Introduction: entrails and digestion in the eighteenth century

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In 1769, a Bath stone carver now known as Thomas Parsons recorded a recent bout of fever in his diary:

> Feb 4th Very Wet – warm –
>
> I never remember such a pain in my stomach as last night – I found a pressure on my stomach – endeavouring to discharge I belched as usual but striving to belch occasion'd a motion like an ebullition in the good which was undigested – and that rose frequently pretty high and felt to me as if it had scalded the upper part of my stomach with its intense heat – my stomach was sore and if the food rose at any time in consequence of my belching it increased the pain to that degree that I could hardly bear it.[1]

The young man's language describing his own stomach is precise and colourful: he defines his sensations minutely, with a clear identification of the motions and transformation of food inside his viscera, as well as the state of his own digestion. That a layperson of fairly low social origin could produce such a medically informed analysis and description of the inner process of digestion suggests that the science of digestion was an intrinsic part of the wide cultural framework of eighteenth-century Europeans. Clearly, the stone carver is used to reading his own body, and he parses a myriad of signs through which he can gauge the state of his internal organs:

> At last some of my dinner though this was 9 at night came up, with a very disagreeable taste, acid and bitter seemed the principal predominant flavours blended together – and with the heat of this

> my throat was made sore – I eat no supper, having no appetite, and being fearfull that any food wou'd only irritate my pain – I went to bed as usual between eleven and twelve and slept very well – when I awoke this morning, I found that I had a considerable cold – or else the consequence of the soreness of my throat and stomach was much the same as the offset of the Cold – I am hoarse and cough up a good deal of a dull greenish matter which comes up with some reluctance and pain in small bits as if tore by violent coughing from the parts to which it adhered.

As Christopher Forth and Anna Carden-Coyne explain in *Cultures of the Abdomen*, the interconnection of internal organs in the stone carver's bodily self-representation derives from a long tradition of ancient medical thought that views the organs holistically. 'The belly and sexuality were interlinked, even interchangeable in ancient thought', they write, and a similar connection is found here between the respiratory and the digestive systems.[2] Connecting the cold and stomach discomfort might not necessarily indicate a lack of anatomical knowledge, but might rather be the conclusion of a regime of acute self-observation where daily variations and changes in regular motions or sensations are attributed to internal processes of ingestion and digestion. This diary testifies to the close scrutiny of the internal organs by eighteenth-century individuals of all ranks.

Eighteenth-century patients feared sickness of the internal organs much more than any external form of disease. The gout, for example, a chronic and non-lethal disease, was considered most dangerous when it took its 'internal' form in its later stages, that is, when it was thought to be attacking the organs instead of manifesting itself in painful extremities. Patients had therefore a multitude of strategies to monitor the state of their insides, and some, like the stone carver Thomas Parsons, recorded their self-diagnosis and speculations, as the increasing tendency to introspection and self-knowledge drew the attention of diarists and letter-writers to the materiality of the self.

Understanding the viscera, mapping the movements of digestion and apprehending the chemistry of digestive juices and the transformation of food also led to a decisive progress in anatomical exploration. John Hunter's experiments on the stomach,[3] George Cheyne's close observation of digestion and the effects of vegetarianism,[4] and the plethora of treatises on dietetics and regimen that ranged from medical treatises to recipe books bear witness to the interest of early

modern science in the digestive process and its role in health. Such an interest stemmed from the continued tradition of Hippocratic and Galenic conceptions of health, channelled, on the one hand, through the more recent commentaries of Sydenham and, on the other, through a vibrant, competitive and co-operative network of anatomists and doctors that drew on each other's works through debates, provocations and sometimes pure professional antagonism. This was the case in the dispute between Richard Mead and John Woodward on the role of the stomach in the body. In his infamous *State of Physick and of Diseases* (1718), the natural historian and physician John Woodward composed the following aphorism: 'The great Wisdom and Happiness of Man ... consists in a due Care of the Stomach and Digestion.'[5] The statement instigated the most violent controversy in his career. Woodward's principle was that, to recover a healthy balance in the body, the use of emetics, whether gentle potions or simply touching the throat with a feather, was therapeutic in most cases, including the early stages of the smallpox. Several doctors attacked him, and the ambitious Richard Mead penned a pamphlet entitled *Don Bilioso De l'Estomac* (1719), a parody of Woodward's treatise written like the table of contents of a picaresque novel.[6] The Mead–Woodward controversy acts as a macrocosm of the way in which differing disciplines and modes of understanding are stimulated and converge in the debate over the stomach. It shows how literature, medicine, history and visual satire participate in a medical quarrel over the cultural centrality and significance of gastric function. Similarly, the French inventor Vaucanson's aspiration to create a digestive automaton, and the success of his famous 'digesting duck' – a machine that claimed to reproduce the digestive process – also highlight the general interest in the invisible workings of the viscera and their representations in eighteenth-century Europe (see Figure 0.1).[7]

Whether the digesting duck worked is another question: it was undoubtedly part of the materialist attempt at figuring out the digestive process, which was at the heart of the eighteenth-century obsession for the workings of invisible pipes.[8] Such interest in delving into the mysterious interior can likewise be seen in the numerous 'anatomical Venuses' of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These figures were kept in cabinets of curiosities as objects of learning, as moral reminders of the limits of life and beauty and as representations of the excavating anatomical gesture in itself.

