# From an Archaeology of Iconoclasm to an Anthropology of the Body

## Images, Punishment, and Personhood in England, 1500–1660

### by C. Pamela Graves

The attack on images in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth century was not random destruction. Particular parts of the body, namely, the head and the hands, were the focus of attack. These were the same foci against which capital and the severest forms of corporal punishment were aimed. Distinct from the theological reasons for iconoclasm, these persistent foci and forms of attack reveal something about attitudes to the body in this period and the privileging of the head and hands in a number of social and cultural discourses. Iconoclasm both informs and was informed by an understanding of bodies as they were constructed in the later medieval and early modern periods.

The attack on statuary and images in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England was not random destruction. It was directed against particular parts of the body, the same parts to which capital and corporal punishment was administered. I will explain why both statues and criminals were treated in these specific ways and then place this in context and attempt to develop aspects of an anthropology of the body. I draw attention to continuities and changes between the late medieval and early modern periods that may have given a particular resonance to the anthromorphism of iconoclasm.

Iconoclasm has taken different forms in different contexts, among them Christian destruction of pagan images, Byzantine, Islamic, or French Revolutionary iconoclasm, pre-Conquest Mesoamerican ritual mutilation of sculpted and painted heads, and political erasure, both ancient and modern, such as the shelling of the Bamiyan Buddha figures by the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2000 (e.g., Belting 1994, 144–207; Barber 2002; Gamboni 1997; Wilson 2005; Sauer 2003; Latour and Weibel 2002). Ancient Egyptian iconoclasts hacked the faces from stone images of pharaohs, and cartouches of their names were erased. The Roman practice of *damnatio memoriae* involved the physical erasure of the name or image of the dead for political reasons (Elsner 1998, 12, 55–56). Sauer (2003, 52) distinguished what he terms such "half-hearted pagan iconoclasm" from more vehement and systematic Early Christian destruction in the Roman world but pointed out (p. 95) that the face was universally selected for destruction. Con-

sequently, he did not seek to explain this in any particular cultural context. Anthropologists and sociologists, however, accept that the social meanings attached to the body vary widely according to culture and period (Shilling 1993). The objects of European later medieval and early modern iconoclastic mutilation were the head and the hands. The approach taken here is therefore to seek to understand the significance of the head and the hands in the context of the contemporary religious and social practices that gave them meaning. This is not the blinkered pursuit of a Eurocentric agenda but rather an attempt to suggest that even in an area of scholarship so heavily dominated by the study of documents, an archaeological, material-culture approach informed by anthropology can throw up new, if challenging, insights for the interpretation of the evidence and the period.

Patterns and intensity of European Reformation iconoclasm varied regionally, leaving some areas with little imagery whilst others retained much of the visual heritage and others retained damaged and partial fragments of former devotional images (Eire 1986; Koerner 2004). Many images were destroyed completely, and there are historical references to suggest that a variety of means were deployed to dispose of images in some particular instances (Aston 1988; Wandel 1995; Koerner 2004, 105). But in England much statuary and two-dimensional imagery, although damaged, was not entirely obliterated and was left on view in its mutilated state. This paper is primarily concerned with these items, in which precise features of the body, most frequently the head and the hands, were systematically targeted. Figures 1, 2, and 3 show church furnishings decorated with figures of saints. On the two-dimensional screens, the painted faces and/or heads and sometimes the hands have been scraped off down to the raw

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Figure 1. Iconoclasm to the faces and some of the hands of saints on the rood screen of Great Snoring parish church, Norfolk.

wood. On the font, the heads of all the sculptures have been knocked off.

Whilst the theological basis of the attack on images has been extensively discussed elsewhere (e.g., Aston 1984, 1988, 1993, 2003; Besançon 2000; Duffy 1992, 2001; Eire 1986; MacCulloch 2003; Phillips 1973; Spicer 2003), it is the implications of this selective, patterned destruction which are of interest here. This paper departs from previous analyses of iconoclasm by asking what the foci of this particular form of iconoclasm tell us about cultural constructions of the body and what the methods of destruction reveal when examined from the perspective of other contemporary practices. It will be argued that an archaeological approach to iconoclasm as a culturally constructed practice of fragmentation broadens our understanding of the social and religious context of the

time. Iconoclasm both informs and was informed by an understanding of bodies as they were constructed throughout the later medieval and early modern periods.

## An Archaeology of Iconoclasm

The ritual "killing of things" has been explored in archaeology by Hamilakis (1998), Chapman (2000), and others. It is the contention of this paper that the iconoclasm of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries acted out ideas about the killing or mutilating of people. Miller (1985) has suggested that artefacts embody the fundamental elements of human categorization processes, and it is argued here that the treatment of artefacts which were themselves depicting human form tells us about contemporary categorization of parts of the body—that is, the way in which bodies were deconstructed at a



Figure 2. Iconoclasm to the heads and hands of saints on the rood screen of Salthouse parish church, Norfolk.

Figure 3. Iconoclasm to the heads of saints around the stem and bowl of the font at Watlington, Norfolk.

certain time can indicate aspects of how bodies were socially constructed at that time.

Amongst the most frequent objects of European later medieval and early modern iconoclastic mutilation were the head and the hands. I will therefore seek to understand the significance of head and hands in the context of the contemporary religious and social practices that gave them meaning. This approach examines iconoclasm as practical action which had a direct and transforming impact on material culture. Historians and art historians have shown that reformers and iconoclasts had diverse motives, views, and values (Koerner 2004, 2002; Aston 1988, 1993; Phillips 1973). Iconoclasm might be official and unofficial, staged or spontaneous, enacted during riots or by unknown individuals (Aston 1988; Davis 1973; Wandel 1995; Cressy 1999). Archaeology does not proceed by accounting for every observed material phenom-

enon with a textual explanation. Many things have been so much taken for granted that they have not been written about, and many voices have not been recorded. It is axiomatic to an *archaeological* approach to iconoclasm that not all actions, motivations, and intentions will have been recorded in written testimony. The following draws on both material culture and written sources but cannot necessarily be *proven* in historical accounts.

### English Iconoclasm

England is a particularly suitable place in which to conduct this examination, because iconoclasm in England was both more protracted and more variable than in many parts of Continent. This was because of the changing intensity of reform and violence against images during the successive reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI, the return to a more orthodox Catholicism under Mary I, and the compromise sought under the religious "settlement" of Elizabeth I. Episodes of iconoclasm recurred over the period of a century, from the late 1530s to the 1650s (Aston 1988; Marks 2004, 255–75). During the reign of Mary I (1553–58) many Catholic images were reinstated, and Protestant imagery and artefacts became the focus of attack in a countermove (Cummings 2002). The Puritan and Presbyterian extremes of the mid-seventeenth century marked the last great episode in this complex process (Aston 1988, 62–95; Cooper 2001). It is, however, often difficult to determine precisely *when* particular images were destroyed unless the attacks were recorded. The archaeology of the Dissolution of the English monasteries in the 1530s and 1540s has on the whole left a picture of asset-stripping and salvage rather than ideologically inspired iconoclasm (Morris 2003). Very few instances of archaeologicaly stratified iconoclasm have been reported for any period; still fewer offer a way of differentiating iconoclastic episodes.

Lincoln Cathedral and the neighbouring church of St. Paul-in-the-Bail provide a remarkable example of the conjunction of archaeological and historical sources. Lincoln Cathedral suffered iconoclastic attacks in both the sixteenth and the seventeenth century. During excavation of the well in the churchyard of St. Paul-in-the-Bail, architectural fragments originating from the medieval shrine of Little St. Hugh in the cathedral were found in archaeologically datable contexts. The most important is the damaged head (fig. 4) of one of the figures which projected from the bases of the gables on the facade of the shrine. Significantly, the damage on the head has two distinct physical characteristics. The face has been chipped off with a small chisel and partially smoothed over, whereas the marks on the base were made by a larger chisel, and this rough hacking corresponds exactly with that on the remaining parts of the shrine in the cathedral. Ceramics, clay pipes, and wine bottles date the relevant archaeological layer to the early/mid-seventeenth century (Graves n.d., 1994). The shrine was still largely intact in 1641, as a drawing from this date reveals (British Library, Loan MS 38; Stocker 1986, p1.
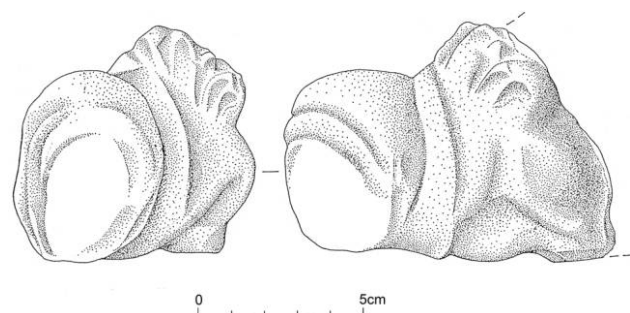
Figure 4. Sculpted figure found in the churchyard well, St. Paul-in-the-Bail, Lincoln (line drawing by Y. Beadnell after an original by D. Watt, City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit).

23D). Significantly, the drawing shows some of the projecting heads remaining on the central tabernacle of the shrine. The shrine was probably destroyed in 1644 as part of Parliament's programme of iconoclasm. John Evelyn visited Lincoln Cathedral in 1654 and noted the destruction: "The soldiers had lately knocked off all or most of the brasses which were on the gravestones: . . . they told us they went in with axes and hammers, and shut themselves in, till they had rent and torn off some barges full of metal; not sparing the monuments of the dead" (de Beer 1955:132). The archaeological context, however, suggests that we may be witnessing the physical results of *two separate* episodes of iconoclasm, for if much of the sculpted detail remained on the shrine until 1644, it had evidently survived the first order to break up shrines in Lincoln, issued under Henry VIII in June 1540 (Lincoln Record Society 1917, 35–36):

> Forasmuche as we understande that there is a certen shryne dyverse feyned reliquys and juellys in the cathedral churche of Lincoln wherwith all the simple people be moche deceyvyd and brought in to gret superstition and idolatrye to the dishonor of god and gret slaunder of this our realme and perill of ther soulys. We lett you wyt, that therfor beyng myndyd to brynge our loveying subjects to the right knowledge of the truths takeyng awaye all occasions of idolatrye and superstition [. . . the king has] appointed certain commissioners. . . . to take downe as well the sayd shrine, superstitiose reliques as superstitiose juellys, plate, copes and other suchelike. . . .

