

AUTHORIZING EXPERIENCE

REFIGURATIONS OF THE
BODY POLITIC IN
SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY
NEW ENGLAND WRITING

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tracts that criticized the king and instead offered writings on Congregational “church order and discipline” to the English public.⁸

Colonial writers used the Antinomian controversy (1636–38) to demonstrate that Congregationalism safeguarded and even bolstered an English authority that would not challenge the old system of monarchical rule. The conduct of the magistrates and church elders during the controversy initially drew censure for what critics on both sides of the Atlantic saw as the colony’s many violations of English common law.⁹ Amy Schragger Lang points out that “the same English Puritans who had not hesitated to criticize New England’s handling of the antinomians found themselves confronting a similar menace” during the crises of the 1640s.¹⁰ Thus colonial New English writers hoped that the Congregational system that had drawn so much fire would now be viewed more favorably in England. It was at this point that colonial treatises could represent their own Congregational solution as one that might keep the English social order in place as well. Their argument to this effect began with the allegation that a group of “Antinomians” was engaged in “seditious” activities aimed directly at the authority of the colony’s political and religious leaders.¹¹ Since the besieged leaders were the Crown’s representatives in the colony, any threat to their power was also an attack on the king in particular and on English systems of authority in general. The Congregationalists’ success in dealing with the seditious factions illustrated the superiority of the New England system. Thus, it was argued, the English government would be wise to follow the example of Massachusetts Bay if it hoped to maintain political order in already turbulent times.

All of this is well known to scholars of colonial American literature. Indeed, few texts in the period have generated as much commentary as the trial transcripts of Anne Hutchinson, the woman whom the magistrates considered the “root” of the subversive faction. I have no interest in participating in the ongoing debate over what precisely led the magistrates to banish Hutchinson and whether Hutchinson and the magistrates’ theological differences represent competing orthodoxies or variations within a single religious ideology. I am interested, instead, in the rhetorical measures taken to represent and quell the threat posed to the colony.

As James Schramer and Timothy Sweet correctly point out, “[b]odily analogies are the controlling metaphors” in the Antinomian controversy’s written records.¹² In telling the story of the controversy to an English audience, colonial writers cast the Antinomian threat as a “Plague” that had “infected” the colonial body. Magistrates and church elders subsequently “cured” that infection by subjecting Hutchinson

Chapter Four

DISCIPLINE AND DISINFECT

AS PERRY MILLER noted long ago, New English civil and religious institutions were designed at least in part to be “a working model to guide” the political allies they had left behind in England.¹ New Englanders soon learned, however, that their institutions were often seen more as a threat to English government than a cure for its ills. In *Plain Dealing: Or, News From New England* (1641), Thomas Lechford claims that the years 1638 to 1641 during which he lived in Massachusetts Bay proved to him that the political system of New England undermined the political authority on which the stability of the English nation depends. The government of Massachusetts Bay endangered the monarchy, according to Lechford, because it assumed that patriarchal authority derives from the common body of the people rather than from “the great body, heart and hands, and feete” of the king, whose immortal body politic stands at the “head” of the ideal social body.² Lechford suggests that by locating the source of political authority in the will of the people, the colonists not only challenge the “hereditary, successive” monarchical system but also put the very Englishness of English government at risk, since national identity depends, he argues, on the purity of the aristocratic bloodline that popular sovereignty is not designed to protect.³

Colonial writers protested their innocence. They had no intention of undermining English government; they merely wanted to plant that government on firmer ground. They wanted England to adopt the Congregational church system, a system that called for the popular election of some political representatives by a carefully screened group of voters.⁴ By publishing treatises in London during the monarchical crisis of the 1640s, Massachusetts Bay colonists hoped to make Congregationalists their allies in England.⁵ They hoped that the English civil war would lead to a government on the order of their own Congregational churches.⁶ But the colonists were in a precarious position. Since the king had issued the colony’s charter, “political expediency” prevented the colonists from “publicly and officially endors[ing] the parliamentary cause,” lest the king return to power and the magistrates be charged with treason.⁷ So it was that the colonists refrained from publishing

and her allies to rigorous civil and religious examinations. Only after these hearings failed to convince the Antinomians of the danger their religious ideas posed to the health of the communal body did the magistrates decide to banish the Antinomians. Thus, the Congregational system drew on its authority to quell dissent by representing the colonial community as a body at risk.

