

A Challenge To The Stoics - Show Us We Are Wrong In How Epicureans View Stoicism

Post by "Cassius" of March 11, 2017 at 6:23 PM

[Cassius Amicus](#) shared a [link](#).

[February 21 at 4:34pm](#)

We have recently seen the latest in a series of posts from Stoic-oriented people who question the accuracy of the characterizations of Stoicism frequently made in this group. The general theme usually takes the form "You misrepresent Stoicism in order to bash it..." but in response to challenge the posters never provide any citations to core stoic leaders (Zeno, Chrysippus, Epictetus, etc) to show that our characterizations of Stoicism are incorrect. The suggestion has been made that it would be good to post a formal challenge to the pro-Stoics to provide authoritative cites to oppose our position. So here it is.

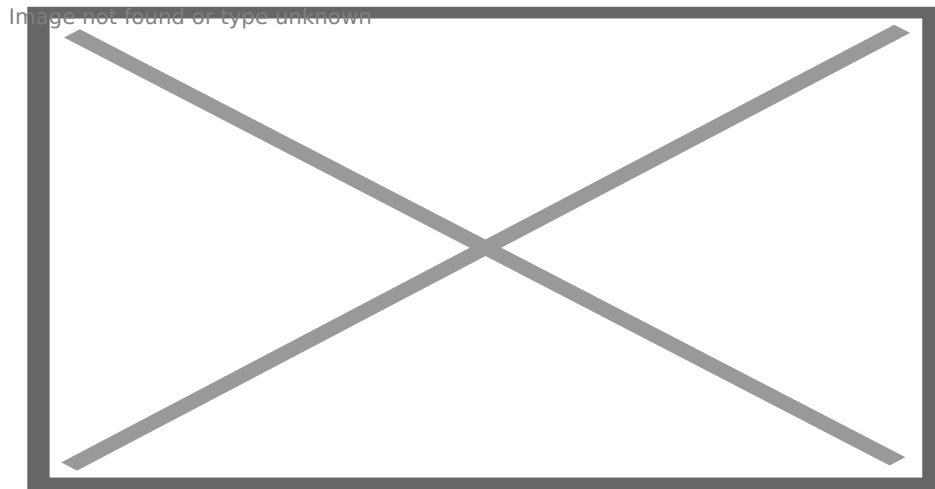
We'll keep the results in a place where we can find them, and I'll even add them to my ongoing contrast chart linked below. Please keep in mind that we're talking about "Stoicism" as a philosophical movement, and we're not talking about modern cognitive behavioral therapy or modern neo-anything. If modernists want to invent their own eclectic philosophies and graft old names onto it, that's their business.

Also, please limit posts that essentially amount to "In my opinion you are wrong..." or "In my experience stoicism is..." As much as we might like to, we don't really have the time for simple statements of opinion - what we really want is **evidence** in the form of citations showing that Stoicism does not rate the denunciation that many of us here (echoing Nietzsche, Cosma Raimondi, and others) regularly give to it. As a practical matter in this group we study Epicurean philosophy, and we learn about Epicurus in part by studying the recognizable philosophies that have opposed him over the centuries - and Stoicism has been the leader of that pack.

Another type of response to avoid is the eclectic "well I pick and choose the BEST of all philosophies and I combine them as I see fit." Those types of comments can be made in the future in separate threads, and we can deal with the problems of eclecticism separately. I suspect neither confirmed Epicureans nor confirmed Stoics think that would be a productive use of time in this thread, and the Stoics would have even harsher words for eclecticism than would we.

So please submit your suggestions from the Stoic Authorities for how we should modify our characterizations. We will happily receive evidence that our opinions should be adjusted, because:

"In a philosophical discussion, he who is defeated gains more, since he learns more." - Vatican Saying 74



[Epicurean Philosophy v. Stoicism - A Comparison Chart with Citations](#)

Epicurean vs. Stoic A Comparison Chart With Citations To Sources In The Ancient Texts (see also a Comparison Chart on The Goal of Life) Issue Epicurean...
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[18](#)Geoff Petersson, Surazeus Simon Seamount and [16](#) others

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[Cassius Amicus](#) type unknown

[Cassius Amicus](#) In my post I made a reference to Cosma Raimondi - here is his letter as an example of the Epicurean position -

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/164-a-challenge-to-the-stoics-show-us-we-are-wrong-in-how-epicureans-view-stoicism/?postID=213#post213>

"It is not just a dispute between ourselves, for all the ancient philosophers, principally the three sects of Academics, Stoics and Aristotelians, declared war to the death against this one man who was the master of them all. Their onslaught sought to leave no place for him in philosophy and to declare all his opinions invalid – in my view, because they were envious at seeing so many more pupils taking themselves to the school of Epicurus than to their own....."

Though this was Epicurus's judgment, the Stoics took a different view, arguing that happiness was to be found in virtue alone. For them the wise man would still be happy even if he were being tortured by the cruellest butchers. This is a position I most emphatically reject. What could be more absurd than to call a man 'happy' when he is in fact utterly miserable? What could be sillier than to say that the man being roasted in the bull of Phalaris,¹ and subject to the most extreme torment, was not wretched? How again could you be further from any sort of happiness than to lack all or most of the things that themselves make up happiness? The Stoics think that someone who is starving and lame and afflicted with all the other disadvantages of health or external circumstances is nonetheless in a state of perfect felicity as long as he can display his virtue. All their books praise and celebrate the famous Marcus Regulus for his courage under torture.² For my part I think that Regulus or anyone else, even someone utterly virtuous and constant, of the utmost innocence and integrity, who is being roasted in the bull of Phalaris or who is exiled from his country or afflicted quite undeservedly with misfortunes even more bitter, can be accounted not simply not happy but truly unhappy, and all the more so because the great and prominent virtue that should have led to a happier outcome has instead proved so disastrous for them.

