

MANIFESTING MANHOOD: THE REGULATION OF THE MALE BODY IN ENGLISH  
PORTRAITS, C. 1587-1595

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A thesis submitted to the faculty at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Department of Art (Art History) in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Chapel Hill  
2014

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## ABSTRACT

Leah D. Thomas: Manifesting Manhood: The Regulation of the Male Body in English Portraits,  
c. 1587-1595

(Under the direction of Tatiana C. String.)

This thesis discusses the construction of manhood via conventions of bodily regulation in English portraits during the late sixteenth century by considering a c. 1590 portrait of an unknown man at the North Carolina Museum of Art and its body of comparanda. Arguably, this portrait can be placed within a wider dialogue that understood manhood to be an imperative shared by all men, but nearly impossible to achieve due to the difficulty of maintaining the necessary physiological balance. Consequently, this thesis argues that portraits comprised an important platform on which men *could* construct, and thus “achieve,” manhood. This visual manifestation of manhood was fashioned by drawing on a “repertoire” of “readable” conventions of regulation that derived from and perpetuated a homosocial environment. By “reading” the portrait of the unknown man in this way, we can understand what *type* of man the subject wished to portray himself as, despite his anonymity.

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## INTRODUCTION

Since the publication of Norbert Elias' seminal work *The Civilizing Process* in 1939 and its subsequent translation into English in 1969, Western scholarship has increasingly focused on historical conceptions, meanings, and experiences of the human body. Elias' central argument, that bodies have come under increasing levels of scrutiny and control due to the imposition of higher levels of shame, has particularly sparked a number of studies that focus on the sixteenth-century, which Elias identifies as a key moment in the movement toward physical structure and restraint.<sup>1</sup> Many of these studies, including the present one, take a distinctly gendered approach to exploring the differences, nuances, and relationships amongst experiences of male and female bodies. The focus in this thesis will specifically be on the construction of manhood via conventions of bodily regulation in English portraits during the late sixteenth century. The point of entry to this discussion will be a full-length portrait of an unknown man, dated c. 1590, in the collection of the North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA) in Raleigh, North Carolina (Figure 1), and a body of comparanda ranging in date from 1587 to 1595.

This thesis will approach the portrait of an unknown man and its comparators using Judith Butler's framework of gender performativity, which she outlines in her useful study *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex."*<sup>2</sup> Here, Butler opens by exploring historical conceptions of materiality, and explains that since the body is "material," "materialization" is necessary for the body to be intelligible; this, in turn, allows the body to "matter," or have

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<sup>1</sup>Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1994).

<sup>2</sup>Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

meaning.<sup>3</sup> It follows, according to Butler, that gender must also be made to “matter” through materialization, or performance. Butler asserts, however, that performativity is not the result of “willful and arbitrary choice,” but rather an imperative that addresses and produces a subject through the regulatory power of norms.<sup>4</sup> Further, this production of sexed individuals is unstable because normative gender is constructed by both reiteration and exclusion, which consequently delineates a deviant “outside” located beyond the borders of the normative.<sup>5</sup> Evidence for this framework is nowhere more apparent than in portraits, onto which painted bodies are literally constructed and inscribed.

With Butler’s framework in mind, the portrait of an unknown man at the NCMA may arguably be situated as part of a wider cultural dialogue of comparable portraits that construct the male body in a similar, regulated manner. Scholars such as Alexandra Shepard, Will Fisher, and Mark Breitenberg argue that, in lived experience, this “regulated” body was essential to the achievement and maintenance of an imperative shared by all males, the estate of manhood.<sup>6</sup> Shepard defines manhood as the phase in a male’s life between the ages of roughly thirty or thirty-five and fifty that was characterized by moderation, constancy, and reason.<sup>7</sup> This period of “man’s estate” was in contrast to adolescence and youth, during which males were more given to

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid, 31-2.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid, 187.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid, 188.

<sup>6</sup>Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (New York: Oxford U. Press, 2003); Will Fisher, “The Renaissance Beard: Masculinity in Early Modern England,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 54 (2001); Will Fisher, *Materializing Gender in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (New York: Cambridge U. Press, 2006); Mark Breitenberg, *Anxious Masculinity in Early Modern England* (New York: Cambridge U. Press, 1996).

<sup>7</sup>Shepard, 54-6.

willfulness, wantonness, and lustiness. Eventually, manhood gave way to old age, during which physical and mental degradation compromised bodily control and reason.<sup>8</sup>

However, the regulated body, and, to some extent, manhood itself, was constantly threatened by bodily, environmental, and social factors, making its maintenance a constant labor that only the socially, economically, and physically privileged few could realistically hope to achieve. For instance, any change in the humoral constitution of an individual male could also result in deviation toward “womanly” qualities, a linear paradigm that Fisher terms a “continuum of gender.”<sup>9</sup> Due to the difficulty, indeed the near impossibility, of attaining and sustaining the physical balance of manhood in lived experience, this thesis will argue that portraits, such as the portrait of an unknown man at the NCMA, were an important platform onto which men *could* construct, and thus “achieve,” manhood. Further, this thesis will argue that the painted male body fashions manhood through a number of identifiable, repetitive conventions of regulation, depicting the subject’s physical body as it ideally should be and rendering it “readable.” The portrait thus makes permanent the subject-as-man, invoking and standing in for the subject’s manhood even when it could not be physically sustained in life.

This thesis will begin with an analysis of the portrait of an unknown man from the NCMA and compare it to other portraits of men created between the years 1587 and 1595. Primary examples include the portraits *Robert Carey, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Monmouth* (c. 1591) and *Sir William Drury of Hawstead, Suffolk* (1587) by unknown artists, as well as *Thomas Cavendish* (c. 1588-91) attributed to John Bettes the Younger and Nicholas Hilliard’s portrait *Sir Anthony Mildmay* (c. 1590-93). This body of comparanda provides a foundation from which to identify the

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid, 56-7.

<sup>9</sup>Breitenberg, 38; Fisher, “The Renaissance Beard,” 181.



formulaic visual conventions of regulation that confirm and perpetuate the standards of manhood, as well as an entry point for a discussion of why bodies were in need of regulation.

Chapter 2 expands on the relationship between regulated male bodies and the imperative of manhood and explores the ways in which the maintenance of both was threatened. This chapter will also discuss the arguably “homosocial” environment that resulted from and was perpetuated by the precarious balance of manhood. In particular, this homosociality was structured by the guidelines in books on deportment such as the 1588 publication of Thomas Hoby’s English translation of Baldessare Castiglione’s *The Book of the Courtier*, which was widely used in England as a guide for visualizing and imitating the deportment of the ideal courtier.<sup>10</sup> The final chapter of this thesis argues that portraits were a platform for the performance and achievement of manhood by suggesting that, like Peter Burke’s framework for a repertoire of gesture, the conventions of physical regulation shared by the *Unknown Man* and its comparators comprise a repertoire for the construction of “readable” manhood.<sup>11</sup> These conventions can be categorized as regulating the carriage of the body through nonchalance, the movement of the body, and the appearance of the physical body itself. This paper concludes by suggesting that, despite its anonymity, the portrait of an unknown man can be understood as manifesting the *type* of man our unknown subject wished to portray himself as, an approach which provides a framework for considering other late sixteenth-century portraits whose sitters are unknown.

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<sup>10</sup>Anna Bryson explains that while *The Book of the Courtier* does not provide specific rules for individual occasions, as is the case in books written exclusively on deportment or manners, the English translation of Castiglione’s text was used by Elizabethan notables such as Sir Philip Sidney to “define a courtly, social aesthetic governing both body and speech” and “present an idealized social persona to be visualized and imitated...” See Anna Bryson, “The Rhetoric of Status: Gesture, Demeanour and the Image of the Gentleman in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England,” in *Renaissance Bodies: the Human Figure in English Culture*, eds. Lucy Gent and Nigel Llewellyn (London: Reaktion Books, 1990), 137; 142.

<sup>11</sup>Peter Burke, “The Language of Gesture in Early Modern Italy,” in *A Cultural History of Gesture*, eds. Jan Bremmer and Herman Roodenburg (Ithaca: Cornell U. Press, 1991).

## CHAPTER 1: ANALYSIS AND COMPARANDA

The portrait of an unknown man (Figure 1) is one of a group of seven late Tudor and early Jacobean portraits in the collection of the North Carolina Museum of Art, traditionally associated with the Scott family of Scot's Hall in Kent.<sup>12</sup> The portrait is full-length and measures seven feet tall by four feet wide, making the sitter close to life-size. The subject stands in an interior space that includes two tables with red tablecloths and wood flooring, one hand placed on the corner of a table and the other hand delicately, yet deliberately, touching the left leg.<sup>13</sup> The sitter is dressed in a peascod doublet and trunk hose decorated with a fleur-de-lis pattern, skin-tight white leather stockings, and white shoes. A translucent, decorative military sash extends from the sitter's proper left shoulder across his chest, and is knotted at the hip. The bottom of this sash is stylized such that the fabric is flattened and spread out to optimally display the intricate pattern made of gold and silver leaf.<sup>14</sup> This complex design interweaves imagery of Tudor roses, pomegranates, a snail, and other floral and insect motifs. Several other elements of the composition are also painted using precious materials, including the gold leaf gorget, belt, sword

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<sup>12</sup>This portrait is illustrated in an 1876 publication by the Scott family. See James Renat Scott, *Memorials of the Family of Scott, of Scot's-hall in the County of Kent* (London: Simmons & Botten, 1876), 177.

