

# Valueless Virtue in Modern Stoicism

Post by "Cassius" of January 18, 2019 at 6:53 AM

You are very welcome! Your comment calls to mind why I think it is so important not to underplay the role of Epicurean physics. We don't just start with abstractions and manipulate them, we start back at basics of elemental particles and void and the absence of an overall supernatural creator, and the absence of a center to the universe. Within such a universe how could it even be conceived that there would be "one size fits all" arrangements?

But the key to me was to help me break out of the "Either chaos or divine creator" alternative. These don't have to be the only alternatives, even though there is massive pressure to force us into one of those two paradigms. Some things are in fact determined and "necessary," while some others are not.

In this context I always remember the Rolfe Humphries wording of the passage from Book 1 of Lucretius about "what can be, and what cannot...."-

So his force,

His vital force of mind, a conqueror

Beyond the flaming ramparts of the world

Explored the vast immensities of space

With wit and wisdom, and came back to us

Triumphant, **bringing news of what can be**

**And what cannot, limits and boundaries,**

**The borderline, the bench mark, set forever.**

Religion, so, is trampled underfoot,

And by his victory we reach the stars.