If we were indeed composed solely of a mind, I should be inclined to call Regulus 'happy' and entertain the Stoic view that we should find happiness in virtue alone. But since we are composed of a mind and a body, why do they leave out of this account of human happiness something that is part of mankind and properly pertains to it? Why do they consider only the mind and neglect the body, when the body houses the mind and is the other half of what man is? If you are seeking the totality something made up of various parts, and yet some part is missing, I cannot think it perfect and complete. We use the term 'human', I take it, to refer to a being with both a mind and a body. And in the same way that the body is not to be thought healthy when some part of it is sick, so man himself cannot be thought happy if he is suffering in some part of himself. As for their assigning happiness to the mind alone on the grounds that it is in some sense the master and ruler of man's body, it is quite absurd to disregard the body when the mind itself often depends on the state and condition the body and indeed can do nothing without it. Should we not deride someone we saw sitting on a throne and calling himself a king when he had no

courtiers or servants? Should we think someone a fine prince whose servants were slovenly and misshapen? Yet those who would separate the mind from the body in defining human happiness and think that someone whose body is being savaged and tortured may still be happy are just as ludicrous.

I find it surprising that these clever Stoics did not remember when investigating the subject that they themselves were men. Their conclusions came not from what human nature demanded but from what they could contrive in argument. Some of them, in my view, placed so much reliance on their ingenuity and facility in debate that they did not concern themselves with what was actually relevant to the enquiry. They were carried away instead by their enthusiasm for intellectual display, and tended to write what was merely novel and surprising — things we might aspire to but not ones we should spend any effort in attaining. Then there were some rather cantankerous individuals who thought that we should only aim for what they themselves could imitate or lay claim to. Nature had produced some boorish and inhuman philosophers whose senses had been dulled or cut off altogether, ones who took no pleasure in anything; and these people laid down that the rest of mankind should avoid what their own natural severity and austerity shrank from. Others subsequently entered the debate, men of great and various intellectual abilities, who all delivered a view on what constituted the supreme good according to their own individual disposition. But in the middle of all this error and confusion, Epicurus finally appeared to correct and amend the mistakes of the older philosophers and put forward his own true and certain teaching on happiness.

Now that the Stoics have, I hope, been comprehensively refuted....

<https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3...jHq8L-1XiFHcKIs>
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Cassius Amicus

[Cassius](#) [Amicus](#) And here is Nietzsche
<https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3...JTMxaQacRabJwYQ>

Beyond Good And Evil, (Gutenberg edition, translated by Helen Zimmern) Chapter 1, section 9

You desire to LIVE “according to Nature”? Oh, you noble Stoics, what fraud of words!

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Imagine to yourselves a being like Nature, boundlessly extravagant, boundlessly indifferent, without purpose or consideration, without pity or justice, at once fruitful and barren and uncertain: imagine to yourselves **INDIFFERENCE** as a power—how **COULD** you live in accordance with such indifference? To live—is not that just endeavouring to be otherwise than this Nature? Is not living valuing, preferring, being unjust, being limited, endeavouring to be different? And granted that your imperative, “living according to Nature,” means actually the same as “living according to life”—how could you do **DIFFERENTLY**? Why should you make a principle out of what you yourselves are, and must be? In reality, however, it is quite otherwise with you: while you pretend to read with rapture the canon of your law in Nature, you want something quite the contrary, you extraordinary stage-players and self-deluders! In your pride you wish to dictate your morals and ideals to Nature, to Nature herself, and to incorporate them therein; you insist that it shall be Nature “according to the Stoa,” and would like everything to be made after your own image, as a vast, eternal glorification and generalism of Stoicism! With all your love for truth, you have forced yourselves so long, so persistently, and with such hypnotic rigidity to see Nature **FALSELY**, that is to say, Stoically, that you are no longer able to see it otherwise—and to crown all, some unfathomable superciliousness gives you the Bedlamite hope that **BECAUSE** you are able to tyrannize over yourselves—Stoicism is self-tyranny—Nature will also allow herself to be tyrannized over: is not the Stoic a **PART** of Nature?... But this is an old and everlasting story: what happened in old times with the Stoics still happens today, as soon as ever a philosophy begins to believe in itself. It always creates the world in its own image; it cannot do otherwise; philosophy is this tyrannical impulse itself, the most spiritual Will to Power, the will to “creation of the world,” the will to the *causa prima*.

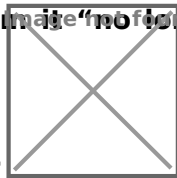
Beyond Good And Evil, (Gutenberg edition, translated by Helen Zimmern) Chapter 5, section 188

188. In contrast to *laissez-aller*, every system of morals is a sort of tyranny against “nature” and also against “reason”, that is, however, no objection, unless one should again decree by some system of morals, that all kinds of tyranny and unreasonableness are unlawful. What is essential and invaluable in every system of morals, is that it is a long constraint. In order to understand Stoicism, or Port Royal, or Puritanism, one should remember the constraint under which every language has attained to strength and freedom—the metrical constraint, the tyranny of rhyme and rhythm.