<sup>13</sup>It should be noted that the red paint used to depict the tablecloths has significantly faded, and would likely have been more vibrant at the time it was painted. Sally Marriott, conversation with the author, January 28, 2014. Marriott was an Assistant Research Conservator for the National Portrait Gallery's Making Art in Tudor Britain project.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid. I identify this sash as a decorative military accoutrement rather than as a chivalric favor, which seem to have generally been worn around the upper arm, as in *Sir Walter Raleigh, Soldier and Historian, 1598*, attributed to William Segar. In addition, a reference to military sashes is found in William Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, in which Benedick asks Claudio, "What fashion will you wear the garland of?/about your neck, like an usurer's chain?/or under your arm, like a lieutenant's scarf?" See William Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing* Act II Scene I (New York: Dover Publications, 1994), 17.

and dagger hilts, and the helmet placed on a table to the right of the sitter; additionally, the braided tassels hanging from the sitter's shoulders contain silver leaf.<sup>15</sup>

It is also important to observe that the portrait exhibits varying levels of naturalism and painterly skill. The face and hair of the unknown man recall the well-blended flesh tones of an artist trained in the Netherlandish tradition, such as Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger, whose aesthetic is demonstrated in portraits such as *Captain Thomas Lee* (1594; Figure 2). In stark contrast, however, the hands and legs are painted with significantly less naturalism than the upper half of the body, though the stark whiteness of the legs and the sitter's unusual gesture of resting a hand on the thigh nevertheless create a point of visual emphasis in the composition. This disparity indicates the work of multiple artists, likely the combined effort of a workshop.<sup>16</sup> The portrait also includes two very dissimilar painted inscriptions. One of these is an *impresa* situated in the upper left corner that comprises three storm clouds with lightning, a blue iris, and the motto "sans orage," which translates from French as "without a storm," done in gold leaf. The painterly quality of this *impresa* indicates that it was likely painted by the same artist responsible for the sitter's face and hair.<sup>17</sup> The second inscription, however, is a later addition, likely painted in the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is situated in the upper right corner and reads "Sir Reginald Scott of Scotts Hall Kent, Captain of Calais 1542."

The date of 1542 indicated by this inscription should not be immediately accepted, however, but rather problematized based on the inconsistencies in fashion that arise when the portrait is compared to paintings that *are* firmly placed in the 1540s. The clothing worn by the unknown man does not bear any resemblance to the dark, heavily-layered clothing and construction of

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<sup>15</sup>Marriott.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

broad shoulders seen in, for example, the c. 1540-1545 portrait *Charles Brandon, 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Suffolk* (Figure 3).<sup>18</sup> Instead, the fashion worn by our unknown man locates the portrait within a body of comparanda dating from 1587 to 1595. A comparison of our unknown man with these portraits reveals a number of similarities in clothing that are consistently repeated amongst the group, allowing the portrait of the unknown man to be dated quite precisely to c. 1590, and his association with Sir Reginald Scott to be firmly refuted.

The conventions of fashion found in the portrait of the unknown man are revealed to be particularly formulaic when compared to other portraits dating to c. 1590. For example, the main components of the unknown man's clothing, the peascod doublet, trunk hose, and tight stockings are clearly fashionable in the period c. 1590, as may be observed in the half-length portraits *Robert Carey, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Monmouth* (c. 1591) and *Thomas Cavendish* (1588-1591), both by unknown artists (Figures 4 and 5). Similarly, the full-length portraits *Sir William Drury, of Hawstead, Suffolk* (1587) and Nicholas Hilliard's *Sir Anthony Mildmay* (c. 1590-1593) (Figures 6 and 7) include analogous, pale-colored stockings and white shoes that visually lengthen the body and emphasize the thighs and calves.<sup>19</sup> Another telling piece of clothing is the lace falling band and matching cuffs included in the portraits of Thomas Cavendish, Sir William Drury, and

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<sup>18</sup>In her discussion of Henrician masculinity in the 1530s and 1540s, Tatiana String devotes considerable attention to the importance of fashion; for example, the use of clothing to construct broad shoulders, which indexed notions of masculinity. See Tatiana C. String, "Projecting Masculinity: Henry VIII's Codpiece," in *Henry VIII and his Afterlives Literature, Politics, and Art*, ed. Mark Rankin (Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press, 2010).

<sup>19</sup>Ellen Chirelstein discusses *Sir William Drury* and attributes the portrait to Daniel van den Queeborne in Ellen Chirelstein, "Emblem and Reckless Presence: The Drury Portrait at Yale," in *Albion's Classicism: The Visual Arts in Britain, 1550-1660*, ed. Lucy Gent (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1995), 291-3. Chirelstein illustrates two other portraits attributed to Queeborne *Maurits of Nassau, Prince of Orange* (c. 1590) and *Andreas van der Muelen* (1583). The portrait of Sir William Drury is also mentioned as being in the Scott collection in Scott, 220.

the unknown man. These delicate pieces of clothing were popular from the early 1590s to around 1615, and are likely examples of *reticella* lace imported from Italy.<sup>20</sup>

Several comparable accessories can also be identified. First, a small gold hoop earring is worn by the unknown man, though it is almost hidden in his thick, curly hair. Similarly, the portrait of *Robert Carey* depicts the sitter with an earring, in this case a large, dangling pearl. Despite the difference in type, the presence of earrings worn by male sitters is significant, since earrings were not popularized among men until the late 1580s, adding credence to a c. 1590 date.<sup>21</sup> A more prominent accessory is the elaborate, gold-embroidered sash worn by the unknown man. This decorative military accoutrement is paralleled by the blue and gold sash in *Sir Anthony Mildmay* and by the more extravagant ropes of pearls worn across the chest in *Robert Carey*.

It is also possible to use these formulaic conventions in fashion to establish a *terminus ante quem* of the mid 1590s for the portrait of the unknown man. In particular, two portraits of Sir Walter Raleigh demonstrate several key shifts in clothing conventions during the late 1580s and 1590s. The 1588 portrait *Sir Walter Raleigh* (Figure 8), attributed to “H,” depicts Raleigh wearing a white peascod doublet and trunk hose that parallel those already observed in the portrait of the unknown man and its comparators. In addition, Raleigh wears a pearl earring similar to the one in *Robert Carey*, as well as a cloak draped over the proper left shoulder like those in *Robert Carey* and *Thomas Cavendish*. However, by the time that Raleigh’s portrait was

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<sup>20</sup>Jane Ashelford, *Dress in the Age of Elizabeth I* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1988), 57; 73. For examples of comparable lace, see Federico Vinciolo, *A Book of Engraved Lace Patterns* (London?: n.p., c. 1605), Early English Books Online (473:08). Vinciolo’s designs were particularly popular from 1587 to 1599.

<sup>21</sup>Ronald D. Steinbach, *The Fashionable Ear, A History of Ear-Piercing Trends for Men and Women* (New York: Vantage Press, 1995), 228-31. Also see Tarnya Cooper, *Citizen Portrait: Portrait Painting and the Urban Elite of Tudor and Jacobean England and Wales* (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 2012), 191. Cooper explains that while earrings became popular among courtiers c. 1616-1620, they were associated with maritime explorers and literary figures during the mid-1590s.

painted in 1598, *Portrait of Sir Walter Raleigh (1522-1618), Soldier and Historian, 1598* (Figure 9), his clothing has changed drastically. While he still wears the white stockings that are so prominent in the portrait of the unknown man, the trunk hose are longer and fuller, and the peascod doublet has been replaced by a short-sleeved doublet that no longer tapers to a point. By 1600, trunk hose become even longer and wider, and stockings only extend to the knee, both of which can be seen in the c. 1600 portrait *Henry Wriothesley, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Southampton* (Figure 10).

Through fashion, therefore, we can confidently establish a date of c. 1590 for our portrait of an unknown man, and subsequently refer to the painting using the more formal title *Unknown Man*. By using conventions of clothing to assign this date to the *Unknown Man*, the importance of formulaic clothing in visually manifesting masculinity is clearly observable. However, the *Unknown Man* and its comparators also share two other types of repetitive, culturally-produced similarities in their constructions of masculinity, specifically conventions relating to the depicted physical body and to the accoutrements present in the portraits. As will be argued throughout this thesis, these formulaic conventions construct a male body that is highly controlled and regulated.

The physical bodies depicted in the *Unknown Man* and its comparators share several key similarities, the most apparent of which is the way the bodies are posed. All five subjects, and we could, undoubtedly, produce more examples, are depicted in the active posture of standing upright, rather than the passivity of sitting or exaggerated leaning. Like the flattened, tilted sash in the *Unknown Man*, the bodies themselves are deliberately angled toward the viewer by constructing the subjects with squared shoulders, puffed-out chests, and arms bent at the elbow. By positioning the subjects of the *Unknown Man* and its comparators in this way, the bodies are

flattened and placed on display for the viewer. This aesthetic contrasts sharply with continental examples such as Giovanni Ambrogio Figino's *Portrait of Lucio Foppa* (c. 1590; Figure 11). Although this portrait shares several similarities with the *Unknown Man* and its comparators, such as a helmet placed atop a table and a subject dressed in half-armor with chest projected and bent arms, the body is also angled away from the viewer and recedes into shadow, obscuring rather than displaying the body.

In the full-length English portraits, the legs also play an important role in constructing a deliberate, formulaic pose. In each example, the subject stands in a contrapposto position with the front of one leg and the profile of the other facing the viewer. This posture can also be observed in two secondary comparative portraits, *Sir John Needham* (c. 1590) and *Sir John Leventhorpe* (c. 1595) (Figures 12 and 13), as well as in *Portrait of Lucio Foppa*. This formulaic, highly-deliberate stance widens the legs and displays them from two angles, but would have been difficult to maintain for long periods of time in lived experience, suggesting the regulation and constructedness of the depicted body. The distinctive connection between the hand and the thigh observed in the *Unknown Man*, however, continues to remain unique.