The iconoclasm of Henry VIII's successor, Edward VI, was more thorough. Proclamations specified that people should "deface and destroy or cause to be defaced and destroyed" images (*Statutes of the Realm*, iv/I, III; 3-4 Ed. VI, cap. 10, quoted in Aston 1988, 267). I believe that the first phase of damage to the figure from the shrine of Little St. Hugh, the erasure of the face (fig. 4), dates to this period. However, the head remained on the shrine in this damaged state for another century. The conjunction of archaeological and documentary evidence at Lincoln suggests that in the first phase it was

sufficient simply to deface the figures of this shrine in order to render them innocuous. By the mid-seventeenth century, however, the very fact that any part of the shrine survived was offensive. This was when the defaced head was finally knocked off the structure. More generally, Dowsing's journal and the activities of his contemporary Culmer prove that in Suffolk and Kent, as in many other parts of England, enough imagery had survived the iconoclasm of the 1500s to form a target in the mid-1600s (Aston 1988, 62–95; Cooper 2001).

## The Punishment of the Images

Ideas that were prevalent in the later Middle Ages imbued the head and the hands with more of the symbolic life-force than other parts of the body, and these were supported by social and religious practices which underlined these special roles. Iconoclasm was therefore not random destruction or vandalism but focused and deliberate. It was predicated on ideas which made images potent and was a specific denial of those ideas. Most frequently faces and heads were attacked; heads and hands together were the next most frequent targets. What were the ideas which made these parts of the body particularly abominable? To understand this, we must first look at the way in which statues and images were destroyed.

In the later medieval period, the attitude of the laity towards images ranged from sophisticated understanding of the theological precepts to animistic veneration and superstitious practices and included critics of image veneration (Aston 1988, 19–34; Duffy 1992 and 2001; Eire 1986; Kamerick 2002; MacCulloch, Laven, and Duffy 2006; Marks 2004; Wandel 1995, 38–51). Despite the theological arguments, images were often regarded as representing saints in real ways. The Church did not always discourage such beliefs (Marks 2004; Belting 1994; Freedberg 1991), and it has been argued that some amongst the laity regarded saints as powerful friends and helpers (Duffy 1992, 160, 169–83). These patron-client relations mirror the clientage practiced in late medieval England, with lay people becoming clients of particular saints, paying the "debt of interchanging neighbourhood" between the living and the dead (or eternally living) as explained in the *Golden Legend* (Duffy 1992, 160). Numerous gifts and bequests were made to images, which created relations of mutual indebtedness between saint and follower (Graves 2000a). This understanding underpinned the earlier practice of the humiliation of saints and occasionally resulted in physical violence against relics echoing criminal sanctions (Geary 1983). Recorded instances of this practice took place when a saint who was considered by a population or monastic community to be its patron was deemed to have failed in his or her obligations to that community under the patron-client relationship. The image or relics of the saint would be ritually debased, placed in ashes on the floor, and sometimes physically attacked, with the assailants drawing on the physical "vocabulary" of punishments that they themselves would experience if they failed in an obligation or duty.

Amongst reformers, there were differing views on the role of images and consequently differing degrees of toleration or hostility towards them from reform centre to centre. Some, like Calvin, denied that images were in any sense conduits for God's power; images which encouraged idolatrous beliefs and erroneous faith in intercessors polluted the temples of God. Such arguments effectively negated the patron-client relationship between the laity and the saints; therefore, where these beliefs were promulgated, it could be perceived that the patron (and the image) had betrayed the client. The belief that the carved images were merely inert matter had to be demonstrated. If the theology which sanctioned images was false, then the images themselves were false and could be challenged. There were precedents in England for the "testing" or "trying" of images, especially amongst the Lollard followers of John Wycliffe in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. The Lollards were regarded as heretics by the Church establishment, and they rejected much Catholic tradition and doctrine, including attitudes to pilgrimage and images (Aston 1984, 1993). Amongst other things, they criticized the popular belief that images embodied saints rather than providing a vehicle for instruction. Two Lollards were reported to have "tested" a wooden statue of St. Catherine by axe and fire (Kamerick 2002, 127): "Let us try her sainthood, they said. If she is truly worthy of adoration she will bleed: if not, into the fire with her. So while one of them held the figure, the other took an axe and cut off its head. . . . The St. Catherine was burnt because it was a sham. It evinced no sign of life; it could not prove itself" (Aston 1988, 133). Aston has sought to explain why burning was a particularly apt method of destruction. Statues were burnt in spectacularly staged public circumstances, sometimes after being imprisoned, tried, and sentenced as heretics (Camille 1989, 224). These images were being treated just like certain categories of condemned criminal—witches, traitors, heretics—and given appropriate corporal and capital punishment. A gruesome example was the dual burning in May 1538 of the Observant friar John Forest and the figure of St. Derfel removed from Llandderfel in Wales (Aston 1993, 276). The friar was burnt for his loyalty to the pope, hence his treason to the king; the image was burnt because its reputation for miraculous powers was false, hence a form of treason to the laity. Aston's thesis is that burning had a particular resonance for the Reformers. Karlstadt, Hätzer, and others identified fire as God's chosen punishment for idols and their worshippers (Mangrum and Scavizzi 1991, 20, 37; Aston 1993, 293) on the basis of numerous Old Testament precedents (e.g., Deuteronomy 7:5, 12:3). There was also the long-standing notion that burning, which reduced the accused to the smallest possible particles of dust and ashes, purified the convicted heretic (Aston 1993, 294; see also Davis 1973, 55).

Aston's thesis is compelling. Iconoclasm also took many other forms, however, and it is argued here that these also find their logical explanation in contemporary practices of capital and corporal punishment. Equally spectacular public dismemberments of images—the striking of the heads and hands from statues—took place. This was not because these were the most easily accessible projections: two-dimensional images had their faces and hands obliterated as well, usually with deep gouging into the wood reflecting the force applied to the task (fig. 1). There were biblical precedents for such mutilations. When God struck down a false idol he targeted the head and the hands (I Samuel 5:2–4, my emphasis):

> When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon. And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the Lord. And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again. And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the Lord; *and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold*; only the stump of Dagon was left to him.

Thus God himself had set a pattern for the mutilation of idols. John Knox, the Calvinist Scottish reformer, referred to this text specifically when the head and hands of the statue of St. Giles were knocked off in Edinburgh in 1558 (Higgitt 2003, 17).

Two-dimensional images might of course have been whitewashed rather than mutilated (Aston 1988, 93). The rood screen of Binham Priory, Norfolk, which was whitewashed and then painted over with texts from Tyndale's English translation of the Bible, is often cited as the embodiment of the triumph of the Word over the Image. However, considerable numbers of heads, hands, or feet painted in two dimensions on wood were scraped off first, sometimes deeply gouged out, even if they were later painted over. In other words, to paraphrase Barthes (1990, 4), *the hiding can be seen.* Simply painting over the face and hands did not signal the "death" of the image—did not deprive it of power. Such subtleties were understood in the later Middle Ages, because chancel screens in churches acted in an analogous way—partly masking the clergy and the Mass in order to emphasize them (cf. also Jung 2000). The parclose screens that defined family chapels in English churches divided the elite from the congregation but allowed the elite occupants to be seen as separate and therefore socially distinct (Graves 2000a). Thus to cover an image was one thing: to remove physically all traces of its head and hands, and in such a way as to make repainting difficult, was quite another. Some reformers sought to retain the damaged images in order to demonstrate their inanimate and powerless nature, unmasking their emptiness (Koerner 2002, 179, 164).

One two-dimensional medium often cited as surviving destruction for practical reasons is glass. Stained-glass windows were a necessary protection against the elements and too costly to replace with unpainted glass; Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin all spoke out against glass-breaking (Aston 1988, 257, n. 10). Prior to 1547 only the most radical reformers in England had advocated the destruction of images in windows

(Aston 1988, 256–58). Occasional survivals demonstrate that faces could be targeted, as at Great Massingham, Norfolk, where the saints' faces and the Lamb of God were replaced with plain glass (Phillips 1973, fig. 16). In some parishes, notably in Kent, the heads and faces of saints in stained-glass windows were masked by painting them out (Aston 1988, 260–61, n. 19). However, there are very few examples of such masking. I would suggest that this is because it was an unsatisfactory way of denying the power of images. By contrast, when the monastic houses were officially dissolved in the late 1530s, glass windows were destroyed routinely because they were no longer needed to fulfil their primary function of keeping out wind and rain. The archaeological patterning of broken glass from sixteenth-century deposits demonstrates that images were deliberately attacked to a greater extent than is normally appreciated (Graves 2000b, 462–64). Much more glass seems to have been destroyed in the parish churches and college chapels in the 1640s (Cooper 2001, 89–93, 391–95).

### Corporal and Capital Punishment

Images were variously burned, drowned, or beheaded: an image of the Virgin was hanged in England in the early 1530s (Aston 1988, 212); a statue of St. Francis was hanged at Ayr, in Scotland, in 1537, and the great statue of St. Giles in Edinburgh was drowned before it was burnt (Higgitt 2003, 17). The most obvious context for comparison is official punishment enacted on the body. The equivalence of punishments meted out to statues and to offenders has been stressed by both contemporaries and modern historians (Davis 1973). I believe that this can be taken farther: there was tacit acknowledgement of the appropriate body locus for judicial violence according to the crime committed, based on an understanding of the relative role and value of body parts. Exceptional bodily punishment was in fact meted out only to traitors, heretics, and other extreme criminals (Dean 2001, 124):

> For the most serious of crimes, the most serious penalties were reserved: the multilation of ears, lips and tongue, the amputation of hands, feet and ears, the gouging out of eyes, or death by hanging, beheading or other means. . . . There was a code to the assignment of mode of capital execution. Dismemberment was reserved for traitors and conspirators. . . . Burning was for crimes requiring "extreme purification by the total elimination of the offender's body."