To understand the significance of this use of the plague as a rhetorical figure, we must, I believe, look to Europe. The measures taken by the colonists against a spiritual infection are analogous to new procedures developed during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when the plague raged across the Continent. These new strategies developed for dealing with the plague in Europe are striking because they are also the very procedures that Foucault identifies with the onset of a modern bureaucratic system of inclusion and discipline that produces distinctively modern institutions for managing populations. Indeed, Foucault goes so far as to argue that “the plague gave rise to disciplinary projects.”¹³ When the plague struck a city in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, he reminds us, everyone, the populace as well as the aristocracy, were sealed into their homes. This change in policy represented a fundamental shift in the self-image of the nation: “Rather than the massive, binary division between one set of people and another,” the nation comes to be imagined as many self-enclosed households “ceaselessly” under the surveillance of the local magistrates. Whereas previously the nation had been imagined as twin bodies whose separation was necessary to ensure the survival of the body politic, disciplinary society imagines the community as a single body whose health depends on the vigilant oversight of its constituent parts by an elaborate bureaucracy.

I do not mean to suggest that Foucault’s analysis of continental responses to the plague can explain the Antinomian controversy. The spiritual plague infecting the Congregational community is not the same as the modern institutional culture that emerged as a new method of dealing with bubonic plague. But these differences between Europe and America should not prevent us from attending to certain similarities that offer new insight into this well-discussed controversy. The connection that Foucault makes between the treatment of the plague and the new ways of imagining and protecting the nation shows that the figure of the plague is used elsewhere to modify the basis, method, and goal of state government. To see the Antinomian plague as a threat to English systems of government, one must understand the nation in somatic terms. The colony, like the European nation, resembles a diseased body, because its membership/population has been infected—whether physically or spiritually figurative, the cultural logic is much the same. The remedy does not involve preserving the head, aristocracy, or elders, but

weeding out the infection and making the whole body once again whole. This requires enclosure and examination, according to Foucault, rather than the kind of solution represented, for example, in Boccaccio’s *Decameron*.¹⁴

Any number of seventeenth-century New England writings could serve as the site for an investigation of the figure of Antinomianism as an infection. Edward Johnson, Peter Bulkeley, John Cotton, and Cotton Mather—to name only a few—all cast the threat in terms of a plague-like infection of the colonial body.¹⁵ In order to calculate the effects on the body politic of the figure of the plague, rhetorical and real, I have chosen to focus on the work not only considered the “first and most authoritative history of the Controversy,” but also thought to have “set the conceptual terms for recounting the crisis” used by later chroniclers—John Winthrop’s *A Short Story of the Rise, reign, and ruine of the Antinomians, Familists, & Libertines* (1644).¹⁶ In this well-known “history,” Winthrop, governor of the colony, shows how Massachusetts Bay’s magistrates and church elders disinfected the colonial body of the Antinomian plague by transforming themselves into a bureaucracy capable of examining and weeding out the sources of contamination, and thus making the body whole.¹⁷ In holding the magistrates and elders responsible for safeguarding the colonial body politic from disease, I will argue, Winthrop makes a subtle but significant shift in the national self-image. He suggests that for the colony’s bureaucratic system to work, it must treat the national body as if it were made up of many different households rather than an aristocratic body in relation to which the common body represents, in Foucault’s words, “a mass among which it was useless to differentiate.”¹⁸ This new figure of the body politic as an aggregate of individual members has at least one additional feature that the traditional body politic lacked. Winthrop’s rhetoric suggests that the elevation of the common body to the status of a figure for the nation itself must be accompanied by a rather rigid internal division and hierarchy of that body along gender lines: for Winthrop, only the subordination of female to male members can ensure that this body politic does not revert to the older figure of the popular body as unruly or carnivalesque.