A final similarity of the depicted body that can be observed in the *Unknown Man* and its comparators is the consistent presence of carefully-groomed beards. While *Thomas Cavendish* and *Robert Carey* only wear what would today be considered mustaches, all facial hair was classified under the overarching category of "beard" during the sixteenth century.<sup>22</sup> The beard was a particularly essential part of constructing and performing manhood, since it was understood to be an excretion resulting from the heat of semen production.<sup>23</sup> This phallic

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<sup>22</sup>Mark Albert Johnston, *Beard Fetish in Early Modern England: Sex, Gender, and Registers of Value* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), 49.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid, 43-6.

reference is particularly explicit in *The Unknown Man*, *Sir Anthony Mildmay*, and *Sir William Drury*, whose beards taper to a point to recall both the phallus and penetrative weapons such as swords and daggers.<sup>24</sup> These relatively small beards also connote affluence, leisure, and high levels of control, since they would have required regular maintenance to sustain their proper shapes.<sup>25</sup>

The *Unknown Man* and its comparanda are also characterized by the repetitive presence of several specific types of accoutrements. The clothing depicted in these portraits, for example, has already been established earlier in this chapter as being highly formulaic; however, these fashion trends also constructed the male body in very controlled, artificial manner. The pale colors of the doublets, trunk hose tights, and shoes worn in the *Unknown Man* and many of its comparators, for instance, imply that the subject had to be constantly aware and in control of his movements and actions, since his clothing could easily become dirty or stained. The ephemerality of these articles of clothing also attests to the subjects' affluence, since items such as shoes and tights likely had to be replaced on a regular basis. The peascod doublet was also understood to fashion the body into the structured, consistent posture observed in the *Unknown Man*, *Thomas Cavendish*, *Robert Carey*, and *Sir John Leventhorpe*. This type of doublet, based on the shape of breastplates such as the one in *Sir Anthony Mildmay*, were stiffened with pasteboard and heavily padded, which made it very difficult for the wearer to move.<sup>26</sup> This experience is disdainfully described by the Puritanical Philip Stubbes in his 1583 *Anatomie of Abuses*, where he comments that those who wear peascod doublets

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid, 55; 62-3; Fisher, *Materializing Gender*, 94-6.

<sup>25</sup>Johnston, 62-3; Fisher, *Materializing Gender*, 94-5.

<sup>26</sup>Ashelford, 43; 46-7; 68.



can neither worke, nor yet well play in them, through the excessiue heat and stiffness thereof: and therefore are forced to weare them loose about them for the most parte, otherwise they could very hardly either stoupe or bowe themselves to the ground, so stiffe and sturdy they stand about the[e].<sup>27</sup>

Stubbes' negative description of the impracticality of peascod doublets attests to the elite status of the men who wore them. Clearly, this type of doublet was not meant to be worn on a daily basis; its presence in the *Unknown Man* and its comparators consequently conveys wealth, aristocratic leisure, and a particular type of controlled masculinity in a very explicit way.

The pointed shape of the peascod doublet also functions as a manifestation of the male genitals that replaces both the prominent codpieces that were popular earlier in the sixteenth century and any painted allusion to the physical male organ in the *Unknown Man* and its comparators. While the lack of a painted shadow or bulge to locate the male genitals in these portraits may be attributed to either the restraints of the costume or to a sense of decency, the exclusion of a codpiece is hardly surprising. While a codpiece does appear in an earlier depiction of the peascod doublet-and-trunk hose ensemble, *Ball at the Court of Valois* (early 1580s; Figure 14), the codpiece became disassociated with masculinity by the beginning of the seventeenth century due to its increased understanding as an unreliable prosthesis, rather than a guaranteed manifestation of the genitals.<sup>28</sup> In the painting of the Valois court of France, where the style of the peascod doublet and trunk hose originated during the early 1580s, the combination of the codpiece and peascod doublet is worn by a prominent, white-clad figure performing the *volta* on the left side of the composition.<sup>29</sup> The tips of these two pointed prostheses extend toward each other, almost touching, and attract the gaze of the man's female

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<sup>27</sup>Phillip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses*, ed. Margaret Jane Kidnie (Tempe, AZ: Renaissance English Text Society, 2002), 96.

<sup>28</sup>Fisher, *Materializing Gender*, 77-82.

<sup>29</sup>Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rennes, "Bal à la cour des Valois," accessed February 1, 2014, <http://www.mbar.org/collections/guide/14-18/040.php>.

dancing partner. When this fashion trend reached England a few years later, however, the codpieces seem to have been dropped from the ensemble altogether, leaving the pointed doublet to alone manifest its wearer's masculinity.

Further evidence of the similarities present amongst accoutrements depicted in our group of portraits is military paraphernalia. In the *Unknown Man*, the most explicit military accoutrements are the helmet, sword, dagger, gorget, and decorative military sash, items that suggest the subject's martial prowess and discipline. Of these accoutrements, the sword is most consistently included in the comparative portraits, and can be seen in each of the English comparators mentioned thus far (Figure 4-8, 12, and 13). The helmet is also a prevalent accoutrement, and is included in *Sir William Drury*, *Sir Anthony Mildmay*, and *Sir John Needham*, as well as in the Italian *Portrait of Lucio Foppa* and the later English portrait *Sir Henry Wriothesley* (Figure 6,7, 10, 11, and 13), almost always displayed on a table. This configuration of a helmet placed atop a table can also be seen in another secondary comparator, the 1592 portrait *Sir George Villiers of Brooksby* (Figure 15). This half-length portrait, which uniquely depicts a subject dressed in full armor, also provides a parallel for the decorative military sash that supplements the sashes depicted in the *Unknown Man*, *Sir Anthony Mildmay* and *Robert Carey*.

Four of the portraits include a personal military device located in one of the upper corners. While *Sir John Needham* includes a rather simple coat of arms in the upper right corner, the other three examples are more complex *imprese*, devices that were very personal and difficult to decipher.<sup>30</sup> The *imprese* in *Thomas Cavendish* and *Robert Carey*, for instance, likely allude to the subjects' connections to seafaring. The *impresa* in the *Unknown Man*, however, is

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<sup>30</sup>Ellen Chirelstein, "Lady Elizabeth Pope: The Heraldic Body," in *Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture c. 1540-1660*, eds. Lucy Gent and Nigel Llewellyn (London: Reaktion, 1990), 44. Also see Roy Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth* (London: Pimlico, 1999), 144-5.

considerably more difficult to understand due to the subject's anonymity.<sup>31</sup> One possibility is that it connotes a similar connection to naval activity. Specifically, the allusion to an intervening storm, "sans orage," may be a reference to the storm that destroyed the Spanish Armada in 1588, which was considered to be an act of God and one of the defining moments of Elizabeth I's reign.<sup>32</sup> Further, the storm cloud motif in the *impresa* closely parallels those depicted in the *Armada Portrait* of Elizabeth I (1588) and on medals commemorating the defeat of the Armada (Figures 16 and 17). The presence of an earring in the *Unknown Man*, which Tarnya Cooper associates with maritime explorers of the mid-1590s, also lends credence to this theory.<sup>33</sup>

This evidence for repetitive, almost formulaic conventions for the depiction of men in English portraiture c. 1590 clearly positions the *Unknown Man* within a body of close comparanda. Amongst these comparative portraits, the male body is consistently fashioned in a way that is highly controlled, or regulated. As will be demonstrated in the next chapters, regulation arguably played an important role in the relationship between the physical body and the depicted body.

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<sup>31</sup>Robert Carey served on many foreign expeditions and in the navy during the 1588 conflict with the Spanish Armada, while Thomas Cavendish was involved in a number of naval ventures to the New World, the first of which was a voyage to Virginia in 1585. See A. J. Loomie, "Carey, Robert, first earl of Monmouth (1560–1639)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford U. Press, 2004), accessed February 1, 2014, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/view/article/4656>; Susan M. Maxwell, "Cavendish, Thomas (bap. 1560, d. 1592)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford U. Press, 2004), accessed February 1, 2014, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/view/article/4942>.

<sup>32</sup>Angus Konstam, *The Spanish Armada, The Great Enterprise Against England 1588* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing Ltd, 2009), 188.

<sup>33</sup>Cooper, 191.

