



The Culture of Obesity in Early and Late Modernity: Body Image in Shakespeare, Jonson, Middleton, and Skelton

Elena Levy-Navarro

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The Culture of Obesity in Early and Late Modernity offers the first sustained examination of fatness in the early modern period. As Levy-Navarro notes, bodily perceptions have evolved that value the thin body as they mark and stigmatize the fat one. Using readings of such major figures as Shakespeare, Jonson, Middleton, and Skelton, this book considers alternative ways that fat was constructed before the introduction of the modern pathologized category of “obesity”. Levy-Navarro argues that Shakespeare, Jonson, and Skelton understood that a thin aesthetic consolidates the power of the elite and chose to align themselves with their fat, lowly, and revolting characters--an alliance that offers a model of defiance with continued relevance.

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