"syllogistic reasoning on the basis of disambi- for Raylor, who devotes only half a page to this consistent with Raylor's argument to describe guated definitions". By contrast, Parts Three discussion, the simile is a mere illustration of the state of nature as a rhetorical exemplum or and Four are not philosophy by this definition. the logical argument Hobbes has already elab- mere illustration of the dangers of not entering Instead, in Raylor's account, Part Three orated. As with the occasional explanatory into the commonwealth. But one could also attempts to demonstrate the congruence of figure in Parts One and Two, the obvious rhe- argue that this fiction does essential work in Hobbes's philosophy with revealed religion torical verve of Parts Three and Four does not, making the argument that "the passion to be and it does so not by reason but by scriptural according to Raylor, impinge on the philo-reckoned upon [in establishing the commoninterpretation. Part Four, which takes up the sophical arguments of Parts One and Two "(in wealth) is fear". Christian notion of the "kingdom of darkness", theory, at least)". is a witty polemic against the abuses of the preachers in England in the 1640s. In Raylor's remain theoretically distinct and incommen- some of its gaps. For a book that spends a overall argument and that we should think of it surable activities, even as they exist within the whole chapter on Hobbes's De mirabilibus instead as a rhetorical add-on? Hobbes himself and political world we inhabit, he sees no such covers of the same book. This is because rhe- pecci, a Latin poem on the natural wonders of seems to have recognized that Parts One and tension in Hobbes's attitudes towards and toric has no role in the discovery of truth for the area surrounding the Derbyshire peak, it is Two could not stand on their own, and that it practice of rhetoric. Such an acknowledge-Hobbes; its only role is to aid in the communication of that truth by means of perspicuous prose or vivid illustration.

In his prefatory remarks to his discussion of Leviathan, Raylor declares that he is not inter- Hobbes really proceed by logical deduction kingdom at some unspecified time in the mode of persuasion that involves rational ested in the inconsistency of Hobbes's practice from first principles? What do we make of eschatological future, which therefore had no argument even while not conforming to the with his view of philosophy. He asserts that Hobbes's own summation of Part Two in bearing on the subject's obedience to his sov- exact strictures of logic. This would suggest this practice is irrelevant to determining Hob- chapter thirty-two of Leviathan, when he ereign. Raylor says Hobbes demonstrates this that Hobbes thought that philosophy and rhebes's theory of political philosophy, especially claims to have derived the principles of gov- not by reason but by scriptural interpretation. toric were ultimately compatible, if different, given the consistency of Hobbes's views of rhetoric throughout his life and his clear dis- such as Experience has found true, or Consent as Raylor tells us Hobbes wants us to do, this to sequester rhetoric but failed to do so. This, tinction between logic and rhetoric from the greater "rhetoricity" of Leviathan, but argues ous centrality of the problem of legal and politthat this is only a matter of degree since the ical representation in Parts One and Two, same polemical verve and witty figures can be which Hobbes compares to theatrical reprefound in Hobbes's earlier works. The only sig-sentation in Chapter Sixteen? The comparison nificant addition he finds in the realm of figu- is not simply an illustration of an argument that declares not only that Scripture teaches noth- of Hobbes's attitudes to rhetoric. It will remain ration is Hobbes's simile of the state as an has already been made; it is the argument. And ing contrary to reason and is perfectly compat- for others to debate the significance of these artificial person, which is visually represented

Tillard van Orman Quine once remarked that people enter philosophy for one of two reasons: some

are interested in the history of philosophy, and

some in philosophy itself. Quine's Harvard

colleague Hilary Putnam claimed that what

can be said in a nutshell belongs in a nutshell.

Jane O'Grady's Enlightenment Philosophy in

a Nutshell casts doubt on both observations.

gory of dry antiquarian intellectual history.

Rather it steadfastly belongs to the kind of

inquiry that engages with long-dead thinkers

as if they were still our philosophical con-

temporaries. This genre presupposes (con-

sciously or not) that the ideas of the great

canonical philosophers of the past transcend

their time and place and partake in the grand

conversation of humankind, a conversation

that is eternally present and universally

O'Grady's book does not fall into the cate-

ical philosophy as Hobbes imagined it, that is, in the famous frontispiece of Leviathan. But, Raylor does not mention at all? It would be

It is a measure of Raylor's scrupulous schol- insistence that the last two parts of Leviathan Catholic Church and by extension radical arship that one finds oneself wanting to be convinced by his argument. But in order to be fully bes's political philosophy. Is it really the case Leviathan, then, philosophy and rhetoric convincing, Raylor would have to address that at least half the book is irrelevant to the very surprising that Raylor doesn't analyse was crucial to the success of his argument to ment might have required him to address more Parts One and Two of Leviathan in any detail. demonstrate that the Kingdom of God was not fully the relation of Hobbes's intention to his Is it really the case that these parts conform to a present kingdom that might compete with the results. As Barnouw and others have argued, in Hobbes's notion of political science? Does sovereign for obedience, but instead an earthly Leviathan Hobbes frequently has recourse to a ernment "from the Principles of Nature onely; If we equate reason with syllogistic argument, modes of argument. Or he may have intended [concerning the use of words] has made so" late 1630s onwards. Raylor does concede the (my emphasis)? What do we make of the obviwhat do we make of the state of nature, which ible with it; he also insists that we must not attitudes in practice.

renounce our natural reason, which he equates with "the undoubted Word of God", in explicating the Bible.

