

Tim O'Keefe's "Epicurean Guide To Christmas" (An Article And Responses)

Post by "Cassius" of December 30, 2021 at 7:44 AM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

But my own feeling is "make love not war"...And I hold on to the dream of creating a 21st Century Epicurean Garden.

And my comment here applies not only to this quote but also to some of the other comments above from Don especially:

Yes that is a laudable goal, and should be pursued as much as your circumstances allow. But in my experience the world does not often allow that - it does not allow us to withdraw to our own communities and live in peace to ourselves. The world is full of Absolutists (Stoics, Platonists, Religious Radicals) who set for themselves the goal of making everyone else believe the way they do - and they will not leave us alone.

Unless a part of Epicurean activity is devoted not just to indulging in our own pleasures, but to making sure that the rest of the world that doesn't agree with us is willing (or compelled by our own power to expel) to leave us alone, then we cannot have confidence in our own ability to sustain our chosen lifestyles.

And my references to the "force" part aren't even probably as important as references to the "argument" part. Very few of us are likely to be able to advance to the point where we are completely confident of the correctness of our positions on the nature of things. Most of us are going to interact with people of other persuasions, and even if we succeed in avoiding those who say "We will not allow pleasure to be pursued as the goal of life" we are going to be constantly confronted with the Platonic argument that "If you think about it, pleasure SHOULD NOT be the goal of life."

And I cannot tell you how often over the years I have seen people get enthusiastic about Epicurean philosophy and then eventually fall away from it, not because they conclude it is wrong, but because they simply get tired of arguing with other people and supporting their own position.

So the Lucretian and Lucian and Epicurus style of constant philosophical warfare isn't necessary for all of us, but for the fact that they pursued that lifestyle, and but for some of us being willing to do that today, in my view there is absolutely no hope to proceed further into the realization of real or even online communities -- sadly, the anti-Epicurean world simply will not allow it.