Thus the seriousness of the crime was mapped out on the body (Merback 1999, 139–40). The "tariff" of monetary fines for attacking people physically varied according to the part of the body attacked. The examples cited by Dean (2001, 132) indicate clearly that mutilations to the head consistently cost more in monetary reparation. Blinding in both eyes incurred the highest penalty. An attack leaving a facial scar accrued a much greater fine than did the severing of a limb, but an attack leaving a "shameful" mark on the face cost even more, implying that such marks resembled those inflicted through judicial punishment. To put this in context, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a woman accused of whoredom or adultery was given the whore's mark on her face, often a slit nose (Hallam 2004, 251). To damage the nose on a male was to imply sodomy (Groebner 2004). This made the sins of the lower body visible on the face. Scholarly culture of the Middle Ages considered the beauty or physical integrity of the face to reflect the inner honesty and integrity of the soul and taught that facial flaws were signs of sin (e.g., Albertus Magnus, writing in the thirteenth century; Groebner 2004, 75; Synnott 1993, 73–102). Thus to damage or defile the face was to damage reputation and honour.

The metaphor of the body politic extended to a conception of the body parts rendering quasi-feudal service to one another and to their higher, governing organs. The corollary was that the head of the body—the king or prince—had the power to "divide others who threatened the body politic with division" (Binski 1996, 65). High treason, encompassing crimes against the ruler, the ruler's family, and high officials, was rewarded with the severing of the head in particular; petty treason, encompassing the slaying of a master or mistress by a servant or of a husband by a wife, was also punishable by execution, usually by aggravated hanging for men and burning at the stake for women (Bellamy 1970; 1973, 189; 1979, 9; Hanawalt 2000, 197; Gowing 2003, 7). Punishment restored the purity and integrity of the social body. Bodily mutilation for lesser crimes had died out in England by 1300, and any form of judicial bodily mutilation had become rare by the fifteenth century, save for treason. There was, however, a resurgence of bodily punishment under the Tudors, and, from 1534, during Henry VIII's break with Rome, even pronouncing the king a heretic, schismatic, tyrant, infidel, or usurper was deemed high treason (Bellamy 1979, 31, 181–92). Many more people were charged with treason than before, because it was necessary to secure the new succession and religious authority. Although the ultimate punishment for high treason was to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, under the Tudors the rope and the axe accounted for 99% of all such deaths (Bellamy 1979, 207). Thus hanging and beheading were the punishments most symbolic of treachery in that age. Moreover, tongues and hands that had committed blasphemy might be abscised. When the Protestant William Gardiner was executed for heresy in Portugal in 1552, his hands were cut off before he was burnt and placed in the fire with him (Aston 1993, 299). The Covenanters who opposed the imposition of the king's Episcopalian Church in Scotland had their right hands cut off before they were hanged in 1638 (Thomson 1886, 239–40).

### Spectators and Agency

Other readings of public judicial violence may inform an understanding of iconoclasm or at least of the competing

interpretations audiences may have put upon the acts. Merback (1999) has argued that capital punishment can be read not only as state authoritarianism, retribution, and deterrence but also, in popular perception, as a spectacle in which communities made great religious investment in the "good death" of criminals (Spierenburg 1984). Good deaths had a penitent and salvific quality that restored to the crowd its sense of proper social and moral order. The crowd could engage in a mystical identity between Christ's passion and the torment of the condemned (*passio* and *compassio*), and this emotional participation restored a sense of power and agency to people otherwise excluded from the judicial decisions and events which had led to the execution (Merback 1999, 141–57). In England, official dismemberments and burnings were sometimes publicized in order to collect as large a crowd as possible, for it was the transformative effect on the religious ideas of the crowd—its consent—which was crucial to the project of reform (Aston 1993, 262, 310). In the discourse of public execution, spectators became agents; corporate veneration turned to corporate vilification.

This analysis of crowd expectations and behaviour in official situations complements our understanding of popular riot, in which the crowd assumed quasi-judicial powers to enact rituals of punishment on those deemed to have escaped proper retribution. Such action also created a precedent for religious rites of violence. Official policy moved too slowly for some reformers, who took matters literally into their own hands. Much popular, unofficial, and even clandestine iconoclasm was improvised from a repertory of forms of popular and unofficial justice and rituals of humiliation (Davis 1973; Aston 1993; Berlin 1997). Images were also used as proxies for the punishment and defamation of those who escaped the law (Jones 2002; Groebner 2004; Freedberg 1991, 246–82). This probably drew on other traditions of the use of images and effigies as proxies for political bodies, for example, in ritually liminal contexts such as royal and heraldic funerals in the medieval and early modern periods, as well as the symbolic stonings and beheadings of effigies of Carnival in parts of Europe (Kantorowicz 1957; Ruff 2001). In England, those who carried out acts of iconoclasm varied across the period according to specific royal injunctions, parish circumstances, and individual initiative. In recorded instances artisans may have constituted the majority, but there were also parsons, vicars, and curates, lay preachers, churchwardens, college radicals, merchants, villagers, and mobs (Aston 1988, passim). As Wandel (1995) has pointed out, however, the physical act of iconoclasm gave a voice to many who were not preachers, writers, or officials and whose names are unknown.

The next section explores further aspects of the social world and practices from which the agents of iconoclasm might draw their "vocabulary" for attacks on images. Whereas we cannot know what has disappeared without trace, there is no getting away from the fact that the surviving remains display remarkably consistent targets for attack.

## Head and Hands in Medieval and Early Modern Discourse

It has been argued above that, in certain contexts, the head and the hands were thought to embody more of the symbolic life-force than other parts of the body; thus if they were the key life-signifiers, their destruction was intended to deny the life or reality of the being portrayed. There is a considerable archaeological literature concerning the body (e.g., Hamilakis, Pluciennik, and Tarlow 2002; Fowler 2004; Gilchrist 2004; Joyce 2004), and historians have examined medieval and early modern aspects of the body in art, literature, and social contexts (Kay and Rubin 1994; Biller and Minnis 1997; Grantley and Taunton 2000; Kleinschmidt 2000). Recent work emphasizes an anti-essentialist stance, the multiplicity of valences of bodies, and the plurality of social identities, varying with status, gender, age, occupation, and life experience (e.g., Butler 1993; Gilchrist 1997, 1999, 2004). Some approaches have explored the relevance of the fissuring or the cleaving of bodies in relation to female piety and mysticism (e.g., Bynum 1987, 1989). Others have examined the humoral conception of the body, space, and metaphor (e.g., Gilchrist 1999). As Bynum (1999) has argued, there were many medieval bodies, and even within orthodox Christian discourses there was no single concept of "the body" (see also Biernoff [2002, 17–39] on the interrelatedness of body, flesh, and soul). Women's lives in the early modern period have been examined by, for example, Gowing (2003), Wiesner (2000), and Mendelson and Crawford (1998). Masculinities and male bodies have been examined for medieval Europe (e.g., Hadley 1999) and early modern England (e.g., Breitenberg 1996; Fisher 2001).

None of these works has, however, examined the link between iconoclasm, the fragmentation of the body, and the value or meaning accorded to parts of the body through social practice. My approach to this topic is informed by the work of Bourdieu (1987), Douglas (1970, 1980), Giddens (1986), Goffman (1987), Turner (1997), and others. I argue that, for the head and hands to be accorded a significance beyond the everyday, there would have to be discourses which built up, through social practice, cultural horizons of meaning, symbolism, and attributes in the social worlds of those who took part in iconoclasm. From this rarefied vocabulary of meaning, iconoclasts could draw their knowledge of how to proceed in the context of attacking images (cf. Giddens 1986; Barrett 1988). The following sections explore a number of practices through which this could happen; the list is by no means comprehensive but seeks to open the field for further exploration.

### Art, Life, and Body Metaphors

Medieval theologians taught that Art was subordinate to Nature, and this was conveyed in secular themes: in the *Roman de la Rose*, Art could not breathe life into her images. In a 1282 manuscript of the story of Zeuxis, the artist is on the

point of colouring the face and hands of his statue of Helen (Musée Condé MS 590). To explain this image, Camille (1989, 318) says that the face and hands were the key life-signifiers, but he does not elaborate on the origins or currency of this idea or on its implications. If we are to place the idea in context, the starting point must be the fact that the body provided a widely deployed metaphor in the Middle Ages.

A potent Christian body metaphor conceived of the Church as a single body or organism, with Christ as its head, and as a hierarchy which privileged the high over the low. This hierarchical image was appropriated for political use, and the feudal household was conceived of as a *corps* (body) with a *chef* (head), the members and the lord respectively. In the formulation of the body politic the head governed all and was explicitly identified with the prince or king: "the function of the eyes, the ears and the tongue is assured by the judges and provincial governors. . . . The 'officers' and 'soldiers' . . . can be compared to the hands" (John of Salisbury, 1159, *Policraticus*, quoted in Le Goff 1989, 17). Thus the king's provincial representatives were his eyes, ears, and mouthpiece, and the king acted in the community through his knights. The lowest members of the community, the peasants or labourers, were identified with the feet. The head was thus a metaphor for the formulation of principle, and the hands were a metaphor for the implementation of principle—important agents but subsidiary to the overall rule of the head. Whether the identity of the metaphoric head was secular or religious was disputed, especially by the Church, as was the priority of head or heart (Le Goff 1989, 18–23; Binski 1996, 65; Blamires 1997). Civic Corpus Christi processions provided one of the most widely projected expressions of the metaphorical Christian body, even if the reality of social exclusion and guild competition belied the ideological intention of representing a unified community (James 1983; Rubin 1991, 243–71).

