

Toward A Better Understanding of Epicurean Justice And Injustice (With Examples of "Just" and "Unjust")

Post by "Don" of April 7, 2021 at 2:19 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Thank you I will listen to that

Also, I think this is the appropriate time to restate what I think ought to be implicit, but maybe not:

I think when Epicurus argues that "justice" does not exist in the air, he is not saying that the issues involved aren't of vital importance to the people involved, or that we should hold back from taking forceful, even "extreme," action to try to stop or resolve circumstances that we find painful. He's not saying that the red-heads should not defend themselves, or that we who presumably would be pained by their elimination (for whatever reason - they're our friends, they are us, or we just don't like the idea of eliminating anybody) should not take strong action to defend them.

He's simply saying that when we act to defend the red-heads, we should be clear that we are doing so because we ourselves are impelled to do so by our "feelings" (or however we want to describe that). What we're NOT doing is because we are impelled to by some force of "natural justice" that was instituted by the gods, or which exists as somewhere as a platonic or aristotelian absolute.

I think it's necessary to make this point regularly because we would not be being "heartless" to follow these last ten PD's to their logical conclusion, we would just be being "clear-sighted" when we realize that it's up to US to vindicate our viewpoints.

And to me, that has a much more forceful value than thinking that there is some kind of universal "justice" that can somehow defend itself, or that somehow motivates every human being if we just somehow can find a way to bring it to the surface. As I read it, Epicurus is emphasizing that those things DON'T exist, and that if we want to truly respect our feelings and follow them, then we'll ourselves take action, to the best of our ability, to see that the red-heads (this example) are protected.

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Agreed... Although that doesn't mean I'm not still grappling with the implications.

Lisa Feldman Barrett hits these exact points at the end of that episode, too.