Scholars have long acknowledged the pivotal role played by images of women’s bodies in Winthrop’s version of the controversy. Their bodies, according to Ann Kibbey, are offered by Winthrop as “proof of the horror of antinomianism.”¹⁹ Thus, when Anne Hutchinson and Mary Dyer, both of the Antinomian party, bear stillborn children in the midst of the crisis, Winthrop orders the babies’ bodies exhumed from their plots and examined as signs from God that the Antinomians have twisted His doctrine. The “monstrous and misshapen” body of the infant Hutchinson

bears reflects the “misshappen” opinions she has “vented.”²⁰ The author of the preface to *A Short Story*, Thomas Welde, wrote it while serving as the colonists’ agent in England during the civil war. According to Welde, God has “caused the two fomenting women in the time of the height of the [controversy] to produce out of their wombs, as before they had out of their brains, such monstrous births as no Chronicle (I thinke) hardly ever recorded the like.”²¹ Indeed, Welde asserts that the children’s dead bodies indicate God’s “owne vote and suffrage” on the matter (12–13).²²

Cultural historian Thomas Laqueur uses Winthrop’s version of the trope of the monstrous birth to illustrate how women’s bodies serve as figures for what Bakhtin calls the “grotesque body,” the popular body in need of regulation. Winthrop’s claim to have found “horns . . . claws, and holes in the back, and some scales” on one of the fetuses provides Laqueur with “an excruciating and dramatic” manifestation of the belief that “any perturbation of accepted order . . . could imprint itself disastrously on the flesh of [a woman’s] child in utero.”²³ Nor is Laqueur alone in equating women with the negation of the social order in seventeenth-century literature. Winthrop’s macabre description of the dead babies has succeeded in attracting the attention of a number of scholars interested in demonstrating that representations of female bodies in early modern literature serve political ends.²⁴ For Welde, the traditional figure provides the “order and sense of [the] story” of Antinomianism (1). Winthrop argues that the Antinomians put this “order and sense” in jeopardy, as he translates the controversy’s historical events and theological disputes into an account of how the colonial body politic body caught and fought off an infection. In England, the king’s body stood at once for the secular government and for the Church of England, as if there were no difference between them. Winthrop invokes this figure of national leadership and puts the church in the place of the king in making the claim that “the whole Church of Boston” was “infected with [Anne Hutchinson’s] opinions” (32). Hutchinson’s opinions were so infectious that “where ever shee came [the infectious opinions] must and they should spread” (32). As a result, Antinomianism “spread so fast” that those of sound faith were powerless to stop its march through the colonial body; only “the most wise and mercifull providence of the Lord . . . prevented it by keeping so many of the Magistrates, and Elders, free from the infection” (33). As Welde notes in the preface, preaching provided the only “cure [for] those that were diseased already” and served as the necessary “Antidote” to “preserve [the rest] from infection” (10). Thus Winthrop sets the magistrates and elders in the place of the monarch as the protectors of the body politic, in much

the same way that seventeenth-century bureaucracies did in European cities during times of plague.

It is only when Winthrop’s remarks on babies’ corpses are viewed as part of a larger discourse on the body politic that his detailed description of the grotesque features of the bodies of Antinomian babies can be seen as yet another contribution to the debate over the effects of the colonial body on the English social body. The figures he uses to describe the babies’ dead bodies are identical to those used by English opponents of colonization to describe what would happen to the English body politic if colonization were allowed to proceed. In claiming that the child born of Antinomianism had “no head but a face, which stood so low upon the breast, as the eares (which were like an Apes) grew upon the shoulders,” Winthrop appropriated a figure that opponents of colonization claimed would be the inevitable offspring of English bodies should they live outside England. In this single brilliant stroke, he equates the bodies of those who oppose his model of authority with those who have rebelled against colonial government and are thus no longer English. In his description, such people have not only reverted to a lower form in the natural chain of beings, they have also gone to hell.

Thus does Winthrop devote such detail to these “Monsters” to show the dangers of colonial insurrection. Winthrop intends his method of dealing with unruly women to be a model for English rule in general. England requires such a model, he suggests, because the grotesque body, which anticolonial propaganda used to generate fear of extending the body politic to America, did not originate in the colonies. Nor did it “grow” within the colonial population. The “immediate revelations” that Hutchinson claimed to have received from God occurred before she arrived on New English shores (38). Indeed, there is nothing New English about the woman. Even the “skill[s]” necessary to “spread” the Antinomian “distemper” with preternatural speed through so much of the colonial population were “learned . . . in England” (31). By claiming that all of Hutchinson’s opinions, practices, and abilities were in fact “brought into New-England” from England, Winthrop disarms critics who would suggest that she exemplifies the colonial woman. Pushing his argument for her essential Old Englishness still further, Winthrop validates Hutchinson’s own argument that her rebellion was at least in part due to the authoritarian tactics of the New English court system. She arrived at what her judges contend are her most dangerous opinions only after they had locked her away from her most trusted religious counselors (58). According to Winthrop’s version of the controversy, then, the order of the English colony was threatened by seditious thinking that came into the colony from England.

