

# Year-End Possibilities - A Friendly "Debate" Show?

**Post by "Cassius" of October 29, 2020 at 7:23 PM**

We have at least two very deep threads going on right now, one on "divinity" and one on "principles of Epicurean thinking / analysis."

I would appreciate everyone thinking as we near year-end how we can extend the discussions.

I think we would all enjoy a Skype or Zoom (audio only 😊) session on these topics, so let's think about how that might be organized. Perhaps with someone making a presentation and then we just go round the table with responsive comments afterwards?

I am also thinking we could identify major alternative positions within the Epicurean alternatives, and perhaps have sort of a "debate" structure. Designate one or two people to present a position for 5 or 10 minutes, then two more people present the opposite position for 10 minutes. I think we have enough people to do that. To repeat, I am not talking about non-Epicurean vs Epicurean positions, but alternative possibilities for what the ancient Epicureans advocated where we are not clear on what they were saying.

But the key in order to prevent hard feelings and to get the most of it, for the second 20 minutes, have the teams **reverse** and take the position opposite the one they argued the first time!

There's no better way to understand an issue than to be able to present both sides. Think about it- here are the two topic threads:

[Reverence and Awe In Epicurean Philosophy](#)

[General Identification of the Argument in "On Methods of Inference"](#)

Let us know your thoughts on whether this might be of interest.

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**Post by "Don" of October 29, 2020 at 8:42 PM**

Oh my, that pro-con reverse-a-palooza sounds like a lot of work. I see where you're going - and can appreciate the sentiment - but that's getting to a conference presentation level of work.



## **Post by “Cassius” of October 29, 2020 at 9:20 PM**

You're probably correct that it's too aggressive for now. I would like to point in that direction for the future, however, because I am thinking that ultimately the issues involved are not really something that need as much detailed documentation as they do sort of generalist command of the alternative positions. Yes a command of the texts is an important part of getting to that understanding, but I'm thinking that the "fun" would not be so much a matter of citing texts as much as it should be the ability to articulate the "conclusions" of the alternative points.

Here I think I am following the drift of many of Elayne's comments - ultimately we're not making our decisions today on how many texts we can stack up, but on how we ourselves are able to put together the positions into something that makes sense to us.

Or at least that's what I am thinking is really the goal of most of what we're doing here - real life application rather than purely academic citations of references.

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## **Post by “Elayne” of October 29, 2020 at 10:05 PM**

That's an interesting idea... I'm not comfortable arguing a position I disagree with, because I know that at least for me, word choice and tone are influenced by feelings, and to feign feeling for a position I don't like would feel dishonest. I don't enjoy dishonesty and I'm not good at it either, lol.

So someone else may want to do that.

Another option that could have a similar underlying goal would be steel manning-- for members to explain the strongest parts of an opposing argument to the satisfaction of the opponent, in their own words but without pretending to endorse it. Which accomplishes the goal of everyone being sure they know what they are opposing.