

# Epicureanism and cult-like mentality?

Post by "Don" of January 8, 2022 at 8:07 AM

If you're getting this impression from DeWitt, I'll be the first to admit I have problems with DeWitt. You'll notice some of my reviews of specific chapters of *Epicurus and His Philosophers* in this section. I have major issues with his Ranks and Titles section in chapter 5. I do not necessarily subscribe to a DeWittian interpretation in all things Epicurean.

That being said, I'd like to address a couple specifics in your post/question.

## [Quote from smoothiekiwi](#)

Epicurean society was a bit separated from the rest of the world- own classes, an own garden, own hierarchical structures

There was a school, but I wouldn't call it a society. Epicurus regularly participated in the life of his city, especially in the religious festivals and rites. This comes through loud and clear in Philodemus's *On Piety*.

The Garden was also not a commune or compound. Students were free to come and go and attend classes and celebratory meals. Property was not held in common. This is explicitly stated in Diogenes Laërtius's writing.

Plus the Garden wasn't secluded or remote. It was right near one of the main gates of Athens on a highly traveled road. It just so happened that Epicurus could afford a place for his school to meet. A refuge from the city life for a time.

All the schools held "classes" and lectures. Most of not all of Aristotle's existing works were compiled by a student from lecture notes they took. I don't think we have extant.

All the schools had leaders and teachers.

All the schools thought they taught the truth.

One of the things that attracted me to explore this philosophy in the first place was because it was the *\*only\** ancient school to welcome every member of society including women and slaves. There are women who were respected members of the school and who wrote philosophical texts (none of which survive - big surprise) arguing against the leading teachers of other schools.

That's all for now, but I appreciate your starting this thread!