Beyond Good And Evil, (Gutenberg edition, translated by Helen Zimmern) Chapter 5,

section 198

198. All the systems of morals which address themselves with a view to their “happiness,” as it is called—what else are they but suggestions for behaviour adapted to the degree of DANGER from themselves in which the individuals live; recipes for their passions, their good and bad propensities, insofar as such have the Will to Power and would like to play the master; small and great expediencies and elaborations, permeated with the musty odour of old family medicines and old-wife wisdom; all of them grotesque and absurd in their form—because they address themselves to “all,” because they generalize where generalization is not authorized; all of them speaking unconditionally, and taking themselves unconditionally; all of them flavoured not merely with one grain of salt, but rather enduring only, and sometimes even seductive, when they are over-spiced and begin to smell dangerously, especially of “the other world.” That is all of little value when estimated intellectually, and is far from being “science,” much less “wisdom”; but, repeated once more, and three times repeated, it is expediency, expediency, expediency, mixed with stupidity, stupidity, stupidity—whether it be the indifference and statuesque coldness towards the heated folly of the emotions, which the Stoics advised and fostered; or the no-more-laughing and no-more-weeping of Spinoza, the destruction of the emotions by their analysis and vivisection, which he recommended so naively; or the lowering of the emotions to an innocent mean at which they may be satisfied, the Aristotelianism of morals; or even morality as the enjoyment of the emotions in a voluntary attenuation and spiritualization by the symbolism of art, perhaps as music, or as love of God, and of mankind for God’s sake—for in religion the passions are once more enfranchised, provided that...; or, finally, even the complaisant and wanton surrender to the emotions, as has been taught by Hafis and Goethe, the bold letting-go of the reins, the spiritual and corporeal licentia morum in the exceptional cases of wise old codgers and drunkards, with whom ~~is no longer as much~~ danger.”—This also for the chapter:



“Morals as Timidity.”

[Nietzsche on Stoicism’s “Fraud of Words”](#)

The following passage from Nietzsche has many excellent uses in exposing the roots of Stoicism and all...

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[Brock Nadeau](#) or type unknown

[Brock Nadeau](#) Can I just claim that I am "indifferent" to Epicureanism. 1f609.png or type unknown
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[Elli Pensa](#) or type unknown

[Elli Pensa](#) [Brock Nadeau](#) IMO you do very well to be indifferent in something that has the suffix -ism. 1f609.png 😊
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[Kev Ring](#) or type unknown

[Kev Ring](#) Many posts on here are just talking about stoicism.....stoic groups dont really talk about Epicureanism at all.....there is just a difference in either mindset or understanding. In many cases it is the latter. Now can we stop talking about stoicism and move on a little? They don't paticularly care...
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[Jason Baker](#) or type unknown

[Jason Baker](#) "...stoic groups don't really talk about Epicureanism at all..."

Yes they do. Do a word search on the main Stoic philosophy discussion group (that you're a member of) here on Facebook. The topic comes up weekly.

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Cassius Amicus

Write a reply...

Cassius Amicus

[Cassius Amicus](#) Kev Ring - It is not "They" who we should primarily care about educating. It is far more important first for Epicureans to understand Epicurus so that they are not taken in by the errors that can otherwise creep in.and still no citations....

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Elli Pensa

[Elli Pensa](#) There is no such a thing Epicurean-ism that some are talking about. There are some filthy hands that grabbed the Epicurus philosophy trying to transform it as to be similar to any miserable ideology. This is a criminal action that the ancient

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epicureans took position in the past and this story continues until nowadays. Because if there won't anyone to react on this, the phenomena around us will be getting worse and we will never become pleased and happy mister Kev Ring.

By the way did you read the inscription of Diogenis of Oinoanda ???

But I must warn you ..against other philosophers, especially those, like the Socratics...

But I must warn you... also against Aristotle, and those who hold the views of his Peripatetic School....

But I must warn you... against of what some men call "Fate," or "Necessity." ...

But I must warn you... against the disposition to grasp at one among several possibilities, when the proof is insufficient, and when several possibilities may be true according to the evidence, is characteristic of a fortune-teller, or a priest, or a fool, and not the path of a wise man.

But I must warn you... that we do not like Protagoras of Abdera, who said that he did not know whether gods exist, for that is the same as saying that he knew that they do not exist.

But I must warn you...that we do not agree with Homer, who portrayed the gods as adulterers, and as angry with those who are prosperous. In contrast, we hold that the statues of the gods should be made genial and smiling, so that we may smile back at them, rather than be afraid of them.

But I must warn you... that many men pursue philosophy for the sake of wealth and power, with the aim of procuring these either from private individuals, or from kings, who deem philosophy to be a great and precious possession.

But I must warn you... to know this also: We Epicureans bring these truths, not to all men whatsoever, but only to those men who are benevolent and capable of receiving

this wisdom.

But I must warn you... that the virtues, which are turned upside down by other philosophers, who transfer the virtues from “the means” to “the end”, are in no way the end in themselves! The virtues are not ends in themselves, but only the means to the end that Nature has set for us!

But I must warn you ...to those who adopt Democritus’ theory, and assert that, because the atoms collide with one another, they have no freedom of movement, and that consequently all motions are determined by necessity, we Epicureans have a ready answer, and we ask in reply. “Do you not know that there is actually a free movement in the atoms, which Democritus failed to discover, but which Epicurus brought to light — a swerving movement, as he proves from the phenomena we see around us?” The most important thing to remember is this: if Fate is held to exist, then all warnings and censures are useless, and not even the wicked can be justly punished, since they are not responsible for their sins.

