He writes: "The dimensions of the Rhetoric that are most tied to praxis ... are the ones connected to human function, while the more poetic side, such as the discussion of style and arrangement in Book III, is not. The current direction of rhetorical research and discussions of phronesis is another reason to see a lack of connection between the human good and the contemporary circumstances of its exercise" (237). As I shall argue in chapter four, Aristotle's conception of the contingency of medicine and rhetoric lends itself to practical intervention in the world: the exigencies of human experience, whether in ethics or health, must be addressed by a theoretically informed, experienced practice refined in the polis.

16Ethics, 1104a3-5.
support a contingent, historical conceptualization of truth, rooted in an individual's experience of the culture and social organization of a given moment. If one accepts that the human sciences (history, law, anthropology, psychology, sociology, medicine) can never offer an assured, normative portrait of humankind, rhetoric is indispensable to the interpretation of human experience.\textsuperscript{17} It is a logic of discovery, a practical philosophy related to topical reasoning, not simply a judicious disposition of words; it is more "a philosophy of human life as determined by speech than a technical doctrine about the art of speaking."\textsuperscript{18} Indeed, scholars have argued that from Cicero and others, early modern writers developed the view that rhetoric as social discourse was the very ground of wisdom.\textsuperscript{19} Furthermore, as Douglas Patey has pointed out, the history of distinctions between probable and indicative signs in various disciplines must be traced to the history of rhetoric.\textsuperscript{20} I am concerned with rhetoric as observation, practical judgement and argumentative persuasion. Quintilian summarizes succinctly: "Just as men discovered the art of medicine by observing that some things were healthy and some the reverse, so they observed that some things were useful and some useless in speaking, and noted them for imitation or avoidance, while they added certain other precepts according as their nature suggested. These observations were confirmed by experience and each man proceeded to teach what he knew."\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{17}Timothy Reiss, \textit{Knowledge, Discovery and Imagination in Early Modern Europe: the Rise of Aesthetic Rationalism} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 87.


Hermeneutics is equally complex. Initially applied to the techniques of textual, especially Scriptural, interpretation in premodernity, its province since the nineteenth century has been widened to include the theory and practice of interpretation in various discursive fields. Since the efforts of Schleiermacher and Dilthey, hermeneutics has claimed a central part in the history and construction of the human sciences.\(^\text{22}\) Hans-Georg Gadamer has recently argued that hermeneutics undergirds history, aesthetics and philosophy: in other words, fundamental to each of these discrete disciplines is an historicized act of interpretation and understanding in which experience as well as habit and prejudice are placed under the lens of inquiry.\(^\text{23}\) For Gadamer, the fundamental task of hermeneutics is not the development of techniques or practice of interpretation, but the clarification of the conditions in which understanding takes place.\(^\text{24}\) From the particular interpretive pyrotechnics (as different as they are) of Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Melanchthon and Erasmus, for example, to an inquiry into the fundamental conditions of human understanding, hermeneutics has held a central position as a theory and practice of interpretation. As such, it too is a study of signs.

As I use the term, hermeneutics designates both specific instances of the interpretation of texts (including the book of the world and its abridgement, the human body) and the intellectual habits that enable a given interpretation. Interpretation is "no more than an approximation: only an

\(^{22}\) As Wilhelm Dilthey claims, absorbed "into the context of the epistemology, logic and methodology of the human studies, the theory of interpretation becomes a vital link between philosophy and the historical disciplines, an essential part of the foundations of the studies of man" (Selected Writings, ed. and trans. H.P. Rickman [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976], 260).

\(^{23}\) As Gadamer insists, "history does not belong to us; we belong to it. ... That is why the prejudices of the individual, far more than his judgements, constitute the historical reality of his being" (Truth and Method, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall [New York: Continuum, 1997], 276-277; emphasis in original). On this point, see Joel Weinsheimer, Philosophical Hermeneutics and Literary Theory (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991), 38-39.

\(^{24}\) Truth and Method, 295-296.
attempt [at explanation], plausible and fruitful, but clearly never definitive." In this sense, hermeneutics possesses a similar epistemological status as medicine and rhetoric. Rhetoric is central to Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics. The practical philosophy he endorses, as well as the "aesthetic" processes he advocates, are essentially rhetorical. Indeed, the theoretical tools of hermeneutics were borrowed from rhetoric; science, too, if it is to be useful, owes a debt to rhetoric.26

Few scholars have seen similar intellectual habits in the histories of rhetoric, medicine and hermeneutics. To a large degree, this shared attention to surfaces as indices of depths, to the visible as a register of the invisible, influences the development of early modern thinking about the relative certainty or uncertainty of various modes of enquiry that sought the universal in the particular. As Barbara Shapiro has argued, in the seventeenth century rational, historicized inquiry into the books of God and the book of creatures was thought to produce, in contradistinction to mathematics, only moral certainty.27 Although it was rooted in divine stricture, ethics, for example, was confined to the probable: certain knowledge of second, let alone first causes was "placed oftentimes far above the ordinary Reach's of human wit," in Edmund Bolton's words (Bolton was writing about history, a discipline concerned with signs).28 If reason was the thread through the labyrinth of nature and

25Gadamer, "Hermeneutics as Practical Philosophy," 105. He continues: "Interpretation is always on the way."

26Gadamer, "On the Scope and Function of Hermeneutical Reflection (1967)," in his Philosophical Hermeneutics, 24. The "rhetorical and hermeneutical aspects of human linguisticality completely interpenetrate each other" (25).


28Edmund Bolton, Hypercritica, or a Rule of Judgment for Writing or Reading our History's (London, 1618?) in Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century, ed. J.E. Spingarn, 3 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), 1.84. See Patey, Probability and Literary Form, 47, for history as an
culture, it was confined to surfaces, "fragments" and "verisimilitudes," as Donne put it, caught in the fray of particulars that might or might not point to correct interpretation, let alone causation.

Essaying causes by means of a thorough and prudent study of effects was accomplished also through diverse means, of course; however it was figured, the faith in traces, signs and clues, in indices and symptoms, was as brittle as it was robust. In the following chapters, I examine one set of instructive links between the visible and invisible in the human body (what might be called the "rhetorical suture") wherein various figurative elaborations perform the function of ligatures, mooring the obscure or the hidden to the intelligible or the manifest.

In fact, I argue that each assessment of the living body is anchored to a cluster of intellectual habits and interpretive techniques developed in both rhetoric and hermeneutics. These habits are dominated by forms of repérage, or mapping the invisible via a visible key. As Gadamer claimed, the "movement of human existence" might be based on "a relentless inner tension between illumination and concealment." The tension between illumination and concealment meant that rhetoricians, hermeneuts and physicians were attentive to textual or somatic surfaces as indices of depths. The techniques applied to this problem of inference were diverse, of course, but in the early interpretation of signs.

29 I borrow the term from Michel Foucault. Foucault argues that the symptom is "the first transcription of the inaccessible nature of the disease"; "of all that is visible," he writes, "it is closest to the essential." The problem of reasoning from symptoms to causes necessitates a form of inference that derives the obscure from the manifest, a process which Foucault calls "repérage," or the anticipation of the invisible by a "visible mapping out" (The Birth of the Clinic: an Archaeology of Medical Perception, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith [New York: Random House, 1975], 90-91; cf. 159-172). Foucault's discussion of signs and symptoms is crucial to my discussion of symptomatology below and in the following chapters. His assertion --- that the symptom merely "translates" what was philosophically available in other systems of thought into thinking about the body --- establishes an axis of relation between this "habit of thought" in medicine and other disciplines.

30 "Hermeneutics as Practical Philosophy," 104.
seventeenth century they reflected a renewed (Aristotelian) attention to practical, probable forms of reasoning that might be brought to bear on a given task. For all the overt reaction to the authority of Aristotle in the seventeenth century, there was an equally powerful aversion to the abstractions of Neoplatonism. This reaction implicitly endorsed phronesis (practical reason) against episteme (demonstrable, theoretical knowledge) or techne (artistic, productive knowledge). This attention to practical reasoning is to a large degree a legacy of humanism.\(^3\) Nowhere was this attention to practical reason, prudence or temperance more important than in medicine, which has been called

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\(^3\)See Stephen Toulmin, "Concluding Methodological Reflections: Elitism and Democracy among the Sciences," in *Beyond Theory: Changing Organizations through Participation*, ed. Stephen Toulmin and Bjorn Gustavsen (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1996), 203-225. Toulmin argues that an attention to rhetorical inquiry is "circumstantial" against the theoretical grasp epitomized by episteme. He proposes medicine as the model for research as a "clinical art" (210). In his work on the "maker's knowledge tradition," Antonio Pérez-Ramos states that epistemology is related specifically to practice; it is, in Amos Funkenstein's phrase, an "ergetic ideal." A manipulator or user of nature's activity would "thus fall under the general rubric of prudentia (phronesis) rather than under the scope of scientia (episteme), which was no maker's but beholder's knowledge" ("Bacon's Forms and the Maker's Knowledge Tradition," in *The Cambridge Companion to Bacon*, ed. Markku Peltonen [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996], 110-111; see also Pérez-Ramos, *Francis Bacon's Idea of Science and the Maker's Knowledge Tradition* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988]). On Aristotelianism, Susan James writes that "any suggestion that there is a clean break between Aristotelianism and the New Philosophy needs to be handled with care. The break is real enough, but it is offset by several sorts of continuity, both in the works of writers dedicated to leaving Scholasticism behind, and in the philosophical culture at large" (Passion and Action, 22). Charles Schmitt has argued that in fact the flexibility of Aristotelianism accommodated diverse and divergent strands of new philosophy (Aristotle and the Renaissance [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983]). See also Eckhard Kessler, "The Transformation of Aristotelianism during the Renaissance," in *New Perspectives on Renaissance Thought: Essays in the History of Science, Education and Philosophy*, ed. John Henry and Sarah Hutton (London: Duckworth, 1990), 137-147. Peter Dear, *Discipline and Experience: the Mathematical Way in the Scientific Revolution* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995) and William A. Wallace who argues, in "Traditional Natural Philosophy," that the "fierce partisan loyalties of the Middle Ages were somewhat relaxed [in the Renaissance]; to a remarkable degree the physical works of Aristotle supplied common ground on which followers of Alexander of Aphrodisias and Simplicius, Avicennians and Averroists, Neoplatonists and scholastics of various affiliations could argue out their differences" (Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy, 204).

"phronesiology" in order to emphasize its enabling mix of skepticism and practical wisdom.\textsuperscript{33} As a semiotics of both indicative and probable signs, as a bastion of analogical, metaphorical and ethical thought, medicine was the paradigmatic low science.\textsuperscript{34}

The relationship between literature and science in early modern Europe has received much thoughtful scrutiny.\textsuperscript{35} Recent studies have argued for the influence of theology, philosophy and

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{34}"Probable signs' are effects which lead the mind to infer their causes; probable signification, we might say, is a causal relation in reverse. ... Probable signs licensed inferences from macroscopic nature to what was called 'the internal constitution' of objects; from body to mind; and, at a variety of levels, from literary form to meaning. These signs were the creation of ancient medical theorists, and spread from medicine to 'low' sciences and to rhetoric" (Douglas Lane Patey, \textit{Probability and Literary Form}, 35). Patey states elsewhere: "as effects which point with probability to their causes, such signs, though first developed in ancient medicine and always part of medical theory, were readily assimilated to the rhetorical model of the internal topics of cause and effect" (22).
\end{itemize}
rhetoric (or "literary technology") on both the theory and practice of early modern science. The work of Galileo, for example, has become a contested site for those who see the emergence of mathesis (scientific knowledge built on mathematical models of demonstration) tinged with the colours of rhetoric. Recent scholarship has implicated rhetoric and hermeneutics in the scientific discoveries of Kepler and Bacon, Gilbert and the virtuosi of the Royal Society. Even Descartes, who archly claimed that no natural phenomenon was beyond the pale of mathematical explanation, offered his arguments about optics in the form of analogy. Descartes called the Discourse on Method a "history, or if you prefer it, a fable." Recognizing the humanist use of dialectical methods that concentrate on probable argument and employ analogies, probable inference and exempla in diverse fields, we should be surprised if the discourses of natural philosophy escaped their influence. The two 'reformations' of natural philosophy in the sixteenth century both placed language, inference and reason at the centre of their concerns.

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36The phrase "literary technology" is Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer's (Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes. Boyle and the Experimental Life [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985], 25). Anthony Grafton claims that if "we examine the humanists' hermeneutical methods, moreover, we will see that historical as well as imitative modes of reading depended on rhetoric for their tools" (Defenders of the Text, 41). Patrick Grant argues that science is dependent on "cultural and historical circumstances" and endorses a vision of early modern science "which makes it sound more anxious than assured, more organic than structured, more reminiscent of the development of literature and, thus, more completely part of a society which also expresses itself in art and history as well as in the languages of quantification" (Literature and the Discovery of Method in the English Renaissance [Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985], 6).

37See, for example, Jean Dietz Moss, Novelties in the Heavens: Rhetoric and Science in the Copernican Controversy (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

38René Descartes, Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy, ed. David Weissman (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), 5. Descartes continues: "fables make one imagine many events possible which in reality are not so, and even the most accurate of histories, if they do not exactly misrepresent or exaggerate the value of things in order to render them more worthy of being read, at least omit in them all the circumstances which are basest and least notable" (6).

39On these points, see Nicholas Jardine, "Epistemology of the Sciences," in Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy, 707, passim, Sachiko Kusukawa, The Transformation of Natural
Within this critical ferment, the specific affinities of literature and medicine have occasioned some interest, mostly from practising physicians and historians of medicine. Indeed, "literature and medicine has become a legitimate, if modest, field of study." Although the specific correspondences between rhetoric and medicine have received little attention, the spate of recent work exploring the relationship of medicine and literature in early modern Europe confirms the importance of this emergent field. Nancy Struever has proposed the term "rhetorical-medical mind set" to designate a cluster of discriminations and practices that attend to the probable in literature and medicine. Both are practically oriented and cultivate a healthy skepticism in their practitioners.

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"Petrarch's *Invective Contra Medicum*: an Early Confrontation of Rhetoric and Medicine," *Modern Language Notes* 108 [1993]: 659-679 (the phrase "rhetorical-medical mind set" at 677). See also...
Although the majority of recent works in English concern anatomy, some scholars have explored the relationship between literature and medicine by focusing on their shared attention to semiotics and practical reasoning. Central to this work is the notion that medicine as a human science revolves around a pair of related terms: signification and system, reading specific signs and placing them within a clinical or theoretical context. Recent work in bioethics has built upon this dyad and argued that both practical (i.e. clinical) and theoretical medicine can thus benefit from narrative, literary theories and techniques. Further, scholars have discerned the parallels between artistic endeavour and clinical medicine, claiming that both share an attention to unfolding the body's


By far the most important work on the intersection of medicine and semiotics is "A Semiotic Definition of Illness" by Kathryn Vance Staiano (*Semiotica* 28.5 [1979]: 107-125). Staiano offers the now commonplace notion that "illness is always a cultural event or experience, inseparable from social and political realities" (108) but continues to refine her argument using the tools of semiotics. Illness produces equivocal signs that require diligent interpretation; the socially and politically constituted self is involved in every illness, thus "all illnesses are psychosomatic" (115). Staiano argues for the ways in which "illness signs" affect both health practitioners and the patient herself. Every sign is thus coded in a particular cultural moment.

44 Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 357ff. See also Thomas on the decline of magic in medicine, *Religion*, 787ff. As Thomas suggests, the "wonder is not that older systems of divination should have lasted so long, but that we should now feel it possible to do without them" (791).
Indeed, one of the major arteries linking rhetoric, medicine and hermeneutics is analogy and metaphor. Scholars have argued for the importance of example, narrative, metaphor and analogy in

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46See, for example, Raymond A. Anselment, *The Realms of Apollo: Literature and Healing in Seventeenth-Century England* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1985), Lucinda McCray Beier, *Sufferers and Healers: the Experience of Illness in Seventeenth-Century England* (London and New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987) and Doreen E. Nagy, *Popular Medicine in Seventeenth-Century England* (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Press, 1988). Perhaps the most important recent work to address these questions is Katharine Eisaman Mauss' *Inwardness and Theatre in the English Renaissance* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995). Mauss examines the development of "interiority" in relation to New Historicism and cultural materialism, positing "the constant practice of induction" involved in discovering the interior of a subject or "reasoning from the superficial to the deep, from the effect to the cause, from seeming to being" (5). She argues for two forms of early modern identity: one based on class and rank, the other "predicated upon sinister interiority" (40). She concludes that in "sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England the bodily interior is still mysterious in a way perhaps hard to recapture in an age of medical sophistication, and in a way quite precisely analogous to the mysteriousness of human motives and desires" (196). Her treatment of English legal precept is admirable (111ff.) as is her discussion of Shakespeare; she relates the dialectics of inside and outside to discourses of gender (188ff.).

scientific discourse and discovery. Concomitantly, science has influenced literature, philosophy and theology. For example, advocating an archaeology of figuration which he terms "metaphorology," Hans Blumenberg sees metaphors as "fossil clues" affording access to the "broken tracks and fragmentary traces" of cognition. "Metaphorology" is a "powerful means for understanding the rationally ungraspable or the indescribable." Metaphorology does not only reveal the irrational, however, it also affords a view of the ways in which figurative language is essential to the construction of knowledge. As Thomas Hobbes insists in 1637, "Metaphors please; for they beget in us ... a kind of Science." In his work on Copernicus and Kepler, Fernand Hallyn calls this work "scientific tropology." With respect to medical epistemology, as Gail Kern Paster has claimed, that "which is bodily or emotional figuration for us, preserved metaphors of somatic consciousness, was the literal stuff of physiological theory for early modern scriptors of the body." Metaphors, in other words, are both the fabric and texture of medical speculation.

Drawing together the heuristic and curative aspects of hermeneutics, rhetoric and medicine, early modern writing was tuned to forms of inquiry audible on an altogether different frequency than


50*Poetic Structure of the World*, 31. Foucault writes of the possibility, in the eighteenth century, of writing a history of knowledge based on figurative language: "Languages, though imperfect knowledge themselves, are the faithful memory of the progress of knowledge towards perfection. They lead into error, but they record what has been learned. In their chaotic order, they give rise to false ideas; but true ideas leave in them the indelible mark of an order that chance on its own could never have created" (*The Order of Things: an Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, trans. of *Les Mots et les Choses* [1966] [New York: Random House, 1973], 87-88). Language rather than the text was in the eighteenth century the repository of fragmented, vestigial meanings. Whereas for the Renaissance, Foucault argues, resemblance functioned as a guarantor of epistemological insight, such a conviction was to disappear from cognition by the mid-seventeenth century.

51"Nervous Tension," 111.
the demonstrable certainty regarded as the mark of acceptable scientific and social argument. In order to listen to the past, I explore the metaphors and methods of somiotics in the work of John Donne. I argue that Donne's fluid epistemology emerged decisively from a nexus of perplexity and doubt. Donne's distrust of "matters of fact" in philosophy and natural science sharpens as he confronts the embodied, afflicted human subject; in this context, as we shall see, the homology between self-knowledge and the knowledge of God, of natural and rectified reason, was both affirmed and circumscribed. Donne's recourse, his cure, I argue, is what Bacon called "Insinuative Reason" or rhetoric as a form of inquiry in which figuration, ornamentation and metaphor are crucial components in a search for both a normative (one might say embodied) ethics and a representation of human thought and action that adequated with lived experience. Whether in reading, rhetoric or diagnosis, the complex human being, it seems, was neither interpreted, explained or represented without recourse to copia, to amplification and ornament, to decorum, rhetoric and metaphor as tools of both explanation and representation. Imagining the interior of the body as a cabinet of curiosities, as "larders and cellars," in Donne's words, or as a mechanism allowed early modern

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52 The aesthetics of the fragmentary and their impingement on early modern discourse have of course their greatest resonance in the work of Michel Foucault (to be examined fully in the conclusion). One might also note the doctoral dissertation of Walter Benjamin and the recent 'cultural aesthetics' of Patricia Fumerton. For Benjamin, see The Origin of German Tragic Drama, trans. John Osbourne (London: New Left Books, 1977). Fumerton, in her Cultural Aesthetics: Renaissance Literature and the Practice of Ornament (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1991). argues that all history is itself "ornament"; her "paradigmatism" sees all history as fragmentary "especially in regard to the gap between parts and wholes" (11; cf. 21-25).

53 As Helkiah Crooke suggests, after an examination of the lower region of the body, "it followeth that we ascend by the staires of the ridge to the middle Bellie, wherin as in a curious Cabinet Nature hath locked up the vital Instruments and wheeles whereby the Watch of our life is perpetuallie mooved" (Microcosmographia: a Description of the Body of Man [London, 1615], 346). In Henry Vaughan's translation of Plutarch's Of the Diseases of the Mind and the Body (London, 1651), the following passage compares the thorax to a cabinet: "if thou wouldst search thy self within, where no eyes shine but thy own, what variety of distempers shouldst thou find there? giddie distractions, blind conceits, crooked affections, shuffled wils, and phantastick humours, which lying there as in a Box, or Cabinet, flow not from without, but are Natives and Inhabitants of the place, springing there like so many
writers to envision the unseen in familiar terms. The exchange of metaphors from the organic to the mechanical signals a subtle, nuanced materialism evident early in the seventeenth century; it also registers a revision in the real and discursive means by which the viscera were unfolded, as we shall see below. The methods and metaphors used to scrutinize and represent forms of embodiment were radically unstable: there was always an element of fragility, a modicum of doubt, surrounding envisioning the unseen. Indeed, the metaphors through which the hidden was made manifest were continually renegotiated as part of the epistemic and semiotic shifts which define cultural change in early modern England.

The opaque interminglings of body and soul, physical matter and God, flesh and spirit offered ample opportunity for the "guesses" that early modern natural philosophers and physicians recognized as an unavoidable component of empirical investigation based on signs. Although Spenser could distil the human body into geometric forms, and Kenelm Digby could underwrite his assumptions, faith in the demonstrable interaction of body and soul waned in the face of a burgeoning materialism: the complex of body and soul could simply not be reduced to quantity or revealed by logical demonstration. If anatomy provided perhaps one of the most powerful and systematic instruments in these attempts (though I argue that, for the scrutiny of the sick body, anatomy ultimately failed Donne), symptomatology, with its subtle adjustments to circumstance, individual history and mental states also proved an excellent heuristic tool. Furthermore, if anatomy had its coincident "culture of inquiry," as Jonathan Sawday has proposed, so too might

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symptomatology.55

In the chapters that follow, I identify the ways in which medical discourse borrowed this form of reasoning from rhetoric and hermeneutics, refining and expanding its constituents and applications, and became a rich, splendid reservoir from which a diverse assembly of writers, often with opposing purposes and politics, sought a secure means to discuss the hidden, the probable or the obscure. Rhetoric and hermeneutics, reinvigorated as practical "Insinuative" reason (phronesis), furnished both decorum and prudence as prophylaxis against the uncertainty of medical inquiry and the deleterious effects of mistreatment. Since medicine was based on conjecture --- it "cannot be performed but by indications," writes one physician in 161556 --- medical method derived some of its tools for adducing "indications" from rhetoric and hermeneutics. The emergence of a "rhetorical-medical mind set" or an "evidential paradigm" in the Renaissance attests to the ways in which a 'phronetic' knowledge, which sustained both humanism and topical learning, continued to develop alongside Cartesian-Galilean epistemology. I shall argue that both the "aesthetics of the part" and the semiosis of the symptom are evidence of the cross-pollination between rhetoric, hermeneutics and medicine.57

55The seventeenth century has been labelled a culture of dissection --- with its systematic, static, tabular knowledge mapped on cadavers. Little notice has been taken of the concurrent 'culture of somiotics' which both enlarged and sustained the probable sign-inference that marks attention to the thoughts, feelings and afflictions of living bodies. See Sawday, The Body Emblazoned.

56"The exquisite method of healing," writes Helkiah Crooke, "cannot bee performed but by indications, and indications are not onely derived from the disease, but also from the part affected, and the remedies must bee changed and altered, according to the divers and several nature, temperature, situation, connexion and sence of the part" (Microcosmographia, 16-17).

Those, like Donne, who were concerned with "dissecting" the Bible in order to reveal, in as much as it was possible, the rarefied intention of the Holy Ghost, sought meaning in ambiguous, obscure, even contradictory Scriptures;\(^5^8\) orators sought, in George Puttenham's words, to "play ... the Phisition" and establish a curative relationship between figurative language and the passions aroused in an audience; physicians strove to understand and tabulate enervation and humoral or pathological undulations based on the evidence of a striated heart or maculated skin. Each practice was based on forms of inference that accredited physical signs --- texts, gestures, emotions or symptoms --- with manifesting the unseen. But physical signs are uncertain; as a consequence, each discipline --- hermeneutics, rhetoric and medicine --- was concerned with prudent, practical intervention in the complex of mind and body. In this context, what medicine, rhetoric and hermeneutics have in common are intellectual habits that strive toward *embodied, circumstanced or historical* understanding.

By exploring the cluster of rhetorical-medical thought that emerged and was crystallized during Donne's lifetime (c.1572-1631), I examine the intellectual habits and forms of inference that Donne refined in order to read and interpret the afflicted, living body. Donne had remarkable antennae.\(^5^9\) He detected and deployed the latest developments in the natural philosophy, medicine and law of the period alongside ancient and medieval models; his stepfather was a prominent physician\(^6^0\) and Donne kept a "Picture call'de the Sceleton" in his hall and bequeathed it to "Dr.


\(^{5^9}\)Carlo Ginzburg calls Donne "one of the most perceptive minds of that age" ("The High and the Low," in *Myths, Clues, Emblems*, trans. John and Anne C. Tedeschi [London: Hutchinson Radius, 1990], 68).

\(^{6^0}\)Bald, 37-38, 49, 115, 214.
Winniff who succeeded Donne at St. Pauls. His attention to the human body and to medicine and medical epistemology was acute. As Terry Sherwood has claimed, "Donne's epistemological considerations dilate ... to embrace all the broadest implications of his notion of body." Throughout his work, Donne consistently retails somatic thresholds, transgresses barriers and interprets the surface of his skin, exemplifying a habit of thought that aided early modern writers in their somiotic excursions (what one might call a thick description of embodiment). While he calls repeatedly for an epistemic renovation if not revolution in a search for the true knowledge of God in the human body. Donne became a master interpreter of symptoms, signs and clues. In particular, his experience of illness codified his attention to probable somatic signs: the relationship between affliction and Providence motivated reasoning that sought and confirmed the presence of God in the lineaments and sinews of the human body. His "volitional materialism" translated the most ephemeral ideas into variegated but visible markings on the skin, in the heart and, indeed, in his "ruinous Anatomie." In the Devotions, his 1624 pathography, he was able to see the analogy between symptoms and sin, to discern in the spots on his skin the "letters" in which God had written His name. The body truly is his

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61"Donne's Will," Bald, 563. See also Izaak Walton, The Lives of Dr. John Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Mr. Richard Hooker, Mr. George Herbert (London, 1670), 63. On Thomas Winniff, see Bald, 391, 401, 417, 488, 524ff. Donne was connected to perhaps the most advanced scientific circle in England in the early seventeenth century; see Bald, 133-134, passim, Gosse, 1.100-102 and Robert Hugh Kargon, Atomism in England from Hariot to Newton (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 6.

62Sherwood. Filling the Circle, 80.

63Clifford Geertz has reinvigorated the guesses and hunches associated with cultural work. "Cultural analysis is (or should be) guessings at meanings, assessing the guesses, and drawing explanatory conclusions from the better guesses, not discovering the Continent of Meaning and mapping out its bodiless landscape" (The Interpretation of Cultures [New York: Basic Books, 1973], 20; my emphasis). Jacques Sarano, in The Meaning of the Body, trans. James H. Farley (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), makes a similar point: "the body-object is, in the final analysis, only the materialization, the solidification of an operation of understanding, which is objectifying" (55).

64The phrase is Elaine Scarry's; see "But yet the Body is his Booke," in Literature and the Body: Essays on Populations and Persons, ed. Elaine Scarry (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 70-105.
book and its interlineations are a message from God.

In the ways in which Donne thought his body effigiated his soul, the implications of early modern analogical thought --- for a preacher, a lawyer and a writer intensely aware of natural philosophy --- become quite clear. As Donne claimed, he saw "invisibly" and he felt "insensibly" that his disease prevailed. Seeing the invisible and feeling the insensible usefully summarizes the function of analogy and metaphor in early modern medicine. Without access to the imaging techniques of contemporary medical technology, imagining the inside of a sick body necessitated the use of interpretive techniques and practices devoted to the reading of probable evidence in the form of symptoms, signs and indications borrowed from rhetoric and hermeneutics. How does one see sickness, the soul, faith? What is the relationship between the afflicted body and the sinful soul? How does one embody sin, natural law or rectified reason? What are the parallels between embodied existence and the exigencies of faith? Donne provides clear, if not always consistent, answers to these questions. Central to his discussion of all of these issues are forms of sign-inference that depend upon analogy. Analogy and indication (the latter in a specific sense defined in chapter four) were essential to these reading practices; they might be seen to summarize what Donne calls his physicians' "intricate work."

Donne was a diligent user of analogical habits of thought, arguing from his juvenilia to his last sermon that the corporal and the temporal are symptoms, even indices of the ineffable. Furthermore, feeling insensibly and seeing invisibly mark the "the slipperie condition of man": human knowledge occupies a middle ground between probable signs and the certainty of the word of God, between the counsel of men (the closed fist of logic, the open fist of rhetoric) and God's demonstrable signifying power. Medicine epitomizes this middle ground. As a discipline devoted to
the reading of probable signs, its first duty is to "externalize the internal." As a practice that was actively engaged with an afflicted human subject, medicine was a practical and political activity. Even Donne's celebrated attention to anatomy and dissection, as we shall see, waned in the face of a more subtle, nuanced treatment of the signs and symptoms of the living human body. The controversy about the depth of Donne's medical learning is largely resolved by a scrutiny of his use of medical methods and medical thought rather than a tabulation of his imagery. My argument is formulated against critics who contend that Donne's medical knowledge was superficial and those who see his use of anatomical imagery, for example, as indicative of a new epistemological order.

With this context in mind, I treat what one critic, sixty years ago, identified as the two central cruxes in Donne. On the one hand, Charles Coffin claimed, "Donne's conception of the problematical nature of human learning comprises one of the most significant aspects of his scholarship"; on the other, the "relation of the body and soul constitutes the fundamental problem of Donne's life." Not only does each scholarly task remain undone, few critics have attempted to analyze these problems together. Indeed, an examination of Donne's somiotics --- the habits of thought applied to the living body --- provides useful answers to Coffin's questions. The problematic nature of human learning, I argue, is inseparable from the ways in which early modern men and women imagined being and having bodies. From Luther and Melanchthon, who thought that anatomy was important to understanding the soul, to Robert Boyle, Thomas Sprat and Sir Matthew Hale, who thought that "

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65"The first function of the probable sign is to externalize the internal: to render mental qualities available to sense, by delineating their signate effects" (Patey, Probability and Literary Form, 90).


texture of Humane affaires is not unlike the Texture of a diseased bodey labouring under Maladies, "68 somiotics was central to early modern epistemology.

Scholarship concerning Donne's knowledge of early modern medicine has focused on his indebtedness to, say, Paracelsus or Galen for some of his most splendid metaphors and structures of feeling or his affinities with various contemporary figures, notably William Harvey and Theodore Turquet de Mayerne, one of Donne's physicians during his illness in 1623.69 The "intrinsic agonies" of Donne's viscera have received thoughtful scrutiny.70 His use of the terms and concepts of anatomy and dissection has been examined with enthusiasm. His sicknesses, too, have enlisted diligent probing by modern physicians and literary historians; the Devotions has been labelled a "pathography" and various scholars, notably Clara Lander and Kate Frost, have taken retrospective diagnosis to new heights. The critical literature on Donne's knowledge of medicine is divided: on one


70 The phrase is Allen's, "Donne's Knowledge of Renaissance Medicine," 322.
side, scholars such as D.C. Allen and David Hirsch have argued that Donne liberally borrowed images and structures from the writings of Paré, Femel and Paracelsus (Thomas Willard even claims that Donne studied Vesalius); on the other is Winfried Schleiner's glassy dismissal, "Donne rarely appealed to any specialized knowledge." ⁷¹

I propose a middle ground. While probing the human body was a cardinal interest (his meditations on the Passion, his interpretation of the liber caritatis motif, his negotiation of affliction), Donne's concern with sickness, as an emblem of sin, for example, drew more on traditional homiletics and Augustine than the new philosophy. Nevertheless, there remains a hitherto undigested element that might burn off some of the rust from previous commentary. Although metaphors and methods drawn from real and theoretical anatomy served Donne and his contemporaries well, Donne was sporadically frustrated with the rigidity of the metaphorical cul-de-sac of anatomy. In the Devotions, confronted with the accidents of an erratic fever, anatomy fails him. As a consequence, Donne turns his attention to symptoms and signs as an alternative (perhaps less certain, less systematic, but more prudent) route to the body's interior.

If we accept Izaak Walton's assessment of the range of Donne's knowledge, Donne knew both the "grounds and use of Physicke." ⁷² This dissertation will trace Donne's engagement with medicine and medical semiotics by following his own assessment of medical history, investigating the changes in medical epistemology from Hippocrates and Galen to his contemporaries. The chapters progress from Donne's rhetoric and hermeneutics, through Donne's rejection of anatomy and dissection, to the application of rhetoric, hermeneutics and medicine to his own, afflicted body. I am

⁷¹Schleiner, Imagery of John Donne's Sermons, 83. Compare Horton Davies, who suggests that "Donne far excels the rest [of his metaphysical preachers] in the wide range of knowledge, varied experiences, in the esoteric reading disclosed in his images" (Like Angels from a Cloud: the English Metaphysical Preachers 1588-1645 [San Marino: Huntington Library, 1986], 448).

⁷²"An Elegie upon Dr. Donne," l. 46; Grierson, 345.
mainly interested in the verse and prose Donne produced between 1608 and 1626.

In chapter one, *Cribration*, I argue that Donne's engagement with the interpretation of Scripture in the *Essays in Divinity* establishes medical thought as a key concept in Donne's hermeneutics. I explore Augustinian hermeneutics and the development of prudence and decorum as the basis for the intersections of medicine and rhetoric in Donne's *interpretatio scripti*. In the *Essays*, Donne is committed to a conception of rhetoric as "Insinuative Reason," Bacon's term for rhetoric as an inquiry into the exigencies of experience. Dissecting God's word, Donne establishes a profound homology between natural reason, aided in its inquiries by both a rhetorical attention to text and context, and rectified reason, a regenerate faculty developed and refined by a diligent searching of Scripture. In order to refine natural reason, Donne proposes rhetoric and hermeneutics as models of practical, circumstanced and "complexioned" intervention in the world. Central to this correspondence between natural and "rectified reason" are the ways in which men argue from effects to causes, from the book of nature to God's intention. Since God speaks in "whispers," since men are confined to an "uncertain, doubtfull and conjecturall" knowledge of God, dissecting and cribrating (sifting through) Scripture required temperance, prudence and decorum.

Chapter two, *Unatomy*, explores Donne's celebrated use of anatomical imagery in the *Anniversaries*. The discursive possibilities offered by anatomy as 'prudent incision' into the human body, the body of the world or the vicissitudes of human experience were embraced by Donne and his contemporaries. As a discursive and epistemological tool, anatomy offered a cluster of highly charged images and metaphors for dispelling obscurity. Donne's widely acknowledged use of anatomy was part of an effort to prise the necessary from the accidental, the causal from the symptomatic, the human from the divine. Yet anatomy merely exposes the interior of these various bodies to scrutiny. Once the interior of a body is exposed, it must be interpreted. In fact, I argue that anatomy engendered a static, normative conception of somatic knowledge. How is the body read? In
order to understand the living, afflicted body, to interpret its surfaces and depths, I argue that Donne turns to somiotics, a form of medical casuistry informed by his hermeneutics. For Donne, seeing the marks of God in a living body was accomplished by imagining that body as a text, which in turn engenders an ideal reader.

Chapter three, *An Abyss of Cause*, explores anatomy and symptomatology as practices and discursive techniques that offer different solutions to the problems of early modern somiotics. I argue that decorum and prudence, reading practices borrowed from rhetoric and hermeneutics, offer much-needed correctives to the exfoliating interpretations applied to somatic signs in early modern England. Physicians and others who wrote about medicine and medical method envisioned the development of a form of "medical prudence" as a prophylactic against terminological and methodological regress. Donne's hermeneutics reflect this development in medical thought. A skilled physician (or a writer who occupied a similar discursive position) embodied the wisdom and experience of the *homo quadratus* or the prudent deliberator. Medicine is an uncertain art; as a consequence, conceptions of decorum, prudence and judgement were borrowed directly from other disciplines concerned with the judicious interpretation and conveyance of probable signs: rhetoric and hermeneutics.

Chapter four, *Indications*, establishes the relationship between medical semiotics, rhetoric and hermeneutics in antiquity. I argue that all three disciplines are concerned with interpreting signs; as such, they borrow liberally from one another. I explore the ways in which indications function as arch-symptoms that afford physicians some access to the relationship between cause and effect in the human body. I then trace the importance of indications and the forms of sign-inference that define somiotics from antiquity until the Renaissance. The testing ground for Donne's conception of medicine, its history and its theory, is the notion of indications applied to his own, afflicted body. As we shall see in chapter five, the opinions of physicians, Donne's evaluation of their "intricate work"
and the ways in which rhetoric and hermeneutics contribute to Donne's somiotics are most carefully articulated in the *Devotions*.

Chapter five, *Devotions*, brings together the threads of my argument in chapters one to four and explores the habits of thought --- reasoned inquiry, exemplarity and the discourse of affliction --- that underlie Donne's laconic assertions about the relative effectiveness of sign-inference in relation to his sickness. After establishing the nature of Donne's sickness, I focus on Donne's attention to illness as a problem of somiotics in the *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions* (1624). The *Devotions* records Donne's and his physicians' attempts to infer the cause of his sickness from its multiple effects --- deliria, maculation, insomnia. By opening his body and 'anatomizing himself,' Donne undertook to neutralize his affliction by rendering it metaphorically visible. A disease that is known, even as divine correction, is emptied of "venome." By examining forms of sign-inference present in the *Devotions*, I argue that anatomy was merely the first step in the ethical self-scrutiny Donne both practised and advocated. It is here that the concepts I have explored --- rhetoric as a form of inquiry, medical prudence and decorum, the importance of analogy and sign-inference, the relationship between bodies and texts, the connection between Donne's learning and the body-soul dialectic --- are woven together into an ethical fabric.

My epilogue, *Symptom History*, suggests that Donne used medicine to argue about the problems and possibilities of human knowledge with a pleasing economy of scale. His specific attention to the history of medical semiotics, and to the living human body as a the primary ground for the accommodation of causes to effects, testifies to the importance of medicine, rhetoric and hermeneutics in his early epistemology. The notion that medicine sustained analogical thinking and probable sign-inference in the guts, as it were, of an analytical paradigm is clarified by Donne's conviction that specific problems in the history of medicine are representative of general problems of reason and rhetoric, knowledge and ethical practice. I conclude by identifying several strands of
'symptom history' both in the early modern period and in modern literary history.
CHAPTER ONE:
CRIBRATION

My inquiry into the relationship between medicine, rhetoric and hermeneutics in Donne's work begins with an examination of the foundations of his interpretive practice in the Essays in Divinity (c.1611). Donne's early hermeneutics enlists rhetoric and medicine as apt tools for the diagnosis and treatment of inequitable interpretation. Donne's precise conception of the relationship between rhetoric, medicine and hermeneutics furthers his primary goal as Biblical interpreter and preacher: the "application" of Scripture to the needs and experiences of his auditory.  

Scripture itself is persuasive physic; by his word and his grace, God purged sinful, "peccant humours" from humankind. In the Essays, Donne proposes medicine's "grounds" as suitable models for reading and interpreting equitably. Donne figures and refigures Scriptural interpretation using terms and concepts drawn from medical discourse; he employs both medical metaphors, to suggest processes of reading and composition, and medical methods, as the bases for prudent reasoning from textual effects to causes (causes are always discovered through effects, as Donne insists).

As disciplines devoted to circumstanced intervention in human affairs, medicine, rhetoric and hermeneutics offer tools for the nuanced interpretation of probabilities, of "what might be otherwise,"

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1 Sermons, 1.292, 3.142. Preachers must "teach," his auditors "must come, and ... must hearken" (Sermons, 6.95). The worst of the obdurate, according to Donne, are "Sermon-proofe" (6.219). In his concern with accommodation and utility, Donne is close to Calvin; see Francis Higman, "'I Came Not to Send Peace, but a Sword',' in Calvinus Sincerioris Religionis Vindex [Calvin as Protector of the Purer Religion], ed. Wilhelm H. Neuser and Brian G. Armstrong (Missouri: Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies, 1997), 133. On the relationship between meditation, preaching and the application of a Biblical text to an individual sinner, see Barbara K. Lewalski, Donne's Anniversaries and the Poetry of Praise: the Creation of a Symbolic Mode (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 83-92, 98, 103, 233. As Donne urges his auditory late in his life (1629), "Moses required not reason to help him be beleev'd. ... And since we have the whole world in contemplation, consider in these words [Genesis 1:26], the foure quarters of the world, by fair, and just accommodation of the words" (Sermons, 9.48-49). A preacher's task is to "edifie" (5.50).

2 See, for example, Sermons, 1.312-313, 2.125, 5.298, 6.198.
in Aristotle's formulation. Central to each is a practical, enabling skepticism about the work of signification and the possibilities of interpretation and knowledge. In the early seventeenth century, an enabling skepticism and a shared attention to probabilities are part of an emergent conviction that the closed fist of logic was inadequate for inquiries into lived, embodied experience. Rhetoric and medicine share forms of reasoning and sign-inference indispensable to the hermeneutics Donne recommends as a prophylaxis against interpretive misprision. Yet rhetoric only works on weak men; like sickness, it mollifies and disorders the judgement. All men, however, are both intellectually and physically infirm. Thus while Donne endorses logic and demonstration as the highest order of discourse (*Sermons*, 6.226), in the *Essays* and the sermons he is careful to engage both reason and the affections in his inquiries into language, sin and the soul. Indeed, Donne's particular brand of Christian prudence demands such an engagement.

I begin this chapter by establishing the importance of Augustinian sign-inference in the development of prudence and decorum in the history of Scriptural interpretation. Although scholars have examined Donne's indebtedness to Augustinian homiletics, imagery and doctrine, I explore the ways in which Augustinian sign-inference and hermeneutics influence Donne. I then trace briefly figures of the equitable interpreter (with his stalwart ethics) from Aristotle until the late sixteenth century. Finally, I explore Donne's conceptions of Scriptural interpretation, prudence, decorum and judgement in the *Essays* and argue that his knowledge of the "grounds" of medicine aid his formulation of equitable and prudent reading.

*Sick rhetoric*

Preparing students to interpret Scripture with equity and decorum, to embody the virtues of an *interpres aequus* (equitable reader), Augustine maintains early in *De Doctrina Christiana* that the
invisible is understood by and through the visible.\(^1\) The human journey home along the "road of affections," our presentiment, he insists, should be full of flashing \textit{aperçus} occasioned by an attention to the phenomenal world as an index. The material and the textual are succinct though unreliable registers of that which passes our understanding. Augustine's concern, of course, is \textit{interpretatio scripti}, the interpretation of Scripture. He recommends a method which resolves Scriptural obscurity and ambiguity in the rarefied strata of \textit{caritas} by balancing any one part of scripture with its context and with other places. Closely following Cicero and Quintilian, he argues for a diligent reading of enigmatic Scriptural passages through which, "by following certain traces ... [we] may come to the hidden sense without any error" or at least avoid "the absurdity of wicked meanings" (1.17.16.16, prol.9.7).

For Augustine, misprision is a problem of sign-inference. If we see an animal track, he insists in book two, we think of the animal that made the track; this sign is "natural" (2.1.1.34). An angry countenance naturally signifies emotion even when other signs of passion are suppressed. These exterior physical traces --- expression, gesture, comportment --- indicate interior dispositions.

With conventional signs, used to convey "the motion of ... spirits" or something sensed or understood, however, the suturing of signifieds to signifiers is more complex. Conventional signs are uncertain,

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\(^1\textit{On Christian Doctrine, trans. D.W. Robertson, Jr. (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1958), prol.4.10; all further citations will be included in parenthesis in the text. For the relationship between hermeneutics, rhetoric and equity, see the work of Kathy Eden and on the concept of equity and its history, see Guenther H. Haas, }\textit{The Concept of Equity in Calvin's Ethics} (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1997), chapters 1 and 2. In the }\textit{Confessions, Augustine wrote that "after reading these books of the Platonists which taught me to seek for a truth which was incorporeal, I came to see your invisible things, understood by those things which are made." He then turns to Pauline writing (The Confessions of St. Augustine, trans. Rex Warner [New York: New American Library, 1963], 7.20-21, pp. 156-157. On the importance of }\textit{On Christian Doctrine, see, for example, Brian Stock, The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries} (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983). Marc Fumaroli has called }\textit{On Christian Doctrine "le dernier rhétorique antique et la première rhétorique ecclésiastique} (L'\textit{Age de l'Eloquence: Rhétorique et "Res Literaria" de la Renaissance au seuil de l'Époque Classique} [Genève: Droz, 1980], 71; see also 70-76.
yet "what is sought with difficulty is discovered with more pleasure" (2.6.8.38). Warning readers off the assumption that conventional signs might be treated as natural, Augustine proposes a twofold prophylaxis against interpretive error. First, one should avoid vague ahistoricism, by which he meant both an ignorance of the historical basis (the context)4 of Scripture and an ignorance of the text itself. Second, with arts immersed in a complex of both natural and conventional signs, Augustine proposes experience as the guarantor of valid inference. "[E]xperience with the past," he wrote, "makes possible inferences concerning the future, for no artificer in any of [these arts] performs operations except in so far as he bases his expectations of the future on past experience" (2.30.47.66-67). The accretion of experience and prudence underwrites valid inference. Armed, then, with history and experience, the obscurities and ambiguities that perplex and deceive casual readers of Scripture are resolved by prudent interpretation. Read in this way, Scripture cures "so many maladies of the human soul."5 Arriving at a prudent, temperate understanding of Scripture, Donne insists, is a potential cure for error, schism and heresy; it was a middle way that conformed to his religious temper.

Book two of Augustine's prolegomenon, which treats "the clarification of unknown signs,"

4"An ignorance of things makes figurative expressions obscure when we are ignorant of the natures of animals, or stones, or plants, or other things which are often used in the Scriptures for purposes of constructing similitudes" (2.16.24.50). Augustine here underwrites natural history as an adjunct to scriptural interpretation, an idea whose afterlife is evident even in the seventeenth century.

5Augustine discusses various forms of "Christian medicine" which either operate by "contraries" or "similar things" (prol.14.15). In 1589, George Puttenham recommended that in certain instances poets, particularly in lamentations, become physicians. Though there is some "joy to be able to lament with ease," it is necessary for the poet "to play also the Physician, and not onely by applying a medicine to the ordinary sicknes of mankind, but by making the very greef it selfe (in part) cure of the disease" (George Puttenham, The Arte of English Poesie [1589], ed. Gladys Doidge Willcock and Alice Walker [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936], 47, 48). As Augustine writes in the Confessions, the Scriptures were in themselves healing: reading God's word was like having his "fingers dressing my wounds" (7.20, p.157). On the trope of healing scripture and Christus Medicus in Augustine, see Rudolf Arbesmann, "The Concept of Christus Medicus in Augustine," Traditio 10 (1954): 1-28.
words which obscure rather than illuminate, is saturated with medical analogies and metaphors. Augustine inveighs against enchantments, amulets or remedies which involve secret signs or "characters" in the remedy or interpretation of illness. True medicine exhibits "a kind of assistance to the work of God": in its practical intervention in the world, it is akin to agriculture, navigation and other arts (here he follows Aristotle). True physicians infer causes from certain propositions, joining true antecedents with true consequents; those who infer from "signs of things instituted by human presumptions" enter pacts with demons and devils (2.20.30.55, 2.22.34.58). In effect, Augustine intervenes in an ancient debate between demonstratio signi and demonstratio causae, or reasoning from signs or effects and reasoning from causes. In the context of Augustinian sign theory, symptoms constitute a special case; they are neither wholly natural nor wholly conventional, nor are they immune to the refractory interpretation of astrologers, augurs or quacks. Although seemingly natural signs, symptoms occupy a middle ground, susceptible to both understanding as indices and the exhaustive historical and philological interpretation Augustine recommends for conventional signs, including Scripture.

As a form of tropological discovery and an endorsement of the experience of reading, this form of sign-inference (reasoning from the trace to the case, from the visible to the invisible) remained influential until at least the late seventeenth century. Augustine hermeneutics influenced

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Scriptural interpretation and exegesis throughout the early modern period. Donne's debt to Augustine is widely acknowledged and Hobbes' discussion of signs and his *causa sine qua non*, for example, owes a great deal to Augustine, as it does to Aristotle. In particular, both in Scriptural hermeneutics and the *ars praedicandi* Augustine solidified the relationship between charitable interpretation, context, prudence and decorum. His account of sign-inference and his reading (and subsequent leave-taking) of Cicero, in particular, inspired Donne and his contemporaries in their evaluations of rhetoric and Scriptural interpretation. Valid sign-inference, Augustine clarifies, is dependent upon past and present experience, context and circumstance and, to a remarkable extent, persuasion. In this context, both decorum and prudence function as guards against unchecked perplexity in the application of reason and judgement to Scriptural hermeneutics.

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8See book four. At 4.16.33.142, Augustine compares eloquent, prudent teaching with medicine. The notion of probability in Augustine addresses "false appearance" and mental operations, however, not the "unpredictability of human affairs" (Kathy Eden, *Poetic and Legal Fiction in the Aristotelian Tradition* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986], 116-117).


Deficiency and the homo quadratus

Decorum and prudence are predicated on the judicious balance of texts with contexts, parts with wholes, past with present and future; in turn, equitable inference from probable signs depends on experience, prudence and decorum. The concern with grounding inference on these experiential bases is present in the history of rhetoric and hermeneutics from antiquity until the Renaissance. The Oxford professor of Greek John Rainolds, for example, argues that in order to understand and convey one's views on "history, customs of life, and received morals" one must utilize "the tools of probability and plausibility." "How may our minds be calmed down or excited?" he continues, except by a form of decorum developed in the history of rhetoric. Decorum is essential to the process of calibrating oratory to match an audience's capacity (an overriding concern of Donne's and the sources

"On the history of prudence, see Eugene Garver, Machiavelli and the History of Prudence (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987). Garver states that while "it is not obvious that prudence has a history at all," if such a history is to be constructed, it will be constructed in relation to rhetoric: "prudence and rhetoric are allies because rhetoric is a method for understanding and manipulating particulars. Just as rhetoric, with its appeals to taste and propriety [tact in Gadamer's terms], resists reduction to logical method, the enemy of prudence is always some form of a drive to generality" (6, 21). Prudence, he concludes, "is ultimately the formulation of the ethical and political problem of the permanently problematic and hence rhetorically debatable relation between knowledge and action" (163). Victoria Kahn has explored a similar history of prudence in the Renaissance (Rhetoric, Prudence and Skepticism in the Renaissance [Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1985]). She argues that the humanist rhetorical tradition proposed that "a text is valuable insofar as it engages the reader in activity of discrimination and thereby educates the faculty of practical reason or prudential judgment which is essential to the active life" (11). In this context, rhetoric is primarily conceived of "in terms of its capacity to exemplify and encourage the activity of practical reasoning" while prudence is "the precondition of artistic decorum, just as it is of ethical decorum" (39). Thus the practices of reading and writing exemplify the humanists' insight that moral philosophy and rhetoric are inseparable. See also Thomas Kranidas, The Fierce Equation: a Study of Milton's Decorum (The Hague: Mouton, 1965), chapter one, Winfried Schleiner, "Imagery and Decorum," in his The Imagery of John Donne's Sermons (Providence: Brown University Press, 1970), 13-62; M. Thomas Hester, "'Zeal' as Satire: the Decorum of Donne's Satyres," Genre 10 (1977): 173-194; and Jeanne M. Shami, "Donne on Discretion," ELH 47 (1980): 48-66. More recently, Shami has argued that Donne's emphasis on the history, rationality and applicability of Scripture led him to a middle way with respect to theological controversy. Shami argues that Donne was, as Walton puts it, a Christian above all. See Shami, "The Professionalization of Public Discourse in the Early Modern Period: John Donne and Religious Labels" (paper delivered at "Professional Donne," Queen Mary and Westfield College, University of London, July 1999).
on which he drew). If decorum is the "main point of the art," where is it to be sought "if not from experience of the things which obtain in life, intelligently and keenly [prudenter & acuē] observed and recorded?" Rainolds introduces the notion of decorum in a discussion of the order of learning (logic and dialectic first, rhetoric later), but it is clear that decorum obtains in all discourse. Rainolds' translator defines decorum as prudence, "that educated sixth sense which identifies what is appropriate for persuasion on a changing moment-by-moment basis." This view might be refined by suggesting that decorum provided hermeneuts with a textual prescription (for writing and speaking are "social interaction"), while prudentia was devoted to action and intervention in the world. Both necessitated assiduous sign-inference. As Donne writes in 1629, "Our actions, if they be good, speak louder than our Sermons; Our preaching is our speech, our good life is our eloquence" (Sermons, 9.156). This division is traditional. As we shall see in chapter three, thinking about inference, cause and effect in medicine was no less dependent on these textual and ethical prescriptions.

In the late sixteenth century, George Puttenham's discussion of decorum and prudence focuses on both textual and social behaviour; it is preoccupied with the human body. A decorous text is akin to a harmonious, proportioned body, an indecorous text to "the shape of a membred body

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11 While Rainolds thought rhetoric and decorum at the very centre of social interaction, they were not the centre of existence (66). Rainolds maintains, nevertheless, that rhetoric itself depends "upon practical judgement of public life" (99). In a textbook on preaching, Ecclesiasticae Rhetoricae, sive de Ratione Concionandi, libri sex (1576), the Dominican Luis de Granada wrote that "prudence ... is the guide of all actions and so also of our speech" (Ecclesiasticae Rhetoricae [Verona, 1732], book 5, chapter 17, pp. 186ff., quoted and translated in Schleiner, 15-16).

12 See Rainolds' treatment of signs, Rainolds's Oxford Lectures, 191-197.
without his due measures and simmetry."\textsuperscript{13} Again, decorum itself is based on prudence, "a learned and experienced discretion." With the requisite "much observation and greatest experience" of the prudent, decorum "resteth in the good conformity of many things and their sundry circumstances."\textsuperscript{14} "This decencie," Puttenham writes, "... resteth in writing, speech and behaviour." As Donne confirms, "intemperance, and licentiousness, deforme" the body (Sermons, 6.268). In decorum's expansive workshop, one of its most powerful tools is example, gleaned from scanning "the truth of every case that shall happen in the affaires of man." The conformity of either discourse or behaviour to the variegated circumstances of human affairs depends on two things, one a practical, interpretive technique, the other a form of sagacity. The former is "Analogie or a convenient proportion ... between the sense and the sensible" aligned with discretion.\textsuperscript{15} This species of analogy is akin to \textit{estimatio}.\textsuperscript{16} The second, as we have seen, is sign-inference. Both have ethical implications; for

\textsuperscript{13}The resutured or disproportioned body, though, had its own poetics. Every work which pleases the mind or senses "doth it for some amiable point or quality," but "that cannot be if they discover any ill favour ednesse or disproportion to the parts apprehensive" (Puttenham, \textit{Arte of English Poesie}, 261). Excesses and defects, a "membered body" without symmetry, mar the correspondence of the part to the whole; the senses themselves might be harmed by looking upon such deformity. Puttenham confirms the notion that disproportion is thoroughly unnatural in a real or rhetorical body: deformity dramatizes the fragile relationship between parts and wholes that underlies the partite nature of the body. But dissymmetry also has its aesthetic appeal: as E.K. tells us in \textit{The Shepheardes Calender}, a "dischorde in Musick maketh a comely concordance: so great delight tooke the worthy Poete Alceus to behold a blemish in the joint of a wel shaped body" (The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser, ed. William A. Oram et al. [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989], 15). As Bacon was to insist, "There is no Excelle[n]t \textit{Beauty}, that hath not some Strangeness in the Proportion" ("Of \textit{Beauty}," \textit{The Essays or Counsels, Civill and Morall, of Francis Lo. Verulam, Viscount St. Alban}, newly written [London, 1625], 252).

\textsuperscript{14}\textit{Arte}, 262-263. As he insists, "whosover observeth much, shalbe counted the wisest and discreetest man" (264). Puttenham's next chapter concerns the "circumstances" of behaviour and decorum (276-298).

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., 262.

\textsuperscript{16}'Estimation' was the apprehension of the inwardness of a thing together with its external appearance." It might be defined, writes David Summers, as "as the activity of the first faculty by means of which the spiritual or inward could be intuited in particular things" (208). Avicenna thought \textit{estimativa} "presumably yields adequate information about particular things and states of
Donne, the prudent, decorous man is "constant" *(Sermons, 6.242).*

Decorum requires a conformity of circumstance, discourse, behaviour and the passions.

Even in the extremes of the passions "there is a comelinesse to be discerned, which some men keepe and some men can not." Earlier in the *The Arte*, perhaps anticipating Spenser's assertion that "the world is runne quite out of square," Puttenham calls this comeliness the disposition of "a constant minded man, even egal and direct on all sides, and not easily overthrowne by every little adversitie, [a] *hominem quadratus*, a square man." *The Arte* is a square man.*

Puttenham cites Aristotle's *Ethics*, book 1. The *homo quadratus*, the prudent and decorous man, has much in common with the *interpres aequus* and affairs" *(David Summers, *The Judgment of Sense: Renaissance Naturalism and the Rise of Aesthetics* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987], 206-210; see also his chapter on "Prudence").

"Bee not over faire," Donne writes, "over witty, over sociable, over rich, over glorious; but let the measure be *Sufficientia tua. So much as is sufficient for thee*" *(Sermons, 3.235).* Although the affections and passions were enlisted in Donne's ethical inquiry, "God delights in the constant and valiant man, and therefore a various, a timorous man frustrates, disappoints God" *(Sermons, 6.108).*

"Compare Donne's assertion in the *Anatomie* that "Then, as mankinde, so is the worlds whole frame / Quite out of joynt, almost created lame" *(ll. 191-192; Grierson, 213).*


The attribute in question *(that a man spends his life in activities)*, then, will belong to a happy man, and he will be happy throughout his life [not just at the end of his life]; for always, or by preference to everything else, he will do and contemplate what is excellent, and he will bear the chances of life most nobly and altogether decorously, if is 'truly good' and 'foursquare beyond reproach'' *(Ethics, 1100b18-21: my emphasis). The decorous man is the *homo quadratus*. The phrase 'foursquare beyond reproach' is taken from Simonides' eulogy "To Scopas" *(Lyra Graeca. Being the Remains of all the Greek Lyric Poets from Eumelus to Timotheus excepting Pindar*, ed. and trans. J.M. Edmonds, 3 vols. [London: Heinemann; New York: Putnam, 1926], 2.285-287). Edmonds translates the phrase as "a truly good man fashioned without flaw in hand, foot, or mind, foursquare" (285). Once again, we see that physical proportion represents moral rectitude. The poem is preserved and discussed extensively in Plato's *Protagoras* (trans. C.C.W. Taylor [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976], 338e7-347a6, pp. 31-40 and commentary, 141-148). A vestige of this concept is present in Erasmus' adage "In quadrum redigere" *(see Adages in Collected Works of Erasmus*, trans. R.A.B. Mynors [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989], vol. 32, p. 235; adage 1.10.3).
Aristotle's *phronimos*, the good deliberator. Each is charged with ordering and subduing the passions (or at least harnessing them for use in both discourse and inquiry), with deliberating usefully and judiciously about the probable and with writing, speaking and acting decorously. The parallels between the square man, the equitable interpreter, the good deliberator, the doctor and the Christian's rectified conscience were not lost on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe. As Pierre Charron insists, prudence is "the Arte of our life, as Physicke [is] the arte of our health."

If prudence was compared to health, the existence and use of the arts of persuasion and accommodation sometimes signalled human infirmity. Rhetoric, Montaigne wrote, "is an instrument invented to manipulate and agitate a crowd and a disorderly populace, and an instrument that is

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22 Of *Wisdome*, trans. Samson Lennard (London, n.d.), 350. Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned*, speculates that it was translated c.1606 and certainly before 1612 (135). Charron continues, insisting that deliberation, judgement and action are intricated: prudence "consisteth in three things, which are all of one ranke; to consult and deliberate well, to judge and resolve well, to conduct and execute well." Due to the "great uncertaintie and inconstancie of humaine things, which are greater by reason of their accidents, circumstances, appertenances, dependancies, times, places, persons ... that [in] the least circumstance, the whole thing it selfe is altered," prudence is obscure, fraught with error and unquantifiable. Indeed, it is a "sea without either bottome or brinke, and which cannot be limited and prescribed by precepts and advisements" (350-351). Prudence is both private and individual and "sociable & Economicall, ... publike and politike," gleaned from both experience and reading (the "knowledge of historie"). Charron's taxonomy of prudence is subtle and learned (352ff.). On Charron, Montaigne and the legacy of humanism in these debates, see Zachary S. Schiffman, "Humanism and the Problem of Relativism," in *Humanism in Crisis: the Decline of the French Renaissance*, ed. Philippe Desan (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991), 69-83, esp. 77-78. For another meditation on prudence and discretion, see Joseph Hall, *Salomons Divine Arts. of 1. Ethics. 2. Politickes. 3. Oeconomicks* (London, 1609), 21ff.
employed only in sick states, like medicine." That rhetoric was meant for the "vulgar" was little disputed in early modern rhetorical or logical treatises. The purpose of rhetoric was persuasion; in contrast, logical discourse consisted in demonstrative argument rather than opinion. As W.S. Howell reminds us, rhetoric in sixteenth-century Europe was compared to an "open hand": it was an éloquence vulgaire, suited to the pliable, common sort ("simple minds") whose passions and emotions might be easily stirred (movere). Logic, however, was compared to a "closed fist": it conveyed reasoned argument via syllogisms to the learned. As Donne insists, both logic and rhetoric are "deduced to the hand" contracted into a fist or enlarged and expanded. While most writers celebrated rhetoric as the fons et origo of civility and argued for the orator's centrality to a healthy polity, to Montaigne the need for the art implied widespread social affliction. Reversing the usual trope --- eloquence flourished in a healthy Rome --- he denigrates the age of Cicero by suggesting that rhetoric ministers to sick states in which "all men held all power." The use of persuasion and


24"Throughout the Renaissance the discourse of rhetoric... is bedeviled by problems of ethics, social class, and the body" (Wayne A. Reborn, The Emperor of Men's Minds: Literature and the Discourse of Rhetoric [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995], 206).


26"The arts and sciences," Donne writes, "are most properly referred to the head; that is their proper Element and Sphere; But yet the art of proving, Logique, and the Art of persuading, Rhetorique, are deduced to the hand, and that expressed by a hand contracted into a fist, and this by a hand enlarged, and expanded" (Devotions, 105). For medieval contexts, see E.J. Ashworth, Language and Logic in the Post-Medieval Period (Dordrecht and Boston: Reidel, 1974) and Eleonore Stump, Dialectic and its Place in the Development of Medieval Logic (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1989). For the Renaissance, see Martin Elsky, Authorizing Words: Speech, Writing, and Print in the English Renaissance (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1989).
eloquence was politically and morally suspect because it pandered to the crowd; a state surfeited with rhetoric was diseased. Indeed, to the arch-skeptic Henry Cornelius Agrippa, the abuse of rhetoric might lead to heresy, seducing men “from the word of truth”; to Bacon, similarly, rhetoric was susceptible to abuse by "seditious orators."27 Whereas logic was steadfastly rational, rhetoric was "meerely Tropicall" and could not "be called unto the rigid test of reason."28

The dominant conception of rhetoric in early modern Europe, however, was free of the urgent skepticism of Montaigne or Agrippa’s mordancy. For the majority of theologians, natural philosophers and writers of the period, rhetoric was a crucial thread in the early modern social fabric. It was understood as an essentially inductive art devoted to reasoned, practical intervention in human affairs.29 In the dominant Ciceronian tradition, rhetoric was an art of accommodation,30 and thus the use of rhetoric carried with it sophisticated conceptions of the social use of eloquence and of the rational investigation and judgement of the exigencies of human experience.31 Rhetoric, in Juan Luis Vives' formulation, was a "universal tool" applicable to all arts and sciences; learning eloquence,


29 “Arguments are like the very body of oratory," John Rainolds writes in his lectures on Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, "and emotions are like an accessory" (Rainold's *Oxford Lectures*, 117).

30 *De Inventione*, 2.42.122.

according to Philip Melanchthon, meant acquiring prudence in human affairs.\textsuperscript{32} Even the term *elocutio* properly denoted more than thoughtful expression; it meant the possession of prudence and knowledge and "practical savoir-faire in all pursuits of public and private life."\textsuperscript{33} Far from empty ornament or suspicious intellection, rhetoric provided a means of intervention in the world, however uncertain; it was concerned with practice, with deliberation and with the development of the *via activa*.\textsuperscript{34} Armed with a famous passage from Cicero's *Academica*, early modern writers established a "rapprochement between dialectic and rhetoric for deliberating under uncertainty," drawing logic and rhetoric more closely together.\textsuperscript{35} The opposite side of this coin, of course, is Ramism, through which rhetoric and logic, though sometimes confused, were inexorably separated.

In what sense, though, is rhetoric like medicine? If we follow Montaigne both rhetoric and medicine minister to the afflicted --- to men and women either physically infirm or who lack the


\textsuperscript{34}William A. Covino has argued similarly for a revisionist rhetoric, stretching from Plato and Aristotle through Montaigne and Vico to Derrida and Geertz, which engages the ambiguity of human affairs. For Covino, rhetoric is less concerned with elocution and ornament than with accommodating "thoughtful uncertainty," in which rhetoric furnishes the hermeneutic and epistemological tools required for survival in a state of Keatsian negative capability. See *The Art of Wondering: a Revisionist Return to the History of Rhetoric* (Portsmouth: Heineman, 1988), 130, passim. See also Susan Wells, *Sweet Reason: Rhetoric and the Discourses of Modernity* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1996). Wells argues that "Rhetoric traditionally recognizes temporality and contingency and values probable conclusions from uncertain evidence. But since all the discourses of modernity are temporal, contingent, and concerned with probabilities, a rhetoric of modernity has no 'counterpart'; it is concerned with the conditions under which, in contemporary societies, things manage to get said at all" (140).

cognitive ability or rectitude to assent to rational argument in discourse or the gravity of truth in Scripture. Both medicine and rhetoric provide cures for these afflictions by proposing various purgations, palliatives or salves applied to the particular physical and mental ailments of a patient or audience. In its most pejorative sense, rhetoric was equated with the "diseases and infirmities of the mind" caused by "perturbations and distempers of the affections." If rhetoric was poison, however, it was also cure. As George Puttenham suggested in 1589, poets and orators should "play ... the Physician" and cure their readers by applying medicine to the ordinary sickness of mankind.