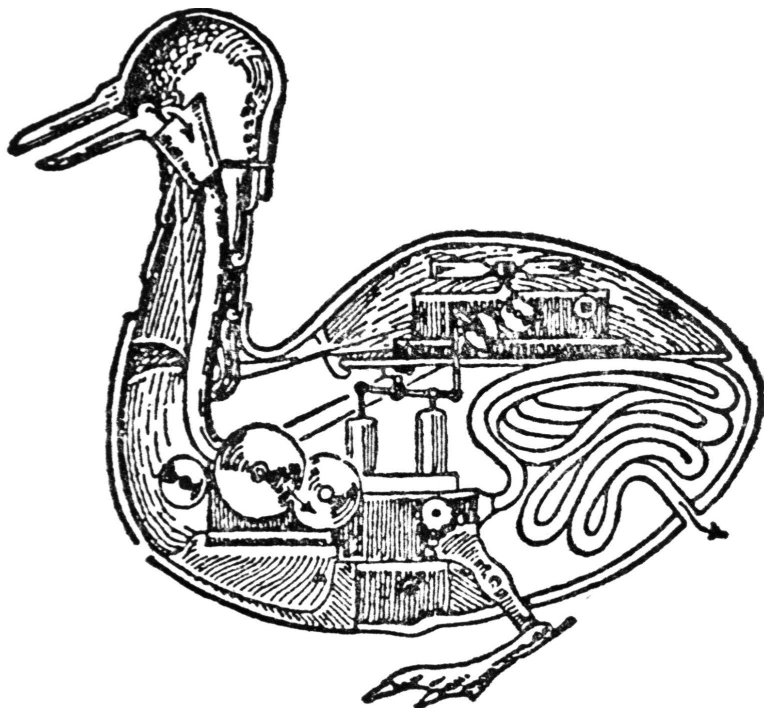

Figure 0.1 Jacques de Vaucanson, automaton of a digesting duck created in 1738 and presented for the first time in the Palais Royal in 1744

This collection of essays challenges the notion of the supremacy of the brain as the key organ of the Enlightenment, by focusing on the workings of the bowels and viscera that so preoccupied writers and thinkers during the long eighteenth century. It complicates the idea that discourses and representations of digestion and bowels are confined to the so-called consumption culture of the long eighteenth century, in which dysfunctional bowels are categorised as a symptom of excess. While digestive malfunction and self-analysis were often the preoccupations of the élite or middling sort, Thomas Parsons's diary makes it clear that the preoccupation with gastrointestinal health cut across classes. This volume interrogates the ways in which the French, German and English middling sort understood their bodily economy, by recourse to recent scientific theories and fashionable fads, but also the ways in which the

culture of the abdomen was manifested in folk culture and in the labouring ranks of society.[9] It also seeks to explore more general manifestations of the visceral or gastric as a wider reflection on the materiality of the period's intellectual, medical and artistic preoccupations. Thus, rather than confine itself to purely medical and scientific discussions of entrails or bowels, *Bellies, Bowels and Entrails* utilises a more capacious and metaphorical understanding of these terms.

This volume derives from a 2014 conference at Université Paris-Diderot, where eighteenth-century scholars from Europe and the USA were invited to work together on the representations of viscera in eighteenth-century medical theory and practice, literature, architecture, religion and visual culture. Over the course of the meeting, it became clear that the representation of the bowels and of the mysterious process of digestion acted as counterpoints to the external gestures of self-effacing politeness and other modes of refined sociability, drawing attention to the deeper workings of the self. Both the conference and this collection confirm that the academic interest in politeness, sociability, public space and opinion, sentimentality and reason that characterised the field throughout the twentieth century has given way to darker, dirtier and less glamorous subjects which complicate and enlarge the vision of a period too often reduced to the glamour of the rich élite and the progressive aspects of social progress. Scholarly focus has shifted to the darker side of the Enlightenment. Two recent works of social history and literary criticism exemplify such interest in the insalubrious elements of the period: Emily Cockayne's *Hubbub*, which examines the materiality of the urban environment of eighteenth-century Britain, with its layers of dirt, filth and unwanted juices,[10] and Sophie Gee's *Making Waste*, which focuses on the mire, desolation and ways in which eighteenth-century culture feasted on 'leftovers of the imagination'.[11] Re-examining the eighteenth-century canon through the prism of waste allows Gee not merely to demonstrate the ubiquity of detritus in the literary canon but to show that these visions of refuse and the material by-products of modernity were closely related to the concept of 'valuable abundance'.[12] Literary representations of dirt, detritus and degenerated surplus were partly negotiations of questions of value, echoing contemporary philosophical and theological debates about knowledge and materialism. In a similar fashion, Peter