But I must warn you... what kind of gods or religion will cause men to act righteously? Men are not righteous on account of the real gods, nor on account of Plato’s and Socrates’ judges in Hades. We are thus left with this inescapable conclusion. Why would not evil men, who disregard the laws, disregard and scorn fables even more?

Thus we see that in regard to righteousness, our Epicurean doctrines do no harm, nor do the religions that teach fear of the gods do any good. On the contrary, false religions do harm, whereas our doctrines not only do no harm, but also help. For our doctrines remove disturbances from the mind, while the other philosophies add to those disturbances.

Fear of the gods; fear of death; fear of pain; fear of slavery to those desires which are neither natural nor necessary. The day will come when none of these shall interrupt the continuity of our friendships, and of our happiness, in the study of philosophy. In that day, wise men will tend the Earth, in a life close to Nature; our agriculture will provide for our needs, and we, and those who are our friends, will live as gods among men.

And Thus Ends the Inscription of Diogenes of Oineanda.

THE DAY WILL COME (...when none of these shall interrupt the continuity of our friendships, and of our happiness, in the study of philosophy)How that HOPEFUL DAY will COME without doing SOMETHING ??

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Kev Ring

[Kev Ring](#) That post is way too long to read   ? but ill give it a like!....fuck it! 

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[Jimmy Daltrey](#)

[Jimmy Daltrey](#) I did actually join this group to find out about Epicureanism, not a constant compare and contrast with Stoicism.

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Kev Ring

[Kev Ring](#) Yeah its getting old. Im outa here i think. No harmony or joy to be found here.

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[Jimmy Daltrey](#)

[Jimmy Daltrey](#) There is a bit of a ranty feel to it. Angry.

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[Ilkka Vuoristo](#)

[Ilkka Vuoristo](#) [admin hat]

We are experiencing a seasonal flood of posts and questions that are motivated by either an innocent curiosity about the difference from stoicism, or an outright hostility to Epicurean philosophy. It's a regular occurrence, about twice a year. This flood will end when malicious posters troll out and are Banhammered.

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [February 23 at 6:53pm](#)


Cassius Amicus

Write a reply...

[Elli Pensa](#)

[Elli Pensa](#) mister [Jimmy Daltrey](#) the texts in the middle of the photo (as above) is

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/164-a-challenge-to-the-stoics-show-us-we-are-wrong-in-how-epicureans-view-stoicism/?postID=213#post213>

about Epicurean philosophy. If you read all these right things then, there is a case that you do not need to read the false things in the right side of the text. Nobody could forced you to read something you do not like or to live your life according to something you do like. Freedom of choice is synonym with the free will actually. Mister [Kev Ring](#), frankly I have no need for your "like" that comes without reading some things from Diogenis Oionanda inscription. I asked you first if you have read it, and in case you did not I responded to your comment which said that many post is about stoicism. When I post for Epicurean philosophy you could not read it. However there are some old women and old men, and mainly the uneducated, who can't read long texts because they think that they know everything and usually they find many excuses that they have problems with their eyes. HA  type unknown

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Jimmy Daltrey

[Jimmy Daltrey](#) Not very friendly.

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Jason Baker

[Jason Baker](#) Frankness is often confused with undfriendliness by the unfriendly. Not everyone is of the temperament to accept correction in the Epicurean way. There's a long tradition of it, going back to Epicurus' own life. Go then, be like Timocrates.

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Elli Pensa

[Elli Pensa](#) [Jimmy Daltrey](#) Not hostile.

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Cassius Amicus

Write a reply...

[Matt Jackson](#) or type unknown

[Matt Jackson](#) Everyone understands this is a citation challenge right? Read the post again. You are to "cite" ancient authentic Stoic authors as support for any claim that Stoicism is being misrepresented by an Epicurean lens. This is to avoid a constant repeated discussion of personal opinions that don't really help the discussion.

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Matt Jackson

[Matt Jackson](#) So by all means if you disagree, please cite Zeno and Epictetus.

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Kev Ring

[Kev Ring](#) I think ye miss the point, and furthermore only show your true misunderstanding of what it is to be a stoic. A stoic has no need nor want to have a debate with Epicureans. Completely indifferent to your calls. To be honest i view it as an unusual and disharmonous mindset really. Elli Pensa, please note I liked your last post too. 1f602.png ? i wish you all well. I joined here to learn about Epicureanism. Not just constantly rant on about how much ye disagree with Stoicism. Perhaps in a way you have taught me enough to know its certainly not something i wish to pursue further. All the best. Back into the cave with you all. 1f44d.png ?

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[Alexander Rios](#) type unknown

[Alexander Rios](#) You should learn the basics by self study, then come ask well formed questions here.

Epicurus wrote three letters. Read or listen to them.

Menoceus, then Herodotus, then Pythocles, then Menoceus again.

After that I recommend The Epicurean Inscription of Diogenes.

After that I recommend Torquatus' Defense of Epicurus, Cicero.

The last you should read are the Principle Doctrines and Vatican Sayings.

Please start here.

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Cassius Amicus


Write a reply...

[Matt Jackson](#)

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Matt Jackson Public farewells aren't necessary.  Image not found type unknown
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Cassius Amicus

Cassius Amicus But they are classically Stoic!  Image not found type unknown
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Cassius Amicus

Write a reply...