Similarly, four years later, in the second edition of The Garden of Eloquence, Henry Peacham discussed the orator's use of sarcasm in medical terms. Sarcasmus is "like to most bitter corrections in Physicke," he wrote, "yet for the most part [it] brings profit." Poets and orators were instructed to adopt the role of physician in order to praise, purge or satirize. Despite contemporary uncertainty about the effectiveness of medicine, its limited authority was mustered to intensify discourses meant to penetrate and describe social and political illness. Like medicine, then, the decorous and incisive use of rhetoric was imagined to uncover, treat and cure individual and collective affliction. If medicine and rhetoric treat the sick, then, both discursive and pharmacological remedies might heal an ill body or a distracted state. At least in early modern England, the pharmacopoeia was expanded to include rhetoric. The discourse of cure, however, represents only one way in which rhetoric was

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36Bacon, Works, 3.437.

37Arte of English Poesie, 47. Writing itself was figured as an illness: "The Heroique Disease of Writing hath (as you well know) long since seised on me, this being the Fourth Publique Paroxisme I have had thereof" (John Bulwer, Anthropomatastorphisis: Man Transform'd; or the Artificial Changeling [London, 1650], sig. a5r). Robert Cawdrey's A Treasure or Store-House of Similies (London, 1600) often resorts to medicine or to the human body to provide analogies for proper oratory; indeed, to Cawdrey, the Scriptures are anatomies wherein vices and sins are "plainly laid open, ripped up, and displayed in their kinds" (sig. A2r; see 59, 182-183, 211, 522-523 for examples).

38The Garden of Eloquence (London, 1593), 38.
"like medicine."

Medicine also provides both rhetoric and hermeneutics with methods for linking effects and causes; to an extent, playing the physician meant using medical methods as well as a discursive scalpel. Since both dealt with "what could be otherwise," the likely or probable, both participated in the development of a form of knowledge that relied on traces, symptoms, effects and clues for its epistemological foundation. In making "absent and remote things present to [the] understanding," in Donne's formulation, rhetoric shared with medicine the duty of manifesting the unseen. In other words, both offered not only cures but methods of inquiry assembled and deployed to render the invisible visible. As John Rainolds writes in his lectures on Aristotle's Rhetoric delivered at Oxford in the 1570s, "Aristotle defines rhetoric as the power or faculty of seeing what may be probable in any situation." Rhetoric, Rainolds continues, "does not create probabilities, but instead perceives them: just as a doctor does not create healthful things, but instead perceives them."

The intellectual habits that rhetoric, medicine and hermeneutics share might be meaningfully distilled into a interpretive practices that carry with them a retinue of metaphors for the relationship between parts and wholes, texts and contexts, reading and behaviour, intention and action. Francis Bacon, for example, lists both elocution and inquiry under rhetoric and suggests that ratiocination is aided by the "Eloquence of Persuasions." The subject of rhetoric, in Bacon's adroit phrase, is "Imaginative or Insinuative Reason." Rhetoric as insinuative reason offered not only a cure but a

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39 Rainolds's Oxford Lectures, 161. For other references to rhetoric and medicine in the text, see 159, 279-281, 331. As Green suggests, Rainolds was aware, following Vives, that "knowledge can never be more than probabilistic, and, while science may demonstrate its knowledge to a very high degree of probability, it is still only a probability, not a certainty" (74-75). Rhetoric's province is the probable.

40 Works, 3.389, 383. While I do not wish to make to much of the phrase, there is certainly more in Bacon's locution than Lisa Jardine implies. "Insinuative reason" certainly speaks to "three subsidiary faculties (the senses and imagination)," but it does so in order to establish relations of causation more characteristic of dialectic (opinionative reasoning or argument). See Francis Bacon: Discovery and
method through which one might unmask the causes of a disease, or the meanings of a text, through metaphor and example. These habits were resident in various, seemingly immured discourses. The reinvigoration of the public and political role of rhetoric in the sixteenth century, for example, meant a concurrent reevaluation of the function of the aesthetic, particularly imaginative literature. Like Edmund Spenser, whose stated, "cloudily enwrapped" purpose in The Faerie Queene was to fashion a gentlemen by example rather than rule, most early modern writers envisioned literary and Scriptural hermeneutics as the training ground for the development of prudential, practical judgement ("vertuous and gentle discipline," in Spenser's words). Indeed, Victoria Kahn has argued that the development of prudentia, which Hobbes later defined as "a Prosession of the Future, contracted from the Experience of the Past," was essential to establishing fiction (broadly understood) as a discourse which "educates the faculty of practical reason or prudential judgment which is essential to the active life." The normative relation between imagined and practical ethics, then, aided in the development of the aesthetic as a privileged discourse in which and through which human behaviour

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*the Art of Discourse* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 216-226, esp. 218. On Bacon, Agricola and Ramus' opinions regarding dialectic and rhetoric, see Jardine, 170. While it is true that Bacon does not see rhetoric or dialectic as suitable tools for establishing natural knowledge, it is altogether the opposite case with respect to human affairs. For other views of Baconian rhetoric similar to mine, see Paolo Rossi, *Francis Bacon: from Magic to Science*, trans. Sacha Rabinovitch (London: Routledge, 1968), 146, where he suggests that the empiricism of sixteenth century philosophers affected their view of the function of rhetoric (and vice versa). Rhetoric is akin to ethics; Bacon's view of rhetoric is quite close to Donne's (179ff.); in addition, Bacon uses rhetorical and dialectical *models* for his natural history and philosophy (192-193). Neither did Bacon dispense with the humanist conception of eloquence: "it is not a thing hastily to be condemned, to clothe and adorn the obscurity even of philosophy itself with sensible and plausible elocution. For hereof we have great examples in Xenophon, Cicero, Seneca, Plutarch and of Plato" (3.284). Eloquence of this sort is particularly fit for religion, as Bacon makes clear in the *Advancement of Learning*: "For we see that in matters of Faith and Religion we raise our Imagination above our Reason; which is the cause why Religion sought ever access to the mind by similitudes, types, parables, visions, dreams" (*Philosophical Works*, ed. J.M. Robertson [London: Routledge, 1905], 110-111).

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41 The Faerie Queene, 15-18.

was available to scrutiny. As we shall see in subsequent chapters, this imagined community played a significant role in defining forms of inference applicable to a multiplicity of human experiences. With respect to sickness or unrest in individual or social bodies, medicine and rhetoric were thought to offer similar tools for social analysis (an attention to particulars and individuals, a profound if unstable pragmatism).

These somewhat contradictory conceptions of rhetoric (as ornament or as reasoned, ethical inquiry) represent an historical overlapping of logic and rhetoric and the place of reason, prudence and judgement within both. This intrication speaks to the ways in which each discipline exists in a kind of parasitic relationship with the other. Indeed, the history of rhetoric and logic in the early modern period is a history of hybrids in which various methods, systems and theories contain significant elements of rhetoric and logic, hermeneutics and philosophy. Hermeneutics and rhetoric, in particular, are intricated in ways recent scholarship has just begun to explore. Nevertheless, these two extreme conceptions of rhetoric present a real problem, itself symptomatic of larger, epistemic questions not new to the early modern period (save, perhaps, for the intensity of the asking): to what extent was rhetoric pressed into service in the development of means through which human experience was investigated (in the courts, in medical thought and in case divinity, for example) in opposition to its status as a storehouse of tropes and embellishments? How might rhetorical inquiry and hermeneutics contribute to the theorization and representation of the complex human subject?

Either rhetoric established equitable and effective guidelines by means of which men were able to investigate and represent lived experience, or it was simply style and ornament; either it supplemented rational discourse or it provided an alternate way of arriving, via induction, example and pathos, at some understanding of the relationship between cause and effect in human affairs. To Thomas Wilson in 1551, "Rhetorique at large paints wel the cause" which logic speaks in "but a
although rhetoric did not usually allow for the invention of arguments, it did make second-
order causes available to human scrutiny through topical reasoning. To use John Donne's 1622
formulation, which closely follows Quintilian, rhetoric made "absent and remote things present to
[the] understanding." Figures and allegories prove nothing, Donne writes, but make "that which is
ture in it selfe, more evident and more acceptable" (Sermons, 3.144). Rhetoric provides, then, a
method (an analogical method) for investigating the unseen.

Many of those who subscribed to the latter view, including John Donne, circumscribed their
endorsement of rhetoric's incendiary capacity in theological language. Although there was a
possibility that an understanding of the ambiguous particulars of human experience via reason and
rhetoric (analysis inflected with the passions) might be achieved, such an enterprise ignores the
certain, universal cause and arbiter of that experience, God. The tension between knowing and
believing remains unresolved for those who argued that the available means of inquiry into human
activity were themselves so uncertain that they faltered when applied to a more crucial concern, the
nature and will of God. In the Reformation, the thrust toward questioning every aspect of faith and
its social manifestations (sects and sacraments) meant that those who inquired into the motives and

43Quoted in Howell, Logic and Rhetoric, 14.

Harvard University Press, 1995), 6.2.32-36. This is a common conception of rhetoric in seventeenth-
century philosophy. See Susan James, Passion and Action: the Emotions in Seventeenth-Century
Philosophy (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 218-219, who cites Bacon, Donne (Sermons, 5.144),
Charleton, Descartes and Hobbes.

45Some claimed that Scripture was a special case of persuasive rhetoric or certain argument. Hobbes
is typical (Leviathan [London, 1651], 3.42, page 270). Donne characteristically proposes a middle
ground when he asserts that Christ's disciples "would not have persuaded a man, that grasse was
green, that blood was red, if it had been denyed unto them:" they were "Persons that could not have
bound up your understanding, with a Syllogisme, nor have entendred, or mollified it with a verse:
Persons that had nothing but that which God himself calls the foolishnesse of preaching [1 Cor. 1.21],
to bring Philosophers that argued, Heretiques that wrangled, Lucians and Julians, men that whet their
tongues, and men that whet their swords against God, to God" (Sermons, 6.156).
pretexts of human action also sought to develop, through similar epistemic means, an evidentiary or rational faith. In fact, the far-reaching effects of an early humanist emphasis on the "importance and value of everyday moral and political experience" and its influence on subsequent early modern conceptions of the tools available for understanding belief have only begun to be examined. While men were instructed to "delight in the assertions" of holy writ, there was a concomitant recognition of "great obscurity in many matters." The contingent, middle ground between divine assertion and terrestrial "obscurity" was the province of the faith based on human reason, judgement and sign-inference. Still, the conviction that one order of knowledge and proof reflected the other persisted. As the moderate Anglican Daniel Featley put it in 1633, echoing Sir Philip Sidney's judicious paean to self-knowledge (architectonike), "he that would learn Theologie, must first study Autologie. The way to God is by our selves: It is a blinde and dirty way; it hath many windings, and is easie to be lost[.]" In the discourses of affliction and theology, medicine and meditation, and literary and Scriptural hermeneutics, the contingent, dirty way was partially illumined by rhetoric.

Against the dominance of the "Cartesian-Galilean deductive paradigm," Nancy Struever has argued, following Carlo Ginzburg, that an alternate mode of inquiry in the Renaissance lived parasitically in the guts of humanism, scholasticism and science. Struever calls this mode of inquiry

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47Barbara Shapiro, Probability and Certainty, quoting Luther and Erasmus, 70, 76.

48Phineas Fletcher, The Purple Island, or The Isle of Man (Cambridge, 1633), sig. Ⓐ4r.
the "rhetorical-medical mind set" and sees it in Petrarch, Pietro d'Abano and Descartes. She found Abano arguing for Galen's prescience when the former suggests that "he who persuades best, heals best" and Petrarch arguing that medicine, with its focus on decorum, provides a model for the rhetor in terms of its "practical intervention in the world." Paradoxically, due to the confused union of the body and the soul, Descartes followed Galen in arguing that the effects of the passions might be limited by forms of decorum. In Struever's argument, decorum accounts the connections between "moral-philosophical, medical and discursive moments." While early modern physicians groped about in the viscera attempting to seat the passions, rhetoric (in Quintilian's model of the judicious orator in particular) offered a prophylactic against passionate extremes; it also provided a more positive propaedeutic, in the form of decorum or temperance, for social interaction of various sorts.

For the rest of this chapter, I explore the relationship between rhetoric, medicine and hermeneutics as the basis of Donne's Scriptural hermeneutics. It will be clear that for Donne 'playing the physician' meant engaging medicine as a useful heuristic tool in his meditations on interpretatio scripti.

Nothing without perplexities

During a severe illness in the winter of 1613-1614, Donne busied himself "in the search of Eastern Tongues," perhaps receiving tuition in Hebrew from John Layfield, rector of St. Clement Danes.50 Izaak Walton confirms Donne's remarkable diligence: despite his affliction, Donne applied himself


51See Bald, 278, 281; Letters, 280-281, 201.
"to the attainment of a greater perfection in the learned Languages, Greek and Hebrew."\textsuperscript{51} Donne's scholarly efforts, his "incessant study of Textual Divinity," however, were inimical to textual complexity. A "perpetual complexity in the words cannot choose but cast a perplexity upon the things," Donne writes in July 1613, remarking that even "the least of our actions suffer and taste thereof." Except "demonstrations (and perchance there are very few of them)," Donne finds "nothing without perplexities."\textsuperscript{52} Written between 1611 and 1615,\textsuperscript{53} Donne's \textit{Essays in Divinity}, which promise to explain "many Holy Curiosities," offer solutions to this vexing, regressive perplexity in the form of prudence and decorum.\textsuperscript{54} Indeed, the ways in which \textit{interpretatio scripti} is figured in theological controversy embody Donne's attitudes toward reading in general.\textsuperscript{55} The Essays are a sustained

\textsuperscript{51}Walton, \textit{The Lives of Dr. John Donne. Sir Henry Wotton, Mr. Richard Hooker, Mr. George Herbert} (London, 1670), 34; cf. Bald, 280.

\textsuperscript{52}Gosse, 2.16. Gosse claims that Donne studied "Oriental languages" and Spanish. There is a very fine example of Donne's textual divinity, in which he speculates about the various manuscripts of Matthew 3.17 available to the Church fathers, in a sermon of 1624 (\textit{Sermons}, 6.148).

\textsuperscript{53}See \textit{Essays}, 109, where Simpson suggests that Donne's engagement in "Civill business" and "publick affairs" might well refer to either his membership in parliament (1614) or his service to Sir Robert Drury (1611-1612).

\textsuperscript{54}I strongly disagree with Arthur Marotti's reading of the Essays. Marotti argues that, in "their intellectual convolution, Donne's \textit{Essays in Divinity} signals a crisis of motive, belief, and commitment. It devastates its own intellectual materials and, in the process, also assaults the forms of order and value that are sanctioned in the public world" (\textit{John Donne, Coterie Poet} [Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986], 262). While I take Marotti's point that political and worldly concerns press on Donne's mind during the composition of the Essays, the work is a rather careful exercise in Scriptural interpretation, in which I see little "mock- or comical-scholarship," parody or "nonsensical helplessness" (261-262). Joan Webber, \textit{Contrary Music: the Prose Style of John Donne} (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 14-15, places the Essays at the mid-point --- in terms of Donne's style and the maturity of his thinking --- between the \textit{Biathanatos} and the \textit{Sermons}.

\textsuperscript{55}Donne claims that the Reformation has occasioned attention to the "matter" and not the "phrase" of Scripture, partly due to the accretion of linguistic knowledge (of Hebrew and Greek, in particular). The Grecians and Romans undervalued the Scriptures due to a lack of such knowledge. "Their case was somewhat like ours," Donne writes in 1623, "at the beginning of the Reformation; when because most of those men who laboured in that Reformation, came out of the Roman Church, and there had never read the body of the Fathers at large; but only such ragges and fragments of those Fathers, as were pacht together in their Decretat's, and Decretals [Papal decrees], and other such Common
meditation on the problems of interpretation and the ways in which techniques borrowed from the
direction of rhetoric (prudence and temperance) allow for both equitable reading and reasoned
intervention in practical matters. The interpretative tools Donne fashions and refines in the Essays
are remarkably similar, as we shall see, to the ways in which prudent, practical reasoning was figured
in medical discourse. That Donne draws on medical metaphors to instantiate ways of reading is a
cue to the intrication of medicine, rhetoric and hermeneutics; it is an aspect of an emergent habit of

The complications Donne finds in "Textual Divinity" were occasioned, he writes in the
Essays, by "unsincere translations," "rasure and mis-interpretation" and the "beggarly wrestling of
Scriptures" found in the history of testimoniurn ab homine about the word of God (Essays, 40, 43,
26). The "transposing" characteristic of men who mark "an hundred differences ... concerning an
Ant" (Essays, 13, 14) is present in the schisms and divisions in the history of interpretatio scripti.
Although speculation about the origin and end of the world, creation and judgement, for instance, is
"uncertain, doubtfull and conjecturall," interpreters do not have license to indulge their caprice.57

placing, for their purpose, and to serve their turne, therefore they were loath at first to come to that
issue, to try controversies by the Fathers. But as soon as our men imbraced the Reformation, had had
time to reade the Fathers, they were ready enough to joyne with the Adversary in that issue: and still
we protest, that we accept that evidence, the testimony of the Fathers, and refuse nothing, which the
Fathers unanimously [sic] delivered, for matter of faith" (Sermons, 6.56). Donne exhibits a reformed
attention to the matter of the text as ballast in his assertion that the Scriptures themselves are the most
eloquent books in the world. Roman reading, so to speak, epitomizes the lack of context and history,
exemplified in the textual fragments of decretals and "Common placers."

56 The phrase "testimonium ab homine" is drawn from a sermon preached at St. Paul's, 13 October,
1622 (Sermons, 8.218; see also 1.297 and, an important passage in which Donne defines the need for
testimony to recompense "our incredulity, ... our negligence in practising, and ... our slipperinesse in
relapsing," 4.223).

57 Compare Pierre Charron, who insists on "the pedanticall and presumptuous spirit" of those who
"make Aristotle and others say what they please." They are "more obstinate in their opinions ... disavowing those for disciples that faint in their opinions, hate & arrogantlie condemn this rule of
wisdome, this modestie and academicall stayednes, glorying in their obstinate opinions, whether they
Rather, the Scriptures are a textured whole, their meaning accessible through diligent, prudent interpretation. Misinterpretation mistakes parts for wholes, disturbing the delicate balance of text and context. As Donne writes, "merciful God has afforded us the whole and intire book [of Scripture], why should we tear it into rags, or rend the seamless garment?"  

Donne is first attentive to words, the individual parts of Scripture. Writing about the various scholarly controversies surrounding the authorship of the Pentateuch, for example, Donne admitted that to "unentangle our selvs in this perplexity, is more labour then profit, or perchance possibility" (Essays, 12). The possibility of profitable, equitable reading is dependent on the meaning of individual words (and thus upon accurate translation); its opposite, perverting the meaning of words, especially Scripture, was the province of both heretics and overly-refined, curious wits.  

be right or wrong, loving better a headie forward affirmer against their owne opinions, and against whom they may exercise their wit and skill, than a modest peacable man, who doubteth and maketh stay of his judgement, against whom their wits are dulled, that is to say, a foole than a wise man" (Of Wisdome, 238-239). Charron constructs a tempered humility and productively skepticism in this passage, which applies both to human and theological learning (230ff.). He goes so far as to separate public duty ("he will conform himselfe to every thing") and private intellection ("every one of us playeth two parts, two persons"; 252).

58Essays, 19, 14. As he wrote later in the Essays, "I do not (I hope) in undertaking the Meditation upon this verse [Exodus 1:1], incur the fault of them, who for ostentation and magnifying their wits, excerpt and tear shapeless and unsignificant rags of a word or two, from whole sentences, and make them obey their purpose in discoursing" (39). Donne might have had writers as diverse as the cabalists and Lancelot Andrewes in mind.

59He seems to have lawyers in mind. See, for example, Essays, 27, in which Donne claims that lawyers "more than others, have ever been Tyrants over words, and have made them accept other significations, then their nature enclined to" and "Satire II," ll.87-102 where Donne claims that, under the influence of lawyers, divines are "controverters" of "vouch'd Texts" and "leave out / Shrewd words, which might against them cleare the doubt" (ll.100-102). Indeed, in a letter to Henry Goodyer, Donne insists that "the divines of these times are become mere advocates, as though religion were a temporal inheritance" (Gosse, 1.221). Like Augustine, Donne equates curiosity with illegitimate prying (see Sermons, 4.142-143) and cautions against being "over-vehement, over-peremptory, (so far, as to the perplexing of thine owne reason and understanding, or so far, as to the despising of reasons of other men)" (Sermons, 6.179). Doubt is often a symptom of over-curiosity (6.182; see also 6.150, where Donne advocates plainness against curiosity). These concerns stay with Donne until the end of his life. As he writes in 1629, "Words, and lesse particles then words have
thought the latter populous in both the Church and in natural philosophy. If picking out stones, as Donne called wrestling words out of their context (*decerpere*),

defaces the "integrity" of Scripture, how then might disabling or vexed interpretation be avoided, freeing "even the least of our actions" from perplexity? In the absence of *demonstrationes* --- that is, without certain evidence linking cause and effect, letter and spirit, words and things, without what Donne later called God's "method" --- controversy, ambiguity and obscurity are resolved by an alchemical faith in God's intention, lent ballast by the prudent exercise of reason directed to the meaning of Scripture and the articles of faith (see, for example, Sermons, 9.355). The resolution of perplexity was based upon prudent interpretation --- a judicious balance of context and text, cause and effect, parts and wholes very similar to that recommended by Augustine.

Imprudent and inequitable interpretation occasioned religious controversy. Terminological wrangling has divided the universal church; there have been "great Heresies, but Verball, but *Syllabical*; and as great, but *Litterall*": "There are occasions of Controversies of all kinds," Donne busied the whole Church. ... Where the question hath not been of divers words, nor syllables, nor letters, but onely of the place of words; what tempestuous differences have risen? ... Nay, where there hath been no quarrel for precedency, for transposing of words, or syllables, or letters; where there hath not been, so much as a letter in question; how much doth an accent vary a sense?" (Sermons, 9.71). "It is a plaine, an easie, a perspicuous truth, but that the perverse and uncharitable wranglings of passionate and froward men, have made Religion a hard, an intricate, and a perplexed art" (Sermons, 9.150). As Donne insists, "when the Scriptures may be interpreted, and Gods actions well understood, by an ordinary way, it is never necessary, seldom safe to induce an extraordinary" (3.141). In the *Biathanatos*, Donne excoriates "Contemplative and bookish men, [which] must of necessitie be more quarrelsome then others, because they contend not about matter of fact, nor can determine their controversies by any certaine witnesses, nor judges" (20).

"Donne here recalls Erasmus' 1515 letter to Martin Dorp in which he defends Folly from denigration by attacking dishonest reading practices. These readers are the sort who "take a couple of words out of the context, sometimes a little altered in the process, leaving out everything that softens and explains what sounds harsh otherwise" (The Correspondence of Erasmus, trans. R.A.B. Mynors and D.F.S. Thomson in The Collected Works of Erasmus, 86 vols. projected [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974-], 3.126). For an incisive examination of the interpretive issues at stake here, see Kathy Eden, Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition: Chapters in the Ancient Legacy and Its Humanist Reception (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997).
wrote, "in ... one Verse" (Sermons, 6.246-247; compare 7.118, 9.52-53). Donne's thoughts about the senses of Scripture and their relationship to typology will be examined in chapter five. Here, it is important to note that Donne's concern with the meaning of the literal sense as it is embodied in words leads him to envision both textual alchemy and verbal dissection. In fact, an equitable reader knows how to dissolve the literal into the figural and to extract, by means of the example, the universal from the particular; he knows how to accommodate. The meaning of individual words is central to this activity. The guard against hermeneutic excess is buttressed by the excision and condemnation of "unsincere translations." Interpretation must be commensurate with both history (and Scripture as history) and other places in the Bible. In the process, Donne insists, Scripture should not be exposed to the "curious refinings of the Allegoricall Fathers," which made "fine cobwebs to catch flies" from the vigour and clarity of God's word; we risk seeing nothing at all if we covet seeing too much. In "The Litanie," Donne prays for "Meane waies" and wishes freedom from

61"The literall sense is alwayes to be preserved; ... in many places of Scripture, a figurative sense is the literall sense" (Sermons, 6.62). Compare William Perkins: "There is but one full and intire sense of every place of scripture, and that is also the literal sense. ... To make many senses of scripture, is to overturn all sense, and to make nothing certen" (A Commentarie or Exposition upon the Five First Chapters of the Epistle to the Galatians [Cambridge, 1604], 346, quoted by Lewalski, Donne's Anniversaries and the Poetry of Praise, 156).


63Focusing on the individual Christian as the audience for the cirenic and historical aspects of scripture, Donne declares "All Gods Prophecies, are thy Histories" (Sermons, 7.403). For other examples, see Lewalski, Protestant Poetics, 124ff.

64Essays, 40. Donne was certainly influenced by the reforming tendency to rearticulate the typological symbolism of the Schools at the literal level; indeed, he shares the reformers' desire for a rigorous means to distinguish "divinely sanctioned symbolic method" from "arbitrary allegorizing" (Lewalski, Protestant Poetics, 117).
the missayings and misdoings of the fathers of the Church.65 Indeed, a "man devests himselfe of all discretion, who, without examination, captivates his understanding to the Fathers" (Sermons, 9.160-161). Those who indiscriminately "break these Sentences" by picking words out of context to exhibit their murmuring wit or unalloyed reason are vainglorious.66 Recalling Augustine's and Erasmus' strictures about equitable interpretation, Donne argues that divines must "have a Theological Alchimy to draw soveraigne tinctures and spirits from plain and grosse literall matter," and be "Cabalists," "which are like the Anatomists of words."67

What does it mean to be an anatomist of words? For Donne, it meant sifting through parts and etymologies, eviscerating misprision and mistranslation by returning to an historical, equitable interpretation of Scripture. "Cribration" was both a medical term --- meaning "the preparation of medicaments by a sive, or searce" --- and a term Donne used to refer to the process of composing a sermon. "I have." Donne writes in a letter dated 1627, "cribrated, and re-cribrated and post-cribrated the Sermon."68 Donne thus imagines Scripture undergoing dissection (breaking it down into nodes of

65 "The Litany," ll. 109-117; Grierson, 312-313. Donne charges Basil with "detorting" (Sermons, 6.143).

66 In a sermon preached at St. Paul's on Psalm 90 during 1623-1624, Donne, citing Jerome as his source, insists that "there should not need another Comment upon my Comment, that when I pretend to interpret the Psalme, they that heare me, should not need another to interpret me: which is a frequent infirmity amongst Expositors of Scriptures, by writing, or preaching, either when men will raise doubts in places of Scripture, which are plaine enough in themselves, (for this creates a jealousie, that if the Scriptures be every where so difficult, they cannot be our evidences, and guides to salvation) Or when men will insist too vehemently, and curiously, and tediously in proving of such things as no man denies" (Sermons 5.269-270). His sentiment here is distinctly anti-Roman.

67 Essays, 48. John Chamberlin, Increase and Multiply, provides a concise résumé of Cabalistic verbal anatomy (105-106). Donne's interest in Cabalistic exegesis persists until at least 1629.

68 Letters, 308. Donne continues: I "must necessarily say, the King, who hath let fall his eye upon some of my Poems, never saw, of mine, a hand, or an eye, or an affection, set down with so much study, and diligence, and labour of syllables, as in this Sermon [vol. 7, no. 16] I expressed these two points, which I take so much to conduce to his service, the imprinting of persuasibility and obedience in the subject" (308-310; Bald, 493). Compare Donne's comments about knowing one's sins, a process in which reason is essential to "this scrutiny, this survey, this sifting" (Sermons, 4.150) and
meaning, into its composite parts) and sifting in the history of its interpretation in much the same way as he presents his own writing and composition. The unstable meaning of words, he insists, is given some ballast by peeling back their skin and carefully probing their parts and meanings while comparing them with other places in Scripture. Medical, iatrochemical and alchemical terms are fundamental to this work; however, no terms are more central than those drawn from anatomy, which addresses the relationship between parts and wholes. For Donne, "The words are the Parts" (Sermons, 5.286).

Donne imagined the process through which the body is investigated, dissected and recomposed by God in terms similar to those in which he describes equitable reading — the balancing of dissected parts with integral wholes:

God's first intention, in the most distasteful physic, is health; even God's demolitions are super- edifications, his anatomies, his dissections are so many re- compactings, so many resurrections; God windes us off the skein, that he may weve us up into the whole pcece, and he cuts us out of the whole pcece into pceces, that he may make us up into a whole garment (Sermons, 9.217).

The parts of the body, like textual parts, intimate a whole. God's intention, then, is to see the whole in the part, to dissect in order to recompact. Dissection and cribration perform similar functions in

Donne's interpretive cosmos: on one hand, one spends time in the charnel house, rooting about in the bones, in order to understand a whole, living body; on the other, one dissects Scripture in order to reconstruct its true (equitable and charitable) meaning. Anatomists of words, then, eviscerate to a purpose: the revelation of meaning. Further, metaphors drawn from anatomy help to establish discursive authority (and if Donne was uninterested in scholarly exactitude, as some have argued, he was profoundly rigorous and exact at crucial moments). Anatomy offered Donne and his contemporaries a literally incisive recourse. If the perplexity and controversy of Scriptural hermeneutics are ultimately irresolute, at the very least it is the duty of every Christian, especially a preacher, to attempt to penetrate these mysteries with rigour and authority. The Essays demonstrate Donne's conviction that the clues available to human comprehension are lodged in textual viscera, in the body of the text. Donne's 'diligent search' is an anatomical lesson.

Chapters two and three examine the significance of anatomy and dissection in the seventeenth century. For now, it is important to recognize a tendency in Donne which confirms an early modern habit of thought I examine below: in order to envision the unseen and to begin to ascertain the meaning embodied in texts, Donne deploys medical metaphors and methods, analogies and analyses. Dissection and cribration were applied equally to texts and to the human subject, suggesting a broad analogy in Donne's thinking between normative interpretive practices in "Textual Divinity" and what we might call a nascent sociology or anthropology, epitomized by his attention to casuistry. If Donne "lift[s] the interior of the body directly onto the surface of the page" and installs the "page back in the interior of the human body," he opens the human body in order to discern both

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the Bible enfolded in the heart and to analyze the springs of human action, including sin. Sifting and dissecting the human body are for Donne analogous to reading and interpreting the body of the Bible and the diverse cluster of impulses and practices that constitute human life. Both processes formed a nexus of activity that operated in two registers, both of which required prudence and temperance: the analysis of texts and the analysis of men and their behaviour. With respect to the latter, prudence was to find its social and ethical counterpart in the Cartesian *habitus*, which Descartes defines as both theoretical and practical knowledge of the ways in which the human body participates in virtue. Similarly, for Donne medical terms and concepts supplied both the means for the analysis or investigation of human behaviour and the resources for potential resolution and 'cure.'

Nor was Scripture alone subjected to medical techniques. The Church, too, was a suffering, wounded body open to Donne's scrutiny. The church, he writes in the *Essays*, is a little thin skin (*cuticulam*) stretched over the body of faith; faith is the skin itself (*cutem*). Once the outer skin, is pierced, scarred or ruptured --- say, by heresy --- it cannot help but compromise the organ itself. But so long as the "main skin is inviolate" (if the fundamentals of faith remain intact72), surface ruptures and incisions matter little (even if the scars persist). Donne opposes the schismatic 'solution of continuity,' a specialized medical term Donne uses to describe religious division:

For as Catechisers give us the milk of Religion, and positive Divines solid nutriment, so when our conscience is sick of scruples, or that the Church is wounded by


73See, for example, *Sermons*, 2.111 ("truly it is a lamentable thing, when ceremoniall things in matter of discipline, or problematicall things in matter of doctrine ... separate us from one another") and 6.250.
schisms, which make solutionem continu, (as Chirurgians speak) though there be proper use of controverted Divinity for Medicine, yet there be some Cankers, (as Judaisme) which cannot be cur'd without the Cabal; which is (especially for those diseases,) the Paracelsian Phisick of the understanding, and it is not unworthily (if it be onely applied where it is so medicinable) calle'd prœambulum Evangelii (Essays, 50-51, 10-11).

Although in Ignatius His Conclave (1611) Donne insisted that many have been made "carkases" by Paracelsus' "uncertaine, ragged and unperfect experiments,"74 in the Essays "Paracelsian Phisick" is a useful term for the kind of ecclesiastical medicine Donne envisioned. A Paracelsian physic of the understanding might be said to heal the whole of the body as it heals its parts, based on the doctrine that the body (in this case, the body of the Church) is variously linked with the world. This physic opposes a 'solution of continuity' or "a division of such parts as naturally ought to be united."75 In this context, understanding relates closely to the temperance Donne praises at the beginning of the Essays. Because the gospel perambulates, because its message is found in potentially contradictory Scriptures and sects, any bulwark against heresy and schism implies the use of prudence, whether locally in interpreting Scripture or generally in healing rifts in the Universal Church. 'Solutions of continuity' are not solutions at all.

This cluster of medical metaphors and interpretive techniques has epistemological implications. All acquired knowledge, Donne claimed in the Essays, is "by degrees, and successive"


75A Physical Dictionary (London, 1657). "Solution" in this case might mean something closer to "dissolution," a meaning antedating the seventeenth century; see the Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), II.5.a. An earlier dictionary defines a solution of continuity [solutio continuitatis] as "a dissolving of that which necessarily belongeth to another" (Christopher Wirtzung [augmented by Jacob Mason], Praxis Medicinae Universalis; or A Generall Practise of Physicke [London, 1598], the third index).
and moves first through negation; years later, he spoke of medical knowledge in the same manner (Sermons, 7.260). However, negation implies "privation," which is inadmissible as a defining characteristic of God.²⁶

Canst thou be satisfied with such a late knowledge of God, as is gathered from effects; when even reason, which feeds upon the crumbs and fragments of appearances and verisimilitudes, requires causes? Canst thou rely and leane upon so infirm a knowledge, as is delivered by negations? (Essays, 21)²⁷

Knowledge of God acquired through effects, through the "Signa muta" (mute signs) of the book of nature (Essays, 63) is infirm; no one is bound by negative proofs. Whereas God is "impartible," reason, moored to appearance, verisimilitude and language, falters in a search for causes and for God in partial and fragmentary human experience.²⁸ God's eternal law is never certainly expressed in the book of creatures although that book is immune from the profanation of heretics; the law is rather "insinuated and whisper'd to our hearts" (Essays, 55, 7). Sir Thomas Browne agreed. Humankind beholds God "but asquint upon reflex or shadow," he wrote, and thus he was content to shun "Contemplations Metaphysicall" for a method of investigation attentive to traces, impressions and effects. The parson, according to George Herbert, is a "diligent observer and tracker of God's ways"

²⁶Essays, 21. He continued: negation "is, besides, so inconsiderable a kind of profe that in civill and judic[i]all practice, no man is bound by it, nor bound to prove it."

²⁷The Biathanatos offers Donne's most spirited critique of the claims of reason (see, for example, 34, 177). The most cogent examination of reason and paradox in the Biathanatos is still Joan Webber, who writes that "In the Juvenilia, Donne turned logic upside down; in Biathanatos he demolishes it by presenting a problem to which there is no solution. ... [T]he strain of voluntarism running through it would indicate, if anything, a rejection of human reason and an intention on Donne's part to look elsewhere for truth. ... Donne was not well suited to learn or to be convinced by formal logic and casuistry" (Contrary Music, 5, 11).

²⁸"For, we have had voces de Inferis, voyces of men, who have indeed but diminished the dignity of the Doctrine of the Trinity, by going about to prove it by humane reason, or to illustrate it by weak and low comparisons" (Sermons, 6.134).
and Donne claims that curiosity leads men to inquire into "unrevealed mysteries ... by Indirect means." Interpreting the ways in which God "whispers" to human beings, however, is prone to misprision, as Donne amply demonstrates in his résumé of interpretatio scripti. Error itself is not only the misattribution of false as true, which is dangerous, even heretical; it is also "an approbation of ... incertain for certain." This is a charge he levelled at Calvin; it was a common criticism of medical practice in the period. And of much else, no doubt.

As we have seen, often the misapprobation of uncertain for certain was a question of language; thus, as well as Cabalistic anatomy, Donne applied laws of proof developed in the history of rhetoric and hermeneutics to the understanding of Scripture. Arguing about the attributes of God by negation exemplifies these errors. To insist, for example, that God is not this or not that is to traffic in unbelief; God himself is unutterable (Essays, 23). Donne's solution to the conundrum of speaking the unspeakable is clear. In as much as it is possible, using both reason and faith as guides, equitable readers listen closely to God's whispering --- in Scripture and in the book of creatures --- and base their judgments on what remains, in the end, a series of inferences and probable signs. Thus even though "Syllabical" heresies might be rooted out, human beings remain insulated from God.

The uncertain investigation of Scripture was susceptible to and frustrated by the fantasy of reasonable apprehension of God, free from misunderstanding and contradiction. Donne's brief consideration of the creation is representative. "When [creation] was," however, "is a matter of

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79Religio Medici, 18. Herbert, The Country Parson, in George Herbert and Henry Vaughan, ed. Louis Martz (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 206; Donne, Sermons, 4.143. Richard Todd cites a marvelous passage from Peter Martyr's The Common Places (1582). According to Martyr, it "is to be noted, that whereas God is a nature so dissevered from anie matter, as he cannot sensiblie be perceived; yet he hath been accustomed by signes and certaine sensible woords to declare himselfe. And those signes, which from the begining have declared God unto us are creatures" (The Opacity of Signs, 43). Donne mentions Peter Martyr in the Biathanatos, 121 and Sermons, 5.383.
reason, and therefore various and perplexed" (Essays, 18). Still, we can neither despise the work of reason ("erroneous pictures" of God based on similitudes) nor make it the sole foundation of the interpretation of Scripture or the knowledge of God (Essays, 22). Although human beings must engage and acknowledge other readers, the testimonium ab homine, and proceed to the limits of reason in hermeneutics, the interpretation of Scripture "must not rest upon thy self, nor upon any private man" since it is not "a bare reading, but a diligent searching, that is enjoyned us."

What then were the constituents of "diligent searching"? Error was one. Although we err in our comprehension of Scripture and thus of God when we mistake uncertainty for certainty, erroneous interpretation has resonant pedagogical and theological effects. For example, if profane history contradicts any one place in Scripture, this history constitutes merely a "half-proof" not certainty (like a jury that endorses an oath but will not convict on it, Donne suggests). Such an event should spur men to prudently examine all other places in the Bible which speak to the same concern. If specific passages supersede human understanding, nevertheless they must harmoniously express

80"Mysteries of Religion are not the less believ'd and embrac'd by Faith, because they are presented, and induc'd, and apprehended by Reason" (Sermons, 1.169).

81Sermons, 8.218-219. Compare an earlier sermon (February, 1620): "no Scripture is of private interpretation" (Sermons, 3.210). The same sermon extols "Christ's plain Doctrine" in spite of "the interlineary glosses, and the marginal notes, and the variae lectiones, controversies and perplexities" induced "with the fingers of mans hand" (Ibid., 208). The Roman Catholic Church, Donne insists, "expunes and interlines articles of faith, upon Reason of State, and emergent occasions" (Ibid., 3.129). Elsewhere in the same sermon, Donne is seemingly content to with interpretive desuetude: "Let us modestly take that which is expressed in [this verse], and not search overcuriously into that which is signified, and represented by it" (Ibid., 120).

82As Donne wrote in the Essays, "And we erre, if we arrest ourselves as upon certain truth (as we do upon all the Scriptures,) when there is sufficient suspicion of Error, (abstracting the reverence of the Author,) and a certain confession and undeniableness of uncertainty." His example is a "man delated juridically" (55-56).

the same opinion, Donne writes, recalling Augustine's arch hermeneutic tool, caritas (which for
Donne does not deny the potential that ambiguity and contradiction may be, in human
comprehension, present in Scripture). 84

If they do not speak with one voice, human reason is at fault. "Where divers senses arise"
out of different passages of Scripture, Donne insists, "... let Charity reconcile such differences"
(Sermons, 9.94-95).85 God admits "diversities" in Scripture he "withdrawes [truth] from present
apprehension" but only in order to "make men sharpe and industrious in the inquisition of truth."

For naturally great wits affect the reading of obscure books, wrastle and sweat in the
explication of prophecies, digg and thresh out the words of unlegible hands,
resuscitate and bring to life again the mangled, and lame fragmentary images and
characters in Marbles and Medals, because they have a joy an complacency in the
victory and atchievement thereof. 86

The victory, of course, is hollow --- for at least two reasons. First, profane wits (or "naturall men").

84 Augustine wrote: "when a meaning is elicited whose uncertainty cannot be resolved by the evidence
of places in the Scriptures whose meaning is certain, it remains to make it more clear by recourse to
reason, even if those words we seek to understand did not perhaps intend that meaning" (De
Doctrina, 3.28.39.102). Compare Hugh of St. Victor's Augustinian hermeneutics: "The Divine Page,
in its literal sense, contains many things which seem ... to be opposed to each other[.] ... But the
spiritual meaning admits no opposition; in it, many things can be different from one another, but none
can be opposed" (The Didascalicon of Hugh of St. Victor: a Medieval Guide to the Arts, trans. Jerome

85 Donne writes: "let my conversation with thy Scriptures be a chast conversation; that I discover no
nakednesse therein; offer not to touch any thing in thy Scriptures, but that, that thou hast vouchsafed
to unmask, and manifest unto me: ... Where divers senses arise, and all true ... let truth agree them.
But what is Truth? God; And what is God? Charity; Therefor let Charity reconcile such differences"
(Sermons, 9.94-95).

86 Donne's scorn for trifling antiquarianism is present throughout his work; it will be examined below.
Writing of Roman hermeneutics, Donne is nevertheless clear that as "God brought light out of
darknesse, and raises glory out of sin, so we may raise good Divinity out of their ill Grammar"
(Sermons, 3.166).
whom Donne rarely ceases to deride, revel in manufacturing empty complexities, whether in case divinity, scientific dispute or antiquarian "wrestling." They are blind, Donne suggests, to substantive concerns and prone to disputing the trivial in religion, law or learning. 87

Second, and rather more important, such wits overvalue reason at the expense of humility, prudence and faith. God is "pleased," Donne wrote,

that his word should endure and undergo the opinion of contradiction, or other infirmities, in the eyes of Pride (the Author of Heresie and Schism) that after all such dissections, & criburations, and examinings of Hereticall adventures upon it, it might return from the furnace more refin'd, and gain luster and clearness by this vexation (Essays, 57).

Thus Scripture is subjected to an alchemical process in human interpretation: vexing, misinterpreting and mistranslating the word of God paradoxically lends it more clarity and lustre. The metaphors here are crucial.

In the history of Biblical interpretation, the meaning of Scripture undergoes subduction, sublimation and subtiliation: its gross matter, its dross, is burned off in an abstraction of "iuyces, oyles and other liquid matters." The process of interpreting God's justice, to take the most important instance from the Essays, requires "condensing" and "rarifying." Donne insists that "the children of God know how to resolve and make liquid all God's Actions. They can spie out and extract Balmes, and Oyles from his Vinegars; and supple, and cure with his corrosives." 88 Tinctures and spirits are

87 See Satire IV, ll. 35-48, 93-114; Grierson, 142, 144, where Donne excoriates small-minded historians, linguists and disputers.

88 Essays, 62. Donne makes a similar case for the extension of law: "For often that action which was principally intended for a work of Justice against one Malefactor, extends itself to an universall Mercy, by the Example." On sublimation and subtiliation, see Woodall, The Surgions Mate, 347. A Physical Dictionary (London, 1657) defines "subtiliation" as "the dissolving and separating the thin parts from thick."
distilled from Scripture in various ways, the most important of which, Donne argues, following a tradition that blends patristic with humanist hermeneutics, is comparing place with place. By comparing and collating places, the "diverse understandings" of "diverse literal senses," human testimony about the meaning of Scripture comes closest to the rarefied intention of the Holy Ghost. Thus the "grosse literal matter" of Scripture is gross not because it is unrefined but because it might accommodate several, variant interpretations (recall that heresies might hinge on a syllable).

In the *Essays*, Donne's examination of reason is central to the problem of arguing from effects to causes. Too often, "infirm" knowledge, fed on "crums and fragments of appearances and verisimilitudes" (*Essays*, 21), wears the demeanour of causation. Matters of reason are "various and perplex'd" and it is merely "opinion" which "relies upon probability and verisimilitude" (*Sermons*, 6.317). Knowledge or reason cannot save us, Donne wrote in 1621, but men cannot be saved without them. Although toward the end of his life Donne was assured that "out of ratiocination and discourse, and probabilities, and very similitudes, at last will arise evident and necessary conclusions" (*Sermons*, 9.355), in the 1610s he focused on *probabilities* and *similitudes* as inadequate foundations on which to erect either faith or understanding. Like Sir Thomas Browne, who thought Scripture was intended to deliver its "unspeakable mysteries ... in a vulgar and illustrative way" to human understanding, for Donne both the book of creatures and the book of Scripture were variegated texts that engaged both the limits and the limitations of reason. Men are, again in Browne's words, condemned to traffic in

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89"But the most important and usefull reason [for arguing over the interpretation of scripture] is, that we might ever have occasion to accustome our selves to the best way of expounding Scriptures, by comparing one place with another" (*Essays*, 57).

90As Augustine insisted in a passage central to understanding the duties of a preacher or interpreter in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, "For what could God have more generously and abundantly provided in the divine writings than that the same words might be understood in various ways which other no less divine witnesses approve?" (*De Doctrina*, 3.27.102).
effects, accidents and axioms,\textsuperscript{91} where God sees causes and universals, men see nothing but particulars. Yet reason is necessary, if insufficient, for the interpretation of Scripture for, in human experience, reason is "our connexion / Of causes." Yet it is incapable of explaining that connection.\textsuperscript{92} Indeed, there is as much "strength in relying upon some ignorances," Donne later wrote, "as some knowledges" (\textit{Sermons}, 6.188). Perhaps that is why divines must learn to be humble, temperate and prudent. In order to accomplish a just and measured interpretation of God's intention, then, men must excavate (or distil or anatomize) examples from the depths of linguistic and phenomenal history, buoyed by collective inquiry and the interpretative community of the church. As Donne insists, "It is not safe concluding out of single Instances" (\textit{Sermons}, 6.208). Incapable of explaining the connection of causes, reason cannot address substance; it is rather confined to accident --- to contingent, conjectural and uncertain qualities, to signs, as opposed to essences and substances. It is "rhetorical" in the broadest sense of the term: concerned with persuasion, observation and inquiry and the exigencies of experience.\textsuperscript{93} As Donne suggests in his elegy on Prince Henry (first printed in 1613 in \textit{Lachrymae Lachrymarum}), in the absence of the prince whom "Reason wrought upon," reason cannot but feed on itself.\textsuperscript{94}

Donne's conception of reason has received some critical scrutiny. Scholars have argued that

\textsuperscript{91}Browne, \textit{Religio Medici}, 52, 23-25.

\textsuperscript{92}"Reason establishes the principles necessary for accepting revealed truth, evaluates the implications of that truth, and prepares for further belief" (Sherwood, \textit{Fulfilling the Circle}, 22).

\textsuperscript{93}Sir Thomas Browne wrote that he desired to "exercise [his] faith in the difficultest points, for to credit ordinary and visible objects is not faith, but perswasion." It is clear that Browne uses "perswasion" as a substitute for reason (\textit{Religio Medici}, 14).

\textsuperscript{94} 'T were madness to enquire of accident:
   So is't to looke for Reason, hee being gone,
   The only subject Reason wrought upon.
Donne's epistemology rests on the apprehension of the world via the senses (an essentially Aristotelian and Thomist notion, poised against the abstractions of Platonism and the Neoplatonism of Augustine).  "Nihil in intellectu, quod non prius in sensu," Donne writes, "till some sense apprehend a thing, the Judgment cannot debate it; It may well be said in Divinity too" (Sermons, 5.176). Sense, reason and judgement, however, are susceptible to persuasion. Indeed, recognizing the rarity of demonstration and the necessity of reason as a basis of faith, Donne identifies reason's susceptibility to persuasion as perhaps its greatest impediment. "Reason durst not attempt" to inform us of God's essence; that is the work of faith (Essays, 20, 56). While those who possess faith, to use Augustine's words, often "desire reason and understanding," and even the most faithful heart "sometimes descends also to Reason" (Essays, 20), men must avoid the disputatiousness of unalloyed ratiocination. Yet reason is integral to spiritual life. Although faith itself is beyond reason, reason is faith's delegate. Faith is composed of articles of belief ("That it is an Article of our Belief, that the world began") and is thus unlike Bacon's insinuative reason, not under the "insinuations and mollifyings of perswasion, and conveniency; nor under the reach and violence of Argument, or Demonstration, or Necessity; but under the Spirituall, and peaceable Tyranny, and easie yoke of sudden and present faith" (Essays, 16). Free from persuasion or demonstration, faith is subject neither to rhetoric nor logic; understanding the Scripture is subject only to "sudden and present faith." Reason, on the other hand, is under the sway of both logic --- both the logic of science and the logic

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96 Donne is citing Aquinas, Summa 1.46.2, which Simpson suggests marks the divergence of Christian philosophy from Aristotle's claim that the world was eternal (Essays, 115).
of opinion or dialectic --- and rhetoric as an art of persuasion. Donne puts this susceptibility to prudent use in his preaching, of course, but it is a discursive strategy, acceptable only if the ends justify the means. In the Essays, Donne draws an important distinction between rhetoric as persuasion and rhetoric as an instrument that enables and fortifies the work of reason that persists in his later work. The basis of this distinction is the prudence and humility he identifies as the necessary constituents of rectified reason. While the human intellect is incapable of fully expressing God, Donne writes in 1622, "Rhetorique will make absent and remote things present to your understanding" (Sermons, 2.87). Unlike Christ, who needed "no eloquence" to "encline" men to follow him, men are susceptible to suasion (Sermons, 2.282-283). Moored to reason and understanding, rhetoric is both powerful, useful (its enargeia) and dangerous.

Working upon "weake men," Donne writes, the "way of Rhetorique is first to trouble the understanding."

to displace, and to discompose, and disorder the judgement, to smother and bury it,
or to empty it of former apprehensions and judgements, and to shake that believe,
with which it had possessed it self before, and then when it is thus melted, to powre it
into new molds, when it is thus mollified, to stamp and imprint new formes, new
images, new opinions in it (Sermons, 2.282).

Donne's explanation of the ways in which rhetoric mollifies the understanding, judgement and belief is complex and will be examined below. Here, it is important to recognize both rhetoric's deleterious effects on judgement and the ways in which rhetoric and judgement are intertwined in human understanding. Discomposing the judgement, emptying it of temperance and prudence, smothers it; in turn, burying the judgement troubles belief. Why? Without reason and judgement, without the testimony of prudent men, we are farther away from the intention of the Holy Ghost and the truth of Scripture. In this formulation, the way of rhetoric --- and its new forms, images and opinions --- is
perfidious. What is the bulwark Donne suggests against both insidious persuasion and presumptuous reasoning in matters of faith?

Donne's answer is twofold; first, Christians develop a particular superfetation of reason. While rhetoric mollifies natural reason and understanding, there is another order of reason almost impermeable to forms, images and opinions. While the "common light of reason illumins us all," its application is uneven. Some employ reason "upon the searching of impertinent vanities" whereas others better use the same light in diligent searching; this additional reason enables Christians to discover the "Mysteries of Religion." "Knowledge cannot save us," Donne wrote,

but we cannot be saved without Knowledge; Faith is not on this side of knowledge,

but beyond it: we must necessarily come to knowledge first, though we must not stay at it. when we are come thither. For, a regenerate Christian, being now a new Creature, hath also a new facultie of Reason: and so believeth the Mysteries of Religion, out of another Reason, then as a meere naturall Man, he believe naturall and morall things. He believeth them for their own sake, by Faith, though he take Knowledge of them before, by that common Reason, and by those humane Arguments, which work upon other men, in naturall and morall things (Sermons, 3.359).

However distinct, this new faculty of reason is founded on the old: natural and moral knowledge are

97Donne thought rhetoric susceptible to misuse: "give no ill example to any, study the setting, and the establishing of all; for, scarce is there any so strong, but may be shaked by some of these scandals, Example, Perswasion, Fear, or Love. And hee that employs his gift of wit, and Counsell to seduce and mislead men, or his gift of Power, and Authority to intimidate, and affright men, or his gift of other graces, loveliness of person, agreeableness of Conversation, powerfulness of speech, to ensnare and entangle men by any of these scandals, may draw others into perdition, but he falls also with them" (Sermons, 3.174).

98See, for example, Sermons, 3.120, 258, 359; 7.251.
first, Donne insisted, on the way to something higher. However, the work that reason and human argument do is neither redundant nor jejune.

While there were differences between these new and old faculties, Donne saw a remarkable homology between natural, moral and supernatural reason. Although only partially commensurate, faith is resolutely grounded on "common Reason." Natural reason and human arguments induce one to read Scripture; but, since both are susceptible to the incursions of rhetoric, reason and argument require circumspection. Recall that rhetoric only works on weak men. The diligent searching that results from the proper use of common reason thus demands a species of prudence and temperance that informs its operation and application so that reason will neither overstep its bounds nor mistake the uncertain for certain. Donne's profound distrust of reason --- "The Scriptures will be out of thy reach and out of thy use if thou cast and scatter them upon Reason, upon Philosophy, upon Morality" --- is mitigated by the urgency of understanding and the sinfulness of its refusal. The

99"Common Reason" has very strict limitations, however. Citing Azorius, Donne writes that "Hee says it is a good and safe way, in all emergent doubts, to governe our selves Per communem opinionem, by the common opinion, by that, in which most Authors agree." But how is common opinion historized? It is different in different ages and places. What if common opinion is opaque to or reason absent from a person? "Now, how shall hee governe himself, that is unleamed, and not able to try, which is the common opinion?" (Sermons, 9.161). Donne's assessment of this casuistical notion differs from his friend Edward Herbert's. Herbert, as we shall see in chapter three, essentializes the historical nature of common opinion.

100Sermons, 2.308. Donne's concern, evident throughout his preaching, is to apply Scripture to his auditory and to avoid captious disputes about things unnecessary to faith. A focus on the essentials of faith might result in a confluence of sects: "At the same hour there was a Sermon at Jerusalem, and a Sermon at Rome, and both so like, for fundamentall things, as if they had been preached out of the same mouth" (Sermons, 6.157). As Donne writes later the same year (1624/5), "If I will ask a reason, why God commands such a thing; first, Periculosum est, It is Dangerous; for, I have nothing to answer me, but mine owne reason, and that affords not Lead enough, nor Line enough, to sound the depth of Gods proceedings, nor length enough, nor strength enough to reach so farre, and therefore I mistake the reason, and goe upon false grounds" (6.188). Nevertheless, things that are not fundamental must be "weigh[ed] in two balances, in the balance of Analogy, and in the balance of scandal: we must hold them so ... analogall [sic], proportionable, agreeable to the Articles of our Faith, and we must hold them so, as our brother be not justly offended, nor scandalized by them" (2.204).
predication of new reason on old meant a careful attention to the problems of reading, sign-inference and interpretation endemic in the old. Donne's second prophylactic against the excesses of persuasion and reason is prudence.

Where humility is, Donne wrote on the first page of the Essays, "ibi Sapienitia" (there is knowledge or wisdom). Not a "grovelling, frozen, and stupid Humility, as should quench the activity of our understanding," he continued,

or make us neglect the Search of those Secrets of God, which are accessible. For, Humility, and Studiousnesse, (as it is opposed to curiosity, and transgresses not her bounds) are so near of kin, that they are both agreed to be limbes and members of one vertue, Temperance.¹⁰¹

Humility and scholarship are limbs of the same body. That temperance should enable men to understand the accessible secrets of God, like those in the book of creatures and the Bible, is Donne's point; and that this temperance, particularly among divines, serves as a prophylactic against schism, heresy and the "malignant church" is, at least at this juncture in his life, Donne's overarching concern (Essays, 51). In controversies among men about things probable and fundamental, "humility ... may, in the sight of God, excuse and recompence many errours, and mistakings" (Sermons, 7.97).

Temperance relates directly to prudence, judgement and the Erasmian sobria mediocritas that Francis Bacon, for example, called "mediocrity" or the middle way between excess and defect, Scylla and

¹⁰¹Essays, 5. Donne writes of the dangers of curiosity in interpretatio scripti in 1624: "we will not therefore fall into either of these faults, at first, we will not be over curious, nor we will not stray [sic], nor cast our selves into that broad, and boundlesse way, by entring into those various, and manifold senses, which Expositors have multiplied, in the handling of this place [Rev. 7.9], and this part of the book; but we take the plainest way, and that in which, the best meet, and concur" (Sermons, 6.150).
Charybdis. It is Donne's shorthand for a Christianized *homo quadratus* armed with the tools of humility and decorum (and rectified conscience). It is figured much later in the seventeenth century as an aspect of the latitudinarian "sagacity" that defined the *virtuoso*. For Donne, it depends on the judicious use of sometimes arcane human learning (the cabbala, for example, or Paracelsian medicine), weighing learning with circumstance and a species of "profane" judgement. Temperance, however, is not merely an admixture of humility, studiousness and moderation in the practice of everyday life; it is also the *use* and *application* of all three in the diligent searching of the Scriptures, which had a practical, prudential corollary. Christians were enjoined to "*Scrutari Scripturas, to search the Scriptures*, not as thou wouldest make a *concordance*, but an *application*; as thou wouldest search a *wardrobe*, not to make an *Inventory* of it, but to finde in it something fit for thy wearing" (*Sermons*, 3.367). A discernible path from Biblical hermeneutics, from the judicious ways in which we interpret words as a reflection or series of effects of the divine Word, to normative human practice in the world is evident throughout Donne's work; it is present *in nuce* in the *Essays in Divinity*. In his denigration of persuasion as a means to spur men to faith, Donne is close to Hooker, who insists that persuasion is only as strong as the reasons upon which it is grounded; the paradox for Donne, of

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102 Bacon, "Icarus and Scylla and Charybdis, or the Middle Way," in *Essays and Wisdom of the Ancients*, ed. Henry Morley (New York: Hurst, n.d. [1883]), 356. For Donne, mediocrity has both rhetorical and ethical connotations: "And, for all this, there may be roome left for the Middle-state, for a mediocrity; when it is not so low as to be made the subject of oppression, nor so high as to be made the object of ambition, when it is neither exposed to scorne and contempt, nor to envy, and undermining, may we not then trust upon, not rest in such a condition? ... From our first Themes at Schoole, to our Texts in the Pulpit, we continue our praysing and persuading of this mediocrity" (*Sermons*, 6.307). As Donne insists, "God hath not carried us so low for our knowledge, as to Creatures, to Nature, nor so high, as to Miracles, but by a middle way, a voyce" (*Sermons*, 6.143).

103 "The primary distinction to be made, then, in dealing with the stuff of reality, is between the Essential Word, which is unknowable to human senses and is the cause of all order in experience, and the words which are the effects and sensible extensions of the Word, which are as close to truth in their presentation of order as man can come" (Webber, *Contrary Music*, 124). In this context, then, rhetoric and logic are extremely important: if words are as close as Donne can get to "the stuff of reality," their disposition is crucial.
course, is that reason alone is inadequate as the substratum of faith. Thus, like Montaigne, Donne insisted that persuasion works only on weak men. Only those intemperate or imprudent in their judgement or learning, who praise great men instead of God (Sermons, 2.307-309), are susceptible to persuasion and thus to the heresies of a syllable.

In reading, interpreting and applying Scripture, temperance signified for Donne a potent cluster of prudence and judgement. Disparaging William Barlow's An Answer to a Catholike English-Man (1609), Barlow's intervention in the Oath of Allegiance controversy, Donne wrote that despite the book's "delicate applications and ornaments from divine and profane authors," Barlow miscited and misinterpreted; he lacked "prudence and human wisdom." Prudence signifies the absence of the "tearing" and "wresting" of Scripture from its context; Barlow's miscitings prove, in a word, "obnoxious." An Answer is "full of falsifications in words and in sense, and of falsehoods in matter of fact, and of inconsequent and unscholarlike arguings" (Gosse, 1.222). Barlow's "silly ridiculous triflings" lack decorum. It is not difficult to see beneath Donne's admonitions the popular conception of prudentia in the sixteenth and seventeenth century as a form of practical judgement that is neither strictly logical nor theoretical. For the authors examined by Victoria Kahn, prudence as a spur to virtuous action was one way to join theory with practice. In this sense, rhetoric was not merely understood as style or ornament, but "in terms of its capacity to exemplify and encourage the activity of practical reasoning." In late sixteenth and early seventeenth-century England, Sir Philip Sidney was perhaps the best known advocate of prudence in reasoning about experience; one of the vehicles for thinking through experience, as both Sidney and the Quattrocento humanists affirm, was poetry. Reading --- especially reading Scripture --- was thus an ethical pursuit that presupposed both

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104 Hooker, Works, 1.150-151, in Shuger, Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance, 27.

105 Kahn, Rhetoric, Prudence and Skepticism, 39, passim.
a reasoned response to a particular discourse and a judgement about the moral exhortations of any
text.

Judgement in this context is complex. Akin to sacred judgement, which possesses "a mixt
and participant nature, and intimates both Justice and Mercy,” profane judgement has three aspects:
the first is psychological and serves as the resolution to understanding; the third is confined to law,
which governs both present and future practice. The second is a deliberative sensibility, refined by
experience and "synonimous with Discretion," which considers "not so much the thing which we then
do, as the whole frame and machine of the businesse, as it is complexioned and circumstanced with
time, and place, and beholders." The second species of judgement, that is to say, is rhetorical, not in
the sense that it conforms to arrangement in the traditional four- or five-fold division of the elements
of rhetoric. Rather, it employs many of the key terms associated with deliberative and forensic
rhetoric: practice, discretion, circumstance, time, place and audience. Donne calls for a
"complexioned and circumstanced" judgement, an embodied understanding that accounts for the
textual and contextual place of an action or utterance. He calls this form of judgement "a discretive
power" (Sermons, 9.86). While other contemporaries suggested both truth and sound reason as the
criteria for judgement, Donne is less absolute, more practical (more prudent) in his taxonomy. In

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106 It is true, Donne writes in 1623-1624, "that the justice of God is subtile, as searching, as
unsearchable" (Sermons, 5.301). "This is the difference between Gods Mercy, and his Judgements,"
Donne writes in 1629, "that sometimes his Judgements may be plurall, complicated, enwrapped in
one another, but his Mercies are always so, and cannot be otherwise" (Sermons, 9.149).

107 Howell describes judgement or disposition (iudicium) in antiquity and the middle ages as "methods
of arranging words into propositions, propositions into syllogisms or inductions, and syllogisms or
inductions into whole discourses" (Logic and Rhetoric, 15).

108 Compare Thomas Spencer in The Art of Logick (London, 1628), who writes that "Judgement, is an
act of the understanding, whereby we determine in our selves, that this or that is true, or false" (151).

109 "Judgement, is the second part of Logicke, whereby every proposithe, or oration, is judged, and
censured, whether it be according to Truth, and sound Reason, or otherwise. It is the Consequent,
Effect, and End of Disposition" (Thomas Granger, Syntagma Logicum, or The Divine Logike
the Biathanatos. Donne insists that no "law is so primary and simple, but it foreimagines a reason upon which it was founded: and scarce any reason is so constant, but that circumstances alter it."110

Donne's second type of judgment resembles what Peter Ramus in 1555 called the "prudential method" or arrangement for opinion. Following Aristotle, who claimed dialectic as a logic of opinion, Ramus notes that the prudential method is practised by poets, philosophers and orators. The prudential method, like Donne's second form of judgement, sounds very much like rhetoric --- practical intervention in the world of human experience and opinion.111 As Brian Vickers confirms, the "stress on practicality is perhaps the most distinctive feature of the Renaissance rediscovery of classical rhetoric."112 Donne (like Vico) identifies active judgement with forms of circumspection, inquiry and delivery; judgement is synonymous with discretion and "serves for practice."

The Essays in Divinity propose, then, a way of reading concerned with historical and textual context moored to a form of discursive and practical discretion refined in processes of dissection and cribration. Like Thomas Hooker, who thought that all careful meditation took in the "woof and web of wickedness" and "all bordering circumstances"113 as it leached out the venom of evil from human


110Biathanatos, 47. In a late sermon, Donne writes: "If I submit a cause to the Arbitrement of any man, to end it, secundum voluntatem, says the Law, How he will, yet still Arbitrium est arbitrium boni viri, his will must be regulated by the rules of common honesty, and generall equity" (Sermons, 9.310).

111Ramus, Dialectique (1555), 128, 134, in Howell, Logic and Rhetoric, 164. For Ramus on sign-inference, see Peter Sharratt, "Peter Ramus and Imitation: Image, Sign, and Sacrament," Yale French Studies 47 (1972): 18-39. As Donne writes in 1624/5, "But in such doubtfull cases in other mens actions, when it appears not evidently, whether it were well, or ill done, where the balance is eaven, always put you in your charity, and that will turn the scale the best way. Things which are in themselves, but mis-interpretable, doe not you presently mis-interpret, you all some grains in your gold, before you call it light: allow some infirmities to any man, before you call him ill" (Sermons, 6.226).


113Thomas Hooker in Lewalski, Protestant Poetics, 160.
practice while at the same time impressed its sinfulness more emphatically upon the actor, for Donne hermeneutics engendered a double bind. While diligent hermeneuts must act like anatomists and root about in the guts of words, this kind of dissection (with the requisite assemblage of linguistic and grammatical tools used to accommodate the obscurities of Scripture), poised as it is over the precipice of reason and faith, is at the very least perplexing, at most stultifying. Donne's examinations of the names of God. Moses' authorship and scriptural numerology are examples of the hermeneut nonplussed. In the face of the possible incommensurability of scriptum and voluntas, the word and God's intention, if Donne is dissatisfied with the results of his investigations --- paradoxically reliant on temperance, prudence and practical judgement in a realm from which these sensibilities are excluded --- he does not abandon his search for a viable method of probing and measuring both. Demonstrations, after all, are rare. Donne's response to their rarity in the Essays is to endorse an explicitly humanist, rhetorical method of interpreting the norms of Scriptural interpretation and human action. This method, as we shall see, values "Textual Divinity" above all; God is not only an excellent anatomist, he is, as the humanists affirm, the most judicious rhetor, his figures and allegories perspicaciously enfolded in his letters.\(^{114}\) Those who mistranslate, rend and tear the Scripture, the perverters and subverters of language, receive Donne's harshest opprobrium.