Smith's *Between Two Stools: Scatology and its Representations in English Literature, Chaucer to Swift* amplifies Gee's argument that waste and impure matter are key imaginative resources of the eighteenth century, providing a pre-history of Swift's excremental verse.[13] These studies flesh out what Peter Stallybrass and Allon White identify as one of the key paradoxes of the period; that while attempting to 'cleanse the public sphere of impure and messy semiotic matter', the eighteenth century imaginary fed 'voraciously and incessantly from [such] material. It nourished and replenished its refined morality from the symbolic repertoire of the grotesque body, in the very name of its exclusion.'[14]

Bellies, Bowels and Entrails adds to these explorations of the murky eighteenth century by examining underlying structures of the body, which were both an object of fascination and a source of confusion, as well as an evolving paradigm through which contemporaries understood the underworlds of their own culture and society. This volume contributes to our sense of the ways in which the polite and impolite were woven together, by focusing on the figuration and understanding of the guts, entrails and digestion in medicine, material history, urban history, literature, art, comedy and science from England, France and Germany. Extending the insights of Ian Miller's *Modern History of the Stomach* by focusing on the century preceding his study, the volume also broadens the conception of innards, entrails and digestion to include fictional, metaphorical and symbolic understandings of the terms.[15] The essays in the volume examine the concept of the viscera in its historical, metaphorical and symbolic manifestations: explaining contemporary representations and understanding of the visceral organs, as well as metaphorical uses of the guts as parallel systems of evacuation, or invisible – perhaps disturbing – digestive structures underneath the surface of things. That the visceral space was both real and metaphorical at the same time is best illustrated by one of the passages of Tobias Smollett's first novel, *Roderick Random*, written just after the author completed his medical training. Roderick and his servant companion, Strap, can afford only a cheap dinner in one of the open cellars of London, which are accessible only to those who know the city well enough:

> He accordingly conducted us to a certain lane, where stopping, he bade us observe him, and do as he did, and, walking a few paces,

> dived into a cellar and disappeared in an instant. – I followed his example, and descending very successfully, found myself in the middle of a cook's shop, almost suffocated with the steams of boil'd beef, and surrounded by a company of hackney coachmen, chairmen, draymen, and a few footmen out of place or on board wages; who sat eating shin of beef, tripe, cow-heel, or sausages, at separate boards, covered with cloths which turned my stomach.[16]

In reaction to this infernal vision of what the lower orders eat, and where and how they have their dinner, Roderick is nauseated, his bodily sensations mirroring the urban space that surrounds him as he finds himself in the entrails of the city. As the poor eat offal (tripe, cow-heel and sausages made with the skin of intestine) that represent their function in the social body, the fumes mimic the constant wind that preoccupied the intellectual élite fretting about the movements of their own bowels. The cellars act as the entrails of the city, processing the unwanted meat from the houses and taverns above the ground.

The first section of this volume, 'Urban congestion and human digestion', explores the metaphorical and symbolic connections between the entrails of the body and the bowels of the city or the labyrinthine tunnels of the mine. In a chapter of 'subterranean revelations', Gilles Thomas explores the Paris beneath Paris. The proliferation of underground spaces in the capital – sewers, catacombs and quarries – drove the administration of King Louis XVI to create an office of inspection to map and police this burgeoning underground city that was becoming increasingly well known through visitors' accounts in French and European periodicals. Thomas sketches an archaeology of the Parisian underworld, 'the hollow imprint of an endoskeleton now vanished', and the alchemical processes of digestion, mummification and exhalations that emanated from the burial sites within the city itself. The gothic overtones of this City of Light are offset by a vertiginous sense of inversion as the ground beneath Parisian streets is repurposed for buildings which stretch into the sky. As Louis-Sébastien Mercier exclaims: 'what we see in the air is what is missing beneath our feet'.

Sabine Barles and André Guillerme also focus on Paris to analyse the fundamental connection between the bowels of city and the entrails of the body. Investigating the history of the French capital's famous stench, this urban phenomenon triggers the anxiety and concern of doctors, architects, civil servants and other observers

who attempted to diagnose the workings of the deepest recesses of the city. If Paris was treated as a patient manifesting symptoms of gastric distress, the civic corporation anxiously fretted about the very structure and dysfunction of its own lower regions. Prone to miasmas and putrid effusions, Paris became anthropomorphised and medicalised by its inhabitants. Barles and Guillerme show that the lower regions of the city and the vast amount of waste they produced were an intrinsic part of the healthy functioning of the whole corporation: an economy of repurposing excrement and innards that connected sewage and nightmen to merchants, musicians, politicians and doctors. Thus the 'Parisian pedosphere was a thick layer perpetually enriched by the waste of the capital', the very wealth of the city powered by the detritus of its inhabitants.

Mirroring Gilles Thomas's introductory perambulation through the intricate bowels of underground Paris, Ian Miller's essay 'Digesting in the long eighteenth century' weaves its way through medical perceptions of the stomach. Miller explores human digestion and explains the ways in which the role of the stomach and of the workings of the inner body became pivotal to understanding larger patterns of interrelationship between the organs. If the dead and dissected stomach yielded some knowledge, the living and functional organism continued to elude complete comprehension. Building on his earlier work, Miller suggests that the changing understanding of digestion 'encouraged deep anxieties to form around the gut' and that these concerns produced and 'underpinned a new set of therapeutic regimes designed to safeguard both dietary and bodily health'. The dethroning of the stomach in the bodily economy occurred slowly across the century, and Galenic, humoral understandings of the intestine co-existed with vitalism and iatrochemistry. A host of 'profound philosophers' were engrossed in gastric speculation across the century, yet digestion continued to be felt as an emotional as well as a material process.

