# A FUNNY THING

Eighteenth-century literature is weirder than we realize. *A Funny Thing* invites readers to be taken by its oddities, its silliness, and its absurdities – both because reading this way is fun, and because this challenges colonialism's disciplinary epistemes of propriety that have consistently bound liberal selfhood to extractive capitalism. Focusing on three aesthetic modes largely unnamed in existing studies of the period's literature – the anamorphic, the ludic, and the orificial – this book offers fresh readings of work by Haywood, Walpole, Bentley, and Burney that point to unexpected legacies from the so-called Age of Reason. This book is for any reader curious about the wilder flights of fancy in eighteenth-century fiction, the period's queer sense of humor, and how writing and art of the time challenge colonial reality. This title is part of the Flip It Open Programme and may also be available Open Access. Check our website Cambridge Core for details.

EUGENIA ZUROSKI is Professor of English & Cultural Studies at McMaster University, Ontario. She is the author of *A Taste for China: English Subjectivity and the Prehistory of Orientalism* (2013) and editor of the journal *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*. She has also published two chapbooks of poetry, *Kintail Beach* (2022) and *Hovering, Seen* (2019).

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 15 Nov 2026 at 06:34:12, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009486255

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 15 Nov 2026 at 06:34:12, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009486255

# A FUNNY THING

## *Eighteenth-Century Literature Undisciplined*

EUGENIA ZUROSKI

*McMaster University*

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 15 Nov 2026 at 06:34:12, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009486255

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India

103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781009486231

DOI: 10.1017/9781009486255

© Eugenia Zuroski 2025

This work is in copyright. It is subject to statutory exceptions and to the provisions of relevant licensing agreements; with the exception of the Creative Commons version the link for which is provided below, no reproduction of any part of this work may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

An online version of this work is published at doi.org/10.1017/ 9781009486255 under a Creative Commons Open Access license CC-BY-NC 4.0 which permits re-use, distribution and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial purposes providing appropriate credit to the original work is given. You may not distribute derivative works without permission. To view a copy of this license, visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0

All versions of this work may contain content reproduced under license from third parties. Permission to reproduce this third-party content must be obtained from these third-parties directly.

When citing this work, please include a reference to the DOI 10.1017/9781009486255

First published 2025

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*
NAMES: Zuroski Jenkins, Eugenia, author.
TITLE: A funny thing : eighteenth-century literature undisciplined / Eugenia Zuroski.
DESCRIPTION: Cambridge ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2025. | Includes bibliographical references and index. | SUMMARY: "For any reader curious about the wilder flights of fancy in eighteenth-century fiction and how they challenge colonial reality, this book is equally delightful and disruptive."– Provided by publisher.
IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2024057773 (print) | LCCN 2024057774 (ebook) | ISBN 9781009486231 (hardback) | ISBN 9781009486262 (paperback) | ISBN 9781009486255 (epub)
SUBJECTS: LCSH: English literature–18th century–History and criticism. | LCGFT: Literary criticism.
CLASSIFICATION: LCC PR442 .Z87 2025 (print) | LCC PR442 (ebook) | DDC 820.9/005–dc23/eng/20250103
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2024057773
LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2024057774

ISBN 978-1-009-48623-1 Hardback
ISBN 978-1-009-48626-2 Paperback

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 15 Nov 2026 at 06:34:12, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009486255