



Enlightened Pleasures: Eighteenth-Century France and the New Epicureanism (The Lewis Walpole Series in Eighteenth-C)

Thomas M. Kavanagh

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Novelists, artists, and philosophers of the eighteenth century understood pleasure as a virtue—a gift to be shared with one's companion, with a reader, or with the public. In this daring new book, Thomas Kavanagh overturns the prevailing scholarly tradition that views eighteenth-century France primarily as the incubator of the Revolution. Instead, Kavanagh demonstrates how the art and literature of the era put the experience of pleasure at the center of the cultural agenda, leading to advances in both ethics and aesthetics.

Kavanagh shows that pleasure is not necessarily hedonistic or opposed to Enlightenment ideals in general; rather, he argues that the pleasure of individuals is necessary for the welfare of their community.

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