Outside the elite sphere of political or theological discourse, the body metaphor applied somewhat differently to the incorporation of trade and craft guilds. The idea of fraternity, with "members subsumed in a common substance," coexisted with hierarchy, experienced in craft discipline and the physical ordering of bodies at guild courts and in religious processions (Farr 2000). Furthermore, traditional guild inspections of products in London took place in choreographed processions of the guild and civic officials making stops at each workshop. Contemporary records use the language of judicial punishment and iconoclasm to describe what happened to any condemned goods. They were "broken all in pieces," "burnt and consumed," "broken defaced and spoiled" (Berlin 1997, 81). As with public executions and public spectacles of iconoclasm, these public demonstrations were designed to uphold the collective or corporate reputation of the trade.

In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the Reformation gave new preeminence to the metaphor of the body politic and a new scale of application within the household. It dismissed the authority of the priestly confessor and replaced it with the authority of the patriarchal head of the household (Aughterson 1995, passim; Fletcher 1994). The body politic was but one of many coexisting medieval body metaphors. Gilchrist has drawn attention to textual uses of the female body as a metaphor for "safe, contained places" in application to castles, to the integrity of kingdoms, to the interior of the body in medical texts, and to the range of metaphors used for the female body itself (1999, 138–45).

For some, the eyes specifically were the surest sign of life in an image. There were several competing theories of vision in the medieval period, mostly derived from ancient Greece and filtered through Islamic thinking. The "extramission" theory of Euclid (ca. 300 BC) and Ptolemy (ca. 170 BC) and the "intromission" theory of Aristotle both proposed quasi-physical rays connecting the object and the viewer's eye (Smith 2004, 327; Lindbery 1987; Miles 1986, 96; Biernoff 2002, 91). Seeing something was in effect touching it through a visual ray; to see the consecrated host, for example, was to touch Christ, and this had a salvific effect (Miles 1986, 96). Bacon's thirteenth-century synthesis maintained that species entered the optic nerve (Smith 2004; Lindberg 1987; Biernoff 2002, 63–107). Consequently, some theologians taught that the eyes represented a portal through which harmful, sinful, and delusional qualities could entice the viewer (Cressy 1999, 40; Biernoff 2002). Furthermore, there was something special about the direct gaze of statues: they looked not above their worshippers but at them, as if to engage them in direct interpersonal communication through the meeting of the eyes (Aston 1988, 401; Baxandall 1980, 166; Dahl 1978). Integrating these optical theories with pious traditions of the later Middle Ages, Biernoff (2002) has argued that the relationship between viewer and image was one of reciprocity, in which optical, carnal, and redemptive vision combined to allow for bodily participation in the divine, what she calls "ocular communion." "To see was to become similar to one's object" and entailed "a certain violence to the self, as one became like one's object" (pp. 137, 138). This concept has enormous implications for iconoclasm, perhaps as a means to prevent any continuing interaction: there are a few instances of the eyes' having been scratched out of a religious image's face (e.g., on the rood screen of Thornham, Norfolk). For some reformers, the eye was a potential traitor, and hearing was privileged over sight (Miles 1986, 95; Wandel 1995).

Art and legal depositions from the period provide insights into vernacular practices and ideas concerning the head and the hands. Many signs of infamy, humiliation, insult, and defilement focused on the head, as did everyday figures of abusive speech (Hallam 2004), while the substitution of animal heads on human bodies and depictions of multiple heads both indicated the foolish and the monstrous (Jones 2002, 68–73). Such derisive iconography was particularly prevalent in Reformation propaganda on both sides (Jones 2002, 73; Gaimster 1997, 142–55), involving inversions of the normal hierarchy, political or domestic, satirized by the inversion of head and feet or head and buttocks. Sometimes abusive ac-

tions in these terms were performed to humiliate a religious image in addition to its "capital" punishment. For example, rams' horns were nailed to the head of the statue of St. Francis that was hanged in Ayr in 1537, and a "kowe's rumpe" was nailed to the statue's buttocks (Higgitt 2003, 31, n. 74). In the seventeenth century portraits of political enemies were often slashed on the face prior to immolation (Cressy 1999, 34, 30–31).

But whatever the head and the hands meant in political or artistic conceptions, if these meanings were to be prevalent in society at large they would have to be made apparent in a wide variety of contexts and discourses. The following sections explore the practices by which such meanings may have been sustained and reproduced.

## Head and Hands in Rituals

Hands were inevitably the medium of all rituals, but many of the seven sacraments or rites of transition of the medieval church contained a pronounced focus on the head and/or hands. This section explores some of these, drawing on some religious and elite texts, amongst other sources, for illustrative material. Such items had limited social circulation, and prescriptive texts did not necessarily determine action; action was contingent upon context and the circumstances and improvisation of agents (Rubin 1991; Graves 2000a; Giddens 1986). In practice, liturgies were subject to unregulated interpretation. Nonetheless, because many of the sacraments were intended to influence the lives of the majority, they are used to gain an idea of the general characteristics of practice.

In baptism by immersion, the sponsor might lay a hand on the infant's head (B. M. Cott. MS. Julius E. iv, f. I, d [Kingsford 1921, 7, fig. 3]). The child would be anointed on the forehead (Kingsford 1921, 13, fig. 6) and a lighted taper, supported by the priest's own hand, perhaps placed in its hand (*The Arte or Crafte to Lyve Well*, Soc. Ant. f. xxxvii [Kingsford 1921, 15, fig. 7]). During confirmation the bishop's hands were raised over the group of candidates; each was anointed with cream on the forehead and had a chrism cloth tied round his or her head (Soc. Ant. f. xl [Kingsford 1921, 20–21, fig. 10]). Absolution was marked by the priest's touching the head of the penitent with a discipline rod (B. M. Add. 25698, f. 9 [Kingsford 1921, 22–23, fig. 11]) or placing his hand upon the penitent's head (Soc. Ant. f. xlii, d [Kingsford 1921, 27, fig. 13]). On Ash Wednesday, the penitent was marked with ashes on the forehead (B. M. Add. 18851, f. 69, d [Kingsford 1921, 29, fig. 15]). At communion, the wafer was usually placed directly into the communicant's mouth (B. M. Royal 2B. vii, f. 207, d [Kingsford 1921, 30–31, fig. 16]). The marriage ceremony required the priest to join the hands of the betrothed together at the church door and again before the altar after the ring had been placed on the bride's fourth finger (*Sarum Manual* [Kingsford 1921, 34–35, fig. 19; 42–43, fig. 23]). The handing over and the ring were the most contested parts of the post-Reformation marriage rite (Cressy 1997, 339–47).

After childbirth women might undergo rites of purification before acceptance back into the parish community. In the pre-Reformation rite, holy water, candles, and the wearing of a veil over the head were the principal material features. The 1552 Prayer Book did away with all three, but the wearing of veils or kerchiefs over the head persisted as the popular outward sign of the event and was highly disputed by religious radicals (Gowing 2003, 47–48; Cressy 1997, 216–29).

The priesthood of the Catholic Church itself was reproduced through the laying-on of hands, and there were many other components of the ordination rite relating to the head and the hands (Cullum 2004, 64). The first tonsure on the head of a cleric was a significant rite of passage (Cullum 2004, 56).

As death approached, the dying person might be helped to hold a lighted candle (B. M. Add. 18854, f. 78, d. [Kingsford 1921, 49, fig. 26]). Absolution was marked by the laying of the priest's hand on the dying person's head (Kingsford 1921, 53, fig. 28). In the *Sarum Manual* unction proceeded from the sensory organs of the head down the body to the hands, feet, and back (Kingsford 1921, 54). Upon death, the corpse would be sprinkled with holy water, again starting with the head. Although most corpses were wrapped in cloth prior to burial, the head and the hands might sometimes be left visible (*Horae of the Regent Philip*, Pierpoint Morgan Collection [Kingsford 1921, 83, fig. 43]). Archaeological excavation in England has often revealed that the head of a burial was given greater emphasis than the rest of the body, for example, with wooden plank covers extending only as far as the neck, the inclusion of head recesses in cists, and stones surrounding the head or supporting the head both where no other cist existed and inside stone coffins (Gilchrist and Sloane 2005; White 1988). Gilchrist and Sloane consider that these practices allowed the head to be exposed during the final burial rites. They cite commentaries on the liturgy from the eighth to the thirteenth century in which the head was important in burial, for example, the place of the head at the Resurrection marking where the rest of the body would be assembled (Gilchrist and Sloane 2005, 139; Bynum 1995, 212).

Amongst the aristocracy, post-mortem bodily division was widespread by the thirteenth century. It allowed a patron to support a number of institutions by leaving parts of his or her body to be buried in each. However, the hierarchical concept of the body resulted in sensitivities amongst the receiving institutions; few were happy to "receive those parts of the body which were lower in the physical hierarchy, and more closely associated with appetite, vice and disease" (Binski 1996, 63). Furthermore, the logical consistency of the body metaphor can be seen in the fact that in the medieval punishment for high treason the quartering (bodily division) of the offender was preceded by the burning of the entrails and heart, since "treasonable thoughts must arise in the entrails" (Bellamy 1979, 204). The hierarchy of the body was both

political and affective: "the head remained the official site of the burial of the person," but the heart came to be regarded as the "seat of piety" because of the Christian head/heart pairing (Binski 1996, 64). Consequently, the heart was often given to institutions to which the donor felt particularly devoted. Thus Eleanor of Castile (d. 1290), queen of Edward I, arranged for her heart to be buried at the Dominican priory in London, her entrails in Lincoln Cathedral, and her body at Westminster Abbey, "marking the latter as the head of the kingdom" (Binski 1996, 64). Bodily division of saints was of course well established, and in this context hand and head shrines featured amongst the veneration and giving of relics.

