

asserts that these novelists were intent upon promoting “orthodox Christian [*sic*] beliefs” and that contrary to the scholarly view that denies any religious dimension to the Gothic form, these novels served as vehicles of “counter-revolutionary religious sentiment” (170).

Absent significant evidence for contemporary readership and reception, the tantalizing claims here for hitherto neglected explorations of soul, self, and Roman Catholicism in the Gothic are blunted by the obscurity of some of the texts and their authors. And it is unlikely that many readers will need reminding that “Christianity was still a way of life and thought” in the period (208). At the same time, the study usefully reminds us of the elusive cross-Channel entangling of doctrine, faith, and belief in its politics and fiction.

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Louisa Shea. *The Cynic Enlightenment: Diogenes in the Salon*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010. xx+262pp. ISBN 978-0-8018-9385-8.

In her appealingly ambitious study of Cynicism in the eighteenth century (and beyond), Louisa Shea perceptively articulates the tensions that have long structured debates around the social effects of philosophical critique. Shea is interested in the “Cynic legacy,” as she calls it, for the role that this inheritance plays in enabling eighteenth-century writers in France and Germany to test the limits of their own intellectual commitments. The figure of Diogenes—defacer of norms and, as Shea helpfully reminds us, of currencies—serves as a crucial point of reference for a wide range of writers seeking, during the Enlightenment and well into the twentieth century, to imagine (and later, to rethink) the position of the public intellectual. But Diogenes, as a critic and a rascal, is not just dogged in his attacks on social conventions but actively doglike: his reported bouts of public urination and masturbation, his shamelessness and poverty, his disrespect for authorities of all kinds (religious, political, and philosophical), make Cynicism particularly resistant to co-optation, even (or perhaps especially) by its “heirs.” In this sense, the Cynic legacy remains defined by ambivalence, and necessarily so.

As Shea argues, the Enlightenment period bears witness to the return to circulation of the coin of Cynicism, in the salons and among the philosophes, in France as well as in Germany. But the attempt to make of Diogenes the representative of an engaged and enlightened philosophy quickly becomes, as Shea portrays it, an effort to domesticate the Dog. Shea shows how the eighteenth-century reception of Cynicism

is significant not only for its successes but also for its failures, as a philosophical Cynicism gradually assumes the more familiar, and yet more scurrilous, posture of contemporary cynical apathy. In her reading of the modern cynic in opposition to his ancient Cynical progenitors, Shea makes elegant use of Peter Sloterdijk's critique of *Zynismus*—an “enlightened false consciousness” that ends in disillusionment and inaction—as the product of the Enlightenment, rather than its antithesis (Sloterdijk, *Critique of Cynical Reason*, trans. Michael Eldred [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987], 5). Yet *Zynismus* is itself both the antithesis and the product of the Cynical tradition from which it derives its name.

What does it mean to deface a philosophical tradition that locates its own point of origin in an act of defacement: namely, the injunction to “adulterate the coinage” (*parakharattein to nomisma*) uttered by the Delphic oracle to the young Diogenes? Shea provocatively opens up this question, although her answers tend, perhaps unavoidably, to emphasize the virtuous arduousness of the turn to Cynicism, occasionally at the expense of some of the outrageous roguishness that has made Diogenes both fascinating and horrifying to more respectable philosophers. Her systematic and engaging presentation of the principles of ancient Cynicism works to underline the difficulties inherent in any attempt to determine exactly what it is that Cynics might effectively pass on to those who aim to receive their message. Among the “competing images of the Cynics” who “vie for centre stage,” Shea identifies three in particular: that of the ascetic and disciplined Cynic, dedicated to moral simplicity and to the promotion of the public welfare; that of the unprincipled Cynic, without dignity and without constraints; and finally, that of the satirical Cynic, who laughs at the other two (19). Shea's reading of the Cynic legacy in the eighteenth century is in many ways a reading of the Enlightenment as a negotiation among the multiple faces visible in ancient portraits of the Cynics, a negotiation that appears eventually to collapse under the weight of its own contradictions, only to surface again in the writings of Sloterdijk and Foucault, towards the end of the twentieth century.

Shea places Diogenes at the very heart of the Enlightenment, contextualizing and illuminating the references to him and to his sect that appear in the work of d'Alembert, Diderot, Wieland, Rousseau (condemned as a false Cynic by Voltaire), and Sade, among others. Shea reads these eighteenth-century philosophers as invested in the reappropriation, but also the transvaluation, of ancient Cynicism. But the “new” Cynic was less transgressive than the old—a kinder, gentler Diogenes. And, at the same time as a polite Cynicism was being reclaimed for the Enlightenment project, Rousseau was taxed by his contemporaries for what Shea calls his “Cynic primitivism” (101).