Elli Pensa

Elli Pensa Mister Kev Ring. When I was at school there was a very nice teacher of mine who said to all of her pupils that the learning comes with the participation with your works. Well, give us your post and your work with a text of Epicurean Philosophy and say to us on what you disagree or agree, and what you do not understand or not.  Image not found type unknown
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Cassius Amicus

Cassius Amicus "A stoic has no need nor want to have a debate with Epicureans. " Boy **that** is a view with which the ancient Stoics disagreed! Apparently Kev needs to read his Epictetus:

"Some of Epictetus' comments are scattered, and of those some are more direct...
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Jimmy Daltrey

Jimmy Daltrey Honestly **Cassius Amicus**, What is with the obsession with Stoicism? If i want to hear about Stoicism i will look into Stoicism. Nietzsche also...Nietzsche, brilliant, why on a page about Epicurus are we constantly seeing Nietzsche?...On the Stoics?
[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [February 22 at 9:30am](#)

Jason Baker

Jason Baker **Jimmy Daltrey**, you don't get to see much of it because it's removed from the group as a distraction but we're invaded by organized stoic groups for the

purposes of trolling on the regular, a la Chan board invasions. They're organized on the Stoicism group and sockpuppets are set up specifically for the purposes of annoying us. We've had frank confessions and screenshots, this isn't paranoia. That alone is enough to cause someone, such as myself, who doesn't give a flying squirrel fart about stoicism to be disinclined to rehash the same old canards ("I don't think stoics would say, blah, blah, blah..." cite your sources!) time and again.

If you would actually read the original and secondary source material you would understand why.

Epicureans don't use Socratic dialogue, that approach (which seems to be VERY common in the Stoic Group) is deprecated here. READ the original sources and then read again the words we spin out regularly, then join the discussion.

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Mish Taylor
Image not found or type unknown

[Mish Taylor](#) What Jason said, and quite frankly, it does get boring this Stoic nonsense, doesn't it [Jimmy Daltrey](#) . - rhetorical, don't need a reply.

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Jimmy Daltrey

[Jimmy Daltrey](#) So that is interesting. The Socratic dialectic is not used. I didn't know that.

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Cassius Amicus

Write a reply...

Elli Pensa

[Elli Pensa](#) "In a philosophical discussion, he who is defeated gains more, since he learns more." - Vatican Saying 74 Image not found or type unknown [LIKE.png](#) (y) [LIKE.png](#) (y)

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Cassius Amicus

[Cassius Amicus](#) I note several references in related threads to people who are asserting that Stoics would enjoy pleasure. As usual, no cites, and in this case it is PARTICULARLY important to document this assertion, given these very clear

statements from Stoic authorities

“FROM THE MEMORABILIA OF EPICTETUS ... bringing forward the peevish philosophers, who hold that pleasure is not natural, but accompanies things which are natural—justice, self-control, freedom. Why then does the soul take a calm delight, as Epicurus says, in the lesser goods, those of the body, and does not take pleasure in her own good things, which are the greatest? I tell you that nature has given me a sense of self-respect, and I often blush when I think I am saying something shameful. It is this emotion which prevents me from regarding pleasure as a good thing and as the end of life. Flor. 6. 50.” Discourses of Epictetus

“

He is impressed with Cynicism, but sees it as a vocation to itinerant teaching and bare-bones living rather than as a body of doctrine (3.22). Epicureanism he identifies with the pleasure principle and accordingly despises (3.7).” Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, entry on Epictetus.

“When you receive an impression of some pleasure, as with others, watch yourself, not to be carried off by it; however let it wait upon your business, and get some delay for yourself. Next remember both the times, when you will enjoy the pleasure, and when having enjoyed it later you will repent and reproach yourself; and against these refraining how much you will be glad and commend yourself. But if an opportunity appears to you to engage in the action, be sure you are not overcome by its softness and pleasure and attraction; but set against it, how much better is the awareness for yourself to have won a victory over it.” Epictetus, Enchiridion

“And if any instance of pain or pleasure, or glory or disgrace, is set before you, remember that now is the combat, now the Olympiad comes on, nor can it be put off. By once being defeated and giving way, proficiency is lost, or by the contrary preserved. Thus Socrates became perfect, improving himself by everything, attending to nothing but reason. And though you are not yet a Socrates, you ought, however, to live as one desirous of becoming a Socrates.” Epictetus, Enchiridion

“What is our nature? To be free, noble, self-respecting. What other animal blushes? What other can have a conception of shame? We must subordinate pleasure to these principles, to minister to them as a servant, to evoke our interests and to keep us in the way of our natural activities.” Discourses of Epictetus, Chapter VII (Note: This entire chapter is dedicated to discrediting Epicurean philosophy.)

Chapter XX is also dedicated to attacking Epicureans: “What, then, do you hold good or evil, base or noble? Is it this doctrine, or that? It is useless to go on disputing with one of these men, or reasoning with him, or trying to alter his opinion. One might have very much more hope of altering the mind of a profligate than of men who are absolutely deaf and blind to their own miseries.”

“Diogenes, who was sent scouting before you, has brought us back a different report: he says, ‘Death is not evil, for it is not dishonour’; he says, ‘Glory is a vain noise made by madmen’. And what a message this scout brought us about pain and pleasure and poverty! ‘To wear no raiment’, he says, ‘is better than any robe with purple hem’; ‘to sleep on the ground without a bed’, he says, ‘is the softest couch.’ Moreover he proves each point by showing his own confidence, his tranquillity of mind, his freedom, and withal his body well knit, and in good condition. ‘No enemy is near,’ he says, ‘all is full of peace.’” Discourses of Epictetus, Chapter 24

“Moreover Epictetus also, as we heard from the same Favorinus, used to say that there were two faults far more serious and vile than any others, want of endurance and want of self-control, the failure to bear and endure the wrongs we have to bear, and the failure to forbear the pleasures and other things that we ought to forbear.” Discourses of Epictetus

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [3](#) · [February 22 at 3:29pm](#)

Cassius Amicus

[Cassius Amicus](#) And that last list was just Epictetus. For other lengthy cites from Zeno and (yes) Marcus Aurelius, see [here](#):
Image not found. See type unknown.

https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3..._NoRLi6iR-dfvKE

[The Stoics On Pleasure](#)

(Note: See also this Epicurean v Stoic comparison chart.) The following is a list of quotations from (or...

