

A Request To New Participants

Post by "Cassius" of May 15, 2018 at 1:12 PM

As participation in the forum expands over time, it will be very helpful if new participants will let us know about their level of background and opinions in the areas of Epicurean physics and Epicurean canonic/epistemology. Many people come here initially due to their interest in Epicurean ethics, but as we discuss and debate ideas about ethics, we are essentially just debating "words" without a means to resolve them unless we have a shared foundation from which to build and understand each other.

Epicurean ethical positions rest on underlying positions about the nature of the universe and the nature of knowledge. Our opinions about ethics will largely rest about on our prior opinions about those. Therefore as you begin to post, and as you introduce yourself, please drop back and let us know your positions on Epicurean physics and Epicurean canonic/epistemology. In the broadest of terms the areas of that will determine your conclusions about Epicurean philosophy in general are your views on the nature of the universe (the existence of supernatural gods, pre-birth or post-death existence of souls, existence of "ideals" elsewhere in the universe, or "essences" in this one), on the nature of knowledge (whether knowledge is possible, the role of reason in knowledge, and the relative status and role the senses, anticipations, and feelings). All of these will have a direct influence on one's opinions about ethical issues.

Of course you may be an absolute beginner in Epicurean studies and you may not yet have fully-formed opinions in these areas. Our purpose here is to learn about and apply Epicurean philosophy in our own lives, so don't be concerned that certain positions are required here before you participate. Just let us know in general about your perspective on these issues, and that will allow us to help fine-tune our discussions to make the experience here more helpful to everyone.

Thanks for joining us.

(And thanks to [Daniel Van Orman](#) for the idea to make this post, which will help us all as we go forward.)

For those who come here and read this first part, I am as of 11/19 encouraging new people to tell us about their reading history by reference to a list of standard sources, which I will encourage people to read in the "Welcome" post:

----- Core Reading -----

1 The Biography of Epicurus By Diogenes Laertius (Chapter 10). This includes all Epicurus' letters and the Authorized Doctrines. Supplement with the Vatican list of Sayings.

2 "Epicurus And His Philosophy" - Norman DeWitt

3 "On The Nature of Things"- Lucretius

4 Cicero's "On Ends" - Torquatus Section

5 Cicero's "On The Nature of the Gods" - Velleius Section

6 The Inscription of Diogenes of Oinoanda - Martin Ferguson Smith translation

7 "A Few Days In Athens" - Frances Wright

8 Lucian Core Texts on Epicurus: (1) Alexander the Oracle-Monger, (2) Hermetimus (3) Others?

9 Plato's [Philebus](#)

10 Philodemus "On Methods of Inference" (De Lacy version, including his appendix on relationship of Epicurean canon to Aristotle and other Greeks)

11 "The Greeks on Pleasure" -Gosling & Taylor Sections on Epicurus, especially on katastematic and kinetic pleasure.

12 Chance and Natural Law in Epicurean Philosophy - AA Long -

----- Other Books On Epicurus You Have Read -----

1.

2.

3.