## CHAPTER 2: A CONSTANT LABOR: THE REGULATED BODY AND MANHOOD

Having identified several key conventions of depicted male bodies that point to physical control and regulation in the *Unknown Man* and its group of c. 1590 comparators, it is necessary to turn to the question of why this regulation was necessary. In large part, this was due to the conception of the body as comprised of humors that were in a constant state of flux. This understanding of physiology derives from classical medical treatises such as the ancient Greek writings of the Hippocratic Corpus (late fifth to fourth centuries BCE), Aristotle (384-322 BCE), and Galen (c. 130-200 CE), which remained in use well into the early modern era. These authors influenced sixteenth-century scholars such as Sir Thomas Elyot, who explains in *The Castel of Health* that the physical world is made up of varying combinations of four elements, Air, Fire, Earth, and Water, which each correspond to different levels of heat and wetness.<sup>34</sup> In the body, these elements manifest as four fluids, or humors, respectively blood (hot-wet), yellow bile (hot-dry), black bile (cold-dry), and phlegm (cold-wet). These varying degrees of heat were also thought to be responsible for determining an individual's sex. Essentially, the typical man was

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<sup>34</sup>While *The Castel of Health* was first published in 1536, it was subsequently re-published in 1539, 1541, 1544, 1547, and 1561; the 1561 edition is used for the purposes of this paper. Elyot explicitly cites Galen throughout *The Castel of Health*. See Sir Thomas Elyot, *The Castel of Health. Corrected and in some places augmented, by the first author therof, syr Thomas Elyot, knight, the yeare of oure lord. 1561* (Imprinted at London: In Fletestrete nere to Saynct Dunstones Church by Thomas Marshe, 1561?), Early English Books Online (291:04), fol. 2. Also see Zirka Z. Filipczak, *Hot Dry Men, Cold Wet Women: The Theory of Humors in Western European Art, 1575-1700* (New York: American Federation of Arts, 1997), 14-6.

characterized as hot-dry and the typical woman as cold-wet.<sup>35</sup> Consequently, the author of the Hippocratic *Diet* explains that if a couple wishes to conceive a male child, their diet and activities should be characterized by heat and dryness.<sup>36</sup>

The four humors were also understood to determine an individual's health and disposition. While all four of the humors were thought to be present in each body, their ideal balance was naturally dominated by one humor that characterized an individual's disposition as sanguine, choleric, melancholic, or phlegmatic. When this natural balance was significantly disrupted, however, the body became diseased and could only be restored to health by adjusting the individual's humoral proportions through treatments such as bloodletting or dietary changes.<sup>37</sup> Less drastic deviation from the body's natural balance was also detrimental, and caused an individual to express the negative characteristics of his temperament or those of another disposition entirely.<sup>38</sup> This imbalance caused both men and women to stray from bodily and mental moderation, which posed serious social and moral dangers.<sup>39</sup> For example, while a choleric temperament was desirable in men due to its characterization as hot-dry, excessive heat

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<sup>35</sup>Filipczak, 16. This characterization is based on the notion that high levels of heat dried up excess moisture in the body. Since women were thought to be implicitly cold, they leaked moisture through processes such as menstruation and lactation. See Hippocrates, *Hippocrates' Diseases of Women Book I—Greek Text with English Translation and Footnotes*, trans. Kathleen Whiteley (PhD diss., University of South Africa, 2003), 2-3 and Aristotle, *On the Generation of Animals*, trans. Arthur Platt (Adelaide, Australia: The U. of Adelaide, 2013), Ebook, <http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/a/aristotle/generation/index.html>, Book II Section 4.

<sup>36</sup>Hippocrates as quoted in Sharon L. James and Sheila Dillon, *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 110.

<sup>37</sup>Elyot, fol. 2; Filipczak, 15-7; Valeria Finucci, *The Manly Masquerade: Masculinity, Paternity, and Castration in the Italian Renaissance* (Durham: Duke U. Press, 2003), 26-7.

<sup>38</sup>Breitenberg, 37-8. Also see Shepard, 61.

<sup>39</sup>This understanding of the physical body was also related to the conception of the body politic during the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The body politic was generally understood as one metaphorical body composed of the individuals or constituents within a nation, with the monarch as the head. An imbalance in the desires or actions of any of these constituents, like an imbalance of the humors in a physical body, caused the entire body to become diseased. The most iconic visualization of this paradigm is Abraham Bosse's 1651 frontispiece for *Leviathan*, which depicts a king whose torso and arms are composed of numerous smaller bodies looking to the head for guidance. Consequently,

could cause a man to be quarrelsome and fool-hardy.<sup>40</sup> Consequently, strict regulation and control of the body was necessary to ensure that a balanced, moderate state was maintained. In the *Unknown Man* and its comparators, maintaining humoral balance through physical regulation can be observed in the consistent presence of, for example, something as mundane as facial hair. Since beards were understood to be an excrement resulting from the heat and moisture of semen production, allowing them to grow prevented this heat and moisture from building up to an excessive degree.<sup>41</sup>

During the sixteenth century, the need for men to maintain moderation through bodily regulation was intrinsically connected to the imperative of achieving ideal manhood. Manhood in early modern England can be defined as a phase within a man's lifetime that spans the period between ages thirty and fifty. During this period, the natural overpowering heat of adolescence reached a more moderate, controllable level, while not yet succumbing to the coldness of old age.<sup>42</sup> Achieving manhood was not guaranteed by age alone, however, but rather contingent on achieving and sustaining expectations such as marriage, engendering children, financial stability, and establishing an honest reputation, all of which required the humoral balance realized through

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maintaining the moderation and reason of man's estate on the individual level can be understood as part of the larger social program of maintaining a balanced body politic; as David George Hale puts it "That which is good for the individual is good for the state." See David George Hale, *The Body Politic, A Political Metaphor in Renaissance English Literature* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), 62 and Shepard, 62-3. Shepard draws largely on Lemnius, fols. 18-9.

<sup>40</sup>Shepard, 60-1.

<sup>41</sup>Adolescent boys who had not begun producing semen contained their facial hair within their heads, causing them to have "hair brains." When the beard was excreted upon physical maturation, it also allowed the young man to grow in intellect and wisdom, since the space that the latent beard occupied is freed. Fisher, *Materializing Gender*, 108-10; Johnston, 45-7.

<sup>42</sup>Shepard, 54-6.

bodily regulation.<sup>43</sup> To return to the example of choleric males, for instance, the quarrelsomeness and fool-hardiness that resulted from the presence of excessive heat in the body could endanger an individual's reputation and financial stability. Likewise, a lack of heat could prevent men from fathering children.<sup>44</sup>

Deviation from the regulated, moderate ideal not only prevented men from achieving manhood, however, but also caused them to take on "womanly" qualities such as idleness, vanity, softness, and lack of reason, which were associated with female heat deficiency and excess moisture.<sup>45</sup> In his article "The Renaissance Beard: Masculinity in Early Modern England," Will Fisher frames the sixteenth-century understanding of gender as a continuum, a linear construct on which gender is a matter of degree, rather than type.<sup>46</sup> This framework builds on Butler's characterization of gender as "unstable," since both men and women had the potential to move along this continuum; by embodying womanly qualities, men were in danger of becoming feminine.<sup>47</sup> This possibility made it crucial for men to constantly be aware of their humoral state and any factors that might negatively affect it. As Levinus Lemnius warns in the 1581 English translation of his *Touchstone of Complexions*,

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid, 73-83; 173-5; 186-8.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid, 59-60.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid, 29.

<sup>46</sup>Fisher, "The Renaissance Beard," 181; Fisher, *Materializing Gender*, 6-7. Fisher explains that this concept was made possible by the Galenic "one sex model," according to which men and women had the same bodily structure. The difference between male and female bodies derived from the location of the genitals; in men, bodily heat caused the genitals to descend outside the body, while women's lack of heat caused these same genitals to remain on the inside.

<sup>47</sup>Fisher, "The Renaissance Beard," 181. It was also possible for women to deviate along the continuum and, in some cases, to actually become men. The most commonly cited instance of this is the account of Marie-Germain included in Michel de Montaigne's *Essays*. In this story, Marie leaps over a ditch while chasing a herd of pigs and sprouts male genitalia due to the excess movement; she subsequently grows a beard and is re-baptized as the male Germain. See Michel de Montaigne, *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (Stanford: Stanford U. Press, 1976), 69. For other examples, see Francesco Maria Guazzo, *Compendium Maleficarum*, trans. E. A. Ashwin (New York: Dover Publications, 1988), 57-9 and Finucci, 54-5.

...the life of man is subject every where, and in all places to innumerable casualties, mis-haps and inconveniences, and is on each side beset and torne in pieces with such a number of miseries and by-reckonings, as every way weaken and appaire the perfect vigour and lusty state thereof.<sup>48</sup>

These threats to the “lusty state” of manhood could derive from a variety of external factors, each of which required compensation through bodily regulation.

As mentioned above, diet was thought to have a significant effect on the humoral balance of the body. Like bodies, different types of food were characterized by varying humoral levels of heat and moisture that affected the balance of those who consumed them. While this property could be used to restore health, eating in excess or eating the wrong types of food also posed the danger of causing the body to deviate from the masculine ideal. Elyot discusses the qualities and effects of a number of foods in *The Castel of Health*, including, for example, apples. While this fruit is cold and can negatively affect the blood, this consequence can be avoided if the apple is roasted or baked.<sup>49</sup> Threats to the regulated body could also originate in the physical environment. The extremes of hot and cold weather inherent to seasonal change, for example, could cause a man’s humoral balance to stray from the ideal of manhood toward the extremes of the gender continuum, necessitating regulatory compensation through clothing, exercise, and diet, for example, eating larger quantities of meat. In addition, influxes of air from certain geographic directions could either benefit or harm humoral distribution; for instance, air

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<sup>48</sup>Levinus Lemnius as quoted in Shepard, 64. This book was originally written in 1561 and first translated into English in 1576 by Thomas Newton. See the 1581 edition, Levinus Lemnius, *The touchstone of complexions: Generallye appliable, expedient and profitable for all such, as be desirous and carefull of theyr bodyly health. Contayning most easy rules & ready tokens, whereby euery one may perfectly try, and throughly knowe, aswell the exacte state, habite, disposition, and constitution, of his body outwardly: as also the inclinations, affections, motions, and desires of his mynde invvardly*, trans. Thomas Newton (Imprinted at London: In Fleetestreete, by Thomas Marsh, 1581), Early English Books Online (262:08).