Judging human action in the context of "the whole frame and machine of the businesse ... complexioned and circumstanced with time, and place, and beholders" (Essays, 90), then, conjures a form of humility that prevents the noisome infatuation with "hearkening after false knowledge" (Devotions, 7). False knowledge confuses effects and causes, mistaking or misreading the former for the latter; prudent judgement guards against it. Yet "Counsels are not alwaies determined in

\(^{114}\)On the eloquence of Scripture, see, for example, Sermons 9.252: "As we say justly, and confidently, That of all Rhetorical and Poeticall figures, that fall into any Art, we are able to produce higher straines, and livelier examples, out of the Scriptures, then out of all the Orators, and Poets in the world, ye we reade not we preach not the Scriptures for their Eloquence...."
"Resolutions," Donne writes as his doctors "proceed to purge" in the Devotions. "Wee cannot alwaies say, this was concluded," since for men "actions are alwaies determined in effects" (Devotions, 105). God's method — blending the literal and the metaphorical, gross matter with spirit — is reflected in his "mixt and participant" discrimination, in which every determination intimates mercy. Whereas God makes "signes, seales; and Seales, effects," whereas he is able to suture effect to cause, "the signe with the thing signified" (Devotions, 103, 39) men are restricted to indications — signs, symptoms and clues. Human learning suffers when compared with God's (Sermons, 4.166-167); human judgement is confined to the accidental.

Donne's engagement with textual divinity through the gradations of knowledge available to human reason and judgement is dependent on humility, prudence and decorum. Kathy Eden has examined economy, decorum and equity in the history of rhetoric and hermeneutics from antiquity through the fathers of the Church to sixteenth-century humanism. She confirms the "equation of spiritual, equitable and historicist reading" from Cicero through the sixteenth century. Economy, decorum and equity ask a reader to balance texts with textual and historical contexts, letter with spirit, by comparing place with place, example with example. Equitable readers sought a sobria mediocritas, in Erasmus' words, a middle ground between the literal and figural, between, to use Donne's conception, "gross literall matter" and "soveraigne tinctures and spirits."¹¹⁵ This method of reading is distinctly Augustinian. Through "dissections, & cribations," Donne attempted to moor his reading of Scripture to an attenuated prudence or temperance mitigated by reason and judgement. His own sobria mediocritas led him to assert, at least in the Essays, the precedence of a Universal Church, a "Meta-theology, and super-divinity" directed by one guide, Christ, independent of ecclesiastical controversy (Essays, 41, 51, 59).

¹¹⁵Eden, Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition, 67, passim.
If the assumption holds that Donne "restates the Pyrrhonist arguments that fuel the religious controversies of his age: the problem of interpretation, the insufficiency of reason and ... the partial truth of language," if he is perturbed by the perplexities found "in the least of our actions," Donne is far from the skeptic some critics assume. His attention to prudence, judgement and rhetoric is paradoxically founded both on a desire to delimit and denigrate unsound persuasion (drawing on the social and religious admonitions that support his view) and a desire to underwrite the potency of certain forms of legitimate persuasion and reason, all of which is subject to the 'suddenness' of faith.

The satires are of course evidence of this attention to language, as are the sermons, and although rarely seen in the same vein, in the 1620s the Devotions resist the Donne's inflected skepticism. Yet the Essays in Divinity establish this dual conception of language --- at once a practical intervention in the world and a haltingly labyrinthine maze of perplexity --- as an early concern. (Donne has language in mind when he speaks of perplexity, but it is a sensibility one might generalize to all of his engagement with human learning, from interpretatio scripti to law, medicine and natural history.) That interpretatio scripti is problematic does not excuse readers from, in Augustine's words, seeking out what is difficult, rectifying obscurity by comparing place with place and finding pleasure in the process (2.6.38, 3.26-29.101-104).

With the realization that language is partial and interpretation galling, Donne's engagement with Pyrrhonism is mitigated by the sense that the struggle for truth, certainty and "Meta-theology," is even more crucial; to forego such a search is sinful. Although he was not confident that hermeneutics, even bolstered by rhetoric, could sustain such a task, Donne was certain nevertheless that sifting the variety of meanings in Scripture might lead to a more accurate comprehension of the

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116James S. Baumlin, John Donne and the Rhetorics of Renaissance Discourse (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1991), 60. For a different view, which argues that Donne was well aware of the medieval grammatical tradition, see Chamberlin, Increase and Multiply.
perfect and perplexing admixture of reason and faith embodied in the text.

As Deborah Shuger has argued, Donne dwells on the disagreements and contradictions in Scripture rather than their resolutions; he seemed "curiously eager" to point up uncertainties in Biblical interpretation without resolving them.\(^\text{117}\) He "destabilized" the interpretation of Scripture, offering perplexities where others offered certainty. Men often interpret God's corrections as "accidents" resultant from natural causes rather than God's judgement.\(^\text{118}\) Despite critical statements to the contrary, it seems Donne had some interest in scholarly rigour and exactitude; it was sinful to refuse to interpret, to believe that an event or a text is not a sign that requires explication and accommodation. In order to develop a knowledge of God's judgements, Donne proposes the examination of doctrinal, grammatical and interpretative controversies in Scripture via "dissection & cribration." Dissolving the admixture of reason and faith was aided by metaphors and methods of reading and reasoning drawn from medicine.

Donne's early, perplexed engagement with "Textual Divinity," then, speaks to a range of concerns which were to fascinate him for the rest of his life: prudence and temperance, reading and interpretation; the relationship between cause and effect, the Word and words, individual and social bodies; and rhetoric in the context of each of these aspects of his thought. I shall not claim that Donne's writing instantiates a missed rhetorical moment, as it were, through which we might discern something new on the early modern rhetorical horizon. Rather, what emerges in an examination of Donne's work is the way in which his figuration of rhetoric --- as a means of inquiry into the exigencies of human (Christian) experience --- is enfolded in his attention to the disciplines which constitute the early modern human sciences in general and medicine in particular. Medical

\(^{117}\)Shuger, \textit{Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance}, 204.

\(^{118}\)I draw on Shuger here, \textit{Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance}, 199-208.
metaphors were critical to the roles of both reason and faith in the 'diligent searching' God enjoins in Christians. The cure of souls, *Christus Medicus* and sickness as affliction all imported medical terminology into faith; imagining the relationship between cause and effect, syndrome and symptom established a form of "medical moral philosophy" suited to Christianity. From Aristotle through to the early modern period, rhetoric as a form of inquiry into the exigencies of human experience, as insinuative reason, borrowed medical terms to discuss signification, inference and proof; here it is important to recognize that at least one aspect of the relationship between rhetoric, hermeneutics and reason in Donne is illumined by his use of medical images.

As we have seen, prudential judgement, temperance and Scriptural hermeneutics in Donne's early work rely to some extent on a figuration of the relationship between medicine and rhetoric in a manner both similar to and dissimilar from Montaigne's, with whom I began. Where Montaigne lamented a rhetoric that ministered to a sick polity whose constituents ("a disorderly populace") were subject to the sway of persuasion, Donne envisioned a rhetoric that, while subordinate to the demonstrations of Scripture, might contribute to rendering those demonstrations accessible by making absences present. Although there were subtle differences between the social and religious uses of rhetoric, most early modern writers insisted on the identification of the preacher with the judicious orator, which in effect blunted the differences between political and religious discourse.

Donne's and Montaigne's figurations differ not so much in their attention to rhetoric as persuasion versus rhetoric as inquiry as they do in competing notions of cure. Whereas for Montaigne, rhetoric is a remedy administered to a decrepit society, for Donne it is a salve applied to the ignorance of the individual sinner. What united these views was a conviction that the causes of each affliction, social atrophy or sin, are rarely available to human comprehension. Attempts to

uncover the causes of an event or a condition are fraught; scholarship and learning, both agree, manufacture and intensify difficulties. In fact, it is in relation to the axis of reasoning from effects (sickness and sin) to causes that rhetoric as inquiry or prophylactic becomes crucial. The crux of the problem is inference and the ways in which rhetoric as prudential judgement might contribute to leaching out causes from effects, substances from accidents, the invisible from the visible. With respect to human affairs, it was not a question of a priori arguments, since the causes of action were obscure. Rather, both Montaigne and Donne agreed that men are confined to demonstratio signi (reasoning from effect to cause, via the sign or symptom), to use Galen's term, if they are to theorize and thematize about human experience at all. In this context, a diligent, prudent searching --- circumstanced, complexioned, anatomical --- is critical. Still, because reason was either a superabundant faculty that could be harnessed in the pursuit of truth or, quite simply, a recalcitrant obstacle, Donne's fluid epistemology might be called skeptical. His skepticism, however, contained healing drugs. In the homology between moral reason and its regenerate incarnation, in the ways in which normative hermeneutic and rhetorical practice underwrite a normative evaluation of human affairs, Donne offers a potential egress from perplexity. In a sense, then, all reason must accomplish is to apprehend Scripture as the word of God; thereafter, men must trust in faith, which, in John Dryden's words, "is the Seal of Heaven impress'd upon our humane understanding."120 Thus, in Augustine's words, "by following certain traces ... [we] may come to the hidden sense without any error" or at least avoid "the absurdity of wicked meanings."

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At White Hall on 12 April, 1618, Donne preached on humility, justice and discretion, extending and refining the emphasis on prudence he explores in the *Essays in Divinity*. He cautions his auditory against "Sceptique philosophers" and "Sceptique Christians" bearing "afflictions with the stupidity of a Stoique, or with the pertinancy of an Heretique" (*Sermons*, 1.278, 271). "Every mans Diligence, and discretion is a God to himselfe," Donne writes, careful to emphasize that a rectified, Christian conscience engages and applies the word of God in a community of worship, not by "private interpretation." Indeed, God has offered humankind "visible" manifestations of his "abundant and overflowing goodness" (angels, the sacraments, the Church). Applied with the aid of "sensible and visible things ... and all the mysterious, and significative furniture" of the Church, Scripture will "succour the infirmity of Man" (1.282-283).

Human infirmity, however, is ubiquitous. Whether humankind is considered in aggregate or individually, there is no "spark of worth in us, before God call us" (1.270-271). Ruin and decay occupy the centre of "Natures nest of Boxes" (*Devotions*, 51). An antidote, and the remedy for both

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1Donne is also concerned with problems of translation, hermeneutics and patristic authority. Where the fathers disagree (as they do about the meaning "baculus" or staff in this sermon, or about the phrases "Argui in furore" and "Corripi in ira" in Psalm 6.1 [*Sermons*, 5.331-332]), Donne writes, they "go about to reconcile this, by taking staff in both places figuratively" (1.279). Accommodation ("reconcil[ing]"") is a resolutely rhetorical task.

2Donne later (1623-1624) draws a direct contrast between "human infirmity" and "a rectified Conscience" (*Sermons*, 5.291). Infirmity is drawn out at length in the sermon that follows in that volume, preached on Psalm 90: "It is therefore but an imperfect comfort for any man to say, I have overcome tentations to great sins, and my sins have beeene but of infirmity, not malice" (5.300). This sermon will be examined in chapter four. In another sermon from the same period, Donne interprets the "beame" in the eye from Matthew 7.4 as "Naturall infirmities" (6.140). At one point in 1624/5, Donne is certain human infirmity is deeply limiting: "this being the infirmity of mans nature, that he is ever ready to object and oppose reasons, according to the flesh and blood, against Gods precepts" (6.195). The very elements of the body are evidence of infirmity: "Fire and Aire, Water and Earth, are not the Elements of man; Inward decay, and outward violence, bodily pain, and sorrow of heart may be rather styled his Elements" (2.78; compare 88-89).
pride and the skepticism of "naturall men," is humility. Jacob's virtuous example in Genesis 32.10 is his "disclaiming of Merit," a middle way between nihilism and arrogantly entreating God for a place. For "when a man pretends Merit ... [it is] a challenge, an increpation, an exprobation" of God. God "comes to thee in zeale, and returns in discretion" (Sermons, 5.372). This purposive humility (what Donne calls discretion or temperance) is forged from a heightened awareness of affliction, the sinner's embrace of divine correction and a conviction that nature and grace are at once distinct and ineluctably intertwined. In order to cultivate humility, one must avoid the factiousness of skeptics and the impertinency of heresy or Stoicism and engage in a diligent searching of self, what Daniel Featley called "autologie." Like disclosing an infirm reading, exposing this generalized infirmity requires prudent, probing incision.

In the same 1618 sermon, Donne writes that "we better discern our selves in singulis, then in omnibus; better by taking ourselves in pieces, then altogether." We "understand the frame of mans body, ... better by seeing him cut up." One "dissection, one Anatomy," he continues, "teaches more of that, than the marching, or drilling of a whole army of living men. Let every one of us therefore dissect and cut up himself, and consider what he was before God raised him friends to bring those abilities, and good parts, which he had, into knowledge, and into use..." (1.273). Stripping the body

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3"Naturall men" is Donne's term for natural philosophers. See, for example, Sermons, 5.320, 323, 328, 332, 6.79-80 (where "naturall" and "Moral" men are equated against an ideal "godly man"), 182 ("contentious wrangler[s]"). 9.51 and Devotions, 77. Donne calls both Socrates and Plato "naturall men" (Sermons, 3.305) and "No man, no natural man can doe any thing towards a supernaturall work" (6.119). Indeed, "Men can teach us wayes how to finde God, The naturall man in the book of creatures, The Morall man in an exemplar [sic] life, The Jew in the Law, The Christian in general in the Gospell, But ... Only the Holy Ghost enables us to finde God so, as to make him ours, and to enjoy him" (6.129), but "we ... are but babes in understanding, as long as we are but naturall men" (9.100).

4See, for example, Sermons, 5.328, 5.338ff (where Donne proposes that prayers, though they instantiate a sinner's desire for grace, must be "Postulatory"), 5.351-352.

5Donne mentions the "infirmity amongst Expositors of Scriptures" (Sermons, 5.270).
of flesh reveals its frame, which in turn reveals the body as a created, decaying thing. Dissection presents us with both a vast and stupefying nothing, a mass of flesh, and evidence for the God's presence in his works. For Donne, division enables precise and systematic knowledge and expression. For example, he urges the application of the surgeon's knife to the Bible's variegated sense, either excising the metaphorical from the literal or perceiving the ways in which one sense is enfolded in another. Anatomy seems to allow a discursive, rational apprehension of meaning; reason's primary medical analog is anatomy. Yet in the Devotions his application of the inexpressibility topos to the dissected body undermines the seeming effectiveness of anatomy: "But for the body," Donne writes in the Devotions, "How poore a wretched thing is that? wee cannot expresse it so fast, as it growes worse and worse." As we shall see, to inquire into embodied experience without humility is to impugn both language and knowledge with debilitating uncertainty. Imagining a divided, open body humbles; and humility is the "beginning of sanctification" (Sermons, 9.153). For Donne, the autological is often anatomical.

Donne's skepticism about the abilities of natural reason and philosophy alone to teach man about God is less learned scorn than a serious condemnation of hubris, of taking the uncertain for

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6Donne is careful here, as elsewhere, to offer a middle way between the figurative and the literal senses of Scripture: "In the figurative exposition of those place of Scripture, which require that way oft to be figuratively expounded, the Expositor is not to be blamed, who not destroying the literall sense, propose such a figurative sense, as may exalt our devotion, and advance our edification; And so no one of those Expositors did ill, in proposing one such sense, so neither do those Expositors ill, who with those limitations, that is destroy not the literall sense, that it violate not the analogy of faith, that it advance devotion, do propose another and another such sense." Donne's concern is the analogy of faith, buttressed with interpretations; once again, avoiding dogmatic wrangling about things adjunct to "devotion" is paramount (Sermons, 6.62-63).

certain. To know the world and to know what it can about God, reason must be purged of its rust: forms of thinking epitomized by the assumption that God's mercies are merely natural "accidents" (Sermons, 6.171, 198). Donne's habitual denigration of "natural men," of the lapses of unrectified reason and its struggle with the modes and possibilities of knowledge, find their most careful articulation in the metaphors of anatomy. Though essential, reason alone is ultimately ineffective, Donne argues, as a means to understanding the complexity of the living human body, the natural world or Scripture. It is no coincidence that his most trenchant poetic excursion on the presumption of human learning, The Anniversaries, is his most thorough and sustained use of anatomical imagery. When anatomy fails him in his search for a circumstanced, humble and prudent mode of knowledge, Donne turns to other, complex medical metaphors and methods grounded in the living, sick body imagined as an accumulation of signs. If anatomy is unalloyed reason's analogue, somiotics, based on the hermeneutics outlined in chapter one, is analogous to complexioned judgement and rectified reason. As we shall see in chapter five, somiotics is akin to Hezekiah's prescient sagacity: the ability to discern among a heteronomy of natural signs the signs that signify

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8To Donne, pride is a monster: "And then as worst surfets, of best meates bee, / Soe is pride, issued from humility, / For, 'tis no child, but monster" ("The Crosse," ll. 39-41; Divine, 27).

9Natural men are moral and natural philosophers who "perceive[...J not the things of the spirit," who accept only the "weakest kinde of prooфе" (natural evidence) of the mysteries of religion. See Sermons, 6.133-134, 142-143, citing 1 Corinthians 2.14. See above, note 3.

God's presence and purpose. A sagacious, circumstanced judgement, versed in the arcana of signs and symptoms, avoids vain pretensions to certain knowledge.

First, I examine the recent critical consensus that anatomy and dissection provided early modern writers with the most perspicacious and incisive heuristic tools for the investigation of human bodies and bodies of knowledge. Donne's use of anatomical tropes confirms aspects of an English "anatomical Renaissance"; his most specific uses of anatomy, however, reveal his profound distrust of the commonplace association of anatomy with certain knowledge. As we shall see in chapter five, his leave-taking of anatomy during his most serious illness before his death confirms his frustration with claims to certain knowledge. Here I examine some of his early dissatisfaction with the metaphors and methods of anatomy and argue for Donne's concern with the body as an agglomeration of signs and symptoms. Imagining the living body as a book spurred Donne to develop and apply a prudent somiotics that drew on the constituents of his Scriptural interpretation. Donne approaches embodiment as an epistemological and ethical quandary; he addresses these questions through a form of reasoning founded on signs, symptoms and indications, on rhetoric and hermeneutics, rather than gross anatomy. Somiotics provided the means to "expresse" the human body even as it grows worse and worse in sickness. While both practices undertook to reveal the relationship between cause and effect and thus propose their own epistemological coefficients, anatomy rendered the human body a lifeless, static corpse; somiotics refigured the body as a book that occasioned a perspicuous, complexioned reading that equated knowing with expressing.

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11This skill is akin to Donne's rejection of natural law in the Biathanatos. Every action, every thought must be circumstanced; one must not only recognize the letter of natural law, as it were, but the human experience of that law. On Donne and natural law, see Bernard H. Judd, "Donne's Positivism: Views of Nature and Law in the Sermons and other Prose" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1966).
Epistemology in the bodyshop

The epistemological importance of anatomy in the early modern period has been variously overestimated in recent historical and literary scholarship. The story is familiar; in literary treatments of the history of anatomy, Donne is often one of its principal characters. The emergence in the late fifteenth century of anatomical demonstration and dissection on the continent and the spread and intensification of anatomical studies in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in England announce a new somatic order. "Renaissance man" was no longer a whole human being, but an agglomeration of parts, organs and adjuncts; the human body was literally eviscerated, subject to a new punitive regime that extended from the gallows to the anatomical theatre, then metaphorically remade into a corpse, a clock or a machine. This renovation of the body is seen either as symptom or cause of new epistemological concerns and practices. In either case, when the body was remade into a cluster of "thinking parts," in Pascal's formulation,\textsuperscript{12} so too was the body of knowledge disintegrated and fragmented; anatomy not only rendered the inviolable, sacrosanct individual a fragmented aggregate, it effected in a similar manner the discovery and presentation of knowledge in the period.\textsuperscript{13} The vogue for discursive anatomy was part of a "baroque" attention to the world and the body, a new "world view," in Heidegger's terms, in which knowledge was presented and represented as tables, charts, bodies and maps.\textsuperscript{14} The body provided, in Barbara Stafford's formulation, "the ultimate visual


\textsuperscript{13}On the fragmented nature of knowledge in the baroque period, see Walter Benjamin, \textit{The Origin of the German Tragic Drama}, trans. John Osbourne (London: New Left Books, 1977). Benjamin claims, for example, that "it is common practice in the literature of the baroque to pile up fragments ceaselessly, without any strict idea of a goal, in the unremitting expectation of a miracle, to take the repetition of stereotypes for a process of intensification" (178). Benjamin's argument will be revisited in the conclusion.

compendium, the comprehensive method of methods, the organizing structure of structures." This new episteme saw the triumph of visuality, the trump of the eye over the other senses.

The epistemological implications of a new somatic order, the story continues, were reinscribed into the flesh itself: the rise and exfoliation of anatomy was the prevailing factor in the separation of body and soul. This body of scholarship shares a common, sometimes ethically charged, assumption: that the conception of the body changed, and changed inexorably, between 1550 and 1650. The constituents of this change are variously identified, but central to each conception is a conviction that anatomy, either as a medical practice or a discursive formation, even as a new poetics of the body, was largely responsible. Medicine "proved one of the key sites for the further elucidation of seemingly infinitely complex and shifting relations between consciousness and movement of the baroque, which declares "war upon the intangible, the abstract, the remote," translating epiphany into the flesh. See, for example, Joan Webber, Contrary Music: The Prose Style of John Donne (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 74.


In Ramus, Method and the Decay of Dialogue (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958), Walter Ong studies the ascendence of topical logic, exemplified by Agricola and Ramus, and the concomitant rise of various spatial models "dealing with the processes of thought and communication." Identifying developments in various disciplines --- Copernican space, perspective, and the rage for philosophical "systems" --- all dependent to some extent on the invention of printing, Ong suggests that medicine, too, contributed to a spatial model of knowledge with its presentation of "bodies" of learning. This tendency, in turn, led to the "related fad" of performing intellectual anatomies (314-318). On the relationship between logic and anatomy, see John H. Randall, The School of Padua and the Emergence of Modern Science (Padua: Antenore, 1961), 35ff. and Thomas Joseph Arthur, "Anatomies and the Anatomy Metaphor in Renaissance England" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1978), chapter one. In The Body Emblazoned, Jonathan Sawday makes much of this point (135-137). A Nancy S. Stuever has argued, "Every change in the notion of what is worthwhile to investigate is at the same time a change in the notion of worthwhile presentation, of discursive practice" (Theory as Practice: Ethical Inquiry in the Renaissance [Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 199).

"Anatomically analyzed man" is a new entity that contributes to the renovation of human knowledge in the period (see Piero Camporesi, The Anatomy of the Senses: Natural Symbols in Medieval and Early Modern Italy, trans. Allan Cameron [Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994], 99).
corporeality," in particular via the emergent belief that consciousness could be discerned and evaluated via corporeality. This notion contributed to the materialism of the "new science" in the period. The soul became increasingly redundant, either a function of the blood or of the configuration of the humours. The charge of mortalism, levelled against Hobbes and Milton, for example, seems a logical outcome of the thrust toward the superfluity of the soul. The conflict between religion and science, soul and body, the story concludes, was inevitable.

Despite its exaggerated claims, this parable of the early modern period (or the Renaissance, the late Middle Ages, the high Renaissance, the seventeenth century, the century of revolution; the period is variable) merits careful study. Its basic narrative --- sustained by an elegiac mourning for a passing, inviolable corporeality and a prescient attention to nascent modernity --- is widely accepted.

Dissection turned the body into a new kind of "discrete object," a process involving "a

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20Some of the most egregious claims about revolutionary changes in embodiment in the early modern period are offered by historical sociology. David Le Breton, for example, has argued that anatomical dissection "played a very important role in the dynamics of mental civilization" (David Le Breton, "Dualism and Renaissance: Sources for a Modern Representation of the Body," Diogenes 142 [1988]: 47-69; quotation from 59. See also Le Breton, "The Body and Individualism," Diogenes 131 [1985]: 24-45, "Corps et Symbolique Sociale," Cahier Internationaux de Sociologie 73 [1982]: 223-232, and Corps et Sociétés, Essai de Sociologie et d'Anthropologie du Corps (Paris: Méridiens-Klincksieck, 1985)). Throughout the middle ages, Le Breton insists with some contradiction, dissections were forbidden and unthinkable; in the Renaissance, however, with the first anatomical dissections, the body was "rendered weightless, dissociated from man, in a dualist manner." Le Breton concludes that early modern anatomists, strong as Atlas but more cunning, distinguished "man from his body" shifting in the process the entire western episteme. François Jacob agrees. "For with the arrival of the seventeenth century, the very nature of knowledge was transformed," Jacob wrote. Living bodies were "scrapped clean" in this period, shaking off their "crust of analogies, resemblances and signs, to appear in all the nakedness of their true outer shape." The visible structure of living organisms, including the human body, "then became the object of analysis and classification" (The Logic of Life:
degradation of the notion of a self extended into a unique and inviolable corporeal volume, to one in which the self only loosely possessed a body." Before the body could be reconstituted as an object of knowledge or description, "it first had to be devalued as a vehicle of symbolic meaning." In emergent bourgeois society, Donald Lowe insists, a new spatiality defined the body as a quantifiable entity, a machine, thus "disembodying" the mind.22 The early modern world might thus be called the "self-separated realm." The most articulate advocate of this position is Francis Barker.23

Two recent accounts of this history deserve close attention. Jonathan Sawday's The Body


23Philip Fisher, "The Recovery of the Body," Humanities in Society 2.2. (1978): 134. Although dissection is only one of his concerns, in effect Barker introduced whole scholarly communities to the Foucauldian notion of radical break in the perception and representation of the body in early modern England. Barker mines three moments --- a page from the diary of Samuel Pepys, Shakespeare's Hamlet and Rembrandt's The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaas Tulp --- in order to position "new images of the body and its passions" among the "novel social spaces and activities" of an emergent European bourgeoisie (Francis Barker, The Tremulous Private Body: Essays on Subjection [London and New York: Methuen, 1984], 10). Barker traces the "liaisons between subjectivity, discourse and the body" in the "apparenacy of the bourgeois world and its texts," arguing in the process that the seventeenth century was the matrix from which the febrile bourgeois subject was born (11, 67). In this new order, the body became "supplementary": "Neither wholly present, nor wholly absent, the body is confined, ignored, exscribed from discourse, and yet remains at the edge of visibility, troubling the space from which it has been banished" (63, 81). The practice of anatomy is an essential component in the changes Barker discerns in the early modern somatic register. The body became an "object of science," both "dumb flesh," a corpse prepared for the anatomist's knife, and a mechanism "which can be understood, repaired and made to work" (77-80, 97). The new social order is heir to a rarefied, attenuated, textualized body; thus "the body has certainly been among those objects which have been effectively hidden from history" (12).
*Emblazoned* is the most important work on anatomy and dissection in the early modern period yet published. Sawday's heady mix of psychoanalysis, feminism and new history, literature, science and visual art makes for a compelling, if presentist, examination of somatic history. His case for a new poetics of the body presses writers as diverse as Descartes and Joyce into service; it is a penetrating if diffuse examination of anatomy in the period that nuances the story I have sketched out above. To Sawday, the Renaissance cannot be properly understood or assessed without attending to the "birth of a new science," anatomy, which transformed human identity, society and the natural world into a "culture of dissection." Furthermore, the culture of dissection had an epistemological coefficient, a culture of inquiry; it was a culture recognizably modern yet "entirely different from the ways in which we now hold the disciplines of inquiry to be organized." The early modern period saw "the emergence of a new image of the human interior, together with a new means of studying that interior, which left its mark on all forms of cultural endeavour in the period."25

Exactly how the culture of dissection engendered a culture of inquiry remains unclear. His argument implies that simply opening the body and documenting the viscera in a consistent, organized way must have transformed epistemology. Like Barker, Sawday argues that by the seventeenth century traditional perceptions and images of the human body were radically challenged.

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24 Sawday's thesis --- that the exposure of inside of the body somehow inspires both desire and horror --- is essentially an elaboration of Luke Wilson, "William Harvey's *Prelectiones*: The Performance of the Body in the Renaissance Theatre of Anatomy," *Representations* 17 (1981): 62-95. Wilson writes: "In order for the body to function properly, and thus to be what we really believe it to be, it must deny us access to it --- to our selves in other words --- either literally or analogically. As a consequence, any glimpse of the inside of the body is felt to invalidate it" (62). That Wilson's view is wrong will, I hope, be clear.

The body was no longer available as a source of resplendent and politically efficacious metaphors (the body politic, for example) but was reinvented as a mechanism, a corpse or a "self-dissecting cadaver," to a large extent by and through anatomical investigation. With Sawday's work, the early modern somatic revolution is delicately lodged in the viscera. But what of real anatomical investigation and its effects on early modern epistemology, Sawday's culture of inquiry?

Andrew Cunningham's recent monograph attempts to answer this question. His evaluation of anatomy in the period is carefully poised between revisionism and the conservatism of much contemporary scholarship. Cunningham charts a lengthy history from Plato through ancient anatomy to Aristotle and Galen, arguing in the process that the "anatomical Renaissance" was characterized in part by the ability of sixteenth-century anatomists to differentiate between distinct, ancient visions of the human body and hence different anatomical forms of inquiry. Before Vesalius, ancient anatomy was assumed monolithic, and various anatomical studies were part of one undifferentiated project. Ancient and modern projects, however, had one goal in mind: to discover the ways in which the soul might be evidenced in the flesh while demonstrating God's masterwork, the human body. Although "different projects of inquiry ... make different bodies visible in anatomy," the body that was made visible was always God's creation. In this sense, early modern anatomizing "was as ceremonial and


27 Cunningham's summarizes his project: "Public anatomical dissection was not an occasion for pursuing research, but for demonstrating the body as found. Nor, usually, was it a place for teaching research --- or even for teaching dissection (at least until Vesalius). It was, rather, a place for showing --- exposing to gaze --- the high point of God's creation. In this sense it was a religious drama which was being enacted in public dissection" (8). Compare Nancy Siraisi's assessment of late medieval anatomy: "The objective of the dissections conducted as part of medical or surgical training in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was not investigation but instruction. ... the practice of dissection served primarily as a visual aid to the understanding of physiological and anatomical doctrines in texts" ("Physiological and Anatomical Knowledge," in her Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine: an Introduction [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990], 89).
religious an experience as a church service: it was the unveiling of holy mysteries. 28 "[A]natomy in the western tradition was essentially about the soul." 29

As a case in point, perhaps the least satisfying section of Cunningham's work is his most ambitious. "The Anatomical Reformation? An Enquiry" investigates the "affinity" between the concerns of certain reformers and anatomists. 30 Although Cunningham finds no extensive parallels between those who worked as atavists of the word and contemporary investigation of anatomy, few scholars have approached the "anatomical Renaissance" from this perspective. 31 He sees affinities between the rise in Lutheranism of "the responsibility of the individual for his own soul" and a new stress on individual autonomy" and Vesalian anatomical inquiry. 32 Cunningham's most potent example of the intrication of religion and anatomy is Philip Melanchthon, who was concerned with natural philosophy and owned and annotated a copy of Vesalius' De Humani Corporis Fabrica.

Cunningham isolates a passage from Melanchthon's Book on the Soul (1553) which brings to focus one of the central aspects of the habit of thought I am tracing here. In his earlier Commentary on the Soul (1540), Melanchthon studies the "traces of God pressed upon Nature." 33 "I have to

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28Thus, according to Cunningham, the same dramatis personae that people the stages of the above inquiries --- Berengarius, Vesalius, Columbus and Fabricius --- testify then to the persistence of ancient rather than modern questions and practices. Vesalius, he argues, revived the doctrines of Galen ("the Physician"), while Columbo revived the doctrines of early anatomists (Herophilus and Erasistratus) and Fabricius the work of Aristotle ("the Philosopher"). Each revival, in turn, proposed a different conception of embodiment. He demonstrates that anatomical dissection in the sixteenth century was a project of resurrection rather than revolution; it was a restoration of the soul, not a comprehensive renovation of the body. See Anatomical Renaissance, 208, 8, 54.

29Ibid., 196. "[E]ssentially" might overstate the case.

30Ibid., 191-269.


33Donne calls these traces "impressions" and "odumbrations" (Sermons, 3.264).
admit," he continues, "that the subject that I relate is extremely uncertain." "How great is the benefit of knowing the distinction between the parts of the body in some way?" Melanchthon asks.34 "Looking at this wonderful variety of work and these designs of God from without and through a thick darkness," he writes in 1553, we are struck dumb and grieve that we cannot look into nature and discern causes. But then at last when we discern the 'idea' of nature in the divine mind we shall look into that whole machine [the human body] as if from the inside, and we shall understand the designs of the Maker and the causes of all the divine works."35 Any assessment of the human body is necessarily an "incomplete consideration," Melanchthon implies, since we are barred from the direct knowledge of causes. Looking at the whole machine from the inside is the province of those who come face to face with God and the "idea" of nature. How then are we to secure any knowledge of the body (and by extension the causal nature of any material) from "without and through a thick darkness"?

Melanchthon, as Cunningham suggests, was aware of the shortcomings of anatomy, yet he followed Galen, Vesalius and Leonhard Fuchs. He refers his readers to the Fabrica, the one book which surpasses others in teaching the art by which our bodies have been fashioned.36 Why then investigate the parts of the body? First, "the assent to providence would be stronger, and our respect towards God greater, if we beheld this structure often and with attention."37 Second, this "knowledge


35Quoted in Cunningham, Anatomical Renaissance, 232. The fantasy of total, causal knowledge apprehended in the afterlife is common in the period, though its application to somatic inquiry is not.

36Ibid., 232. "Preface to the Book on the Soul (1553)," in Orations, 156; Corpus Reformatorum, 7.1125-1128.

37Jakob Milich, "On Anatomy (1550)," Orations, 161; Corpus Reformatorum, 11.939-946.
also throws light on the laws by which the morals of men are to be ruled. For it shows which parts [of the soul] can be curbed." As we shall see, this purpose is confirmed in Donne's use of anatomy.

Melanchthon's formulation best sets before us the central problem of the interpretation of anatomy in the period and its relation to epistemology: how does one see the inside of things, how does one see causes? Once the inside is exposed to view through anatomy, how does one 'read' it? Further, Melanchthon establishes a relationship between knowing the soul and God through the body and ethical action. Both of these questions, of course, partake of religion and politics, but my focus here will be epistemological. In Melanchthon's injunction to consider the body as the work of God, not of "atoms, rushing in a senseless, hurried flight," and in his insistence that we are exiled from causes and the idea of nature, I see a central problem of human knowledge: how does man reason from the visible to the invisible, from the outside to what was contained within the human body? What ethical implications are associated with various forms of somiotics? This process represents in nuce the problem of knowing in general.

While knowledge and perception of the human body did shift in the early modern period as part of the "dynamics of mental civilization," and while anatomists, physicians, poets and divines paid more attention to the "nonlying book of the body," to use Vesalius' phrase, change was gradual rather than revolutionary. The discontinuity suggested by the above accounts ignores an assemblage of knowledges and practices, all of which claimed some insight into corporeality, that exhibit more continuity than change. Bold assertions about the early history of anatomy and its valences must be

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38"Preface to the Book on the Soul (1553)," Orations, 157. Melanchthon continues: "Therefore in life and in the sciences these things are not secondary, but oriented towards the subject, and useful for understanding the doctrine of the Church and for the guidance and discipline of morals" (157).

39Cited in Cunningham. The Anatomical Renaissance, 121.

40It may be that anatomical demonstration did not further certain or therapeutically useful knowledge at all: rather, it was the post-mortem dissection that to a limited extent revealed the workings of the
balanced against its proliferation as a metaphor or discursive position (Sawday, for example, confuses the two).\(^{41}\) Anatomy, both as a discursive and a real practice, offered sixteenth- and seventeenth-century natural philosophers and authors a new suasive apparatus to address ancient problems, including envisioning the unseen. By late in the century, English anatomists were convinced that the passions and the rational soul could be located anatomically.\(^{42}\) Yet if the passions and emotions were extended into the viscera, this process was rhetorical and hermeneutical. Once open, the "nonlying book of the body" must be read.\(^{43}\) While I will make some claims about the association of anatomy as a medical and discursive practice with epistemology,\(^{44}\) for Donne and his

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\(^{42}\)“During the seventeenth-century ... the reduction of psychic phenomena to somatic states --- which Timothy Bright had seen to be implicit in medical practice --- became increasingly explicit in medical writings and was taken up by speculative writers with various reformist religious intentions" (John Henry, "The Matter of Souls: Medical Theory and Theology in Seventeenth-Century England," in \textit{The Medical Revolution of the Seventeenth Century}, ed. Roger French and Andrew Wear [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989], 90).

\(^{43}\)Devon Hodges writes: "That unknown region is present and yet absent in anatomies --- it is the purity of an unfallen world that the anatomist would recover by stripping away false forms, or it is a nowhere of the future, a utopia that can be established if man finally penetrates to the essence of things and lives with truth and harmony. These totalities of past and future remain elusive because the anatomist's fragmenting method defers and distances the absolute order that he hopes to bring to light. ... The anatomy, then, is destined to face on a space beyond form that alternatively fills the anatomist with the promise of a great discovery and a melancholy certainty of the world's decay. Both responses are possible because the anatomist reveals a double dislocation of the truth --- the traditional system of correspondences is exposed as corrupt and outmoded by a "science" that knows its own dependence on rhetoric" (Devon Hodges, \textit{Renaissance Fictions of Anatomy} [Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1985], 17-18).

\(^{44}\)Hodges is still the clearest expositor of the relationship between anatomy and early modern epistemology. Hodges argues that anatomy was used to "arrive at the knowledge of universals" through its attention to parts and particulars. "Anatomical truth was not based simply on the
contemporaries the circumstanced knowledge offered by symptomatology was the most potent way of understanding the relationship between the body and the soul, language, ethical practice and God. Anatomy did not result in self-separation; rather, the soul was enfolded in the viscera, in "body thought." The problem, of course, was how to determine its state.

Real and theoretical anatomy

The relationship between anatomy, dissection and discourse, between cutting into the human body and applying "a rude hand" to "launce" and "cut through skin" in satire, for example, was commonplace in the early modern period. Early anatomists were keenly aware that their incisions had philosophical, discursive analogues. Dissection, Matthias Curtius writes in 1540, may be performed "in one way really or actually, in another way through description, e.g. in writing or lecturing. For this is also to dissect the body. ... anatomy embraces the art of dissection, both performed actually and by description." Anatomy encompasses, but is not exhausted by the art of dissection; anatomy signifies "reiterated incision" either discursively or in the corpse of a human

e numeration of parts of a dissected body," he continues, "an anatomist also claimed the ability to see how each part of the body revealed the divine purpose of its creation" (Renaissance Fictions of Anatomy, 4). The anatomist --- a figure Hodges never really defines, though he seems an amalgam of those who practice dissection and those who practice rhetorical argument and logical analysis --- transformed matter into fragments. In this fragmentation, Hodges sees "significant change": "the spiritual and the abstract are replaced by the sensible and the visible" (15). In the materializing tendency of the English seventeenth century, as I shall argue, it was less that the spiritual or abstract were replaced by the sensible and visible; rather the former was installed in the latter, blurring the boundaries between the two. Viewed from a different angle, Hodges' "significant change" is nothing other than the incursions of rhetoric into the logic of discovery. What Hodges recognizes as the unique attributes of a specific kind of discourse (the "anatomy") and its attendant problems were the problems of hermeneutics and epistemology since antiquity.


being. In Galen's works, Curtius continued, dissection means "description by lecturing, not dissection actually performed." 47 For Paracelsus, anatomy had several senses, ranging from a knowledge of the parts of the body in the treatment of wounds to "the examination of the composition of various parts of the body in order to discover the affinity of individual parts with the individual substances in the outside world." 48 By the early seventeenth century, the conception of anatomy and dissection as manual, discursive and analogical activities was conventional; both in discourse and in the flesh, anatomy addressed the relationship between parts and wholes, cause and effect and matter and spirit. Even with its use in satire, anatomy was enlisted in the quest for self-knowledge.

According to Harvey, anatomy is "philosophical, medical, mechanical." 49 For Harvey, anatomical method allows the acquisition of knowledge about various bodies, real or imagined. 50 The


49 Medical anatomy had five aspects: narrative description of the body and its parts, the actions, uses and ends of the part, the observation of pathological conditions of the organs, the resolution "of the problems of authors" (an assessment of medical and anatomical authorities) and the "skill or dexterity in dissection and the condition of the prepared cadaver" (William Harvey, Lectures on the Whole of Anatomy: an Annotated Translation of Prelectiones Anatomiae Universalis, ed. and trans. C.D. O'Malley, F.N.L. Poynter, K.F. Russell [Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1961], 22-23, 27).

50 Theoretical anatomy was used to unfold the characteristics of a city or a building, a text or a scientific practice. In Thomas Dekker's The Dead Tearme (London, 1608), a personified London could say to a waning Westminster, "I wil in thy presence Anatomize my selfe; even from head to foot, thou shalt know every limbe of me, and into how many parts my bodie is divided" (The Non-Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker, ed. A B Grosart, 5 vols. [London, 1885], 5.71); John Shute, in his The First and Chiefe Groundes of Architecture [1563], ed. Lawrence Weaver (London, 1912), 27, compares the human body to a house. In his commendatory poem to Phineas Fletcher, Francis Quarles makes the analogy between bodies and houses explicit ("Mans bodies a house"). A number of works for the period deploy an anatomical topos, particularly the body politic analogy, in various ways. Some examples of anatomies of the period are: John More, A Lively Anatomie of Death (London, 1596); [anon], The Anathomie of Sinne, Briefly Discovering the Braunches Thereof, with Short Method How to Detest and Avoid It (London, 1603); William Cowper, The Anatomie of a Christian Man ... Both Inward and Outward, 2nd ed. (London, 1613); [Robert Pricket], Times
English physician and controversialist Helkiah Crooke almost certainly knew Harvey and perhaps Donne. In 1613, he insisted that anatomy had at least a "double acceptation": "either it signifieth the action which is done with the hande; or the habite of the minde, that is, the most perfect action of the intellect. The first is called practicall Anatomy, the latter Theoretical or contemplative."51 The first is historical, wherein a knowledge of parts of the body is obtained by "Section and Inspection"; the second, the more "profitable" scientific anatomy, scrutinizes the causes of the structures of the parts and their actions and uses. The first or the "way of Historie" is more certain, the second is less certain but carries "more grace" since it concerns intellection. Opening the flesh affords access to the "motions of the hidden and secret parts"; those parts and functions not "subjected to sense," "must be


sought out by dissection." By the use of tables, illustrations and inspections, opening a discourse establishes various parts and their relationship to a whole through section and inspection. For Crooke as for Harvey, the objects of both historical and scientific anatomy are parts of the body. "The discerning and judging of a disease, consisteth in two things, namely, the knowledge of the evil affect, & the knowledge of the part affected." Medicine, Crooke confirmed, is conjectural; a knowledge of the parts affected by disease via anatomy and dissection (the inspection of parts and their structures) might lend more certainty to healing. Knowledge is accumulated by reasoning from the known to the unknown.

Beginning an anatomy of a dead body, as Crooke insists, with "that which is best knowne," we can begin to establish a knowledge of ourselves, of disease and of the relationship between sensation, the body and the soul. Anatomy contributes to what Bacon called the "Radius Reflexus" or self-knowledge. Such knowledge, Crooke claims, is "very hard and difficult"; and "yet by the dissection of the body, and by Anatomy, wee shall easily attaine unto this knowledge." Whosoever "will attaine unto the knowledge of the soule, it is necessarie that hee know the frame and composition of the body." Once again, the visible functions as an index of the invisible; Crooke is solidly Aristotelian here. In order to know the soul, the body must itself be known: how better to know it than to take it apart? Anatomy also has purgative effects. A thorough knowledge of the parts and composition of the body contributes to disciplining of the passions. Crooke figures the

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52Microcosmographia, 17-18.
53Ibid., 16-17 (page 16 is mispaginated as 14).
54Although Thomas Wright counsels that "a good way to know the inclinations of the mind is like the manner we come by the knowledge of the inclinations of our bodies, that is, by long experience" (The Passions of the Minde in Generall [London, 1604], ed. William Webster Newbold, The Renaissance Imagination, vol. 15 [New York and London: Garland, 1986], 149).
anatomist as the *interpres aequus*, the judicious reader evoked in ancient and humanist rhetoric, as one who will "diligently weigh and consider the use of every part, the fashion, the scituation, and admirable workmanship of them all, as also, the Organs and Instruments of the outward senses." This way, he shall "easily perceive how and after what manner he is to make use of every part."

Fundamental to its utility are the ways in which anatomy opens the question of the relationship between parts and wholes. As his lecture notes demonstrate, for Harvey anatomy is the key to somatic knowledge articulated through the structures, composition, sites and connections of the parts. All parts of the body exist in relation to the whole, of course, but the body as a whole is "equivocal and diverse," thus "the part may be in controversy."

Ill content with "playing the part of advocate," Harvey writes, the "practised anatomist" must answer this central question. His heuristic tools were various. Harvey draws on Aristotle, claiming that "whatever way the whole is integrated, the part is a whole." Yet early anatomists from Galen to Du Laurens, Harvey argues, faltered on precisely this question. Insisting that most anatomical controversy was merely authorial, Harvey later wrote, in a very Baconian idiom, that "many are led [by "the brilliancy of mere reasoning"] to wrong conclusions, to probabilities only, and too frequently to sophistical conjectures on things!" Harvey denounces Gabriel Fallopius as "too curious" for finding certainty in nature where none exists. Reasoning with certainty from the part to the whole, from an open cadaver to the complex living


56Harvey, *Prelectiones*, 23.


58William Harvey to R. Morison, 28 April 1652, in *Works*, 604. The whole passage reads: "With what labour do we attain the hidden things of truth when we take the averments of our senses as the guide which God has given us for attaining to a knowledge of his works; avoiding that specious path on which the eyesight is dazzled with the brilliancy of mere reasoning, and so many are led to wrong conclusions, to probabilities only, and too frequently to sophistical conjectures on things!"
body was problematic. When examining all the parts of the body, he suggests, consider "temperament, what results, what happens," all probable deliberations. For instruction in probable deliberation about the human body, Harvey, as we shall see, turns his auditors' attention to rhetoric and philosophy as useful tools for imagining the relationship of parts to wholes.

As an incisive practical and pedagogical tool that resolves theoretical controversy in the viscera, anatomy established what little knowledge of the human body contemporary physicians possessed. The claims made for anatomy were resolutely epistemological: that it disclosed the workings of the body and its relationship to the soul, that it was central to (self-)knowledge, that the dead are cut up in order to know the living. The discourse of anatomy is a discourse of knowledge: morbid, static, systematic knowledge, tied to logic, used to dissect bodies, texts and ideas. In the late sixteenth century, Andrew Kingsmill used anatomical metaphors as epistemological vehicles, claiming that physicians "who, to know the whole state of man openeth and cutteth him up, and divideth him into parts, and thereby groweth into a greater knowledge." In "The Dampe," Donne suggests that his physicians' and his friends' confusion about his cause of death will "have [him] cut up." Donne's conceit is rooted in post-mortem practice, as we shall see, but it points as well to the commonplace that not only is dissection desecration, it is a revelation of knowledge. Similarly, for example, in his funeral poem for "anatomiz[ation] of our soule" (Sermons, 2.159). Similarly, for example, in his funeral poem for

59Harvey, Prelectiones, 28.

60Andrew Kingsmill, A View of Mans Estate (London, 1576), sig. I8v.


Charles Mountjoy, Earl of Devonshire (1606), Samuel Daniel claims anatomy will effect both somatic and spiritual knowledge. Sir Kenelm Digby calls "Metaphysicians" "spiritual Anatomistes." The anatomical trope was broadened and applied to the soul.

By 1640, Francis Glisson could define anatomy as "an artificiall dissection of [a certayne] objecte in such maner as may most conduce to the perfect knowledg of the same and all its parts."

... Now this artificiall dissection impylyes not the manuall dissection only but in especiall maner the mentall ... which maynely denominats the artiste an anatomist, and hath use in livinge as well as dead bodys, and noe body desires the manuall dissection of dead bodies but in order to [understand] the livinge."

The way to the essence of a body (or a system of thought), Crooke and Glisson are convinced, is through the dead. As John Hall writes in 1649, lamenting that England had fallen behind the continent in anatomical investigation, things unfolded are best understood: the anatomical exploration of the body epitomized reason itself "if the veynes of things were rightly and naturally cut up."

How, then, might the dead speak? They must remain silent, it seems, if they do not speak their parts.

For Donne, too, anatomy functions as a means to articulate the relationship between parts and

63 And now being dead I may anatomise, And open here all that thou wert within, Shew how thy minde was built, and in what wise All the contexture of thy heart had been[.]


wholes in human bodies and bodies of knowledge. Donne's use of anatomical imagery has received ample attention. Scholars have argued for his indebtedness to Paracelsus and Vesalius, his knowledge of early atomism, his "anatomical challenge" or his use of traditional homiletics.\textsuperscript{67} If the negotiation of text and context, the rags and garments of Scripture evident in the Essays in Divinity was aided by anatomy, medicine was also implicated in Donne's assessment of contemporary epistemology. In the Anniversaries, the sermons and the letters, medicine often functions as a representative example of the uncertainty, deficiency or impossibility of human knowledge. Thus in addition to treating medicine as a potential semantic and imagistic lodestar, Donne is concerned with the historical development of medical epistemology. If we accept Izaak Walton's assessment of the range of Donne's knowledge, Donne knew both the "grounds and use of Physicke."\textsuperscript{68} Epistemological questions (the "grounds") are fundamental to his use of anatomy. His habitual recourse to the discursive position of physician-anatomist solidifies a conviction that some of the answers to rational


\textsuperscript{68}"An Elegie upon Dr. Donne," l. 46; Grierson, 345.
and ethical problems are lodged in the viscera. Indeed, Donne often conveyed his ruminations about the possibilities and probabilities of human knowledge in medical terms, employing anatomy as shorthand for a stultifying preoccupation with antiquated systems of knowledge.

"And how imperfect is all our knowledge? What thing doe we know perfectly?" Donne writes in 1626. "Whether we consider Arts, or Sciences, the servant knows but according to the proportion of his Masters knowledge in that Art, and the Scholar knows but according to the proportion of his Masters knowledge in the Science":

we looke upon Nature, but with Aristotles Spectacles, and upon the body of man, but with Galens, and upon the frame of the world, but with Ptolomies Spectacles. Almost all knowledge is rather like a child that is embalmed to make Mummy, then that is nursed to make a Man; rather conserved in the stature of the first age, then growne to be greater; And if there be any addition to knowledge, it is rather a new knowledge, then a greater knowledge; rather a singularity in proposing something that was not known at all before, then an emproving, an advancing, a multiplying of former inceptions; and by that meanes, no knowledge comes to be perfect (Sermons, 7.260).

Knowledge increases sporadically, capriciously, always on the cusp of the new. Knowledge that grows by singularities, "by degrees" in the words of the Essays in Divinity, is imperfect. In this assessment, Donne was rather close to Francis Bacon: old spectacles must be discarded, he argued, in order that outmoded knowledge not obscure human perception. "Thou look'est through spectacles," Donne writes in Of the Progresse of the Soule (1611), disparaging those who held sense and imagination alone adequate to the investigation of human, terrestrial or celestial bodies.

That his contemporaries still scrutinized the body "with Galens ... Spectacles," Donne thought particularly regrettable. In 1607, discussing the development of medical knowledge since antiquity, Donne submits that "in Galens time, which was not satisfied with the effect of curing, nor
with the knowledge how to cure [in contrast to Hippocrates' period], broke out another desire of finding out the causes why those simples wrought those effects." After Paracelsus, however, "the world hath turned upon new principles," a turn which Donne would urge some twenty years later. Yet with "new diseases on our selves we warre, / And with new Physicke, a worse Engin farre."70

This concern with medical thought as a field in which to negotiate the relationship between parts and wholes and causes and effects resurfaces throughout Donne's life. In Donne's most sustained meditation on sickness and medicine, the Devotions, he submits that "finding out the causes" of disease, diagnosis, is akin to the predictions of astrologers: "no Astrologer tells us when the effects will be accomplished, for that's a secret of a higher sphere" (52). It may be that imputing any specific cause to a particular ailment was preposterous. After all, it had long been known that healing is "oftentimes done more by chance, then by any certayne Methode or Reason."71 While there is little role for chance in Donne's contemplation of illness, his attention to medical method, reason and

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70Anatomie of the World, 11. 159-160; Grierson, 212. As Donne insists in 1624, "Militia, vita: our whole life is a warfare." To fear this life, however, is to fall: "The fearfull man that falls from his morall and his Christian constancy, from the fundamentall rules of his religion, falls into labyrinths, of incertitudes, and impertinencies, and ambiguities, and anxieties, and irresolutions" (6.108). As Donne writes in a sermon on Psalm 6, "Nature hath put a warre upon us" (5.352). The language is distinctly reminiscent of the Anniversaries.

prudence insists upon the deficiency of unalloyed (unrectified) human knowledge. Between hopeful conjecture and the demonstrationes of the Holy Ghost, the best to which man could aspire is to be "Problematicall": against the claims of philosophy, Donne argues that only God "seales" probabilities with "Infallibility." Aristotle's and Plato's "It must be thus," he notes in a 1625 sermon, are dogmatic. In every assessment of human affairs, the "onely measure is, and judge, opinion." There is no certainty found in the apprehension of the merely "casuall" (Progresse, l. 485). Though not an unrepentant skeptic, Donne's own fluid epistemology gives little weight to the quest for first causes: it is beyond human capacity. The impoverished state of medical and anatomical knowledge epitomizes this condition; medical knowledge is itself based in part on opinion. Men know as little about the functions of the body as they do about other natural "mysteries" (l. 289).

Donne's estimation of medicine depends on method and the connections between event and evidence, cause and occurrence. In the next section, I argue that Donne's use of anatomy was confined to its utility as a vehicle for revealing the divergence of human knowledge and the world.

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72 For these quotations, see Coffin, John Donne and the New Philosophy, 252. The first passage is from the Sermons, 6.301; the second, from "The Progresse of the Soul," ll. 518-520 in Grierson, 287.

73 Of our body's infirmities, though our knowledge be partly ab extrinseco, from the opinion of the physician, and that the subject and matter be flexible and various," Donne writes in 1608, "yet their rules are certain, and if the matter be rightly applied to the rule, our knowledge thereof is also certain" (Gosse, 1.184). On Donne's distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic, see Sermons, 2.144.

74 While we "know the capacity of the ventricle" and "the receipt of the receptacles of blood, and how much blood the body can have" (Sermons, 3.235), as Donne writes, famously, in the Progresse, Knowst thou but how the stone doth enter in The bladders cave, and never breake the skinne? Know'st thou how blood, which to the heart doth flow, Doth from one ventricle to th'other goe? (ll. 269-272)

75 Although Sawday is clear on this point in his discussion of the Anniversaries ("Donne remarks upon ... the unknowable quality of the body's own motions. ... He was always alert to the potential defeat of reason, once the body had become the object of his gaze"), he offers no explanation for this "anatomical challenge" (The Body Emblazoned, 18).
While remaining essentially about the soul, if anatomy readjusts various epistemological trajectories in early seventeenth-century England, it does so by thickening the borders between received knowledge and lived, embodied experience.\textsuperscript{76}

"If I were punctual in this Anatomy"

Nowhere is Donne's poetic vision of the relationship between anatomy and epistemology, rhetoric and argument more precise than in the \textit{Anniversaries}. From Ben Jonson on, the poems are often treated as glorious failures, \textit{encomia} which load far too much weight on the death of a frail, young girl.\textsuperscript{77} The figure of Elizabeth Drury has caused immense and, in my estimation, largely redundant critical debate. More productive have been arguments surrounding the structure, genre and theological sources of the poems.\textsuperscript{78} Here, I offer a reading that insists on the poems' relationship to Donne's developing sense of both the necessity and the difficulties of human knowledge in the face of his insistent refrain: the decaying, natural world is irredeemable.\textsuperscript{79}

\textsuperscript{76}Certainly individual experience is on Donne's horizon. David Hirsch, "Donne's Atomies and Anatomies," argues that by "anatomizing the representative body to the limits of material dissection, Donne attempts to discover a radical immutability of selfhood which could refute his fear of dissolving into nothingness" (73).

\textsuperscript{77}The most cogent summary of the terms of engagement with the poems is still Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, \textit{Donne's Anniversaries and the Poetry of Praise}, 3-70. John Carey is the most recent critic who assumes the poems fail: "Cut loose from any semblance of sense," he writes, "the poems float upwards in aerobatic extravagance" (\textit{John Donne: Life, Mind and Art} [London: Faber, 1981], 101-103; see also his chapter, "Bodies," 131-166).


\textsuperscript{79}Love, "The Argument," 130.
and limits human knowledge in the poems is the decay of the world, the occasion of Donne's anatomy.

Just as infirmity is the defining condition of human embodiment, the world itself is built on decay. As Geoffrey Goodman insists in 1616, the world "will againe returne unto nothing." One writer suggested that "it is the common opinion, and is in every mans mouth, that this world, and all things therein contained, do run towards their end, by a universall and perpetuall declining to worse and worse." Even commonwealths decay. George Hakewill's voluminous attack on Goodman and these ideas went through several editions in a very short period. The notion of the world's decay preoccupied virtuosi for the rest of the century, most of whom were content to cite Hakewill as their authority for its refutation. Donne summarizes the decay of the world precisely. Citing Cyprian, and

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80 The Fall of Man, or the Corruption of Nature, Proved by the Light of Our Naturall Reason (London 1616), sig. A5'. For the long view of the relation of the notion of decline to, for example, the translatio studii, see Peter Burke, "Tradition and Experience: The Idea of Decline from Bruni to Gibbon," Daedalus 105 (1976): 137-152. See also George Williamson, "Mutability, Decay, and Seventeenth-Century Melancholy," ELH 2 (1935): 121-150, Don Cameron Allen, "The Degeneration of Man and Renaissance Pessimism," Studies in Philology 35 (1938): 202-227, R.F. Jones, Ancients and Moderns: a Study of the Rise of the Scientific Movement in Seventeenth-Century England (St Louis: Washington University Press, 1961), chapter 2 and, for the most thorough account, including the details of the Hakewill-Goodman controversy, Victor Harris, All Coherence Gone (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949). Compare early Donne: "If then the best things kill themselves soonest, (for no Affection endures, and all things labour to this perfection) all travell to their owne death, yet the frame of the whole World, if it were possible for God to be idle, yet because it began, must dye" (Juvenilia: of Certaine Paradoxes and Problemes [London, 1633; composed 1590s], sig. C3').


82 As Thomas Forde wrote in mid-century, echoing some of Lipsius's earlier comments, "Kingdoms & commonwealths must needs be subject to the like mutability, and corruption, as the men are of whom they are compounded" (Lusus Fortunae: the Play of Fortune [London, 1649], 73).

83 George Hakewill, An Apologie of the Power and Providence of God in the Government of the World. Or an Examination and Censure of the Common Erroour Touching Natures Perpetuall and Universall Decay (Oxford, 1627). Between 1627 and 1635, the Apologie went through two more editions, each one substantially enlarged. On Hakewill, see Jones, Ancients and moderns, 29-37 and Harris, All Coherence Gone, 47-85.
anticipating his own assessment of the accumulation of knowledge, Donne laments:

As the world is the world frame of the world, God hath put into it a reprooafe, a rebuke, lest it should seem eternall, which is, a sensible decay and age in the whole frame of the world, and every piece thereof. The seasons of the year irregular and distempered: the Sun fainter, and languishing; men lesse in stature, and shorter-lived. No addition, but only every yeare, new sorts, new species of wormes, and flies, and sicknesses, which argue more and more putrefaction of which they are engendered (Sermons, 6.323).

This reproof carries with it a paradoxical comfort: delivery from decay and the "stupefaction of the conscience" (329). This delivery is built on the natural qualities of the body, the application of physical and spiritual remedies and the ethical foundations of refined reason and equitable reading. 

In a decayed, senescent world, correspondences, proportion and ethics, like "sense and memory" (Anatomie, 1. 28), are lost. As "mankinde, so is the worlds whole frame / Quite out of joynt. a!most created lame" (ll. 190-191). Sin and corruption have deformed "each joynt of th'universall frame" (l. 198). With the disappearance of memory, "which is an easier faculty to work upon, then the understanding or will," rectified, ethical engagement in the world is difficult (Sermons, 2.259).

Donne figures the world as disabled body; its articulated structure lacks "cohaerence," resultant from

84That all bodies contained within them the sources of both preservation and decay was a commonplace in the early seventeenth century, one to which Donne referred briefly in the Juvenilia and throughout the verse and sermons. Each body contains within itself, on the one hand, an "intrinsique balm," a preservative which, in the Anatomie, the world had lost (ll. 55-60). Lifting the concept straight out of Paracelsus (see Murray, "Donne and Paracelsus," 118), who lurks behind the phrase "Physitians say," Donne elaborates upon the concept of the balm:

Now Physitians say, That man hath in his Constitution, in his Complexion, a naturall vertue, which they call Balsamum, his own Balsamum, by which, any wound which a man could receive in his own body, would cure it selfe, if it could be kept cleane from the anoiances of the aire, and all extrinsique encumbrances. Something that hath some proportion and analogy to this Balsamum of the body, there is in the soul of man too (Sermons, 5.347-349).
both the disappearance of "just supply, and all Relation" (Anatomie, l. 214) and the arrogance and presumption of human learning. While there is a need for a "new compasse" (l. 226) to navigate a world crumbled out into atoms, learning has taken an ominous turn: "Man hath weav'd out a net, and this net throne / Upon the Heavens, and now they are his owne." Loathe to labour to "goe to heaven, we make heaven come to us" (ll. 279-282). Arrogance has torn heaven into "eight and forty sheires" (l. 258), deformed the perfect orbits of the sun and planets and rendered "All their proportion's lame" (l. 277). The antiquated or redundant sets of knowledge Donne belittles are all that establish man's fragile apprehension of the universe.

This poignant moment in the Anatomie underwrites Donne's main concern in the poems: not only have the world and the human body "contracted" into decay, not only has their decay resulted in "the provocative indeterminacy of the spirit-matter relationship," human learning has grown grotesquely presumptuous in the face of its waning effectiveness. These changes are represented by the emasculated occult sciences of astrology and the ars signata:

What Artist now dares boast that he can bring

Heaven hither, or constellate any thing,

So as the influence or those starres may bee

Imprison'd in an Hearbe, or Charme, or Tree,

And doe by touch, all which those stars could doe?

The art is lost, and correspondence too.

(Anatomie, ll. 391-396)

The "mysterious Arts" that afford human access to the secrets of nature have become distracted due to the "want of correspondence of heaven and earth" (ll. 375-378; marginal note). Similar to Donne's

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assessment of astronomy in the *Devotions* (51-52), he insists that "none can see / Not only what [meteors] meane, but what they bee" (ll. 387-388). No "Art could guess the harmonious "Complexion" or ethical importance of the exemplary Christian subject, Elizabeth Drury (*Progresse*, ll. 121-126). Drury's death has even affected the ability to historicize. As Donne notes in 1624-1625, man may "mis-impute" its anger for God's; in human affairs, to "attribute an action to the next Cause [i.e., proximate cause], or to the Cause of that Cause, is, to this purpose, all one" (9.262, 265).

Without the "diligent devotion" that keeps God's image in the heart (*Progresse*, ll. 455-456), even this meagre skill is diminished: "Be not concern'd: studie not why, nor when; / Doe not so much as not beleeve a man" (ll. 50-52). The social compact is undermined. Error is damnable, but the world will no longer sustain a search for truth (ll. 53-54). A similar situation obtains with the human body. The body is in constant flux, and the tools of its apprehension are pallid. The perception of physiology

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86 Donne asks similar questions about the ontology of celestial phenomena in "To the Countess of Bedford. On New-Yeares Day," ll. 1-5; Grierson, 175.

87 In a letter to one "Dr. Fr. Mansell" from Venice in 1621, James Howell doubted whether he had "the same Mass of Blood in my Veins, and the same Flesh now in Venice, which I carry'd about me three years since up and down London Streets" (*Epistolae Ho-elianae. The Familiar Letters of James Howell. Historiographer Royal to Charles II*, ed. Joseph Jacobs [London: David Nutt, 1890], 71). Similarly, Donne writes in "Obsequies to the Lord Harrington":

As bodies change, and as I do not weare
Those Spirits, humors, blood I did last yeare,
And, as if on a streame I fixe mine eye,
That drop, which I looked on, is presently
Pushed with more waters from my sight, and gone,
So in this sea of vertues, can no one
Bec'insisted on; vertues, as rivers, passe,
Yet still remains that vertuous man there was.
And as if man feed on mans flesh, and so
Part of his body to another owe,
Yet at the last two perfect bodies rise,
Because God knowes where every Atome lyes
(ll. 45-56; Grierson, 248).