But Winthrop in no way suggests that England threatens the autonomy and internal order of colonial government, since that government is itself an extension and subordinate part of the English body politic. Indeed, Winthrop claims it is the Antinomians who challenge monarchial authority in defying the king's rightful emissaries in the colony: magistrates such as Winthrop himself. To the magistrates "the King" has "given . . . authority by his graunt under his great Seale of England to heare and determine all causes without any reservation" (27). Hutchinson, Winthrop concludes, was sent to New England by God to test the strength of an English body whose civil authority comes directly from the monarch and was established according to Biblical principles. The fact that Massachusetts Bay survived—which required nothing short of ridding itself of the infection attacking its body—defines the colonial government as an example of the well-regulated English social body that England herself should heed.

We receive an especially clear sense of how Winthrop rethinks the social body from his sermon written on the occasion of the Great Migration in 1630. In "A Modell of Christian Charity" (1630), he argues that what "knits" the various parts of the social body together constitutes "its perfection."²⁵ The New England body politic comes as close to realizing the metaphysical body as can any body politic on earth, for nothing less than Christ's "spirit and love" "knitts" the "severall partes of this body . . . to each other."²⁶ Winthrop maintains that since Christ makes the various parts of this community cohere as one body, the political, theological, and social practices born out of the body will remain pure once the imported elements are disinfected (40). In calling attention to the English origins of the Antinomian threat, Winthrop means to point out England's own vulnerability to the very threat Winthrop himself is struggling to bring under control. That is, if a particularly strong part of the English body politic had to work so hard to shake off this infection, nothing would prevent an English body not modeled so closely on Christian principles from succumbing.

Imported opinions may put the pure New English body at risk, but the far greater threat comes from the sex of the body from which these trusted versions of the word of God issue forth. The importance of gender in understanding the controversy has long been a commonplace of colonial scholarship, and I have no intention of rehearsing the claim that Hutchinson was singled out as the "root of all [the colony's] troubles" simply because she was a woman.²⁷ Indeed, it is my hope that this argument has gained general acceptance and will require little further elaboration.²⁸ I simply want to suggest that gender becomes so important to representations of the body politic and eventually a source of tension within it because of the way that Winthrop used the Antinomian contro-

versy to rethink the relation between England and her colonies. Hutchinson, he contends, is nothing less than "the head" of the infectious Antinomian monster that has been "breeder and nourisher of all these distempers" (31). Why, if not to represent the Antinomians as an upside-down version of the social body with its nether parts in place of its head, would Winthrop exaggerate her role in the controversy to the extent of naming her "the principal cause of [the colony's] trouble." Why would he do so, even though any number of influential male leaders, including the ministers John Cotton and John Wheelwright, lectured on Antinomian doctrine to larger groups on a more regular basis in an ambiguously acceptable context for religious teaching? Unless he had some larger rhetorical strategy in mind, it is hard to conceive of Winthrop contradicting his own (misogynist) assumption that Hutchinson's opinions were not her own. They were derived from radical English theologians whose ideas would have been familiar to any dissenter dissatisfied with the English church in the colonial environment of the 1630s.²⁹ Winthrop singled out the only female voice in the colony and proclaimed her opposition to points of theology, I believe, because it afforded the opportunity to suggest that the Antinomians were not only granting masculine authority to a woman, but thereby also neglecting the long-standing iconographic principle that the "head" of any legitimate political hierarchy was rightfully masculine.

Moreover, in casting the Antinomian communal body as threatening simply because it was female, Winthrop implied that the body politic should be understood as biologically rather than merely figuratively male. Particularly striking about this implication on Winthrop's part is his apparent willingness to fly in the face of a tradition that represented the body politic as a body without sex. Leonard Tennenhouse is among those who argue that at least through Elizabeth's reign "state power was not understood as male in any biological sense," even though it was certainly understood as masculine or patriarchal.³⁰ By insisting that the body politic should be thought of as biologically male, Winthrop has refigured that body and, by implication, the distribution of power itself.³¹

