

The
Little Book
of

CYNICS

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Crombie Jardine
PUBLISHING LIMITED
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www.crombiejardine.com

This edition was first published by
Crombie Jardine Publishing Limited in 2007

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ISBN 978-1-906051-00-6

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Typesetting and cover design
by Ben Ottridge

Printed by William Clowes, Beccles, Suffolk

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INTRODUCTION

Cynics are as old as Man himself. Ancient sources tell of Adam who, when seeing Eve for the first time, muttered, “Uh-oh. There goes Free Will.” If Adam was indeed the father of the human race – and, as such, the progenitor of cynicism – is it any surprise his children are just like him?

THE LITTLE BOOK OF CYNICS

In fact, it was Antisthenes, a follower of Socrates, who got the ball officially rolling. The original philosopher Cynic sought happiness through virtue, rejecting the obsessions of the time: pleasure, fame, fortune and power. Antisthenes, it's said, once declared, "I would rather go mad than experience pleasure" – not someone you'd want on your list of wedding guests.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the word ‘cynic’ has been relegated to a synonym of ‘doubter’, ‘pessimist’ or ‘sceptic’. But, given our modern preoccupations with pleasure, fame, fortune and power, maybe we need cynics more than ever. Perhaps theirs is that small, sane voice amid the roar of instant gratification, 24-hour television, media manipulation and marketing.

THE LITTLE BOOK OF CYNICS

Or perhaps we just wanted to sell a book. But, of course – we're not that cynical. Are we?





APHORISMS

He who laughs
last will probably
be laughed at next.

A fool and his
money are a joy
to behold.

APHORISMS

A thing of beauty
is a marketing
opportunity.

Two heads are
better than one,
but it's hard to
find a hat that fits.

When the pupil
is ready the guru
will rip him off.

Never look a
gift-horse in the
mouth while
it exhales.

APHORISMS

In the kingdom
of the bland the
one-idea-ed man
is king.

The journey of
a thousand miles
begins on the
wrong airplane.