Heraclitean in its expression, Donne figures the flux of changing humours and spirits in the body against the constancy of virtue.
is particularly blunted.\textsuperscript{88}

Investigating the world through the senses, learning by circuit and collections, mires the intellect in "unconcerning things" and trivial "matters of fact" (l. 285). While knowledge of human behaviour, past and present (l. 287), might progress, why grass is green or blood red "none have reach'd unto" (ll. 288-289). Being has trumped knowing and always shall: artists will argue about the heavens until the heavens expire ("A Funeral Elegie," ll. 69-70). Epistemology has been unravelled by ontological change ("What should the nature change?" [\textit{Progresse}, l. 483]): although the direction of influence is convoluted, the world's decay has resulted in misprision, error or "mis-devotion," in "Receivers impotencies." This dissonance has an ethical coefficient. In a terse formulation which combines several aspects of decline (physical, mental and moral), Thomas Adams writes in 1629 that "Now Man is growne lesse; and as his body in size, his soule in vigour, so himself in all vertue is abated."\textsuperscript{89} Decay in the \textit{Anniversaries} is physical, spiritual and ethical.\textsuperscript{90}

\textsuperscript{88}Knowledge of the "Province pack'd up in two yards of skinne" is lamentable (\textit{Progresse}, ll. 176). "Poore soule." Donne writes,

\begin{quote}
Thou know'st thy selfe so little, as thou know'st not,  
How thou didst die, nor how thou wast begot ...  
Thou art too narrow, wretch, to comprehend  
Even thy selfe: yea though thou wouldst but bend  
To know thy body. ...  
\end{quote}

\textit{(Progresse}, ll. 254-259)


\textsuperscript{90}Donne is uncertain of the agency of the dissolution. While he strives to instill in his readers an image of a world "rotten at the heart," nonetheless he moves from a delineation of decay to a condemnation of distorted human understanding as a potential agent in the death of the world. Throughout the \textit{Anatomie} Donne focuses on the processes of human understanding --- dissecting, discovering, unfolding, mapping, charting, knowing --- effecting a transition in crucial passages from what seems to be the actual decay of the world to a reproach of human fallibility (see ll. 249-280). Though the world is "almost created lame," it may be hubristic "new Philosophy" that has paradoxically contributed to the world's decay. After all, as Donne repeatedly insists, though human beings have gained immensely in "matters of fact," the world has lost its informing spirits.
The decay of the world was also a decay of virtue and morality. In 1574, an English translation of Augustine Marlorate's work, suggested that "mannes nature [is] growing dayly more and more into decay with the perishing worlde now hasting too his ende, is more subject to corruption, and lesse gyven too Godlynesse and vertue that ever it was." Donne agrees. "The worlds proportion disfigured is," he writes, "That those two legges whereon it doth rely, / Reward and punishment are bent awry." Even grief, Donne writes, deftly self-conscious, is "without proportion" (Anatomie, ll. 302-308). While the references to the social circumstances of disproportion might speak to Donne's personal situation, the use of traditional contemptus mundi posturing seriously impugns contemporary epistemology and morality. Reward and punishment are not simply social categories, as Marotti would have us believe; they are religious and ethical categories as well, which is the reason Donne insists his anatomy should more "affright" then "pleasure" his audience. Let no one say, Donne writes, that his labour is vain; his auditors' eye is trained repeatedly on the ethical


92I disagree with Arthur Marotti, who argues that these lines seal the poems' fate as trivially intellectual meditations on his prospects for social advancement. "Both Anniversaries," Marotti writes, "enact a rejection of the world, but these poems resulted from Donne's feeling that he had been rejected by the world" (236). None of the learning Donne presents is "truly serious evidence" (240) of the world's decay, nor are the poems more than frivolous (241). See John Donne, Coterie Poet, 232-245.

significance of this loss of proportion (*Anatomie*, ll. 372, 63-66). This "new world" may be safer, Donne writes,

being told

The dangers and diseases of the old:

For with due temper men doe then forgoe,

Or covet things, when they their true worth know.

(ll. 87-90)

Knowledge is impossible without temperance; intemperance deforms the body (*Sermons*, 6.268). In the end, even if the decay of the world were merely something to think with, the results of that thought process were grave indeed: because proportion and correspondence have (metaphorically) disappeared from a world diminished in scale and colour, virtue itself had vanished ("Doe not so much as not beleeeve a man"). The poems establish a colloquy between inquiry into the causes of decay and ethics: who is sure he has a soul, Donne asks, unless he sees, and judges and "follow[s] worthinesse" (ll. 3-4)?

With the dissipation of virtue, with "a strong example gone, equall to law" (*Anatomie*, l. 48), the possibility of knowing the world also evaporated. Although at various points in his life Donne put the radical uncertainty of human knowledge to edifying use (since for him, as for Montaigne, destabilization has a positive, mollifying effect), in the *Anniversaries*, with the loss of Drury's example, theory devolves into practice;⁴ human knowledge relies more and more on exemplarity, prudence ("due temper" [l.89]) and use. In order to recompense for the loss of moral and epistemological compass, Donne attaches immense ethical and theological concerns to Elizabeth Drury, to the frequent dissatisfaction of both his contemporaries and ours. Discussing the

Anniversaries in a letter to George Gerrard written 14 April, 1612, Donne writes that his "fault" lies in printing the poems, not in their hyperbole. "I would not be thought to have gone about to praise any bodie in rime, except I tooke such a Person, as might be capable of all that I could say."95 The capability rests not with Elizabeth Drury as an historical figure, of course, but with her as a figure of prudent, rectified reason and will: "[R]eason still / Did not o'rtrow, but rectifie her will" (Progress, ll. 361-362).96 She is both example and exemplar, a "partaker, and a part" (Anatomie, l. 434). All "must endeavour to be good as shee" (Anatomie, ll. 434, 18) and "future vertuous deeds are Legacies, / Which from the gift of her example rise" ("A Funeral Elegie," ll. 103-104). Drury is the "patteme" Donne canonizes in verse (Progress, l. 524). If "any of those Ladies think that Mistris Drury was not so," Donne continues in his letter to Garrard, "let that Ladie make her selfe fit for all those praises in the Booke, and it shall be hers."97 In other words, Drury is an occasional vehicle for Donne's meditations, interchangeable with other "Ladies" should they, as he suggests, see themselves reflected in (or attempt to apply the strictures of) the verse.

With this in mind, Donne concludes that "Verse hath a middle nature" (Anatomie, l. 473) which is able to preserve Drury's example from the "mis-devotions" that honour saints at the end of the Progress (l. 511; Donne finished the poem in France; see Bald, 245-246). At the conclusion of

95Letters, 255 and Gosse, l.302. On Donne's friendship with Garrard and Garrard's reading of the poem, see Bald, 159 and 159 note 2.

96The controversy surrounding the identification of Drury has been usefully summarized by Lewalski, Donne's Anniversaries and the Poetry of Praise, 108-115. In his introduction to the Anniversaries, 10-50, Frank Manley, who identifies Drury with Sapientia, a Christianized, Neoplatonic conception of wisdom, identifies some of the constituents of my position here. Lewalski herself, however, is closest to my argument. She writes, "Elizabeth Drury appears to have offered Donne an occasion he found nowhere else for an elaborate poetic analysis of the Divine image in man and its implications for the human condition here and hereafter" (111). Where I differ from Lewalski is in her assertion that the poems are to be understood with respect to their "metaphysical significations" and not their ethical or epistemological concerns (114).

97Letters, 255.
the Progresse, the middle nature of verse --- its ethical ground, its ability to teach, delight and spur to action. the "passport of Poetry" in Sidney's terms --- is once again addressed:

And where, what lawes of Poetry admit,
Lawes of Religion have at least the same,
Immortall Maide, I might invoke thy name.

(ll. 514-516)

Careful to avoid any imputation of the Catholic idolatry of saints, Donne offers poetic rather than religious license for his admiration of Drury. Heaven keeps souls, the earth keeps bodies and verse captures ("emprison[s]; Anatomie, l. 470) the middle ground, the ground of human practice and experience. The poems are an "Organ" tuned to beget "Wonder and love" ("A Funeral Elegie," 27-29): wonder is the first step to faith. Elsewhere, Donne draws the parallel between well-tuned verse and bodies: "Verse embalmes vertue; ... / ... As spice doth bodies from corrupt aires" ("To the Countesse of Bedford. On New-Yeares Day," ll. 13-15; Grierson, 175). Here, the poems are "carrasse verses" nonetheless, improbable media, "ragges of paper" incapable of giving Drury her proper due ("A Funeral Elegie," ll. 11-21).

The ethical imperatives of giving the dead proper due are examined at length in early seventeenth-century funeral elegies contemporary with the poems. Here, the question is posed as a decision between "accidental" and "essential" happiness allowed by an accumulation of true knowledge (and "God is no Occasional God, no Accidentall God" [Sermons, 9.303]). Donne's elaboration of the difficulty of knowing in the Anatomie is superseded by the necessity of

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98"The first step to faith, is to wonder, to stand, and consider with a holy admiration, the waies and proceedings of God with man; for Admiration, wonder, stands, as in the midst, between knowledge and faith. and hath an eye towards both" (Sermons, 6.265). Seeking a "mediocrity," Donne once again occupies the middle ground, the sobria mediocrates in natural, civil and supernatural things.

differentiating between accident, "inconstancie" and essence in the Progresse. "[W]hat essentiall joy can'st thou expect / Here upon earth? what permanent effect / Of transitory causes?" Donne asks (Progresse, ll. 387-389). Even heaven's accidental joys surpass the poor, lame and "casuall" joys on earth (ll. 467-473); accidental joys are like an "Apostem" which rises up and disappears (ll. 477-482).100 "He that attributes more to nature, he that allows her any ability of disposing her selfe before hand, without prevention of grace ... sets up an Idoll, and magnifies nature beyond that which appertaines to her." Reason and the natural faculties are most receptive to grace, "however he may in discourse and in argument exalt nature" (Sermons, 6.120-121). Only a "habituall, and manifold sinner. sees nothing aright; Hee sees a judgement, and calls it an accident" (2.114). Only God "knowes contingent thinges as certaine and necessary" (Sermons, 2.151; 315).101 Donne's use of scholastic terminology should not surprise; it is a discourse he typically vilifies for its abstruseness and obfuscation.102 Here, it is employed to signal the confusion of human intellect set against eschatological wisdom:

Only who have enjoy'd

The sight of God, in fulnesse, can thinke it;

For it is both the object, and the wit.

This is essential joy, where neither hee

100 Donne also uses the term in its medical sense to denote insubstantial but affecting symptoms (Progresse, l. 146). The term "accident" has a complex and important history in natural philosophy, medicine and theology. As Charles H. Lohr has argued, Aristotle's methodology and ideas in the Metaphysics "provided an ontological foundation for traditional theological concepts, such as 'essence,' 'nature,' 'person' and 'subsistence' in trinitarian theory, and 'substance' and 'accident' in the theory of grace and transubstantiation" ("Metaphysics," in The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy, 587; the whole article is germane).

101 Often these "mistakings rise out of the different computations [of time] betweene God and us" (Sermons, 2.146).

102 See, for example, Sermons, 1.304, 2.242.
Can suffer diminution, nor wee[.]

\textit{(Progressse, ll. 440-444)}

The accidents of joy (and of illness) are ultimately rectified by the "full ... and filling good" of the vision of God. Donne enjoins his soul, and his audience, to "study, ere thou fall / On accidentall joyes, th'essentiall" (ll. 383-384).\(^{103}\) Opening the world's body, examining its "Hectique" fever, offers to aid the distinction between casual and essential joy. Anatomy offers limited assistance in this process.

The poems establish the relationship between Drury as "patteme" or example and the faith she exemplifies. As Barbara Lewalski has argued, for Donne "universals are apprehended as they are embodied, epitomized, incarnated in particular individuals."\(^{104}\) Drury embodies essential joy both on earth and in heaven: she possesses those "rich joyes" which in turn possess her heart. She is both a "partaker, and a part" \textit{(Anatomie, ll. 433-434)}. For Donne, as for Harvey, "whatever way the whole is integrated, the part is a whole." Donne's use of anatomy is not rooted in real dissections, but in its ability to reveal, distinguish and "bring those abilities, and good parts, ... into knowledge, and into use..." \textit{(Sermons, 1.273)}. The knowledge revealed by dissection equates parts with examples.

\(^{103}\)Compare Donne on "\textit{new Joyes, Essentaill and Accidendal}" \textit{(Sermons, 6.195)} and the form of judgement, "a judiciary, a \textit{discretive} power," necessary to discern divine judgement from natural accident (9.86; my emphasis). Certainly, he writes, "we were better to call twenty natural accidents judgements of God, then frustrate Gods purpose in any of his powerfull deliverances, by calling it a naturall accidents, and suffer the thing to vanish so, and God be left unglorified in it, or his Church unedified by it" (6.219).

\(^{104}\)\textit{Donne's Anniversaries and the Poetry of Praise}, 162. Both in the sermons and in his verse, Donne has the propensity "to incarnate the whole process of providential history in the individual Christian" (168). Apropos the \textit{Devotions}, Joan Webber writes of his "refusal to surrender himself wholly to abstract metaphysical thought" \textit{(Contrary Music, 195)}. Elaine Scarry claims that for Donne "language achieves its greatest triumph when it is inclusive of the material realm." This penchant for the inclusion of the material realm in language Scarry calls "volitional materialism" \textit{("Donne: 'But yet the body is his booke," in Literature and the Body: Essays on Populations and Persons", ed. Elaine Scarry [Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988], 73, 76)}.
And learn'st thus much by our Anatomy,

That this worlds generall sicknesse doth not lie

In any humour, or one certain part;

But as thou sawest it rotten at the heart,

Thou seest a Hectique feaver hath got hold

Of the whole substance, not to be contrould,

And that thou hast but one way, not t'admit

The worlds infection, to be none of it.

(Anatomie, ll. 239-246)

While sickness does not reside in any one part or humour, Donne is pressed by the world's putrefaction to reason from the part to the whole, from a potent example to the general spiritual state of the world:

But as in cutting up a man that's dead,

The body will not last out, to have read

On every part, and therefore men direct

Their speech to parts, that are of most effect;

So the worlds carcasse would not last, if I

Were punctuall in this Anatomy:

... for though the soule of man

Be got when man is made, 'tis borne but than

When man doth die; our body's as the wombe,

And, as a Mid-wife, death directs it home.

(Anatomie, 435-440, 451-454)

Donne has certainly adopted the role of anatomist as he defines it: he has directed his speech to
Drury, a 'part of most effect,' in order to argue, reasoning from the part to the whole, that the irredeemable world must be renounced. Donne's practice has a theological analogue. In their "Anatomie Lectures," according to William Spurstowe, "though the whole body lye before them," physicians "read cheifly [sic] upon some more noble and Architectonical parts, the braine, the heart, the stomach, or the like, so in our humiliations, though we bring the whole body of sinne and death into Gods presence, yet are we to dwell and insist cheifly upon those corruptio[n]s."105 Donne dwells on effective parts in order to understand the exchange of sin and corruption between affected parts and the infected whole.106

"Punctuall" in this context does not mean timely; rather, it means both "minute, precise and accurate" and "of the nature of a point of puncture."107 Thus at the moment he dissects, Donne refuses to be precise.108 The entire world is putrefying; if Donne is exact with his incisions, its body will not last. Instead, before the world's body rots, his audience is urged to "have your last, and best concoction / From [Drury's] example, and her vertue" (Anatomie, ll. 456-457). The rhetoric of exemplarity serves the concoction, which in this context means "ripening, maturing, or bringing to a

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106See, for example, Donne's meditation on "some drops of [Christ's] blood" and its concomitant effect of "humiliation" (*Sermons*, 1.253-254).

107*Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991). Both meanings were current when Donne was writing; with respect to time, the word did not come to be used until the 1630s.

108Some readers believed Donne was indeed, given the nature of his ostensible subject, unpunctual. In 1612, Donne writes to Goodyer that he hears "from England of many censures of my book, of M*". *Drury*: if any of those censures do but pardon me my descent in Printing any thing in verse, (which if they do, they are more charitable then my self; for I do not pardon my self, but confesse that I did it against my conscience, that is, against my own opinion, that I should not have done so) I doubt not but they will give over that other part of that indictment, which is that I have said so much" (*Letters*, 74-75; emphasis added). See Lewalski, *Donne's Anniversaries and the Poetry of Praise*, 261-262.
state of perfection." In a passage that draws together the potency of exemplarity and the physiological, 'incarnated' nature of learning, Donne again uses the term concoction: "Example concocts" the rule and allows the understanding to assimilate it. Reasoning from the affected parts of human or terrestrial bodies has its corollary in forms of reasoning that uphold the utility of exemplarity. In his hands, anatomy is a pedagogical tool ("Let thine own times as an old storie bee") that reveals exemplary parts, but which is finally discarded for an ethical imperative that requires the "temper[ed]" differentiation between essential and accidental joys, the latter figured as sickness.

The corruption exposed by dissection infects thoughts as well as bodies. Anatomy discovers the "faults in inward parts, / Corruptions in our braines, or in our hearts, / Poysoning the fountaines, whence our actions spring (Anatomie, ll. 329-331). One seeks "sinnes ... in his Conscience, and he unfolds that, rips up that, and enters into the privatest, and most remote corners thereof" (Sermons, 9.300). Tempered, prudent action in the world, conformity with God's image, is paramount, for "good, and well, must in our actions meete; / Wicked is not much worse than indiscreet" (ll. 337-

While "the old physiology recognized three stages of concoction," the last corresponding to defecation, Donne's "last, and best concoction" must mean a bringing to perfection. The OED cites a similar meaning from one of his sermons in 1631. Thomas Willard insists that concoction also presents an analogue of reading; he cites Thomas Vaughan, who advises readers to "concoct what you read" (The Works of Thomas Vaughan, ed. A.E. Waite [London: Theosophical Society, 1919], 198) and argues that Donne "seems to imply as much" ("Donne's Anatomy Lesson," 46).

All wayes of teaching, are Rule and Example: And though ordinarily the Rule be first placed, yet the Rule it selfe is made of Examples: And when a Rule would be of hard digestion to weake understandings, Example concocts it, and makes it easie: for, Example in matter of Doctrine, is as Assimilation in matter of Nourishment; The Example makes that that is proposed for our learning and farther instruction, like something which we knew before, as Assimilation makes that meat, which we have received, and digested, like those parts, which are in our bodies before" (Sermons, 9.274; my emphasis). However, "God governes not by examples, but by rules" (10.241). On Donne's alimentary and gustatory metaphors, see Terry G. Sherwood, Fulfifling the Circle: A Study of John Donne's Thought (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 67.

If "sin get to be a heart, it will get a liver to carry blood and life through all the body of our sinful actions: That's the office of the liver" (Sermons, 1.192).
Discretion is a form of prudent judgement (Essays); God "comes to thee in zeale, and returns in discretion" (Sermons, 5.372). "Every mans Diligence, and discretion is a God to himselfe," Donne writes, as we have seen above. Knowledge of the difference between accidental and essential joy depends on "due temper" (Anatomie, l. 89). Drury exemplifies discretion: her "cleare body is so pure and thinne, / Because it need disguise no thought within" ("A Funeral Elegie," ll. 59-60). This somatic transparency represents the moral philosopher's ideal — to be able to see thoughts and feelings in the interior of the body.

Drury's exemplary body perfectly expresses the ethical ideals St. Bernard associated with an embodied Christ:

wee understood

Her by her sight; her pure, and eloquent blood

Spoke in her cheekes, and so distinctly wrought,

That one might almost say, her body thought[.]

(Progresse, ll. 243-246)

The distinct ways in which Drury's blood (her soul, her intellect) speaks through her body "chides" those who crawl on the earth "Oppress'd with ignorance" (ll. 248-249, 253). The eloquence and virtue of her "body thought" launches Donne into a lengthy excoriation of medicine and natural virtues.

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112 For example, on Wednesday, 21 March 1609, James I made a speech to parliament in which he promised "to recomence" his listeners "with a great and rare Present ... which is a faire and a Christall Mirror; Not such a Mirror wherein you may see your owne faces, or shadowes; but such a Mirror, or Christall, as through the transparantnesse thereof, you may see the heart of your King. The Philosophers wish, That every mans breast were a Christall, wherethrough his heart might be seene, is vulgarly knowne, ...: But though that were impossible in the generall, yet will I now perform this for my part" ("A speach to thelords and commons of the parliament at White-Hall, on Wednesday the XXI. of March. Anno 1609.," in The Political Works of James I, ed. Charles H. McIlwain [New York: Russell and Russell, 1965], 306).

113 Patience, humility, obedience and charity. See J.A.W. Bennett, Poetry of the Passion: Studies in Twelve Centuries of English Verse (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 47. While I am not suggesting Drury is a figure of Christ, she is a figure of rectified conscience in conformity with Christ.
Drury's "body thought" and the contrast between accidental and essential joy receive their clearest exposition when Donne imagines her body as a "booke" (*Progression*, l. 320). Drury's somatic, ethical and theological exemplarity is translated into an "edition" (l. 309). In heaven,

... thou (but in no other schoole) maist bee

Perchance, as learned, and as full, as shee,

Shee who all libraries had thoroughly read

At home in her owne thoughts, and practised

So much good as would make as many more:

Shee whose example they must all implore,

Who would or doe, or thinke well, and confesse

That all the vertuous Actions they expresse,

Are but a new, and worse edition

Of her some one thought, or one action:

She who in th'art of knowing Heaven, was growne

Here upon earth, to such perfection,

That she hath, ever since to Heaven she came,

(In a far fairer print,) but read the same: ...

And cals us after her, in that shee tooke,

(Taking her selfe) our best, and worthiest booke.

(ll. 301-314, 319-320)

Human learning is a diminutive, imperfect second edition of the book of Drury's life and body; her mastery of the art of celestial knowledge surpasses all other arts that Donne condemns. Drury, like one of Augustine's angels, reads "the same" on earth as in heaven without the necessity of
apprehending her text in time. On earth, the soul often accepts "opinion" for truth, swallowing any religion "to escape the paine of debating, and disputing"; upon resurrection, however, the soul "reads without spelling, knowes without thinking, and concludes without arguing" (Sermons, 6.76). Drury embodies these qualities. As well as a figure of humble, prudent and rectified reason, Drury epitomizes the perspicacious reader "Who kept by diligent devotion, / God's Image, ... / Within her heart" (ll. 455-457). While other men and women "look'st through spectacles," through "lattices of eyes" and "Labyrinths of eares" (ll. 296-297), Drury's reading was, to put it mildly, otherworldly.

The poems appear incisive in their condemnation of "humane learning" as a vehicle for faith or as a step to a rectified conscience; anatomy teaches nothing but the fact that "this worlds generall sickenes doth not lie / In any humour, or one certaine part" (Anatomie, ll. 240-241). While Donne later argues that such learning is essential to faith, in the Anniversaries Donne excoriates the "mysterious Arts" that David knew but ultimately abandoned. The one art that establishes both Drury's sanctity and Donne's audience's engagement with that sanctity, an art brought into focus by the adversity of decay, is reading. The problem of human knowledge of both the body and the world is resolved by rectified reading as well as rectified reason. Individual prudence, temperance and decorum counteract both the world's disproportion and "Receivers impotencies" (Anatomie, l. 416). Imagining Elizabeth Drury as an eloquent, transparent "booke" revivified Donne's engagement with humility, human learning and reason in ways that sustain themselves throughout his writing.

Like her ethical and readerly exemplarity, Drury's text is written on her body. Drury was the "first orignall / Of all faire copies" (Anatomie, ll. 228-229). Like Christ's body, as we shall see, Drury's body is an opisthograph. She was "like to full on both sides written Rols, / Where eyes might reade upon the outward skin, / As strong Records for God, as mindes within" (Progresse, ll. 504-

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506). Reading occurs both outwardly and inwardly; it is concerned with "crums and fragments of appearances and verisimilitudes" of reason's apprehension (Essays, 21), and with forms, souls and the laws of heaven. Donne's source for this image is Augustine again. Drury is the incarnation of the single sense of Scripture (which are yet "words which so well agree together"); reading her body requires the same skills as "Textual Divinity," prudence and "due temper."

Reading is fraught with complication in a world apparently full of analogy and similitude. In such a world, the only certain knowledge is the knowledge of God. If "We cannot truly love anything, but that we know," and we cannot know the world, and if the only certainty is the limited knowledge of God, it follows that God must be loved. While it is true that Drury held "God's Image, ... / Within her heart," she nevertheless had to isolate that image and furnish it with "devotion" (Progress, ll. 455-457). As an exemplary reader ("She who had all libraries thoroughly read" [l. 303]), Drury is able to discern the divergence between natural and divine signatures:

She, who had so much essential joy,

As no chance could distract, much lesse destroy;

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115 In the Confessions, Augustine asks whether anyone but God could have made Scripture into a firmament. He continues, echoing Isaiah 34:4, "For heaven shall be folded up like a scroll, and now it is stretched over us like a skin. ... Lord, you know how you clothed men with skins when by their sin they became mortal. And so you have like a skin stretched out the firmament of your book, that is, your words which so well agree together and which, through the agency of mortal men, you have placed above us" (Confessions, book 13, chap. 15, p. 327). On Augustine's scroll imagery, see Karl F. Morrison, Conversion and Text: the Cases of Augustine of Hippo, Herman-Judah and Constantine of Tsatsos (Charlottesville, Va.: University Press of Virginia, 1992), 28-32. Jager, "The Book of the Heart," discusses book imagery in Augustine (6-10). Skin above and below: the celestial skin of Scripture and human skin that recalls original sin. Thus while Christ's incarnation as a fleshy word is drawn out into a sheltering, if ominous, sky, Augustine maps Scripture onto a form of skin. For an extended meditation on skin, on vernicles and the status of relics and miracles, see Ewa Kuryluk, Veronica and Her Cloth: History, Symbolism, and Structure of a 'True' Image (Oxford and Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell, 1991), chapter 10.

116 But to "comprehend is not to know a thing, as far as I can know it, but to know it as far, as that thing can be knowne; and so onely God, can comprehend God" (Sermons, 6.184).
Who with Gods presence was acquainted so,
(Hearing, and speaking to him) as to know
His face in any naturall Stone, or Tree,
Better then when in Images they bee[.]

(Progresse, ll. 449-453).

Possessed of "essential joy" and proportion, Drury embodies the distinction between, in Donne's words, a trace of descent or a "filiationem vestigii, [or] a testimony of Gods having passed that way, and called in there" and a "filiationem imaginis, [or] an expression of his Image." Everything that has being ("any naturall Stone, or Tree") contains the traces of God; only man "hath the Image of God in his Soul." Through devotion and the sacraments, the expression of his image "does the office" of a "Picture, to bring him, whom it represents, the more lively to our memory" (Sermons, 9.83). Those who have not been rectified "despise ... Gods Image in [their] ruinous, and defaced soule[s]" (5.203), and are satisfied rather with the vestiges of God in the book of creatures seen "in enigmate" (Sermons, 3.111; 264). Although Donne laments the disappearance of coherence and proportion, it is precisely along this axis that Drury's exemplary reading is refined. The relationship between rectified reason, belief and persuasion is steeped in paradox: even if one's thoughts of heaven are 'doubled,' only "those who have enjoy'd / The sight of God, in fulnesse, can thinke it" (ll. 439-441).

Natural, "transitory causes" cannot instil an indelible image of God in the heart. Since "a Regenerate man is not made of Faith alone, but of Faith and Reason," in Donne's erstwhile nominalism, appearances and verisimilitudes will not suffice alone. Nevertheless, while they are "Riddles,"

117God's "most glorious Creatures are but vehicula Dei; they are but chariots, which convey God, and bring him to our sight" (Sermons, 2.221). We distinguish human authors by "tomes" and volumes, Donne writes in 1622, but who knows "how many tomes of Gods Creatures there are?" (4.167). On the books of Scripture and nature, see Thomas Heffernan, Art and Emblem: Early Seventeenth-Century English Poetry of Devotion (Tokyo: Renaissance Institute, 1991), 1-28.
"Signes, externall things, assist us all" when approached the "right way" (Sermons, 3.111, 6.133, 175).

At stake in the Anniversaries is the Thomist concept of analogia and competing medieval and early modern views of the universe: on the one hand, the Aristotelian vision of an unequivocal gradation of nature wherein God grows more distant as natural phenomena are explained. On the other, a revivified hermetic universe full of hidden meanings and similitudes. For Donne, even if the world decays, its ontological status is constant; it is rather comprehension that waxes and wanes. Ultimately, the decay of the world is only perceptible in the concomitant decay of the possibilities of human knowledge. Donne produces a sensory, epistemological map of terrestrial senescence. To an extent, then, trivial inquiry and common human ignorance --- of the reasons for green grass and red blood --- allow for the apprehension of decay. The proportion lost in the world (and proportion is the original sense of analogy in Aquinas) returns as a deformation of knowing, as labyrinths of ears and lattices of eyes. Learning impoverished, humans can no longer see the real correspondence of the world to God and as a consequence no conception of the relationship between cause and effect.

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119In spreading the Gospel, "God imploied such persons, as would not have perswaded a man, that grasse was green, that blood was red, if it had been denied unto them: Persons that could not have bound up your understanding, withe a Sylogisme, nor have entrended, or mollified it with a verse: Persons that had nothing but that which God himselfe calls the foolishnessee of preaching, to bring Philosophers that argued, Heretiques that wrangled, Lucians, and Julians, men that whet their tongues, and that whet their swords, against God, to God" (Sermons, 6.156).

120Funkenstein, "The Body of God," 163. Donne makes this equation explicit by linking proportion with analogy; see Sermons, 2.204, 5.347-349.

121"The correspondence and relation of all parts of Nature to one Author, the concinnity and dependence of every piece and joynt of this frame of the world, the admirable order, the immutable succession, the lively and certain generation, and birth of effects from their Parents, the causes" have
If the decaying world lacks proportion, if the true image of God is found neither in stones nor trees, "thou hast but one way, not t'admit / The worlds infection, to be none of it" (Anatomie, ll. 245-246).

Anatomy aids in this conception by exposing the misery and decay of the world. As Donne writes, "Solomon shakes the world in pieces, he dissects it, and cuts it up before thee, that so thou mayest the better see, how poor a thing, that particular is, whatsoever it be, that thou sets thy love upon in this world" (Sermons, 3.48). 122 The prudent, incisive reading of various natural bodies that Donne, following Augustine, endorses as the foundation of knowledge is ultimately redundant without the sense that the image of God "can never be burnt out" while "those Images and those Impressions, which we have received from men, from nature, ... shall all burn in Hell" (Sermons, 2.247). Rectified reading requires rectified conscience.

So, too, with anatomy and the human body. The contemporary critical consensus that the human body was "devalued as a vehicle of symbolic meaning" by anatomy is clearly mistaken. Anatomy was certainly part of the renegotiation of the body's symbolic meaning in the period --- intensifying, for example, the distinction between divisibility and wholeness123 --- but it did not empty been disrupted (Sermons, 1.289-290). As Rosalie Colie noted long ago, "a crooked mind cannot measure a crooked world; man's ways of knowing are as skewed as the world they seek to know" (Paradoxicà Epidemica [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966], 416).


122 Drury is indivisible: she has no governing part or humour, nor can subtle distinctions be made in her composition (Progresse, ll. 127-136). As Donne writes, "whatsoever is indivisible, is immoveable: a Point, because it cannot be divided, cannot be moved: the Centre, the Poles, God himself, because he is indivisible, is therefore immoveable. And when the heart of man is knit up in such an intireness upon one Object, as that it does not scatter, not sub-divide it self; then, and then only is it fixed (Sermons, 9.175). If the heart is focused on one object ("Gods Image"), the act of perception lends it a preternatural entirety; the body made of parts is made whole by the contemplation of God. For Donne, Drury's indivisibility sets her apart from the "revolutions of Dust" (Sermons, 3.105-106) to which other bodies are subject. Other bodies simply putrefy: "Thou hast a desire to please some eyes, when thou hast much to do, not to displease every Nose"; "Dissolution
the body of resonance. Within the changing contours of somatic history in the period, new metaphors were applied to the body, the most potent of which was imagining the body as a book. Once the human body was opened and its inexorable decay exposed, being "punctual" in his anatomy meant that Donne textualized the body. To an extent, the relationship between textual and human bodies was established using anatomy as a pedagogical tool which isolates representative parts of a decaying whole (rather than separating the soul from the body). Moreover, anatomists assume they are working on a representative (even normative) body, a part, as it were, of a social whole.

Anatomy, however, offered the most superficial of readings. Donne refused to be precise in his anatomy not only because of the rapid precipitation of the corpse, but because of his struggle for embodied, living knowledge. Imagining the body as a book occasioned here and elsewhere in Donne a form of reading that depends less on matter than spirit, less on form than content. As Joseph Hall recognized in his prefatory poem to the Anniversaries, comparing Donne's verse to an angel's and describing in nuce an important rhetorical facility, while "subjects differ," the "skill [may] agree" ("To the Praise of the Dead, and the Anatomie," l. 40). The "skill" required to interpret both of these books, "body thought" and "eloquent blood" and the "worlds infirmities," is the prudent,

and putrefaction is gone over thee alive" (Sermons, 2.83). Donne's scrutiny of embodiment revolves around the opposite poles of dissolution and integrity: that which is one, which is not made of parts, cannot dissolve. By their nature, bodies are "ruinous" ("A Valediction: Of My Name in the Window," ll. 31-32, 24; Grierson 24-25): "The devill was Logician good enough, Omne divisibile corruptibile, whatsoever may be broken, may be annihilated" (Sermons, 2.352).

See Pagel and Rattansi, "Vesalius and Paracelsus," 316. E.R. Curtius has noted the various ways in which the interior of the body is written, from antiquity to the middle ages. See European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, 302-347.

According to Paracelsus, it is not sufficient to "view the human body, to dissect, then to view again, and finally to boil it and look at it once again. To view in this way is to be compared with the unlearned peasant reading psalms: he reads only the letters and there is nothing more to say about him" (Paracelsus, Labyrinthus Medicorum, quoted in Pagel and Rattansi, "Vesalius and Paracelsus," 313).
circumstanced rhetoric and hermeneutics Donne refined in the *Essays in Divinity*. Famously, "The Extasie" engages this form of reading: "To our bodies turne wee then," Donne writes, and proceeds to investigate the "soules language" and the "concoction" occasioned by love (ll. 69, 22-27). Pure lovers' souls descend to "affections" and "faculties, / Which sense may reach and apprehend[.]") The ecstasy of the title is the "departing, and secession and suspension of the soul" from the prison of the body; the soul returns to a textual substance, a fleshy text. Although love's "mysteries" grow in souls, "the body is his booke" (ll. 65-72).

*Epitomes*

Jesse Gellrich has thoroughly examined the metaphor of the book in the Middle Ages. Just as the book of God's word is a mirror of his work, Gellrich argues that behind this metaphor (the codex, the *summa*) is a habit of thought which gathered the totality of knowledge into a perfectly ordered text. This conception depends on *manifestatio*, which involves "a preoccupation to fill out and classify all space within perceptible limits." If the classification of space is ultimately equivocal, full of similitudes and correspondences, how is such a book read? What is the relationship between Thomist *analogia* (the proportion of the world and the body with the world) and *manifestatio* (space full of

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120Donne, *Letters*, 11. See Gardner, 184-185, for Donne's later skepticism about the epistemological use of ecstasy. Her appendix is also useful (259-265). Sir Thomas Browne, however, is certain that in ecstasy "the soule beginning to be freed from the ligaments of the body, begins to reason like her selfe" (*Religio Medici*, in *Sir Thomas Browne: Selected Writings*, ed. Geoffrey Keynes [London: Faber, 1968], 85).


meaning) and how might anatomy or symptomatology disclose it?

What I am proposing here is not the strict identity of bodies and texts, but coincident horizons of perception, reading and other intellectual habits applied to both: the subjects may differ, but the skills agree. The skills might be summarized as sagacity, a mastery of the rhetoric of exemplarity and the ability to reason about the probable signs of the living body. Rhetoric and hermeneutics in the early modern period are closely aligned with symptomatology, not anatomy: while anatomy exposed the infirmity of the body (and the world), symptomatology allowed Donne to calibrate his reading of texts and bodies with prudence, circumstance and temperance. By opening the body, anatomy divides and ultimately empties space; somiotics, which treats the body as an agglomeration of signs, fills it up. Somatic space is filled with text (see figure 1).

As Gellrich and E.R. Curtius have demonstrated, in the late Middle Ages the world was often seen as a book. This metaphor has an afterlife which stretches into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. To those who would explore the book of creatures, Paracelsus advises that they "must tread her [nature's] books with [their] feet. Scripture is explained through its letters; but nature from land to land. Every land is a leaf. Such is the Codex Naturae; thus must her leaves be turned." Rather more famously, Sir Thomas Browne agrees. In John Davies of Hereford's words, "God is a sp'rite, the World a Body is, / Both which in Man are plaine epitomiz'd." In Richard Baxter's

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129Seven Defensiones, in Four Treatises of Theophrastus von Hohenheim, called Paracelsus, trans. C.L. Temkin (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1941), 29. In a passage which might echo Paracelsus, Donne writes that "Outward and visible means of knowing God, God hath given to all Nations in the book of Creatures, from the first leaf of that book, the firmament above, to the last leaf, the Mines under our feet" (Sermons, 2.253).

130"[T]here are two bookes from which I collect my Divinity; besides that written one of God, another of his servant Nature, that universal and publik Manuscript, that lies expans'd unto the eyes of all' (Religio Medici, 20-21).

Figure 1

William Cowper, The Anatomie of a Christian Man ... Both Inward and Outward, 2nd edition (London, 1613). Cowper's text (first edition 1610) is a devotional manual organized around the passions and the parts of the body. Cowper (1568-1619) was bishop of Galloway and spent several years in London as dean of the Royal Chapel.
words, "the World is God's book, which he set man at first to read; and every Creature is a Letter, or Syllable, or Word, or Sentence, more or less, declaring the name and will of God." The world, Donne writes, "is a work, a determined, a circumscribed work; ... what book (what kind of book) ... proves not this world to be Opus, a work, made, and Opus ejus, his work, made by him, by God?" (Sermons, 4.166). It is a work with a variable format: "an ant hill is the same book in decimo sexto as a kingdom is in folio.""

From an ant hill to the commonwealth, that the world was understood as variously formatted books meant the primary occupation of philosophers, historians, poets and theologians was reading. There is little distance from reading the book of the world to imagining the epitome of that world, the human body, as text. To Francis Quarles, in his Emblems (1635), "The world's a book in folio, / Each creature a page." The ancients "have dignified the frame of mans body with name & title of The Book of God." In the De Humani Corporis Fabrica (1543), Vesalius addresses Emperor Charles V

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133Sermons, 4.128, 167. Compare the following passage, in which nature is both a volume and a theatre: "There is not so poore a creature but may be thy glasse to see God in. The greatest flat glasse that can be made, cannot represent anything greater then it is: If every gnat that flies were an Archangell, all that could but tell me, that there is a God; and the poorest worme that creeps, tells me that;... The whole frame of nature is the Theatre, the whole Volume of creatures is the glasse, and the light of nature, reason, is our light" (Sermons, 8.224). "God shewes this inconsiderate man, his book of creatures, which he may run and reade" (9.236; compare 373). For Donne the universe is partially accessible through a rather small number of volumes. At least three texts are needed --- a logic (the book of scriptures), a rhetoric (the book of creatures) and a grammar (the book of life), since God proceeds, filling up space with his presence, "openly, intelligibly, manifestly, by the book." In the book of Scriptures, God "hast written all in the Old, and then lightedst us a candle to read it by, in the New Testament." The book of life, though never shut to God, "is never thoroughly open to us"; human knowledge is circumscribed by embodiment and temporality. It is in the book of nature, however, "wher though subobscurely, and in shadows, [God] hast expressed [his] own Image" (Devotions, 49; see also Essays in Divinity, 6-8).

134Crooke, Microcosmographia, 14.
in similar terms. In 1606, using terms that draw explicit parallels between books and bodies, Pierre Charron writes that man is "a summary recapitulation of all things, and an Epitome of the world ... gathered into a small volume." Thomas Adams echoes Charron. "Man," Adams writes, was a goodly creature, an abridgement of heaven and earth, an Epitome of God and the world: resembling God, who is a spirit, in his Soule; and the World, which is a Body, in the composition of his. Deus maximus invisibilium, mundus maximus visibilium: God the greatest of invisible natures, the World, the greatest of visible creatures: both brought into the little compasse of Man.

Adams's use of the microcosm trope is orthodox. Donne, too, uses maps and books to figure the relationship between bodies and texts.

"A godly man is a library in himself," Donne confirms. The "world a great Volume, and man the Index of that Booke; Even in the body of man, you may turne the whole world; This body is an Illustration of all Nature; Gods recapitulation of all that he had said before" (Sermons 9.185; 7.272). A human being is a chapter (a "recapitulation," from the Latin, caput, which of course also

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135Charles' interest in science was so immense that he delighted both in the comprehension of the stars and the human body: "perhaps you sometimes delight in consideration of the most perfectly constructed of all creatures, and take delight in considering the temporary lodging and instrument of the immortal soul, a dwelling that in many respects corresponds admirably to the universe and for that reason was called the little universe by the ancients" (De Humani Corporis Fabrica, fol. 4v, quoted and translated in C.D. O'Malley, Andreas Vesalius of Brussels, 1514-1564 [Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1964], 324). As we have seen above, Vesalius also thought of the body as a "nonlying book."


137Thomas Adams, Mysticall Bedlam, in Workes, 479.

138At the centre of this volume, again, is decay and sickness. While the "world is a great Volume, and man the Index of the Booke[,]" the body itself "must wither, must decay, must languish, must perish" (7.272). In "To S' Edward Herbert. at Julyers," Donne returns to microcosm-macrocosm correspondence in order to suggest the human body indexes the unfavourable qualities of beasts (ll. 1-17; Grierson, 170-171). That "Man himselfe can draw / All" is immaterial if that "All" is bestial: All that is fill'd, and all that which doth fill,
has a somatic meaning, "head"), an epitome of the world, gathered into, say, an octavo. "Thou art a world." Donne could say, and rest assured that most of his congregation would agree (Sermons 10.57). In 1624, Donne employs the book of the body trope to great purpose:

All mankinde is of one Author, and is one volume; when one Man dies, one Chapter is not torn out of the booke, but translated into a better language; and every Chapter must be so translated; ... Gods hand is in every translation; and his hand shall binde up all out scattered leaves againe, for that Librarie where every booke shall lie open to one another (Devotions, 86).139

In what seems a unique application of this metaphor, heaven itself becomes a library, idealized in terms similar to Donne's figuration of Drury: an open, transparent text that, while it might occasion interpretive work, in the end conceals no secrets. This openness requires a particular kind of translation in which the pages of a book become, like Drury's body, transparent. Transparency, as we have seen, has an ethical implication: "well and good" must meet in human practice; wickedness is not much worse than indiscreet. The viscera, the medium of God's writing and the cradle of motive and intention, must be exhibited. Bodies are finally open books in a realm in which human sensual
experience is heightened not by God the anatomist, but by God the reader, writer and translator.\textsuperscript{140} Donne imagines himself dying reading: the charnel house and the morgue are \textit{scriptoria}.\textsuperscript{141} Books and libraries are the figures through which Donne understands eschatological 'translation.' Books are bodies, libraries are sepulchra: their substance (vellum, skin) and the names of their parts (spine) underwrite his conceit. We might say, with Donne, of the "Noble Body of Divinity," that "one fair limb is in [the] Text" (\textit{Sermons}, 9.174; see also 6.292).

However, strict correspondence ("man as a little world," "I am a little world made cunningly") was unsatisfying to Donne, since if a strict equation of microcosm and macrocosm is assumed "the subject-object problem becomes identical with the problem of self-knowledge"; that is to say, in studying the macrocosm, "man grasps self and world at once."\textsuperscript{142} Only David "is his owne Library; he studyes himselfe" (\textit{Sermons}, 2.145). The thickening of borders between received knowledge and the experience of a living body allows Donne to reestablish a relationship between the body and the world that distinctly proposes the world as the diminutive map of the body:

\begin{quote}
"God does not only reade his own works, nor is he onely delighted with that which he hath writ himselfe, with his own eternall Decrees in heaven, but he loves also to reade our books too, our histories which we compose in our lives and actions" (\textit{Sermons}, 7.240).
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
"This letter hath more merit, then one of more diligence, for I wrote it in my bed, and with much pain. I have occasion to sit late some nights in my study, (which your books make a pretty library) and now I finde that that room hath a wholesome emblematicke use: for having under it a vault, I make that promise me, that I shall die reading, since my book and a grave are so near" (\textit{Letters}, 31; to Henry Goodyer, autumn 1608). Compare "To the Countesse of Salisbury. August. 1614," in which Donne is thankful to "study" the Countess after "reading others": "Nor lacke I light to read this booke, though I / In a darke Cave, yea in a Grave doe lie" (ll. 65-74; Grierson, 203). Men "by the grave might be translated to heaven" (\textit{Sermons}, 6.72).
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}
It is too little to call \textit{Man a little World}; Except \textit{God, Man is diminutive} to nothing. Man consists of more pieces, more parts, then the world; then the world doeth, nay then the world is. And if those pieces were extended, and stretched out in Man, as they are in the world, Man would bee the \textit{Gyant}, and the world the \textit{Dwarfe}, the world but the \textit{Map}, and the Man the \textit{World}. If all the \textit{Veines} in our bodies, were extented to \textit{Rivers}, and all the \textit{Sinewes}, to \textit{vaines of Mines}, and all the \textit{Muscles}, that lye upon one another, to \textit{Hilles}, and all the \textit{Bones} to \textit{Quarries} of stones, and all the other pieces, to the proportion of those which correspond to them in the \textit{world}, the \textit{aire} would be too little for this \textit{Orbe} of Man too move in, the firmament would bee but enough for this \textit{star} (\textit{Devotions}, 19).

Like Phineas Fletcher, Donne takes his own voyage around the Purple Island; for Donne, the microcosm-macrocosm trope is a question of representation. That which in the world stands for specific aspects of man has no correlative, for "as the whole world hath nothing, to which something in man doth not answere, so hath man many pieces, of which the whol world hath no representation" (\textit{Devotions}, 19). In fact, the world is nothing more than the suburbs of the microcosm.\footnote{As Sir Thomas Browne claims, "whilst I study to finde how I am a Microcosm or little world, I finde my selfe something more than the great" (\textit{Religio Medici}, 83; compare 40).} Thus in the \textit{Anatomie}, Drury not only recapitulates the world, the world is \textit{her} microcosm: "She to whom this world must it selfe refer, / As Suburbs, or the Microcosme of her" (ll. 235-236). For Donne, embodiment is paramount; the world becomes the representation, "the Map," a cartograph so detailed that it covers the territory it is purported to represent. It is finally not a question of incorporation (the interiorizing of cosmic space) but of objectification (the interior is anterior and seeks its correspondences).
Thus the knowledge that comes with microcosmic proportions is sickening: scrutinizing the books of the world, particularly searching for the image of God in the book of the body, both discovers and induces illness, illness, perhaps, that only further reading can cure. Donne's use of medicine recognizes that it is above all reading practices that determine somatic knowledge. Though the human body is an epitome, a summary recapitulation, Donne expresses extreme trepidation about formulating certain knowledge based on any reading in libro creaturarum. After all, God's creatures are but a "flat glasse," a "medium" (Sermons, 8.224); knowledge gleaned from the creatures is "weak." However, in order to separate rectified reading from the mere identification of spurious signs and signatures, this medium must be investigated with a surgeon's knife, a ready instrument for revealing the misery at the heart of things, which in itself is a spur to rectified conscience. The seat of that conscience is the heart, which was also metaphorically dissected. "When I am dead, and Doctors know not why," Donne writes in "The Dampe," "my friends curiositie / Will have me cut up to survay each part." The doctors find a "Picture" in Donne's heart (ll. 1-8; Grierson, 57). As man epitomizes the world, the heart epitomizes man.

In the Anatomie, Elizabeth Drury is the "heart" of the world ("The heart being perish'd, no part can be free" [l. 186]). Just as the body is an abridgement of the world, the centre of the body, the heart, is an "abundant Library" (Sermons, 3.365). Reading the heart, of course, requires opening the body. If, as Donne suggests, the world "is great Volume, and man the Index of that Booke," the universe is figured as a vast index of the human body (the anatomy as cosmos, inner space as outer

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144 As Donne writes in the Devotions, "Is this the honour which Man hath by being a little world, That he hath these earthquakes in him selfe, sodaine shakings; these lightnings, sodaine flashes; ... Is he a world to himselfe onely therefore ... to assist ... sickness[?]" (7-8). Man "could be a Microcosm, a world in himself, no other way, except all the misery of the world fell upon him" (Sermons 2.78).

145 On this topic, see Lewalski, Protestant Poetics, 147-178.

146 See above and Sermons, 2.253.
space), its legend retrieved in the heart replete with pictures, striations and text. In his epithalamion for the Earl of Sommerset, Donne allows "Idios" to bolster his argument about the omnipresence of the court with the following lines:

As man is of the world, the heart of man,

Is an epitome of Gods great booke

Of creatures, and man need no further looke[.]

(ll. 50-52; Grierson, 118).

Similarly, the focal point of "The Dampe" concurs with Donne's message in "The Legacie" (where the heart, which "colours, and corners had," is a gift and a book): although the entire body is Donne's book, it is the "naked thinking heart" that bears the fruit of diligent reading.147

That there was writing in the heart was by Donne's time a commonplace of both popular prose and theological disquisition; the locus classicus is perhaps 2 Corinthians 3.2-3.148 In the work of both divines and physicians of the early seventeenth century, the heart is the centre of the body, the locus of the affectus, the seat of the soul. In the words of Robert Erickson, in the early seventeenth century the heart "was the single most important word referring both to the body and to the mind."149

147 "The Legacie," ll. 17-24, "The Blossome," l. 27; Grierson, 19, 54. For Donne, ther are three states related to the heart --- either a heartlessness, "a doubtfull, a distracted" double heart or "Cor vagum, a wandring, a wayfaring, a weary heart: which is neither Inconsideration, nor Irresolution, but Inconstancie" (Sermons, 9.175-176).

148 In the authorized version, "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in table of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." Compare 2 Cor. 1.22, Rom. 2.15 and Ezek. 11.19, 36.26 and Sermons, 7.55, in which Donne meditates on "stony" and "fleshy" hearts. Early modern cardial inspection has been examined thoroughly by Robert A. Erickson, The Language of the Heart, 1600-1750 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997). Erickson mentions the book of the heart (16) but focuses on the Biblical and, to a lesser extent, medical underpinnings of early modern heart tropology.

149 Ibid., 11 (emphasis in original); 1-60. See, for example, the list of meanings attached to "cor" by Matthias Flacius Illyricus, Clavis Scripturae, 2 parts (Basel, 1617), 1.176, cited by Lewalski,
While other viscera are natural, or animal, the heart is "vitall": "As man is Microcosmus, an abridgement of the world, he hath heaven resembling his soule: earth his heart ... All the faculties of Man follow the Heart, as servaunts the Mistresse .... the Heart leads, directs, moves the parts of the body, and powers of the soule." Though there seems to be some confusion over the best analogue of the heart in the little world, the notion that the heart dominates the viscera was commonplace. Helkiah Crooke calls the heart the "sun in the microcosm"; and, in a rare poetic flourish, William Harvey agrees: "the heart ... is the beginning of life; the sun of the microcosm, even as the sun in his turn might well be designated the heart of the world." Citing the famous Menenius Agrippa parable, of which Shakespeare made abundant use in Coriolanus, Crooke draws on the repertoire of body politic tropes to note that "the Heart like a King maintaineth and cherrisheth with his lively and quickning heate, the life of all the partes." Donne somewhat equivocally agrees: the heart is composed of spirits which 'tune' the organ of the body: "The world containes ... / Divines for hearts" ("A Funerall Elegie," II. lines 21-23). In Donne's body politic, divines are the vital part of the body, while princes and merchants become limbs. But in the Devotions, hierarchy has been temporarily restored: the heart is the bedchamber of the house of the body. Although it is subject to the checks of the brain (a council), it has primogeniture, since it is the source of life and "King of man."

Protestant Poetics, 81, 446 note 40.

150 Adams, Mysticall Bedlam, 482-482.

151 Harvey, An Anatomical Disquisition on the Motion of the Heart and Blood in Animals, in Works, 47.

152 Crooke, Microcosmographia, 13.

153 Devotions, 56ff. On this passage, see David Norbrook, "The Monarchy of Wit and the Republic of Letters," 22. who cites the relevant literature. Norbrook argues, in contrast to Deborah Shuger, that Donne is "by no means unambiguously absolutist" (17). Though Donne has little trouble conjuring the analogy between the heart and the king, he is equivocal about assigning any place of office to the organs of the body. Nature's law is of course "To give every one his owne"; but the "primarie law of Nature" is that there is "no Proprietie, no Meum & Tuum, but an universall Communitie over all"
Even with the use of these analogies, the heart is particularly difficult to read; only God earns the title "cardiognostes," the knower of the heart. To Donne, the "broken glasses" and "ragges" of the heart are like a perplexing text ("The Broken Heart," ll. 25-32; Grierson, 44). The transparency that Drury exhibits as an "edition" and opisthograph finds its opposite in the secrecy of the heart. The heart is uncertain and unsearchable; And it is so, because it pursues those things which are *in fluxu,* ever in motion. ... If a man suffer his heart to issue upon any of these fluid and transitory things of this world, he shall have *cor vafrum, & inscrutabile.* He shall not know where to find his own heart (Sermons, 1.191).

Similar to his strictures in the *Anniversaries,* Donne recommends that "we keep clean that heart by a continuall diligence, and vigilancy over all our particular actions" (1.192). Focused on the uncertain actions of human beings in the world, the heart (a figure for rectified conscience) falters. As we have seen in chapter one, the tools used to deliberate *in fluxu* are rhetorical; the "continuall diligence" Donne recommends is the prudence, circumspected reasoning figured as reading and writing.

(57). While Donne was certainly no Digger, his reticence about visceral political analogies parallels his fragile assertions about obedience to the King. If, after all, the king is the heart, it is the most vulnerable part of the body: "How little of a Man is the Heart; and yet it is all, by which he is: and this continually subject, not onely to forraine poysons, conveyed by others, but to intestine poysons bred in our selves by pestilential sicknesses." The heart-king analogy is inflected with somatic and political instability. Indeed, "whilst we dispute whether the throne and seat of the soul be in the Heart, or Brain, or Liver, this tyrant sin will præoccupate all, and become all" (Sermons, 1.192).

154Jager, "The Book of the Heart." Recalling, for example, the *scholia cordis* poets, such as Francis Quarles, and Crashaw's 'flaming heart,' begins to focus concern with the trope of the *lisible and scriptible* heart in seventeenth-century verse. On the poetics of the heart in emblem literature, see Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics,* 179-212. The phrase "cardiognostes, the knower of the heart" is Elias Petley's (*The Royall Receipt: or, Hezekiah's Physicke* [London, 1623], 17). For the inscrutability of the heart, see *Sermons,* 1.190-193. God, of course, is the best anatomist: he can scrutinize the minutiae of a sinful heart. God "knowes all the diseases, windings and turnings" of the soul, "he is an excellent Anatomist" since "*all things are naked and open before his eyes*" (Richard Sibbes, *The Returning Backeslider* [London, 1639], 142). To Donne, God is the supreme anatomist, since he can recompact any body even after unfolding it (Sermons, 9.217).
In c. 1630, Donne once again opens the heart to textual metaphors:

God opens another book to us, his manuall, his bosome, his pocket book, his Vade Mecum, the Abridgement of all Nature, and all Law, his owne heart and conscience:

And this booke, though he shut it up, and clasp it ever so hard, yet it will sometimes burst open of it selfe; though he interline it with other studies, and knowledges, yet the Text it selfe, in the booke it selfe, the testimonies of the conscience, will shine though and appeare: Though he load it, and choak it with Commentaries and questions, that is, perplexe it with Circumstances, and Disputations, yet the matter it selfe, which is imprinted there, will present it selfe[.] (Sermons, 9.237).\(^{155}\)

The heart, as rectified conscience and as the cradle of faith, is the "second edition" of Christ's election (Sermons, 8.70). No amount of perplexing the text with idle wrangling will inhibit the work of cribration --- sorting and sifting the image of God in the "Rolls" of the heart (Devotions, 106). Like the transparency of emotion and intellecction in the ideal Christian body (Drury's opisthograph), the cardial text will "shine through and appeare." Embodying a text in the heart has its corollary in a textualized body. Even the body of Christ was imagined as a book. Indeed, In the early seventeenth century, there were well-worn paths through the bone-yards, or libraries, of Golgotha.

Imagining the body as a book engenders a form of reading that allows the individual Christian to develop an ethical engagement with Scripture and the sacraments in order to bring himself into conformity with the body of Christ. The body of Christ was both an anatomy\(^{156}\) and a

\(^{155}\) Donne denigrates interlineation in Sermons, 2.242.

\(^{156}\) "[A]s S.John speakes," Donne writes, "he takes Jesus in peeces, and after the Jews have crucified him, he dissects him, and makes him an Anatomy" (Sermons, 8.146). Compare Richard Sibbes, who proposes a method for thinking about Christ which places particular attention on the imagination of God in the flesh: "As the soule of man is first sinfull, and then sanctified; first humble, and then raysed: so our meditations of Christ must be in this order; first, thinke of Christ, as abased and crucified: for, the first comfort that the soule hath, is in Christ manifested in the flesh .... In the
text. As a text, his body was the "book of charity." The liber caritatis trope, the figuration of Christ's body as a book of charity or love, has a lengthy history. Donne and his contemporaries did not return to the crucifixion as to an inert object of contemplation: they were alive to the passion of Christ's suffering and were enjoined to read Christ's crucified body, God's body, as a text. In Sacrament, our thoughts must especially have recourse, in the first place, to Christ's Body broken, and his blood shed, as the Bread is broken, and the Wine poured out, that we have benefit by Christ's abasement and suffering" (Light from Heaven, Discovering the Fountaine Opened, the Angels Acclamations, the Churches Riches, the Rich Povertie, in Four Treatises [London, 1638], 197). Thus before one thinks of Christ's glory or exaltation, a meditation on his wounds, on his blood, on his suffering and abasement, is the first step. Since we are flesh, we begin with flesh (in which, as Donne has pointed out at length, there is no "soundnesse" [Psalm 38.3]). In the eyes of many early seventeenth-century poets and divines, there was no truer public anatomy than Christ's crucifixion, and no truer anatomists than God and the writers of the Gospel. Reading the body of Christ, as we shall see, was aided, though not accomplished, by anatomy.

157 In the liber caritatis trope, the "crucified body of Christ is compared to a book --- the limbs stretched upon the cross being likened to a parchment, the five great wounds to capital letters in red, and the marks of the scourging to the red and blue lines which are found in ancient 'books of hours'" (W. Fraser Mitchell, English Pulpit Oratory from Andrewes to Tillotson: a Study of its Literary Aspects [London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1932], 169-170). Vincent Gillespie has argued that a new focus on the crucified Christ as a book occurred in the context of controversies about literacy and the translation of the scriptures into the vernacular during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. See "Lukyne in Haly Bukes: Lectio in Some Late Medieval Spiritual Miscellanies," Spatmittelalterliche Geistliche Literatur in der Nationalsprache, Analecta Cartusiana 106, ed. James Hogg (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, 1984), 10-11. Janel Mueller has identified this motif in Erasmus, Katherine Parr and John Fisher ("Complications of Intertextuality: John Fisher, Katherine Parr and "The Book of the Crucifix,"" in Texts and Cultural Change in Early Modern England, ed. Cedric C. Brown and Arthur F. Marotti [London and New York: MacMillan and St. Martin's, 1997], 15-36; I encountered this article long after my first explorations of Fisher in 1991).

158 See Bennett, Poetry of the Passion, 162ff. Taking the notion of reading the flesh of Christ's body as the first imperative of preaching in addition to meditation, a contemporary of Donne's renounced his desire for any book but the open side of Christ's body. Daniel Featley writes:

For I desire no other Pulpit than that tree; no other Preacher then they crucified body; no other Text then thy death and passion; no other parts then thy wounds; no other amplification then thy extension; no other notes then thy markes; no other points then thy nails; no other booke then thy open side (Ancilla Pietatis: or, the Hand-Maid to Private Devotion [London, 1625], 302).

Christ's body resumes and exhibits the rhetorical disposition of the sermon. The wounds are parts and divisions of the text. The extension of his body, his marks, and the nails all punctuate the lesson Featley receives and transmits: the crucified body must be read and interpreted.
Donne's textual economy, there is no law, no verse of the Scriptures, that is not written on the body.

The writing on the surface and in the viscera of Christ's body is both human and divine. In order for there to be writing over "all the limbs of this body, [over] every particular book of the Bible [Donne notes] ... we must have _testimonial ab homine_, the testimony, that is, the interpretation of other men" (_Sermons_, 4.218). Thus there is a sense that the 'mysticall body' of Christ is a body of human words: "God made us with his word, and with our words we make God so farre, as that we make up the mysticall body of Christ Jesus with our prayers, with our whole liturgy." In turn, we "make the naturall body of Christ Jesus applicable to our soules, by the words of Consecration in the Sacrament"; we become "capable of that body" (_Sermons_, 3.259-260). Being capable of Christ's body (understood as the Church but also as an image by means of which one meditates on incarnation and embodiment) meant for Donne being part of an interpretive community that takes the crucifixion and passion as definitive. Of course, human writing is subject to error. In writing Christ's body, and reading what is already written there (the intention of the Holy Ghost), often the substance of the book is neglected in favour of its cover. We "have the image of God imprinted in our own souls," Donne writes, "bound up in this velum, in this parchmin, in this skin of ours, and we neglect the book, and image, and character, and seal, and all for the covering" (_Sermons_, 3.103-104).

Imagining the body as a book embodies the prudent, diligent reading Donne frequently prescribes. Yet Donne takes the metaphor a step further. In order to emphasize the prudence of a rectified reader, who avoids "the stupidity of a Stoique" and judiciously interprets "sensible and visible things," Donne applies somatic metaphors to the Bible itself. Scripture is a body; diligent readers must seek its interior, its soul, the intention of the Holy Ghost. The "body of Scriptures hath in it limbs taken from other bodies; and in the word of God, are the words of other men, other
authors, inlaid and inserted" (1.252, 9.312). Even difference on the *sacra pagina* (sectarian or doctrinal conflict) was resolved as "skin that covers some particular limb of the body, and not another" (*Sermons*, 10.113). Different interpretations have different skins, though they cover the same body; as Augustine writes, "knowledge is interwoven throughout the text of Scripture like so many nerves." In the face of this variance, Donne urges a meditation on the 'soul' of this body (Scripture), "the sense of the Holy Ghost in that place" (*Sermons*, 4.223). Although it is prone to misinterpretation, human testimony is required for a diligent reading of the 'soul' of Scripture. That testimony must be imbued, as Donne insists, with "due temper."

Donne's exchange of bodies for books emphasizes the shared intellectual and hermeneutic techniques he applies to both. The subjects differ, but the skills agree: Donne draws on the rhetorical and hermeneutic traditions to construct an amalgam of readerly prudence, itself epitomized by a transparent body (Drury) that wears its secrets on its skin. If, as Donne suggests, bodies are books, if the image of God is annealed in the flesh --- the crazy brittle glass in George Herbert’s "The Windows"; as Donne put it, "soules diginifie / Us to be glasse" (*Epitaph: Omnibus,* ll. 7-8; Grierson, 266) --- then the ways in which the body and its skin are interpreted are indices of a larger horizon of reading practices. As we shall see, this exchange between bodies and books, parts and wholes was based on an uneasy conjunction between surface and depth: skin versus viscera, the

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159 Andreas Hyperius proposed to "draw out the entrailes of the scriptures, both what and how many kindes of divine Sermons there bee" (*De Formandis Concionibus Sacris* [Basel, 1579, translated as *The Practis of Preaching*], trans. John Ludham [London, 1577], quoted in Lewalski, *Donne’s Anniversaries and the Poetry of Praise*, 180).


161 "It is so for the whole body, *The bible*; it is so for all the limbes of this body, *every particular book of the Bible*; and it is so, for the soul of this body, the true *sense of every place*, of every book thereof; for, for that, (the sense of the place) we must have *testimonium ab homine*, the testimony, that is, the interpretation of other men" (*Sermons*, 4.218).
rhetoric of the body versus its meaning, action versus intention.

Just as Drury's exemplary life is figured as an "edition" in the *Anniversaries*, so Donne proposes other exemplary lives as texts. He refers to "all the letters of the Alphabet of our life," to his life as a "sentence,"\(^{162}\) and directs us to an exemplary "booke," *Job* (*Sermons*, 3.188). "Bee thine owne text then, and bee thine owne comment," he writes in a sermon preached at Lincoln's Inn (2.157).\(^{163}\) While he habitually denigrates print, for Donne textuality embodies the exigencies of human experience. The mutable, interpretable text represents both the labyrinthine nature of ethical experience and the variable temperament of the living body. Derived from the application of Christian ethics and the sacraments in preaching, rectified human practice in the world is "the best printing" (*Sermons*, 7.255).

While Donne recognizes that "dead carkasses things written are, in respect of things spoken," searching for meaning ("that Spirit, which is ever the same in equall devotion"), inanimating a text, as he puts it, "makes a writing and a speaking equall means to edification."\(^{164}\) Like the cadaver subjected to dissection, texts are carcasses and require "Anatomist[s] of words" (*Essays*, 48).\(^{165}\) Both

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\(^{162}\) In a letter to an unidentified lord, whom Gosse suggests is the Earl of Dorset (although that is unclear; see Bald, 455), Donne writes that to "make myself believe that our life is something, I use in my thoughts to compare it to something; if it be like anything that is something. It is like a sentence, so much as may be uttered in a breathing; and such a difference as is in styles is in our lives, contracted and dilated" (Gosse, 2.208). Sir Thomas Browne refers to the "Alphabet of man" (*Religio Medici*, 83).

\(^{163}\) Donne uses textuality as a figure of life elsewhere; see, for example, *Sermons*, 1.266: "every man may find some such particular condemnation in himself, and in his own crosses, if he will be read his own history in a true copy." "All this life," Donne later writes, "is but a Preface, or but an Index and Repertory to the book of life" (6.286). Affliction is also figured as a book (2.354)

\(^{164}\) "To the Right Honourable Countess of Montgomery," Donne's dedicatory letter to a sermon preached 1618/19 (*Sermons*, 2.179).

\(^{165}\) In "Christ's Victorie in Heaven," Giles Fletcher equates microcosm-macrocosm with living and dead bodies: "So that this Creature [man] well might called be / Of the great world, the small epitome, / Of the dead world, the live, and quicke anatomie" (Giles and Phineas Fletcher, *Poetical Works*, ed. Frederick S. Boas [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1908], 1.20).
texts and flesh require 'inanimation,' which is akin to the application of doctrine Donne demands of his auditory. The inanimation Donne proposes in the Anniversaries is a diligent, prudent reading, based on "due temper" and rectified reason, aided by medical metaphors. Citing Plato, Donne confirms that "he that will cure the Head, must cure the Body; and he that will cure the Body, must cure the Soul; that is, must bring the Minde to a temperature, a moderation, an equanimity" (Sermons, 1.220). The mind has "physick" as well as the body (5.321). The sifting and cribrating of texts represents for Donne the complexioned reasoning that he applies to bodies and demands of readers. While anatomizing the body has a limited, pedagogical purpose, it is an unfolding that merely exposes other surfaces, other signs, that have to be interpreted and read, ultimately thickening the distance between the noumenal and the phenomenal. In order to collapse that distance, to draw the body closer to the soul and to heal both, various projects of inquiry --- whether directed to bodies or texts --- occasion a form of medical casuistry. Both the physician or the hermeneut must apply their tools with a concern for text and context.