<sup>49</sup>Particular types of food were also associated with each temperament; not only were these foods beneficial to individuals of that temperament, but they were also easier to digest. Eating food that did not correspond to an individual’s temperament could be detrimental to his humoral balance. Elyot, fol. 21. Also see Filipczak, 17-8.



originating in the north prolonged life by expelling ill vapors, while air from the south and west threatened the body with ill, mutable vapors.<sup>50</sup>

Social threats could also endanger the precarious balance of regulated manhood. While public slander and name-calling could damage a man's reputation and credit, women posed a threat to the male body itself.<sup>51</sup> First, women had the potential to incite lustful desire in men that, if unchecked, would upset a man's humoral balance and compromise his masculine qualities of self-control and reason. Unbridled lust, then, was not perceived as hyper-masculine, but as effeminate.<sup>52</sup> Second, women also threatened manhood through cuckoldry. By failing to bridle her own lust through chastity, a woman incited jealousy in her husband or lover, a state that Mark Breitenberg argues is "the most severe example of the body's perturbed and imbalanced fluidity, the most complete overthrow of the rule of reason."<sup>53</sup> The importance of reason and chastity, as well as the connection between the two, is explicitly represented in a c. 1530-1550 woodcut by Cornelis Anthonisz. *Theunissen* that depicts allegories of a wise man and a wise woman (Figure 18). In this print, a turtle dove inscribes the wise woman's breast with a steadfast and faithful heart, while her waist is girded with serpents, recalling original sin, to protect her from the poison of scandal, evil love, and shameful play.<sup>54</sup> Facing the wise woman, the man holds up a balanced scale and a rigid right angle across his groin, visually inscribing and regulating his body with symbols of moderation. The two figures comprise a complementary

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<sup>50</sup>Elyot, fols. 12; 39-40; Shepard, 64-6.

<sup>51</sup>Shepard, 173-5.

<sup>52</sup>Breitenberg, 99; Shepard, 67.

<sup>53</sup>Breitenberg argues that the anxiety that resulted from gender instability made anxiety a necessary part of masculinity during the sixteenth century, rather than a secondary effect of masculinity. Specifically, masculine anxiety both reveals the holes in the patriarchal system and enables the re-production of this same system. Breitenberg, 175.

<sup>54</sup>Max Geisberg, *The German Single-Leaf Woodcut: 1500-1550*, vol. 4, ed. Walter L. Strauss (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1974), 1511.

and interdependent relationship; the chastity of the woman promotes the rule of reason in the man.

While bodily regulation was expected of all men, Alexandra Shepard argues that only a few, privileged men were realistically expected to achieve and maintain this imperative.<sup>55</sup> This privilege resulted in part from the natural temperamental characteristics a male was born with. Men born with a phlegmatic or melancholic humoral balance, for instance, faced the difficulty of compensating for the lack of natural heat in their bodies, as well as the excessive moisture this lack engendered.<sup>56</sup> Additionally, temperamental and physical predisposition to the achievement of manhood was conflated with social privilege. Lower-class men were “lower” because they did not possess the faculty for bodily regulation and the moderation that this control produced. Conversely, at the top of the social hierarchy, upper-class men were both innately more capable of bodily regulation and possessed the resources to learn and perform this regulation.<sup>57</sup> As observed in the *Unknown Man*, *Robert Carey*, and *Thomas Cavendish* (Figures 1, 4, and 5), one way this could be achieved was through expensive articles of clothing such as the peascod doublet, which restricted physical movement and the excessive heat such activity created. In addition to wealth, upper-class males were educated, capable of reading treatises on deportment, and had access to a wider variety of foods with which to adjust their levels of heat and moisture.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>Shepard, 49; 53; 59.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid, 61.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid, 60-5. Shepard particularly draws on Levinus Lemnius’ *Touchstone of Complexions*; see, for example Lemnius, fol. 24. Anna Bryson also argues that bodily regulation was closely connected with the civility and manners that characterized the “gentleman.” See Bryson, 148; 152.

<sup>58</sup>A list of foods, spices, and drinks are listed along with their humoral composition and specific effects on the body in Elyot, fols. 17- 31. Elyot also specifies what types of food and drink should be consumed according to age and time of day, as well as in what order. Also see Shepard, 65-6.

This physical and social privilege enjoyed by upper-class males arguably created a homosocial environment of men simultaneously pursuing the same imperative.<sup>59</sup> Since each individual within this group was more or less predisposed to achieving manhood, it was essential for men to know where they stood in relation to one another and, consequently, how they should interact. William Cecil, Lord Burghley, attests to this environment in the eighth of ten precepts he wrote to his son: “Towards thy superiours be humble yet generous, with thy equals familiar, yet respective, towards inferiours shew much humility and some familiarity...”<sup>60</sup> In the *Unknown Man*, this hierarchy of men is signaled by the inclusion of the subject’s complex, highly-personal *impresa*. As Ellen Chirelstein explains, deciphering a device such as this one was an exercise that indicated and reinforced where the decipherer stood in relation to his fellow men.<sup>61</sup> Additionally, this hierarchy also allowed men to learn from and imitate one another. In the 1588 edition of Thomas Hoby’s English translation of *The Book of the Courtier*, the man who wishes to become an ideal courtier should observe the men around him and imitate the best qualities of each.<sup>62</sup>

English translations of books on deportment such as Hoby’s were published and re-published throughout the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, arguably creating and perpetuating a

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<sup>59</sup>In the imagined court of Urbino that provides the setting for *The Book of the Courtier*, it could be argued that homosociality can be recognized in the characterization of the courtiers as “brethren” who are “linked together in love.” See Baldessar Castiglione, *The Courtier of Count Baldessar Castilio: deuided into foure books. Verie necessarie and profitable for young gentlemen and gentlewomen abiding in court, pallace, or place, done into English by Thomas Hobby* [sic], trans. Thomas Hoby (London: Printed by Iohn Wolfe, 1588), Early English Books Online (312:2), fol. 10.

<sup>60</sup>While these precepts were not published until 1611, they were written before Cecil’s death in 1598; consequently, the ideas expressed in them should be understood as reflective of the 1590s. William Cecil, *The counsell of a father to his sonne, in ten seuerall precepts: left as a legacy at his death* (London: Printed for Ioseph [sic] Hunt, and are to be sold at his shop in Bedlem, neere Moore-field gate, 1611), Early English Books Online (1885:64). Also see Shepard, 35.

<sup>61</sup>Chirelstein, “Lady Elizabeth Pope,” 44. Also see Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth*, 144-5.

<sup>62</sup>Castiglione, fols. 33-4.

homosocial environment that was predicated on relatively standardized guidelines for the performance of manhood. In addition to Hoby's translation of *The Book of the Courtier*, first published in 1561, other notable examples include Desiderius Erasmus' *De Civilitate Morum Puerilium Libellus*, which was published in English in 1532 and 1560, and Giovanni della Casa's *Il Galateo*, which Robert Peterson first translated into English in 1576. Each of these books emphasizes the relationship between bodily regulation and ideal manhood; Erasmus, for example, addresses the body in parts, providing specific instructions for the deportment of the eyes, nose, face, mouth, hair, and genitals.<sup>63</sup> In Hoby's translation of *The Book of the Courtier*, two overarching themes inform the construction of the ideal courtier. First, he is always defined as the opposite of "womanish" men, those males who either fail to regulate their bodies or regulate them incorrectly. These men, for example, curl their hair, pluck their eyebrows, and use tender, faint gestures like a woman.<sup>64</sup> Second, the ideal courtier should always avoid affectation, eschewing it "as much as a man may, and as a sharpe and dangerous rocke."<sup>65</sup> Instead, every aspect of a man's life, including movement, speech, and clothing, should be endowed with grace and naturalness, or "nonchalance," done "without paine and (as it were) not minding it."<sup>66</sup> Della Casa echoes the undesirability of affectation in his warning that the man who "applieth himself to much" in conversation and behavior is "to be thought a Jester, and Jugler or a flatterer, then a gentleman wel taught and nurtured."<sup>67</sup> As will be argued in the next chapter, these guidelines

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<sup>63</sup>Desiderius Erasmus, *De Ciuilitate morum puerilium*, trans. Robert Whittinton (London: Imprinted at London in Foster Lane by Iohn Wallye, 1554), Early English Books Online (1832:45).

<sup>64</sup>These "womanish" men are compared to women who engage in prostitution and other wanton behavior, since both groups of individuals deviate from their socially-accepted gender roles. See Castiglione, fols. 27-8.

<sup>65</sup>In Hoby's translation, he consistently uses the word "curiofneffe" in place of "affectation." Ibid, fol. 34.

<sup>66</sup>While Castiglione also specifies that natural grace is desirous for female courtiers, men and women clearly performed nonchalance in different ways. Ibid, fols. 33-4.

for performing and achieving manhood are useful and highly suggestive in understanding the construction and conventions of manhood in the *Unknown Man* and its comparators.

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<sup>67</sup>Giovanni della Casa, *Galateo of Maister Iohn Della Casa, Archebishop of Beneuenta. Or rather, A treatise of the ma[n]ners and behaiours, it behoueth a man to vse and eschewe, in his familiar conuersation*, trans. Robert Peterson (London: Imprinted at London by Henry Middleton for Raufe Newbery dwelling in Fleetestreate a litle aboue the Conduit, 1576), Early English Books Online (188:16), 4.