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Jimmy Daltrey

[Jimmy Daltrey](#) Back to the Stoics again? Do we do the Peripatetics as well?

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<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/164-a-challenge-to-the-stoics-show-us-we-are-wrong-in-how-epicureans-view-stoicism/?postID=213#post213>

Jason Baker

Jason Baker We do, but they're not as thick on the ground as MoStos. 1f609.png



Unlike · **Reply** · **2** · **February 22 at 5:13pm**

Jason Baker

Jason Baker But seriously, this thread was made specifically to keep the stoic discussion to one thread. **Jimmy Daltrey**, you've taken issue with our characterizations, this is your chance to correct them with citations!

Unlike · **Reply** · **2** · **February 22 at 5:18pm**

Jimmy Daltrey

Jimmy Daltrey Stoics are just soft core Cynics.

Like · **Reply** · **1** · **February 22 at 6:53pm** · **Edited**

Cassius Amicus

Write a reply...

Vagelis Baltatzis type unknown

Vagelis Baltatzis **Cassius Amicus** ,

Stoa , Garden , Academy (I do not like the words -ism) were ancient vivid philosophies. They were in many things correct and in many things wrong.

The physics of Stoa and Garden are in many things wrong from the view of modern physics . Ancient greek physics did not have experiments in the galilean sense . Actually, hellenistic science underwent a scientific revolution and was very close to the scientific revolution of Galileo,Kepler ,Neuton, but the Roman conquest of Greece stopped the advancement.

Stoic propositional logic was revolutionary for its time and the people could not understand it . Stoic ethics have to be tested in our everyday lifes and the results are observable . Many stoic elements were used by modern psychotherapy and there is experimental evidence for many stoic ideas and approaches. Modern Stoicism is a vivid community with many people from a different background.

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/164-a-challenge-to-the-stoics-show-us-we-are-wrong-in-how-epicureans-view-stoicism/?postID=213#post213>

Although I agree more with stoic principles, than with epicurian principles , this does not mean I do not like Epicurus and many of his ideas. This also does not mean that I agree with ALL the stoic ideas . The Stoics (as also the Epicurians and other philosophes) were 2.300 years ago, They used the science and ideas of their time to advance on them. They did not use the ideas of ancient Egypt. In this sense we should use the knowledge of our time. It is not philosophy if I follow a group like a football club blindly and without critical thinking.

I will not write here to prove that Kepos is wrong. I think many ideas of Epicurus are correct and if they work for you, then its super for you . I disagree with some of the ideas of Epicurus (for instance that pleasure is the ONLY aim of life or that ethics exist ONLY for mutual benefit), but this is not our thread here .

I will write here only to show you that many of your ideas of Stoicism are almost completely wrong. I do not care if you want to have this ideas and most people in stoic fora don't care . I will do this, because it is very sad , if we have wrong things about greek philosophy.

Its one thing to say that sensual pleasures , ataraxia, wellbeing are parts of a rational life and it is different to say that they were against pleasures ,enjoyment and wellbeing.

The Stoics did not say that you have to be tortured to be happy. They showed the way that in all instanced of life you can be eudaimon. It is very counter-intuitive , but think of this. There are many people who cannot see, who do not have legs or who are ill. Many of them lead a very happy life . OF course they would prefer to see , to be able to walk etc., but this does not influence their wellbeing.

Epicurus ,himself , shows the truth of the stoic position in his last hours. He was very ill, he had pains, but this did not influence his psychological wellbeing.

Anyway, I will come to this again in the specific point of the table.

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[Ilkka Vuoristo](#)

[Ilkka Vuoristo](#) "[...] (for instance that pleasure is the ONLY aim of life or that ethics exist ONLY for mutual benefit) [...]"

Epicurus doesn't teach either of these....[See More](#)
[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [2](#) · [February 23 at 7:03pm](#)

Vagelis Baltatzis

[Vagelis Baltatzis](#) [Ilkka Vuoristo](#) Maybe, some of my ideas about Epicurian philosophy are wrong. Maybe I could not be very precise in my words, because I mentioned this point very fast.

1. In my knowledge , the aim of our lifes according to Epicurus is ηδονή(hedone...[See More](#)
[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [February 24 at 9:15pm](#)

Ilkka Vuoristo

[Ilkka Vuoristo](#) The aim of life is Happiness (ataraxia and aponia) which is the state of ultimate pleasure (hedone), defined by the absence of any pain. These words have related meanings, but they differ in their contexts. For example, ataraxia is a form of pleasure, but not just any pleasure.

Happiness is the aim of life, whether we consciously accept this or not. Everything we do is aimed at being happy. The problem is that many think that some things leads to pleasure, when in fact they eventually bring pain.

The motivation to be ethical is a personal one: "I will benefit from this." But one of the main rules of ethics is "Don't harm others." So the benefits are for all humans. An ethical person is an asset to every other person. So ethics have instrumental value, but the value isn't limited to a single individual.

You seem to like these dichotomies of "only" and "or". Unfortunately life is much too complex for such divisions.