"To be a good Divine," Donne writes, "requires human knowledge" (Sermons, 9.254). In the Essays in Divinity, the Anniversaries and the sermons, as we have seen, Donne views bodies and texts through a medical lens. While the lapses and errors of reason are represented often by the 'new philosophy' and medicine, here and in chapter one we have seen Donne use the "grounds" of physic as a means to articulate forms of reading and sign-inference, equating knowledge with expression and discretion with a particular kind of embodiment. His use of anatomical metaphors to open questions about parts and wholes, causes and effects allowed Donne to move from the superficies of natural to the depths of rectified reason. The concomitant of rectified reason is rectified reading, typified by Elizabeth Drury who "all libraries had thoroughly read" with the "Image of God" in her heart.

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106 Donne links medicine with casuistry in a letter to Thomas Lucy, 9 October 1607 (Letters, 13). On Lucy, see Bald, 184-185.
Decorum is essential to rectification. The next chapter establishes the importance of decorum and prudence to the reading of the body through the lenses of anatomy and somiotics.

\[\text{167In order to cultivate a "perfect heart ... [t]here is conformitie of the Will and affection unto the intellect, transformed by the renovation of the Mind, when the exorbitant and irregular passions, are brought to the obedience of Christ" (Petley, The Royall Receipt, 17).}\]
CHAPTER THREE:
AN ABYSS OF CAUSE

"Let every one of us therefore dissect and cut up himself, and consider what he was before God raised him friends to bring those abilities, and good parts, which he had, into knowledge, and into use...." When Donne preached these words at White Hall in 1618, William Harvey was lecturing on the structure of the human body for the College of Physicians. Harvey assumed the Lumleian lectureship in 1615; he did not resign until 1656, a year before his death. From 1616 until at least 1626, Harvey compiled extensive notes designed to accompany his lectures. Often taken as evidence of his early theories of circulation, these notes have survived, replete with Harvey's own interlineations marked by a prominent "WH."

After discussing various medical and philosophical practices assembled under the term anatomy, the usefulness of physiognomy and the "passions of the viscera" (by which he seems to mean the condition of various internal organs thought to seat the passions), Harvey ends the Prelectiones by drawing his students' attention to the ancient relationship between philosophy, medicine and rhetoric. "NB," Harvey writes, "Galen was not discoverer of nerves from brain to senses. Cicero, Tusculanian Disputations, I, p. 339. Likewise Cicero [has] much [to say] about the

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1In 1582, Lord Lumley and Richard Caldwell, a fellow of the College of Physicians of London, obtained Queen Elizabeth's permission to establish instruction in surgery at the College, read in both Latin and English, in a room built "for the better celebration of this solemn lecture." The universities had established lectures in physic; yet since surgery was taken "separatlie" from physic, the Lumleian lectures were a "good and charitable creation" (Raphael Holinshed, The First and Second [and third] Volumes of Chronicles ... Now Newlie Augmented and Continued ... to the year 1586 by John Hooker [London, 1587], 3.1349). It seems that the lecture may have had a political purpose. The full passage reads: "A godlie and charitable creation doubtlesse, such as was the more needfull, as hitherto hath beene the wante and lacke so hurtfull; sith that onelie in ech universities by the foundation of the ordinarie and publicke lessons, there is one of physicke, but none of surgerie, and this onlie of surgerie and not of physicke, I mean so as physicke is now taken separatlie from surgerie and that part which onlie useth the hand as it is sorted by the apothecarie" (emphasis mine). See Cook, The Decline of the Old Medical Regime for the controversies between physicians, surgeons and apothecaries.
use of the parts in De Natura Deorum, book 2." Why would the most dominant figure of the English medical establishment, versed in ancient and contemporary anatomical knowledge and praised as the most significant and influential physician in the seventeenth century by his contemporaries and ours, direct his students to Cicero, sometimes received, as we have seen, as an (academic) "Sceptique"?

Unlike Vives, who insists that, once trained, physicians should not read Cicero, Demosthenes, Virgil or Homer, Harvey seems to propose Cicero as source of medical knowledge.

My purpose in this chapter is to treat seriously the context of Harvey's allusion to Cicero (and certainly that is all it is, since neither the Tusculan Disputations nor De Natura Deorum offer the guidance Harvey claims) and to suggest that this allusion represents Harvey's recognition that, while

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3"Therefore let not teachers train one destined to afford practical assistance to health, to read Cicero or Demosthenes, Virgil or Homer: still less to study the authors of the art of grammar, neither to study the historians or even the philosophers: unless it be such as can bring some assistance in the treatment of those who have committed their health to their doctor's care. These studies must be learned before, and not studied concurrently with, their professional work. To all practices and studies of the literary art he will say 'farewell'; his attention will be bent and strained forward to this one art alone" (Juan Luis Vives, Vives: On Education, a Translation of the De Tradendis Disciplinis of Juan Luis Vives, trans. Foster Watson [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1913], 223).

4At 1.20.46-48, Cicero speculates about the "passages" from the seat of the soul to the eyes, ears and nose (Tusculan Disputations, trans. J.E. King [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927], 55-57) and at 2.9.25, 11.30, 23.59-60,27.93-96, 47.122, and especially 54-59.133-150, Cicero discusses the relationships between parts and wholes (De Natura Deorum, trans. H. Rackham
anatomy is an empirical pursuit, discerning the relationship between the body and the senses is fraught with uncertainty. In other words, Harvey's reference to Cicero is only medical insofar as the relationship between organic structure and function is probable, rather than demonstrable, knowledge. That is, the sensory somatic axis is not so much seen as imagined. Speculation about the relationship between perception, the senses, the "inward wits" and the body was conjectural. Perhaps it is no coincidence, then, that the Disputations, which proposes reason as a bulwark against perturbations caused by pain, grief and the passions, also endorses probable knowledge. At the very least, Harvey's allusion suggests a discernible cross-pollination between medicine, rhetoric and philosophy; perhaps it is true that, as Everard Digby suggests in 1579, "Where philosophy leaves off, medicine begins"?

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Early modern medical theorists and practitioners recognized sign-inference (reasoning from visible instances and examples, the rhetoric of "ocular demonstration") as central to medical theory and practice. Harvey certainly acknowledged the uncertainty of medical inquiry and attempted to bolster its authority by recourse to the body, to "Nature's book so open and legible," as Abraham Cowley insisted in his "Ode: Upon Dr. Harvey." As Harvey maintains in his introduction to De Generatione Animalium (1651), Aristotle is correct both about the necessity of acquiring knowledge through the sensual apprehension of particulars and the confirmation of that knowledge by universal concepts. Knowledge proceeds, Harvey writes, from things more known to things less known; and much remained unknown about the terra incognita of the human body. In his characteristic denigration of verbal controversy (and thus of scholastic natural philosophy), Harvey criticizes his contemporaries for playing "advocates" rather than being anatomists. If the knowledge of something like the somatic sensory axis is probable, such knowledge should be grounded on the authority of personal experience, not the experience of authors. "[V]ersimilitudes" and analogies often produce "chimeras" and "delirium"; knowledge should be based on "visible instance[s] or example[s]."


10Letter to Paul Marquard Slegel, 1651, in Works, 598.

11"[S]trive after personal experience," Harvey writes in the introduction to De Generatione Animalium, "[d]o not rely on the experiences of others" (Works, 157).

12De Generatione Animalium, in Works, 154-163. On the relationship between Harvey and Aristotle and the development of Harvey's epistemology, see Walter Pagel, William Harvey's Biological Ideas: Selected Aspects and Historical Background (Basel and New York: Karger, 1967), 23-47 and French,
Reading visible instances and examples occasioned the circumstanced thinking Donne, for example, advocates in relation to Scriptural hermeneutics. As we have seen, such thinking drew a repertoire of techniques from rhetoric and hermeneutics. The expansion of somiotic knowledge also necessitated borrowing tools of discovery, interpretation and reasoning from Cicero, Quintilian and Augustine, hardly stalwart figures in medical history. Physicians were charged with the preservation and prolongation of health; their borrowings from ancient and modern rhetoric and hermeneutics was part of the search for adequate tools used to interpret and restore the equilibrium of passions and humours in the body. Rhetoric and hermeneutics provided tools both for discerning significant signs and symptoms in a living body and for dampening the "civil war" among the passions.

Having described the medical aspects of Donne's early hermeneutics and argued for his leave-taking of anatomy as a static, normalized form of somatic knowledge, the next two chapters investigate the intrications of medicine, rhetoric and hermeneutics in terms of Harvey's assertions. One of the major axes of this relationship is symptomatology. Here, I outline the development of a set of rhetorical sutures --- joining marks and tokens of disease to imagined causes --- contemporaries employed when reasoning about the living, human body.

I argue that the use of medical metaphors and methods in early modern England is based on the evaluation of medicine as an uncertain discipline concerned with traces, parts and indications, probability and analogy. I scrutinize early modern attitudes toward the uncertainty of medicine in order to show that prudence and decorum are essential to this qualitative, inexact science; I place the relationship between rhetoric, medicine and hermeneutics in a context which stretches to the early eighteenth century. Despite (or because of) its uncertainty, then, medicine provided a variety of writers with trenchant and incisive means for thinking about evidence, cause and effect in human

Harvey's Natural Philosophy.
experience; at the very least, medicine became a reservoir of splendid metaphors for such writers as Donne, Herbert, Milton and Traherne. Donne used somiotics to focus his attention on the relationship between the body, the soul and God, reading both the signs of his illness and the signs of Scripture with the sagacity of a skilled physician. Without access to the "secrets" of disease, physicians and writers who employed medical metaphors and methods used sign-inference to suture effects to causes. Establishing a probable explanation for the occurrence of sickness in a living body depends on decorum and prudence, experience and example.

No arte is more unconstante then phisicke

In 1530, Agrippa set out to purge the arts and sciences of their vain pretensions to certain knowledge. His skepticism was not merely academic. Attempting to defuse Agrippa's potential reception as an unrepentant skeptic, his English translator drew an analogy between the sciences and an afflicted body. For "like as diseased bodies," he writes, "havinge some infirmitie, are not to be abandoned, but to be recured, preserved, and chearished, so ought Sciences and Knowledges ... not to be dispised, but will all endeour ought to be purged from their chaffe, and brought to the former perfection." Since science was "no especiall thinge, above the very Beleefe, that is, where the goodnesse of the Author, moveth the free will of the Schollers Beleefe," the sick body of knowledge, of which medicine was a significant part, demanded a radical cure. To Agrippa, the "infirmitee of our understanding," the lack of access to causes and deficient sense perception guaranteed the uncertainty of human knowledge.

Few disciplines escape Agrippa's invective; medicine is criticized for its sectarianism as well as its pretension to certainty. Built on nothing other than "false experiments ... fortified with the light

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beleefe of the Sicke," medicine's place in the order of knowledge is insecure. "What certaine thinge can Phisitions promesse," Agrippa writes, "if that be true which Plinie writeth, that no Arte is more unconstante then Phisicke, nor whiche ofteren is chaunged?"14 To Agrippa, since it was based mostly on belief, the only thing incontrovertible about medicine was its detrimental effects on human health. Medicine is an "Arte of manslaughter altogether servill, although it presume to passe under the title of Philosophie"; its province is variegated experience15 and its mode of enquiry suspect. Physicians are led by conjecture rather than reason or the knowledge of causes; "the whole Arte of Physicke [is] nothing els but chaunce and conjecture." While physicians claimed certain knowledge about the human body and the remedies they administered, in truth (and indeed in practice) they were prone to error. There is no "certaintee emonge them, but all their promises be vaine trifles"; they practise "but by opinion alone, supposall, and conjecture." Pliny's derisive comments about the uncertainty of medical practice and its modes of enquiry echo throughout the period; Petrarch and Peter of Abano, John Securis and Francis Bacon, for instance, identified similar problems in the epistemology and practice of medicine. Although severe, Agrippa was read by many of the figures that follow, Montaigne and Bacon in particular; at the very least, his work codified one strain in the revival of ancient skepticism.16


15"[T]here is nothing more available to the trade of Phisicke then experience, wherein it is manifestely scene, that the beste learned men have beene oftertimes overcome by an olde wife of the Countrie" ("Of Phisicke, that consisteth in practice," Vanitie, 309).

16The relationship between skepticism and medical knowledge is discussed briefly in Popkin, particularly in relation to later seventeenth-century figures like Gassendi. Popkin suggests that although Agrippa's work "does not present any sceptical analysis of human knowledge, it represents a facet of the revival of ancient scepticism" (Richard H. Popkin, The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Spinoza, 2nd ed. [Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979], 23-
Most writers who derided medicine were content to enumerate a stock constellation of problems: the brazen profit-seeking and vanity of doctors, their disagreement about remedies (often emblematic of religious and political views as much as professional concern), the profoundly diverse conceptions of the body and diagnosis held by various schools and sects and the lability of medical theory and practice. In the sixteenth century, Jobst de Necker, one of Vesalius' many plagiarists, claimed with some assurance that medicine "has been overlain and obscured especially because of the great handicap of ignorance, as the majority of physicians did not know anything except what they had sucked superficially from official pandects."17 To Robert Underwood, in his 1605 anatomical poem, "The chiefest rules of this Art, / yea and his greatest ground, / Stand but on observations, / and on conjectures fraile." Keenly aware of both its practice and history, Donne thought very little of medical advances, upbraiding his contemporaries for looking at the human body through Galen's spectacles.18 Medical knowledge progressed, he claims, by exceptions set apart from the extant body of knowledge, rather than an "improving, an advancing, a multiplying of former inceptions." The stultifying persistence of outdated epistemologies --- Galenism for Donne --- frustrated its development. Drawing conclusions from the inspection of the body was a complex, fragile activity.


17Quoted in Harvey Cushing, A Bio-Bibliography of Andreas Vesalius (New York: Schuman's, 1943), 18.

Medical learning was problematic both in terms of the recording and theorization of lived somatic experience and with respect to contemporary evaluations of medical scholarship and history.

Medicine was disparaged as poor philosophy, bad history and worse practice.19

In 1616, Geoffrey Goodman impugned medicine with uncertainty by suggesting that even the best physicians dissimulate. Goodman offers the derisive suggestion that the fullness of the *materia medica* was the result of the deficiency of medical knowledge; it was simply the covetousness of physicians that obfuscated prescription and cure "to make it seem wonderfull and incomprehensible."

In truth, physicians "...doe but guesse at their physicke" and they learn not through anatomy, not by reason or discourse, but by "experience."20 Throughout the 1620s and 1630s, diverse writers charged the medical profession with arrogance and uncertainty. By mid-century, an especially prolific period for medical writers in the vernacular, medicine was deemed a highly suspect, uncertain art.21 Noah Biggs, George Thomson, Marchamont Needham, Thomas Sydenham, Robert Boyle and others were

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20*The Fall of Man, or the Corruption of Nature, Proved by the Light of our Naturall Reason* (London, 1616), 97.

convinced that medical method, still grounded in Galen, was immature, often citing Bacon as their source. In particular, the hollow spectacle of anatomical demonstration and the difficulty of diagnosis were frequent targets of derision.

Although writers as diverse as Andrew Kingsmill, Richard Rogers and John Donne occupied the discursive position of an anatomist in the early seventeenth century, making "anatomies" of sinners, texts, words, Christ on the cross and delving into "every veine and little nerve" of the human body, claims that anatomy advanced the practice of medicine were vigorously questioned. As the depth and breadth of anatomical investigation increased in seventeenth-century England, its claims to advance somatic knowledge were more thoughtfully and more forcefully challenged. While Agrippa implied that dissection was vainly used to discover the "placing, order, measure, worke, nature and secretes of every member, to learne thereby howe and in what places they [physicians] should cure," he does not condemn anatomy outright for its failure to supplement therapeutic practice. Rather, Agrippa was appalled by its cruelty. Cruel or not, anatomy was deemed important in mid-century; few agreed, however, on the reasons for its importance.

Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to both critics and defenders, however, medical semiotics was the most fragile aspect of the "unconstante" art of physic. As Lionardo di

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23"Of the Anatomist Arte, or cuttinge of menne by Phisitions," *Vanitie*, 86.319.

24Through to the late seventeenth century, two conflicting views emerged in debates about anatomical study. One the one hand, physicians asserted the importance of the ocular inspection of the human body as well as its therapeutic relevance; on the other, its critics were convinced that, in Marchamont Needham's words, diseases "are in their Causes remote from ocular inspection" ("To the Reader," preface to Franciscus de la Boe Sylvius, *A New Idea of the Practise of Physic* [London, 1675], sig. c3r). To Thomas Sydenham, for example, anatomy merely exposed "new superficies for ourselves to stare at" (*Anatomie* [1668], in Kenneth Dewhurst, *Dr. Thomas Sydenham (1624-1689): His Life and Original Writings* [London: Wellcome Historical Medical Library, 1966], 79-91).
Capoa put it in 1684, "[m]ost uncertain always and obscure are the Symptoms of diseases."\(^\text{25}\) No "discipline is more subject to deception with regard to cause, than is medicine."\(^\text{26}\) As we have seen, Donne presented his own view of the development of medical thought from Hippocrates to Paracelsus in which one of the keys to progress was a renewed attention to the relationship between cause and effect in a living body. The focus of this attention is the symptom. In the following section, I outline both Montaigne's and Bacon's attitudes toward medicine in general and symptomatology in particular. From different perspectives, both Montaigne and Bacon present prudent, circumstanced symptomatology, bolstered by discursive and rational resources drawn from rhetoric and hermeneutics, as an essential constituent of the knowledge of a living, human body. Both confirm William Petty's position that few "diseases have their pathognomical signs" and that "few know these signs, without repeated experience of them."\(^\text{27}\) They differ, however, on Petty's third point, that these signs should be known "in others rather than themselves": while Bacon proposes reasoning by analogy to unlock the secrets of normative, living bodies, Montaigne uses similar techniques (symptom histories, analogical thinking) to radically particularize somatic experience. As we shall see, early modern physicians negotiate the individual experience of affliction using similar tools.


\(^{27}\)In a letter to Robert Boyle about his hypochondria, Petty writes: "Few terrible diseases have their pathognomical signs; few know these signs, without repeated experience of them, and that in others rather than themselves. Moreover, the same inward causes produce different outward signs; and, vice versa, the same outward signs may proceed from different inward causes; and therefore those little rules of prognostication, found in our books, need not always be so religiously believed" (Petty to Boyle, 15 April 1653, in Boyle, *The Works of the Honourable Robert Boyle*, ed. Thomas Birch, 2nd ed., 6 vols. [London, 1772], 1.138-139).
Speculum Matricis

With one critical difference, Michel de Montaigne's evaluation of medicine follows most critical assessments of early modern medicine. Although it was not an entirely futile pursuit — surgery is an exacting and useful art; it "sees and feels what it is doing" — medicine was presumptuous and conjectural. According to Montaigne, medicine is hampered in particular by the inability to see inside a suffering, living body. Physicians had no "speculum matricis to reveal to them our brain, our lungs, and our liver" ("Of the Resemblance of Children to Fathers," 585). Without a lens that would enable a clear vision of the "matrix" of a sick body, Montaigne concludes, contradictory and unsound reasoning is more apparent in medicine than in any other art. Citing Pliny with respect to the ancient, sectarian controversies over the causes of disease, he insists that although medicine was the most important "science practised among us, ... [it] is unfortunately the most uncertain, the most confused, and agitated by the most changes" (585). Adhering to a skeptical tradition that stretches at least from Pliny through Pyrrho to Securis and P.J.G. Cabanis, Montaigne claimed that, like rhetoric, medicine was rife with "conjecture and divination." The "very promises of medicine are incredible."28 Medicine, like rhetoric, treated the sick; like rhetoric, too, medicine was founded upon "examples and experience" ("so is my opinion," Montaigne writes, impugning physicians for their ignorance).29

28"Of the Resemblance of Children to Fathers," 2.37.587. Compare Florio's translation: "God knowes how hard the knowledge of most of these partes is: As for example, how shall he finde out the proper signe of the disease, every maladie being capable of an infinitie number of signes; How many debates, doubts and controversies have they amongst themselves about the interpretations of Urine?" and "Whereby I judge the arte of Chirurgery much more certaine; For, it seeth and handleth what it doth; and therein is lesse conjecture and divination. Whereas Physitions have no speculum matricis, to discover our braine, our lungs and our liver unto them. The very promises of phisicke are incredible" (443). Montaigne echoes Agrippa's comment that "shoppe Phisicke ... is altogether for the moste parte devinatorie" ("Of Phisicke, that consisteth in practise," Vanitie, 312).

29On early modern examples and the rhetoric of exemplarity, see John D. Lyons, Exemplum: the Rhetoric of Example in Early Modern France and Italy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 3-34, 118-153 (on Montaigne) and 154-170 (on Descartes).
Thus although for physicians "All their study is practice," medicine was susceptible to the same criticisms as rhetoric: its principles were fragile, its claims exaggerated and its practice uncertain. Disease, like matter itself, is protean. As Donne insists, "ill affections of the spleene complicate, and mingle themselves with every infirmitie of the body, ... wind in the body will counterfet any disease" (Devotions, 29). Enumerating the factors that influence disease, Montaigne invokes the common conception that God is the sole perspicuous physician. Whereas physicians are given to "controversies and inconsistencies of judgement," he writes, "God knows how difficult is the knowledge of most of these details; for how, for example, shall [a doctor] find the proper symptom of the disease, each disease being capable of an infinite number of symptoms?" ("Of the Resemblance of Children to Fathers," 585, 587). How might medical practitioners reason, then, from effect to cause if the number and complexity of effects so complicates the process, if there was no speculum matrieis? Montaigne's answer was that men must become their own physicians and judge by experience, aware of the exigencies of their bodies, its disease and its symptoms. His antidote to the debilitating uncertainty of medicine was itself medical: given the impossibility of a coherent theory of medicine that accounts for the particulars of any given body, Montaigne circulated in himself, as he put it, dissecting, recording and cribrating his symptoms.

Recognizing the futility of attempting to compare atomized, particular experience with universal knowledge, Montaigne's evaluation of medicine hinges on examples as potential antidotes to heterodoxy. By the end of the Essays, "a founding document of the modern humanities," Montaigne has proposed his own body, rather than the bodies of history and antiquity, as the most

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30See Cook, "The New Philosophy and Medicine," 406-407 for a discussion of these issues. The quotation is a lawyer speaking at what Cook calls a "crucial early seventeenth-century court case."

31See, for example, "Of Practice," 2.6.273.
potent example. His skepticism about medicine is checked by the potential exemplarity of his own experience of illness and embodiment; but it was fostered by the infirmity of ratiocination. In most cases, human reason gropes vaguely after causes and neglects "cases," assiduously passing over facts for their consequences ("Of Cripples," 785). Such is the case with medicine, in which chance ("fortune") is more valuable than reason ("Of the Resemblance of Children to Fathers," 579). If sickness and, by extension, the human body are unassailable by reason, what is the point of developing and refining medical method? How is one to propose the experience of one's body as an example?

In "Of Experience," Montaigne records his pointed refusal of method, medical or otherwise. Aristotle insisted that there can be no science of particulars; by contrast, Montaigne eschews the systematization of somatic experience and luxuriates in the particular. His "mimetic quest" is to represent experience in a new literary form meant to "assume the contours of experience"; his essays as "notions in search of truth" were inevitably full of "self-contradiction and tentativeness." Since ignorance is incontrovertible, he does not attempt to assemble the "infinite variety of actions, so diverse and so disconnected," into types, categories or classes available to human scrutiny. Rather, he presents his experience of "bodily health ... pure, not at all corrupted by art or theorizing" (826); pure experience is fragmentary. Yet in medicine experience, defined as "the comprehension and memory of what is seen often and in the same condition," was paramount. No one, Galen asserted, can practice medicine without recourse to experience. However, somewhat disingenuously, since at

32Timothy Hampton, who cites the relevant literature, argues that the final pages of the Essays are "structured on the paradoxical relationship between a judgement that becomes ever finer and a body that slips ever deeper into infirmity" (Writing from History: the Rhetoric of Exemplarity in Renaissance Literature [Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990], 193.

other points in the *Essays* he was at pains to distinguish example from precept, evidence from experience, Montaigne reveals his affinity for broken knowledge:

I speak my meaning in disjointed parts, as something that cannot be said all at once and in a lump. ... Not only do I find it hard to link our actions with one another, but each one separately I find hard to designate properly by some principal characteristic, so two-sided and motley do they seem in different lights ("Of Experience," 824-825).

The diversity and complexity of human behaviour renders the fabric of actions that constitute the phenomenal world opaque. Indeed, human experience, the strata of actions, sentiments and passions that constitute the quotidian, speaks, in the poet Robert Herrick's words, of a "wilde civility," impermeable to rational precepts. "So much uncertainty there is in all things," Montaigne writes, "so gross, obscure and obtuse is our perception" ("Of Cripples," 784) that actions cannot be linked with one another, let alone causes. In the meditation on law which begins the essay, confirming his failure to moor rational enquiry to experience, Montaigne insists that the "Multiplication of our imaginary cases will never equal the variety of the real examples." The noumenal and the phenomenal rarely meet, most rarely, perhaps, in sickness.

Yet Montaigne's particular ailment (the stone) offers little to "guess about." Although nature has "utterly unknown ways of her own," with a simple pathology, we "are freed from the worry into which other diseases cast us by the uncertainty of their causes and conditions and progress" ("Of Experience," 840, 839). Nevertheless, in light of the natural desire for knowledge, physicians assume access to causation through experience. Experience itself, however, was as polymorphous as reason.14 "Experience is really its own dunghill in the subject of medicine," he writes, at once

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14"Reason has so many shapes that we know not which to lay hold of; experience has no fewer" ("Of Experience," 815). On Montaigne's concept of experience, see, for example, Paradis, "Montaigne, Boyle and the Essay of Experience."
resolute and maudlin about the impossibility of generalizing individual experience.

Faced with the asymmetrical relationship between human experience and its representation in the human sciences, Montaigne offers a form of horizontal analogy as a means by which one might secure access to and ethically evaluate experience. His example is law.

All things hold together by some similarity; every example is lame, and the comparison that is drawn from experience is always faulty and imperfect; however, we fasten together our comparisons by some corner. Thus the laws serve, and thus adapt themselves to each of our affairs, by some roundabout, forced, and biased interpretation ("Of Experience," 819).

The instrument used to prise significant moments from a series of experiences is the example, however imperfect. Examples are lame (cloche); they are essentially pathological, departing from the "normal" course of things to point up singularity, or, in this case, the latent similarity of things. The echoes of Bacon are evident. Bacon too sought to unmoor his inquiries from stultifying scholasticism and body forth his limited knowledge in aphorisms. "Aphorisms, representing a knowledge broken, do invite men to enquire farther; whereas Methods, carrying the shew of a total, do secure men, as if they were at furthest." 35 Bacon's desire to render the results of his investigations in a useful and

35 Against the assertions of recent literary historians, Brian Vickers reminds us that the aphorism is not "the method of fragments" (as James Stephens asserts) nor a feature of style but a question of content. Although I agree with most of Vickers' intervention, Bacon does attach an epistemological relevance to aphorisms and, moreover, though the two are not necessarily related, to "broken knowledge." This notion of broken knowledge is very important in medicine, since its form of knowing was distilled into and disseminated by aphorisms since at least the writings of Hippocrates (Donne certainly knew Hippocratic aphorisms). For the view that Bacon endorsed a "broken knowledge" and was "essentially a conservative thinker" who confused forms, substances and qualities, see Michael Hattaway, "Bacon and 'Knowledge Broken': Limits for Scientific Method," Journal of the History of Ideas 39 (1978): 183-197. Mary Horton comes to an admirable defense of Bacon in her reply, "Bacon and 'Knowledge Broken': An Answer to Michael Hattaway," Journal of the History of Ideas 43 (1982): 487-504, and Brian Vickers reacts to Hattaway's argument with vitriol in, "Francis Bacon and the Progress of Knowledge," Journal of the History of Ideas 53 (1992): 495-518. Both Horton (489-491) and Vickers (503, 515-516), however, grant the importance of analogy as a requisite aspect
useable form in order to spur men to action contrasts sharply with the inheritance of aphoristic
writing. Medicine may have provided Bacon with a model.36

Assembling the disjointed parts of human experience along a continuum of equivalence ("by
some similarity") conjures the Aristotelian paradigm, the example which speaks to the relationship
between parts and parts, rather than parts and wholes; the paradigm is "a variety of induction
which brings out the meaning of a thing by comparing it with one or more other things which are like
it but clearer or better known" or the visible with the invisible.37 Although Montaigne is a diligent
venator, he hunts for particulars, for traces, signs and clues, rather than causes; in this sense too his
knowledge is broken. Montaigne detects along the axis of particularity the impossibility of total
knowledge, unless, as John Lyons argues, that knowledge is articulated historically.38 This hope is

of an underdeveloped Baconian natural philosophy. See also Vickers, "Bacon among the Literati:
and the Authority of the Aphorism," Prose Studies 11 (1988): 60-71. The most recent account of
"broken knowledge" is Stephen Clucas, "A Knowledge Broken: Francis Bacon's Aphoristic Style
and the Crisis of Scholastic and Humanist Knowledge-Systems," in English Renaissance Prose:
History, Language, Politics, ed. Neil Rhodes (Tempe: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies,
1997), 147-172. "If the humanist, the occult-scientific, and the pedagogical traditions stressed the
aphorism's ability to contain the 'integrum sensum' of a science," Clucas writes, "... Bacon ... radically
resituated it. ... [Bacon's aphorisms] transcend the quiescent assent of totalization, and instead act as a
progressive spur to action" (164-165). Clucas argues that as "a form of knowledge which was based on
'knowledge drawn freshly ... out of particulars' [3.453], the aphorism seemed to Bacon to be the
best antidote to the linguistic quibbling of contemporary scientific discourse" (152). The sources he
cites are germane. As we shall see, enthymemes are figured as broken syllogisms.

36Humphrey Rolleston, "Medical Aphorisms, Chiefly in English," Bulletin of the History of Medicine
10 (1941): 544-567. Clucas notes that Hippocrates aphorisms had been published in 1590 along with
those of Celsus ("A Knowledge Broken,' 154-155).

37Gerald F. Else, Aristotle's Poetics: The Argument (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press,
1957), 19; emphasis in the original.

38John D. Lyons, "Circe's Drink and Sorbonnic Wine: Montaigne's Paradox of Experience," in Unruly
Press, 1995), 86-103. Lyons' essay came to my attention too late for me to fully address its claims,
although I agree that Montaigne first treats the example as lame only to endorse the access it allows
to human experience (102).
vestigial, but it is hope nonetheless.

Roundabout, forced and biassed interpretation is rhetorical; Montaigne chooses medicine over rhetoric. At the very least, his early refusal of exemplarity commits him to a new attention to particularity in which examples figure largely; at most, it commits him to a refusal of the possibility of the demonstrable knowledge of human affairs. Both gestures bring out the similarities between medicine and rhetoric. Nowhere is his refusal more clear than in his antidote to precocious, presumptive physicians. Against their universalist claims, Montaigne proposes a local articulation of somatic experience that avoids "conjecture and divination" by speaking in disjointed parts. Montaigne's somatic hermeneutics is an artificial process, inscribing history into a textual body that corresponds to his own historical accretion of symptoms. In other words, while he claims to present himself whole in the anatomy of the *Essays*, the accurate, if anamorphic picture of his body is lame, disarticulate and particular:

For lack of a natural memory I make one of paper, and as some new symptom occurs in my disease, I write it down. Whence it comes that at the present moment, when I have passed through virtually every sort of experience, if some grave stroke threatens me, by glancing through these little notes, disconnected like the Sibyl's leaves, I never fail to find grounds for comfort in some favorable prognostic from my past experience ("Of Experience," 837-838).

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39On Montaigne and medicine, see, for example, Susan Wells, *Sweet Reason*, 236-241, although Wells' argument is marred by earlier comments such as "Montaigne repeatedly rejects both the project of rhetorical demonstration and the rhetorical devices he uses so deftly" (231). For Montaigne and rhetoric, see Margaret McGowan, *Montaigne's Deceits: the Art of Persuasion in the Essais* (London: University of London Press, 1974). See also Steven Rendall, "Mus in Pice: Montaigne and Interpretation," *MLN* 94 (1979): 1056-1071. Rendall argues that "for Montaigne, the interpreter's quest for definitive meaning is pernicious less because it further obscures and fragments a past presence already only too dimly perceived, than because it diverts us from the practical and moral benefits to be derived from reading" (1062).
Montaigne's past experience is distilled in "little notes," unstitched, unsewn like the Sibyl's leaves. The separate leaves, which represent the variations of experience, are fastened together "by some corner." Left to meditate on the records of his symptoms, Montaigne refuses to classify; rather, he leaves it to others to order the "accidental." Examples, like parts, are the constituents of an artisan's knowledge, the assemblage of particulars that, when marshalled into classes, form an inductive nexus.

Montaigne also professes both the necessity and the difficulty of reasoning from the outside of a body to its interior. As Timothy Hampton argues, "the body emerges [throughout the Essays] as the material signifier of the condition of the soul." Reading the signs of the human body requires a form of decorum:

Now if the doctor's error is dangerous, we are in a very bad way, for it is most unlikely that he will not fall into it again often. He needs too many details, considerations, and circumstances to adjust his plan correctly: he must know his patient's constitution, his temperament, his humours, his inclinations, his actions, his very thoughts and fancies. He must be responsible for the external circumstances, the nature of the place, the condition of the air and weather, the position of the planets and their influences. He must know in the disease the causes, the symptoms, the effects, the critical days; in the drug the weight, the power, the country it comes from, the appearance, the age, the way of dispensing it; and he must know how to proportion all these factors and relate them to one another in order to create a perfect symmetry [my emphasis]. Wherein if he makes ever so slight an error, if

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*Hampton, *Writing from History*, 171. "By following the degeneration of his own body Montaigne breaks loose one and for all from memory, narrative, and history, organizing his text on the immediacy of bodily sensation. ... The 'useful' knowledge which he gives his readers stems ... from reading the signs of the body" (194).
among so many springs there is even a single one that pulls askew, that is enough to destroy us ("Of the Resemblance of Children to Fathers," 586-587).

Attending to the body's symptoms and their context, then, is merely the beginning of a process that requires "proportion," interrelation and "symmetry." A concern with circumstances, details and inclinations is an interpretive process much like the one Augustine and others advocate, adjusting to a context, the hermeneut (whether a physician, a reader or a writer attempting to body forth his own experience) accommodates an interpretation to its moment, in this case "the body's moment."

Yet if the metaphors and reasoning inherent in symptomatology are equivalent to Montaigne's *experience* of his body, the constituents and adjuncts of anatomy suit its discursive presentation. He bodies forth his amorphous "cogitations" as a skeleton (in Florio's translation) or a cadaver. Identifying an aporia in the rhetoric of exemplarity --- "samples" display only details without certainty; the network of motivations remain conjectural --- Montaigne exposes himself "entire:" "my portrait is a cadaver on which the veins, the muscles, and the tendons appear at a glance, each part in its place." Parts of him were produced "dubiously" by symptoms, "by a cough, another by a pallor or a palpitation of the heart," whereas, as a cadaver, the representation is himself, his "essence" ("Of Practice," 274). Anatomical revelation is synchronic, the whole suspended over its parts, whereas symptoms, which either accompany or follow the disease, are temporal. The difficulty of expressing the body, in Donne's formulation, is inextricable from this urgent sense of narrative disclosure. "But for the body," Donne writes in 1623, "How poor a wretched thing is *that?* wee cannot expresse it so *fast,* as it growes worse and worse." As both Montaigne and Donne were aware, a subject requires both a body (an anatomy, a cadaver) and a narrative (symptoms, indications).41

Montaigne established a form of discursive autopsy in which the participatory knowledge of the self issues from the body. In Jean Starobinski's formulation, Montaigne appealed to the "body's wisdom": "it is necessary that our body, aided by our judgement, become itself the subject of its own knowledge." This knowledge depends on a series of conjectures about symptoms, temperaments, characters and signs; it also depends on an attention to parts, the veins, muscles and tendons, "each part in its place." Medicine's grounds are experience and example: Montaigne used symptomatology to assemble his experience into a mass "disconnected like the Sybil's leaves," and anatomy to body forth the examples into a discernible whole or essence. In anatomical discourse, the example is the part; a judicious examination of parts, pace Ramist method, clears a path to the whole. Faced with the uncertainty of medicine, what Montaigne proposed was a form of somiotics that ratified the wisdom of the body expressed through a collocation of symptoms. Causal and terminological regress was halted by applying astringent remedies to the representation of somatic experience. Medical knowledge, in other words, was useless without the particularity of experience and pragmatism Montaigne demands of all epistemology. While anatomy might present a whole, normalized body to an audience, symptomatology, rife with problems of reasoning and inference, sustained an individual, particular somiotics that mirrored the difficulties of knowledge itself.

*Summoning instances*

To Francis Bacon, medicine was also inexact, conjectural and presumptive. One of the arts of the body, along with cosmetic, athletic and "Voluptuary," by which he means the arts that give pleasure (poetry, painting, music and so forth), medicine ("physic") has three offices, the preservation of health. the cure of disease and the prolongation of life (4.483). All three offices are lamentably

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underdeveloped, but the most important constituents of medicine, encompassing its first two offices, were particularly deficient: a thorough investigation and detailed record of the causes of disease, with its "occasions or impulsions," the knowledge of "accidents" or symptoms, and the cure of illness and the preparation of remedies. Both suffered from imperfections which undermine the whole of natural philosophy: competing hypothetical systems little concerned with experience, deference to authority and the difficulty of imputing causes to natural phenomena. Thus this art of the body is hampered by a divorce from (reformed) natural philosophy, the limited experience and arrogance of physicians and the complexity of lived, embodied experience. Nature is labyrinthine; there is no deeper abyss of cause than the human body.

In his proposals for the reform of natural philosophy, medicine receives ample attention both specifically and as part of a reformed ethics. Since philosophical "invention," or in his terms "discovery," was wanting, Bacon insists that lived, embodied experience remains opaque if one simply examines particulars or rehearses the hoary generalities which previous investigators of nature uncritically embraced. Medicine, already susceptible to error, suffers acutely from these inadequacies. Cicero criticised Socrates for setting rhetoric apart from philosophy; so medicine also suffers if it is segregated from a renewed natural philosophy. The impoverished state of medical knowledge results from the "deficiency" of its various components, which in turn, rests on the opacity

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43This account, as Spedding points out, differs slightly from that in the De Augmentis. Compare the "histories" of various aspects of medicine listed in the Parasceve (4.267-269), to which I will return below.

44Advancement, 3.354; De Augmentis, 4.346. On the relationship between physic and metaphysic, which "investigates the constant and immutable laws" of natural phenomenon, see Lisa Jardine, Francis Bacon: Discovery and the Art of Discourse (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 141-143. Bacon understands "physic" as a middle ground between natural history and metaphysics that describes "variable or respective causes" or "Material and Efficient Causes."

45Advancement, 3.384.
and changeable nature of the human body: medicine is "by consequent more conjectural." Yet medicine participates, along with what we would term psychology, in one "end and term of natural philosophy," "knowledge of ourselves" or "Radius Reflexus whereby Man beholdeth and contemplateth himself." It was shameful and unfortunate, then, that medicine was so inexact; it was, he said, more "professed than laboured, and yet more laboured than advanced."

Bacon's assessment of medicine --- its inadequate, unmethodical attention to experience, its irresponsible imputation of causes, its neglect of history and its inability to seat humours in the body --- is nestled between his excursions on physic and on invention, judgement, memory and rhetoric.46 This is not a coincident or empty juxtaposition, either discursively or philosophically. Medicine provides a potent analog for ethics and one of the primary ways in which Bacon communicates his plans for moral and philosophical reform.47 Although as an aspect of the consideration of humanity "segregate, or distributively," medicine is philosophically defective; it might improve, however, with the help of techniques and practices borrowed from rhetoric. With this in mind, the reciprocal knowledge of both body and mind, already practised by the wisest physicians who attend the

46Advancement, 3.354. Bacon tends to classify dialectical processes under the rubric of rhetoric or "Tradition."

47Ian Box, "Bacon's Moral Philosophy," in The Cambridge Companion to Bacon, ed. Markku Peltonen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 270-272 and, especially, Marc Cogan "Rhetoric and Action in Francis Bacon," Philosophy and Rhetoric 14 (1981): 212-233. Cogan's argument is particularly important here, since he proposes that Bacon "makes a striking innovation in rhetorical theory" by describing rhetoric in terms of human faculties (passions, emotions, reason and the imagination) rather than forms of or occasions for persuasion (213). For Bacon, Cogan argues, only rhetoric "makes present" in a way that Donne will argue and only rhetoric "is informed by reason, and only it has its end in the rational management of action" (219; cf. 221, 226). Cogan concludes: "Rhetoric has become, in effect, a practical logic, fulfilling with respect to practical reasoning a role analogous to that of logic with respect to speculation. In both cases the arts are developed and used as instruments to correct a defect in the faculty of reason: logic to correct the weakness of the reason for the idols which pass for and conceal truth, and for the 'sciences as one would' that Bacon says are infused with will and desire; rhetoric to correct the natural inability of reason to present its conclusions to the imagination in such a way as to influence action" (225; emphasis mine). Cogan's conclusion is crucial to my argument.
"symptoms of the soul" (accidentia animi), is greatly in need, providing evidence for what he calls the "Physician's clue" or the way of cure (4.390); paradoxically, this process would map the body in a manner Bacon had criticized as difficult if not impossible.48

To a large degree, the impoverished state of medicine is the fault of physicians. Clinical practice, for example, has suffered from the abandonment of the habits of Hippocrates, who diligently recorded the process and experience of illness in histories and judged his own practice by the recovery or death of his patients. Although law is a germane example of this practice (lawyers "report new cases and decisions for the directions of future judgements"), Bacon offers "the father of the art" (Hippocrates) as an example of effective medical history dominated by a careful observation of particulars and their relation to types of illness. Anatomy is also underdeveloped. Much is "passed over slightly and in silence" in current anatomical practice, Bacon insists. Neither the diversity of the parts, the "secrecies" of the passages, the "seats or nestling of the humours" nor the "footsteps and impressions of diseases" are adequately investigated by looking at a few open bodies. Rather, anatomists are concerned primarily with the parts and their substances, figures and collocations; with form, in other words, not function. These neglected functions, Bacon advises, could be exactly observed "by multitude of anatomies and the contribution of men's several experiences," carefully recorded with a vision to "appearances" and "diseases and symptoms."

Anatomical demonstration, Bacon states somewhat derisively, is "a subject on which learned men may display their knowledge in lectures and before audiences"; true anatomical knowledge, however, cognizant of the labyrinthine nature of disease and its symptoms, is gained by "silent and long

48Knowledge of the concordances between mind and body, he thought, "considereth of the seats and domiciles which the several faculties of the mind do take and occupy in the organs of the body." Through dissection, we might further "observe what cavities, nests, and receptacles the humours do find in the parts, with the differing kind of the humour so lodged and received" (Advancement, 3.369, 375).
experience" (4.385). If the human body were observed closely, he suggests, altering the scale of enquiry from generalities to the ways in which specific pathologies speak to the complex of mind and body, medicine might be greatly improved. Physicians have failed to develop either clinical or anatomical skill.

Thus the poets were clear-sighted, Bacon suggests, in making Circe and Aesculapius, sorceress and physician, brother and sister: the powers of the physician are, at worst, simply "magistral," opening the profession to quackery, empiricists and imposture. Medicine's uncertainty stems in part from physicians' "magistral" method, whereby, instead of attending to experience and diligently reporting it, they try "to impose their conclusions" on the patient and his or her affliction. Physicians are not given to the "initiative" method of delivery or "those which display the stages by which the author's conclusions were reached."49 By shrouding their techniques in opaque terminology and delivering their results in aphorisms, by assuming conclusions drawn from a limited number of cases and neglecting the particularities of their experience, they were, in a phrase, acting imprudently. Physicians derogate their science by anticipation, hastily assuming conclusions when they should engage in interpretation, the systematic and thorough investigation of natural phenomena.50

Physicians have failed, for example, to facture "certain experimental medicines for the cure of diseases, besides their own conjectural and magistral descriptions." Whereas other arts and sciences are judged by virtue or function, medicine is evaluated according to the event: success or failure of cure. Yet "who can know, if a patient die or recover, or if a state be preserved or ruined,

49Jardine, Francis Bacon, 175.
50For this distinction in Bacon, see Works., 3.244-247, 4.42, 50-53.
whether it be by art or accident?" Bacon asks.51 The current state of medical knowledge, he implies, precluded the question. No branch of medicine was prepared to offer certain knowledge of the body for at least two reasons: first, each aspect was in itself inadequate; second, knowledge of the body depends to a large degree on the perceived interaction between body and mind, or discovery and impression: "how the one discloseth the other, and how the one worketh upon the other." Bacon advocated a knowledge of "the sympathies and concordances between the mind and body," arguing, famously, that "the Lineaments of the body do disclose the disposition and inclination of the mind in general."52 While he thought the microcosm-macrocosm correspondence "fantastically strained," Bacon resuscitates the commonplace that the outside of the body was a reliable index of its interior.53

51De Augmentis, 4.381; Advancement 3.371. Akin to other underdeveloped areas of natural philosophy, medicine "decides on the authority of too few cases" (Novum Organum, 4.63).

52Advancement, 3.368. "Lineaments" here might be synonymous with signatures.

53The notion is commonplace. In "Of Physiognomy," Montaigne argues, in relation to Socrates, that there "is nothing more likely than the conformity and relation of the body to the spirit" (809). A "deformed and ill favored bodie in proportion," William Pickering writes in 1595, "is a lively representation of a vitiouus and ill disposed nature, so that it is a necessary consequent, that as his bodie is croked, Crabtree lyke, and growne out of all order, so his mind is montrus, and stained with manie foul qualities" (A Briefe and Necessarie Treatise, Touching the Cure of the Disease called Morbus Gallicus, of Lues Venera [London, 1595], 60v.) In the Juvenilia (London, 1633), Donne writes that "in a faire body, I doe seldome suspect a disproportioned mind, and as seldome hope for a good, in a deformed" (sig E4"). Pierre Charon declares: "There is nothing more beautifull in man than his soule; and in the body of man than his visage, which is as it were the soule abreviated. ... The Beauty of the Body, especially the visage, should in all reason demonstrate and witnesse the beauty of the soule ... for ther is no-thing that hath a truer resemblance than the conformity and relation of the body to the spirit" (Of Wisdom, trans. Sarsom Lennard, 3 vols. [London, 1607], 18, 20). The dialectic between the inside and outside of the body is clear here, as it is elsewhere in Bacon: the body is poised to continually disclose and indeed amplify ones motives and passions ("Certainly there is a Consent between the Body and the Minde; And where Nature errth in the One, she ventureth in the Other" [The Essays or Counsels, Civill and Morall, of Francis Lo. Verulam, Viscount St. Alban, newly written (London, 1625), 254]). See also John Bulwer, Chirologia; or the natural language of the hand (London, 1644) and Anthropometamorphosis: Man Transform'd; or the Artificial Changeling (London, 1650), 4, passim. Even a virtuoso as careful as John Evelyn, while registering his doubts about the wide application of physiognomy --- conscious, perhaps, of the ways in which the new philosophy was taken to task for its absurd arrogation of certainty, claims that "as to Passions and natural Inclinations, there is no doubt but much may be conjectured, and that upon a Physical
For Bacon an examination of the human body divided from the scrutiny of mind (and vice versa) was a medical and philosophical cul-de-sac. Bacon thus betrays more than a slight faith in the attenuated materialism I have identified as a constituent of an indexical habit of thought. This faith depended on a relationship between body and mind, the visible and the invisible, the former, like a symptom, revealing the latter. His term for the ways in which the soul acts on the body (and vice versa) was "Impression" (4.377). For the interpretation of such impressions, medicine remained under the sway of "Insinuative Reason" and literate or learned experience.

Literate experience (experientia literata) denotes for Bacon a methodical attention to experience or "experiment" and is distinct from the syllogistic reasoning of 'natural logic' or the geometrical method. Lisa Jardine explains, "Learned experience or experientia literata is the material of natural history organised in such a way as to suggest to a perceptive mind the possibilities for enlarging knowledge." Knowledge was enlarged "by applying techniques successful in one field in similar fields, or by applying experiments successful on one type of material to similar materials." A methodical encounter with the world, experientia literata is a practical (phronetic) activity that proceeds by sagacity, inference and analogy. Literate experience proceeds "in accordance with a

account, as both Theophrastus, Galen and others frequently shew; and therefore the study of it, especially recommended to those of their Profession." Physiognomy is not as "vain, fallacious and uncertain" as some would have it, but it does depend upon probable sign-inference: Evelyn distinguishes true "Conjectures ... made of Capacities" from the "various Phaenomena, Characters, and Indices legible in the Countenance" from false "Physiognomical Divination." True physiognomy is a "Semeiotics" of "Notes, and Characters" of the affections, passions and inclinations of the mind and constitution of the body (John Evelyn, Numismata. A Discourse of Medals, Antient and Modern [London, 1697], 304, 294, 332-338). On Evelyn and medicine, see C.D. O'Malley, "John Evelyn and Medicine," Medical History 12 (1986): 219-231. Physicians, in other words, were especially compelled to conjecture from the outside to the inside of the body, from its signs and symptoms to the state of its physiology; according to Donne, so were divines (Sermons, 7.104).

Reiss, Knowledge, Discovery and Imagination in Early Modern Europe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 152.

Jardine, Francis Bacon, 144.
fixed law, in regular order, and without interruption”; it is a dialectic of particulars and axioms, the latter, it seems, drawn out quite often by analogy (although this is an intermediate stage in knowledge). Bacon calls it "hunting by scent" or the "hunt of Pan." Under this rubric, Bacon draws together all manipulation of experience which depends on analogue thought. As a form of sagacity or sign-inference (drawing parallels between disparate experiments or materials, searching for the "true signatures and marks" set upon creation), experientia literata is akin to the formulations of rhetoric that I have outlined. Both rely on analogy, both are heuristic techniques that might apply to any given situation and both require an attention to language as such; both, crucially, argue for the interaction of one discourse, one set of data, with and within another. Although Bacon claims to "despise" this form of "logic," which he carefully explores, it nevertheless has a presence in his own reformed philosophy. One example of this form of reasoning is evident in Bacon's discussion of symptoms.

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56 Works, 8.135-136 and Timothy Reiss, The Discourse of Modernism (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1982), 202-203. Reiss concludes that Bacon's experientia literata is "mighty ambiguous. On the one hand, it indicates only the 'self-conscious' discursive organization of human thought and its 'objects,' without which organization there can objectively be no thought whatsoever. On the other, it is already leading toward its own hypostatization into the origin of all thought" (204).

57 Works, 4.421, 326. On these issues, see Jardine, Francis Bacon, 144.


59 Works, 4.51.

60 See Works, 4.366 for Bacon's disdain of sagacity. Bacon's list of analogical extension of experiments is diverse: "the Variation, or the Production, or the Translation, or the Inversion, or the Compulsion, or the Application, or the Conjunction, or finally the Chances, of experiment" (4.413). On the role of probability within Baconian science, see L. Jonathan Cohen, "Some Historical Remarks on the Baconian Concept of Probability," Journal of the History of Ideas 41 (1980): 219-231.
In the *Novum Organum*, Bacon places among prerogative instances "Evoking" or "Summoning Instances," a term he borrows from law. These instances or events "summon objects to appear which have not appeared before," reducing the non-sensible to the sensible, making "manifest things not directly perceptible by means of which others are." There are several species of such instances: either indexical, in which a relation is established between a distant object and its indication (the ringing of a bell) or a quality is "reduced" from a body by the multiplication of investigative techniques; others are revelatory.

In the second kind, this reduction or secondary manifestation is effected when objects that are concealed by the interposition of bodies within which they are enclosed, and cannot conveniently be opened out, are made manifest to the sense by means of those parts of them which lie on the surface, or make their way from the interior.

Akin to Montaigne's round-about, forced interpretation of his elusive body, distilled into notes like the Sybil's leaves, Bacon's enclosed bodies, since they could not be dissected ("conveniently be opened out"), are investigated by means of their visible parts. With respect to spirits encased in tangible bodies (Bacon's example), these bodies take on the shape, operation and disposition of the spirit: "all these processes are made manifest to the sense by conspicuous effects." A knowledge of causes, in other words, is based on symptoms and effects; it is analogical and exemplary. "Thus the condition of the human body," Bacon asserted, "is known by the state of the pulse, urine, and the like."  

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61 *Works*, 4. 194-195. On prerogative instances, see Jardine, *Francis Bacon*, 124-126; she does not discuss evoking or summoning instances.

62 "For everything tangible that we are acquainted with contains an invisible and intangible spirit" (*Works*, 4.195).
Bacon's attention to the difficulties of medicine --- reasoning from the pulse to the "condition" of the body, for example --- confirms its uncertainty, indeed the uncertainty of all natural philosophy in its current state, and proposes to resolve this problem via a form of inference that treats physical, exterior signs as manifestations of the unseen. That his prime example for "Evoking Instances" is symptomatology should come as no surprise. In fact the living body is a central focus of a reformed natural philosophy; the process of medical reformation begins with accurate accounts of somatic phenomena. Adjusting our view to "a kind of second Scripture," Bacon insists that the first step toward a useful natural history, free of antique or unreliable opinion, was the compilation of "particular histories," followed by a series of questions --- "like a kind of particular Topics" --- applied to each history. Included among the list of one hundred thirty 'histories' in the Paraceve are several that read as prolegomena to historical and theoretical work on the human body in our own period: Bacon's suggestions for histories of "Pleasure and Pain in general," "Smell and Smells," and "Vision and things Visible" have all met with scholarly attention in the last twenty years. There are three suggestions in Bacon's list that, together, produce a broad outline of the dialogue between rhetoric, hermeneutics and medicine that I outline here: the "History of Natural and Involuntary Motions; as Motion of the Heart, the Pulse, Sneezing, Lungs, Erection, &c.," the "History Medicinal of Diseases, and the Symptoms and Signs of them," and the "History of Diagnoses, or Secret Natural Judgements." All of these histories require somiotics, the correct assemblage of sensations derived from clinical observations; all necessitate, in Maurice Merleau-Ponty's words, an esthesiology or the study of the human body as a perceiving animal.63 All imply that somatic experience is a cluster of

disarticulate fragments that, when combined, might provide a coherent picture of the living, human body.

As we have seen, Bacon and Montaigne share an urgent sense of the uncertainty of medicine and anxiety about its place in the nascent human sciences. Bacon's antidote to skepticism was a reformed natural philosophy which would set medicine on its feet; Montaigne's skepticism was unassailable, but his solution --- the individuation of experience --- while decidedly less programmatic, went further to recognize the difficulty of accommodating individual experience to precepts and rules. While their remedies for the tractability of somiotics were various, they each rely on forms of sign-inference developed in (forensic) rhetoric and hermeneutics: examples and summoning instances. Unlike other skeptics, both rely on reason inflected by empirical and rhetorical inquiry.\footnote{Popkin, \textit{The History of Scepticism}, 40, 126, 54.} For Montaigne, reason is circumscribed: he proposes to read holistically by thickly describing individual experience using rhetoric as remedy. In contrast, Bacon subsumes individuality in historical particularities (histories of symptoms, fever, touch and taste), broadening the outlines of various intellectual habits drawn from rhetoric and hermeneutics, disciplines more comfortable with analogical thinking than is his reformed natural philosophy. For both, symptomatology furnished means for thinking through the relationship between cause and effect in living bodies, amply demonstrated in the writings of Hippocrates, Galen and Aristotle, to whom most early modern writers turned when thinking about medicine. Thus the obverse of a real \textit{speculum matricis} was discursive incision using symptomatology, and to a lesser extent anatomy, as models. In either case, one of the guards against the debilitating uncertainty of medical diagnosis, the misattribution of causation or the deleterious effects of mistreatment was a form of medical decorum or prudence. Medicine offered tools for the kind of prudent incision necessary to dissect and cribrate
the morass of parts and wholes, signs and symptoms that promised, but often failed, to reveal the secrets of the body.

Conjecture, analogy and sign-inference

In 1586 the physician Timothy Bright claimed that he had "layd open how the bodie, and corporall things affect the soule, & how the body is affected of it againe." Similarly, writing about the passions in 1600, Thomas Wright thought that the path between emotion, the passions and the physical body might be mapped with the use of inference and conjecture. Men may discover their fellows' "natural inclinations" by means of "natural conjectures and probabilities." Although Wright was optimistic that he and his contemporaries were able to "trace out passions and inclinations by some effects and eternal operations" as "Philosophers by effects find out causes," by the end of his book, he displayed a trenchant skepticism:

I will infer our extreme Ignorance, that few or none of these difficulties, which concern us so near as our souls and bodies, are thoroughly as yet, in my judgement, declared even of the profoundest wits: for I know not how their best resolutions leave

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65 A Treatise of Melancholy (London, 1586), sig. *iiiiv. A large claim, to be sure; yet to Bright, the body is a recalcitrant tool: "the soule receaveth no other annoyance by the bodie; then the craftes man by his instrument: with no impeach, or impaire of cunning: but an hinderance of exercising the excellent partes of his skill: either when the instrument is altogether unapt, and serveth for no use: or in part only fit: whereby actions, and effects are wrought, much inferiour to the faculty of the workcr"

(48) Though the soul is, in Bright's words, "plunged in this gulfe of the body," it is not so much the weight of corporeity that hinders the functioning of the soul and its servant, the spirit; rather, in this early workshop, it is the impropriety of the instrument that compromises the worker. That the tool is "altogether unapt" is taken for granted; its limited utility, however, is compromised even further by the pathologies of illness and excessive desire. A healthy body is a decorous body:

A bodie of sanguine complexion ... the spirits being in their just temper in respect of qualitie, and of such plenty as nature requireth, not mixed or defiled, by any straunge spirit or vapor, the humour in quantity & qualitie rated in geometricall, or just proportion, the substance also of the bodie, and all the members so qualified by mixture of elementes, as all conspire together in due proportion, breedeth an indifferencie to all passions (97).
still our Understandings dry, thirsting for a clearer and fresher Fountain.\textsuperscript{66}

Explaining the narrow "seam" or "suture" between the mind and the body was vexing to Wright.\textsuperscript{67} He was not alone.\textsuperscript{68} The central problem was sign-inference or reading the mute symptoms produced by the body.

"The exquisite method of healing," writes Helkiah Crooke in 1615, "cannot bee performed but by indications, and indications are not onely derived from the disease, but also from the part affected, and the remedies must bee changed and altered, according to the divers and severall nature, temperature, scitation, connexion and sence of the part."\textsuperscript{69} The method of healing, sorely underdeveloped in the seventeenth century, proceeds on the basis of sign-inference: the interpretation of the circumstances and indications of the sick body. Indications, as we shall see in the next chapter, are not only arch-symptoms, but also evidence of the "Impressions" minds make on bodies and vice versa. However, thirsting for more knowledge about the relationship between effects and causes, souls and bodies means developing techniques for discerning inclinations and temperaments by conjectures, hypotheses and probabilities. The calculus of signs and symptoms, as we have seen, was infinitely complex. How, Montaigne asks, "shall [a doctor] find the proper symptom of the disease, each disease being capable of an infinite number of symptoms?" ("Of the Resemblance of Children to


\textsuperscript{67}Explaining how a mother might deform her child through the force of her imagination, Montaigne wrote: "But all this may be attributed to the narrow seam [or suture] between the soul and body, through which the experience of one is communicated to the other" (\textit{Essays}, 1.21.74).


\textsuperscript{69}\textit{Microcosmographia}, 16-17 (page 16 is mispaginated as 14).
Physicians must act like philosophers, as Wright and Harvey insist, and find out causes by effects. In a living body, effects are symptoms.

From at least the mid-sixteenth century, "symptom" was generally understood as "any passion or griefe following a disease, and sensibly joyned with it: as headach with an Ague, a pricking in the side with a Pleurisie, and such like." Though there were some specialist definitions, such as those contained in A physical dictionary (1657) and Thomas Blount's Glossographia (1656), which equates symptoms with "inward causes," symptom was not understood as a "sign, mark, or token" in English dictionaries until the eighteenth century. Notwithstanding physicians who possessed a more subtle understanding of the word's roots (in the Latin signum, for sign, indicium or vestigium, for indication or trace, respectively), symptoms accompanied or followed disease.

Robert Burton understood symptoms in this manner. In order to identify a pathology, then, clusters of symptoms, often temporally and spatially removed from underlying causes, were assembled into a coherent picture of disease.

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70 Dictionaries consulted: Thomas Cooper, Thesaurus Lingue Romanae et Britannicae (London, 1565); Thomas Thomas, Dictionarium Linguæ Latinae et Anglicane (London, 1587); Robert Cawdrey, A Table Alphabetical of Hard Usual English Words (London, 1604); John Bullokar, An English Expositor (London, 1616); John Minsheu, Doctur in Linguas (London, 1617); Henry Cockeram, The English Dictionarie (London, 1623); Thomas Blount, Glossographia (London, 1656); A Physical Dictionary (London, 1657); Edward Phillips, The New World of English Words (London, 1658); Elisha Coles, An English Dictionary (London, 1676); and James Buchanan, Linguæ Britannicae Vera Pronunciato, or a New English Dictionary (London, 1757). All more or less repeat a similar definition. Patey argues that symptom, sign, mark or token were all more or less synonymous; while there is some terminological confusion, distinctions between these different orders of signification were nevertheless clear in many seventeenth-century accounts (Probability and Literary Form: Philosophic Theory and Literary Practice in the Augustan Age [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984], 37).


A sign, in this context, is a symptom or cluster of symptoms that has been subjected to a physician's close and particular scrutiny. In order to signify, in order to say something, symptoms must be compared, both with the normal processes and structures of the body and with their manifestation in other bodies; their simultaneity or frequency of succession must be charted. Transferred to the care of physicians, symptoms become signs of a discernible disorder, named and classified with the diagnostic tools of the period. Although in the early seventeenth century, the relationship between the dissected cadaver and the living body remained unclear, poets and preachers consistently occupied the roles of physician, surgeon or anatomist in order to clearly differentiate symptoms, signs and causes. Donne exhibits the tendencies of other writers in the period: he also engages in diagnostics, dissections and symptomatic readings, armed with either the anatomist's knife or the consoling words of the Christus Medicus. Although Donne found some physic in the words of "a Seneca, ... a Plutarch, [or] a Petrarch," the healing effected by human words was tinged with the threat of relapse. As Donne laments, sin has a grammar and we slide "Rhetorically, perswasively, powerfully" into "contemptuous obduration." Only the sinner "assignes a cause."  

For early modern physicians, the intricate work in which they were engaged was sign-inference. As Eleazar Dunk insisted, diseases "are knownen and distinguished by their signes." The first duty of a learned physician is "to search out the proper signes of [a] disease, and by them to distinguish it from others that hath some affinity with it." Cures are effected by an attention to the differences and differing magnitudes of signs and symptoms. Of necessity, this intricate work

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74Sermons, 1.225-227.
75The Copy of a Letter written by E.D. Doctour of Physicke to a Gentleman, by Whom it was Published (London, 1606), 24-25.
required formal training in grammar, logic and rhetoric. As we shall see, John Cotta's demand for a "settle perfection and generall idea of prudent deliberation" in medicine depends on the prudence and decorum physicians developed in their training in the trivium. Early logical and rhetorical texts often contained references to and examples of medical cases, medical problems and semiotics.

Imputing causation via symptoms and signs was not only presumptive, it was both essential and complex. As Douglas Patey has argued, natural philosophy, rhetoric and history in the early modern period maintained an essential connection to medicine: all of these activities relied on the sagacious ability to reason from signs. Illness does not only afflict the sufferer, it poses grave problems of inference since, as John Cotta insisted in his fervent attack on empirics in 1612, "one circumstance alone co[m]only altereth the whole co[n]dition." The problem is compounded by the delicacy of the task at hand --- diagnosis and prescription --- and by the accidents or symptoms which often "obscure the disease" and compromise its cure.

\[\text{\textsuperscript{76}}\text{Ibid.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{77}}\text{In his The Logike of the Most Excellent Philosopher P. Ramus Martyr (London, 1574), Rolland MacIlmaine writes: "If thou be a Phisition and willing to teache (as for exa[m]ple) of a fever, this methode [Ramus' method] willethe thee to shewe first the definitio[n], that is, what a fever is, next the devisio[n], declaring what sorte of fever it is, whether the quartane, quotidien, hecticke, or what other: thirdly, to come to the places of invention, and shewe first the causes of the fever every one in order, the efficient, as may be hotte meates, the matter as melancolie, choler, or some rotten humor, and soforthe with the formale causes and finall. The seconde place is the effecte, shewe then what the fever is able to bring forthe, whether deathe or no. The third place willethe thee to tell the subjecte of the fever, whether it be in the vaines, artiers, or els where. The fowrtho to shewe the signes and tokens which appeare to pretende life or deathe: and to be shorte, thou shalt passe thorouge the rest of the artificiall places, and do that which is required of every of them: And last come to the confirming of thy sayinges by examples, authourities, and (as Hippocrates & Galen have done) by histories and long experience" (13-14). On MacIlmaine, see Tamara A. Goeglein, "Wherein hath Ramus been so offensious?": Poetic Examples in the English Ramist Logic Manuals (1574-1672)," Rhetorica 24 (1996): 73-101, esp. 89ff. For other examples, see Thomas Spencer, The Art of Logick, Delivered in the Precepts of Aristotle and Ramus (London, 1628), 91-92, 213ff. (where his example of "distribution" or analysis is the relationship between the soul and the body). John Cotta, A Short Discoverie of the Unobserved Dangers of Severall Sorts of Ignorant and Unconsiderate Practitioners of Physicke in England (London, 1612).\]
Cotta's place in medical history is assured because of his relatively early attack on the unlicensed practitioners of London; his attention to symptomatology as the means to distinguish learned from unlearned, however, has been little recognized. His résumé of the problems associated with medical inference reads like a treatise in commonplaces:

He that considereth the multitude of causes in diseases, their infinitie kindes, manners, and natures, the varietie of accidents, their sodaine and variable mutations, the soone lost occasions, and hardly gained opportunities, the wisedome which circumstances require, the care and vigilance which the subject exacteth, the doubts which repugnances bring, the resutlions which necessitie urge; shall find the most exquisite powers of understanding, judgement, wit, discretion, and learning herein exactly sifted. From the varietie of causes of diseases, what varying differences arise in the manner, quantity, qualitie, and times of remedies: every one requiring a separate and distinct respect and dispensation, even in the same disease and person? The immediate cause from the mediate the antecedent from the continent, the necessarie from the casuall and contingent, require both a divers handling, and also a distinction in order of handling: neither is there a like consideration of the externall and internall, the positive, the privative, the materiall, the immateriall, those that are single and alone, and those that are jointly and with others.78

The negotiation of cause and effect, of the "infinite kindes, manners and natures" of cause and the "varietie of accidents" or symptoms, as Cotta insists, is a complex, arduous task; it is no wonder Thomas Sydenham called nature, including the human body, an "abyss of cause" about fifty years

The possibility of error was no less immense with respect to symptoms: "As causes & diseases ... so no lesse materiall are accidents to be distinctly knowne and considered. Some of them bring certaine knowledge, some artificiall conjecture, some matter of presumption and probability."