Finally, the dissection of corpses for scientific or artistic scrutiny had been subject to restrictions imposed by the Church during the Middle Ages. Relieved of these prohibitions after the Reformation, a new science of anatomy flourished in Protestant contexts such as Calvinist Holland in the seventeenth century. It has been suggested that the workings of the hand, in particular, engaged Protestant practitioners of this new discipline, as is perhaps reflected in Rembrandt's painting *The Anatomy of Dr. Nicolaas Tulp* (1632, Mauritshuis, The Hague). In this, a renowned anatomist demonstrates the workings of the muscles and tendons of the flayed left hand of a newly executed criminal, convicted of armed robbery. This scene, like all art, is subject to interpretation, but some points may be relevant to the cultural emphasis on the hand at this time and relate to similar themes explored above. These include the fascination with the mechanical workings of the hand itself, the instrument with which work (for good or evil) is accomplished; greater knowledge of God, since the human body is a product of divine creation; and the redemptive value of knowledge gained to the benefit of a whole community from the excision of an evil-doer (Heckscher 1958; Mitchell 1994).

### Ritual Hand-washing

One practice which gave significance to the hands in the Middle Ages was that of ritual ablutions. The washing of the hands was concerned with the moral sphere rather than physical hygiene. The ritual washing of the priest's hands in the Mass was seen by varied sections of society on a regular basis. The liturgical *Use of Sarum*, which was the most extensively used in late medieval England, prescribed the handling of the ritual vessels, the pre- and postconsecrated wafer, and rules concerning the priest's hands; more accessible versions existed, such as the *Lay Folk's Mass Book* (Simmons 1879). I have argued elsewhere (Graves 2000*a*) that this concern with washing the hands was integral to conveying the changing nature of the host as the performance of the ritual progressed. The ritual climax of the Mass was the consecration, when Christ's body became immanent in the wafer. After many preparatory actions but before the Preface which was the start of the consecration, the celebrant's hands would be washed (Frere 1898–1901, 76–77; Legg 1916, 218). This was intended

to decontaminate his hands of any pollution prior to his touching the host at the moment of transubstantiation. After the dismissal, the celebrant was to wash his hands again (Lockton 1920, 150). Medieval commentators asserted that this ablution was not to cleanse the priest after having handled the consecrated host but the opposite. In terms that fulfil Douglas's (1980) analysis of purity and danger, having once touched the sacred, the celebrant's hands were not allowed to touch anything profane until the sacred had been washed away, lest remnant traces of the sacred on his hands be polluted by this contact (Alexander of Hales, *Summa Theologica* III, 327, quoted in Lockton 1920, 150–51; Simmons 1879, 145).

Great concern with passing corrupt matter into the body by means of the hands is reflected in the testimony of people examined for heresy in Montaillou, southern France, between 1318 and 1325 (Ladurie 1984, 142–43). For this, albeit historically specific, group the practice of toilet was restricted to "those parts of the body which blessed, handled or swallowed food—i.e. the hands, face and mouth" (Ladurie 1984, 142). At the other end of the social scale, medieval courtesy books urged boys of the wealthier classes in England to wash their face and hands when they arose in the morning and to wash their hands before meals (Orme 2001, 75). In England, as elsewhere, a bowl of water for hand-washing was to be offered to an important guest on arrival at a religious or noble house as a sign of courtesy, status, and respect (Régnier-Bohler 1995, 363).

### Gesture

Modern anthropology has reinvigorated studies of hand gesture (Enfield 2005). Systems of gesture permeated so many spheres of medieval life that Schmitt (1991, 59) has called the Middle Ages a "gestural culture." Gestures could be bad or good, wicked or virtuous, as they contributed to the fashioning of wicked or virtuous subjects (Asad 1987; Camille 2002, 154–55; Schmitt 1989, 136–37). Some everyday insulting gestures can be re-created from visual images and literary and legal references. At least four gestures of contempt involving the thumb and mouth were known on the Continent before the sixteenth century and had been introduced to England by that time (Jones 2002, 79–81). The finger in the mouth and a range of grins or grimaces also denoted foolishness, stupidity, or derision (Jones 2002, 114–15). In the early modern period, gestures and insulting actions were related to a complex nexus of disputed discourses, including seniority, gender, dependency, and honour, but boxing the ears, spitting in the face, slapping the face, pulling the beard or hair, and attacking neck-bands and neck-ruffs were amongst the most common and prevalent (Shepard 2003, 140–51; Gowing 2003; Wells 2004).

The kiss of peace within the Mass, in theory, created a community of equals. In practice, however, in England people in many later medieval communities avoided kissing each other

and instead used a special board or tablet (pax board) which could be passed round and kissed. The order in which the pax was received was perceived as reflecting a social hierarchy and could therefore be a catalyst for dispute and social fragmentation rather than Christian unity (Bossy 1987, 69–70).

The language of gesture in fourteenth-century art and of the "speaking hand" in particular has been the subject of intensive analysis by Barasch (1987). The power of this analysis is that it identifies the origins of these gestures in contemporary church ritual and judicial procedures which would have had an audience across the social spectrum. The idea that hand gestures "could form a comprehensive system of communication that might be called 'language'" was explicitly formulated in the early years of the seventeenth century (Knowlson 1965). In 1644, an English physician, John Bulwer, published his *Chirologia: Or the Naturall Language of the Hand.* For Bulwer (1644, 1–2, quoted in Barasch 1987, 2) the hand was another mouth: "the Hand, that busie instrument, is *most talkative*, whose *language* is as easily perceived and understood as if Man had another mouth or fountaine of discourse in his Hand." In the present context Bulwer's work raises two points. First, in the period immediately preceding the Commonwealth, the role of the hands as a primary cultural medium was acknowledged in certain intellectual circles. Second, Bulwer was associated with the Royalist Laudian party. This was the party that supported the use of elaborate ceremony, vestments, and veneration in the rituals of the Church of England, seen by opponents such as the Puritans as akin to the reintroduction of Catholicism, and that largely supported the king when the Civil War of the 1640s in England set the king against Parliament, led by Oliver Cromwell. Consequently, Bulwer's attitudes could have been subject to the same violent rejection that other aspects of the Established Church suffered in the late 1640s and '50s. Liturgical gesture was certainly seen as part and parcel of Laudian religious practice and was despised by the religious radicals: kneeling, bowing, any form of lowering or uncovering the head, the signing of the cross, or making a benediction were anathema to them (Cressy 1999).

Courtesy and conduct books were produced primarily for educating the male children of the gentry, describing body discipline, hygiene, gesture, and elite concepts of manners (Bryson 1998). The earlier seventeenth century was a period in which reverence and deference were shown by bodily disposition and gesture not only in Royalist court and church circles and amongst the gentry but also, if in far less codified and recorded ways, in ordinary homes and workshops between servant and master or mistress, between children and their elders, and between apprentices and masters (cf. Goldberg 1999; Brooks 1994, 53; Gowing 2003, 7, 58–65). In England children were expected to kneel as a gesture of submission before their parents to ask for a blessing in the morning (Stone 1979, 122). Hat-doffing was the norm between males of inferior and superior rank and between male juniors and elders in many institutions (Cressy 1999, 35–36;

Bryson 1998, 88–89, 93–94; Stone 1979, 122–23). Infringements of these prerogatives denoted rebellion and insult. To strike off the hat was one of the commonest forms of humiliating insult used in male encounters in the early modern period, as it imposed a gesture of subordination on the one whose hat was dislodged (Shepard 2003, 145; Ruff 2001, 123). A similar though differently nuanced practice concerned honour and insult amongst women. The tangible symbol of married status for a woman in the seventeenth century was the head-covering: to have it forcibly removed during a fight evoked the dependency of a servant or the shame of a whore (Gowing 2003, 58). Slapping the face was symbolic of the disciplinary rights that masters had over male servants and apprentices as well as younger male relatives and that mistresses of households had over female servants in particular (Brooks 1994, 144; Hanawalt 2000, 208–14; Gowing 2003). To use it out of these contexts projected servility onto the recipient. Gestures of deference pervaded most domestic contexts in the early to mid-seventeenth century but in religious contexts evoked disputed religious practices. Thus gesture made the body an area of contesting disciplines and ideologies in this period.

### Dress, Body-fashioning, and the Significance of Clothing

Clothes were the central material markers of identity in the early modern world (Jones and Stallybrass 2000). Many aspects of medieval and early modern dress (e.g., sumptuary laws, livery, significance of types of cloth) have been the subject of academic study, but an anthropology of what was emphasized at any one point and why has yet to be attempted. Here just a few aspects are explored.

As in many societies, the attention given to the head through dress, head ornamentation, and hair practices signaled certain social distinctions (cf. Bartlett 1994; Hiltebeitel 1998). Moreover, theologians put a religious gloss on much of the evidence. For Thomas Aquinas, a crown was a symbol of royalty, but its circular form was also a sign of perfection (Minnis 1997, 121). One of the external signs of priestly ordination was the tonsure, which, however, also provided a reference point for marks of infamy and humiliation. According to the fifteenth-century *Liber Albus*, brothel-keepers of both sexes in London might be given a tonsure as punishment, as was a common whore if caught for her third offence (Jones 2002, 103–4). Fools' heads might be shaved into multiple tonsures or shaved completely, and fools were also signified by the wearing of cocks' combs on the head, ass-eared hoods, and hoods with a phallic appearance (Jones 2002, 103–6, 109). Pieces of paper pinned to the cap or paper hats or mitres inscribed with the crimes of the malefactor were an integral part of punishment in both the late medieval and early modern periods (Jones 2002, 87; Cressy 1999, 28).

Constable (1985) has reviewed the sometimes contradictory meanings of beards in the Middle Ages. The beard, or at least the ability to grow one, was regarded as a symbol of manliness,

virility, and potency. The absence of a beard therefore required explanation, for example, either as a symbolic component of a clerical or religious way of life or as a sign of weakness, effeminacy, or sterility. However, the texts cannot tell us about the prevalence or otherwise of real beards on real men. Cumberpatch (2006) suggests that ceramic vessels with anthropomorphic faces and nearly always beards of the later eleventh to mid-fifteenth century may have been connected with rites of passage for boys coming of age or with feasting and drinking related to fertility (e.g., weddings and harvests). Fisher (2001) argues that in early modern England beards became a central aspect of the elite Renaissance male and that the beard was so important that boys may have been regarded as a distinct gender between the mid-sixteenth and the mid-seventeenth century but that manipulations of gender signaling were possible on the theatrical stage and elsewhere through the use of prosthetic beards.