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [February 25 at 2:10pm](#)

Cassius Amicus

Write a reply...

Vagelis Baltatzis

[Vagelis Baltatzis](#) Ok, almost all points are oversimplifications and extreme

misconceptions of the stoic view. Most Stoics would laugh at most of these points. I do not have time to give citations for all of them at once . I will try to give one or two citations for a subject everyday.

I suspect most people here have not read the Discourses of Epictetus, Marc Aurel or Seneca. You cannot rely only on some sentences of the Enchiridion. The Enchiridion is a rough compilation of the discourses made by Arrian. It is not a presentation of Stoicism. Even the Discourses are not a presentation of Stoicism, because they are not epistles to present a subject, but normal vivid discussion in the school of Epictetus. So , we have to read the whole Discourses to have a opinion about Epictetus.

Its a historical tragedy, that 99 % of the Stoic ,the Epicurian, the Sceptic works did not survived the middle ages.

I suspect most of the misconceptions/oversimplifications are firstly because of ignorance (you have a good understanding of Epicurianism, but a superficial understanding of Stoicism) and maybe also from unconscious bias.

Lets see for example POINT 6.

What is the nature and the effect of death ?

For the epicurian view you write this :

"Death is the end of individual consciousness; the material of the soul disperses at death. The soul receives no rewards or punishment after death.6A " (which is correctly attributed to the Epicureans)

source : PD1 , Letter to Menoecus , VS14

Then, for the stoic view , you write :

"Souls of particular men favored by the gods can expect to live on in "heaven."

Other souls travel to the underworld for unspecified times. Generally speaking the soul survives for at least some period of time after death to receive reward or punishment for actions on earth."

source : [Note For Researchers: Need cites for Stoic position here.]

If you do not have sources about the stoic position, why do you write this? LOL
1f61b.png 🤪 This opinion about death is not only wrong, but is also 100 %
antistoic.

Stoicism is materialism. There is no afterlife, no otherworld, no fear of the gods . No fear of death. The soul, god/gods are materialistic . If they say god/nature/zeus/gods/eimamene they mean the Universe/cosmos.

From a stoic point of view , death is for the humans the end of the individual consciousness. Of course there is no reward or punishment after death.

Discourses of Epictetus , book 3,

CHAPTER XXIV

p.398

(Epictetus speaks about death)

"Say that harvesting ears of corn is ill-omened, for it means destruction of the ears; yes, but not the destruction of the world. Say that the fall of the leaf is ill-omened and the change of the fresh fig into the dry and of grapes into raisins; for all these are changes from a previous state into a new one. This is not destruction but an ordered dispensation and government of things. Going abroad is a slight change; death is a greater change—from what now is, not to what is not, but to what is not now.

'Shall I then be no more?'

You will not be, but something else will be, of which the world now has need; for indeed you came into being, not when you willed it, but when the world had need. "

<https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3...u4m-juj1PI0YIMo>

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Elli Pensa

[Elli Pensa](#) Epicurus speaks about everything and all the stoic shit have to be SILENT now ! =====>> Epicurus to Menoeceus: Greetings.

Let no one delay to philosophize while he is young nor weary in philosophizing when he is old, for no one is either short of the age or past the age for enjoying health of the soul. And the man who says the time for philosophizing has not yet come or is already past may be compared to the man who says the time for happiness is not yet come or is already gone by. So both the young man and the old man should philosophize, the former that while growing old he may be young in blessings because of gratitude for what has been, the latter that he may be young and old at the same time because of the fearlessness with which he faces the future. Therefore the wise plan is to practice the things that make for happiness, since possessing happiness we have everything and not possessing it we do everything to have it.

THE GODS

Both practice and study the precepts which I continuously urged upon you, discerning these to be the A B C's of the good life. First of all, believing the divine being to be blessed and incorruptible, just as the universal idea of it is outlined in our minds, associate nothing with it that is incompatible with incorruption or alien to blessedness. And cultivate every thought concerning it that can preserve its blessedness along with incorruption. Because there are gods, for the knowledge of them is plain to see. They are not, however, such as many suppose them to be, for people do not keep their accounts of them consistent with their beliefs. And it is not the man who would abolish the gods of the multitude who is impious but the man who associates the beliefs of the multitude with the gods; for the pronouncements of the multitude concerning the gods are not innate ideas but false assumptions. According to their stories the greatest injuries and indignities are said to be inflicted upon evil men, and also benefits.

THE GODS INDIFFERENT TO WICKEDNESS

[These stories are false, because the gods], being exclusively devoted to virtues that become themselves, feel an affinity for those like themselves and regard all that is not of this kind as alien.

DEATH

Habituate yourself to the belief that [death is nothing to us](#), because all good and evil lies in consciousness and death is the loss of consciousness. Hence a right understanding of the fact that [death is nothing to us](#) renders enjoyable the mortality of life, not by adding infinite time but by taking away the yearning for immortality, for there is nothing to be feared while living by the man who has genuinely grasped the idea that there is nothing to be feared when not living.

So the man is silly who says that he fears death, not because it will pain him when it comes, but because it pains him in prospect; for nothing that occasions no trouble when present has any right to pain us in anticipation. Therefore death, the most frightening of evils, is nothing to us, for the excellent reason that while we live it is not here and when it is here we are not living. So it is nothing either to the living or to the dead, because it is of no concern to the living and the dead are no longer.