Some symptoms are manifest, some ambiguous, some significant alone, some ciphers. The symptoms that accompany fevers, for example, perplex even the most perceptive: their symptoms "dissemble" and imitate one another. Since "diseases oftimes ... mocke one the other, that a good eye may easily deceive it selfe," how are physicians to proceed through this labyrinth of cause and effect? As Bernard Lamy was to insist in 1683, "What can the physician do but conjecture?"

It seems, at first glance, that experience alone is insufficient, since if "experience be no more but experience, it must needs prove in many cases a slow guide to lame instruction." Particular experience, accompanied by understanding and right reason, Cotta confirmed, establishes and confirms knowledge. But the abuses of the sects and empirics, either in relying too heavily on experience or ignoring it altogether, have precluded judicious medicine.

The competent physician must, however, cultivate a solid prudence in order to proceed through the maze of causes and effects. Since the physician "beyond all other Artists" has "need & use of exquisite knowledge of nature" in "restoring the ruines and decayes of generation, in rectifying, reforming and moderating the errors of continuall mutation and alteration," Cotta urges physicians to labour for the "settled perfection and generall idea of prudent deliberation." Although experience "giveth unto reason the true reflexion of it selfe, yet it is the rule of reason that first

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80 Cotta, *A Short Discoverie*, 17.

81 Quoted in Patey, *Probability and Literary Form*, 64.

82 Cotta, *A Short Discoverie*, 12, 11.

guideth experience forth unto likely proof. In the quotation above, a "divers handling" of symptoms requires judgement, wit and "discretion." To some extent, this prudence was developed in the learned physician's study of grammar, logic and philosophy as one of Cotta's contemporaries, Eleazar Dunk, recommends. To "judge rightly of the causes and differences of ... diseases ... requireth Arte"; in the "great variety of these doubts, difficulties and distinctions there is a necessary use of sound judgement, confirmed by long study and profound knowledge both in Philosophy and Physicke."  

Nevertheless, even the "true Artist" may be deceived. Certainty engenders uncertainty; the mutability of things, as Edmund Spenser was aware, may not in the end alter their constitution, but it surely affects prudence and perception. As Cotta observed,

The corruptible condition of all things in substance, & perpetuall mutabilitie and alteration in accidents, doth every moment beget such divers oddes and differences in the same things, that their former considerations and respects, can never constantly, truly, and indeed long continue them to be the same. Hence by vicissitude it ordinarily cometh to passe, that of those things whereof lately seemed certaintie [sic], thereof by continuall accesse of different accidents and circumstances, is againe begotten uncertainties.

This lamentable condition predisposes "men that desire with more likely certainty, through prudence to guide their actions unto the schoole of contemplation of the world, and of the generall revolution of

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84Ibid., 118, 121-122. On this last point, Cotta cites Scaliger's comments about prudence guiding present action and future inference.


all things therein, (which is true Philosophy) that thence by long study and diligence observing to
know and distinguish what is in nature, and the ordinarie vicissitude of all things, according to
severall seasons, circumstances and subjects, meanes, measures, and manners variously, now true,
now false." The "summe of arte and prudence" does not neglect the "least hope" when we are mired
in uncertainty. Cotta's conception of prudence recalls Keats' "negative capability." Cotta proposes
prudence as a kind of master skill as the property of the sagacious in various pursuits, from pedagogy
to medicine to natural philosophy. Some scholars are able to discern via signs the inward causes of
things; only the unlettered are banished to surfaces, as it were, and derive their information from
without. All share, however, a concern with probability and conjecture, for "that which is probable
cometh neare unto truth, and he that industriously exerciseth himselfe in discerning rightly true
probabilitie, shall alway more wisely walke, and most seldome erre or be deceived."88 Cotta's
trenchant prolegomenon draws our attention to the common early modern understanding of
'symptom' as something that both reveals and conceals, that points a way to a cause while obscuring
its seat. Symptoms, it seems, were considered as elusive and protean as signs.89 While Cotta advised
physicians to acquire a prudent understanding of the human body and its signs and symptoms, others
longed for a more transparent understanding of the relationship between cause and effect, enlisting
anatomy and dissection in their quest. As we have seen with Donne, these questions were both
practical and epistemological.

88Ibid., 130. Cotta's claim that all investigators of nature share with other scholars the need for
prudent meditation about probability and certainty is crucial to my point that rhetoric and medicine
are closely related. His observations will become important in chapter two, where I will revisit these
concerns in Donne's Devotions.
89In his Arte of Reason, Ralph Lever suggests that signs "contain[...] forcommers, aftercommers and
withcommers" (189-190). See Patey, Probability and Literary Form, 38.
Early in the seventeenth century, Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, a close friend of Donne's, claimed at once that mind and body were so "ingeniously united that the ways in which they interact elude our grasp" and that "Certain principles implanted in the bodily humours are active; the evidence for this is derived from gross physical sense," in the process setting up a master problem for the rest of the century: how does the body act on the mind and vice versa? What can be considered evidence for this interaction?91

Similar to Donne's, Herbert's solution is argument by analogy, or a concentration on the interrelations between micro- and macrocosm, internal and external senses, perceiver and object. In his attention to analogy, probability and possibility, Herbert's thought sustains the "emblematic" mode of thinking characteristic of the "evidential paradigm" and the "rhetorical-medical mind set." Principles "implanted" in the body, he insisted, are made manifest by "gross physical sense": in other words, one might reason from the outside to the inside of the body. In this process, somiotics was crucial.

Focused on the innate, human capability for reasoning from our minds and bodies to external objects and vice versa, Herbert proposes truth as the collision of the same (which he terms "bringing into conformity" the faculties of the mind with the objects of sense). "Common notions" or universals, as it were the debris of this collision, are reflections of the wisdom of nature itself, although they may be "broken up into particular forms by discursive reason" and perceived by an

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infinite number of faculties. Through this process, he claimed, we arrive at artificial knowledge, meaning the knowledge of both objects and human affairs. Yet with respect to "natural objects" our faculties are limited by their own analogies and thus "cannot penetrate the internal essence of things." Knowledge of the body or of human affairs is at best probable "since it depends on the authority of the narrator." Medicine too is probable. Herbert's complex faculty psychology confirms that, in the republic of letters and in natural science, the corollary of the drive for certainty was an expanding mistrust: a mistrust of the imagination and as a consequence of imaginative language. As Herbert insists, there is "no criterion for derived [or secondhand, historical] truth" and that "when we pass from simple to complex truths, and infer some general principle upon the basis of images which are themselves wrongly represented, simple error becomes manifold." Thus we arrive by different means to Donne and Fitzherbert's "perplexity": inference often multiplies error. Descartes' famous leave-taking of letters for mathematics was transacted on similar terms. Hobbes'
discussion of prudence and sagacity confirms the difficulty of sign-inference." As Hobbes put it in 1637, "as in other Arts and namely in Physicke Fallacies are pernicious." The dangers of multiplying error through inference are plain, especially, as is so often the case with medicine, if the "images" or signs on which inference is based are probable.

The problems of inference in medicine were similar to those encountered in scholastic debates about intrinsic and extrinsic qualities; in fact, the terms of the debate were developed in medicine. In the choice between two aspects of the demonstrative regress, demonstratio causae (reasoning from cause to effect) and demonstratio signi (reasoning from effect to cause, via the sign or symptom), to use Galen's terms, seventeenth-century thinkers laid an altogether new emphasis on the importance as well as the lability of discerning causes in effects, especially in medicine. What do maculated skin or a striated heart truly mean? Are spots symptoms or signs? How does one reason from the spot to its causes? If a symptom points a way, clears a path (hodos), from effect to cause, it was not always in a wholly revelatory manner: the symptom reveals and conceals, and thus there must be a higher way, a method (meta-hodos), for the reception of somatic signs. This method, such as it was, derived from topical reasoning, rhetoric and hermeneutics. Two modes of inquiry, each with its attendant questions about reasoning from effect to cause, were marshalled to address this problem by early modern poets, divines, historians and politicians: symptomatology and anatomical dissection. Debates raged about the efficacy of both, and medicine, contemporaries

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thought, suffered as a result. Deductive reasoning is perhaps most frustrated by medicine; the tools used to discern the relationship of effect to cause in medicine should be varied, since "each maladie [was] capable of an infinite number of signes." Sign-inference was the major problem for early modern physicians.

If physicians must resort to guesses and utilize rhetorical and hermeneutical tools to ascertain the usefulness of those guesses, there is no less attention to the human body in poetic and rhetorical discussions of decorum, as we have seen. Indeed, the cluster of concerns that surface in book two of Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana*, medicine, augury and reading, resurface in treatments of medicine and rhetoric in early modern Europe. They also reappear in early modern historiography: history retails the probable.

Sign-inference is apparent in law, history, religion and natural philosophy in the period; a general "conviction" developed that "the human mind can safely reason from effects or *symptomata* to their hidden causes." Probable reasoning and analogical thinking, endorsed by Montaigne, Bacon, Donne and the physicians I have examined briefly, in turn support a renewed attention to the topics. The endorsement of topical learning by Vives culminates in the resurrection of topics as the organizing model for knowledge accumulation and pedagogy in Vico.

Carlo Ginzburg has argued for an "evidential paradigm" or "an attitude oriented towards the analysis of specific cases which could be reconstructed only through traces, symptoms, and clues"

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103 As Herbert of Cherbury writes in his meditation "On Probability," "All tradition and history, everything in short that concerns the past, whether it be true or false, good or evil, possesses for us only probability, since it depends on the authority of the narrator" (*De Veritate*, 314).

which remained implicit in western knowledge, suppressed by a Platonic model of knowledge.\textsuperscript{105} The human sciences and law are essentially qualitative or evidential; as with medicine, historical knowledge for example is "indirect, presumptive, conjectural." The inability to quantify the flux of human experience, particularly in medicine, meant that details from individual case histories, from a particular experience of disease, could not be generalized;\textsuperscript{106} further, the knowledge of disease remained indirect. The ancient notions of tracking and hunting, important in Augustine's interpretive prolegomena and in the subsequent figuration of an interpreter as a \textit{venator}, are present in a host of intellectual activities in the high and low sciences of the early modern period. Bacon lamented a lack of knowledge about the "footsteps and impressions" of disease. Yet until the late seventeenth century, it was difficult to extract purely rational (and, after Galileo, quantitative) enquiry from the constellation of qualitative habits of thought sustained by the \textit{ars topica} since antiquity. The thrust toward certainty in the early seventeenth century as well as its subsequent relaxation in England in the middle of the century is evidence of a renewed attention to probability and the "evidential paradigm"; it also confirms Stephen Toulmin's point that the political costs of a drive for certainty were high. Barbara Shapiro has documented this subtle change brilliantly.\textsuperscript{107} The reading of signs, symptoms and clues becomes an important constituent of knowledge-making in medicine which, as I have suggested, proved a willing participant in all aspects of this change. Carlo Ginzburg concludes


\textsuperscript{106}As Peter Dear succinctly summarizes the question at hand, "how can a \textit{universal} knowledge-claim about the natural world be justified on the bases of \textit{singular} items of individual experience?" (\textit{Discipline and Experience: The Mathematical Way in the Scientific Revolution} [Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995], 13.

his discussion of the "evidential paradigm" by arguing that the "future epistemological essence of the humane sciences was already being formulated in ... discussions on the 'uncertainty' of medicine."\textsuperscript{108}

In this chapter I have begun to chart the contours of a habit of thought that exerted an immense gravity on diverse writers and modes of enquiry in the seventeenth that persisted into at least the eighteenth century. Reasoning from the trace to the case, from effect to cause, from the visible to the invisible is a potent reflex in the work of seventeenth-century thinkers, whether it is called a "summoning instance" or the rhetoric of exemplarity. This way of thinking draws on antiquity, particularly ancient medical and rhetorical thought. We have already seen Hippocrates' advocating the use of "mental sight" in medical reasoning and sign-inference.

A typical early modern medical rendition of this habit of thought explicitly instructs the physician to reason from the outside in, from the visible to the invisible. Discussing "\textit{those things that are apparent in the sick,}" in 1583 Giovanni Battista De Monte asserts the importance of approaching an unknown patient by scrutinizing "those signs which are manifestly apparent, from which you will afterwards receive those things that are hidden, and what is the disease."\textsuperscript{109}

\textit{Analogismos} or \textit{repérage} is present in aesthetics, medicine, theology and rhetoric; it is part of the history of hermeneutics and natural philosophy; its enabling metaphors and destabilizing resonance participate in a paradigm that resists the demonstrative certainty of early modern mathesis, epitomized in the writing of Galileo. The fundamental problem of hermeneutics --- the articulation of \textit{historically effected consciousness} --- finds some of its bearings in the history of various forms of sign-inference. The evidence of this habit of thought is abundant in early modern England: from the

\textsuperscript{108}See Clues,\textsuperscript{114}

accommodation of the book of the world with the book of the human body, of which Christ's body, figured as a liber caritatis, is the epitome, to the investigation of affliction, reasoning from the invisible to the visible enabled both an attenuated materialism, culminating in atomism, and the eirenic visions of the Neoplatonics. It was, as I have shown, crucial to medicine.

To return, then, to my opening questions: why did Harvey recommend Cicero? Why would physicians and surgeons be instructed to turn to rhetoric for answers to medical problems? Of course it was common for the educated to know Cicero, if only a few knew him well. However, physicians seem to be a special case with respect to reading. For example, in the Letters of Old Age, Petrarch complained that physicians read everything, except medical texts, and yet still know nothing of philosophy (15.14.593). Petrarch emphasized decorum as both the primary rhetorical imperative and medical obligation. In contrast, eighty years later, physicians were to avoid letters altogether. In the De Tradendis Disciplinis, first published in 1531 but reprinted often, including an English imprint in 1612, Vives argues that physicians should have little use for imaginative or philosophical after completing their studies in the trivium, save for "consign[ing] their own experiences ... for the use of posterity." Teachers should not immerse students destined for medical practice in letters. Practical intervention in medicine, Vives insists, does not require the ministrations of rhetoric or literature. For Vives, devotion to the art of medicine meant bidding farewell to Homer, Virgil and Cicero, and "still less to study authors of the art of grammar ... historians or even philosophers."


\footnote{Juan Luis Vives, Vives on Education: A Translation of the De Tradendis Disciplinis of Juan Luis Vives, trans. Foster Watson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1913), 223. In contrast, by 1672, Samuel Sorbière in his Avis a un Jeune Medicine (Lyon, 1672) advises that a physician has "only Galen and Hippocrates" for "guarantors." The physician "speaks only about uncertain things, with which everyone thinks it is his right to be concerned" so he should have both politics and popular lore at hand (Frank Lester Pleadwell, "Samuel Sorbière and his Advice to a Young Physician," Bulletin of the History of Medicine 24 (1950): 255-287; quotations at 270).}
Although Harvey is certain that the evidence of the senses is "more assured and manifest" than "matters inferred by reason," with respect to things insensible analogy and inference are indispensible. In fact, Harvey endorses a form of Baconian *experientia literata* which he calls the "rule of Socrates" in the *Prelectiones*. Searching for function of the caecum, Harvey discusses its variability in a range of animals. His inquiry is helped by "the rule of Socrates according to similitude."\(^{112}\) As Roger French explains, "Harvey's rule of Socrates per similitudinem appears thus to be a rule about looking for the same thing in different contexts to see it more clearly."\(^{113}\) We are reminded of the Aristotelian *paradigma*. Indeed, as French has argued, while Harvey endeavoured to leave dialectical methods of proof behind for empiricism, he still utilizes the tools of rhetoric and dialectic to establish the grounds of proof. Nowhere are these tools more necessary than in questions of the relationship between structure and function.

With respect to Harvey's allusion to Cicero, although neither dialogue contains the solution Harvey proposes in an explicit manner, the *Tusculan Disputations*, with its lengthy excursus on pain, provides ways of thinking about the sensory somatic axis. More interesting and important in this context is the *De Natura Deorum*. In book two, a treatment of the entire universe based mostly on analogy, Cicero insisted that to imagine the universe as the result of the "fortuitous collision" of solid and indivisible particles is absurd, as absurd, he said, as "if a countless number of copies of the twenty one letters of the alphabet ... were thrown together in some receptacle and then shaken out on the ground [were to produce] the *Annals* of Ennius, all ready for the reader."\(^{114}\) Particularly with respect to the human body, Cicero continued, no "conformation and arrangement of the members nor

\(^{112}\) *Prelectiones*, 62.

\(^{113}\) *Harvey's Natural Philosophy*, 85.

\(^{114}\) *De Natura Deorum*, 2.37.93-94 (page 213).
such power of mind and intellect can possibly have been created by chance" (2.51.153; page 271). Although Lucretius certainly thought this possible, even in his poem the divine stenographer appears yet again. The idea that an discernible alphabet (or code) lurks behind natural forms is present in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, in Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* (1605) and in the writings of the mid-century experimental philosophers. Perhaps Harvey's point in his allusion to Cicero is that anatomy cannot adequately answer the question of purpose, which is a question of the relationship between parts and wholes, particulars and universals; and with respect to the human body, and indeed any aspect of nature, one cannot think about parts apart from wholes. Judging function and purpose, inferring from perceptible things, presupposes not only visible instances and examples, but sagacity, the perspicacious assemblage of parts, premises and consequences, collating and comparing precepts. And prudence --- a presumption of the future contracted from an experience of the past, a tempered and circumstanced sign-inference, a diligent "symptom history" such as Montaigne and Bacon propose --- obviates the necessity to resort to chance as an explanation.

Harvey and the other writers studied in this chapter open the question of the relationship between anatomy, symptomatology, sense perception and sign-inference. Awareness of the intersection of rhetoric, medicine and hermeneutics is crucial to their deliberations.

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115In Lucy Hutchinson's translation from the 1640s, "Wherefore of things, it rather may be sayde / As words are out of so many letters made / That common bodies doe their beings give / Then that ought without principles can live" (*Lucy Hutchinson's Translation of Lucretius' De Rerum Natura*, ed. Hugh de Quehen [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996] book 1, ll. 200-203).
CHAPTER FOUR: INDICATIONS

Writing in 1606, Eleazar Dunk insists that diseases "are knownen [sic] and distinguished by their signes." The first duty of a learned physician is "to search out the proper signes of [a] disease, and by them to distinguish it from others that hath some affinity with it." As we have seen, early modern medicine was an uncertain practice based on examples and experience; prudent sign-inference was one of its essential components. Interpreting and assessing the varieties of "body thought" present in the period necessitated an assiduous attention to signs not offered by a recourse to gross anatomy. Although his use of anatomical metaphors persists throughout his writing, Donne's awareness of the implicit limitations of anatomy compels him to adjust his attention to the body using the methods and metaphors of somiotics. Anatomy lays bare the structure of a static, normative body; in contrast, somiotics is key to the operation, discovery and treatment of illness in a living body. It proved equally compelling to early modern physicians, divines and philosophers. Reading and interpreting "summoning instances," searching out the "proper signes" of a disease in a living body, is accomplished by refining and expanding forms of sign-inference, species of evidence and orders of signification first developed in ancient forensic rhetoric and medical thought. For Donne, one the keys in this cluster of heuristic tools was the indication.

Donne's experience of insomnia in 1623, for example, occasions a trenchant speculation about the meaning of somatic signs using terms he deployed in his deliberation about the meaning of texts:

I must therefore, O my God, looke farther, than into the very act of sleeping, before I

mis-interpret my waking: for since I finde thy whole hand light, shall any finger of

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1The Copy of a Letter written by E.D. Doctour of Physicke to a Gentleman, by Whom it was Published (London, 1606), 24-25.
that hand seeme heavy? since the whole sicknesse is thy Physicke, shall any accident
in it, bee my poison, by my murmuring? ... What it may indicate or signify,
concerning the state of my body, let them consider to whom that consideration
belongs (Devotions, 80-81).

Although such considerations belong strictly to his physicians, who see "land" after "a long and
stormy voyage" (signs and indications of the "concoction" of his disease), Donne engages in his own,
spiritual diagnosis. "What is my assurance now?" Donne asks. "It is but a cloud; that which my
Physicians call a cloud, is that, which gives them their Indication." In his elaborate and splendid
metaphor, the human body is adrift in a ocean of sickness, his physicians are sailors and the cloud an
indication --- a definite, revelatory sign --- of the ripening of his disease. In his amalgam of Old and
New Testament verse, medical theory, hermeneutics and afflicted exhortation, Donne's chief concern
is the interpretation of "signes of restitution" in Scripture and disease. In both, God's method, the
"stile of [his] works, the phrase of [his] Actions, is Metaphorically." Even when he is metaphorical,
however, none of God's "Indications are frivolous." God made his "signes, seales; and [his] Seales,
effects; and [his] effects, consolation, and restitution" (Devotions, 97-103). Misinterpretation is a
human failing.

While Donne solicits God's certain "declaration" in his sickness, he is offered ambiguous
"types & figures," "Curtaines of Allegories," signs and indications. The testimony of "critical
Judicatures" and "evident Indications" is equivocal; how might these signs be read? During this
illness Donne's physicians, Simeon Foxe and Theodore Turquet de Mayerne, decided to offer Donne

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2In Donne's "Hymne to God, my God in my sicknesse," his "Physicians ... are growne /
Cosmographers" and map his body "Per fretum febris" (by the straits of his fever), ll. 6-10; Divine,
50. I accept the 1623 dating; see Divine, 132-135.

3On seal and insignia imagery in Donne's sermons, see Winfried Schleiner, The Imagery of John
purgatives after (presumably) agreeing on the "good Indications" and "good signs" of his fever (Devotions, 97-109, 121-122). What do Donne and his physicians mean by the repeated use of the word 'indication'? Are indications simply another term for symptoms, signs or accidents? What do indications reveal about a disordered, irregular and vehement fever? "It were scarce a disease," Donne writes, "if it could bee ordered, and made obedient to our times" (Devotions, 97). Cognizant of the perplexity of somiotics, Donne imitates his physicians and employs forms of sign-inference that focus on indications. As we shall see in the next chapter, this attention to sign-inference is particularly crucial to spiritual diagnosis; correct sign-inference which avoids the faults of misinterpretation is the foundation on which Donne built his understanding of affliction.

In order to properly understand the ways in which Donne's use of signs in his reading of his affliction marks the intrication of medicine, rhetoric and hermeneutics, here I explore the early history of sign-inference in terms of Donne's own assessment of medical history (from Galen and Hippocrates to the sixteenth century). The development of indicative sign-inference in ancient medicine and its revival in early modern medicine is central to Struever's "medical-rhetorical mind set" and the evidential paradigm outlined in the introduction. While its earliest use in England is in a Galenic medical text from 1541, the term 'indication' seems to have a particular currency in the early seventeenth century. Furthermore, from the evidence of texts like Robert Barrough's The Method of Physicke, the notion of indication combined with an attention to the "experience" of embodiment is crucial to the development of symptomatology in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England.

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5 The Method of Physick, Containing the Causes, Signes, and Cures of Inward Diseases of Mans Body from the Head to the Foote, 4th ed. (London, 1610). Barrough's text will be examined in chapter five, although it should be noted that in the preface to the work he writes: "I have bene more curious in prescribing the sundrie curations and waies to help the diseases, then in explaining the nature of them ... the former being more necessarie."
Indications in medical thought are analogous to certain forms of probable evidence in rhetoric, hermeneutics and natural philosophy. Donne's discussion of the signs of God in the *Devotions* and sermons exhibits a debt to sign-inference prominent in medical theory. Donne certainly learned from Augustine that by diligently interpreting signs, "by following certain traces ... [one] may come to the hidden sense without any error" or at least avoid "the absurdity of wicked meanings."6 I begin with three autopsies.

*Signa pathognomica*

In November 1600, Philip Gawdy, a minor courtier and soldier, wrote to his brother about news at the English court. After discussing "mens cloakes," court intrigue and "peace with Spayne," Gawdy notes "news besydes of the tragycall death of Mº Ratcliffe the mayde of honor." Her brother, Alexander, died fighting in Ireland; grieving, Ratcliffe "hathe pined in suche straunge manner, as voluntarily she hathe gone about to starve her selfe," dying "at Richomnde uppon Saterdaye last." Although Gawdy's account is spare, the death of Elizabeth's maid of honour was obviously important and troubling. The queen's attendant for almost forty years, Margaret Ratcliffe took her own life; the exact cause of her death, however, was obscure. It seems the key to this mystery was lodged in Ratcliffe's body. Hence Elizabeth "commaundd her body to be opened and founde it all well and sounde, saving certeyne stringes striped all over her harte." "I saw it my selfe," Gawdy continued, "wher I saw the quenes maºe talke very long withe my L. Henry Howard and your oncle Fra: Bacon."7

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7*Letters of Philip Gawdy of West Harling, Norfolk and of London to various members of his family, 1579-1616*, ed. Isaac Herbert Jeayes (London: Nichols, 1906), 103. (Donne might have known Gawdy through Gawdy's relative Sir Francis Gawdy, Lord Chief Justice in 1605 and Egerton's replacement in Chancery in 1600; see Bald, 109). Ratcliffe died on 10 November 1599, so it probable that Jeayes misdated Gawdy's letter. See Ben Jonson, *Works*, ed. C.H. Herford and Evelyn
The episode is evocative: a dead knight, a maid of honour's unspeakable grief, the mysterious and "tragycall" end to her life, her body dissected before the court and, nestled in her body, a telltale heart tendered as evidence of an excessive affection for her brother. That Ratcliffe was opened at all, particularly before Elizabeth, who seems to have taken interest in the postmortem, is telling. The autopsy betrays at least some faith in the possibility that her abject body might provide some insight into her distraction; why else examine the organs of a cadaver for traces of emotion? Yet once the court had inspected the viscera, finding Ratcliffe's body "well and sounde," a perplexing question remained: what did her cardial striations signify? If a vestigial knowledge of the thinking, feeling

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Simpson, 11 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), 11.7-8 and Ben Jonson, ed. Ian Donaldson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 651. Violet Wilson treats the episode briefly, commenting that Ratcliffe's (or Radcliffe's) death "made a deep impression, not only at Court, but throughout the whole city of London." After talk of the arrest of the Earl of Essex, "it formed the chief topics of conversation" (her evidence is spotty). She cites Gawdy's letter and Ben Jonson's poem, "On Margaret Ratcliffe." See Queen Elizabeth's Maids of Honour and Ladies of the Privy Chamber (London: John Lane, 1922), 245-249. I have thus far found no other account of this autopsy.


9Both to determine the cause of death and the prevent immediate decomposition, post-mortems were relatively popular in the early seventeenth century. With increasing frequency, aristocrats and "members of wealthy families accepted this surgical intervention as an inevitable part of interment, preferable to premature decomposition." Queen Elizabeth herself, however, left instructions that her body was not to be opened for the purposes of preservation (J. Nichols, The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth, 2nd ed., 3 vols. [London, 1823], 3.613). On this and related topics, see the brilliant article by David Harley, "Political Post-Mortems and Morbid Anatomy in Seventeenth-Century England," Social History of Medicine 7 (1994): 1-28 (the quotations above are from 3-4). Postmortems and dissections were performed with increasing frequency in the early modern period.

10Just as the heart was the emblem of Ratcliffe's depression, when the bodies of melancholics were opened, according to Nicholas Coeffeteau, "instead of a heart, they find nothing but a drie skinne like to leaves in Autumn" (The Table of Humane Passions, trans. Edward Grimestone [London, 1621], 333). Coeffeteau writes of courageous men who were found to have hairy hearts when they died (427-428). See J.B. Bamborough, The Little World of Man (London and New York: Longmans,
complex of mind and body was somehow lodged in the viscera, would opening a dead body reveal such secrets? Is the body best understood when it is laid open? How might the court have reasoned from physical traces to the specific pathologies implicated in Ratcliffe's dissolution? To adjust a New Historical apothegm, with respect to the mute strata of signs and indications, how might the dead speak?

Almost forty years later, Edward May, physician extraordinary to Queen Henrietta Maria, proposed an answer: in an autopsy dead bodies, like living bodies, speak through signs. On 7 October 1637, May dissected the body of Sir Francis Harris' nephew, John Pennant, to determine cause of death. The autopsy was successful. Yet May was perplexed about the specific cause of death; in part, his confusion arose from the perceived deficiency of somiotics. "As for the knowledge of abstruse and secret affections," May writes, "where perhaps no dolor gives certitude of the place affected ... such skill is worthy of a Physician, and at any rate to be procured: But how or where shall we have it?" Reasoning from signs and indications, May states, is essential to medical practice; yet current forms of medical semiotics were impoverished. "I never yet read of any Signa pathognomica [pathognomic signs] of any such disease," he writes, nor "do I know where to find one graine of

Green, 1952), 137. The heart was clearly a locus of emotion for most of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

"A Most Certaine and True Relation of a Strange Monster or Serpent Found in the left Ventricle of the heart of John Pennant, Gentleman, of the age of 21. yeares. By Edward May Doctor of Philosophy and Physick, and professor Elect of them, in the College of the Academy of Noble-men, called the Musaeum Minerva: Physitian also extraordinary unto her most Sacred Majesty, Queene of great Britany, &c. (London: Printed by George Miller, 1639). The text is dedicated to Sir Theodor Turque de Mayherne, one of Donne's physicians in 1623. "Physician also extraordinary" in this context meant a doctor who might treat the king and queen but was not on salary. See Harold J. Cook, The Decline of the Old Medical Regime in Stuart London (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1986), 281. On the Musaeum Minervae, see Francis Kinnaston, The Constitutions of the Musæum Minervæ (London, 1636), in which doctors of physick and philosophy shall profess "Physiologie" and "Anatomie, or other parts of Physick" (5) which included lecturing publicly for the benefit of gentlemen (13).
instruction in this, as also in divers other diseases (which I can nominate) more then from mine owne observation and care."\textsuperscript{12} May's assessment of current medical learning was incisive. Although George Herbert thought that an adequate knowledge of medicine might be gleaned from "seeing one Anatomie, reading one Book of Physic, [the physician] having one Herball by him," university medical education in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was especially poor.\textsuperscript{13} Especially to a Paracelsian, who believed that "the exterior thing alone gives knowledge of the interior ... otherwise no inner thing could come to be known," it was lacking in "curative details."\textsuperscript{14} In any case, May's doubts about the efficacy of symptomatology were resolved by another case.

One Arthur Buckeridge contracted a form of the pox, amorphous in contemporary

\textsuperscript{12}A Most Certaine and True Relation, 24-25.


nosology. May cured Buckeridge by reasoning from visible signs to invisible causes: "God and nature did assist in so great a difficulty, shewing by external figure the interall cause, taking therefore my Indicative from the Conjunctive (as Galen counselleth very well) I prescribed chiefly against wormes and inward putrefaction, and in very short space he was restored to his health." May's conclusion is precise: "secret, unusuall and strange inward diseases, doe send forth some radios, or signatures from the centre, Analogicall to the circumference, by which we may finde the causes if we be diligent and carefull." Diligence, observation and care, then, will enable one to reason from the effect to the cause; dissection assists this process. Although May cites Galen as his authority, his text is rife with Paracelsian terms and references.

May ends his pamphlet with a pæan to anatomy that, incidentally, excoriates the middling sort for their fear of dissection. Who knows, he asks, "what good more frequent dissections might doe, what portentous matters they might discover."

[T]here are by dissections every day something to be learned: and how much the internall do simbolize with externall, as in part I have discovered, and I will yet give out one illustration more: let but Physitions well note their patients complections, and colours (for this time I will onely speake of the face) and let them take afterward if they come to dissect them notice of their livers, and if they be diligent, in few dissections they shall be able, looking into any mans face whatsoever, to know the

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16*A Most Certaine and True Relation*, 25, 26-27. These signatures are "... an accurate and most necessary observation, and a chiefe Window to see into the most secret diseases and Closets of the body and heart also" (26-27). On May's Paracelsian formulations --- signatures and radii --- see Bono, *The Word of God and the Languages of Man*, 123-166, passim.
affections very manifestly of the liver.\textsuperscript{17}

Studying the "entrailes," May claims, might arrest the controversy over the causes of disease; inspection of the viscera enables the judgement of "thinges hidden and secret" and develops the ability to reason from effects to causes with acuity. To the physician who dissects, who has established the relationship between exterior signs and interior states, the face reveals the state of the liver. The equation May draws is clear: distemper is registered in the flesh, the pathognomic signs one sees in the living are evident in the dead. According to May, a physician's experience with cadavers will afford him the skill to infer disease from physiognomical signs ("complections, and colours"). The external and internal are inextricably, albeit perplexingly, linked; one "simbolize[s]" the other. The inside of a body is, to use May's words, "\textit{Analogicall to the circumference.}" The body's interior, in Sir Thomas Browne's words, sent out "sigils" evident on its surface.\textsuperscript{18}

The court's attempt to find traces of emotion in Ratcliffe's body and May's efforts to see the internal symbolized in the external both testify to an important habit of thought in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England: a conviction that what was inside a body (disease, emotion, character

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\item \textsuperscript{A Most Certaine and True Relation}, 37-38.
\item \textsuperscript{In A Letter to a Friend, Upon Occasion of the Death of his Intimate Friend} (1690, but composed in the 1640s), Browne advises that some diseases, such as "extreme Consumption," do not send out "Sigils" as others do (\textit{Sir Thomas Browne: Selected Writings}, ed. Sir Geoffrey Keynes [London: Faber, 1968], 95). In 1654, Walter Charleton identified "Sigillation" with indication. Sigillation allowed "Occult qualities" to be "made manifest" (\textit{Physiologia Epicuro-Gassendo-Charltoniana} [London, 1654], 364). Charleton expresses the fear that students of occult qualities "have not obtained the happy shoar of verity, but remain upon wide and fluctuating ocean of meer Verisimility." His purpose was to "explain sundry admired Effects, by such Reasons, as may appear not altogether Remote and Incongruous, but \textit{Constantaneous} and \textit{Affine} to Truth; that so no mans judgement may be impeached by embracing them for most Probable, untill the (in that respect, too slow) wheel of Time shall have brought up some worthy Explorator, who shall wholly withdraw the thick Curtain of obscurity, which yet hangs betwixt Natures Laboratory and Us, and enrich the Commonweal of Letters, by the discovery of Real Verity" (342). Patey thinks this passage "somewhat disingenuous[...]") (\textit{Probability and Literary Form: Philosophic Theory and Literary Practice in the Augustan Age} [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984], 290 note 7).
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or soul) could be accessed and assessed via surfaces. Imagining a discernible path from a trace, the "stringes" of Ratcliffe's heart, to a case, the cause of her death, speaks to an emergent if attenuated materialism: signs offered by the human body might assume, in specific instances, the status of definitive evidence.19 Like the signatures emitted by the organs of a dissected cadaver, physical signs manifest the hidden, whether disease or a distracted emotional state; at the very least, dissection is a process of revelation. What emerges from these accounts is not merely a conceptualization of the relationship between parts and wholes, but a refiguration of physical matter as a knotted index of the attenuated (emotions, causes) educed by reading bodies gone wrong. In each case, May and the English court took their 'indicatives' from 'conjunctives,' proposing, in other words, that one specific symptom (a striated heart, behaviour suggestive of an infestation of worms) took precedence over others both in discerning causation and prescribing medicine. In each case, too, as Donne put it, the physicians directed their speech to parts of the most effect.

"The exquisite method of healing," Helkiah Crooke notes in 1615, "cannot bee performed but by indications, and indications are not onely derived from the disease, but also from the part affected, and the remedies must bee changed and altered, according to the divers and severall nature, temperature, scituation, connexion and sence of the part."20 Crooke implicitly endorses the activities of May and the English court. Aided by a thorough understanding of anatomy, healing proceeds by a circumstanced, contextual interpretation of the signs and indications of the human body. Like May,

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19"The materialism of this eschatology expressed not body-soul dualism but rather a sense of self as psychosomatic unity. The idea of person, bequeathed by the Middle Ages to the modern world, was not a concept of soul escaping body or soul using body; it was a concept of self in which physicality was integrally bound to sensation, emotion, reasoning, identity ---- and therefore finally to whatever one means by salvation" (Caroline Walker Bynum, The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200-1336 [New York: Columbia University Press, 1995], 11).

20Microcosmographia: a Description of the Body of Man (London, 1615), 16-17 (page 16 is mispaginated as 14).
Crooke insists that medicine depends on a knowledge of "evil affect[s]" and a "knowledge of the part affected," on both symptomatology and anatomy. The latter assists physicians in establishing connections between somatic matter (parts) and the mute signs that potentially reveal hidden pathologies. Symptomatology and anatomy also enable a knowledge of the self: accumulating knowledge about the whole human being, body and soul, necessitated exposing the interior of the body to scrutiny. From Philip Melanchthon through Donne and Descartes to Vico, in order to know the soul, the body must itself be known. As many early modern physicians, philosophers, poets and anatomists insist, these matters were best investigated "in a fresh cadaver," to use Jacobus Sylvius' phrase. As the Anglican Daniel Featley put it in 1633, at least one "blind and dirty" way to God is through the body. How better to know the body and the soul than to take the body apart?

Yet rooting through the guts to discover the traces of disease, anchoring the passion in the flesh or retailing the Creator's skill by exhibiting the intricacy of human anatomy was no guarantee of a knowledge of sickness or of the relationship between body and soul. Identifying and describing the parts affected by an illness posed grave interpretive problems. Suturing physical evidence, like a striated heart, to its apparent cause was equally fraught. In early modern England, each task was accomplished by the collation of the living body's signs and indications, a judicious meditation on the relationship between parts and wholes and prudent speculation about causes. Since charting "the Meteorology of the little world" --- the undulations of the humours, the rise and fall of vital spirits and fluids, the "storms" to which the body is subject --- was an arduous, uncertain task with ambiguous results, medicine remained conjectural, as we have seen. Medical semiotics thus

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21Sylvius (1478-155) was Vesalius' teacher at Paris; for biographical information and the phrase quoted, see C.D. O'Malley, Andreas Vesalius of Brussels, 1514-1564 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University California Press, 1964), 47-53, 249.

required recourse to analogy, symbolics and probable inference. Although physical connections between body and soul were undisputed by Crooke, Donne, May, even Descartes, establishing the functions and relations of these connections in living bodies was dependent on reading signs. While gesture, facial expression, the marks on a heart or spots on the skin were thought to reveal the emotional state or the causes of disease or death, just as "delivery" was essential to a good oration, none of these signs were certain. In all cases, however, physical marks functioned as indices of the metaphysical. If the signs of the living body, like the signs of Scripture or other texts, were sometimes obscure or ambiguous, how were these hermeneutic problems resolved?

Early modern writers envisioned two solutions: they employed rhetorical and hermeneutic techniques developed in the interpretation of texts to the book of the human body, sifting and weighing signs and symptoms with prudence, decorum and an attention to circumstance (the subject of chapter two). They also endorsed a hierarchy of signs, treating the "sign-as-evidence," to use Ian Hacking's phrase, as an arch-sign or indication.\textsuperscript{22} Whereas any symptom might, in Donne's words, "complicate, and mingle themselves with every infirmitie of the body" (Devotions, 29), indications pointed a way to the proper name and interpretation of an illness as well as treatment. A symptom became a meaningful sign in the "consultations" of the physician, as we saw in the introduction; a meaningful sign became an indication when it was perceived to point to the root of an illness. Like Bacon in the Ratcliffe case or May reasoning from "indicatives," Donne's physicians decided to offer him purgatives after (presumably) agreeing on the "good Indications" and "good signes" of his fever.

Similar to the way in which the "stringes" on Ratcliffe's heart might have been treated as evidence of her emotional state, Donne's indications seem to determine the relationship between cause and effect and suggest, if not a discernible cause of his fever, at least a treatment. In either case, those who examined the bodies of Ratcliffe and Donne were following accepted medical practice. As May insists, by "taking therefore my Indicative from the Conjunctive (as Galen counsolletheh very well)" he effected a cure of Buckeridge's distemper by seeing analogically (seeing invisibly, as Donne would say) into the causes of his patient's disease. Thus there are different orders of "radios, or signatures from the centre. Analogicall to the circumference" by which the causes and cures of disease are discerned. May follows Galen in his determination; as we shall see, however, Galen's conception of indication or endeixis is rooted in earlier notions of sign inference. The interpretation of somatic signs drew upon other forms of sign-inference developed in the histories of rhetoric and hermeneutics.

**Endeixis**

The relationship between medicine, rhetoric and hermeneutics has a long history. Although the

"divergent strands" within Greek and Roman medicine and philosophy are striking, central to each are two frequently repeated caveats. First, the practice of medicine, rhetoric or hermeneutics is based on understanding and interpreting signs; second, as a result of that dependence, each practice is uncertain and thus requires long experience, prudence and diligence to accomplish its ends. That medicine in itself was thought a deeply uncertain practice contributed to the ways in which ancients imagined its intersection with other arts and sciences. Recent scholarship has identified a nascent "medical moral philosophy" in ancient ethics. Here, I argue that, in the writings of the three classical authorities in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance (Plato, Aristotle and Galen --- and, to a lesser extent, until his seventeenth century revival, Hippocrates), medicine was a practice based on reading and interpretation. In order to solve the hermeneutic problems presented by a sick, living body, ancient medical writers looked to rhetoric and hermeneutics as particularly fertile ground. Even as Galen, for example, sought to establish a demonstrable medical logic, medicine nurtured and sustained forms of analogical thinking. The dominance of sign-inference and analogy in medical thought persisted until the eighteenth century.

The interrelations of rhetoric, ethics and hermeneutics have been established by Wesley one recognizes that it arose in conjunction with ancient medical theory. See, for example, Joel Warren Lidz, "Medicine as Metaphor in Plato," *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy*, 20 (1995): 527-541. 527 and P. Carrick, *Medical Ethics in Antiquity* (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1985), 26 and Ludwig Edelstein, *Ancient Medicine*, trans. C. Lilian Temkin (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967), 361. Werner Jaeger, as Lidz notes, held that Platonic ethics "would be unthinkable without the medical model" (527). Of course I cannot do justice to this complex relationship here; however, a few rudimentary observations are necessary in order to establish the important of symptomatology in the medical writings of antiquity. I shall focus on the hermeneutics of symptoms and the relationship between rhetoric and medicine.

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Trimpi. Trimpi argues that early literary theory emerged to form a middle ground between rhetoric, hermeneutics and philosophy; the most important development in this ancient cross-pollination was "a philosophical justification of probability." Other scholars have argued that the development of equity, prudence and decorum in rhetoric and law was essential to the interpretation of poetry and to hermeneutics in general in antiquity. What is missing from these accounts is the role of ancient medical thought and its contributions to early modern deliberations about signs.

Medicine was central to the ways in which Plato envisions human life: "the good human" as well as justice are analogous to a healthy body. Such analogical thinking is central to early Greek thought; analogies between physicians, lawyers and orators pervade ancient Greek philosophical and medical writing. To Plato, a physician, like a lawyer or orator, treats patients by "going into things

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28Wesley Trimpi, "The Ancient Hypothesis of Fiction: an Essay on the Origins of Literary Theory," *Traditio* 27 (1971): 1-78. Trimpi writes: "The adoption of terms from medicine, politics, ethics, dialectic, and rhetoric by those who first discussed the purposes and deficiencies of literature suggests how a theory of literature may have been forming in its borrowed vocabulary prior to the recorded documents as well as the ways in which later theorists would perceive, define, and defend their critical principles" (3). Aristotle, in particular, defending the mimetic arts against Plato, established a philosophical justification of probability (11). "The second general issue on which Aristotle responds specifically to Plato in his own terms," Trimpi argues, "has perhaps more importance than any other for the history of literary discourse, and this is the issue of probability" (16). For literary theory as a middle ground, see 23-27 and Trimpi, "The Quality of Fiction: the Rhetorical Transmission of Literary Theory," *Traditio* 30 (1974): 1-118. "The 'psychological' middle ground of the probable lying between the true and the false and the 'judicial' middle ground of equity lying between a general principle and a disparate particularity became increasingly interdependent" and crucial to the formation of literary theory (80).


31Lloyd, *Polarity and Analogy*. 
thoroughly from the beginning in a scientific way, and takes the patient and his family into his confidence." In the Republic Plato draws an explicit analogy between a judge and a physician, both of whom, in order to practice well, must cultivate a lengthy experience, and hence the most prudent judgement, of their respective subjects. The best physician is "in contact with the greatest number of sick bodies," has himself experienced every illness and, surprisingly, is "not very healthy by nature." Like the judge, the physician cures with his mind or soul and thus, Plato implies, requires a command of language. Yet, in a polity, the rhetor is to be preferred before a physician. Why? By means of consoling words that allow one to identify and assuage the passions of an audience, the rhetor is able to persuade an assembly that he would be a better physician. The health of the body

32 Laws 720c-e. On medicine in Plato, see William Osler, Physic and Physicians in Plato (Boston: Damrell and Upham, 1893). Lidz, "Medicine as Metaphor," writes: "That Plato was influenced by these metaphysical and medical metaphors is clear, though metaphors which underlie philosophical theories are not normally the subject of explicit discussion by those who employ them, and Plato was no exception. Such 'root' metaphors serve to illuminate a range of phenomena, opening a horizon for theorizing, but themselves remain undiscussed" (528). Lidz then identifies four ways in which Plato employed medical metaphors, terms and models (529-530).

33 As Plato wrote in the Statesman, "The differences of human personality, the variety of men's activities, and the inevitable unsettlement attending all human experience make it impossible for any art whatsoever to issue unqualified rules holding good on all questions at all times" (294b). Plato distinguishes between the more and less exact arts (Philebus, 56bff.); see Kathy Eden, Poetic and Legal Fiction in the Aristotelian Tradition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 35 note 15.

34 Plato's Republic, trans. G.M.A. Grube (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1974), 77: 408d-e. Here, Plato seems to deepen the analogy between the physician's body and the body of his patient. This notion is repeated by George Herbert in The Country Parson: "And it fares in [preaching] as it doth in Physick: He that hath been sick of a Consumption, and knows what recovered him, is a Physician so far as he meetes with the same disease, and temper; and can much better, and particularly do it, then he that is generally learned, and was never sick. And if the same person had been sick of all diseases, and were recovered of all by things that he knew; there were no such Physician as he, both for skill and tenderness" (The Works of George Herbert, ed. F.N. Hutchinson [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941], 278-279).

35 "Let a rhetor and a physician go together to whatever city you will: if a discussion is begun in the assembly of the people or in any gathering to decide which of the two will be elected as physician, I declare that the physician will disappear and the orator will be preferred, if it so please him" (Plato, Gorgias, 456b). The association of the iudex and medicus persists through Augustine (Sermones de Sanctis 278.5, cited in Schleiner, The Imagery of John Donne's Sermons, 85, 222 note 65).
and the health of the soul (and by implication, the health of the polity) are inextricably linked. The bridge between them is rhetoric or the "therapeutic word."  

The *locus classicus* for the relationship between medicine and rhetoric in Plato is the *Phaedrus*. "The method of the science of medicine," Plato writes, "is, I suppose, the same as that of the science of rhetoric." The rhetor and the physician share a single method, its success or failure determined by the aptitude with which causes are sutured to effects. Proceeding scientifically and not merely by "empirical routine" from effects (the passions aroused in oratory or symptoms arising from fever) to causes (a true knowledge of an auditor's soul or the seat of the illness itself) requires a detailed tabulation of the "distinguishing marks" of various topics and the differentiation between necessary and accidental qualities. Since each individual possesses a particular nature, the "therapeutic word" must be accommodated and attuned to the character and state of mind of a

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36 "Whenever our body is unduly loosened or overstrained by diseases or other mishaps, it is a necessary result that the soul be at once destroyed" (Plato, *Phaedo*, 86c). Compare Aristotle's assertion that the body is changed by the passions: "It seems that all the affections of the soul involve a body --- passion, gentleness, fear, pity, courage, joy, loving, and hating; in all these there is a concurrent affection of the body" (*De Anima*, 403a16-18). On this connection in antiquity and the seventeenth century, see Susan James, *Passion and Action*, esp. part 1 and Entralgo, *The Therapy of the Word*.


38 *Phaedrus* 263b8.
patient. This attention to an equitable reading of marks or signs is the province of both rhetoric and medicine. As Kathy Eden argues, Plato attends to poetics in a similar manner. Gorgias makes this relationship the basis of his evaluation of rhetoric: the rhetor is a physician of words. That the physician and the orator might share both a method and an end (the cure of physical or emotional distemper) was cause for speculation both in the antique reception of Plato and in the Renaissance.

Following Plato, Aristotle discerns similar parallels between rhetoric, hermeneutics and medicine. Aristotle's "primary analogon to rhetoric is not virtue but medicine." Although he


41"Just as some medicines eliminate one humor from the body, and other medicines another, and some free from disease while others take away life, so too do some words grieve, others cheer, others frighten, others inflame him who listens to them and others, finally, with effectively malign persuasion poison and bewitch the soul"; quoted in Entralgo, Therapy of the Word, 93. The "close structural and genetic connection" between medicine and rhetoric, Entralgo notes, is explained with clarity by Plato at Gorgias, 464b, 465a, 501a and Phaedrus, 270a-d (Therapy of the Word, 164).

42Attention to Plato was confined almost entirely to the Timaeus, which contained his most cogent and popular medical writing (81e-87b; see Lloyd, Magic, Reason and Experience, 97 and 97 note 203). That doctors and sophists were often indiscernible, see Lloyd, ibid., 96. Although one should be clear that "the Plato of the Renaissance was very far from the original" (Anthony Grafton, "The Availability of Ancient Works," The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy, ed. Charles B. Schmitt et al. [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988], 787), Plato was nevertheless increasingly influential into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. See Paul Oskar Kristeller, "Renaissance Platonism," in his Renaissance Thought: the Classic, Scholastic and Humanist Strains (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), 48-69, Gilbert, Renaissance Concepts of Method, The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy (entries in index), Brian Vickers, In Defense of Rhetoric (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), Michael J.B. Allen, The Platonism of Marsilio Ficino: a Study of his Phaedrus Commentary. its Sources and Genesis (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

43Rainolds, Lectures, recognizes the relationship between the Phaedrus and Aristotle's writings on rhetoric in the 1570s: "Bessarion, in book 1 (as I recall) of Against the Slander of Plato, shows that Aristotle's Rhetoric is patterned after the rhetorical precepts which were sketched in Plato's Phaedrus. This is evident in the work itself" (97). Rainolds cites Johannes Bessarion (1403-1472), In
insists that a "physician is not expected to persuade or coerce his patients," because both dealt with opinion Aristotle argues that medicine and rhetoric shared forms of inference and reasoning (the enthymeme, for example) common to practical deliberation. In Aristotle's writings, medicine operates in at least two ways: either as an exemplary practice that underwrites and verifies the need for practical reasoning in human experience (rhetoric and ethics) or as the primary example of the complexities of signification and interpretation (symptomatology and hermeneutics). In both cases, the physician and the rhetor were closely associated.

In the Ethics, medicine functions as a discipline that instantiates not only the importance of practical reasoning (phronesis), but also the impossibility of exactitude in disciplines concerned with particular experience. Since rhetoric and medicine treat particulars (or "ultimates" in Aristotle's

Calumnatorem Platonis [c.1469] (Venice, 1503), book 1, chapter 2, page 7 (cited by Green, Lectures, 394).


47 Book six of the Nicomachean Ethics deals largely with the questions of art, knowledge, philosophical wisdom, practical wisdom, judgement and understanding (1138b18ff.). Practical wisdom (phronesis) consists of deliberation about things which might be otherwise than they are or are contingent and mutable. Also called temperance (1140b11) or prudence (Rhetoric, 1366b20-23), practical wisdom is confined, more or less, to "things human," to particulars and to opinion. Its constituents are experience, foresight and, in its guise as judgement, "the right discrimination of the equitable" (1140b20-1143a25). The literature on practical wisdom is large; for my purposes, the most useful treatments are Eugene Garver, Machiavelli and the History of Prudence (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987) and Kathy Eden's work. Eden writes: " Appropriately, then, Aristotelian probability is empirical rather than mathematical, qualitative rather than quantitative, relying less on calculation and more on experience" (Poetic and Legal Fiction, 70). The best contemporary treatment of phronesis and the phronimos (the prudent deliberator) is C.D.C. Reeve, Practices of Reason: Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 67-98. On equity in Aristotle, see N. Sherman, The Fabric of Character (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 13-28. The first English translation of the Ethics was made by John Wilkinson from the Italian; see The
terms), medicine underwrites his claim that ethics is contingent: "matters concerned with conduct and questions of what is good for us have no fixity, any more than matters of health." Neither ethics nor medicine fall under "any art or set of precepts, but the agents themselves must in each case consider what is appropriate to the occasion, as happens also in the art of medicine or of navigation." 

Like the rhetor who must possess "the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion" and "discover the persuasive facts in each case," the physician must assemble the appropriate heuristics (symptomatology, anatomy, pathology) in order to treat the sick. 

In other words, both medicine and rhetoric were attuned to discovering the appropriate means of treating, whether discursively or remedially, the human subject. By means of a diligent examination of signs, both the rhetor and the physician must be able to discern between apparent and real causes. The problem of course is that the signs that reveal human experience --- whether ethical or medical --- are

\[\text{Ethiques of Aristotle, that is to say Preceptes of Good Behavoure (London, 1547). Donne certainly read the Ethics; see Sermons, 9.255.}\]

\[\text{As Aristotle writes later in the Ethics, "individual education has an advantage over education in common, as individual medical treatment has" (1180b7-8). "For to get anyone whatever --- anyone who is put before us --- into the right condition," he continues, "is not for the first chance comer; if anyone can do it, it is the man who knows, just as in medicine and all other matters which give scope for care and practical wisdom" (1180b26-29). On the importance of phronesis to medicine, see Eugenie Gatens-Robinson, "Clinical Judgement and the Rationality of the Human Sciences," Journal of Medicine and Philosophy 11 (1986): 167-178 and Kathryn Montgomery Hunter, "Narrative, Literature and the Exercise of Practical Reason," Journal of Medicine and Philosophy 21 (1996): 303-320 and idem, "Aphorisms, Maxims and Old Saws: Narrative Rationality and the Negotiation of Clinical Choice," in Stories and Their Limits: Narrative Approaches to Bioethics, ed. Hilde Lindemann Nelson (New York and London: Routledge, 1997), 215-231. In the latter article, Hunter writes: "Although medicine draws much of its knowledge from the biological sciences, its practice relies on moral knowing. Like bioethics, which it comprises, clinical medicine requires the use of narrative, interpretive reason. A physician's practical know-how arises from experience with particular cases, both directly, in the care of patients, and vicariously, through oral and written reports. Transmitted and refined as diagnostic and therapeutic plots, this practical reason is summarized and expressed in aphorisms, old saws and rules of thumb. ... Aphorisms are part of medicine's counterweighted, often paradoxical method of teaching and reminding in an uncertain, case-based domain of knowledge" (215, 217).}\]

\[\text{Rhetoric, 1355b110-35.}\]
complex and variegated. "Most of the things about which we make decisions, and into which we inquire," Aristotle writes, "present us with alternative possibilities."50

While mathematics and science are concerned with "forms," demonstration and certainty, and other sciences have only knowing or understanding as their internal ends, the practice of medicine is predicated on an external end --- healing a sick body.51 In medicine, however, ends and means do not always agree: physicians do not always understand the nature of health and the means used to effect healing may not be effective.52 Due to the variety of medical phenomena and the exigencies of individual illness, medicine is uncertain. Yet medicine and rhetoric share an attention to certain states of being or categories of people; particulars were assembled into whole if not universal knowledge. How else might one build the necessary experience to qualify as an effective healer? Although rhetoric, as Aristotle confirms, "is not concerned with any special or definite class of subjects," it "is concerned not with what seems reputable to a given individual ... but what seems so to men of a given type." Medicine, Aristotle continues, "does not theorize about what will help to cure Socrates or Callias, but only about what will help to cure any or all of a given class of patients: this alone is subject to technique --- individual cases are so infinitely various that no knowledge of them is possible."53 Similarly, the potency of rhetoric resides in its flexibility; it is "the power of observing the means of persuasion on almost any subject presented to us."54 Both medicine and rhetoric, then,

50Rhetoric, 1357b124-25.

51For "it is for the doctor to know the fact that circular wounds heal more slowly, and for the geometer to know the reason why" (Posterior Analytics 79a1.15, 129). See also Eudemian Ethics (1215b15-17). There Aristotle writes that we aim to be healthy not to know what health is (1216b22-25).

52Politics 1331b34-35.

53Rhetoric, 1356b30-33.

54Ibid., 1357b32-33.
traffic in classes of people or patients, inferring from individual cases probable rules for a class (the feverish, the rash); yet both remain, strictly speaking, mired in the world of contingency, of particulars and signs. As Oswei Temkin has pointed out, medicine suffers from a fundamental contradiction: its practice treats individuals while its theory can only grasp universals. Since there can be no science of individuals or particulars, how does one reason from heterogeneity of particulars to homogeneous universals?

This task is accomplished by rhetorical argument which takes the form of either enthymemes or examples, both of which, with important differences, rely on contingencies and probabilities to establish proof. An enthymeme is a deductive rhetorical argument from particular "probabilities or signs" commonly held to be true (although neither a sign nor a probability are, in point of fact, identical elements of an argument). Probabilities are "reputable propositions," based on commonly


56On the difference between probabilities (reputable propositions) and signs (demonstrative propositions either necessary or reputable), see Prior Analytics, 70a3-70b38. Aristotle's examination of these differences is centred on the question of repérage: how might one "infer character" from "physical features"? It might be accomplished, he claims, if there were only one sign for each affection, given that "the body and the soul are changed together by natural affections" (Ibid., 70b6-31). "Passions, it is agreed [in ancient philosophy]," writes Susan James, "have intrinsic physical manifestations which bridge emotion and action and are written on the body in facial expressions, blushings, trembling and postures" (Passion and Action, 4). Elsewhere, Aristotle writes that enthymemes may be based on "probabilities, examples, evidences, signs." "Enthymemes based upon probabilities are those which argue from what is, or is supposed to be, usually true. Enthymemes based upon example are those which proceed from one or more similar cases, arrive at a general proposition, and then argue deductively to a particular inference. Enthymemes based upon evidences are those which argue from the inevitable or invariable. Enthymemes based upon signs are those which argue from some universal or particular proposition, true or false" (Rhetoric, 1402b13-21). Trimpi succinctly defines the enthymeme: "The enthymeme, the orator's 'demonstration' of what he wishes to persuade his listeners, reaches a probable conclusion from probable premises with the same logic as the syllogism reaches a certain conclusion from certain premises" ("Ancient Hypotheses of Fiction." 17). The most perspicacious writing on the enthymeme is by M. F. Burnyeat. See "Enthymeme: Aristotle on the Logic of Persuasion," in Aristotle's Rhetoric: Philosophical Essays, ed. David J. Furley and Alexander Nehamas (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 3-55, citing
held beliefs that underwrite the syllogisms on which they are based. Signs are another case: they "yield no deduction" and are treated with suspicion along with arguments from accident, consequence or synecdoche. Linguistic signs are like somatic symptoms. Both are either necessary (internal) or non-necessary (external), dependent on the ways in which they instantiate the relationship between the general and the particular. In other words, a "sign is meant to be a demonstrative proposition either necessary or reputable; for anything such that when it is another thing is, or when it has come into being the other has come into being before or after, is a sign of the other's being or having come into being." The definition is repeated in the pseudo-Aristotelian *Rhetoric to Alexander.* However, signs might allow a certain knowledge of things, Aristotle claims, because it is easy to obtain an "abundance" of signs from any one body. Once again, medicine is crucial to this argument about hermeneutics; illness is Aristotle's example.

"The fact that [a person] breathes hard is a sign that he has a fever." Yet the argument is


*Rhetoric,* 1401a1-b27.

*Prior Analytics,* 70b3ff. As we shall see below, this formulation is remarkably similar to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century definitions of a symptom.

"One thing is a sign of another thing, but one thing taken at random is not a sign of something else taken at random, nor is everything a sign of everything else; but the sign of a thing is that which usually occurs before, or simultaneously with, or after it. That which has happened is a sign not only of what has happened but of what has not happened; and similarly what has not happened is a sign not only of what does not exist but also of what does exist" (*Rhetoric to Alexander,* 1430b30-36).

"refutable, even if true, since a man may breathe hard without having a fever."\textsuperscript{61} The signs of fever cannot function as evidences (irrefutable signs that reveal an invariable condition or quality) since they signify "the relation of universal to particular." In other words, focusing on medicine, Aristotle argues that some signs, those which embody the relationship between universals and particulars, while they might attest to the presence of disease, are not admissible as legitimate proofs. As a consequence, enthymemic reasoning relies on a consensus gentium, and thus possesses less veracity than scientific demonstration. Equally useful, this reasoning seems less crucial to medical thought than the example.

Although enthymemes, as rhetorical arguments based on deduction, hold more evidential force than examples, examples have their place in reasoning.\textsuperscript{62} Where the use of an enthymeme involves deduction from commonly held, culturally accepted opinion, using an example entails inducing the common characteristics of a person or thing based "on a number of similar cases."\textsuperscript{63}

Used to establish the truth of a seemingly incredible statement, examples are "actions which have taken place in the past and are similar to, or the contrary of, those about which [one] is speaking."\textsuperscript{64} Strictly speaking, an example speaks to the relationship between parts and parts, rather than parts and wholes; the example (paradeigma) is "a variety of induction which brings out the meaning of a thing


\textsuperscript{62}\textsuperscript{62}"Where we are unable to argue by enthymeme, we must try to demonstrate by this method of example, and to convince our hearers thereby" (\textit{Rhetoric}, 1394a10-11).


\textsuperscript{64}\textit{Rhetoric to Alexander}, 1429a22-28.
by comparing it with one or more other things which are like it but clearer or better known. It is a form of reasoning akin to analogisms. The example also has an historical dimension, for examples are either invented ("fables" in Aristotle's terminology) or consist "in the mention of actual past facts." The latter is more potent but of course more difficult but both operate according to probatio (testing, trial, examination; the word has surgical analogues in the early seventeenth century) or analogy. In practice, however, the example performs functions similar to those of the enthymeme and, depending on audience, is pedagogically more useful. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the practice of medicine relied on experience, example and analogy.

Much more could be written about Plato and Aristotle's attention to medicine and its relationship to rhetoric and hermeneutics. Although I have not addressed the competing concepts of medical thought in various schools of philosophy, from my brief discussion, three characteristics of ancient medicine should be clear. First, medicine was an uncertain practice that addressed contingent, individual phenomena. Second, due to its uncertainty, rhetoric and hermeneutics offered

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67 Why is it that in rhetorical displays men prefer examples and stories rather than enthymemes? Is it because they like to learn and to learn quickly, and this end is achieved more easily by examples and stories, since these are familiar to them and are of the nature of particulars, whereas enthymemes are proofs based on generalities, with which we are less familiar than with the particular? Further, we attach more credence to any evidence which is supported by several witnesses, and examples and stories resemble evidence, and proofs supported by witnesses are easily obtained. Further, men like to hear of similarities, and examples and stories display similarities (Problems, 916b25-34). As Aristotle makes very clear, narrative, analogy, inartificial proofs and similitudes are essential to learning. On inartificial proofs, which are deduced from outside the oratory, see Rhetoric, 1355b36-1356a1 and Quintilian, Institutio Oratoria, trans. H.E. Butler, 4 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996), 5.1.1-3.
useful models for medical logic. The enthymeme and, in particular, the example were essential to a physician's deliberations about variable symptoms and signs. This uncertainty was clearly a weakness with respect to the development of a 'science' of medicine. However, and this is my third point, it strengthened the appeal of specific medical models and metaphors as the basis for reasoning about the exigencies of human experience in general: both Aristotle and Plato use medical metaphors and analogies to explain rhetorical thought, signification and ethical deliberation.

Attempts to uncover the immured interior of the body were central to the intersection of rhetoric, medicine and hermeneutics. As Page du Bois has argued, the interior of the body was seen to contain "secrets that must be interpreted, elicited by signs that emerge onto the body's surface." Envisioning the interior depended on the techniques and practices I have outlined above. For example, in *The Science of Medicine*, Hippocrates insists that what escapes our vision we must grasp by mental sight, and the physician, being unable to see the nature of the disease nor to be told of it, must have recourse to reasoning from the symptoms with which he is presented. ... By weighing up the significance of various signs it is possible to deduce of what disease they are the result, what has happened in the past and to prognosticate the future course of the malady.69

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68 *Torture and Truth* (New York and London: Routledge, 1991), 87. duBois argues that the interior of the body is "associated with female space" and that its articulation is intertwined with ancient notions of torture as legitimating revelation (*passim*). The physician's task, in contrast, "consists in patient observation of appearance and behaviours that reveal the progress of disease within the closed body of the sufferer" with an eye to the future: prognosis (88-89).

Reasoning from symptoms, weighing their significance, can of course lead to widely divergent conclusions; nevertheless, physicians cannot avoid this historicized process of reasoning about cause and effect in a sick body. Hippocrates calls the process "deduction," however, which would seem to sanction the use of enthymemic reasoning. Yet his practice, his "histories" of disease, also utilize the rhetoric of exemplarity. Hippocratic case-taking necessitates the scrutiny of concordances and discordances of symptoms until "a single concordance is derived from the discordances." In other words, a careful analysis of the variance and collocation of symptoms and signs leads a physician to a definitive end, an arch-symptom as it were, which discloses the nature of the illness. However, the process is conjectural (physicians must employ "mental sight") and dependent on variable signs and indications.

Galen agreed and spent considerable energy establishing the differences between forms of reasoning that lay claim to a knowledge of the interior of the body in order to establish medicine as a demonstrative science. From antiquity, through the middle ages to the early modern period, the importance of Galenism cannot be overstressed. While Galen's blend of reason (logos) and

of which things are composed" (Galenism: Rise and Decline of a Medical Philosophy [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973], 16).