The hands were distinguished by rings to denote marriage, wealth, feudal and familial alliance, and authority (usually by seal rings). So important was the ring in certain contexts that the custom arose of wearing the ring over gloves; some gloves were made with slits to allow rings to be seen through them (Norris 1999, 90–91). Gloves were expensive and were a favoured high-status gift. Norris (pp. 93–94) has identified 16 points of etiquette and ritual respecting glove wearing that were current amongst the elite throughout the Middle Ages up to the end of the sixteenth century—more than for any other single item of clothing. These included the issuing of challenges and insults and also favour, homage, and deference. A whole semiotic system evolved around the wearing or removing of gloves in different contexts. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries gloves, handkerchiefs, and hand-held fans were material props in the highly stylized self-representation of elite married women. They also mapped cultural anxieties about courtship and marriage, and new gloves were often distributed to guests and friends on the day of a gentry wedding (Green 2000; Cressy 1997, 216, 362). The throwing down of the gauntlet, although clichéd in European historical memory, was an elite act of defiance.

Some have argued that there were fundamental changes in body discourse in Western cultures between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries. Vigarello (1989), Muir (1997), and Kleinschmidt (2000, 76–88) claim that by the sixteenth century a new perception of the body had emerged, and new techniques of the body came into being that focused mainly on the upper body—its discipline, flexibility, and agility in practices such as fencing and dancing. Upper-body strength as a marker of distinction and beauty in the male elite in the later Middle Ages gave way to an emphasis on deportment, gracefulness in movement, and suppleness in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, together with the idea of civility in conduct (Bryson 1998). These ideas were propagated through bodily practices and literature on deportment which became far more prescriptive than had previously been the case (Vigarello 1989, 156; Muir 1997, 117–46). The limitation

of these arguments is the extent to which they refer to limited social groups. Discipline extended, through bodily practices, to the mind and disposition. It is uncertain how far Stone's (1979) assertion that punishment for children increased in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries stands up to scrutiny (cf. Orme 2001, 85). "Controlled" beating or whipping was advocated in the Middle Ages but not to excess (Shahar 1990, 109–11, 173–75 190, 194). It was intended to improve the child: "to chastise" was "to make chaste or pure" (Orme 2001, 84). The increase in the number of schools in the postmedieval period may have extended the experience of corporal punishment. The English Poor Laws of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries physically marked and regulated the bodies of the poor in new, intensive ways and subjected the bodies of many unmarried women to unprecedented physical searches (Gowing 2003, 40–47).

By the early seventeenth century, dress and deportment had become an aspect of partisan religious and political identity: crudely juxtaposed, this pitted Royalist flamboyance and lewdness against Puritan simplicity and sobriety. Colour and lace were measured against simplicity, where "plainness" could become a measure of human value and worth to Puritans. This had a corollary in the relative exposure and framing of neck and head, arms and hands; the culturally loaded semiotics of hat-wearing have been mentioned above. Some urban trade guilds tried to impose dress legislation, some of it focusing specifically on head and neck apparel, on their apprentices in this period, but they had limited success because this apparel provided the apprentices with a means to assert their individuality and defy their masters (Mackenzie 1827, 666). How the body was framed in the 1640s–'50s was neither incidental nor a whim of fashion.

## An Anthropological Context for the Treachery of Images

Whilst the destruction and removal of images was encouraged by key reformers in Europe and by state decree in England, the systematic attacks suggest more than the agency of central authority. Aston (1989) has made a distinction between public and private acts of iconoclasm. It is my contention that the form and context of these actions elucidate an aspect of the relationship between ordinary people and images that has not been recorded or explicitly verbalized because it formed part of popular thinking rather than a theological argument or state directive. This is not to reconstitute a two-tiered model of the Reformation (learned elites versus unschooled populace) or to deny theological understanding, intent, and piety to ordinary people's actions but rather to postulate a further dimension to their motives. Clearly some iconoclasm was theologically motivated; some no doubt had its precedents in medieval Carnival, in which the normal social and religious hierarchies were inverted and uncontrolled riot—derisive and destructive behaviour—was tolerated for a season. In the following I propose a hitherto unexplored motivation from

within an otherwise orthodox community. It is not intended to explain all occurrences. The argument rests on a material-culture aspect of the relationships between people, saints, and images and the medieval contexts of gift giving.

The doctrine of the communion of saints bound together the living and the dead as a community of believers who helped one another in preparation for the day of judgement (Morrill 2001, 25). The living were engaged in constant prayer for their dead kin, patrons, and allies. Duffy's analysis of medieval miracle tales argues that such supplication was regarded as semi-contractual (1993, 185). The Church circulated exempla to warn the laity of the saintly wrath and punishment they would incur if they reneged on their obligations under the contract, and the laity were equally capable of feeling aggrieved if the saints did not fulfil theirs. Generations had contributed bequests to the same images, for painting, clothing, lights, housings, vestments, and cloths for the altars dedicated to them, and to the priests who served them. I have argued that these practices had resonances for a wide social spectrum by the sixteenth century (Graves 2000*a*). Cloth and clothing, in particular, played a central role in the European and English economies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Cloth not only had a commodity value but was circulated and recycled as clothing in a number of spheres which gave it other equally important social and economic values (cf. Kopytoff 1986). This can be seen most conspicuously in the late medieval and early modern institution of livery, "whereby people were paid for their services not in cash but in goods, especially clothing" (Jones and Stallybrass 2000, 4). *Marked* clothing proclaimed the identity of the aristocratic or gentry employer through specific colours, heraldic badges, armorials, or other personal ciphers. It also, thereby, proclaimed the identity of the wearer as a servant of the patron. In addition, craft and trade guilds often required their members to wear guild livery in public processions, at guild courts, and at fraternal feasts and funerals. *Unmarked* clothing could also be given as a form of non-monetary payment with the understanding that it formed part of a livery and maintenance agreement or apprenticeship indenture or as part-wages for domestic service or other wage work (Goldberg 1999; Gowing 2003, 32). "Livery was a form of incorporation, a material mnemonic that inscribed obligations and indebtedness upon the body. As cloth exchanged hands, it bound people in networks of obligation" (Jones and Stallybrass 2000, 20). Finally, cloth and clothing were the principal non-ephemeral items in gift giving as a mediating practice in the discourse of social patronage outside the institution of formal livery and formed a large component of charitable giving to the poor. As have other seminal studies of the gift (Mauss 1954), contemporary evidence shows that participants were bound in formidable networks of mutual debt and obligation (Crawford 2004; Sweetinburgh 2004).

From this perspective, by the frequent gifts of cloth and clothing to their favoured saints and the clergy who served

them early-sixteenth-century people were offering support and maintenance which created mutual obligations. The popular feeling was that, in return, the saint was obliged to answer prayers and requests. It is interesting to consider where the power balance was perceived to lie. Would these donors not have been entitled to think of *themselves* as the patrons? The communion of saints seems to have been partially understood, if not sealed, in the terms and material culture of these practices.

From this perspective, when the intercessionary power of saints and images was denounced in the process of Reformation, there must have been an enormous sense of religious, emotional, and social betrayal amongst some portions of the population. These might have been people of many ranks who experienced livery and incorporation in their own lives and who had even contributed singly or collectively for cloth and clothing for a saint's image, the dressing of a saint's altar, or the provision of the liturgical cloths required to maintain the rituals at the altar or in connection with the image. They would have represented a potentially large proportion certainly of the artisanal class and middling sort—those from whose ranks many iconoclasts are believed to have come. Whatever religious reforms iconoclasm enacted, the *form* of the enactment resonates with an understanding of social betrayal in the context of both livery and gift-giving practices. The punishment meted out to images surely tells us that some people felt both a personal and social institutional sense of betrayal: petty treason, as between a master and a servant or apprentice or between the head of a household and his dependents, but treason nonetheless.

The increased occurrence of capital punishment, particularly for treason, provided the "vocabulary" with which those feeling betrayed on these grounds could enact vehement attacks on the bodies of images. If a row of two-dimensional saints painted on a chancel screen could not be individually burnt or hanged, it could nonetheless be "killed" or executed by striking the body parts which were most socially significant and which were the most frequent objects of judicial punishment: the head and the hands. In this context we may also understand why, after some public image-breaking, the crowd took fragments from the broken images home with them to enact private retribution on them (Aston 1993, 307).

## Conclusions

This paper has sought to build towards an aspect of body discourse by extrapolating from practices inflicted *on* images rather than practices represented *by* images. Heads and hands of images were removed whether the saint or religious persona represented was male or female, young or old, religious or lay, mother or virgin (or both). Thus although our modern understanding of the cultural constructions of bodies in history is alert to complex nuances according to wealth, gender, life-course, status, and other socially constructed concepts, there remains an observed consistency in the corpus of sur-

viving evidence to be explained. This is not to argue that there was only one dominant discourse of "the body" sustained by normative texts and practices when, clearly, body discourse and corporeal experience varied enormously, but it does require us to seek answers for the observed phenomena.

What gave the archaeological pattern meaning in the past? I have tried to construct an argument, drawing upon both the written record and other forms of material culture, for ways in which heads and hands were accorded significance in the period. I have argued that some iconoclasts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries treated images in the way that bodies would have been treated in circumstances of capital and corporal punishment. The selective attack on the heads and hands of images was predicated on cultural understandings of these features as signifying more of the life-force than other parts of the body. The potency of these features was borne out, reproduced, and reinforced through the social practices of a wide range of discourses—sometimes common to an equally wide range of subjects, sometimes particular to a specific few—which gave the head and the hands priority and heightened importance. These practices included religious and secular rituals, systems of gesture and deportment, and both the physical composition of clothing and its role in the construction of social identity. From this perspective, iconoclasm can contribute to an anthropological understanding of bodies in this historical period.

