

# Preparing A Public Domain Audio And Text Version Lucretius In Modern American English

Post by “Cassius” of October 16, 2025 at 2:42 PM

The title of the post states the goal: I want a freely accessible good quality audio version of Lucretius rendered into modern American English based on the best translations currently available. This goal is going to take quite a while to accomplish and it will require several steps:

1. We need a text that has been prepared from the best public domain versions available, "conformed" into a mashup-edition that avoids archaic or over-academic constructions but still highly accurate and as literal as possible. That will require the version be in prose rather than poetry.
2. We already have three side-by side public domain translations that can be used to compile a revised version. They can be viewed [here on the web](#).
3. I created [a Google Doc](#) with the Bailey edition as a base and we can use that to make changes based on better word choice in the other editions. As set up now anyone can view the latest version at that link. I will grant commenting permission to anyone here on the forum who asks, and I will appreciate as many people as possible making editing comments. We can discuss those proposed changes in the comments and I will then incorporate into the body of the text. At regular intervals I will export to markdown and we'll add this version back to [the side-by-side page](#) where it can be selected or deselected along with the other three translations.
4. After we have an improved text we will want to create a text-to-speech version and export to MP3 where we can make this publicly available for download. In order to accomplish that we'll need to do the following:
5. Find an affordable AI text-to-speech generator with a very professional voice. I suspect we want standard Mid-West style accent that is serious but not overly dramatic. I'm forever indebted to the Charlton Griffin version available at Audible.com, but I find it overly dramatic and even pompous in tone at places, and I don't think that's the right tone. The most widely useful version would likely not sound like Biblical/Apocalyptic tone, or even "Thus Spake Zarathustra, but rather serious and insistent without sounding like an eccentric fanatic.

Steps where you can help:

1. Keep prompting us to move this forward when things seem to slow down for a period of time.
2. Make suggestions for consolidating better language from other translations to substitute for issue with the Bailey version.

3. Make suggestions for AI text-to-speech generation. That includes going through the many website offerings to find the best mix of affordable (preferably free, but at last reasonable cost) that will produce output recordable and usable in the public-domain. This will also likely mean generating a "prompt" that will give instruction as to the way the voice should read the text. For example as a start
  1. "Render the following text in a very professional voice with Mid-West American accent that is serious but not overly dramatic. The voice should never be pompous or fanatical but rather serious and insistent while always being friendly."

Comments and suggestions for how to proceed are welcome. I am sure there are versions already available, and there will be more in the future, but I'd like to see one that will forever be public domain, and is based on a revised and "conformed" copy of the best texts, and that won't happen anywhere else but here.