

Methodological Naturalism

Post by “Don” of July 4, 2022 at 12:31 AM

[Quote from Joshua](#)

I don't think that methodological naturalism asserts that there is nothing supernatural-- that to my understanding would be 'philosophical naturalism'. Methodological naturalism is not so much a doctrine or belief, as it is an attitude or approach to inquiry.

You are absolutely correct, [Joshua](#) . Thanks! Very good points to remember.

[Quote from Joshua](#)

But to state my own position plainly, I think that Epicurus was a philosophical naturalist, who further employed methodological naturalism in his study of nature.

I would concur as well. I think that is an excellent way to phrase it. And so I would agree with [Cassius](#) above as well in saying Epicurus did positively assert that there was nothing supernatural. As [Cassius](#) mentioned in the most recent podcast (Nicely done on the 12 Fundamentals btw), the Epicureans could be lauded for their ALWAYS looking for a material/physical explanation even when confronted by Alexander the Oracle-monger and his magic snake. So, the Epicureans would assert, as you said [Joshua](#) that there is nothing supernatural (I would add: Because I assume they believed the universe was infinite and there was nothing "outside" of the universe.) therefore, they were "philosophical naturalists" in their perspective. As such, they would (in our terminology here) be "methodological naturalists" in their day to day dealings with the world.

[Quote from Joshua](#)

By contrast, Dr. Francis Collins who is a renowned geneticist and was the the head of the Human Genome Project is not at all a naturalist, being a Christian, but in his scientific work he sought natural explanations for the phenomena of nature.

You are on fire, my friend! 😊 Excellent point there as well. That is a good illustration of the different permutations possible in the naturalist and scientist categories.

Thank you both, [Joshua](#) and [Cassius](#) !