Can any differences be seen between sixteenth-century and seventeenth-century iconoclasm? I would contend that reading the retribution on images as socially understood appropriate punishment for crimes against both the individual and the collective of believers helps us to understand not only a further aspect of body discourse but an anthropological aspect of religious practice. The contexts of the exchange of clothes created a social understanding within which relationships with saints and images were embodied. I argue that the particular form of destruction also adds a dimenstion of social justice or cultural appropriateness to iconoclasm. In this I have, in Wandel's (1995, 11) words, tried to "excavate the meaning of acts" of people who did not necessarily have control over more protected and conventional forms of communication—the treatise, the pamphlet, the sermon, the propaganda image. The immediacy of involvement with images may explain much of the fury of the popular iconoclasm of the sixteenth century.

By the mid-seventeenth century, however, there was little continuity in public reverence for images. Religious iconoclasm in the early 1640s was both commissioned by the state and undertaken by soldiers in less controlled circumstances (Morrill 2001). The recent installations of Laudian worship were as much the target as surviving traces of those late medieval practices which were regarded as idolatrous. Most commentators consider seventeenth-century iconoclasm to have been more encompassing, also targeting monuments to the dead which included any hint of Catholic belief in prayer

formulae (Cooper 2001). The sense of active *personal* betrayal, therefore, was absent. The passage of time had allowed the identity of the nation itself with Protestantism to become more concrete. The treachery of idolatrous practices could be seen far more in relation to a communion of the realm than a communion of saints. The Civil War challenged even that communion and unleashed an attack on the "passive reminders of [a] discredited theology" (Morrill 2001, 26). After these purges, and lacking any more available images, religious violence continued in the later seventeenth century when effigies—or substitute bodies—of hated figures (e.g., the pope, the Whore of Babylon, or the perpetrators of the Popish Plot) were specially made in order to be burnt in public bonfires (Cressy 1999, 24–25). Nevertheless, if an image could not be removed or destroyed *in toto*, the targets of attack in the seventeenth century continued to be heads and hands. It is the contention of this paper that the head and the hands continued to denote the highest association with the life-force, supported by a raft of social practices which emphasized this importance. The punishment unleashed on them still bore a relation to these factors and reflected an age of contested bodily deference and discipline. It was an age in which it was perhaps more obvious for the gestures and framing of the body itself to betray religious and political allegiance than had been true in the 1530s and '40s. In a period in which the word came to represent the ideological cynosure of political and religious thinking, it would repay further study to consider how other, alternative ways of speaking were made possible through bodies and their actions.

## Acknowledgments

# Comments

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Two features are most salient in Graves's paper: the use of social theory for the understanding of archaeological evidence and the role of deep-rooted historical mores and ethos in explaining the past. Iconoclasm and attacks on images are usually dealt with using theological discussions as background or direct explanations of the social practices involved. Graves prefers to use anthropological models, emphasizing the plurality, diversity, and fluidity of social identities (cf. Jones 1997). Gestures are thus part of religious communities' differentiation, opposing, in the case of early modern England, Catholic, various Protestant, and other religiosities. Furthermore, popular identities are opposed to elite *Weltanschauungen*, the former interested in contrasting power relations and the latter prone to defend the status quo. Contrary to the official *damnatio memoriae* of Roman times, popular iconoclasm was aimed at authorities in general and Church *exempla* in particular. The occurrence of concepts such as discipline and bodily practices suggests the influence of Foucault and Bourdieu, but Graves stresses her use of a plethora of specific studies such as Vigarello (1989) and Kleinschmidt (2000). Social theory is thus mostly used through historical studies. Historical context is put at the center of the argument. Agency and the limits of normative interpretive models and prescriptive historical documents are dealt with again in the very specific historical Reformation and Counter-Reformation context. Giddens is used to understand historicity.

It is natural, then, that Graves's arguments pay special attention to the historical, medieval roots of religiosity in England (Johnson 2005), particularly as the destruction of images is placed in the context of the Reformation's official anti-Catholic royal policy. The later-medieval perceptions of sainthood, described by Graves as "animistic veneration and superstitious practices," are perhaps a deep-rooted popular understanding of the sacred, as Aron Gurevich (1988) observed. Medieval associations with body (*corpus*) and head (*caput*), as well as hands (*manus*) and face (*facies*), are related to society as a whole, and the procession of Corpus Christi is taken as a good example of the relationship between the imagery of society and of the body (cf. Funari 1993). In the detailed study of iconoclasm, Graves is keen to emphasize the diversity of social groups and attitudes, as discourse and experience varied enormously. She clearly denies normative compliance. Her overall conclusion is a tentative one, again grounded in the historicity of cultural understandings: some iconoclasts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries treated images in the way that bodies would have been treated in punishment. More than that, the appeal of iconoclasm was rooted in its direct, popular character, as opposed to upper-class conventional media. She stresses both the variety of perceptions and the overall difference between ordinary and scholarly expressions. Archaeology is taken as a way of accessing people's feelings, particularly those reflecting contradictions and social conflict.

The most challenging issue raised by Graves is how to put together anthropological and historical interpretive models, modern and postmodern epistemologies. The fluid provisional and contradictory identities of social agents complicate the study of the construction of social identity, but Graves right from the start does not aim at proving that her interpretation is the only possible one. She succeeds, however, in convincing the reader that material culture does not depend on the written record and that historicity and culture are key to an understanding of iconoclasm in England. These are no mean achievements, and others, studying different subjects, will profit from her epistemological outlook.

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Graves has written a paper of the first significance whose argument and conclusions are important and timely. Hitherto, too much of the literature on sixteenth and seventeenth-century iconoclasm, even where it has been anthropologically informed, has framed itself as a contribution to religious and theological history or to the political narrative of the time. Graves shows us how a comparative anthropology, when combined with a stress on materiality and material culture, adds an essential dimension to the understanding of iconoclasm.

In approaching iconoclasm in this way, Graves shows us historical actors behaving not as mindless vandals, on the one hand, or as robots following a formal Protestant agenda, on the other. Instead, they act as social agents in their own right, operating against a backdrop or habitus of late-medieval values and assumptions (the importance of the head and hands, the "contract" between saint/image and laity) and making their own history in the process. After 30 years of agency theory, this may seem a very basic point to make, but it remains an important and valuable one.

In the process, Graves raises some difficult and important interpretive questions, of which I will pursue only one. Graves is working here on the cusp of history, archaeology, and anthropology. She is right to stress the way her argument operates at the level of folk practice and understanding rather than formal doctrinal belief and fully justified in asserting that it should be evaluated against the evidence of the patterning of material culture rather than what an elite minority

of contemporaries chose to scribble down—in other words, the stuff of traditional documentary history. However, I would ask her to dwell a little more on the way acting upon the material world in the form of iconoclasm was refracted through social class and literacy.

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England and Europe were, among many other things, a period of class polarization, and this polarization was linked to the changing social configuration of the practice of reading and writing. The older Marxist accounts of the end of feudalism and the "rise of the middle classes" may have been revised, but class formation and its relationship, via literacy, to changing forms of knowledge and power remain at the heart of all theoretically reputable understandings of the period. This being the case, I would suggest that a more complex and nuanced picture needs to be drawn than simply a documentary record of elite doctrinal and political impulse on the one hand and a material record of popular or folk understandings on the other.

Literacy and, more specifically, the practice of reading and writing and the way the spread of that practice was refracted through status, class, and gender and through the secularization of education changed the way people thought and felt about the world. In particular, following the lead of Goody (1987) and to some extent Sharpe (2000), I suggest that it changed the way people thought and felt about material things such as icons and images. The religious changes of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had iconoclasm as one symptom and a rising level of literacy as another. Neither archaeology nor history is adequately placed on its own to grasp this decisive transition, since it is about the relationship between the actions and processes that produced the records of both.

To clarify at the risk of oversimplification: a sixteenth-century peasant may well have inhabited the mental world that Graves describes, and iconoclasm, for him, was an appropriate reaction for the reasons Graves delineates. But his other reactions, as I have argued elsewhere (Johnson 1996; 2007, 152–61), may well have been to engage in other patterns of economic and cultural practice, including, for example, new agricultural practices that might be described as "capitalistic" and the sending of his son to grammar school to learn to read and write. For his son, then, there were other ways of understanding the world than through the "gestural culture" referred to by Graves, and history shows that such young men were not slow in appropriating and exploiting those new cultural resources.

For Graves's argument to be complete, then, it needs some account of changing levels and patterns of literacy in this period and the way those changes related to changing patterns of social class and gender. A full account of such would be a tall order and a "complete" argument in a period of such dense scholarship and abundant data something of a chimera, but some brief comment on this topic would be welcome.

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Graves's case study in the archaeology of iconoclasm represents another important step in the maturation of historical archaeology. As she works to push the discipline farther into the realm of anthropological scholarship, she demonstrates its multidisciplinary power. She shows how seemingly random individual actions (here the partial destruction of human images) mask cultural manifestations of a deeper mentality. At the most explicit scale she pursues a line of inquiry that teases out a likely meaning for the destruction of anthropomorphic images in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. The thoroughness of her scholarship provides a convincing and enlightening case study.

First, Graves's explicit assertion that her article is not just another Eurocentric exercise should not be overlooked. Readers unfamiliar with historical archaeology may be surprised that she must offer this disclaimer. If one is a scholar of historic England, must one be Eurocentric by definition? Are all anthropologists of Europe inherently Eurocentric because of their chosen field of study? These are philosophical questions that anthropologists would seemingly be able to answer with ease. To clarify the situation in historical archaeology, however, it must be noted that it has become something of a mantra among some historical archaeologists working outside the developed world to argue—sometimes covertly, often more openly—that archaeologists of post-Columbian European history necessarily pursue a Eurocentric agenda. Obviously cognizant of this possible charge, Graves feels compelled to defend herself at the outset even though she is a widely respected authority on her subject. Her need to distance herself from Eurocentrism to a broad readership outside England is a sorry commentary on how far global historical archaeology has yet to travel to become truly accepted as an anthropological pursuit. Whether we like it or not, the many diverse nations and peoples of Europe (itself a historical construct) helped to shape our modern world. To ignore the oppression and repression they wrought in the world and, indeed, to gloss over their sometimes well-intended but misguided attempts to "raise" indigenous peoples is to overlook a significant part of our shared global history. Even the esteemed anthropologist Jack Goody (2006), in a recent critique of the Eurocentric agenda (but not specifically directed toward research in and about Europe), has considerable difficulty completely removing Europe from global history. Even when China ruled the commercial world with its porcelains and silks, it traded these commodities to the eager residents of European city-states first in the Mediterranean and then elsewhere.