In 'The soul in the entrails: the experience of the sick in the eighteenth century', Micheline Louis-Courvoisier shifts the focus of medical history onto the subjective experience of illness. Her contribution marshals individual accounts of symptoms in the epistolary medical correspondence of the celebrated Dr Tissot. Analysing the semantics of description affords insight into self-conceptions of intestinal and emotional maladies and the nosological assessments made by their physicians. Louis-Courvoisier insists on the

importance of crediting the ways in which patients perceived the relationship between their emotional and psychological states, between their melancholy and hypochondria and the workings of their bowels. The cases from Tissot's correspondence add a new element to our sense of how eighteenth-century individuals understood their intestines: not merely in the terms of the humours, but using an atmospheric vocabulary: 'terms of clouds, veils and vapours' to evoke a 'chaotic inner sensitivity' as 'elusive and shapeless as it is painful and stressful'.

The second section of the volume, 'Excremental operations', illustrates the materiality of digestion by focusing on its by-products – excrements and paper – and their satirical or epistemological manifestations. In 'Sawney's seat: the social imaginary of the London bog-house c.1660–c.1800' Mark Jenner conducts a pungent 'history from below', which unravels the social and cultural meaning of the eighteenth-century 'house of office'. Challenging commentators such as Lawrence Stone who cast the eighteenth century as an unsanitary precursor of toilet-trained Victorian hygiene, Jenner illuminates the complex and vital meanings of the bog-house in eighteenth-century urban culture. If the urban privy was relatively insalubrious and undeveloped it was nonetheless an effective means of managing faecal waste, and contained unclean ordure in a fashion that was clearly socially recognised and largely respected: eighteenth-century individuals were indeed offended by defecation in public zones and vigorously policed anti-social toilet practices. In Jenner's detailed weaving of legal testimony, visual prints and cityscapes, he shows how eighteenth-century privies (both communal and domestic) were regarded with disgust given their dirt and stench, but were also sites of varied activity. Bog-houses were locations for illegal and taboo practices such as infanticide and sodomy, topoi of political satire and scatology and the terminus for much contemporary writing which ended up recycled as toilet paper or bumfodder. These social spaces, Jenner concludes, encapsulate a 'paradoxical urbanity' affording a provisional privacy and reminder of the base bodily functions shared by a sprawling populace.

Amélie Junqua's interest in paper reflects Jenner's attention to the prints on the walls of Sawney's bog-house. Junqua's conception of digestion is both material and metaphorical as she depicts the recycling processes that surrounded paper. In 'Eighteenth-century

paper: the readers' digest' she provides a material-cultural history of the bumfodder discussed in Jenner's chapter. Junqua explains the protracted process of papermaking from a pulp made of old rags, and the fate of paper once it has been read and discarded, into many forms of waste paper including hygienic paper. Such a long transformative – and digestive – process has epistemological ramifications for print and knowledge, which, Junqua argues, many writers of satire and periodicals were aware of and used in their own metatextual considerations.

Jennifer Ruimi's chapter on faecal references in eighteenth-century *théâtre de société* uncovers a seemingly paradoxical scatological pleasure in eghteenth-century drama: colic, diarrhoeas, haemorrhoids and clysters are part of a transgressive aesthetic enabled by the cloistered space of representation. These plays not only contain lurid toilet humour but seem to call for stagings of defecation and even coprophagy. Ruimi provokes the question of taste: how did society and the aristocracy understand their predilection for comedies of the basest humour? Rather than a simple burlesque, Ruimi argues, these plays deployed a deliberate aesthetic which became, at times, a political contestation: reminding the audience that the king, too, had to use the privy.

Perhaps one of the most famous representations of the bowels in eighteenth-century visual culture is the final plate of William Hogarth's *A Rake's Progress*, where the rake's intestines slide from the dissection table directly into a waiting dog's bowl: uniting ignominious death, punishment, filth and food in one serpentine and morbid movement. Anthony Mahler's 'The legibility of the bowels: Lichtenberg's excretory vision of Hogarth's *A Harlot's Progress*' re-examines Hogarth's work via the notebooks of Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, academic, aesthetician and Hogarth's most influential German advocate. The essay explores constipation, both as a physical malaise and as a metaphor for the effects of study and learning in Lichtenberg's work. Mahler shows that Lichtenberg's analyses of Hogarth reflect not only the author's obsession with excretion and expulsion, but also the ways in which such excremental iconography is representative of the period's fascination with the bowels and their relationship to bodily and moral health. That preoccupation with the innards extends to hypochondria, which Lichtenberg understands 'as a pathology of interpretation … the fearful imagination of causes and symptoms of disease where

there are none'. Thus the 'hermeneutics of hypochondria' is a cultural tendency to overanalyse symptoms, to pathologically detail the minutiae of bodily and symbolic manifestations. Revealing the plethora of objects (enemas; anal bulbs; close stools) designed to hold the excretions and secretions of the human body, Mahler provides a surprising and convincing reinterpretation of this most ubiquitous of eighteenth-century prints.

