

Question Everything: A Stone Reader

Edited by Peter Catapano and Simon Critchley. Liveright, \$40 (608p) ISBN 978-1-324-09183-7



New York Times opinion editor Catapano and philosophy professor Critchley (*Tragedy, the Greeks and Us*) deliver an edifying compendium of essays published in the *Times's* philosophical series, the Stone, between 2015 and 2021. Contributors

including Agnes Callard, Ai Weiwei, and Sonny Rollins reflect on such questions as “Is democracy possible?” and “What is happiness?” in light of recent social, political, and technological changes. Greek philosophy doctoral student Joseph P. Carter suggests that the “universe doesn’t care about your ‘purpose,’” but that humans can make life meaningful by telling stories and creating myths. Meditations on ethics abound; philosophy professor Paul Bloomfield posits that one must assess oneself accurately if one is to judge others fairly, and history professor Robert Zaretsky argues that Simone Weil’s exhortations for humans to recognize their shared obligation to one another remain relevant. Other entries are more autobiographical, such as novelist Min Jin Lee’s reflections on finding her voice after immigrating to New York City from Seoul. Despite the heavy subject matter, the essays are accessible and often struck through with wit and humor, combining brevity with potency to offer bite-size examinations of how to lead a moral life. Anyone curious about life’s big questions would do well to seek this out. (*Oct.*)