See Entralgo, Therapy of the Word, 148-155; quotation from Hippocratic texts at 150. Bacon is indebted to the development of medical reason in the Hippocratic tradition.

For ancient science theory and the difference between indexical and commemorative signs, see Hankinson, On the Therapeutic Method, xxviii-xxix.

Hankinson writes that Galen thought that medicine "indeed practical medicine, should be put on all fours with theoretical, axiomatized sciences like arithmetic and geometry .... This is, I think, Galen's great claim to originality as a theoretician" (On the Therapeutic Method, 120). Clearly, Galen differs radically from Aristotle and Plato, even Celsius, in this claim.

experience (empeiria) lent itself to an extensive discussion of symptomatology, his 'medical reasoning' is little discussed with any specificity. Like Aristotle, and in contradistinction to the Dogmatists, Rationalists and Methodists he attacks, Galen treats the process of reasoning from symptoms and signs as a practical task. However, his delicate empiricism, refined by reason, led to the conclusion that divining the causes of illness, while laudatory, is fraught. Those who search for causes (in either the temperaments or elements of the body) "are fittingly plunged into doubts and contradictions"; the "investigation of causes is an unnecessary superfluity." Nevertheless, in the face of the difficulty and potential redundancy of the task, Galen offers a possible solution: if medicine were established on a rational foundation, and its practice informed by experience, it might,
despite internecine, sectarian controversy, come nearest to truth.  

Illness is known both by reason and experience; there are some diseases which cannot be known by the senses and compel the physician to use reason ("mental sight"). Establishing a rational medical epistemology meant refining inferential methods, since clinical knowledge is based on "diagnosis by professional conjecture." Signs are essential to this process. The variation in arrangement and magnitudes of illness prompts a careful consideration of visibles or symptoms; symptoms are either prognostic, diagnostic or therapeutic. The order of their occurrence is crucial to prudent diagnosis. In analyzing symptoms and signs empiricists, he claimed, were immune to the errors of the others sects since they refuse to impute causes; yet their refusal to impute causation precluded a 'science' of medicine. While Galen thought demonstration was rendered impossible by medical theory of his predecessors, proper diagnosis, based on both reason and experience in a deliberation about symptoms, might be thoroughly established.

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77 Frede, "On Galen's Epistemology," 80-82. Crombie, Styles, writes that "Galen's sophisticated critique of the medical sects envisaged a logic of inquiry combining experimental exploration with rational analysis in which both were essential" (219).

78 Garcia-Ballester, "Galen as a Medical Practitioner," 15.

79 Ibid., 19, 34-34. Garcia-Ballester uses the term "medical conjecture" to identify the practice of reasoning from indicative and evidential signs.

80 Ibid., 29.

81 "If for example convulsion follows fever this is a sign of death, and if fever follows convulsion this is a sign of safety" (chap 4), Crombie, Styles, 222.

82 "Different states arise from the causes, places affected, ages, habits, magnitude of the symptoms, natures, times of year and regions ..." (De Optima Secta, c.13; Crombie, Styles, 219).

83 "We say that the medical art has taken its nature from experience and not from demonstration. We call experience the knowledge of something that is gained with one's own eyes, and demonstration the knowledge that is deduced as a logical conclusion. ... Experience based on practice occurs only to craftsmen through some resemblance to what has been discovered empirically" (De Subfiguratione Empirica, c.2; Crombie, Styles, 221).
Inferring or conjecturing from signs (diagnosis and prognosis) takes at least two forms (epitomized in the writings and practice of the various medical sects Galen discusses): epilogismos, a form of inference "directed toward visible things" and analogismos, or reasoning from effects to causes, from the visible to the invisible. The former is akin to "ordinary thought," the latter to a specialized, technical form of reasoning epitomized by the Rationalist sect. Frede explains:

the rationalists believe there are indicative signs by means of which one can make inferences from observable states of affairs to unobservable, hidden states and entities, which are implied by them. Thus we will be able to proceed deductively from what can be observed to what cannot be observed from the existence of objects of experience to the existence of theoretical entities. ... Thus the theory of the rational method is supposed to provide a justification for the old assumption that medical knowledge should be based on a theory of the underlying, hidden nature of things.\textsuperscript{84}

At various points in On Medical Experience, for example, he chides Dogmatists for refusing to join reason with experience in "inferring what is concealed from what is manifest." The logic of discovery used by all sects, Galen claims, is called epilogismos, which seeks "the guidance of visible things --- and it is from those that it seeks confirmation of its truth and rightness." Yet at several points in the same treatise he praises analogismos (or, in my terms, repérage), suggesting that "inferring what is concealed from what is manifest" defines the "method of experience."\textsuperscript{85}

Nevertheless, for Galen, reasoning from visibles to other visibles, reminiscent of the Aristotelian paradeigma, is the Archimedean point with respect to medical knowledge.\textsuperscript{86} Although each method

\textsuperscript{84}Frede, "On Galen's Epistemology," 80.

\textsuperscript{85}On Medical Experience, 139, 100.

\textsuperscript{86}The inference known as epilogismos is as we say directed toward visible things and is an inference common to and universally used by the whole of humankind, wherein men are unanimous, and where
required both experience and reason, the latter, analogical method "does not suffice for the discovery of things useful for purposes of healing." There is thus a distinction between theory and practice: analogismos might define rational method as well as advance experimental method, but it does not necessarily contribute to the development of therapeutics.

The difference between these two forms of inference --- one directed to the surface of a body, the other to its depths --- turns on the interpretation of "indications" or endeixis. Endeixis could mean either implication or simply sign; in medicine, it meant an indication or "a discovery of what is sought from the nature of the matter in accordance with a clear consequence from the phenomena."

An indication is not simply a sign; rather, it suggests and defines intervention as well. For Galen, it is a "reflexion of a consequence" that does not appeal to experience per se, but is the reasoned assumption which undergirds the hypothesis of a physician. It enlists a physician's "mental sight."

Thus Galen distinguishes between mere signs and semeia endeiktika or indicative signs which, by indicating the cause of a disease, point to a therapeutic path. Hankinson explains that discovery by there is no such thing as schism and diversity of opinion" (Crombie, Styles, 226).

87Quoted by Crombie, Styles, 228.

88As Celsus was to conclude from his study of the various medical sects, conjecture (reason) often fails when it is divorced from experience (empirical observation); nevertheless, the "Art of Medicine ought to be rational." In order to purge medicine of debilitating conjecture, Celsus suggests a division between pedagogy and practice: "to draw instruction from evident causes, all obscure ones [must be] rejected from the practice of the Art, although not from the practitioner's study" (Celsus, De Medicina, 1.41: prooemium, 48, 73-75).

89"Again, one has to keep in mind that in all these cases, 'indication' does not mean a mere 'sign' but rather an action (for instance, 'indicatio symptomatica' is not to be understood as 'what the symptoms show'; actually, it points to the treatment of certain symptoms of the disease in question)" (Fridolf Kudlien, "Endeixis as a Scientific Term: A) Galen's Usage of the Word (in Medicine and Logic)," in Galen's Method of Healing, 103; see also 105-106. The term could also be used in a legal context, as Donne does in his Devotions. In law, endeixis meant that "somebody 'denounced' [indicted] another person before the legal authorities. The implication was that, herewith, a criminal should not only be made known as such, but that the one who 'indicated' this also expected or even demanded from the authorities that an appropriate action ... was being taken. This appears to offer a good parallel to the term's usage in medicine and logic: By the word 'endeixis/indication' itself, an appeal is made, so to
endeixis is a "method of inferring to some conclusion which involves reference to the essential nature of things." However, the term's cognates include significatio and demonstratio, testifying to the fact that endeixis occupies a middle ground between the demonstrable, repeatable proofs required for science and rhetorical proofs that testify to the incertitude of medicine. Indications are the primary starting points for any therapy since they point the way to the true causes and thus the effective treatments of disease: the accretion of several indications will clear a way, by "long argument" and "logical method," to the causes of disease. Because they allow for consequents (if $x$ is true, then therapy $y$ must work), indications are decisive. With an adequate knowledge of anatomy and physiology, taking into account the whole course of the disease, a physician transforms conjectural signs into evident signs thus making the basic structure of scientific diagnosis possible. Still, conjecture is central to this process. Indeed, the analogismos Empiricists reject "is inference by way of endeixis." This conception of indication, and the rhetoric of observation that accompanies it, persists through Celsus, Quintilian and Augustine until the early modern period. It is prominent in

\[\text{Inst. Log. 11.1, quoted by Hankinson, On the Therapeutic Method, 204.}\]

\[\text{See Richard J. Durling, "Endeixis as a Scientific Term: B) 'Endeixis' in Authors other than Galen and is Medieval Latin Equivalents," in Galen's Method of Healing, 112-113.}\]

\[\text{Jonathan Barnes, "Galen on Logic and Therapy," 99-100.}\]

\[\text{Garcia-Ballester, "Galen as Medical Practitioner," 34-35.}\]

\[\text{Hankinson, On the Therapeutic Method, xxviii.}\]

Sextus Empiricus' criticism of the Stoic theory of language, later important for Montaigne.\footnote{According to Sextus, signs may be either associative or indicative. The first represent things that are distant or unobservable because of temporal considerations; the second things that can never be evident. His example of indicative signs are bodily motions that indicate the soul. The indicative sign can be "viewed as the effect that is the sign of its cause" (Kahn, 119). According to Sextus, a "theory of signs" for the Stoic "is thus analogous to a doctrine of evidence. It furnishes a way of proceeding by inference from what is immediately given to the unperceived" (quoted in Kahn, 119). Kahn argues that Sextus' skeptical critique of the indicative sign is instructive with respect to Montaigne's "Of Practice," although I disagree (see 120ff.) Sextus argues that indicative signs are those which Stoics understand to be "not clearly associated with the thing signified" (Outlines of Pyrrhonism, 2.101, in Sextus Empiricus, trans. R.G. Bury, 3 vols. [London: Heinemann and New York: Putnam, 1933], 1.215). Indicative signs, he continues, do not exist because they signify (if they signify at all) non-evident things about the existence of which there is much controversy. It is "impossible to form a conception of an object which cannot be known before the thing before which it must necessarily be apprehended; and so it is impossible to conceive of an object which is both relative and also really serves to reveal the thing in relation to which it is thought" (2.12; 1.227: Sextus discusses the "sign" but clearly has in mind endeixis). Inference by signs, he claims, will lead to regress ad infinitum, since neither the sign nor its signified is stable or evident (2.124; 1.231). On indications in this context, see Manetti, Theories of the Sign, 100-103.}  

Largely through the scholarship of Thomas Linacre and Thomas Gale, the Galenic notion of \textit{endeixis} was available to and utilized by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century physicians and other writers.\footnote{On this diffusion of early modern Galenism, see Temkin, \textit{Galenism}, and the works by Gale and Galen in the \textit{Short Title Catalogue}, Andrew Wear, "Galen in the Renaissance," in \textit{Galen: Problems and Prospects}, 229-267 and C.D. O'Malley, \textit{English Medical Humanists: Thomas Linacre and John Caius} (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1965) treats the inception and reception of Galenism based on classical texts (3-25).} "\textit{Semiotica}," according to Gale's Englishing of Galen, "... doth judge by signes, and toke[n]s" the nature and causes of disease. A surgeon ignorant of this aspect of the art, Gale continues, errs "by mistaking of the \textit{Symptomata} and accidents" of an illness. Chief among symptoms are indications which disclose the vehemency, magnitude and potential for cure of a disease.\footnote{Thomas Gale, \textit{Certaine Works of Chiurgerie} (London, 1563), 29r-v, 77r-v, 79r, 80r.}  

The 1657 \textit{Physical Dictionary} explains:

\textit{Indication}, is some kind of signes or symptoms appearing in the sick patient whereby
the Physitian is hinted, or as it were pointed with the finger to such and such a course of Physick or particular remedy, as abundance of blood. 99

Marshalling the "Sign before the Causes, that [he] might assist the natural method of humane Conception, in the finding out of things," John Jonstone proposes a complex schema of indications as part of his method of healing or "Art of Inventing." Drawing together semiotics, logic and medicine, for Jonstone the "Indicant" is related to the "Indicatum, as of a signe to the thing signified, or an Antecedent to its Consequent."100

As we have seen, Donne's famous contemporary, the physician and controversialist Helkiah Crooke, agreed. "The exquisite method of healing cannot bee performed but by indications[.]"

Indications had a various presence in theological literature as well, as we shall see in the next chapter.

In their "Anatomie Lectures," according to the preacher William Spurstowe, "though the whole body lye before them," physicians "read chiefly upon some more noble and Architectonical parts, the braine, the heart, the stomach, or the like," seeing in these, as in the indications of a disease, the definitive characteristics of sin.101 To return to the New Historical apothegm mentioned near the beginning of the chapter, it seems that if a cadaver or a living body spoke at all, whether of sickness or sin, it spoke through effects, signs and, especially, indications. One might almost say, as Donne did of the young Elizabeth Drury in 1611, that the blood was eloquent, that the body thought.102


102"[H]er pure, and eloquent blood, / Spoke in her cheekes, and so distinctly wrought, / That one might almost say her body thought" (Progress, ll. 244-246; Grierson, 234).
Bare effects

Interpreting signs was to preoccupy philosophers and physicians, lawyers and divines, from antiquity through the middle ages to the early modern period. In particular, from Plato to Aristotle in the Topics and the Prior Analytics through Cicero, Quintilian, Augustine and Aquinas, who thought the body was "materia signata," to early modern English physicians and rhetoricians, medical theory and medical practice depended on the judicious interpretation of signs, symptoms and indications. As a consequence, physicians borrowed forms of inference from other disciplines devoted to reasoning about particular signs: rhetoric and hermeneutics. In turn, medical inference was one of the primary ways of thinking about signification and the methodus medendi offered a model for prudent ethical deliberation. Deliberating about symptoms is similar to ethical judgement. The aim in both, as in practical wisdom, was to respond to particular cases with the most appropriate heuristic and therapeutic tools. Like ethics, medicine deals with probabilities, signs and symptoms; both were uncertain. Not only do Hippocrates, Aristotle and Galen propose symptomatology as the primary ground of signification, medicine also provided a model for treating and judging the exigencies of

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104Sign-inference was drawn from medicine and imported into rhetoric. A representative example is Quintilian, 5.9.8-11 (where he discusses a bloody handkerchief as an "indication"). The discussion is relevant to Othello.

105Summa Theologica 1.91.3.

106See Thomas Sebeok, An Introduction to Semiotics (London: Pinter, 1994), 24-28, 43-60 and Eugen Baer, Medical Semiotics, Sources in Semiotics, vol. 7, ed. John Deely and Brooks Williams (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1988). "Medical semiotics," Baer writes, "considers illness to be a semiotic, i.e. a communicative, state. Symptomatology, accordingly, is the doctrine of how humans communicate meaning by way of symptoms. And symptoms, in turn, are signs in which human existence is often radically and in the most concrete bodily form called into question. Symptoms are, in this sense, the most existential signs we can produce" (114). Baer's book, despite its obvious flaws, is the only informed semiotic treatment of medicine.
human affairs.\textsuperscript{107} Primarily through Augustine, an attention to signs and sign-inference as central to any hermeneutical exercise remained influential through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

In the Renaissance, a hierarchy of signs emerged gradually with the recovery of ancient texts, particularly texts associated with a skeptical tradition (Pyrrho, Sextus Empiricus, Carneades). A complex treatment of signs was also present in works that sought to renew interest in Aquinas.\textsuperscript{108} Accounts of this recovery have led scholars to discern a new epistemology born from the ashes, as it were, of the Middle Ages. Hence early humanist statements such as Vives' declaration that "All philosophy is based entirely upon opinions and probable conjectures,"\textsuperscript{109} which implicitly readjusts medieval conceptions of evidence and certainty in philosophy to accord with this new attention to signs.\textsuperscript{110} Hence too anti-humanist reactions to such statements, suggesting that humanism, with its

\textsuperscript{107}"But this must be agreed upon beforehand," Aristotle wrote in the \textit{Nicomachean Ethics}, "that the whole account of matters of conduct must be given in outline and not precisely, as we said at the beginning that the accounts we demand must be in accordance with the subject-matter; matters concerned with conduct and questions of what is good for us have no fixity, any more than matters of health. The general account being of this nature, the account of particular cases is yet more lacking in exactness: for they do not fall under any art or set of precepts, but the agents themselves must in each case consider what is appropriate to the occasion, as happens also in the art of medicine or of navigation" (1104a1-9). On the relationship of medicine and ethics, see Nussbaum, \textit{Therapy of Desire}, 65-76, passim, and W. Jaeger, "Aristotle's Use of Medicine as a Model of Method in his Ethics," \textit{Journal of Hellenic Studies} 77 (1975): 54-61.

\textsuperscript{108}See, for example, \textit{Tractatus de Signis: The Semiotic of John Poinsot}, ed. John N. Deely and Ralph A. Powell (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985), e.g., 25-27. This text merits much further attention. Poinsot is careful to establish a taxonomy of signs in relation to his logic since, as he wrote, "if the student of logic is to know his tools --- namely terms and statements --- in an exact manner, it is necessary that he should also know what a sign is" (25; cf. "the universal instrument of Logic is the \textit{sign}" [38]). His division of the sign also recalls Augustine and Peter Lombard (27; 116) and includes indications (in their general sense) as "instrumental signs" (27). For succinct definitions of sign, signification, image and representation, drawing largely on Aquinas, see 218-219.


\textsuperscript{110}Martin Elsky has argued that humanists thought "literary language, rather than logical proposition and syllogism" was "the discourse that can contain and express truth" (\textit{Authorizing Words: Speech, Writing and Print in the English Renaissance} [Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1989],
focus on historicized textuality and eloquence, denigrated logic and demonstrable argument in favour of rhetoric. Recent scholarship, however, has suggested that the intellectual consequence of humanism was "not a shift from respectable dialectic to the 'soft opinion' of rhetoric, but a shift from certainty to probability as the focus of intellectual attention." A scrutiny of the development of medical theory and epistemology allows a more nuanced view: probable sign-inference, the staple of medical theory from antiquity through to the early modern period, was always alive and well in medicine. Hence medicine offered heuristic and hermeneutic tools to scholars labouring in other disciplines concerned with signs. Although there is no full account of hermeneutics in England in the seventeenth century, hermeneutics in Donne and some of his contemporaries can be seen as based in part on a medical model.

However, medicine was a subdiscipline of both natural philosophy and natural history, neither of which were immune to the incursions of rhetoric and hermeneutics. Subordinate to natural philosophy, which provided knowledge of the basic operations of nature (including, of course, the human body), medicine ideally absorbed and put into practice in the microcosm theories directed toward nature itself, the macrocosm. For example, as Jean Bodin insists, following Aquinas, "The


\[112\] The relationship between physic, physics and medicine is complex in the medieval and early modern periods. Harold J. Cook summarizes some of the debates, concluding that writing simply about "medicine" in the seventeenth century obscures the issues that were controversial to contemporaries. Medicine was the art of healing and curing whereas physic was the learned discipline of maintaining healthy equilibrium in a human body. With the rise of the new philosophy in the seventeenth century, physic became subordinated to natural history and philosophy (or "physics" in our sense). See "The New Philosophy and Medicine," in *Reappraisals of the Scientific Revolution*, ed. David C. Lindberg and Robert S. Westman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 397-432. See also Charles E. Raven, *English Naturalists from Neckam to Ray: a Study in the
principles of physics must be much more certain than those of medicine, which they must serve to illuminate." Both natural philosophy and medicine share an attention to signs. From the thirteenth century until the early nineteenth, the practice of natural philosophy was based on the notion that the visible world was a reliable though sometimes obscure index of the invisible. Natural philosophers and historians tabulated and classified in order to discern, via signs and later Baconian "forms," the presence of God in his works. Further, from the mid-sixteenth century until at least the mid-eighteenth, dependent in part on the recovery and resuscitation of the doctrines and documents of antiquity, natural philosophers attested to the importance of investigating nature empirically as a gradual step toward the knowledge of the entirety of God's creation. Nature was the "alphabet" of God, the great "Stenographer"; natural philosophers were figured as diligent investigators who

Making of the Modern World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1947) and F.D. Hoeniger and J.F.M. Hoeniger, The Development of Natural History in Tudor England (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1969) and idem, The Growth of Natural History in Stuart England from Gerard to the Royal Society (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1969). This particular conception of the relationship between medicine and natural philosophy has been explored by Luis Garcia-Ballester, "Artifex Factivus Sanitatis: Health and Medical Care in Medieval Galenism," 127-128. Garcia-Ballester cites Aquinas, who wrote that the "physician should not limit himself to making use of medicines, but he should also be able to reflect upon the causes [of health and illness]. To this purpose, the good physician begins his training [with the study of natural philosophy]" (quoting the Summa Theologica). Institutional learning in the Middle Ages promoted this view.


115Bacon proposed a "Collection of all varieties of Natural Bodies" wherein "an Inquirer ... might peruse, and turn over, and spell, and read the Book of Nature, and observe the Orthography, Etymologia, Syntax, and Prosodia of Nature's Grammar, and by which as with a Dictionary, he might readily turn to and find the true Figures, Composition, Derivation, and Use of the Characters, Words, Phrases and Sentences of Nature written with indelible, and most exact, and most expressive Letters, without which Books it will be very difficult to be thoroughly a Letteratus in the Language and Sense of Nature" (quoted in Elizabeth Sewell, The Orphic Voice: Poetry and Natural History
prized, above all other skills, the ability to read the cryptic, opaque and often distorted divine
missives in the "book of nature." This skill at reading these signs was called sagacity.\textsuperscript{116} As Joseph
Glanvill wrote, "Nature works by an Invisible Hand in all things" so that "we know nothing but
effects, and those but by our senses." As a consequence, natural knowledge is perfected through a
knowledge of signs, the "Alphabet of Science."\textsuperscript{117} Sagacity was the defining characteristic of the
virtuoso in the mid-seventeenth century.

With respect to the relationship between medicine and natural philosophy, the lines of
continuity between the late sixteenth and early eighteenth centuries, at least, are evident: natural
philosophy stored a set of its master tropes, borrowed from hermeneutics and rhetoric, in medicine.
Both medicine and natural philosophy read their respective books with an eye to discerning the
hidden workings of nature. Exposing those hidden operations required a diligent attention to signs
and indications. With respect to the investigation of the laws of matter, for example, the certainty
attainable in natural philosophy ("physics") was believed much higher than that of medicine. For
Bodin, medicine, and in particular anatomy, thus provided a model for probable forms of inquiry
devoted to man. Bodin's orders of history and his sense that human history is most "uncertain and
confused" necessitated a method of analysis that, akin to a dissection, "shows how to cut [experience]
into parts and how to redivide each part into smaller sections and with marvellous ease explains the

\textsuperscript{116}Patey writes: "Sagacity, then, is skill in finding out and using signs; as such, it is for instance the
virtue of skilled physicians, so that it is no accident that Vives, defender of both probabilism and
education in the topics, spends more time in the De Tradendis Disciplinis discussing medicine than
any other field of study" (Probability and Literary Form, 62).

\textsuperscript{117}The Vanity of Dogmatizing or Confidence in Opinion Manifested in a Discourse of the Shortness
and Uncertainty of Our Knowledge (London, 1661), 41-42, 180, 210, 6-7, cited in Patey, Probability
and Literary Form, 49-50.
cohesion of the whole and the parts in mutual harmony." Because they treated signs, history and
law, ethics and rhetoric often borrowed from medical theory in order to define or solve hermeneutic
problems. Bacon called his reformed natural philosophy a "diligent dissection and anatomy of the
world." Natural philosophers borrowed terminology from medicine to describe its form of
analysis; physicians described and represented the body in 'natural' terms. In many aspects of
medical treatment, in fact, there was little separation of the body from the world. Bringing the shared
inheritance of rhetoric, medicine and hermeneutics to light confirms as it nuances current conceptions
that "the physical and the social --- symptomatology and ideology --- shared a discursive
environment" and that "they worked to demonstrate each other's dominant truths." The materia
signata of individual and social bodies intersected. As Elaine Scarry has suggested, the human body
is always a "condensed approximation" of the body politic.

The tropes and techniques shared by medicine, rhetoric, hermeneutics and natural philosophy
establish inference from signs, symptoms, traces and clues as an implicit or explicit component of the
examination of nature, the vicissitudes of human affairs or the intersection of the two. The
conception of the human body as a microcosm of natural, supernatural and preternatural worlds, for
example, established analogical or emblematic thinking as a stalwart constituent of these inquiries.
One of the ways in which the relationship between the body and the soul, nature and culture became
intelligible was through repéréage, another term for Galen's analogismos or a dialectical interplay of

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118 Method for the Easy Comprehension of History [1566], trans. Beatrice Reynolds (New York:

119 Works, 4.110.

120 Paster, "Nervous Tension," 111.

121 The Body in Pain: the Making and Unmaking of the World (New York: Oxford University Press,
1985), 245. For the Renaissance, see David George Hale, The Body Politic: A Political Metaphor in
surfaces and depths. *Repérage* was sanctioned by scripture (the *locus classicus* is Romans 1:20)\(^{122}\) and ancient natural philosophy (in Aristotle's *Parts of Animals*, for example); it was an important component of various interpretive practices refined and clarified in the history of hermeneutics (Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine* is its most careful elaboration); it was an aspect of early modern science, the latter figured as the prying open or hunting out of nature's secrets;\(^{123}\) and it was essential to medicine and to the "clinical gaze" which arose in the seventeenth century, only to be sharpened in the eighteenth. Reasoning from visible indications is evident in early discussions of method and the *regressus demonstrativus*, essential to the theorization of experience and the human body in the seventeenth century, was important in the interpretation of the past in both early historiography and legal writing and the basis of physiognomics and pathognomics in the eighteenth.\(^{124}\) *Repérage* was employed in natural and moral philosophy to help distinguish between necessary or "absolute" and "accidental" knowledge of a body or a thing, in the process, in other words, of establishing the

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\(^{122}\) In the King James version, it reads: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." Donne quotes this verse in a sermon on the manifestation of God in his works; see *Sermons*, 3.217.


relationship between cause and effect. While there is a danger, as Jaques Derrida said of psychoanalysis, of finding repérage everywhere, such a danger may be avoided by isolating specific nodes of inference in various disciplines that rely on the visible as sign or index of the hidden or obscure.

_Repérage and analogismos_ are crucially important in the constellation of reading practices applied both to texts and to the human body. Indications, as I have shown, are in turn central to these forms of sign-inference. However, the preponderance of signs, symptoms, effects and indications necessitated a careful collocation of observation and analogy. For example, discussing melancholy, Robert Burton allows for the difficulty of differentiating indicative symptoms from a morass of somatic signs: "in such obscurity, therefore, variety and confused mixture of symptoms, causes, how difficult a thing it is to treat of several kinds [of illness] apart; to make any certainty or distinction among so many casualties, distractions, when seldom two me shall be like affected _per omnia_!" Not only with respect to sickness was the problem of inference from effects noted and lamented. Although reason could be imagined as, in Donne's words, a connection of causes, our senses are confined to effects. John Davies of Hereford summarizes this view:

> We by our _soules_ conceive (as erst was said)
>
> _Wisdome_ and _knowledge_ bee'ng incorporeal:
>
> But outward _sense_ is altogether stai'd,
>
> On _qualities of things_ meere corporall:

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125 Nicholas Jardine, "Epistemology of the Sciences," *Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, 687 and _passim_. In the same volume, William A. Wallace suggests that behind the "observational component" of early modern conceptions of method "was a general conviction that the human mind can safely reason from effects or _symptomata_ to their hidden causes, to structure scientific explanations of the phenomena that had been observed" ("Traditional Natural Philosophy," 207).

126 _The Anatomy of Melancholy_, part 1, sect. 2, memb. 3, subsect. 4.
The *soule*, by *reason*, makes *rules* general,

Of *things* particular: but *sense* doth goe

But to *particulars* material;

The *soule* by th' *effect* the *cause* doth sho,

But *sense* no more but bare *effects* doth kno.\(^{127}\)

As Pierre de La Primaudaye asserts, summarizing this commonplace notion, "Reason draweth out and conclueth invisible things of visible, of corporall things it conclueth things without bodies, and secret things of plaine and evident matters, and generalles of particulars."\(^{128}\) The danger, of course, in this form of inference is empty speculation based on rhetoric and opinion, as Hobbes makes clear.\(^{129}\)

In order to make "bare *effects*" speak their cause, as it were, poets, physicians and divines proceeded by indications. But to what end? How was one to sift through a "confused variety of symptoms" to construct "*rules* general"? What if there were no particularly revealing indications or no adequate tables, in May's words, of pathognomic signs? How does one connect effects with causes when causes are unavailable to human scrutiny except through analogy and uncertain inference?

This problems of *signification* --- problems of analogy, inference and evidence --- are the problems Donne faced during his relapsing fever in 1623. What symptoms "may indicate or signify, concerning the state" of bodies and souls is a central question, though perhaps not the central purpose, of the *Devotions*. The next chapter examines Donne's fever in the context of the discourse of affliction and sign-inference. Donne's treatments of the interpretation of Scripture, of anatomy as

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\(^{129}\) "Nor ought a man endeavour to *prove* every thing by *Enthymeme* lest like some *Philosophers*, he collect what is *knowne*, from what is *lesse knowne*" (*A Briefe of the Art of Rhetorique*, 125).
form of inquiry, of prudence, temperance and decorum, I argue, form the basis of his attention to
affliction as sin. He diligently searches the bones and sinews of his sick body for causes. Declaring
anatomy ultimately unsuited to the task, he trains his attention to signs and indications as the means
by which his soul is "effigiate[d]" in his body. His leave-taking of the metaphors of anatomy is
decisive. What takes its place is a form of somiotics.
Hezekiah was sick. Isaiah came to him and repeated God's words: "Put thine house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live." Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, prayed that God remember his perfect heart and wept bitterly. In the crucible of his sickness, God gave him a "signe" of his recovery: the sun rising ten degrees over the horizon after it set. Unsure of his recovery, Hezekiah asks for a "signe, that [he] shall goo up into the house of the Lord[.]" With exemplary forbearance, Hezekiah embraced medical remedies (38:21), the office of confession (18-19) and the knowledge of the true cause of his illness, sin (12). The "life of my spirit shall be known," he says, using his affliction as an occasion to search the meaning of sickness, sin and the living body. This episode exerted an immense influence on the discourse of affliction in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; it focused Donne's and his contemporaries' attention on the spiritual and physical complexities of symptoms and sickness, sin and signification, recovery and representation.

In 1622, Elias Petley travelled to London to preach on Hezekiah at Pauls' Cross, dedicating his sermon to Donne, then Dean of Pauls. "Examples have more powerfull inducement to perswasion, then rules & precepts," Petley writes, "I therefore made choyce of this admirable and royall patterne of Hezekial's godly behaviour." Petley treats Hezekiah as an exemplary sufferer who is able, through "prayers and teares," devotion and contrition, to discern the image of God in his

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1 Isaiah, 38:1, 7, 22; compare 2 Kings 20, 2 Chron. 32. The Bible, that is, the Holy Scriptures [Geneva Bible] (London, 1599). Though it is clear that Donne used the Authorized version in the Devotions, the commentary and cadences of the Geneva echo throughout his work (See Sister Elizabeth Savage, John Donne's Devotions upon Emergent Occasions, 2 vols. [Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur, 1975], 1.xviii) and Sermons, 10.328.

2 Bald suggests that Petley, "a rector of a Lincolnsire parish," would have been known to Donne through Peter Petley, brother or father to Elias (394-395).

3 The Royall Receipt: or, Hezekiahs Physicke. A Sermon Delivered at Pauls-Crosse, on Michaelmas Day. 1622 (London, 1623), 1. Further references are included in the text.
heart (47). By refusing to "expostulate with God, ... and fill his mouth with arguments," Hezekiah exemplifies the "sweet resignation to the disposall of Almightie God" (11-12). With his humble submission to affliction in the midst of doubt and distraction, Hezekiah is a figure of a prudent sufferer who prays with consummate decorum. A contrite Christian "let[s] all things be done decently and in order," Petley continues; it is "commended to Christian prudence to sute our actions with convenient & correspondent circumstances" (14-15). Those who have not sought out consolation before their affliction merely "mutter out" fragments "and broken peeces of prayers" (24).

In contrast, the rectified, decorous Christian able to interpret affliction can know God, and make himself known to God, by signs and tokens. The method is medical. For Petley, "divine Phisicke" applied to a faithful soul is preparative, purgative and restorative (6-7).

For Donne, too, Hezekiah is an exemplary sufferer. In the Devotions, Donne takes Hezekiah, the king of Judah who "writt the Meditations of his Sickness, after his Sickness," as one of his "Examples" (3, 120). "I remembred that Hezekiah in his sickness," Donne writes, "turn'd

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4"Lord what Symptomes of perplexed sorrow and amazement startle the passions of the Soule? How doth a swarme of doubts and distractions sting the very Conscience, How doth the vengeance of God tear and rend the cauls of their hearts enclosed in their owne fat[?]" (24).

5"By what token, what signe, can thou bring thy selfe into the memorie of thy Saviour? Now therefore, in the acceptable time, labour by all meanes to make thy selfe knowne to God, that they Face may shine like Moses his face, with being often conversant with God" (27).

6See Devotions, 108 and, for example, Sermons, 6.198ff.

7Donne's interpretation of Isaiah 38 is common. See, for example, references to Hezekiah in John Mabb, The Afflicted Mans Vow: with His Meditations and Prayers (London, 1609), 8 (this text, by a student of the Inner Temple, is unfilmed; BL shelfmark C.186.b.32), M.M., An Ease for a Diseased Man. Published for the Instruction of Those which are Visited with Sickness of the Body (London, 1625), 10, 12. The author of the latter offers Hezekiah as an "example" of a sick man 'exercising' himself in spiritual things (citing 2 Kings 20:2).

8Kate Gartner Frost, Holy Delight: Typology, Numerology and Autobiography in Donne's Devotions upon Emergent Occasions (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), gives the most thorough treatment of Hezekiah. According to Frost, Hezekiah functions as both an exemplary sufferer and an exemplary ruler for Donne and many of his contemporaries (see, for example, Sermons, 8.238-239);
himself ... to pray towards that wall, that look'd to Jerusalem" (Sermons, 2.112). While Donne's use of Hezekiah's example differs in emphasis from Petley's, it too establishes sin, divine medicine and prayer as the central concerns of an afflicted Christian. Both Petley and Donne are concerned as well with Hezekiah's prudent sagacity. Hezekiah's skill at reading the signs of his sickness, recovery and salvation, his desire to know and make known the life of the spirit, resurfaces in the early seventeenth century as an attention to somiotics as a key to sickness and sin. Affliction, as "the seale of the living God," spurred Donne and his contemporaries to search for a rudimentary knowledge of the soul via the exterior or exposed interior surfaces of the body. Each process required diligent, circumstanced sign-inference, as we have seen in chapter three. An elaborate, specialized vocabulary was developed in order to describe the effects of illness on the body and the soul. Using these tools, and following the examples of Hezekiah and Job, Donne explores the ethics, rhetoric and

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9 Other references to Hezekiah in the sermons include 1.233, 2.68. 70, 112, 157, 216, 357; 3.83, 206, 327; 5. 191, 240 (which also refers to his prayer), 290, 349 (which refers to his medicine), 384, 387; 6.47, 260, 311; 7.58 (again referring to his prayer), 93; 8.238-245 (where Hezekiah is the figure of a just ruler), 279; 9.185, 208, 387. For most, but not all, of these references, see Troy D. Reeves, Index to the Sermons of John Donne, 3 vols. (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, 1980), 2.81.

10While Donne is concerned about the rhetoric of his own colloquy with God, he seems to use Hezekiah as a figure of just devotion who published his experience of sickness upon his recovery, rather than simply a penitent soul (Devotions, 3, alluding to Isaiah 38:9). In his project of inquiry, Donne takes Job as his model (21, citing Job 13:3); see also Savage, John Donne's Devotions, xxv.


13Mabb, Afflicted Mans Vow, 11.
hermeneutics of affliction and suffering in order to "reason with God" (Devotions, 21). Like Petley's, Donne's method in the Devotions is preparative, purgative and restorative.14 His remedy is a nascent "medical-moral philosophy."15

The Devotions presents Donne's most precise use and evaluation of medical semiotics in a work, like the Anniversaries, designed for publication. Indeed, there is a sense of urgency both of content and of publication in the Devotions.16 One minute Donne is well, the next ill with a "malignant and pestilential disease" (7, 67). "But for the body," Donne writes, "[h]ow poor a wretched thing is that? wee cannot expresse it so fast, as it growes worse and worse" (92). This urgency is spiritual and ethical rather than political.17 "Afflictions," as Henry Vaughan notes, "turn

14"The working of purgative physick [a free and entire evacuation of my soule by confession], is violent and contrary to Nature. O Lord, I decline not this potion of confession, how ever it may bee contrary to a naturall man (Devotions, 108). "Confessio vomitus," Donne writes, citing Origen; "It is but a homely Metaphor, but it is a wholesome and a usefull one," an "ease ... to the patient" (Sermons, 9.304).


16Barred from his "ordinary diet ... of reading," Donne 'distracted' himself during his sickness and convalescence in 1623 by putting pen to paper, his biographer states, and wrote the "many sheetes (perchance 20.)" that were entered in the Stationers' Register on 9 January 1623/4, about a month after his recovery, as Devotions upon Emergent Occasions and Severall Steps in my Sicknes (Gosse, 2.208; Letters, 249; Bald, 450-451). On the circumstances of printing, the printers and the booksellers, see Savage, John Donne's Devotions, l.cx-cxvi.

our Blood to Ink." Full of "many curious and dainty conceits, not for common capacities," the book is a record of Donne's attempts to express his afflicted body as an example to other sufferers rather than a political intervention. In the words of one critic, who borrows the term from Freud, the Devotions is a "pathography." Scholars have studied the structure, typology, number symbolism, devotional antecedents and meditative and political contexts of the Devotions. Here, I explore the and Jeanne Shami, "Political Advice in the Devotions: No Man is an Island," MLQ 50 (1989): 337-356, Shami, "The Stars in their Order Fought against Sisera': John Donne and the Pulpit Crisis of 1622," John Donne Journal 14 (1995): 1-58, Richard Strier, "Donne and the Politics of Devotion," in Religion, Literature and Politics in Post-Reformation England, 1540-1688, ed. Donna B. Hamilton and Richard Strier (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 93-114 and the other citations by Shami, "The Stars in their Order are Fought against Sisera." Mary Arshagouni, "Politics of John Donne's Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions: or, New Questions on New Historicism," Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme 27 (1991): 233-249, refutes their claims admirably. She claims that Donne's disappointment in James' failure to support the Palatinate, a foreign rather than domestic concern, may have caused him "to turn away from politics and towards a pietism that allowed him to escape from ... worldly emptiness" (241). Although I disagree with her simplistic conclusion ("piety and poetry transcend politics" [244]), Arshagouni is to an extent correct: the Devotions is not a resolutely political text. Of course, it is shot through with political concerns which conform to Donne's middle way in both theology and politics.


text's epistemological and ethical concerns in relation to Donne's evaluation of somiotics as a cluster of instruments capable of disclosing the living, sick body's relationship with the soul.\footnote{On sickness in the \textit{Devotions}, see Jonathan Goldberg, "The Understanding of Sickness in Donne's \textit{Devotions}," \textit{Renaissance Quarterly} 24 (1971): 507-517, Clara Lander, "A Dangerous Sickness which turned to a Spotted Fever," \textit{SEL} 1500-1900 9 (1971): 89-108, Kate Frost, "John Donne's \textit{Devotions}: an Early Record of Epidemic Typhus," \textit{Journal of the History of Medicine} 31 (1976): 421-430, Anne Hawkins, "Two Pathographies," Sharon Cadman Seelig, "In Sickness and in Health: Donne's \textit{Devotions upon Emergent Occasions}," \textit{John Donne Journal} 8 (1989): 103-113, William B. Ober, "John Donne as Patient: \textit{Devotions upon Emergent Occasions}," \textit{Literature and Medicine} 9 (1990): 21-37, Murray D. Arndt, "Distance and the Look of Death," \textit{ibid.}, 38-49. The circumstances of Donne's illness and the publication of the \textit{Devotions} are described concisely by Potter and Simpson, \textit{Sermons}, 6.4-8 (they conclude that Donne suffered from a "violent fever," a point to which I shall return).} I argue that Donne sees the sick body as a revelation, however uncertain, of the state of the soul. First, I establish the conditions of Donne's inquiry: the sickness and the site of its ripening. Then I examine the traces of Donne's early engagement with reason and judgement which resurface in the \textit{Devotions}.\footnote{In conjunction with this exploration of the \textit{Devotions}, I also draw substantially on Donne's sermons on the Psalms. Mueller, "The Exegesis of Experience," discusses the parallels between these sermons the \textit{Devotions}.} The importance of rhetoric and hermeneutics to an emergent somiotics receives Donne's most sustained interrogation during this illness. Third, in light of Donne's enabling skepticism about the possibilities of human knowledge, I bring the argument of chapters three and four to bear on Donne's own reading of the human body. In this section, I focus on signs, indications and effigiation. Finally, taking account of his use of examples, I argue for an ethical dimension, built on rhetorical and medical models, in the \textit{Devotions}.

Evident in the \textit{Essays in Divinity}, the \textit{Anniversaries} and the sermons, Donne's turn to somiotics registers his concern with discretion (prudentia, decorum) and judgement as the necessary
preconditions for the rectification of reason. Indeed, his experience of illness occasions a meditation on the problematics of reason, which are in turn central to his diagnostics of sin. For Donne, reason and judgement are embodied. Against claims that Donne is "committed to an intellectuality that obviates emphasis on the senses," I argue that Donne enlists the senses in order to confirm, precisely, the Aristotelian conception of probable knowledge (outlined in chapter four) as one key to knowledge of the soul. Man reasons from the visible to the invisible, from the known to the unknown. Using probable inference and example, medical methods and forms of reading developed in his Scriptural hermeneutics, Donne locates the coordinates of the soul in the sick body. If his anatomical animadversions signify a desire to adduce what he calls "God's method" (linking the sign with the signified, drawing out "peccant humours" from obdurate souls, sick bodies and crabbed texts), in his tractable somiotics I see a tempered attention attuned to probability, to the rhetoric of exemplarity and to the human body as a manifold, entangled, perplexed thing. Indeed, for an afflicted, living body, somiotics is closer to God's method than anatomy: it brings the living body into knowledge.

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25*Devotions*, 54. As Donne writes, "You see Christ's method in his physique; it determines in a preparative, that does but stirre the humours ... Christ's physique determines not in a blood-letting, no not in cutting off the gangren'd part, for it is not onely Cut off, and pull out, but Cast away" (*Sermons*, 3.179). He later compares the sinner to a "vessell of peccant humours" (5.298).
Fever

For Donne, somatic and spiritual knowledge is broadened and refined by adversity. Donne was ill in late November 1623. He was confined, both for the six or seven days of his illness and for his convalescence, for at least three weeks. He was not fully well until February or perhaps March 1624. By his own assessment, Donne was afflicted with a fever. In fact, he offers the Devotions as a text which documents his "Humiliation" by "the furtherance of a vehement fever" (Devotions, 3, 83). Fevers were endemic in the period. Characterized by eruption and remission, insomnia and

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*Anthony Raspa, Devotions, xiv suggest the sickness is relapsing fever compounded with other illness, perhaps influenza. Kate Frost, "John Donne's Devotions," and Clara Lander, "A Danger Sickness," diagnose epidemic typhus (or 'spotted fever' --- the terminology is unavoidably confused). Neither Lander's nor Frost's accounts are convincing; their evidence is meagre and circumstantial. Savage, *John Donne's Devotions*, merely notes the illness (xi). We are safest, I suggest, to side with Shapiro, Bald and Raspa, not least because Donne himself thought his sickness a 'fever' (Devotions, 47).

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maculation, delirium and relapse, Donne's illness is a species of *febres confusae* (combined fevers) that, while they originate in different humours, have common beginnings and ends. A combined fever is difficult to classify. All its "symptoms and signs" are "mixed together, and it is scarcely possible to tell them apart." Galen distinguished two types of semitertian, both composites of tertian fever (caused by yellow bile) and quotidian fever (caused by phlegm); in the semitertian, post-Galenic authors saw either an intermittent tertian plus a continuous quotidian fever or vice versa.31 Donne's contemporary, the physician Philip Barrough, classifies these fevers as "Synochus" because "their nature is not all one." Some "have manifest signes and tokens of rottennesse: and some againe have none at all, (which, as we said a little before) be of the kinds of Diaria [or quotidian]."32 Combined fevers are also "Erraticae" since "they keepe no certaine and just time, nor any order of fits, nor the intermission between them."33 Donne's "perplex'd discomposition" (*Devotions*, 8) fits this seventeenth-century nosology, though he does exhibit symptoms of typhus. Yet as Donne assures his readers, the exact nature of the illness is obscure, even trivial. The question, Donne declares in the ninth meditation, "whether there be more names or things, is as perplexed in sicknesses, as in any thing else; except it be easily resolved upon that side, that there are more sicknesses then names." If "sicknes were reduc'd" and there "were no sickness but a fever, yet the way were infinite still" (46).34

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34 On the infinity of sicknesses, see *Sermons*, 2.62-63, 82 (Donne has "a universall debility upon [him], that all sicknesses are in [him], and have all lost their names, ... I am sick of sickness, and not of a Fever, or any particular distemper"). Elsewhere, Donne worries about the causes of fevers. In
While Donne's medical knowledge is substantial, his purpose is devotional.\textsuperscript{35} Aside from its possible nosological fit, erratic fever suits Donne's purpose, both in the *Devotions* and elsewhere.\textsuperscript{36}

In a 1619 sermon, in terms which anticipate the *Devotions*, Donne proposes fever as a figure for falling and relapsing into sin. He "that hath had a fever," Donne writes, has an inclination to the bedchamber; so "hath he to relapses, that hath been under the custome of an habituall sin, though he have discontinued the practise of that sin" (*Sermons*, 2.136; compare 2.125). Fevers represent the

1616, for example, he writes that one who contracts a fever remembers "where he sweat and where he took cold; where he walked too fast, where his Casement stood open, and where he was too bold upon Fruit, or meat of hard digestion; but he never remembers the sinful and naked Wantonnesses, the profuse and wasteful Dilapidations of his own body, that have made him thus obnoxious and open to all dangerous Distempers" (*Sermons*, 1.173). As Jeremy Taylor states, placing metaphysical above physical causes, "covetousnesse may cause a Fever as well as drunkenesse" (*Holy Dying*, 114). In any case, diagnosis is imperfect. David Harley quotes Richard Kilby, *A Sermon Preached ... in Oxford* (London, 1613): the "arte and the knowledge of man [is] unable to comprehend all that infinite variety of particular diseases" ("Medical Metaphors," 412).

\textsuperscript{35}See, for example, Kate Frost, "John Donne's *Devotions*," 422 note 1. As Donne comments in the *Biathanatos* (London, 1648), "in all rebellions and disobediences of our flesh, wee may minister to our selves ... corrections and remedies" (171).

\textsuperscript{36}In "Hymne to God my God, in my Sickness," written during the same illness, Donne again writes of fever (on the dating of the poem, see Bald, 453-454 and *Divine*, 132-135). He insists his

... Physicians by their love are growne
Cosmographers, and I their Mapp, who lie
Flat on this bed, that by them may be showne
That this is my South-west discoverie
*Per fretum febris*, by these streights to die[.]

(ll. 6-10; *Divine*, 50).

In the disorientation of the fever, historical and geographical distances are radically collapsed; joy and sin play themselves out in the choreography of the body. Though underlying physical causes remain occulted, his symptoms, the straits of his fever, are Donne's access to God. (On the human body figured as a map, see *Sermons*, 2.199, 3.109, 5.282-283, 6.59.) The word "streights" recurs in Donne's attention to sickness: in 1627, for example, in a prayer before Lady Danvers' funeral oration at Chisley, Donne implores his auditory to recognize the care God takes in the preservation of bodies. "Thou hast a care in the preservation of these bodies, in all the waies of our life: But in the Streights of Death, open thine eyes wider, and enlarge thy providence towards us, so farre, that no Fever in the body, make shake the soule." "But so make thou our bed in all our sickness," Donne continues, "that being us'd to thy hand, wee may be content with any bed of thy making" (*Sermons*, 8.62). Donne compares fever to original sin (5.353) and explicitly refers to his fever in the *Devotions* (15). I am not claiming, however, that he understood his illness as a fever only for devotional purposes.
fragility of both physical and spiritual health; they also pose a stubborn challenge to early modern medical semiotics. Fevers "enrage us, and we are mad," Donne writes (3.53); they recede and erupt and remind us of the perplexity and variation of human affairs. Paradoxically, despite diagnostic difficulties, fevers offer occasional clarity, particularly in recession. "Let the fever alone, say our Physicians, till some fits be passed, and then we shall see farther, and discern better" (6.206). Either of the accidents of sickness or of the ways in which the sick body represents the soul, better discernment is intricate work.

"I am surpriz'd with a sodaine change, & alteration to the worst," Donne writes, "and can impute it to no cause, nor call it by any name" (Devotions, 7). Nor could his physicians. How "intricate a worke then have they," he declared, "who are gone to consult, which of these sicknesses mine is, and then which of these fevers, and then what it would do, and then how it may be countermind" (46). Recall from the introduction that earlier in his life Donne claimed that assiduous medical practice afforded physicians a certain knowledge of disease. Donne's fever in 1623 muted this view. Disease had established its "Arcana Imperii," its secrets of state in his body. Like the

37"But O my God, my God, doe I, that have this feaver, need other remembrances of my Mortalitie?" (Devotions, 84).


39"Of our bodies infirmities," Donne wrote to Sir Henry Goodyer in March 1608, "though our knowledge be partly ab extrinseco, from the opinion of the Physitian, and that the subject and matter
passions (Donne writes of fear), erratic fevers "complicate, and mingle themselves with every infirmitie of the body"; in fact, "wind in the body will counterfet any disease" (29). Sickness is "unsuspected for all our curiositie" (7). The intrication of sickness with forms of knowing appears early in the Devotions.

Donne is remarkably consistent in his condemnation of excessive curiosity. At the beginning of the Devotions, he directs his vitriol at the search for cause in the signs of the body. Confirming the ways in which contemporary epistemologies of the body could not account for its fierce mutability, the first 'step' establishes "hearkning after false knowledge," the "pre-apprehensions," and presages of disease as destructive habits which contribute to an ignorance of both the body and the soul. The miserable condition of man, he insists, is compounded by the suspicion of causes. In the thirteenth expostulation, Donne sees a way out of this regress. He compares "these spotts upon my Breast, and upon my Soule" to "the Constellations of the Firmament" (Devotions, 70). Searching the "blazing stars, [the] sodaine fiery exhalations" of the body is akin to seeking meaning in the heavens. Donne seems certain of the futility of attempting to divine such meaning from "effects or significations" (51-52). He clearly has Jeremiah 10:2 in mind.

be flexible, and various; yet their rules are certain and if the matter be ritely applyed to the rule, our knowledge thereof is also certain" (Letters, 70-71).

On God's arcana imperii and his government by precedents, see Sermons, 5.365. Compare his use of the term in a sermon preached on a penitential Psalm, largely concerned with sickness, of the same period (5.296-317).

In accordance with devotional tradition, Donne opposes curiosity, implicitly allied with infirmity, to obedience and patience in affliction (Devotions, 61).

See above, chapters one and two, and Sermons, 4.143, where Donne equates curiosity with being "over-vehemently affected or transported with Poetry or Secular Learning."

In the Authorized version, "Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them." The marginal note to the Geneva bible speaks directly to Donne's concerns: "God forbiddeth his people to give credit or feare the constellations and conjunctions of starres and planets, which have no power of themselves, but
Men "infatuated" themselves with seeking such knowledge, which for Donne is defined by capriciously imputing causation to natural phenomena and mistaking natural accidents for divine judgement or mercy. So, too, with spiritual and somatic physic: bodies and minds change and alter "and the cause is wrapped up in the purpose and judgement of God onely, and hid even from them that have" those changes (Sermons, 2.306). Nor do occult practices offer access to certain knowledge in the microcosm or macrocosm. No "Almanack tells us, when a blazing starre will break out, the matter is carried up in secret[.]" Donne writes, "no Astrologer tells us when the effects wil be accomplished, for thats a secret of a higher sphære[.]" These are aspects of divine order [potentia absoluta] that men can infer or imagine but not demonstrate (51-52). Just as there is no certain knowledge of the heavens, there is no demonstration in the sick body. In particular, futile, "sad apprehensions" of illness in the body fail to recognize that the "first Symptome of the sicknes is Hell." "I fall sick of Sin," Donne writes (8-9). Attempting to apprehend the state of the body based on the pulse or the urine is akin to drawing conclusions from "single Instances" (Sermons, 6.208). Neither sickness nor the course of nature can be prevailed upon. This search for cause and order in the are governed by him, and their secret motions and influences are not known to man, and therefore there can be no certaine judgement thereof."

44"Keep my back O Lord," Donne writes in the fourth prayer, "from them who misprofesse arts of healing the Soule, of the Body, by meanes not imprinted by thee in the Church, for the soule, or not in nature for the body: There is no spiritual health to be had by superstition, nor bodily by witchcraft; thou Lord, and onely thou are Lord of both" (Devotions, 23).

45As Douglas Patey explains: "Scientific demonstration depends on syllogisms whose premises contained necessary connections of universals and were either the conclusions of other scientific syllogisms or were principles arrived at by induction; when these stringent conditions were not met, an argument was to be classed as at best dialectical" at worst, rhetorical (Probability and Literary Form: Philosphic Theory and Literary Practice in the Augustan Age [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984], 17).

46Donne's meditations on the order of nature in meditation nineteen are important to this argument. If "we looke for durable and vigorous effects," Donne writes, nature "will not admit preventions, nor anticipations, nor obligations upon her; for they are precontracts, and she will bee left to her libertie. Nature would not be spurred, nor forced to mend her pace[.]" The "power of man" cannot affect the
variable condition of the body represents the defects of epistemology with a pleasing economy of scale.

Donne's condemnation of idle curiosity is based on his assessment of useless human learning, which often takes opinion for knowledge and uncertainty for certainty. That scholars and philosophers engage in controversy over an ant is risible; arguing about opinion and perception, Donne insists, is futile. Its futility derives from the absence of certainty and demonstration in both human affairs and intellecction. Among all proofs, Donne writes, demonstration is most certain.

"When I have reason to think my superiors would have it thus [conforming to Christ for the right reasons]," he writes,

this is Musique to my soul; When I heare them say they would have it thus, this is Rhetorique to my soul; When I see their laws enjoyne it to be thus, this is Logick to my soul; but when I see them actually, really, clearely, constantly do thus, this is a Demonstration to my soule, and Demonstration is the powerfullest prooufe: The eloquence of inferiours is in words, the eloquence of superiours is in action (Sermons, 6.226-227).

Rhetoric mollifies, logic establishes understanding, but demonstration is actual. The species of demonstration explored here is not mathematical (where causes and effects are evident both 'to us' and 'to nature') but the demonstration of facts and reasoned facts. Logic and rhetoric might expose course of nature or illness: "shall wee looke for ... Indulgence in a disease, or thinke to shake it off before it be ripe?" (Devotions, 98).

47See above, chapters one and two.

48"Syllogism, Donne writes, "must be a syllogisme within our Authors [Aristotle's] definition, when out of some things which are agreed on all sides, other things that are controverted, are made evident and manifest" (Sermons, 6.319).

49These are Aristotle's distinctions; see Prior Analytics, 68b35ff.
or express causes by reasoning from effects (better known 'to us'). However, demonstration marks the transparency of both effects and causes, so that inference might be accomplished either from effects to causes or vice versa. Reason might harmonize natural or spiritual phenomena and human perception, at least for the smug 'natural man' who mistakes his own intellection for divine order, (Anatomie, ll. 279-282), but demonstration is divine. God "knowes [apparently] contingent thinges as certain and necessary" (Sermons, 2.151). Indeed, all knowledge "that begins not, and ends not with his glory" is but a "vertiginous circle," an "elaborate ignorance" (6.227). Reason, rhetoric and logic refer to human affairs, wherein there is "nothing simply good, or ill alone." Of every civil quality, "Comparison / The onely measure is, and judge, Opinion." Thus, as Donne carefully suggests, reasoning with God means foregoing the possibility of demonstration. The sick are distracted in their use of reason.53

50Discovering the secrets of divinity is clearly beyond human capacity. On forbidden knowledge in the early modern period, see Carlo Ginzburg, "The High and the Low: the Theme of Forbidden Knowledge in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," Myths, Emblems, Clues, trans. John and Anne C. Tedeschi (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1990), 60-76. Ginzburg isolates Romans 12:3, 16 as the central texts circumscribing human knowledge and draws out their political valences. As Donne writes, implying the political consequences of excessive curiosity, "God is best found, when we seeke him, and observe him in his operation upon us. ... In his Cabinet, in his Bed-chamber, in his unreaved purposes. wee must not presse upon him. ... They that looke too farre into Gods unrevealed purposes, are seldome content with that that they thinke God hath done; but stray into either an uncharitable condemning of other men, or into a jealous, a suspitious, a desperate condemning of themselves" (Sermons, 5.298-299).

51Progresse, ll. 518-520; Grierson, 287. But "Generally, thy opinion must be no rule for other mens actions" (Sermons, 6.269).

52Compare God's logic to man's: While "the actions of men are so ambiguous, as that we cannot conclude upon them" and there "hath alwayes beene ambiguity and equivocation in words, but now in actions, and almost every action will admit a diverse sense," "... Gods ordinary working is by Nature, these causes must produce these effects; and that is his common Law" (Sermons, 3.226-229).

53See Taylor, Holy Dying, ed. Stanwood: "For a sick man and a disturbed understanding are not competent and fit instruments, to judge concerning the reasonableness of a proposition; ... [his] actions are imperfect, [his] discourse weak, [his] internall actions not discernable, [his] fears great" (136-146). Like the sick, the "habituall, and manifold sinner, sees nothing aright; Hee sees a judgement, and calls it an accident" (Sermons, 2.114). Donne thought his own understanding was
Still, "out of ratiocination and discourse, and probabilities, and very similitudes, at last will arise evident and necessary conclusions" (Sermons, 9.355). For Donne, drawing conclusions from probabilities and verisimilitudes is initially the work of 'rhetorical judgement' eventually conjoined with rectified reason; any examination of the "slipperie condition of man" without doctrine is merely an "Essay" (Devotions, 105; Sermons, 3.180). His distrust of unrectified reason is balanced against his view that necessary but insufficient probabilities are the stuff of human knowledge. While it is strictly "madnesse" to inquire of "accident" since in "this world, we see nothing but outsides," it is utterly sinful to utterly abandon the work of interpreting the world though the lens of effect. In civil or religious affairs, of course, opinion is the basis of action. For the negotiation and judgement of opinion, Donne proposes medicine as a model both of the necessity and the difficulties of pragmatic intervention. Apropos of his physicians' attempt to discern the cause of his illness, Donne writes causes and actions are always determined in effects (Devotions, 105; compare 56-57). In the natural world, effects do not always follow from human assumptions about causes. Donne develops various intellectual strategies to compensate for the absence of demonstration in natural and in human affairs.

First, as we have seen in chapter one, is the rectification of natural reason. For the "incomprehensibleness of God," human understanding has a "determined latitude": reason is its main coordinate. Although reason is to an extent dependent on opinion, God enjoins man to embrace the

affected by his sickness (Devotions, 81).


55Christ says "Follow me, and I will doe this," Donne writes, as "but an addition to his owne goodnesse." Yet "it is as certain, and infallible as a debt, or as an effect upon a naturall cause. Those propositions in nature are not so certaine" (Sermons, 2.309). Donne proceeds to discuss eclipses.

56"No man can pretend to be a Christian, if he refuse to be tryed by the Scriptures," Donne writes in 1616, just as no man "can pretend to be in his wits, if he refuse to be tryed by Reason. ... Mysteries of Religion are not the less believ'd and embrac'd by Faith, because they are presented, and induc'd, and apprehended by Reason" (Sermons, 1.169). See chapter one.
lower strata of his hierarchy of proof, which Donne calls "likelyhood" and "faire probability" (Sermons, 5.380, 6.317). Donne gives thanks to God for allowing reason and the affections to inhere in a rectified conscience (Devotions, 84). Indeed, God is offended if "Man should exercise ... reason, in all his Morall and Civill actions, but onely do the acts of Gods worship casually" (9.134, 303). The use of reason, rhetoric and logic carries with it strictures that affect both practice and expression.

Prayer and devotion must possess rational justification and logical coherence. Arguments are "enemies of the Trinity," but "to exercise our owne devotions, we are content with similitudinary and comparative reasons" (3.144). Yet reason frequently settles on "false grounds" (6.188), even if the means of communication are "fit and proportionable" to human understanding (2.153).

The second strategy, which carries ethical and discursive strictures that emphasize accommodation and proportion, is the use of examples. As we have seen in chapter four, the

57 Donne's concern for rational, accessible expression is rooted in Scripture: "Therefore is Gods will delivered to us in Psalms" that "we might have it the more cheerfully, and ... more certainly. ... God speaks to us in oratione stricta, in a limited, in a diligent form; Let us [not] speak to him in oratione soluta: not pray, not preach, not hear, slackly, suddenly, unadvisedly, extemporally, occasionally, indiligently; but let all our speech to him, be weighed, and measured" (Sermons, 2.50). Occasional mutterings and murmurings impugn faith and divinity: "Our communication with God must not be in Interjections, that come in by chance" (9.303; compare 6.52 on praying out of "indigested apprehensions"). If it does not possess "a Quia, a Reason, a ground" prayer is "very farre from faith" (5.345).

58 Compare Joseph Hall, The Art of Divine Meditation (London, 1606), chap. 25, section 8, who writes that in devotional mediation "the mind shall make 'Comparison' of the matter meditated with what my nearest resemble it; and shall illustrate it with fittest 'Similitudes,' which give no small light to the understanding nor less force to the affection" (Frank Livingstone Huntley, Bishop Joseph Hall and Protestant Meditation in Seventeenth-Century England: a Study with the Texts of The Art of Divine Meditation (1606) and Occasional Meditations (1633) [Binghamton: Centre for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1981], 96).

rhetoric of exemplarity entails adducing the common characteristics of a person or thing based "on a number of similar cases."^60 Examples are "actions which have taken place in the past and are similar to, or the contrary of, those about which [one] is speaking."^61 All pedagogy consists in rule and example, "yet the Rule itself is made of Examples." Using a medical term, Donne argues that examples "concoct" rules and make assimilation easy (Sermons, 9.274).^62 Sickness brings exemplarity into focus for Donne. Discussing Christ as a physician (Matthew 14:35-36), Donne urges his auditory to be "brought by example" to the hem of his garment and healed (5.343).^63 Even a knowledge of God is propagated by "good example" (Sermons, 2.153).^64 "Shall I have no use, no benefit, no application of those great Examples?" Donne asks (Devotions, 79). In the Devotions, concludes that Donne is concerned to "establish the validating power of precedent examples" but that this exemplarity is ultimately circumscribed by the necessity of multiplying examples (87, 93).


^61Aristotle, Rhetoric to Alexander, 1429a22-28. The line between exemplarity and Donne's typology is thin. Job, Hezekiah and Jeremy, humbled by the memory of their affliction, are both examples and types. Kate Frost, Holy Delight, explores the typological significance of Hezekiah, 49-54, 111. Hezekiah is also associated with a "Temperance tradition" (114). For Donne, medical remedies can call types to mind. When his physicians apply pigeons to Donne's feet, in order to draw out cold and dry humours, he thinks that "this application of a Dove, to our lower parts, to make these vapors in our bodies, to descend, and to make that a type to us, that by the visitation of thy Spirit, the vapors of sin shall descend, & we tread them under our feet" (Devotions, 65-66). The explanation of this remedy by Raspa (that Donne had an excess of cold and dry humours) supports the case for Donne's illness as a fever (162).

^62"[O]f all commentaries upon the Scriptures, Good Examples are the best and liveliest; and of all Examples, those that are nearest, and most present, and most familiar to us" are best (Sermons, 8.95).

^63As Donne writes in the last expostulation, "My God, my God, thou mightie Father, who has bee my Physician; Thou glorious Sonne, who hast bee my physicke; Thou blessed Spirit, who hast prepared and applied all to mee, shall I alone bee able to overthrow the worke of all you, and relapse into those spirituall sicknesses, from your infinite mercies have withdrawne me?" (122-123). On God as a physician and Christus Medicus, see, for example, Sermons, 1.197, 303, 312-313, 2.179, 3.179-180, 6.41, 72, 206.

^64In this instance, David is Donne's example: "David was the Patient, and there, his Example is our physick" (Sermons, 2.74-75).
Donne applies his hierarchy of proof and the rhetoric of exemplarity to his own, sick body for a distinctly pedagogical purpose: as "all example is powerfull upon us, so our own example most of all" (Sermons, 6.227).

In light of the lack of demonstrable somatic knowledge, Donne's use of his sick body as example in the Devotions has several implications. If, in the gradations of knowledge from probability to demonstration, the human intellect is confined to the lower strata, to "crums and fragments of appearances and verisimilitudes," how does one apprehend the state of the soul or God's intention in visiting men with affliction? If "proportion is no measure for infinitie" (Devotions, 12), how does exemplarity function to unfold that infinity? How is individual experience, certainly the centre of the work, enfolded in providential history? For Donne, these questions are answered by using available intellectual means to apprehend God's purpose and method. "Even our Naturall faculties," Donne writes, "... might preserve us from some sin. Education, study, observation. example. ... might preserve us from some" (Devotions, 109). Building on Aristotelian and Galenic notions of example, Donne's use of exemplarity establishes mediated inference from parts (of the body, of the world) to other parts (the soul) to, potentially, the whole (God) as the legitimate work of reason. Reasoning from symptoms to syndromes to cures is aided by exemplarity. Indeed, Donne's fear of relapse is finally mitigated by example: "Saint Paul, was shipwracked thrice; & yet still saved" (127, citing 2 Cor. 11:25).