The third part of the volume, 'Burlesque bellies', expounds further on the burlesque motif of the innards as it is used to subvert areas of more serious knowledge, from medical treatises to epic literature or visual representation. A more bathetic wind blows through Guilhem Armand's essay, in which flatulence is a kind of chronic comic condition in *théâtre de société* and comic tracts of eighteenth-century France. In 'Parodies of pompous knowledge: treatises on farting', Armand presents a panoply of excremental dramas and scientific burlesques which push the boundaries of representation. Armand's study is thus a Francophone case study which parallels Simon Dickie's work on the persistence of impolite jokes throughout the century and the ways in which eighteenth-century culture accommodated (and enjoyed) what we might find obscene or cruel.[17] These French texts have Swiftian overtones, satirising scientific discourses and insisting that pretensions to human dignity and encyclopaedic understandings of the material world be punctured by the involuntary eruptions from our nether regions. The farts in these texts have a power to humorously critique and liberate both body and mind: as one verse asserts, 'The fart, unpent, that croons its air / Often foils death, dispels despair.' Yet, as Armand suggests, these uncontrollable winds are ideological as well as playful: an instance of the potential for the bowels to deflate overweening Enlightenment rationalism.

Similarly, Clémence Aznavour focuses on Marivaux's less well-known prose works *L'Homère travesti* and *Le Télémaque travesti*, showing the recurrence of the abdominal imagery otherwise almost totally absent from his theatrical works. In these works 'Gastric disturbances invade the epic struggles', as the burlesque reintroduces the fart or hiccup to unveil and emphasise impolite or hidden aspects of the body. The voracity of desire and the analogy between food and sexual longing renders the 'belly … the material location of desire'. Aznavour's 'links between the pleasures of the stomach and the pleasures of the flesh' are developed further in Rebecca

Anne Barr's study of John Cleland's *Memoirs of a Coxcomb*. This novel explores the interrelation of sexuality and digestive organs, and Barr's reading reveals the ambivalence towards appetite in the works of a writer better known for his pornographic work *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*. Cleland, Barr argues, was 'fixated on the visceral compulsions of humanity'. By contextualising *Coxcomb*'s queasy amatory escapades with the author's interest in preventive medicine, the oral and gastric elements of masculine desire are shown to be crucial to bodily health but deeply fraught. Cleland's injunctions to obsessively clean the tongue with a whalebone to keep the mouth 'religiously clean' is echoed in his nauseated protagonist, who surfeits on vice while on a supposed road to virtue. Combining affect theory and the history of emotions with concepts of diet and regimen, this essay exposes 'the visceral expulsions of disgust … [and] the vacillations of embodied subjectivity' in its male protagonist. Culminating in a scene of perverse breastfeeding, *Coxcomb* suggests that the imbrication of appetite, desire and disgust has ramifications for the forms of the novel and the forms of self that the novel portrays.

Echoing Mahler's analysis of Lichtenberg's Hogarthian obsessions, Frédéric Ogée offers an essay on the bellies and double chins of Hogarth's robust, dynamic, de-idealised human figures. Hogarth's desire for comprehensiveness and his refusal to correct nature led him to depict 'all the "symptoms" of human life' including 'disease, vice, squalor, disgust'. The retching, sometimes abject, characters that populate his art express a conception of the body as a variable and transformable object capable of expressing moral and aesthetic pathology as well as beauty. Hogarth's bodies, like those envisioned by the academicians, were intrinsically political too. The linearity of scrawny French peasants' bodies offsets the rotund bellies of his English subjects, who even as they depicted the dynamics of excess in staggering, bleary-eyed inebriation or vomiting were suffering the much-preferable affliction of plenty. In *A Midnight Modern Conversation*, Ogée argues, the over-full gorges and 'slack and flabby lines' of the subjects are part of a visual arsenal intended to 'provoke in the viewer a reaction of uneasiness, [as] physical as much as existential'.

Following Ogée's chapter on the visual impact of Hogarth's 'line of bellies', the last section, 'Visualising the viscera', focuses on drawings, engravings and caricatures which used the bowels,

viscera and entrails to articulate political protest, Revolutionary tensions and subversion through scatological aesthetics, or to expose those invisible organs. Barbara Stentz examines the 'iconography of the belly', whose protuberant lines were increasingly deployed in Revolutionary satire to depict the excesses and corruption of both the clergy and the aristocracy. Caricature reacted against the smooth lines of classical statuary and aesthetics, replacing the manly musculature of the torso with pathological adiposity and visceral monstrosity, exemplified by depictions of the voracity of Louis XVI. In the rhetoric of Revolutionary and counter-Revolutionary satire, 'The physiological is … amalgamated with the political.' Stentz's analysis of the influence of medical knowledge on caricature is confirmed by Dorothy Johnson's discussion of the intensified focus on dissection in pedagogy and its effects on neoclassical art in the 1790s. The renovation of teaching in the Académie des Beaux-Arts transformed traditional aesthetics with the material reality of viscera and entrails, just as the guillotine transformed the spectacle of execution, so that in Revolutionary art 'form and corruptible flesh are conjoined and become prominent'. Drawing on the seminal work of Barbara Stafford and Daniel Arasse, Johnson traces the ways in which religious iconography, blood sacrifice, art and science, opened up the innards of humanity to a horrified yet entranced gaze. Whether in écorché, anatomical Venuses or neoclassical depictions of the auto-disembowelling of Cato, viscera were at the forefront of a new aesthetics of dissection.