In making sex a precondition for political authority, Winthrop imperceptibly substitutes sex for rank as the chief division within the body politic. We can observe this shift more clearly if we return to the figure of the ideal body politic described in "A Modell of Christian Charity." In this earlier essay, Winthrop had figured the very same ideal body politic he describes in *A Short Story* divided by rank.³² In fact, as he saw the political situation then, divisions by rank constituted the natural order of any social body, for "in all times some must be rich, some poore, some highe and eminent in power and dignitic; others meane and in

subjection.”³³ These differences within the social body were ordained by God, since “all men are ranked into two sortes, riche and poore” by “divine providence.”³⁴ Winthrop believes that for the body politic to be just that, a body politic, distinctions between the various ranks “must” be maintained. Sexual divisions do not enter into this picture before the Antinomian controversy. To be sure, *A Short Story* still acknowledges the importance of rank in maintaining a healthy body politic, but sex has inserted itself into his paradigm of the orderly state as a more primary division on which all other forms of internal hierarchy—including rank—ultimately depend. The healthy body is the sexually differentiated body. In ignoring the consequences of having a biologically female head, a colonial government risks the health of the entire body of which the colony is a part. Indeed, this is precisely the insight *A Short Story* means to offer its English audience: that they, too, must reimagine the body politic along gender lines. The body politic can only be healthy when male bodies rule over female ones from head to toe, just as the members of one rank must rule those of a lower rank in the established model of the political order. What threatens the health of the body is not usurpation of aristocratic power by commoners so much as the usurpation of masculine prerogatives by women. At all costs, the political body must protect its masculinity.³⁵

To make his point, Winthrop traces the Antinomian contagion back to the birth room. By locating the source of insurrection in this particular place, he loads his argument against female authority with the freight of ages to suggest at once blood, supernatural birth, women’s gossip, and unsanitary conditions as the source of physical disease.³⁶ While Winthrop’s call for a male presence in the birth room no doubt contributes to the well-chronicled “development of obstetrical science” dominated by males and the corresponding decline of midwifery, he wants more than simply to establish a male professional class to oversee and legitimate.³⁷ He draws on this repository of folklore about women’s conspiratorial power in order to convince his readers to vest power in men. Embodied in women, power overturned precisely the order it was supposed to uphold.³⁸ When rank served as the basis of political power, the exclusion of males from the birth room posed little or no actual threat.³⁹ When, however, political authority depended on male regulation of the female body, any space where women might escape the watchful eye of male authority was a place where they were likely to stir up trouble. Such a space within the body politic was an inversion—or antibody, if you will—capable of undermining the health of the body politic from within.⁴⁰

Winthrop goes well beyond merely placing a female head on the grotesque Antinomian body. So that there can be no doubt about the sex-

ual character of the threat the female body poses to the authority that Winthrop would have us believe is naturally embodied in the male, he suggests that the infection spreads most rapidly when there are no men around; Antinomianism is born out of Hutchinson’s “work” among women “during times of child-birth” (31). It was during such times that she “easily insinuated her selfe into the affections” of the female members of the congregation—so much so that she eventually usurps the rightful ministers in dispensing theological counsel. When he locates the origin of the Antinomian disease in childbirth, Winthrop means to show that men play absolutely no role in the “spread” of this infection. A perfectly healthy woman “contracts” the disease through contact with the Antinomian women attending at the birth of her child, and she “carries” the disease back to her own home when leaving the birthing room, “infecting” her own children in the process. I cannot overemphasize the graphically somatic character of Winthrop’s metaphor for moral contagion. After Mary Dyer gave birth to the stillborn child, he tells us, for example, that “most of the women who were present at [Dyer’s] travail, were suddenly taken with such a violent vomiting, and purging . . . they were forced to go home” where “their children [were] taken with convulsions” (44).⁴¹

This account of an infection spreading outward from rooms that only women inhabit to the homes and families of those women helps Winthrop identify what he regards as the real target of Antinomianism. He contends that Hutchinson’s diseased theology ultimately singles out the natural authority within families in order to destroy household by household the internal order of the body politic. Although weekly meetings were common among radical Protestants in England, in Hutchinson’s hands these meetings become, according to Winthrop, a way of attacking the family; they do a “great damage,” Winthrop claims, “to the Common-wealth” because the families of those attending are “neglected” (36).⁴² The magistrates have no choice but to intervene in such a situation. To attack the family was to attack the very foundation of the church since, as Edmund Morgan argues, New England Puritans “thought of their church as an organization made up of families rather than individuals.”⁴³ “As the Fathers of the Common-wealth,” the magistrates were entrusted with protecting the family structure (36). Indeed, ministers in Massachusetts Bay “routinely referred to the family as a ‘little church’ or a ‘little commonwealth.’”⁴⁴ It is this image of the household as “a little commonwealth” that Locke would use in his essay “On Paternal Power.”⁴⁵ By invoking the image of the father, Winthrop suggests that the commonwealth not only be thought of as a single family but that its chain of command is as natural as the patriarchal chain from father, to mother, to child. To counter those who might argue that