Equally significant is Graves's comment that her analysis cannot necessarily be proven with historical records. This

point raises another hot issue for historical archaeologists and perhaps is more acutely noticed in Britain than in the United States. American historical archaeologists who have intellectually matured on a diet of historically rooted cultural anthropology fully appreciate the close epistemological links between history and anthropology. In Britain, however, the intellectual schism between social anthropology and archaeology—which some scholars are working to mend—has meant in a practical way that the tradition of British archaeology is distinct from that of its American cousin. Even the term for the field in Britain, "post-medieval archaeology," evokes the tradition in which it has emerged. The English historical archaeologist Matthew Johnson (2007) has explored this intellectual history as it pertains to the scholarship of local history in Britain and concretely outlined its impact on the archaeology of recent history.

As a further line of inquiry it would be interesting to know whether and how contemporary osteological specimens conform to Graves's thesis. For example, in a recent study of the use of black bodies as cadavers in Dallas, Texas, during the early twentieth century, James Davidson (2007) found that some of the skeletons were missing their lower arms and hands. The sociohistorical and cultural setting of the Dallas skeletons is much different from the focus of Graves's study, but the similarities are striking nonetheless. The apparent consistency exposed in the disparities of time and place may present a fruitful line of additional inquiry.

The Dallas information also makes one wonder about the continuity of dismemberment through time and the continuation of its symbolism. The contextual information for sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England is so rich that Graves can explore the broader anthropological implications that link the destruction of images with questions of punishment and torture, but a more cross-culturally sensitive, pantemporal analysis also appears to represent a rich area of future research.

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In 1793 the former French king Louis XVI was guillotined in Paris. The same year the cathedral of the town, Notre Dame, was exposed to a violent iconoclasm in which the biblical kings on the western facade were beheaded. The crowd believed that the statues represented the French kings. Thus during the French Revolution there was a clear-cut parallel between the execution of people and the vandalism of sculptures symbolizing the ancien régime: Off with their heads!

Graves demonstrates a correlation between body culture, punishment, and vandalism during the Reformation in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It was the most important body parts—head and hands—that were punished for extreme crimes that were attacked during this period. Her article is a brilliant example of historical archaeology unifying different disciplines and fields of research—anthropology, history, and archaeology, body culture, law, and religious imagery. The examples are convincing, and the argument ought to inspire new investigations employing its questions and methods.

England is described by Graves as well suited for such investigation because of the intensity of the Reformation. In Scandinavia the Reformation was milder and more pragmatic, and I do not see all of the same tendencies as she does in England. Catholic imagery was to a great extent accepted by the Lutheran reformers, and many medieval altars and sculptures are preserved in churches and museums. Only a handful of instances of iconoclasm are known. The Catholic Poul Helgesen describes an attack in 1531 on the imagery in the church of Our Lady in Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark: "First they overthrew all the imagery of saints, spitted on them, beated them with their fists and mocked them with dreadful invectives, while they smashed them with axes." Furthermore, in 1534 everything divine in the church was made "silient" (Frederiksen 1987, 117; Bolvig 1996, 96). The description of the 1531 event has been considered overstated and untrustworthy (e.g., Bolvig 1996, 97). However, what is described is an attack on images as if they were living people who had failed, in accordance with the examples from England and Graves's interpretation of them. Catholic wooden sculptures appear to have often been burned. The Lutheran bishop Peder Palladius wrote in his visitation book in the 1540s that pilgrimage imagery "should be taken away and burnt" (Frederiksen 1987, 112). This was what also happened to witches, according to Graves.

A survey of the Romanesque and Gothic sculpture in Scandinavia does not, however, reveal any traces of selective vandalism. Medieval stone sculpture is often intact except for natural disintegration. Medieval wooden sculpture is also well preserved in many cases. The national museums of Scandinavia do have rooms, now and then, called "hospital departments," of sculptures that lack some part of the body. Heads are usually preserved, while an arm or a leg of a crucifix, or the arms and hands of a seated Madonna, apostle, or bishop saint are missing. Rather than selective vandalism this reflects the fact that arms and hands were more easily broken off or loosened under rough treatment since the Reformation.

# Reply

I am grateful to all of the contributors both for their expressions of support and for indicating areas for further exploration and necessary consideration.

Wienberg has drawn attention to a different response to the Reformation in much of Lutheran Scandinavia, in which

the selective destruction I have suggested for England was largely absent. Whilst reviewing the patterns of iconoclasm in England I was aware of both similarities and contrasts in Calvinist Scotland and in Lutheran countries. There is obviously scope for a much wider survey and analysis of Reformation and Counter-Reformation attitudes and actions towards the materiality of images across Europe. This study would examine patterns of iconoclasm, tolerance of images, and the active promotion of images, on the one hand, and whitewashing or concealment of images in compliance with state regulation carried out in the covert hope of future recovery, on the other (Duffy 1992, 583; Tarlow 2003). Given the range of theological, political, and social responses to the Reformation, it is to be expected that there will be variety in patterning in different countries and different regions. Contextual analysis of iconoclasm and image toleration can provide rich understanding of diversity in levels of orthodox understanding and relations between Reformation, social structure, and agency (see, e.g., Bolvig 2003; Møhlenfeldt Jensen 2003). However, part of my argument is that where there was a perception of betrayal in the relationship between intercessors, images, and petitioners, contemporary life provided a vocabulary of physically appropriate retribution or erasure. Where the sense of betrayal was less emphatic, for example, in image-tolerant dispensations and theologies, or where the images were not necessarily important to religious understanding, there would have been far less incentive to respond in this way. More studies of the range of patterns and their religious and social implications are to be welcomed.

In response to one practical point raised by Wienberg, I would point out that the projecting limbs of three-dimensional imagery will be vulnerable to breakage if the imagery is handled, removed from its original position, and moved about in museum store-rooms, but the erasure of specific body parts on two-dimensional imagery cannot be explained by simple wear-and-tear.

On another tack, I knew that my argument would not and could not be "complete," as Johnson is correct to indicate. A more complete consideration of changing patterns of literacy, capitalism, class, and gender in relation to the aspects of iconoclasm with which I was concerned in this article would have been a far larger project than it could have encompassed. It seems to me that, in response to Johnson, there are two issues: first a simple matter of clarification and second the wider considerations to which he alludes.

First, I do not consider the reactions Johnson delineates in respect of other patterns of economic and cultural practice as incompatible with the actions I suggest in response to images. I have been careful to point out the range of social actors at least recorded as having been engaged in iconoclasm, which crosses social classes and, to a less retrievable extent, gender (Aston 1988). Whilst following Wandel (1995) in thinking that the physical act of iconoclasm gave a voice to many who were not preachers, writers, or officials and whose names are unknown, I did not intend to imply that these

actors were illiterate. To say that certain iconoclasts did not necessarily have control over more protected and conventional forms of communication—the treatise, the pamphlet, the sermon, the propaganda image—in which to record or articulate their personal acts of iconoclasm does not mean that they were illiterate or that they did not engage in the use and production of documents of many sorts in other aspects of their lives. My specific aim in emphasizing these points was to attest that not every iconoclast has been recorded as such.

The state of current thinking on levels of literacy across social class in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England suggests that literacy was relatively high and certainly rising. The complexity of engagement with texts in changing social relations and ways of thinking has been explored by Johnson (1996). Many of those artisans, for example, who took part in acts of iconoclasm would have acquired (and required) some degree of literacy to further their livelihoods and businesses, particularly in the changing world of this period (e.g., Brooks 1994; Farr 2000). Craft regulation was a recursive relationship between order as accounted for in texts and order as accounted for in actions (Berlin 1997) to which Protestant ideas, capitalist work relations, and social practices gave new and poignant nuances. I may have erred in taking this understanding for granted. As Johnson (1996) has argued, new ways of thinking about and ordering the world emerge in this period, many of them inspired by the kind of engagement with literacy that, for example, the Protestant emphasis on reading the Bible encouraged (although the use of religious texts in late medieval secular piety was already significant amongst the "middling sort" [Aston 1984; Swanson 2004; Duffy 2006]). In a world where old certainties were being smashed and churches, landscapes, and living spaces reordered (Johnson 1996; 2007, 152–61), the peasant farmer and the artisan may well have seized the opportunities and potential for power that engaging with new cultural resources offered them and that sending their sons to grammar school created for following generations. Rather than excluding this possibility, I envisage some acts of iconoclasm as expressions of that engagement. I was categorically not implying that the material record reflects a simple *dichotomy* between "popular or folk understandings" and "gestural culture," on the one hand, and a "documentary record of elite doctrinal and political impulse," on the other: a great deal of the vocabulary of body discourse, body discipline, and violence permeated the changes and complexities of class and gender discourse and was therefore accessible to people in many social spheres. Towards the end of my article I suggested one level of understanding and response hitherto unexplored but not exclusive of other ways of thinking and behaving.

Secondly, Johnson's work in exploring the interconnectedness between the material ordering of the world, the negotiation of social relations, and the ordering of documents as artefacts has been extremely influential. Iconoclasm in this period was precisely an attempt to assert the authority and

primacy of the Word and its conveyance through text and speech over image. In addition to official texts painted on church walls and commandment boards, words, texts, and posies/poesies were chalked, scratched, or written in coals as graffiti in both domestic and church contexts, on a wide range of artefacts, and on bodies (tattoos, labels) (Jones 2002, 87; Fleming 2001; Cressy 1999, 28). The very consciousness of the materiality of text and the material contingency of text in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries provides scope for further research, particularly on ideas of erasure, concealment, and whitewashing—the aggressive and protective imposition and obliteration of text (Cooper 2001; Fleming 2001; Cummings 2002; Groebner 2004).

<div align="right">—C. Pamela Graves</div>

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