

Epicureanism and Romantic Love

Post by “Joshua” of June 30, 2022 at 9:55 AM

Probably my approach to this question would be twofold. The first point I would like to see articulated is that Epicurus' opinions about sex and romance—whatever they turn out to be—are just that; opinions. I'm not very likely to consult a dead philosopher *at all* on these matters, they being so intimate and so personal, and I am *especially* uninterested in giving my ear to any High Priest of Epicureanism on what I should do, or what I am *allowed* to do when it comes to interpersonal relationships.

The second point is this; apart from the physicality of the thing itself, nearly everything about sex and about romance has changed wildly since the 3rd century BC. "Chaste"—I detest the word *pure* when applied to people—but "chaste" women tethered to their looms, and shut away in an inner room, is no longer the order of the day. Richard Nixon famously said about economics that "we are all Keynesians now". Well, in the 21st century we are, in the English-speaking world of my experience, nearly all Epicureans when it comes to sex. *Purity* and *sin*, thank heavens or culture, are on the outs, and *choice* and *avoidance* are the new watchwords.

My parents have an average of 8 or 9 siblings. Them and their siblings have an average of two or 3 children. This fact tells a story that the homilies of their parish priests do *not* tell. They will continue to say one thing, but secular culture and law has allowed them to choose quite another.

So, if you are lucky enough now that no one has the power to coerce you—what will *you* choose? That is, in my view, the only question that means anything.