the meetings were of positive spiritual benefit to the families of all those in attendance, Winthrop argued that these meetings only misdirected spiritual energy away from the family and proper rearing of children. Hutchinson's meetings were designed, according to Winthrop, to lure people away from their rightful duties by appealing to their desire for "a very ease, and acceptable way to heaven" (31).

Let us pause at this point and consider what Winthrop has accomplished by means of the figure of the spiritually infectious woman. He has proposed that family units be closed off and contained within the individual household, each headed by a father who keeps his wife and children under supervision at all times and never allows women to congregate on their own. At the same time, and in apparent contradiction to this individualizing logic, he contends that such self-enclosure is the only way to ensure the integrity and inclusionary character of the English community as aggregate. Just such a set of procedures is proposed by Foucault as necessary for creating and maintaining a modern secular state. William Petty, too, proposed that such procedures were the best method for protecting the English nation from the next plague that might come to England from the Continent. By redefining the "head" of the body politic in gendered terms, Petty reconceptualized that body in terms of its people and the family as a self-enclosed social unit analogous to the state. I am not suggesting that Winthrop had anything like this European vision of modernity in mind when he rethinks the colonial social order in a way that will put Anne Hutchinson in her place. But he does seize upon a remarkably similar set of procedures and, in many respects, accomplishes the same goal even more powerfully than did his European counterparts, because his model is still shot through with divine purpose.

And what of Hutchinson in all this? What does Winthrop claim she used to attract so many colonists to meetings designed only to "seduce" them into separation from the very body that Christ had knit together? Winthrop does not, as we might first suspect, have Hutchinson advocate an earlier view of the social body, one that Winthrop would have us replace with his own. Quite the contrary. Winthrop's view resembles Hutchinson's in that they anticipate two contending components of a modern model of the nation.

According to Winthrop, Hutchinson's power is purely rhetorical and stems from her appeal to experience. He accuses the Antinomians of substituting experience for testimony sanctioned by God. One of Hutchinson's theological "Errors" is her belief that "No minister can be an instrument to convey more of Christ unto another, than hee by his own experience hath come upon" (12). To suggest that a member of the church possesses knowledge equal to the minister's challenges the

model of the church as a single body whose parts are held together by Christ's love and spirit. It substitutes the body of the individual who directly experiences God for the body of the church, which mediates between God and that individual. This, as Winthrop sets up the analogy, is tantamount to leaving Christ out of the picture.

Thus experience threatens to sever the ligaments connecting a community that Christ holds together. The "poysen" that Hutchinson injects into the pure New England body politic disguises itself as a cure for the anxiety felt by those members of the church who may not have achieved personal salvation (64). The body of the church may be immortal, but that does not eliminate the possibility that any individual member may perish. In this respect, Winthrop's model of the church resembles an early modern body politic in which perpetuity is guaranteed to the blood alone, not to any particular embodiment. According to Winthrop, Antinomianism fails to hook individual salvation up to the well-being of the whole social body. Since in Antinomianism the body of the saved remains healthy regardless of the welfare of the larger body of which it is but a part, why should such an individual bother. Winthrop asks, to worry about how his or her effects on the community? To demonstrate the falseness of Hutchinson's position in this respect, Winthrop calls attention to her claim that her "experience" of grace indicates that human judges "have no power over [her] body, neither can [they] do [her] any harme" (38).⁴⁶ From this, he concludes, the "practice of immediate revelations" could have "such dangerous consequences" for the community that the magistrates must "disarm" the Antinomians and all those "who had openly defended them" (41–42). What was finally wrong with Hutchinson, then, was her way of figuring the ordinary individual as outside and independent of the body politic.