By bracketing the question of the relation of theory to practice, Raylor avoids some of the most challenging questions regarding the interpretation of Leviathan. Practice, too, is a kind of evidence of Hobbes's intentions or, at the very least, evidence of a tension within Finally, one could quarrel with Raylor's Hobbes's own mind. While Raylor acknowledges at several points in his book that Hobbes was not always consistent in his definition of philosophy, and that these inconsistencies raise the question of the exact relation of Hobbes's watertight logical method to the physical makes sense. But if we recognize the role that certainly, was the view of many of Hobbes's scriptural interpretation has in Hobbes's dem- contemporary readers. If so, what do we make onstration of his argument, it becomes more of this failure? What did Hobbes make of it, so difficult to see Parts Three and Four as mere far as we can tell? And what does this failure illustration. Here we should note that Hobbes tell us about his political science? Raylor has himself, in the beginning of Part Three, given us an important and scrupulous account

## Ideas of history

## How to introduce a movement concisely

JOHNNY LYONS

Jane O'Grady

ENLIGHTENMENT PHILOSOPHY IN A NUTSHELL 240pp. Arcturus. Paperback, £7.99. 978 1 78828 372 4

worthwhile. Typically, the authors of such histories acknowledge that the social and intellectual conditions from which the ideas of the great philosophers emerged are not of only trivial importance, but that the historical context has no pivotal bearing on the deeper, perennial matters they focus on.

It is relatively easy to mock such "histories", or what Ian Hacking called the "pen-pal view" of the history of ideas. More often than not they are guilty of various sins of anachronism, from the most crude to the more subtle but no less flawed. But every so often this genre can produce something that manages to engage us despite its obvious shortcomings. Enlightenment Philosophy in a Nutshell is such a work.

At first glance there appears to be nothing especially original or arresting about O'Grady's book. Ostensibly a conventional and concise introduction to the central ideas of the Enlightenment thinkers, it conforms to the established pattern: beginning with the thought of Descartes and then moving swiftly to that of Locke, Spinoza, Berkeley, Hume and Kant. The only somewhat unexpected hero of her history is Hume, closely followed thinker to make the cut is Rousseau, who by Kant - she devotes two chapters to each in finds himself rather incongruously sand- contrast to a single chapter on each of the other wiched between Hume and Kant. The book five. O'Grady's analysis of Hume is particualso includes familiar pictures of these great figures as well as unfamiliar yet fascinating illustrations from their times.

But there is nothing elementary about O'Grady's primer. She pulls off the feat of writing a reliable and accessible introduction to modern philosophy that is also a meaningful contribution to the subject. She treats each of the long-deceased Enlightenment thinkers

a philosopher to explain and evaluate their core ideas in clear, precise and readable prose.

are not presented with detached and soporific that the more we succeed in recovering the summaries of the main thoughts of each theorist: O'Grady wants to show us what is still alive in the ideas. For example, we are given an enviably clear account not just of the radically new and egocentric conception of philosophy put forward by Descartes but also of how the Cartesian emphasis on a first-person perspective transforms our understanding of the philosophical enterprise itself.

Inevitably, some of the philosophers emerge from her critical treatment as more interesting and important than others. The larly impressive and makes you want to re-read him with a renewed sense of energy and interest. She brings out the paradoxical character of his sceptical view of the world, revealing what makes his various paradoxes "infuriating but rich, ingenious and seminal". One of the indirect lessons of her treatment of Hume's brand of scepticism is that the epistemic value attributed to consistency as interlocutors and then applies her skills as by contemporary analytic philosophers would idea.

appear to be somewhat exaggerated. Critical reconstructions of the other philosophers rarely fail to be anything less than genuinely curious and engaging, the arguable exception being the chapter on Locke, which feels just a little too perfunctory, even in a brief guide.

The undeniable success and appeal of this book raises a general question about the relationship between philosophy and its history. The contextual (sometimes called the "Cam-One of the results of her approach is that we bridge") school of the history of ideas argues actual meaning of historical texts, the more we converge on the insight that the past is a foreign country where things are done incomparably differently. Diametrically opposed is the more traditional, analytic, view of philosophy which plays down the otherness of the past and claims that there is a profound intellectual continuity between Plato and his descendants, including ourselves (the "penpal" view). Which of these competing perspectives should we opt for? Neither. We are better off keeping both perspectives in view. O'Grady's work exemplifies the virtues as well as the vices of non-contextual, analytic "history" of philosophy, whereas, for example, the contribution of such distinguished intellectual historians as Quentin Skinner or Jonathan Israel displays the strengths and limits of an authentically historical approach to the history of ideas. The tension between history and philosophy (or perhaps, more accurately, historicity and truth) may be inescapable rather than resolvable or illusory. In any case, trying to create a truly enlightened world hasn't ceased to be a good

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