### CHAPTER 3: READABLE BODIES

Having examined several of the key precepts of sixteenth-century deportment, it is now possible to return to the c. 1590 *Unknown Man* and its comparators to discuss how these guidelines relate to the construction of the male body in portraits. By using the principles of the regulated body of manhood discussed in Chapter 2 to inform a reading of the *Unknown Man* and its comparators, this chapter will demonstrate that a set of repetitive, regulatory conventions point to a widespread understanding among upper class men of what “manhood” looked like. Ultimately, this chapter will argue that, since achieving and maintaining the perfectly-regulated body of manhood was so difficult in lived experience, portraits were used as a platform through which men *could* perform, and thus “achieve,” manhood.

This emphasis on making bodies “readable” is addressed by Peter Burke in his chapter “The Language of Gesture in Early Modern Italy.”<sup>68</sup> Here, Burke argues from a historical point of view that the meanings of gestures were highly conventional in sixteenth-century Italy and comprised a widely-understood “repertoire.” He suggests that individuals deliberately chose gestures from this repertoire according to factors such as identity, gender, age, and social status, as well as according to the domain in which the gesture would be used, such as public versus private and religious versus secular.<sup>69</sup> Anna Bryson also suggests the “readability” of the body in her chapter “The Rhetoric of Status: Gesture, Demeanour and the Image of the Gentleman in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England,” where she uses treatises on deportment to discuss

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<sup>68</sup>Burke, 69-83.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid, 72-5.

the ways in which the body of the English gentleman was ideally performed in lived experience during the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>70</sup> In particular, Bryson emphasizes the need to care for and control the body according to a set of widely-understood rules.

While Burke and Bryson discuss the concept of “readable” bodies from historical and literary perspectives, Tatiana String demonstrates the usefulness of this framework for art historical analysis in her chapter “Projecting Masculinity: Henry VIII’s Codpiece.”<sup>71</sup> Here, String “reads” each part of the depicted body of Henry VIII in Hans Holbein’s portrait of the monarch, part of the larger composition in the Privy Chamber of Whitehall Palace (1537), to determine the visual codes and motifs used to communicate power and masculinity. String also points out the conventionality of much of this visual language by contextualizing the motifs of Holbein’s painted construction of Henry’s body, such as the “legs astride” pose, within a larger tradition of depictions of strong, militaristic men.<sup>72</sup> This framework of “readable” bodies, as well as Burke’s model of a “repertoire” of conventions, is extremely relevant to our analysis of portraits. The regulated, “readable” bodies that men labored to construct in lived experience could, in fact, be “achieved” when these bodies were fashioned into painted portraits. By approaching the *Unknown Man* and its comparators with this in mind, it is possible to identify the conventions of constructing manhood in English portraits between 1587 and 1595. Like Burke’s repertoire of Italian gestures, these conventions form a repertoire that individuals drew from to create and comprehend English portraits.

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<sup>70</sup>Bryson.

<sup>71</sup>String.

<sup>72</sup>String, 146-7.

## Nonchalance

As mentioned in the previous chapter, one of the most important rules for the ideal courtier, or for those in England who applied Castiglione's precepts as part of a program to achieve man's estate, to obey was to avoid affectation in the performance of the body.<sup>73</sup> The characters in *The Book of the Courtier* all agree that one of the most egregious types of affectation is holding one's body with stiffness rather than nonchalance.<sup>74</sup> While the painted body is necessarily an affected body, this inherent aspect of portraiture is made less explicit in the *Unknown Man* through the depiction of the subject in a naturally graceful pose rather than one that is stiff and artificial. The subject stands straight, but is not inflexible; his shoulders are squared, but not rigid. The naturalness of his stance extends to his legs and hips, which are positioned unevenly in a contrapposto position. The slight leaning of the body through a hand placed on a table, which is repeated in *Sir William Drury* and *Sir Anthony Mildmay* suggests the casual, relaxed attitude with which this pose is performed.

This "pliant" body, as Ellen Chirelstein terms it, was capable of subtle variations in weight shift and movement, preventing stiffness or affectation in the carriage of the body.<sup>75</sup> Chirelstein cites Bronzino's *Portrait of a Young Man* (1530s; Figure 19) as an archetypal example of the pliant body, and compares its subject's aristocratic bearing and "disdain for the appearance of effort" with the construction of the male body in *Sir William Drury*.<sup>76</sup> However, there is a key difference between Bronzino's subject and the subjects of *Sir William Drury* and the *Unknown*

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<sup>73</sup> For a discussion of how *The Book of the Courtier* was used in England, see footnote 10 on page 4 of this thesis.

<sup>74</sup> Castiglione, fols. 34-6.

<sup>75</sup> Chirelstein, "Emblem and Reckless Presence," 305.

<sup>76</sup> Chirelstein is unaccountably tentative in her association of the "pliant" body with the description of nonchalance in *The Book of the Courtier*. Instead, she offers the limited explanation that the subject of *Sir William Drury* invokes an "open and aggressive display of aristocratic self-definition." See Ibid, 305.



*Man*. In *Portrait of a Young Man*, the subject's pliant body is anchored by the arm akimbo, or what Joaneath Spicer refers to as the "Renaissance elbow."<sup>77</sup> This stiff, thrusting gesture signals confidence and self-possession in a militaristic, almost aggressive manner. In contrast, the subjects of *Sir William Drury* and the *Unknown Man* only slightly bend their elbows, indicating confidence through relaxed nonchalance rather than aggression.

The contrapposto position of the legs and hips further conveys the natural confidence and self-possession of nonchalance by firmly placing the subject of the *Unknown Man* within a visual lineage of elegant, aristocratic men. As mentioned in Chapter 1, this pose positions our unknown man's legs such that while the proper right leg faces the viewer, the left leg is turned outward and slightly extended. This conventional placement of the legs, which is repeated in *Sir William Drury* and *Sir Anthony Mildmay* (Figures 6 and 7), can be observed in many earlier depictions of aristocratic men, for example in Titian's *Charles V Standing with His Dog* (1533), *Portrait of Philip II in Armour* (1550-1), and *Portrait of Philip II* (c. 1554; Figure 20).<sup>78</sup> In each of these portraits, the subject adopts a graceful contrapposto stance, simultaneously signaling nonchalance and aristocratic elegance. Indeed, standing with evenly distributed weight, such as the "legs astride" pose, could even be construed as unseemly in life, making the adoption of this pose in a portrait a highly-privileged act.<sup>79</sup> By drawing on the prevalent motif of contrapposto, our unknown man communicates his *own* manhood by visually associating himself with and perpetuating the conventions of a larger, aristocratic, homosocial environment.

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<sup>77</sup>Joaneath Spicer, "The Renaissance Elbow," in *A Cultural History of Gesture*, eds. Jan Bremmer and Herman Roodenburg (Ithaca: Cornell U. Press, 1991).

<sup>78</sup>This convention also demonstrates that the legs are "well-made," an ideal characteristic that, while introduced using an ironic tone in *The Book of the Courtier*, nonetheless seems to have been an important quality to emphasize based on the multiple examples presented here. See Castiglione, fols. 27-8.

<sup>79</sup>Lorne Campbell, *Renaissance portraits: European portrait-painting in the 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries* (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1990), 95.

## Regulation of Movement

The regulation of movement was an essential aspect of maintaining the bodily equilibrium necessary for manhood. In *The Castel of Health*, Thomas Elyot explains that while exercise is beneficial for all male bodies, it should be practiced in different degrees according to an individual's humoral composition. Men with naturally moist compositions, such as phlegmatic or melancholic men, should exercise "violently," or with great vigor, in order to produce the heat and dryness necessary for manhood. Men who were blessed with the lean physique of choleric or sanguine bodies, however, should walk softly and exercise themselves only temperately so as not to produce too much heat.<sup>80</sup> Similarly, in *The Book of the Courtier*, the ideal courtier is advised to never practice violent exercises such as gymnastics.<sup>81</sup> This differentiation between types of movement is discussed at length by Sharon Fermor, who argues that the vocabulary used to describe movement was highly gendered, both in reference to lived experience and the depiction of the human figure in art.<sup>82</sup> *Gagliardezza*, or large, complex movements, for example, enabled men to demonstrate their physical vigor. However, this type of movement was only appropriate in certain contexts, such as dancing, and could indicate a lack of physical control and an unbalanced inner state if performed excessively or with too much skill.<sup>83</sup>

While Fermor cites several examples of the depiction of *gagliardezza* in paintings of religious and mythological subjects, this type of movement would have been counterproductive to the communication of regulated manhood in portraits. Instead, the *Unknown Man* and its

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<sup>80</sup>Elyot, fol. 51.

<sup>81</sup>Castiglione, fols. 30-2.

<sup>82</sup>Sharon Fermor "Movement and Gender in Sixteenth-Century Italian Painting," in *The Body Imaged: The Human Form and Visual Culture Since the Renaissance*, eds. Kathleen Adler and Marcia Pointon (New York: Cambridge U. Press, 1993).

<sup>83</sup>Ibid, 133; 144-5.

comparators use what Anne Hollander terms the “supplements” of clothing to construct the subject as in control of his movement.<sup>84</sup> The peascod doublet worn in the *Unknown Man*, *Robert Carey*, and *Thomas Cavendish* (Figures 1, 4, and 5) was clearly considered an appropriate “supplement” for indicating manhood in portraiture. As observed in the previous chapters, this type of doublet significantly restricted the wearer’s range of movement, preventing any large, uncalculated gestures. The breastplates worn in *Sir William Drury* and *Sir Anthony Mildmay* (Figures 6 and 7) would have undoubtedly had a similar, restraining effect. Additionally, the pale stockings and shoes worn in all of the full-length portraits (Figure 1, 6, 7, and 12) indicate that the subjects are able to “walk softly” as Elyot instructs, since these pieces of clothing could have been easily stained or damaged.