Even as she persuasively depicts the vexations that accompany eighteenth-century attempts to press Cynicism into the service of

enlightened debate, Shea gives a particularly fine reading of Diderot's *Le Neveu de Rameau* through a Cynic lens. She shows how this dialogue may be understood as the confrontation of two types of Cynicism: the first, represented by the respectable "Moi," evokes the Cynic as a figure of autonomy and sound critical judgment, while the second, embodied by the disillusioned and bitter "Lui," foreshadows the emergence of a modern cynic as a defacer of *all* values—a pure egotist who has given up on any project of social reform. But Shea does not see Diderot as simply staging Cynic against cynic, in a rehash of Sloterdijk's position. As she explains, *Le Neveu de Rameau* "plays a pivotal role in the history of the relationship between Cynicism and Enlightenment: it employs the former to question the latter, showing Cynicism to be at once the illness and potential remedy of the progressive agenda of the philosophes" (56). For Shea, Diderot's Cynical apathy is at once a failure to recuperate ancient Cynicism and a means of exploring the limitations of an engaged philosophy that must, in order to be received by a public, carefully police itself.

Shea's reading of Sade's corpus, as informed by a kind of Cynical Utopianism (with fascinating echoes of the ancient Epicurean Philodemus's account, unknown to Sade, of what a Cynic society would look like), is similarly suggestive. Portraying Sade as the author of a Cynic republic in *Français, encore un effort*, Shea asks: "Could it be that when all is said and done, Cynicism belongs to the realm of fiction? *Français, encore un effort* is a libertine utopia, written on a note of provocation and inscribed firmly within the realm of fiction and parody" (127). Because Shea's focus is primarily the Cynic as engaged philosopher, the second half of her book, on Sloterdijk's and Michel Foucault's recent efforts to rehabilitate once more a Cynic legacy, does not expand much on this provocative reformulation of the Cynic as a fundamentally literary figure. But it lingers nonetheless: does literature become a site where the Cynic attachment to "living differently, even outrageously" is more rigorously sustained (188)? What might it mean to read the evolution of literary form through a Cynic lens?

In certain respects Shea's book, which aims to convince its readers of the significance of Cynicism for the Enlightenment as both event and philosophical concept (considered in general terms), necessarily gives limited consideration to a more marginalized—and potentially more disruptive—Cynicism, that of minor authors like Fougere de Monbron, whom Shea mentions as a precedent for the nephew in *Le Neveu*, or of revolutionary pamphleteers, with their references to Diogenes as a political provocateur, whom Shea depicts as "unmindful of the irony involved in claiming such a singular, antisocial figure as the head of a new collectivity" (127). And, given the admirably broad range of materials and periods she covers, Shea is unable to account fully for the way in which the eighteenth-century recuperation of Cynicism takes

place alongside a reinvestment in other ancient philosophical traditions, Epicurean and Stoic materialism in particular. If it is not always clear, however, where Cynicism begins and other kinds of philosophical attachment end, Shea shows with great care and intelligence how it is the very ambiguity of the Cynical legacy that gives it its critical purchase on more genteel—and teleologically inclined—traditions. Cynicism is also, as Shea demonstrates by way of her analyses of Sloterdijk and Foucault, a means of living otherwise. The doggedness of the attempts, by writers such as d’Alembert, Diderot, and Wieland, to tame Diogenes suggest the extent to which the Enlightenment as critical inheritance becomes the product of the very divisions that its exponents appear to want, most urgently, to extinguish.

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Thomas M. Kavanagh. *Enlightened Pleasures: Eighteenth-Century France and the New Epicureanism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010. x+254pp. US\$45. ISBN 978-0-300-14094-1.

Thomas Kavanagh has written extensively on eighteenth-century France, on its libertine literature and esthetics, and on its culture of gambling. His latest book provides him with another intriguing, elusive object of inquiry, creating an original oeuvre that provides a different narrative of the Age of Voltaire, away from the pessimistic version of Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, or the idealistic version of Ernst Cassirer. Kavanagh returns to what he would call the original “French story” of the French Enlightenment, his preferred preoccupation: pleasure. He does so by probing the classical heritage of this notion in the eighteenth century. It is what he calls the Enlightenment’s new Epicureanism that Kavanagh meticulously examines in this rich, concise book, not the libertinage perceived more commonly as sexual licence but the recasting of it as an exceptional synthesis of Epicureanism and Stoicism. This book is divided into eight chapters covering a variety of known and under-studied texts (Jourdan, Mirabeau), the visual arts, and the erotic theatre, a welcome addition.

Chapter 1 offers a new reading of a turbulent, little-known memoir-novel, *Le Guerrier philosophe* by Jean-Baptiste Jourdan. This hard-to-follow novel (a detriment to this chapter that opens the book) narrates a story that establishes, Kavanagh argues, the primacy of the experience of love, of “the evanescence of pleasure” (16). The characters are repeatedly confronted with the renunciation of Stoic principles, with reason.