

**Holmes, B. (2008) “Euripides’ *Heracles in the Flesh*,” *Classical Antiquity* 28.2, 231-81.**

This article takes up Euripides’ representation of Heracles’ madness in the *Heracles*. It departs from interpretations which narrate his madness in terms of entirely internal or external causality by insisting on its polysemy: the play offers multiple stories about his *nosos* and its implications. In conversation with fifth-century medical texts, it frames this polysemy in terms of the symptom: a deep rift in one’s sense of self or public persona that betrays the unseen presence of a fearsome, alien world. On this account, Heracles’ symptomatic madness exposes the vulnerability of the male heroic body. It uses this account of the symptom to reinterpret the play’s final scene with Theseus, emphasizing that Heracles’ apparent reconciliation with the *polis* does not erase the imperative to remember his madness and the questions it raises about the limits of heroic embodiment.