These proscriptions against large, violent movements, however, would seem to contradict the military allusions included in the *Unknown Man* and its comparators. In the *Unknown Man*, the subject’s martial prowess is indicated through the inclusion of military accoutrements, namely, a helmet, sword, dagger, gorget, and military sash, while *Sir William Drury* and *Sir Anthony Mildmay* (Figures 6 and 7) are depicted in half armor, standing in tents surrounded by a scattering of armor and weapons. Even *Robert Carey* and *Thomas Cavendish* (Figures 4 and 5), who are depicted more as gentlemen than soldiers, are shown with a hand placed on the hilt of a sword. Furthermore, Castiglione seems to agree that knowledge of all military exercises is essential to the ideal courtier.<sup>85</sup> These military exercises, however, are qualified by the injunction that they be performed gracefully and in the highly-controlled context of festivals. In this context, the “chivalric” mode could be adopted, in which men demonstrated their martial abilities in the largely ceremonial, regulated competitions of tilting (jousting), the tourney (a

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<sup>84</sup>Anne Hollander, *Seeing Through Clothes* (New York: Avon, 1980), 42.

<sup>85</sup>Castiglione, fols. 30-2.

*melée* on horseback), and the barriers (fighting on foot). By the late sixteenth century, any truly violent fighting had been largely removed from tournaments, for example through the replacement of real lances with fragile, grooved lances that shattered easily.<sup>86</sup>

This “chivalric” mode is visually manifested in the *Unknown Man*, *Sir William Drury*, and *Sir Anthony Mildmay* (Figures 1, 6, and 7) through the depiction of the subjects wearing clothes made of light-colored fabric, which Castiglione explains is appropriate for such occasions; on a daily basis, the courtier should instead wear dark, sober clothing.<sup>87</sup> The decorative nature of the gold sword, dagger, and helmet in the *Unknown Man*, as well as the delicately-embroidered military sash, also indicate the subject’s ability to perform military exercises with the skill and energy of a chivalric knight, rather than with violence and unbridled bodily control. At the time the *Unknown Man* and its comparators were painted, the most important and elaborate festival held by the court of Elizabeth I was Accession Day, which was celebrated annually on November 17<sup>th</sup>.<sup>88</sup> This festival provided the opportunity par excellence for men to demonstrate their manhood by performing all of the visual conventions of masculinity. Indeed, the tents, scattered armor, and decorative accessories in *Sir William Drury* and *Sir Anthony Mildmay* can quite confidently be associated with the pageantry of Accession Day, an association that may suggest these portraits were painted specifically for the occasion. In the *Unknown Man*, the presence of the complex *impresa*, whose potential allusions to Elizabeth and the defeat of the Spanish Armada are discussed in Chapters One and Two, suggests a similar association with Accession Day pageantry, since heraldic devices were often presented to the queen on this

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<sup>86</sup>Roy Strong, *The Tudor and Stuart Monarchy: Pageantry, Painting, Iconography* vol. 2 (Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 1995), 102.

<sup>87</sup>Castiglione, fol.105.

<sup>88</sup>Strong, *The Tudor and Stuart Monarchy*, 122.

occasion.<sup>89</sup> This likelihood is further substantiated by the inclusion of several Tudor rose motifs in the subject's sash, which unquestionably invoke our unknown man's loyalty to the monarchy.

### **Regulation of the Physical Body**

In addition to the regulatory conventions associated with nonchalance and movement, several conventions for the appearance of the depicted male body can also be identified. The most common and most highly-regulated elements of the physical body that can be observed in the *Unknown Man* and all of its comparators is the beard.<sup>90</sup> As introduced in Chapter 1, the beard was essentially linked to manhood since it was understood as an excretion produced through the manufacture of semen. It is for this reason that Will Fisher argues that the beard was one of the most important visual components of man's estate and a means by which an individual "materialized" manhood.<sup>91</sup> Consequently, beards required high levels of regulation to ensure that they communicated their wearer's intended meaning. The unkempt "bush beard," for example, could point to a man's lack of civility and reason, while smaller, carefully-shaped beards indicated that the wearer had the leisure and money to devote to the beard's upkeep, which would have required regular maintenance.<sup>92</sup>

In the *Unknown Man*, the subject's beard consists of hair on both the chin and upper lip; the hair on the chin is shaped so that it tapers to a point below the subject's chin, resembling a sword or dagger. The use of the beard to signify martial prowess was quite common, and could be achieved through a variety of beard styles. In the *Unknown Man* and *Sir Anthony Mildmay*

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<sup>89</sup>Ibid, 106.

<sup>90</sup>Will Fisher observes that in the 1995 Exhibition *Dynasties: Painting in Tudor and Jacobean England*, held at the Tate Gallery, over ninety percent of the portraits of men painted between 1530 and 1630 depicted bearded subjects. See Fisher, *Materializing Gender*, 94. For the exhibition catalog, see Karen Hearn, ed., *Dynasties: Painting in Tudor and Jacobean England, 1530-1630* (London: Tate Publishing, 1995).

<sup>91</sup>Fisher, *Materializing Gender*, 99.

<sup>92</sup>Johnston, 62; 70.

(Figures 1 and 7), the sitters both wear a version of the “pike-devant,” though Sir Anthony Mildmay’s beard is significantly shorter and thinner than the one depicted in the *Unknown Man*.<sup>93</sup> A military allusion could also be achieved through the “needle,” “bodkin,” “spade,” “dagger,” “marquisotted,” “Roman T,” or “stiletto” beards. This last category, the “stiletto” beard, can be observed in *Sir William Drury* (Figure 6), where the beard is allowed to grow along the subject’s jawline to form a point below the chin.<sup>94</sup>

Similarly, hairstyles were also an important site for the regulation of male appearance. The *Unknown Man* and its comparators all feature sitters who wear their hair in curly, teased quiffs. In particular, the vertical shape of the quiff worn in *Sir Anthony Mildmay* parallels the fullness of the hair depicted in the *Unknown Man* (Figures 1 and 7). One key difference, however, is that the subject of the *Unknown Man* has allowed a strand of his hair to grow out into a long lovelock. This lock of hair is depicted stretched out above the left shoulder, almost floating in space. Lovelocks came into vogue in England during the early 1590s, and were only worn by the most fashionable courtiers.<sup>95</sup> The rarity of this trend suggests that our unknown man was emulating someone specific, taking part in the homosocial environment of imitation described by Castiglione.<sup>96</sup> The trend-setter Henry Wriothesley, for example, wears a lovelock hairstyle in his 1594 portrait miniature by Nicholas Hilliard (Figure 21).

A final prominent element of regulated appearance is the remarkably small waistlines that can be observed in the *Unknown Man* and its comparators. These similarly-proportioned bodies suggest that the subjects adhered to the dietary restrictions specified by authors such as Elyot. In

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<sup>93</sup>See Ibid, 62-3 and Fisher, *Materializing Gender*, 94-5.

<sup>94</sup>Johnston, 55; 62-3; Fisher, *Materializing Gender* 94-6.

<sup>95</sup>Victoria Sherrow, *Encyclopedia of Hair: A Cultural History* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2006), 115; 327.

<sup>96</sup> See the discussion of imitation on page 22 of this thesis.

*The Castel of Health*, Elyot explains that dietary choices should be specific to an individual's temperament. Those individuals with a choleric temperament, for example, should eat beef rather than chicken, whereas those with a melancholic temperament should do the opposite.<sup>97</sup> One of the most important dietary regulations that Elyot mentions, however, is to avoid over-eating. Elyot, as well as Lemnius, even goes so far as to suggest that it is better for an individual to come away from a meal still hungry rather than full.<sup>98</sup> It follows, then, that by observing these rules, an individual could quite literally eat like a man and achieve a correspondingly masculine physique. In the *Unknown Man* and its comparators, the subjects are depicted with very similar lean physiques, suggesting that they all follow a dietary regimen that constructs their bodies in a particularly masculine shape. In each portrait, the small waist and curved hip of this masculine shape are emphasized by the tapered form of the peascod doublet or breastplate and a tight belt.

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<sup>97</sup>Elyot, fol. 17.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid. Lemnius, fol. 14.

## CONCLUSION

As Lacey Baldwin Smith succinctly observes in his discussion of English painting, sixteenth-century English portraits depict “what ought to be,” rather than the facts of lived experience.<sup>99</sup> The “repertoire” of visual, regulatory conventions outlined in this thesis allowed men to construct and “achieve” what was, in lived experience, nearly impossible to attain: the estate of manhood. The depicted body that emerges from this “repertoire,” such as the subject of the *Unknown Man*, makes this construction of the male-as-man permanent and allows the portrait to stand in for the subject. Just as Alberti characterizes paintings as having the power to make the absent present, the portrait continuously manifests the subject’s perfectly-regulated body, materializing manhood even when it could not be achieved or sustained in life.<sup>100</sup> The permanence of this depicted body also allows the portrait to invoke the subject’s manhood long after his physical body has expired.<sup>101</sup> As William Segar explains in *Honour Military and Civil* (1602), the portrait enables the viewer to “retain in memory” the actions, virtues, and honor of the subject; in other words, the “readable” qualities that construct the subject as a “man.”<sup>102</sup> Consequently, portraits such as the *Unknown Man* were able to instruct male viewers in the

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<sup>99</sup>Lacey Baldwin Smith, “‘Christ What a Fright’: The Tudor Portrait as an Icon,” *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 4 (1973): 122.