Exemplarity is part of a rhetorical node that concerns probable knowledge. Donne uses techniques developed in rhetoric and hermeneutics to see invisibly and feel insensibly the presence of

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65"Canst thou be satisfied with such a late knowledge of God, as is gathered from effects; when even reason, which feeds upon the crums and fragments of appearances and verisimilitudes, requires causes? Canst thou rely and leane upon so inform a knowledg, as is delivered by negations?" (Essays, 21) As Donne remarks in the Biathanatos, the "lower you goe towards particulars, the more you depart from the necessitie of being bound" by reason (46).
God in his maculated flesh. He reasons with due temper and prudence, making absent things present; he uses analogy, example and proportion to rhetorically suture his afflicted body to his soul. As we have seen, examples and experience underwrite the art of medicine. Donne focuses on David's exemplarity in an early sermon, for instance. "Medicorum theoria experientia est, Practice is a Physicians study; and he concludes out of events: ... Therefore, in this spiritual physick of the soul, we will deal upon Experience too" (Sermons, 2.76-77, citing Paracelsus). Just as Donne renders his experience exemplary, in the Devotions Biblical examples function to legitimize his experience; his experience of affliction is underwritten by Scripture. While the Devotions is not a work of Scriptural interpretation, it is saturated with Biblical references (the text contains over five hundred references, just over three hundred and forty identified in the margin). Unlike his use of Scripture in the sermons, Biblical passages, echoes and citations are subordinated to his "personal cogitations," legitimizing rather than defining his intellection. It is rather the sacraments that are the "means conducing most to a spiritual perspective on experience." As Janel Mueller has argued, Donne's use of the sacraments has a larger purpose. Spurring the intellect to imagine the invisible resident in the visible, sacraments are "Gods ordinary physick" (Sermons, 6.198). According to Mueller, in the Devotions Donne "wants us to see as manifestly in his life as in the administration of the sacraments that the physical conveys the metaphysical." That which cannot be demonstrated, must be imagined (Devotions, 51-52); devotions require "similitudinary, and comparative reasons." This is precisely Donne's method: using medical 'grounds,' Donne reasons from the afflicted body to the state of the soul. His "anguished intellection" was directed in part toward somiotics.

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66See Savage, John Donne's Devotions, xviii-xix and Mueller, "Exegesis of Experience," who argues that in the Devotions Scripture does not function as a "recourse to authority," but as tools to "understand his crisis of body and soul" (3).

67Mueller, "The Exigesis of Experience," 6, 17. As Mueller insists, in Donne's sermons on Psalm 6, Donne's use of patristic writings allows him to draw "figurative equivalents ... of the physical
Effigiation

Donne begins the Devotions searching for signs of his illness. We "are not sure we are ill[,]" he writes, "one hand asks the other by the pulse, and our eye asks our own urine, how we do" (7). Against his seeming confidence in his physicians' reasoning and remedies, Donne is certain that his fever signified, that it means more than the mere alteration of his body. "Let me think no degree of this thy correction, casuall, or without signification," he writes, confirming the popular and traditional notion that sickness was a trial sent by God to test a sinner (40). Sickness has purpose; it manifests the tribulations of the faithful. Yet no man is capable of certain "Application" or "Imputation" (Sermons, 7.158-159). Frustrated with the taxonomy of these "outward declarations," Donne is convinced that the cause of his sickness is sin. While Donne used the theory, practice and terminology of early modern medicine to focus his attention on suffering, imagining his sickness as an "affliction," a "treasure" which matured, ripened and prepared him for God, rendered his symptoms and psychological states of David in his illness" (12). The same hermeneutic applies to the Devotions.

68 The controversy surrounding urinology was raging at the time. See, for example, John Cotta, A Short Discoverie of the Dangers of Ignorant Practisers of Physick (London, 1612), who writes that "the urine is truly of it selfe and properly indication of no other immediate dispositions" (104).

69 The primary literature confirming this notion is vast. For some examples, see Goldberg, "The Understanding of Sickness in Donne's Devotions" and, the epitome of the ars moriendi literature, Jeremy Taylor, Holy Dying, ed. Stanwood, 68-70. Bishop John King is unequivocal: "Sinne, the sicknesse of the soule, is the reall and radical cause of all bodily sickness" (A Sermon of Publicke Thanks-Giving, 33). As John Downname insists, if Roman Catholics "do not imagine that the body were the chiefe cause of all sine, why doe they so miserably and supersititiously afflict it, placing their mortification onely in a bodily exercise, and corporall punishment?" (The Conflict between the Flesh and the Spirit. Or the Last Part of the Christian Warfare [London, 1618], 22). For similar views among the reformed, see Andrew Wear, "Puritan Perceptions of Illness in Seventeenth-Century England," in Patients and Practitioners: Lay Perceptions of Medicine in Pre-Industrial Society, ed. Roy Porter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 55-99. On the notion of sin as sickness, see Raymond A. Anselment, The Realms of Apollo: Literature and Healing in Seventeenth-Century England (Newark: University of Delaware Press; London: Associated University Presses, 1995), 25-28.
physicians' terminological and methodological wranglings superfluous. 70

"Affliction," Donne writes, "is my Physick" (Sermons, 6.237). Joseph Hall wrote in 1605 that to live without affliction is a "signe of weakenesse." 71 Donne echoes Hall when he writes that every "affliction is not evil; it is rather evil to have none" (Sermons, 3.67). It is the "seale of the living God." 72 As Henry Vaughan notes in his translation of Henry Nollius' Hermetical Physick, "every disease is an expiatory penance, and by this divine affliction, correction and rod of judgement is the patient called upon, and required to amend his life." 73 For Donne, affliction was "a fomentation to supple and open his Body for the issuing of his Soule." 74 Once again confirming the 'textuality' of the body, affliction is a form of translation from this world to the next; God was the translator. 75

Conceiving sickness as divine affliction carried with it not only an ethics that proscribed normative Christian behaviour (what Donne often calls "conformity to Christ" [Sermons 3.332, 10.245-248]). It

70 Devotions, 87. As Donne states, "No man hath affliction enough, that is not matured, and ripened by it, and made fit for God by that affliction" (87). Compare a sermon of three years earlier: Job's "skin and body" are destroyed "by wormes in the grave, and so [he] is mellowed and prepared for the sight of God in heaven" (Sermons, 3.132).


72 Mabb, Afflicred Mans Vow, 19. Mabb personifies affliction as a goddess (6-7).

73 Vaughan, Works, 587.

74 Judging by devotional manuals, the Books of Common Prayer, diaries and letters, and evidence of an increasing emphasis on the individual in the early seventeenth-century English Church, contemporaries thought an afflicted body most readily revealed the contours of the soul. Discourses of affliction confirmed the Calvinist view that the senses were utterly depraved (see Sermons, 5.383); paradoxically, this view led to the anxious scrutiny of the human body, especially the heart. See, for example, Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).

75 Sermons 8.7.190. God employed several "translators" in work of rewriting human life as something inherently divine; one translator was "sicknesse" (Devotions, 86).
also spurred Donne and his contemporaries to employ forms of inference developed in the intersections of medicine, rhetoric and hermeneutics in order to discern the ways in which the body symbolized the soul. If sickness marked the tribulations of the faithful, God's word was written on the body.76 If the living body truly was Donne's book, how was it read? Through affliction, a sinner is tried77 and given the "understanding" which makes "[God's] Image more discernible, and more durable in us" (2.67, 354, 3.193).78 Since the "witnesses" of affliction refuse to lend certainty to Donne's or his physicians' deliberations, their diagnostic instruments must be adjusted to conform to the divine concoction of judgement and mercy, infirmity and grace. The discourse of affliction addresses spiritual and epistemological questions through representation, reasoning and sign-inference. Indeed, as one late seventeenth-century theologian insists, affliction itself is a sign: it is "a most certaine signe of everlasting damnation, where a life is led without affliction."79

Similar to the Devotions in purpose and design, John Mabb's The Afflicted Mans Vow (1609) leads the penitent sufferer through meditations, prayers and vows on subjects ranging from presumption, to Christ, to despair.80 Like other authors of manuals for the sick, Mabb offers sin as

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76"I cannot feel an affliction, but in that very affliction I feel the hand (and, if I will, the medicinall hand) of my God" (Sermons, 3.191). The "hand" as we shall see conveys Donne's sense of both divine writing and rectified, prudent ethics.

77The collocation of the law and sickness cannot be explored fully here, though it does figure largely in the Devotions (105, 121, for example). For the intersection of law and sickness in the Sermons of the same period, see 5.284-285, 334-335. For the sickness as "Indictment": "so we lye upon our death-bed, and apprehend a present judgement to be given upon us, when, if we will not pleade to the Indictment, if we will stand mute, and have nothing to say to God, we are condemned already, condemned in our silence" (Sermons, 3.203; see also 1.225).

78"This is the proper work of sickness," writes Jeremy Taylor, "faith is then brought into the theatre, and so exercised, that if it abides but to the end of the contention, we may see that work of faith which God will hugely crown" (Holy Dying, ed. Stanwood, 91).


80It is finally vows, promises to change one's behaviour knit together by "religion, discretion, abilitie and pietie," that offer the sick "a bitter pill, to give [him] good and sound purgation" (Afflicted Mans
the cause of affliction. To treat sickness as a natural accident, to behold sickness with "an earthly eye," is obdurate. Yet, with an awareness that contemporary medical practices are injurious, the interpretation of affliction is frequently transacted in medical language. "No wound is cured," Mabb writes, "except it be searched, and that is painful to the patient: and no soul fully sanctified, unless it be afflicted, which brings sorrow to our sinnes, and causeth us speedily to turn to the Lord." Wounds are probed with either the surgeon's knife or with the delicate empiricism of somiotics. The heuristic most often applied to the sick body, as we have seen, is anatomy. Like sin, sickness is revealed by means of well-placed cuts.

In a sermon preached in 1624-1625, Donne uses his own anatomical knife and draws a parallel between the spiritual and physical searching of wounds.

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Vow, 27, 175, 3). As with most Protestant manuals for the sick, Mabb also proposes reading Scripture and hearing sermons as remedies (176).

Ibid., 16, 19. The 1559 Elizabethan prayer-book is unequivocal: "Derely beloved know this ... whatsoever your syckenesse is, know you certainlye, that it is Goddes visitacion" ("The Order for the Visitacion of the Sicke," The Prayer-Book of Elizabeth, 1559, ed. William Benham [Edinborough: John Grant, 1911]. 130). M.M., in An Ease for a Diseased Man (London, 1625), agrees. Look "not too much on the mea[n]es whereby, or the manner who thou are afflicted," he writes, "but looke especially to thy sinne, as the principall cause of it" (4).

As Sir Thomas Browne states, "tis as dangerous to be sentenced by a Physician as a Judge" (A Letter to a Friend, upon Occasion of the Death of his Intimate Friend, in Sir Thomas Browne: Selected Writings, ed. Sir Geoffrey Keynes [London: Faber, 1968], 94). The fact that early modern medical practice was dangerous and injurious, as Donne was well aware, contributes to the discourse of affliction; one might as well put one's faith in God, physicians either fail to cure outright or merely compound one's suffering.

Mabb, Afflicted Mans Vow, 7, citing Hosea, 5.14 (mistakenly, I think, for 5.13; Donne cites both verses in the Devotions, 23, 55). The notion of searching wounds is commonplace: "I have searched thy feastred wounds, I have bared thy ulcered sores, and for feare of putrifying cankers I have tainted thee to the very quick: so to keepe thy weaknes in a good temper, I have applied this Cataplasme, to appease thee of all thy paines" (Simon Grahame, Anatomic of Humors, sigs. A3-A4, quoted in Lewalski, Donne's Anniversaries and the Poetry of Praise, 233).

Schleiner argues that this anatomical imagery is derived from Augustine (Imagery of John Donne's Sermons, 80-81).
As the body of man, and consequently health, is best understood, and best advanced by Dissections, and Anatomies, when the hand and knife of the Surgeon hath passed upon every part of the body, and laid it open: so when the hand and sword of God hath pierced our soul, we are brought to a better knowledge of our selves, then any degree of prosperity would have raised us to (Sermons, 9.256).85

Here, for the most part, Donne is conventional; numerous early modern texts propose anatomy as the shortest and surest way to knowledge of the human body and to the exposition of sin. Establishing a knowledge of wounds (sin) implies the presence of adversity. What distinguishes Donne's use of anatomical metaphors is his sense that, while the 'body emblazoned' is a useful heuristic tool, the knowledge it produces is normative and static. Anatomy merely exposes sin.86

Donne dissects himself in the Devotions, offering his "ruinous Anatomie" to his physicians' scrutiny.87 "I offer not to counsell them, who meet in consultation for my body now," Donne writes, "but I open my infirmities, I anatomise my body to them" (48). Rooting about in the guts for the causes of disease is akin to searching for the seat of sin in the body; both fail. Donne is unequivocal: no anatomist "can say ... here lay the coale, the fuell, the occasion of all bodily diseases," he writes, for "What Hypocrates, what Galen, could shew mee that in my body? It lies deeper than so; it lies in my soule" (118). If one accepts that anatomy in the early modern period is essentially about the soul,

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85 Based on conjectural evidence, Potter and Simpson suggest the sermons on the penitential Psalms in volume 9 date "most likely" from the winter 1624-1625 (9.35-37).

86 The disclosure of infirmities is incumbent upon every Christian. Donne longed for an anatomization of the soul in order to expose "every sinnewe, and fiber, every lineament and ligament of this body of sinne" (Sermons, 2.158-159).

it is a very blunt instrument indeed." While no anatomist can locate the cause of illness or sin in the body, a rectified conscience has little trouble cultivating its own knowledge of the "constitution, and bodily inclination to diseases, as that he may prevent his danger in a great part" (118-119).

Anatomical knowledge lacks the particularity (and the particularity of application) necessary for the rectification of an individual Christian. While the body might be known to the extent that it is taken apart, if anatomy teaches at all, it teaches that the human body, the world and various ways of knowing both are "rubbidge." As Donne writes at a poignant moment in the Devotions, adjusting his readers' focus from his 'open infirmities' to his physicians' work of interpretation, "They have seen me, and heard mee, and arraign'd mee in these fetters, and receiv'd the evidence; I have cut up mine own Anatomy, dissected myselfe, and they are gon to read upon me" (45-46). Even the metaphorically dissected body must be read and interpreted. His physicians read signs and indications; so must Donne.89

In contrast to the Anniversaries, in which the anatomy of various bodies underwrites both

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88 [A]natomy in the western tradition was essentially about the soul" (Andrew Cunningham, The Anatomical Renaissance: the Resurrection of the Anatomical Projects of the Ancients [Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1997], 196). Browne is unequivocal in his opinion: "In our study of Anatomy there is a masse of mysterious Philosophy, and such as reduced the very Heathens to Divinitie; yet amongst all those rare discoveries, and curious pieces I finde in the fabricke of man, I doe not so much content my selfe as in that I finde not, that is, no Organ or instrument for the soule; ... Thus we are men, and we know not how; there is something in us, that can be without us, and will after us, though it is strange that it hath no history, what it was before us, nor can tell how it entred us" (Religio Medici, 43).

89 As Goldberg claims, in the imitation of Christ, "the sick man learns to shake off his attachment to things of the body or, more precisely, learns the right use of signs as a means to acquire true humility" ("The Understanding of Sickness in Donne's Devotions," 515). David Harley argues that "ministers were interested in the problems of diagnosis." He quotes William Whatley, A Caveat for the Covetous, 3rd ed. (London, 1616): "as some diseases have their diverse signes, so have also sinners in diverse conditions and estates, diverse markes to know them by" ("Medical Metaphors," 411).
equitable reading and the "provocative indeterminacy of the spirit-matter relationship," in the Devotions the fluctuations of the afflicted soul are mapped onto the living body. From the opening of the text, even as he questions hearkening after false knowledge, Donne validates forms of inference which attest to a dialectic between the soul and the body revealed by the adversity of affliction. This dialectic depends on Donne's conception of both divine and human signification. Written months after his illness, Donne's Christmas sermon, 1624 on Isaiah 7.14, is key to his theories of signification and his epistemology. As Noralyn Masselink argues, "Donne consistently advocates ... a process rooted in sensory perception of God's effects rather than direct illumination." Apprehension through direct illumination is too close to sectarian Protestantism for Donne. As we have seen, his prudent sign-inference is to a large degree dependent on a vision of the Church as an interpretive community. To such a community, God uses natural elements and events as "emblemes


91This dialectic is evident in prayer. Like the soul, the body at prayer must testify and express our love, not only in a reverential humiliation thereof, in the dispositions, and postures, and motions, and actions of the body, when we present ourselves at God's Service (Sermons, 7.104). Attention to the body, however, can quickly overstep humility. Men should neither enlarge nor pamper the body extravagantly, "nor so adorn and paint it, as though the soul required a spacious, and spescious palace to dwell in" (7.105). In "The Extasie," Donne wrestles with this dialectic: "O alas, so long, so farre / Our bodies why doe wee forbear? / They'are ours, though they'are not wee, Wee are / The intelligences, they the sphære" (ll. 49-52; Grierson, 47). Donne confirms the commonplace that the body is merely the instrument of the soul, which is derived from Aristotle (Sermons, 3.355), yet if "the body opresse it selfe with Melancholy, the soule must be sad" (6.75). On this dialectic, see, for example, Rosalie Osmond, "Body and Soul Dialogues in the Seventeenth Century," ELR 4 (1974): 364-403. For Donne, the incarnation, passion and crucifixion of Christ are the archetypes of this relationship. On the Devotions as an example of imitatio Christi, see Goldberg, "The Understanding of Sickness in Donne's Devotions" and Frost, Holy Delight. As Donne insists, because Christ was flesh, "we conceive certaine bodily impressions, and notions of him" (Sermons, 6.127). Like signs and indications, these impressions are sometimes diffuse. While painters might present the "frame of the bones of mans body," the "state of the body, in the dissolution of the grave, no pencil can present to us" (Sermons, 3.105).

92"Donne's Epistemology and the Appeal to Memory," 64.
and instruments of his Judgements" (Sermons, 6.173). For example, the birth of Christ is a sign and Donne unfolds before his auditory "what this sign is in general" (6.169). "It is a Degree of Mercy," Donne insists,

that he affords us signes. A naturall man is not made of Reason alone, but of Reason, and Sense: A Regenerate man is not made of Faith alone, but of Faith and Reason; and Signes, externall things, assist us all (175).

God has given man "visible means of knowing God" (2.253). Just as excessive curiosity about divine purposes is condemnable (182), to refuse the assistance of signs is obdurate. Indeed, "Man hath a natural way to come to God, by the eie, by the creature; So Visible things, shew the Invisible God" (6.217; citing Romans 1:20). Things nearer to men are discerned more clearly because they are visible: "we could not assure our selves of the mercies of God, if we had not outward and sensible signs and seals of those mercies" (2.254-255). Recall that there is a "right way" to proceed from signs to things signified for Donne. The right way is "to go ... from things which we see, to things which we see not" (1.222, 3.111). God is perceived through "reflexion, & by instruments." His "blessed spirit instructs mee," Donne writes, "to make a difference of [his] blessings in this world"

93Of Christ's incarnation, Donne writes "that God and Man, are so met, is a signe to mee, that God, and I, shall never bee parted" (Sermons, 6.179; my emphasis).

94About Ahaz's refusal of God's signs (Isaiah 7.13), Donne writes that if "God, of his abundant goodnesse, doe give me a signe, for my clearer directions, and I resist that signe, I dispute against that signe, I turn it another way, upon nature, upon fortune, upon mistaking, that so I may go mine own way, and not be bound, by believing that signe to be from God, to goe that way, to which God by that signe calls me" (Sermons, 6.176). Hezekiah did not turn from God's signs, but demanded more signification.

95Engaging Aquinas' meditations on Romans 1:20, Donne confirms the sensible apprehension of God's incorporeality; see Sermons, 4.167-168 and Masselink, "Donne's Epistemology and the Appeal to Memory," 69.

96On the seal as a form of proof, see Schleiner, Imagery of John Donne's Sermons, 120-121.
Like physicians, Christians must conclude from "visible instance[s]."\(^7\) Yet his confidence in divine signification is at times ambivalent. His frequent imprecations to God betray a fragility of purpose and resolve.\(^8\) However, like other sufferers, his resolve is restored by affliction: he is spurred to imagine the complexities of divine signification transacted in his body.\(^9\) In the crucible of his sickness, Donne imagines the body as a field of signifiers whose signified is the soul. Like faith, the soul "doth not easily lie in profe." Instead, "wee are put ... to a continuall study of the whole complexion and constitution of our body" for evidence of its action and works (106, 116-117).

The thirteenth meditation, "The Sickness declares the infection and malignity thereof by spots," confirms this habit of thought. Placed in the middle of the Devotions' twenty-three steps, this step focuses Donne's on the signs and symptoms of his illness as evidence of the state of his soul. Before his maculation, the evidence presented both to his readers and his physicians was equivocal: Donne's manifold signs and symptoms mingle with and counterfeit one another, hold consultations and "conspire how they may multiply." Though present, murmuring secretly in his viscera, symptoms are not bound to "declare" themselves (35, 46, 52). The appearance of spots is perplexing. Donne first calls his spots an "accident," a cognate term for symptom rooted in Aristotelian notions of

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\(^8\)"Let me think no degree of this thy correction, casuall, or without signification; but yet when I have read it in that language, as it is a correction, let me translate it into another, and read it as a mercy " (Devotions, 40). Compare Sermons, 2.284-285, when Donne longs for the signification of God's hand as a mercy rather than simple ruin and destruction.

\(^9\)As Samuel Crooke insists, "the childe of God maketh happy use of bodily distempers; making choler serve unto zeale; flegme unto patience; melancholy unto contemplation; and lively blood unto spiritual rejoicing" (Ta Diapheronta, or Divine Characters [London, 1658], 24, quoted in Harley, "Medical Metaphors," 403).
Although Donne feels they confirm the malignancy of his disease, often physicians must treat accidents and symptoms in advance of the disease itself, since the former are so violent they allow no time for "consultation" or intricate work (46). Equally often, the accidents of an illness are mistaken for its cause. Yet, as he says to his physicians, drawing an analogy between sickness and symptoms, "till we shew our spots, thou appliest no medicine" (69). The paradox is biting: the same eruption of spots which allows Donne's physicians to begin to discern the operation of illness in Donne's body distracts them from its cause (67). What Donne sees in his maculation, however, is the seal of God's writing on the surface of his body. "These spots," he writes, "are but the letters, in which thou hast written thine owne Name, and conveyed thy selfe to mee" (70). Donne's spots, God's signs, are lisible. As Donne insists, affliction makes "[God's] Image more discernible ... in us" (Sermons, 3.193). As in many occasional meditations, from John Hall to Robert Boyle to


101 Discussing human ignorance of heaven, Donne writes that "as Physicians are forced to doe sometimes, to turne upon the present cure of some vehement symptome, and accident, and leave the consideration of the maine disease for a time, so Christ leaves the doctrine of the kingdome [of heaven] for the present, and does not rectifie them in that yet, but for this pestilent symptome, this malignant accident of precedency, and ambition of place, he corrects that first, and to that purpose gives them the example [of the humility] of a little child" (Sermons, 3.157).

102 The appearance of spots also focuses Donne's ardent typological imagination. The spots declare Donne's sin: if "we hide our spots, wee become Idolatres of our owne staines, of our own foulnesses." God's remedies are withheld unless sins are confessed. "When I open my spots," Donne writes, "I do present him with that which is His." Only then will confession be received with "a gracious Interpretation." Indeed, nature itself confesses "and cries out by these outward declarations" (Devotions, 69-70). As Donne writes, "God comes to see in what case his Image is in us; If we shut doores, if we draw Curtaines between him and his Image, that is, cover our soules, and disguise and palliate our sins, he goes away .... But if we lay them open, by our free confessions, he returns again" (Sermons, 5.371). Through the testimony of his spots, Donne secures the relationship between the manifestation of sickness and the disclosure of sin. Both rely on sign-inference. On the appearance and interpretation of maculated skin in literature about smallpox sufferers, see Anselment, The Realms of Apollo, 192-212. John Oldham, William Strode, Jeremy Terrent and John Dryden imagine the spots and scars of smallpox as stars (196, 200, 204, 206-207).
Richard Baxter, a crisis of bodily health is transformed into a crisis of spiritual health by rectified reading (Devotions, 73).

In the dialectic between the soul and the body, structural aspects of the body --- its sinews, ligaments and bones — are transferred to the soul. Sin even imprints "deformity" on the soul (Sermons, 2.56). If the soul possesses somatic properties, what of the soul's physiology? How does Donne discern its health? If sickness witnesses sin, how is sin apprehended in the soul? Donne first questions the body-soul dialectic altogether. "Why hath not my soule these apprehensions, these presages, these changes ... as well as my body of a sicknes?" Donne writes, "why is there not always a pulse in my Soule, to beat at the approçh of a tentation to sinne?" Why, he asks, "is not my soule, as sensible as my body?" (Devotions, 8). It is, he answers, if men would adjust their "mental sight," as it were, and rectify their conscience in order to perceive divine traces in natural matter. "Thou has imprinted a pulse in our Soule, but we do not examine it" (9). While no physician or anatomist could locate the seat of sickness in the body, the soul's pulse might be seen and felt by a rectified conscience. It appears as the presence of God in the "materia signata" of the human body. Montaigne's symptom history and Bacon's "Summoning Instances" are thus transformed by Donne's profound awareness of sin. Donne records and recollects sins as symptoms of his spiritual health, 'seeing invisibly' and 'feeling insensibly' that sin is lodged in the bowels of his soul (52-54). "I know." Donne writes, addressing God, "that in the state of my body, which is more discernible, than

103 See, for example, Sermons, 2.84, 159, 288-289, 5.353, 6.101, 10.80. The anatomy of the soul is dependent upon these metaphors (see 9.300-301).

104 Upon those words of David, Conturbata sunt ossa mea, St. Basil saith well, Habet & anima ossa sua, The soul hath bones as well as the body. And in this Anatomy, and dissection of the soul, as the bones of the soul, are the constant and strong resolutions thereof, and as the seeing of the soul is understanding" (Sermons, 6.101).
that of my soule, thou dost effigiate my Soule to me" (119).\textsuperscript{105} Effigiation depends upon prudent and precise inference from signs and indications. In turn, discerning indications among the body's manifold signs depends upon rhetorical proof.

\textit{Judicatures}

Conforming to common seventeenth-century medical practice, in the nineteenth step in Donne's sickness Simeon Foxe and Theodore Turquet de Mayerne offer him purgatives after (presumably) agreeing on the "good Indications" of his fever (97-109, 121-122). Indication (\textit{endeixis}) can mean simply 'sign.' However, in ancient medical thought, it denoted a sign which suggests and defines the causes and cures of a given pathology. Indeed, Galen distinguishes between mere signs and \textit{semeia endeiktika}. The term's cognates include \textit{significatio} and \textit{demonstratio}, testifying that \textit{endeixis} occupies a middle ground between the demonstrable, repeatable proofs required for \textit{episteme} and rhetorical proofs that testify to the incertitude of medicine.\textsuperscript{106} As signs that index if not reveal causes, indications mark the conflicts and contradictions inherent in probable sign-inference. This conception of indication, and the sign-inference and rhetoric of observation that accompanies it, persists through the early modern period. It is prominent in Sextus Empiricus' criticism of the Stoic theory of language, later important for Montaigne.\textsuperscript{107} It is clearly central to Donne's and his

\textsuperscript{105}To \textit{effigiate} is to represent, to fashion into a likeness; it came into popular usage in the early seventeenth century. The \textit{Oxford English Dictionary}, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991) cites John King (1605), George Hakewill (1627) and John Wall (1628).


\textsuperscript{107}See above, chapters three and four. Indications was used in its technical sense in the following works: Walter Bailey, \textit{A Treatise of the Medicine called Mithridatium} (London, 1585), sig. E2r and William Clever, \textit{The Flower of Physicke} (London, 1590), 83, 101 (the first use of "indicate"), 111
physicians' conception of his fever in 1623.

Whereas any symptom might, in Donne's words, "complicate, and mingle themselves with every infirmitie of the body," indications pointed a way to the proper name and interpretation of an illness as well as treatment. A symptom became a meaningful sign in the "consultations" of the physician; a meaningful sign became an indication when, combined with other signs confirmed in a medical hypothesis,\(^\text{108}\) it was perceived to point to the cause of an illness. In meditation thirteen of the *Devotions*, after the appearance of spots, "the Phisicians see more clearly what to doe" by indications (67). Indications are "outward declarations," "witnesses" to the disease. Shortly after the emergence of his maculæ, Donne's illness entered its "Critical dayes, Indicatory dayes.\(^\text{109}\) Yet for all "those evident Indications, and Critical Judicatures\(^\text{110}\) which are afforded us" (74), for two reasons Donne refuses to trust in "these signes of restitution." First, it was not his but his physicians' intricate work. "What it may indicate or signifie," Donne writes, "concerning the state of my body, let them consider to whom that consideration belongs" (80-81). Second, if he takes "comfort ... in the

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\(^{108}\)As Quintilian writes, "an indication may not amount to proof in itself, yet it may be produced as evidence in conjunction with other indications, such for instance as the fact that the man with the bloodstain [on a garment] was the enemy of the murdered man, had threatened him previously and was in the same place with him. Add the indication in question to these, and what was previously only a suspicion may become a certainty. ... The force of such indications [he mentions symptoms] depends on the amount of extraneous support which they receive" (*Institutio Oratoria*, 5.9.7-12.199). Words equivalent to "indicium" are "signum, a sign" and "vestigium, a trace" (199).

\(^{109}\)On the notion of critical days, see Raspa's notes, *Devotions*, 164.

\(^{110}\)A word meaning "mental judgement; formation of authoritative expression or opinion" (*OED*). The *OED* cites Donne as the first usage, presumably from a sermon (the text, which I have been unable to locate, is *Selections from the Works of Donne* [1840], citation at 205).
indication of the concoction and maturity" of his disease, his affliction might lose its spiritual lustre (100). He merely takes natural accidents for divine intervention. Truly, as he repeats again and again, sickness is the result of sin. If Donne "confide[s]" too much in the signs of restitution, believing his affliction "but a Naturall accident," God's significatory work is redundant. Indeed, the indications by which his physicians prescribe, in which Donne might take some assurance, are "but a cloud" (102-104).

Even with the assistance of Donne's spots, his physicians' work remains intricate. As Donne writes on the cusp of relapse, "wee must stand at the same barre, expect the Physitians from their consultations, and not be sure of the same verdict, in any good Indications" (121-122). The witnesses had been brought into court and interrogated, as it were, but refused to confess: his "pulse, the urine, the sweat, all have sworn to say nothing, to give no Indication of any dangerous sicknesse" (52; see also 35-36). The evidence, it seems, was circumstantial: the mute signs of the living body frustrated his and his physicians' attempts to identify the cause of his disease. As a consequence, Donne enlists 'insinuative reason' in his deliberations about indications. In fact, the habits of thought shared by rhetoric and medicine are revealed clearly by Donne's ruminations about indications. Just as his Scriptural hermeneutics aid Donne in thinking about somatic signs, so rhetoric (the rhetoric of Scripture) assists him in his deliberations about indications.

God communicates in "Curtaines of Allegories," commanding persuasions and harmonious locutions. Scripture is at once the most eloquent and the most simple of texts. Its very simplicity is an argument for its truth. Broadening the literal sense of Scripture to include "peregrinations to fetch remote and precious metaphors," Donne folds several senses into one (100-101). The meaning of Scripture, particularly the Psalms, is enfolded in its style in order that men might better comprehend
the intention of the Holy Ghost. Due to his particular love for man, for example, the Holy Ghost is also "amourous in his Metaphors" (Sermons, 7.87). Donne's comments about the figurative nature of Scripture are well known. Here, in meditation nineteen, Donne's views about Scriptural composition echo his views about the mingling of signs and symptoms in the book of the body. "Neither art thou thus a figurative, a Metaphorical God, in thy word only," Donne writes, "but in thy workes too."

The institution of thy whole worship in the old Law, was a continuall Allegory; types & figures overspread all; and figures flowed into figures, and powred themselves out into farther figures; Circumcision carried a figure of Baptisme & Baptisme carries a figure of that purity, which we shall have in perfection in the new Jerusalem.

By this figurative language, the fathers were encouraged to "proceede the same way in their expositions of the Scriptures," he continues,

to make their accesses to thee in such a kind of language, as thou wast please to speake to them, in a figurative, in a Metaphoricall language; in which manner I am bold to call the comfort which I receive now in this sicknesse, in the indication of the concocion and maturity thereof, in certain clouds, and residences, which the Physitians observe, a discovering of land from Sea, after a long, and tempestuous voyage (100).

Donne applies the tools of Scriptural hermeneutics and rhetoric to the indications of the concoction of

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112See Schleiner, Imagery of John Donne's Sermons, 185-200.

his illness; these tools are accommodation and decorum, which also underwrite Donne's conception of the usefulness of reason in the apprehension of God. As Donne laments, "O, what words but thine, can express the inexpressible texture, and composition of thy word" (99). The parallels between divine, metaphorical language and the 'text' of the illness are thorough. Buoyed by the ways in which a diligent searching of Scripture, a comparing of place with place, yields consistent meaning (a "Metaphoricall Christ," for example), Donne applies the same hermeneutic to the indications of his affliction. Is that which gives his physicians their indication, Donne asks, but a cloud? His answer is that, metaphorically, God has declared himself in his cloudy urine. In the longest expostulation in the Devotions, Donne weaves together medical learning, patristic exegesis and a "continued Metaphor" (Sermons, 7.72) of sickness as a sea of sin in order to conclude that none of God's "Indications are frivolous." God makes "signes, seales" and "Seales, effects." Transacted in signs and symbols, his effects are consolation and restitution (103). The uncertainty of Donne's indications (clouds) is resolved in the certainty of God's signification. As he writes, punning, God's "purpose terminates every action, and what was done before, is undone yet" (102). Let me only discern, he writes, that what is "done upon me, is done by the Hand of God, and I care not what it be" (Sermons, 5.284).

Donne's complex negotiation of the meaning of indications and the traces of divine purpose in somatic alteration ultimately depends on adducing intention, purpose and meaning from effects. Immediately following the nineteenth prayer, Donne questions the ability to suture probable effects to causes. "Wee cannot alwaies say, this was concluded," since for men "actions are alwaies determined in effects" (Devotions, 105). His statements echo Augustine, who in De Doctrina Christiana, considers the rational apprehension of God through the lens of sign-inference. Since "correct inferences may be made concerning false as well as true propositions," Augustine asserts, "it

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114On affliction and sin as a sea and the "Prudentiam navifactivam" God has given man to negotiate that sea, see Sermons, 9.106-107.
is easy to learn the nature of valid inference even in schools which are outside the Church." The truth of a valid inference is "discovered," he continues, "perpetually instituted by God in the reasonable order of things." Like walking, logic is natural, he insists, whereas "the rules of eloquence" are artificial. Yet there are natural, inartificial principles applicable to rhetoric "which are themselves true in so far as they cause things to be known or to be believed, or move men's minds either to seek or to avoid something." These principles "are rather discovered than instituted." His example is mathematics in which "numbers have rules not instituted by men but discovered through the sagacity of the more ingenious." Augustine is writing of indications as they function in the history of rhetoric. Quintilian explains that indications are a species of inartificial proof, meaning that they are natural, that they are not deduced from argument but arise from the vicissitudes of things. With supporting arguments, indications prove something when they are combined with other signs; they are akin to examples. Without a larger logical context, indications in themselves mean little; when sutured together with other signs to form a syndrome, illness (in medicine) or proof (in rhetoric), indications are decisive. God departed from the Jews, he insists, because they "trusted" in signs and indications (104). Donne cautions against this trust and cautions his physicians against confidence in any sign which apparently discloses the "slipperie" condition of his body. None of these alterations "easily lie in proof," he writes. Yet whether of sickness or sin he prefers action and remediation over "long consultations" (106-107). If supporting arguments cannot be assembled from other somatic signs that buttress the meaning of his "cloud" or his spots, he nevertheless proceeds to purge. Faith in

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116Quintilian gives two reasons for classifying indications as inartificial: first, they are "analogous to documentary or oral evidence and rumours." Second, if they are "indubitable" they leave no room for argument; if not, they must be supported by arguments but are not arguments themselves (5.8.1-3.195). There are traces of its origins in medical semiotics in Quintilian's discussion of indication. Donne knew Quintilian; see Sermons, 8.259.
the means (in this case, confession) supersedes the observation of actions (106). As Augustine insists, "the truth of propositions is a matter to be discovered in the sacred books of the Church" (2.31.49.68).

In the nineteenth and twentieth steps in his sickness, Donne's intellection illustrates the affinities between rhetoric, hermeneutics and medicine. His assessment of Scriptural rhetoric, his probable sign-inference and his progress through the gradations of knowledge to faith testify to the ways in which the rhetoric and hermeneutics of illness conform to his nuanced "Textual Divinity." In his last sermon, Donne explicitly moors the concept of indications to prudent, rhetorical judgement. In fact, signs, examples and indications represent the grounds and rules of medicine: "Those indications which the Physitians receive, and those presagitions which they give for death or recovery in the patient, they receive and they give out of the grounds and the rules of their art[.]

(Sermons, 10.241). "Presagition" means presaging, divining by signs; its cognate terms include sagacity and prudence, "that whereby the heart of the wise fore-knowest the time, and judgement."

In John Hall's words, a prudent man works "according to fore-knowledge; yet not too strictly, and fearfully[.]

Foreknowledge, as we have seen, requires imagining and deliberating about outcomes and counterfactuals, a process that seems not to apply to spiritual matters. But in charting the signs and indications of the sick body, in seeing invisibly and feeling insensibly, Donne offers a map of his soul's affliction. This process is aided by rhetorical inquiry in which "absent remote things [are] present to your understanding" (Sermons, 2.87). As Donne insists in the twentieth expostulation, in matters of both evidence and faith, God refers us to the "observation of actions."

God directs men to their evidence, to "the hand, to action, to works." Logic and rhetoric, the arts of

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118We "have no such rule or art to give a presagition of spirituall death and damnation upon any such indication wee see in any dying man" (Sermons, 10.241).
proving and persuading, are "deduced to the hand," meaning that human intellec tion, even at its apex, is confined to surfaces (105-107). A "Christian must not thinke he hath done enough, if he have been studious, and diligent in finding the mysteries of Religion, if he have not sought them the right way" (Sermons, 6.133), and the "right way" concludes from "things which we see, to things which we see not" (Sermons, 1.222). Seeing invisibly is ultimately the work of a faith that embraces these probabilities as definitive indications of the presence of God.

Thus through probable sign-inference and indications, effigiation secures Donne's attention to the body as one of the primary grounds of signification. Inflected with rhetoric and hermeneutics, medicine functions as a discourse of cause and effect. Through "summoning instances," exemplarity and indications, the 'state of the body' is subject to limited rational apprehension. While it cannot lead to a certain knowledge of the soul, by revealing the limits of reason essaying the body cultivates discretion and humility. Of course, by urging the sufferer to use all available means to perceive the condition of his soul, the discourse of affliction occasions the work of faith.

In late November 1623, Donne's fever occasioned, in Janel Mueller's phrase, the 'exegesis of experience' using the varied heuristics he has developed in the Essays in Divinity, the Anniversaries and the sermons. These practices and concepts (the rectification of reason, the rhetoric of exemplarity and probable sign-inference, all refined at the intersection of medicine, rhetoric and hermeneutics) are applied to his own affliction in an endeavour to discern, via signs and indications, the state of the soul in the body-soul dialectic. In the process, Donne realizes that affliction also has its signs and indications; affliction itself is a "symptome of the working of the grace of God" by "holy insinuations" (Sermons, 5.347, 6.230). Affliction is a form of graceful "Humiliation" that instructs

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119 As Sir Thomas Browne insists, "where there is an obscurity too deep for our reason, 'tis good to sit down with a description, periphrasis, or adumbration; for by acquainting our reason how unable it is to display the visible and obvious effects of nature, it become more humble and submissive unto the subtilities of faith" (Religio Medici, 15).
rather than "affright[s]" (*Devotions*, 3, 15). As Donne writes, insisting that sickness prepares us for God, echoing 2 Cor. 11:30, "I shall thank my fever" (*Sermons*, 9.88).

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120 The *Devotions*' instructional facility was recognized by John Aubrey in his plan for an ideal education. In Aubrey's plan, at "their first desertion of sleep" each pupil would "use some short, pious ejaculation." "Dr. Donne's *Devotions*, or Dr. Browne's, will furnish them" (*Aubrey on Education: a hitherto Unpublished Manuscript by the Author of Brief Lives*, ed. J.E. Stephens [London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972], 46). "Browne" is Thomas Browne, archbishop Laud's chaplain. The text Aubrey has in mind is unclear.
EPILOGUE:
SYMPTOM HISTORY

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Christians, he continues,

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after long disputations and controversies, have allowed many things for positive and
dogmaticall truths which are not worthy of that dignity; And so many doctrines have
grown to be the ordinary diet and food of our spirits, and have place in the pap of

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Catechismes, which were admitted but as Physick in that present distemper, or
accepted in a lazie weariness, when men, so they might have something to relie upon,
and to excuse themselves from more painfull inquisition, never examined what it
was. To which indisposition of ours, the Casuists are so indulgent, as that they allow

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a conscience to adhere to any probable opinion against a more probable, and do
never binde him to seek out which is the more probable, .... This, as it appears in all

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sciences, so most manifestly in Physick, which for a long time considering nothing,
but plain curing and that but by example and precedent, the world at last longed for
some certain Canons and Rules, how these cures might be accomplished (Letters, 13-

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14).

14).

This last development produced Hippocratic medicine. Then, in "Galens time," men were unsatisfied
with curing and sought the causes of disease. Causes, Donne continues, were explained by the theory
of the four elements (earth, water, fire and air, which in turn correspond to the humours, blood,
phlegm, yellow bile or choler and black bile).\(^1\) Men were "arrested" upon the notion that "all differences of qualities" derived from the harmony or imbalance of these composite elements. "[N]ot much before our time," Donne writes, "men perceiv[ed] that all effects in Physick could not be derived [from] these beggarly and impotent properties of the Elements ...; [now] we see the world hath turned upon new principles which are attributed to Paracelsus, but (indeed) too much to his honour" (14-15). Donne draws parallels between these developments and the history of Christianity ("the Physick of our soul Divinity" which grew from charitable disposition through sectarianism to grace) and the "matter of the soul" (14-16). Developments in the history of medicine stand as proxy for both change and continuity in religion and epistemology. Donne has an implicit awareness that the "diagnostic event," in the words of a recent critic, is at once "symbolic" and moored to the cultural-historical moment of its occurrence.\(^2\)

This early letter illustrates Donne's sophisticated knowledge of the "grounds" of medicine fifteen years prior to the Devotions (1624). Although Donne is typical in his assertion that "the true and proper use of physick, is to preserve health, and, but by accident to restore it" (Sermons, 2.76), as we have seen he used and interrogated medical metaphors and methods for his own ends.\(^3\) His


\(^3\)"[L]earned medicine in this period was not a rigid orthodoxy; there was flexibility, for instance, in creating narratives about what was going on inside the body, and in giving people the feeling that they could personally contribute to medical knowledge through their senses, and by adding pieces of information in an aphoristic, unargued way" (Andrew Wear, "Epistemology and Learned Medicine in Early Modern England," in Knowledge and the Scholarly Medical Traditions, ed. Don Bates [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995], 161).
argument is commonplace — to cure symptoms or diseases is "greate work," but to cure the body itself, the "occasion of diseases, is a worke reserved for the great Physitian" (Devotions, 117-118) --- but the terms in which it is articulated are specialized. While I am not claiming that Donne's knowledge of medicine surpasses that of contemporary poets and preachers, I do claim that he puts his extensive medical knowledge to better and more varied use. Despite his avowed disdain for historians, Donne's purpose in his letter to Lucy is to historicize the accumulation of knowledge using medicine as an epitome of "all sciences" and as an emblem of the problems of epistemology in general.4 We have seen this tendency in Donne throughout his writing, but particularly from 1607 to 1626. Human knowledge is historical, contingent and particular; it is devoted to the situation at hand. Its constituents as well as its intellectual foundations change.5 The uncertain art of medicine thus functions perfectly to mark the historicity and fragility of human knowledge.6 It also marks the historicity of changing perceptions of human embodiment.

For Donne, the human body is full of larders, kettles and cellars, storms, stars and books, sicknesses and names; it is an epitome of the world, yet there parts of the body which find no representation in the world; it is merely the instrument of the soul, but an instrument the soul cannot do without, even at the resurrection; it is an ultimately recalcitrant partner, something he both is and

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5As Donne remarks in the Biathanatos (London, 1648), "to mee there appears no interpretation safe, but this, That there is no external act naturally evill; and that circumstances condition them, and give them their nature; as scandall makes an indifferent thing hainous at that time; which, if some person go out of the roome, or winke, is not so" (173-174).

6"Paracelsus says, of that soule contagious disease which then had invaded mankind in a few places [ulcers], and since overflown in all, that for punishment of generall licentiousness, God first inflicted that disease, and when the disease would not reduce us, he sent a second worse affliction, which was ignorant, and torturing Physitians" (Ibid., 215).
has an agglomeration of parts and the most splendid evidence of the wisdom of God. It is at once a terra incognita and an object of knowledge. Among scholars who study Donne, a commonplace admission affirms that his metaphysical wit is focused on the physical. His eye is trained on somatic minutiae while he contemplates celestial homecoming. Whether in Jack Donne's poetry or in the mature theology of the Dean, the body ghosts Donne's writing in the form of either ecstatic union with the lover or "excrementall jelly." This common perception is both too precise and quite inaccurate. As I have argued, Donne's focus on the body, both as a dissected cadaver and a living, sick body, provides him with immediate and sensory means for thinking through complex epistemological problems.

Both medical epistemology and epistemology in general, as we have seen, turn on the relationship between causes and effects, parts and wholes, universals and particulars. In order to discern the elusive relationships between these interconnected terms in human affairs, Donne cultivates rhetorical inquiry, a form of eloquence which establishes a conjunction of intention and action, practice and presentation, the seen and the unseen. 'Insinuative Reason,' to recall Bacon's term for rhetorical inquiry, makes the absent present by establishing the coordinates of the unseen (sickness, intention, the soul, God) in the material. It is underwritten, I have argued, by the persistence of accommodation, prudence and decorum, each of which is central to Struever's emergent medical-rhetorical paradigm. Of course, inferring the invisible from the visible is delicate, intricate work.

A similar fragility applies to reason. Reason and virtue, Donne remarks in the Biathanatos, "differ no otherwise than a close-box of druggs, and an emplaister or medicine made from thence and applied to a particular use and necessitie." The materia medica contains "not onely aromatike simples, but many poysons, which the nature of the disease, and the art of the Administrer make
That knowledge is infirm means that Donne focuses on healing drugs: exemplarity, circumstanced deliberation and the ethos of the knower. Mere circumstances can "aggravate ... [or] alter the very nature of the fact" and "the exercise of a thousand wits" has not comprehended human will or the affections, which Donne assumes are an integral part of embodied knowledge (Sermons, 2.158, 6.321). While over-curious men busy themselves with "speculative subtleties" and are in danger of 'vomitting' the foundations of religion, the articles of faith are discerned by reason (9.134, 355). When man has cultivated a "historical and moral faith," God "super-infuses true faith" in him (2.264). While demonstrable arguments might convince the understanding, the will is "irregular," schismatic and seditious. Convincing the will requires particular remedies, logic or persuasion (6.320-321). The rectification of reason is accomplished by both arguments and metaphors, logic and rhetoric, but it is ultimately faith that burns off any skeptical rust. Indeed, "[R]ectified reason is Religion" (2.293).

Donne's conception of the relationship between reason and rhetoric is complex. For Donne, reason utilizes rhetoric in order to make absent things present. Rhetoric encompasses both the understanding and the will; it is at once active, directed toward rectifying the conscience (Sermons, 6.103).

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7Ibid., 41.

8We owe thanks to God for allowing reason and the affections of natural men to inhere in Christians (Devotions, 84). In particular, maintaining a constancy in the teeth of affliction means recognizing that "naturall affections ... may advance ... salvation" (Sermons, 6.106). At least two other passages from the sermons illustrate this view at some length; see Sermons, 5.328-329, 350-352. Furthermore, "This is it that undoes us," Donne writes, "that vertues and vices are contiguous, and borderers upon one another; and very often, we can hardly tell, to which action the name of vice, and to which the name of vertue appertains" (Sermons, 2.59).

9As Donne writes apropos of his role as preacher, "Invention, and Disposition, and Art, and Eloquence, and Expression, and Elocution, and reading, and writing, and printing, are secondary, accessory things, auxiliary, subsidiary things; men may account us, and make account of us, as of Orators in the pulpit, and of Authors in the shop; but if they account of us as Ministers and Stewards, they give us our due" (Sermons, 6.103).
2.93; chapter two) and exemplary, "Our good life is our eloquence" (9.156). The good life is cultivated through "mediocrity" (6.307). The figure that embodies both natural and rectified reason is the prudent, constant man whose practice is rectified reading. From the Essays in Divinity through the Anniversaries to the Devotions, Donne's equitable reader is an amalgam of natural faculties and grace, of passions and reason. Epitomized by Elizabeth Drury's ethics and transparency of intention, by her reading and her diligent devotions, Donne's homo quadratus is tried by the inconstancy of reason and the exigencies of affliction. With respect to both, Donne's recourse is ethical practice or "doing" (Devotions, 107). To an early seventeenth-century poet and preacher, trained in law, doing is often judicious, circumstanced and complexioned reading. To read is to make the body work; it is an embodied, practical activity.10

Like rhetoric, reading was figured as a cure. In the Confessions, Augustine confesses to reading the books of "naturall men," especially Platonic texts, and then confides to God "I believe that you wanted me to come upon these books before I made a study of your Scriptures." Carrying forward the "impression" of these texts, Augustine was then "tamed by [God's] books (your fingers dressing my wounds)."11 Reading Scripture cures "many maladies."12 Curative reading certainly


12On Christian Doctrine, trans. D.W. Robertson, Jr. (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1958), 2.5.6.36; compare 4.16.33.142. Edward Vaughan presents a strict Augustinian hermeneutics to Elizathan readers in Ten Introductions: How to Read, and in Reading, How to Understand; and in Understanding, How to Beare in Mind all the Bookes, Chapters, and Verses, contained in the Holie Bible (London, 1594). For example, Vaughan recommends comparing natural signs by "spirituall application" (sig. Iii), examining the "nature and qualitie of that earthly thing which beares" a similitude (K2v) and developing accommodation and prudence as basic foundations for the understanding of Scripture. He includes a short discourse entitled "An Answer for Phisitions" in which he insists that it is "sinne for a man to destroy himselfe in not seeking after Phisitions and Chirurgions, when time and opportunitie is offred for recovery" (sig. Mr).
involves the anatomy of words, as Donne advocates in the *Essays in Divinity*, but it also involves diligent reading with "due temper" (*Anatomie*, l. 89), 'Drurian' reading. As Donne writes in an early sermon, reading Scripture will "succour the infirmity of Man" (1.282-283). Several contemporary devotional manuals intended for the sick advocate reading as part of the cure for affliction. Secular literature also possessed healing properties. George Puttenham, for example, recommends that poets play physicians. Though there is some "joy to be able to lament with ease," it is necessary for the poet "to play also the Physitian, and not onely by applying a medicine to the ordinary sicknes of mankind, but by making the very greef it selfe (in part) cure of the disease." Thus the poet applies a specific form of physic to himself and his readers: not "the medicament of a contrary temper, as the *Galenistes* use to cure *[contraria contrariis]* but as the *Paracelsians*, who cure *[similia similibus]* making one dolour to expell another, and in this case, one short sorrowing the remedie of a long and grievous sorrow."  

Donne, too, comments on reading's healing properties and is subtle enough to differentiate between remedies:

If any distresses in my *fortune* and *estate*, in my *body*, and in my *health*, oppresse mee, I may finde some *receits*, some *Medicines*, some words of consolation, in a *Seneca*, in a *Plutarch*, in a *Petrarch*; But I proceed in a safer way, and deale upon better *Cordials*, if I make *David*, and the other *Prophets of God*, my *Physitians*, and see what they prescribe me, in the *Scriptures*; and looke how my *fellow-patient Job* applied that *Physicke*, by his *Patience* (*Sermons*, 8.74).

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13 See, for example, Thomas Becon, *The Physike of the Soule* (London, 1549), sig. A4r.

Scripture is the only lisible pharmacopoeia for Donne; here and in the *Devotions*, only the word of God is adequate physic. Nevertheless, Donne acknowledges that healing (a remedy against fortune, perhaps) might be found in natural men, Seneca and Plutarch, or Petrarch. But the causes of the wounds of the soul are "intrinsique," Donne writes, so no man can cure them. Human medicine is composed of the "drugs of the earth," which might assuage pain but do not cure disease. In contrast, God cures and nourishes with "fruitfull and effectuall meanes": "the medicinall preaching of the Word, medicinall Sacraments, medicinall Absolution" (*Sermons*, 5.349). Because affliction marks the presence of sin in the unfathomable reaches of the soul, preaching and the charitable reading of Scripture are its only cordials.

In all of the Donnean moments I have explored, the discourse of affliction and his conception of the use and grounds of physic are either manifest or lurk just beneath the surface of the text. Medicine is one of the dominant discourses in early modern England; the discourse of affliction provided a potent narrative for individual experience and offered ways in which that experience might be elided with providential history. Both instantiate the relationship between individuals and the social whole. Healing was applicable to human and political bodies. Medicine was also a model for early modern historians and lawyers. To Edmund Bolton, historian, poet and founder of James I's Royal Academy, "he who relates Events without their Premisses and Circumstances deserves not the name of an Historian, as being like to him who numbers the Bones of a Man anatomized, or presenteth unto us the Bare Skeleton, without declaring the Nature of the Fabrick or teaching the Use of the Parts." Anatomizing the past merely presents its frame; reading history is rather more akin to somiotics, in which the causes of things are explored. Fifty years later, according to the jurist Sir

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Matthew Hale, the body of history had become plump and pathological: "y' texture of Humane affaires is not unlike the Texture of a diseased bodey labouring under Maladies." History is a diseased body; medicine's 'delicate empiricism' might provide the best model for not only a taxonomy of symptoms, but, as Bolton and Hale imply, for the disposition of "Premisses and Circumstances."

From the mid-sixteenth century through Donne and Francis Bacon to Giambattista Vico, even as they were derogated medicine and its subdisciplines provided compelling ways of thinking about signification, cause and effect, the visible and the invisible. Anatomy and symptomatology share habits of thought that endeavour to discern wholes from a scrutiny of parts, causes from an evaluation of effects, invisibles from a careful mapping of the visible. At the same time, medical methods and metaphors became increasingly popular as means by which the learned might secure access to --- and secure a discourse that pretends to certain knowledge of --- the ineffable. The development of sophisticated forms of probable sign-inference confirms that the development of probability and topical thinking in the "new science." Pace the arguments of Foucault and his more historically-

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17As Vives wrote, "How often are Hippocrates, Galen and other physicians, historians, when, for instance, they relate the succession of their experiences. So the Medical Art is collected from history, as Pliny, following Varro, asserts" (Vives: On Education, A Translation of the De Tradendis Disciplinis of Juan Luis Vives, trans. Foster Watson [Totawa: Rowman and Littlefield, 1971 (1913)], 233).

18By the mid-eighteenth century, the "prevalence of the anatomical metaphor in biology, archaeology, printmaking, physiognomics, criticism and connoisseurship signified the inability to tolerate ambiguity. It exposed the need to attain exactitude, not just degrees or shades of knowing" (Barbara Maria Stafford, Body Criticism: Imagining the Unseen in Enlightenment Art and Medicine [Cambridge, Mass. and London: MIT Press, 1991], 104).
minded explicators, sign-inference "provided the crucial inspiration and model for the formation of the human sciences." Medicine, and the ways in which inference was deployed in medical epistemology, is central to this formation. In the conflicts between Galenists, Hippocratics and Paracelsians, between the Neoplatonic visions of Henry More and the Cambridge Platonists and the concretizing tendencies of Neoepicureans and Atomists in seventeenth century England, the rudiments of this change of epistemological orders, from certainty to probability, from whole to "broken knowledge," from a reluctance to reinscribe the soul in the flesh to the search for "the proper composition of the orthodox English body," are unmistakeable. These changes were subtle, but it is clear that habits of thought that sought to make the invisible visible contributed to the alteration of the epistemology of the human sciences; as Douglas Patey has argued, diagnosis from signs or symptoms was the major problem confronting late antiquity and the Renaissance in the quest for certainty. In fact, attaining the unseen interior of things continued to be a central concern --- and cardinal problem --- for the Enlightenment.

See Jeffrey Barnouw, "Vico and the Continuity of Science: the Relation of his Epistemology to Bacon and Hobbes," Isis 71 (1980): 609-620; the quotation is at 609.


Barbara Stafford, Body Criticism, 47. G.S. Rousseau observes that "Slowly but surely, it becomes painfully clear that Richardson, Sterne, Diderot, Rousseau, Mackenzie, and even the Marquis de Sade were the posterity of two generations of thinkers who had increasingly 'internalized' --- and that is the important word --- the new science of man, directing thought about man from his visible eyes and expressive face to his unseen nerves and controlling brain, from what he looks like to what he feels, and from what he feels to what he knows" ("Nerves, Spirits and Fibres: Towards Defining the Origins of Sensibility," in Studies in the Eighteenth Century 3 [Canberra: Australia National University Press, 1976], 155). It seems that as the scrutiny of the world of probable signs intensified, there was a greater demand for rigor in probable argument; see Patey, Probability and Literary Form, 70 and W.S. Howell, Eighteenth-Century British Logic and Rhetoric (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 288, 445, 495-495, 602 (cited by Patey). As David Morris suggests, like "theology in the Middle Ages, medicine in the Enlightenment approached the condition of a master discourse" ("The Marquis de Sade and the Discourses of Pain: Literature and Medicine at the Revolution," in The Languages of Psyche: Mind and Body in Enlightenment Thought, ed. G.S. Rousseau [Berkeley and
Changing perceptions of sickness and human embodiment were central to these apparent epistemic shifts. In theology, natural philosophy and medicine, the human body was seen as a repository of signs, texts and evidence that was consubstantial with the soul; it was a book that demanded reading as well as a key to its own interpretation. The *terrae incognitae* of the human body occasioned an insistent, probing somiotics. Whether its gestures and comportment or its visceral marks, reading the human body was a vexed, perplexing task; the conviction that the interior of the body could be accessed and assessed by anatomical incision or somiotics was a conviction in search of a language. It drew its repertoire of interpretive techniques from seemingly disjunct disciplines and practices: medicine, rhetoric and hermeneutics.

The intersections of medicine, rhetoric and hermeneutics have received some recent scrutiny. Steven Mailloux has proposed a 'rhetorical hermeneutics' that shares "interpretive strategies" with rhetoric and hermeneutics. His "interpretive neo-pragmatism" is a hermeneutics grounded in "historical sets of topics, arguments, tropes, ideologies, and so forth which determine how texts are


22See Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 1, note 1, for recent scholarship that, following Foucault, has placed "the legible history of the body ... at the centre of a decidedly new discursive domain." As Jonathan Sawday notes, we still lack "a history of the creation of the body as a cultural field of enquiry in the European Renaissance" (*The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* [London and New York: Routledge, 1995], 5). Keith Thomas's view is surely mistaken. "The human body," he writes, "is as much a historical document as a charter or a diary or a parish register (though unfortunately one which is a good deal harder to preserve) and it deserves to be studied accordingly" ("Introduction," to *A Cultural History of Gesture*, ed. Jan Bremmer and Herman Roodenburg [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991], 2).
established as meaningful through rhetorical exchange." Mailloux argues for "thick descriptions" of interpretive practices that are "mindful of the shifting political positions of those who engage them." A riposte by Michael Leff argues for 'hermeneutical rhetoric' to compensate for what he sees as Mailloux's political indeterminacy. In both of these arguments, the similarities between classical rhetoric as a productive or performative theory and the interpretive emphasis of contemporary theory are fleshed out. Both Mailloux and Leff draw heavily on Gadamer. Missing from these interventions, however, is an awareness of the productive intersections of rhetoric, hermeneutics and medicine, from the classical period to contemporary theories of semiotics. Most compelling among recent accounts of this interaction in the early modern period is Nancy Struver's proposal for a "medical-rhetorical mind set." Drawing on the work of Carlo Ginzburg, Struver argues for a "dual history of rhetoric and medicine" focused on the relationship between materiality and spirituality and on cure. This dual focus suggests "a relocation of a fundamental problematic." It "usefully describes a complication of medical and rhetorical interventions when it describes the constraints on ethical and rhetorical and medical programs of the intense interactions" invested in the passions of the soul. Her example is Descartes. Exploring the ethical implications of the Passions of the Soul (1649)


25Ibid., 197-204.


Struever argues that Descartes's text justifies "anti-rhetorical" bias and prejudices against certain aspects of medicine. "Curiously," she writes, "the very thick intrications of body and mind" support "these negative moments." In turn, the linkage between rhetoric and medicine "illuminates the change in the notion of capacity for action and the possibility of bodily and political health" in early modernity. This readjustment of the Cartesian moment might contribute to the emergence of the history of rhetoric as a general intellectual history. The "rhetorical/medical agenda," Struever concludes, "depicts Cartesianism as [a] context for practical interests": as it has been understood, Cartesian dualism seems oddly unmoored to Descartes's own purpose and context. He wrote as a physician.

Struever's prolegomena usefully pose the relations between rhetoric and medicine as the relationship between intention and action, theory and practice and medical history and history itself. Donne certainly anticipates our rather late awareness of these imbrications. Perhaps Struever's intervention itself is late. In fact, post-war historians learned from medical theory and medical semiotics and developed a 'symptom history' which anticipates and supersedes the New History.

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28Ibid., 210-211.

29Descartes, whom I take to be the author of the preface to The Passions, writes that "nowhere is our need to acquire new learning more apparent in things that concern Medicine." We are far from knowledgeable even about common illnesses "which all the most learned Physicians cannot understand, and only aggravate by their remedies when they undertake to dispel them." One problem is that medicine, as it is currently practiced, does not depend on physics; rather, the most "prudent" physicians "are content to follow the maxims or rules which long experience has taught." They are, however, "not so scornful of human life as to rest their judgements, on which it often depends, on the uncertain reasonings of Scholastic Philosophers" (The Passions of the Soul, trans. Stephen H. Voss [Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett, 1989], 6-7; on writing as a physician, see 17).


Rudolf Allers, for example, ends his erudite 1944 examination of the microcosmos trope by claiming that the "complexity of the geistesgeschichtliche [history of ideas] facts does not permit simplification. The 'symptomatic' approach alone seems legitimate." To Allers, a symptom is not a primary factor in a complex phenomenon but one by which primary factors may be ascertained; it is an indication. "Thus the rash in scarlet fever or the raise of temperature are not of a primary nature," he writes, "but they indicate the presence of an infectious disease of a definite kind. ... The same viewpoint may be used, analogice, in the study of general mentality and its various forms as they appear in documents of past ages." He warns against vague and questionable notions of primary and secondary traits of the past (causes and conditions, one might say) and claims a symptomatic approach obviates this question. Symptomatic analysis is "unprejudiced," it starts, he wrote, with assembling the most complete lists of symptoms of any one period and focusing on one --- not necessarily the most significant one.

Allers' approach is remarkably similar to E. R. Curtius' renovation of philology at about the same time. Curtius alludes to his method in the epilogue of *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* as a form of symptomatology. The task of the philologist is protracted observation. "To that end," Curtius writes, "one must of course read a great deal and sharpen one's eye for 'significant facts.'"

One encounters a phenomenon which appears to mean little or nothing. If it recurs constantly, it has a definite function. ... When we have isolated and named a literary evolution of historically-situated language" that translates into a "rhetorical notion of literature as text-cum-action performed by historical subjects upon other subjects" ("The Power of Formalism: the New Historicism," *ELH* 56 [1989]: 721-771; 756). A medical-rhetorical concept of historical study, which I outline very broadly, might accomplish this task.

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phenomenon, we have established one fact. ... If we get a few dozen or a few hundred such facts, a system of points is established. They can be connected by lines; and this produces figures. If we study and associate these, we arrive at a comprehensive picture.

Curtius draws a comparison between this process of assemblage and divining the hidden properties of things. He writes, "The dowser discovers the veins of gold with his rod. The 'significant facts' are the lodes in the rock. They lie hidden in the object and are 'divined' --- more properly, 'tracked down' --- by the seeker's dowsing rod."33 Observation, divination, tracking: these are the keywords in Curtius' allusive exposition of his "clinical" method. Both Allers and Curtius are positivists: further reading, an immersion in the documents, will render these "significant facts" transparent. The historian is unprejudiced. In contrast, Maurice Mandelbaum suggests that if we take medical semiotics as the paradigm of historical discovery, it is impossible to point to a single causal factor as the root of any particular effect. As the symptoms multiply, in other words, so do the causes.34

What interests me in these accounts is the willingness to treat imaginative, philosophical and historical writing as symptomatic. In the recent historiographical renovation in which "thought" and "reality" have been transformed into meaning and experience, literary documents, imaginative literatures, are crucial. As E.P. Thompson argues, people "do not only experience their own experience as ideas, within thought and its procedures, they also experience their own experience as feeling," handled, culturally, "as values or (through more elaborated forms) within art and religious


beliefs." \(^{35}\) Feeling is transacted "within art and religious beliefs," that is, aesthetically. Historicizing "perception by feeling" thus requires training our attention to the products of feeling, particularly toward literary artefacts. In the first chapter of *Civilization and its Discontents* (1929), Freud recognizes the need for such cultural excursion in order to chart the contours of emotion. It is not easy, he writes,

> to deal scientifically with feelings. One can attempt to describe their physiological signs. Where this is not possible ... nothing remains to fall back on the ideational content which is most readily associated with the feeling." \(^{36}\)

The most indeterminate sensation experienced as 'feeling' is embodiment. Somatic experience is displayed in symptoms and signs which, subject to the vicissitudes of history, representation and interpretation, both reveal and conceal. There is "no subject without a symptom" \(^{37}\) and the symptom, that uncanny (unheimlich) indicator of somatic experience which is beyond our conscious control, is articulated in the records of somatic experience. We are not far, it seems, from treating literature itself as a symptom. In any case, it is this uncanny correspondence between "physiological signs" and the "ideational content most readily associated with the feeling" that remains to be inferred. The problem of association or correspondence between experience and its records becomes, as it did in the seventeenth century, the problem of reasoning from effects to causes, from symptoms to syndromes, from the visible to the invisible. It is a problem in the history of ideas and the history of

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epistemologies in the early modern period, as Donne certainly recognized. Suturing hypotheses about causes to the probable evidence of signs and indications in the human body or in the "diseased body" of history is a resolutely rhetorical task. Perhaps, with this awareness in mind, we might conclude that, since the orator, the hermeneut or the historian must be like a physician who is able to see "what may be probable in any situation," "medical practice itself will become a part of rhetoric, as already is that silent investigation of bodies, lines and numbers."38

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