In Winthrop's eyes, Hutchinson endangers the Congregational community because she believes that the saved have two bodies. Winthrop contends that the experience of immediate revelation allows her to disregard her place within the body politic, because this experience provides her with evidence of a second body housing the spirit. This spiritual body differs from the natural body in that it is immune from the diseases that will kill the common body of the church. According to Winthrop, Hutchinson has proposed that "[t]hose who are united to Christ have in this life new bodies, and 2 bodies," a conclusion she can reach only because she "knowes not how Jesus Christ should be united to this our fleshly bodies" (59). Her "admonition" from the church results from her "obstinately . . . maintain[ing]" her position on this issue in spite of "the many places of the Scripture . . . which were brought to convince her" that such views would lead her to deny the Resurrection (64 and 63). In fact, however, nowhere in the trial transcripts is Hutch-

inson actually quoted as saying that to be saved means that one possesses two bodies. She merely puzzles over how such a pure being as Christ could be united in any way to bodies that Puritan theologians consider the source and emblem of depravity.

It is important to remind ourselves at this point that neither Hutchinson's views nor Winthrop's attack on these views were unique to the colonies. Since the beginning of the Reformation, Protestants across Europe had been making much the same argument as Winthrop's whenever they refuted the various radical sects that arose on the fringes of Orthodoxy. Thus I am not claiming that Winthrop and Hutchinson have broken new theological ground in their debate over the problem of the resurrected body. I simply want to suggest that their rather conventional argument over how one evaluates individual experience does something new to the traditional iconography of the body politic, when that body is one and the same as the Church of Boston. However, inadvertently, Winthrop alters the theory of the king's two bodies on which English monarchical authority was founded when he tries to define Hutchinson's theology as not simply heretical but dangerous to the political order of the community as well. He, not Hutchinson, after all, proposes the idea of salvation as two bodies housed within a single human host. In doing so, he makes Hutchinson's position on the Resurrection look remarkably similar to the early modern figure of the monarch's two bodies.

Indeed, it might be argued that Hutchinson's central premise, that a human can have direct and continuing physical union with the Lord, is virtually the same theory used by political theorists to explain the king's two bodies.⁴⁷ Like the metaphysical body politic, the spiritual body created by Christ's direct intrusion into the individual's consciousness produces a corporate spiritual body that corresponds component by component to that older figure of the metaphysical body politic, in that it exists outside of time and knows no form of natural deterioration. In Hutchinson's representation, the "fleshy body" corresponds to the natural body of the monarch. In place of this figure incorporating Christ's spirit in individual flesh, each person saved being thus a little monarch in the kingdom of the elect, Winthrop substitutes the sexed body of the church community. This body, too, is immortal, but it is not housed within the body of any single individual. Nor, then, can it be represented by any such individual. It is a collective entity whose internal coherence demands the subordination of the female components to male. Winthrop claims that tolerating any other theory of the body will risk "the peace of any State." No body politic, neither New England nor England herself, should consider itself immune to the doctrine that issues from women. Hutchinson's individual encounter with God gives

her a personal story to tell about a body she possesses as individual with Christ, a story that relies on the doctrine of experience for its authority. This is the basis on which Winthrop condemns her for having put herself outside and above the community.

In showing what is wrong with experience, however, Winthrop does not dismiss it. On the contrary, he demonstrates its flaws in order to appropriate its infectious powers for his own rhetorical use. In fact, I would argue that both Winthrop and the Antinomians more generally are the champions of experience. Though Winthrop would have us believe that his refutation of Hutchinson's doctrine merely provides the antidote to the disease of false theology, he appeals to experience to put forth the true theology. Nowhere in her two trials nor in other contemporaneous accounts of the Antinomian controversy does Hutchinson describe or defend her actions through recourse to the authority of experience. Yet Winthrop's condemnation of her views on experience has led scholarship to cast Hutchinson in precisely the role that Winthrop wanted. Hutchinson becomes the spokesperson for individual experience. In accepting Hutchinson's role in precisely these terms, I would contend, we fail to understand the role that her chief opponent played in authorizing his own position by empowering the doctrine of experience.⁴⁸

Winthrop manages to shift the whole argument over church authority: whereas before colonists had argued whether institutional doctrine or personal experience should underwrite power, Winthrop asks them to consider different qualities and kinds of experience. His critique of experience proceeds on the premise that experience must be regulated because it is necessary for community health. He blames the Antinomians for overemphasizing what can be learned while one is involved in an experience and charges that in valorizing experience as is happening, they neglect the superior insights acquired during reflection on our past experience. It is only by reflecting on "bitter experience" that one sees the "true love" one has for Christ (33). "[F]ormer experiences" bring "comfort" to the true Christian by reminding him of his "Covenant" with God (13).

