

The "Leaping Pig" from Herculaneum (& modern iterations)

Post by "Cassius" of June 28, 2022 at 3:50 PM

From the [Herculaneum Society Page](#) that Don found - Someone else who appreciates "thumbing one's nose!" 🤔

This life-size piglet was found in the Villa of the Papyri alongside many other bronzes and marbles in the largest collection of statues surviving from the Greco-Roman world. There is some evidence that the Epicureans adopted the piglet as a symbol of their hedonistic philosophy, which did not mean (as their critics alleged) the indulgence of carnal desires but the pursuit of true pleasure and inner tranquillity. The young animal is in an innocent state of nature and has not yet learned the fears and hatreds that cause pain in human life. "Pig" in the mouths of others was an insult so this appropriation of the tag was another way Epicureans thumbed their noses at society's ordinary, misguided values.

This carefree, energetic and frisky youngster, a favourite of many visitors to the Herculaneum Gallery in the National Archaeological Museum of Naples, seemed a good mascot for our young Society when we started up in 2004. And who knows but that pigs may fly?