Returning to the influence of religion and folk memory, Jacques Gélis outlines the history and influence of the 'saints of the bowels' in eighteenth-century culture, connecting their representations to the representations of the underworld of the mine. These religious figures, whose entrails are exposed to the viewer in early modern sculptures and altarpieces, co-existed with the new scientific conceptions of the belly and viscera. At the frontier between the higher functions of the body and their lower orders, the belly was viewed as 'a subtle but fragile alembic' requiring safeguarding by supernatural powers. In their murky proximity, the womb, the bowels and the belly were linked by their cloacal properties. The curative powers of these saints were intimately tied to their inner organs, and their representations insist on the materiality of the body as well as their symbolic significance: thus these saints proffer and extend their bowels in their own hands and were worshipped by

believers who suffered from various intestinal maladies. From childbirth to attacks of the gripe, the eighteenth-century faithful sought assistance in these symbols of gruesome evisceration and via material and symbolic practices. To Gélis, the evisceration of the saints echoed the excavation of the bowels of the earth, while the aching bellies of women and infants were linked by the healing rituals to the fertile womb of mother earth.

The essays collected here provide a series of illuminating case studies of how the cultures of the period plumbed the depths of the human entrails and of the underground for a variety of purposes and with a variety of outcomes, as they tried to assimilate, rather than simply reject, their material essence in order to understand processes of incorporation and embodiment itself. Recurrent themes emerge across these essays. Scatology, the grotesque and the comedic are persistent Bakhtinian tropes. Whether being deployed against monarchical power (Ruimi) or to deflate the discourse of the new science (Armand) by returning the body to the hallmarks of its digestive processes, such humour pervaded all walks of life: not merely confined to a few shameful pamphlets or jokes behind closed doors, scatology operated even within absolute power or rigid hierarchy. As the recent work on the voluminous Saint-Aubin *Livre de caricatures* shows, the humour and significance of scatology is suffused with political implications as well as being historically contingent.[18] This can be seen in Jenner's discussion of the ways in which the Jacobite crisis percolated through to the scatological imaginings of Scottish incontinence; Sawney 'taken short' in Hanoverian English territory metaphorises Scottish defeat as bodily discomfort and social shame. That these figurations of the body also disrupt eighteenth-century gender norms is clear in Ruimi's essay, where the scatological society *parades* are equally open to women as men. As well as a forerunner of political revolt, the dramas she analyses are largely an attack on the formal proprieties and proscriptions of the Théâtre-Français. Ruimi's description of *Le Remède à la mode* – in which the noble heroine's diarrhoea gives rise to a rare paean to the thrills of anal penetration – together with the preponderance of phallic innuendo in these texts, suggests that such depictions had a place in high society. Despite the universality of such humour, these essays show that the meaning of excremental representations is often context-dependent and requires knowledge of social and material history to make its humour legible.

The understanding of the gut as an index of health and vigour of the bodily economy is in flux during this period of intensified modernity. The iconography of the period shows the shifting and culturally contingent appraisals of the stomach, as the soft underbellies of non-heroic bodies become part of the aesthetic repertoire of art as well as caricature. Johnson's analysis of the impact of dissection as pedagogy and embodied practice (students not merely watching, but wielding the scalpel themselves) in Revolutionary art suggests the ways in which scientific and surgical precision not merely became ideological but also impacted aesthetics. In France, the impact of the medical pathologies, in which fat becomes less a signifier of wealth and comfort than one of inertia and moral turpitude, can be witnessed in visual representations. England, by contrast, appears to retain some positive valorisations of rotundity, as Ogée argues. However, belly-fat, with its connotations of 'nutritive prosperity',[19] becomes pernicious when proliferating on female figures, as seen in Barr's essay, where the body of the brothel madam engenders the pull of both curiosity and horror. The stomach, thin or flabby, is gendered.

Much of the work here confirms the confluence of theories of illness, privilege and somatic disorder in the period.[20] Thus *The Lady's Magazine* calls hypochondria a 'disease of people that are idle, or think themselves but ill entertained; and attribute every fit of dull humour, or imagination, to a formal disease'.[21] Valetudinarianism and hypochondria have often been interpreted as a means for the weak or powerless to exert power over others or a diversion for weak minds.[22] But somatic illness is also understood as an existential or psychological metaphor. As Allan Ingram and Stuart Sim have argued, these maladies are often deployed as signifiers of intelligence and refinement.[23] Thus the hypochondriacal self-analysis of Lichtenberg is a wry expression of the obsessive practices and costive productions of the academic life: a means of expressing his academic abilities and splenetic genius. The spleen (that gloomy organ of imagination) was, after all, supposed to feed the stomach the refined blood required for digestion.[24] Mahler's essay suggests that in late eighteenth-century Germany intellectual over-delicacy was still being formulated as a digestive-gastric malady rather than as a 'nervous disease'. Indeed, the scatological vigour of Lichtenberg's writing conveys a gastric imaginary capable of (filthy) output even when the body is constipated.