<sup>100</sup>Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting*, trans. and ed. Rocco Sinisgalli (New York: Cambridge U. Press, 2011), 44.

<sup>101</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup>William Segar as quoted in Smith, 122. Originally in William Segar, *The Book of Honor and Armes* (1590) and *Honour Military and Civil* (1602) (Delmar, NY: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1975), 238. *Honour Military and Civil* is an expanded and illustrated version of Segar’s 1590 *The Booke of Honour and Armes*.



visual and performative conventions that regulated the body to produce manhood, thereby perpetuating both the conventions themselves and the homosocial environment of emulation described by Castiglione.<sup>103</sup>

Today, the *Unknown Man* continues to invoke its subject's embodiment of regulated, ideal manhood in a way that is "readable" and (academically) instructive to its viewers. By "reading" the body of this unknown sitter, as well as those depicted in its comparanda, it is possible to identify a significant number of conventions that were used to manifest ideal English manhood between 1587 and 1595. The "repertoire" that these conventions comprise allows us to access and understand English manhood in a way that builds upon and supplements descriptions of deportment and bodily regulation in sources such as *The Book of the Courtier* and *The Castel of Health*.

The *Unknown Man* is particularly suited to this type of analysis because its anonymity allows us to question what *kind* of person the subject wished to portray himself as, and likely strove to be in life, rather than simply *who* he was. This "reading" of masculine *identity* rather than *identification* is a useful framework that can be mobilized to approach the numerous other English portraits whose associated names and biographies have been lost. Additionally, by expanding the chronological or geographic parameters of this framework, it would also be possible to expand the "repertoire" of visual conventions of manhood. A wider study of European conventions of manhood in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, for instance, would be particularly useful in deepening our understandings of the identity that is constructed in works akin to the *Unknown Man*.

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<sup>103</sup>Smith argues that the portrait was used to instruct men in chivalric virtues. See Smith, 122.

## FIGURES



Figure 1: Unknown Artist, *Unknown Man*. c. 1590, Oil on Canvas, 84 x 48 in. The North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh.



Figure 2: Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger, *Captain Thomas Lee*. 1594, Oil on canvas,  $90 \frac{7}{10} \times 59 \frac{2}{5}$  in. Tate Britain, London.



Figure 3: Unknown Artist, *Charles Brandon, 1st Duke of Suffolk*. c. 1540-1545, Oil on panel, 34  $\frac{5}{8}$  x 29  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. The National Portrait Gallery, London.





Figure 4: Unknown Artist, *Robert Carey, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Monmouth*. c. 1591, Oil on Panel, 36  $\frac{1}{5}$  x 28  $\frac{9}{10}$  in. Montacute House, Somerset.



Figure 5: Attributed to John Bettes the Younger, *Thomas Cavendish*. 1588-1591, Oil on Panel, 35 x 29 in. Private Collection.





Figure 6: Attributed to Daniel Van Den Queecborne, *Sir William Drury, of Hawstead, Suffolk*. 1587, Oil on Canvas, 93  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 61  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. Yale Center for British Art, New Haven.



Figure 7: Nicholas Hilliard, *Portrait of Sir Anthony Mildmay, Knight of Apethorpe, Northants.* c. 1590-1593, Watercolor on vellum, 9  $\frac{1}{8}$  x 6  $\frac{13}{16}$  in. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland.





Figure 8: Attributed to “H,” *Sir Walter Raleigh*. 1588, Oil on panel, 36 x 29  $\frac{3}{8}$  in. National Portrait Gallery, London.



Figure 9: Attributed to William Segar, *Portrait of Sir Walter Raleigh, Soldier and Historian*, 1598. 1598, Oil on canvas, 43 x 33 in. National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin.



Figure 10: Unknown Artist, *Henry Wriothesley, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Southampton*. c. 1600, Oil on canvas, 80 ½ x 48 in. Lent by a private collection to the National Portrait Gallery, London.





Figure 11: Giovanni Ambrogio Figieno, *Portrait of Lucio Foppa*. c. 1590, Oil on panel,  $41 \frac{3}{10} \times 19 \frac{7}{10}$  in. Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan.



Figure 12: Circle of Marcus Gheeraerts, *Sir John Needham*. c. 1590, Oil on Canvas, 82 ½ x 43 in. Private Collection.



Figure 13: Unknown Artist, *Sir John Leventhorpe*. c. 1595, Unknown medium, 83 ½ x 46 ½ in.  
Collection of the Marquess of Lothian, Melbourne Hall, Derbyshire.





Figure 14: Unknown Artist, Detail, *Ball at the Valois Court*. c. 1580, Oil on canvas,  $64 \frac{1}{10} \times 76 \frac{3}{10}$  in. Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rennes, Rennes.

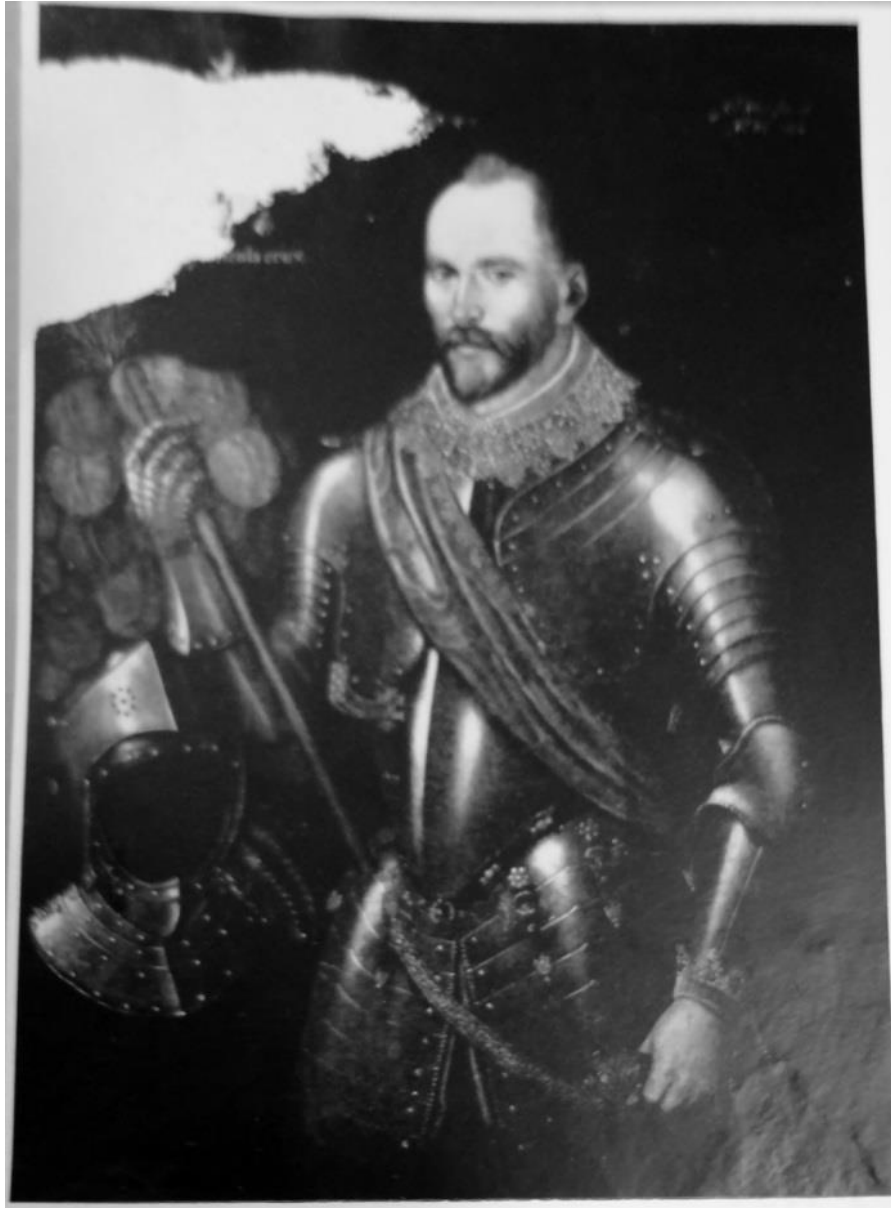


Figure 15: Unknown Artist, *Sir George Villiers of Brooksby*. 1592, Unknown medium, Unknown Dimensions. Collection of the Earl of Dartmouth, Patshull.





Figure 16: George Gower, *Armada Portrait of Elizabeth I*. c. 1588, Oil on panel,  $52 \frac{2}{5} \times 41 \frac{3}{10}$  in. Woburn Abbey Collection, Bedfordshire.



Figure 17: Unknown Artist, *Armada Medal*. 1588, Silver, 2 in. diameter. Hans and Hanni Kraus Collection of Sir Francis Drake Materials, Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Washington, DC.





Figure 18: Cornelis Anthonisz. Theunissen, *Allegory of a Wise Man and a Wise Woman*. c. 1530-1550, Woodcut, 10 <sup>2</sup>/<sub>5</sub> x 9 in. The British Museum, London.





Figure 19: Agnolo Bronzino, *Portrait of a Young Man*. 1530s, Oil on wood, 37  $\frac{5}{8}$  x 29  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.



Figure 20: Titian, *Portrait of Philip II*. c. 1554, Oil on canvas, 72  $\frac{4}{5}$  x 40  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. Galleria Palatina, Florence.



Figure 21: Nicholas Hilliard, *Sir Henry Wriothesley*. 1594, Vellum laid on playing card,  $1\frac{3}{5} \times 1\frac{3}{10}$  in. The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

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