Immediately following the controversy and thus well before *A Short Story* was published, the conception of experience I am ascribing to Winthrop was actually institutionalized. After the controversy, according to Michael G. Ditmore, churches began to require prospective members to give a narrative of their conversion experience as a condition for membership.⁴⁹ Because the right to vote and hold civil office depended on belonging to the church, this required self-narration and allowed church leaders to set limits on what constituted an acceptable experience. Winthrop's account of a body politic imperiled by "monstrous"

views of experience served to legitimate precisely the disciplinary practices of Massachusetts Bay that had drawn so much fire from English Puritans. By revealing the dangers of experience, Winthrop suggested that while political authority in the colony derived from the *common* body of the church, and was thus subject to the whims of that body, no English institution oversaw the spiritual composition of the common body with the care and consistency that Congregationalism did. In this argument, we see the same kind of disciplinary logic that Foucault identifies with the management of the plague. Since all members of the community would want to belong to the church—their spiritual survival depended on it—admission procedures made everyone feel their experience as subject to constant scrutiny. Far from being exclusionary, the required narration includes all the community in the process of self-examination. In this way, the procedures Winthrop recommends to his English audience anticipate modern institutional cultures that regulate the body through the mind.

Rather than drive a wedge between English and New English Protestants, Winthrop aims the rhetoric of experience in *A Short Story* at all true Christians, showing that those on both sides of the Atlantic must align themselves against Hutchinson's attempt to define unregulated experience. Contrary to what some in England might think, Winthrop reasons, the English and New English Protestants constitute a single community of Christians in this respect, for "the servants of God, who are come over into *New England*, do not think of themselves more spiritual than other of their brethren whom they have left behind, nor that they can or do hold forth the Lord Jesus Christ in their ministry, more truly then he was held forth in *England*" (40). Such attempts on Winthrop's part to defend New English Protestants against charges of spiritual arrogance tend to be understood as self-interested. New England Puritans publicly disavow their criticism of their English counterparts, for fear of incurring the same forms of persecution that drove them across the Atlantic in the first place. I cannot attest to the sincerity of such disavowals except to mention how often, as in the case at hand, they seem designed to create alliances between colonial factions and to pit English Protestants against another colonial faction. It seems to me that in insisting on the similarity of true Christians regardless of geographical location, Winthrop wants to portray Hutchinson's views as not only spiritually deformed but also unEnglish. By insisting on his kinship in this respect with English ministers, Winthrop reminds his readers that after all is said and done, the colonists are fundamentally English. Moreover, because they have met and conquered an enemy the English have not, the colonists know how to solve certain problems. They have the advantage of this experience. His account of the Antinomian contro-

versy thus invests Winthrop's faction of the church with the authority of an experience unique to colonial Protestants.

As if to demonstrate the power of this knowledge, Thomas Welde adds a "Postscript" to his "Preface" to Winthrop's account. In it, Welde explains how Winthrop's method of handling the crisis within the Congregational Church does more than it set out to do. These procedures both find a "cure" for the "poyson" within the church community and incorporate into that body representatives of the native, pagan population. This inclusionary strategy is the mark of discipline. A good modern institution can incorporate and deracinate almost anyone and make potential outsiders feel that they have gained rather than lost by acquiring the membership we equate with a modern identity. Welde claims, for example, that "two Sagamores (or Indian Princes) with all their men, women and children, have voluntarily submitted themselves to the will and law of our God . . . and put themselves under our government . . . in the same manner, as any of the English are" (14). The implication is clear: the very body politic that saved the colony from a potentially lethal infection, in Winthrop's account, now subjugates the native population without violence or acrimony in Welde's postscript. Indeed, one might even see the postscript as a subtle criticism of those who would say that Winthrop's reformation of the body politic was hostile to English monarchy. In showing how the natives submit to the English monarch by submitting to Congregational doctrine, Welde suggests that such fears are completely unjustified. It would not be misreading his postscript to say that those in England who fail to see the benefits of the New English Way are less sensible than the Indians.