These essays show the variety of approaches to, discourses on, and understandings of the intestinal functioning in French and English culture. As Miller's overview of the medical history of the stomach in the period shows, older forms of 'scientific' humoral understanding persisted long into the century of enlightenment, co-existing with more modern forms of analysis. If the élite patients in Courvoisier's study seek medical advice partly through the forms of a 'writing cure' – analysing, evoking, taxonomising their ailments and surrendering themselves to the care of trained specialists – members of folk culture externalise their ailments, concretising them in symbolic objects, seeking to control and cure by age-old practices such as prayers and rituals. Yet both groups try to negotiate the interfaces between the murky spaces of their innards and the 'light' of reason or God's grace. Both groups likewise display agency in their attempts to seek relief: tea or folk practices may have provided a solace close to a placebo effect.

Perhaps surprisingly, *Bellies, Bowels and Entrails* does not contain any female-focused case studies, an unintended aspect in a book co-edited by three female academics. The notable exception is Gélis's discussion of the oven-like womb, childbearing pangs and the eighteenth-century Catholic Church's attempt to separate the procreative function of the womb from the proximate activities of the viscera – ensuring that the former was sacred while the latter could be relegated to low function. This might suggest that the one-sex model of physiology persisted throughout the century, with far less differentiation being made between the stomachs and innards of women and men than might have been thought.[25] Contemporary interest in spectacularly sexual and gynaecological artefacts such as the anatomical Venus may in fact result from, and reproduce, an anachronistic emphasis on difference. While the womb was part of the inner world of the body, it was merely one of a host of recalcitrant yet omnipresent organs exerting their influences on the bodies and consciousness of eighteenth-century individuals. Further research is needed on the ways in which the womb was understood as interacting with the viscera in this period, outside the gendered paradigms of the nervous system. Recent work by Lianne McTavish and Wendy Churchill shows that the intricate relationship between the womb (often simply called 'the belly') and viscera is being explored by scholars.[26]

The variety of meanings and their differing permutations analysed here shows that even within a study limited to England, France and Germany there is a superabundance of material. Further studies on other countries and cultures will no doubt be equally rich. Europe's perennial fascination with the stomach and its importance in the holistic understandings of human health can be seen in the recent efflorescence of popular work on the subject. The German scientist Giulia Enders's book *Gut: The Inside Story of Our Body's Most Underrated Organ* not merely argued for the centrality of the gut but reinstated it into the popular imaginary.[27] Her clear account of the function of the digestive system, the neuronal and microbial processes at work in our intestines and the impact of bacteria on our physical and mental health has had a major impact on our contemporary culture and modes of living. Likewise, Francisca Joly Gomez's *L'intestin, notre deuxième cerveau* emphasises the stomach's role in bodily equilibrium and health, granting its symptoms powers of prognosis for the entire organism.[28] Modernity's interest in our guts and digestion has returned our focus to the stomach and the abdomen. This volume has attempted to give a sample of the ways in which the eighteenth-century culture fixated on its belly. From expressions of gastric pain, nervous indigestion and the material culture of the bog-house to chronic or comic flatulence; from iconographies of the stomach transformed in the wake of political upset and medical discovery to the staging of scatological dramas and queasy fictional protagonists, the eighteenth-century history of bellies, bowels and entrails is not for delicate stomachs.

Notes

1 Huntington Library, MSS HM 62593. The diary has been identified by S. Sloman, 'An Eighteenth-Century Stonecarver's Diary Identified: Eight Months in the Life of Thomas Parsons (1744–1813) of Bath', *British Art Journal*, 7:3 (2006), 4–13. For further reading on the diary see L. E. Klein, 'An Artisan in Polite Culture: Thomas Parsons, Stone Carver, of Bath, 1744–1813', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 75:1 (2012), 27–51.

2 C. Forth and A. Carden-Coyne (eds), *Cultures of the Abdomen: Diet, Digestion, and Fat in the Modern World* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

3 J. Hunter, 'On the Digestion of the Stomach after Death, by John Hunter, F.R.S. and Surgeon to St. George's Hospital', *Philosophical Transactions*, 62 (1772), 447–54.

4 G. Cheyne, *The English Malady; or, A Treatise of Nervous Diseases of All Kinds*, ed. Roy Porter (London: Routledge, 1991) and T. Stuart, *The Bloodless Revolution: A Cultural History of Vegetarianism from 1600 to Modern Times* (London: Norton, 2007).

5 J. Woodward, *The State of Physick and of Diseases* (London, 1718). The first one was triggered by his theory about the flood and the presence of the fossils of fish and sea shells on dry ground. On this controversy see C. A. Hanson, 'Don Quixote and Medical Satire: The Mead–Woodward Quarrel', in *The English Virtuoso: Art, Medicine, and Antiquarianism in the Age of Empiricism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), pp. 135–40.

