

# **Discussion of Article: "Caricatures to the Left of Them, Caricatures to the Right of Them, Caricatures In Front of Them, Volleyed and Thundered"**

**Post by "Cassius" of May 4, 2020 at 3:34 PM**

More discussion:

Do you not believe that perhaps there is a genetic disposition for the majority of people to claw for castles made of clouds?

It would seem to me that since the dawn of humanity (I forget exactly how many millions of years), that an adaptation took place for many to yearn for the metaphysics.

Seems I've tried my best sometimes to break friends from it, yet they almost can't get it.

Cassius' Reply:

I think you are right that it is natural for people to be confused about our place in the universe, and it is natural for people to come up with theories that are often wrong. But like Epicurus said, until they are perverted by wrong thinking, they naturally understand that pleasure is desirable and pain is undesirable, and it would not be rocket science to follow those observations to their logical conclusion, like Epicurus did, but for the "perversion" that comes from religion and false philosophies. Supernatural Religions and Platonic theories do not invent themselves; those take people who quickly learn how those theories can be used to manipulate the weaker-minded for their own (the manipulators') benefit.

So when you talk of working with your friends, you're talking about the 21st century and 20 additional centuries of development of peer pressures toward perversion than Epicurus faced in his time. We have advantages (such as the internet and more advanced science) that he didn't have, but the forces of perversion also have access to those tools, and they have had 2000 years of additional regimentation and practice toward pressuring people toward their views.

So I don't think you should judge yourself harshly if you fail to convince any particular set of friends, but you do have to ask yourself "Do I fully understand what Epicurus taught, especially about the faculty of pleasure and pain, and how those translate into a philosophy of practical living?" If you're teaching any variation of "one size fits all" (such that everyone needs to live more simply, or everyone needs to live less simply, or everyone needs to be more of a socialist or less of a socialist, etc etc), then by teaching one size fits all - like a lot of people do - you and the people you're trying to teach are missing the deeper implications of the role of pleasure and the rest of the philosophy.