6 R. Mead, *The Life and Adventures of Don Bilioso De L'Estomac. Translated from the Original Spanish into French; Done from the French into English. With a Letter to the College of Physicians* (London, 1719).

7 Vaucanson gives the following description of the mechanism at play in his duck: 'Un canard, dans lequel je représente le mécanisme des viscères destinés aux fonctions du boire, du manger, & de la digestion … l'aliment y est digéré comme dans les vrais animeaux, pas dissolution, & non par trituration, comme le prétendent plusieurs physiciens … La matière digérée dans l'estomac est conduite par des tuyaux, comme dans l'animal par ses boyaux, jusqu'à l'anus, où il y a un sphincter qui en permet la sortie.' ('A duck in which I have represented the machinery of the viscera devoted to drinking, eating, & digesting … The food is digested as it is in real animals, by concoction & not trituration, as many physicians have claimed … The matter digested in the stomach is pushed along pipes (as in the bowels of the animal) towards the anus, where a sphincter allows it to be expelled.') 'Lettre de M. Vaucanson, à M. l'Abbé D. F.', in *Le Mécanisme du flûteur automate … avec la description d'un canard artificiel* (Paris: Jacques Guérin, 1738).

8 See for example J. Riskin, 'The Defecating Duck, or, the Ambiguous Origins of Artificial Life', *Critical Inquiry*, 29:4 (2003), 599–633; Justin Pollard, 'The Digesting Duck, the Musicians and the Silk Loom', *Engineering & Technology*, 9:9 (October 2014), 98; Daniel Cottom, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Digestion', *Representations*, 66 (1999), 52–74.

9 Chapters 1, 4 and 6 of the volume discuss non-élite manifestations of excremental culture, fat and prosperity, and religion and illness. For an exploration of the ways in which illness was socially fashioned and negotiated in eighteenth-century culture see A. Ingram and L. W. Dickson (eds), *Disease and Death in Eighteenth-Century Literature and Culture: Fashioning the Unfashionable* (London: Palgrave, 2016).

10 E. Cockayne, *Hubbub: Filth, Noise and Stench in England, 1600–1770* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).
11 S. Gee, *Making Waste: Leftovers and the Eighteenth-Century Imagination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).
12 Ibid., p. 8.
13 P. Smith, *Between Two Stools: Scatology and its Representations in English Literature, Chaucer to Swift* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012).
14 Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, *The Politics of Transgression* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), p. 108.
15 I. Miller, *A Modern History of the Stomach: Gastric Illness, Medicine and British Society, 1800–1950* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2011).
16 T. Smollett, *Roderick Random* (London, 1748), p. 102.
17 S. Dickie, *Cruelty and Laughter: Forgotten Comic Literature and the Unsentimental Eighteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).
18 Colin Jones, Juliet Carey and Emily Richardson (eds), *The Saint-Aubin 'Livre de caricatures': Drawing Satire in Eighteenth-Century Paris*, Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century, 2012:06 (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2012).
19 S. Weir Mitchell quoted in S. L. Gillman, 'How Fat Detectives Think', in Forth and Carden-Coyne (eds) *Cultures of the Abdomen*, pp. 221–38; at p. 226.
20 See for instance, C. Lawlor, *Consumption and Literature: The Making of the Romantic Disease* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007), who discusses the aestheticisation of unpleasant diseases as socially 'glamorous' markers of sensibility.
21 W. Temple, 'Of the People and Disposition of the Hollanders', extract in *The Lady's Magazine; or, Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex* (March 1781), 140.
22 G. S. Gross, 'Flights into Illness: Some Characters in Jane Austen', in M. Roberts and R. Porter (eds), *Literature and Medicine during the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 190.
23 A. Ingram and S. Sim, 'Introduction: Depression before Depression', in Allan Ingram et al. (eds), *Melancholy Experience in Literature of the Long Eighteenth Century: Before Depression, 1660–1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 5.
24 W. Cowper, in *The Anatomy of Humane Bodies* (London: Sam. Smith and Benj. Walford, 1698), b2r–b2v, claimed that the spleen processed blood from the viscera before returning it to the stomach.
25 Thomas Lacquer's influential model of sexual difference is articulated in *Making Sex: Body and Gender From the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge,

MA: Harvard University Press, 1990); for challenges to this narrative see M. Green, 'Bodily Essences: Bodies as Categories of Difference', in Linda Kalof (ed.), *A Cultural History of the Human Body in the Medieval Age* (Oxford: Berg, 2010), pp. 149–72 and 264–8.

26 L. McTavish, *Childbirth and the Display of Authority in Early Modern France* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005) and W. D. Churchill, *Female Patients in Early Modern Britain: Gender, Diagnosis, and Treatment* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012).

27 Giulia Enders, *Gut: The Inside Story of Our Body's Most Underrated Organ* (Vancouver: Greystone Books, 2014).

28 F. Joly Gomez, *L'Intestin, notre deuxième cerveau: comprendre son rôle clé et préserver sa santé* (Paris: Marabout, 2016).