THE INCONSISTENCY OF PEOPLE

But the multitude of men at one time shun death as the greatest of evils and at another choose death as an escape from the evils of life. The wise man, however, neither asks quarter of life nor has he any fear of not living, for he has no fault to find with life nor does he think it any evil to be out of it. Just as in the case of food, he does not always choose the largest portion but rather the most enjoyable; so with time, he does not pick the longest span of it but the most enjoyable.

And the one who bids the young man 'Live well' and the old man 'Die well' is simple-minded, not only because of the pleasure of being alive, but also for the reason that the art of living well and dying well is one and the same. And far worse is he who says: 'It were well never to have been born or having been born to have passed with all speed through the gates of Hades.' For if he is saying this out of conviction, why does he not take leave of life? Because this course is open to him if he has resolutely made up his mind to it. But if he is speaking in mockery, he is trifling in the case of

things that do not countenance trifling.

(to be continued)

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Elli Pensa

[Elli Pensa](#) 'THE FUTURE

As for the future, we must bear in mind that it is not quite beyond our control nor yet quite within our control, so that we must neither await it as going to be quite within our control nor despair of it as going to be quite beyond our control.

THE DESIRES

As for the desires, we should reflect that some are natural and some are imaginary; and of the natural desires some are necessary and some are natural only; and of the necessary desires some are necessary to happiness [he refers to friendship], and others to the comfort of the body [clothing and housing], and others to life itself [hunger and thirst].

Because a correct appraisal of the desires enables us to refer every decision to choose or to avoid to the test of the health of the body and the tranquillity of the soul, for this is the objective of the happy life. For to this end we do everything, that we may feel neither pain nor fear. When once this boon is in our possession, every tumult of the soul is stilled, the creature having nothing to work forward to as something lacking or something additional to seek whereby the good of the soul and the body shall arrive at fullness. For only then have we need of pleasure when from the absence of pleasure we feel pain; and conversely, when we no longer feel pain we no longer feel need of pleasure.

THE BEGINNING AND THE END OF THE HAPPY LIFE

And for the following reason we say that pleasure is the beginning and the end of the happy life: because we recognize pleasure as the first good and connate with us and to this we have recourse as to a canon, judging every good by the reaction. And

for the reason that pleasure is the first good and of one nature with us we do not choose every pleasure but at one time or another forgo many pleasures when a distress that will outweigh them follows in consequence of these pleasures; and many pains we believe to be preferable to pleasures when a pleasure that will outweigh them ensues for us after enduring those pains for a long time.

Therefore every pleasure is good because it is of one nature with us but every pleasure is not to be chosen; by the same reasoning every pain is an evil but every pain is not such as to be avoided at all times.

EXPEDIENCY: THE CALCULUS OF ADVANTAGE

The right procedure, however, is to weigh them against one another and to scrutinize the advantages and disadvantages; for we treat the good under certain circumstances as an evil and conversely the evil as a good.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY OR CONTENTMENT WITH LITTLE

And self-sufficiency we believe to be a great good, not that we may live on little under all circumstances but that we may be content with little when we do not have plenty, being genuinely convinced that they enjoy luxury most who feel the least need of it; that every natural appetite is easily gratified but the unnatural appetite difficult to gratify; and that plain foods bring a pleasure equal to that of a luxurious diet when all the pain originating in need has been removed; and that bread and water bring the most utter pleasure when one in need of them brings them to his lips.

Thus habituation to simple and inexpensive diets not only contributes to perfect health but also renders a man unshrinking in face of the inevitable emergencies of life; and it disposes us better toward the times of abundance that ensue after intervals of scarcity and renders us fearless in the face of Fortune. When therefore we say that pleasure is the end we do not mean the pleasures of profligates and those that consist in high living, as certain people think, either not understanding us and holding to different views or willfully misrepresenting us; but we mean freedom from pain in the body and turmoil in the soul. For it is not protracted drinking bouts and revels nor yet sexual pleasures with boys and women nor rare dishes of fish and the rest - all the delicacies that the luxurious table bears - that beget the happy life

but rather sober calculation, which searches out the reasons for every choice and avoidance and expels the false opinions, the source of most of the turmoil that seizes upon the souls of men.

THE PRACTICAL REASON

Of all these virtues the source is the practical reason, the greatest good of all - and hence more precious than philosophy itself - teaching us the impossibility of living pleurably without living according to reason, honor, and justice, and conversely, of living according to reason, honor, and justice without living pleurably; for the virtues are of one nature with the pleurable life and conversely, the pleurable life is inseparable from the virtues.

DESCRIPTION OF THE HAPPY MAN

“Because who do you think is in better case than the man who holds pious beliefs concerning the gods and is invariably fearless of death; and has included in his reckoning the end of life as ordained by Nature; and concerning the utmost of things good discerns this to be easy to enjoy to the full and easy of procurement, while the utmost of things evil is either brief in duration or brief in suffering.

He has abolished the Necessity that is introduced by some thinkers as the mistress of all things, for it were better to subscribe to the myths concerning the gods than to be a slave to the Destiny of the physicists, because the former presumes a hope of mercy through worship but the latter assumes Necessity to be inexorable.

As for Fortune, he does not assume that she is a goddess, as the multitude believes, for nothing is done at random by a god; neither does he think her a fickle cause, for he does not suppose that either good or evil is dealt out to men by her to affect life’s happiness; yet he does believe the starting points for great good or evil to originate with her, thinking it better to plan well and fail than to plan badly and succeed, for in the conduct of life it profits more for good judgment to miscarry than for misjudgment to prosper by chance.

THINK ON THESE THINGS

Meditate therefore by day and by night upon these precepts and upon the others that go with these, whether by yourself or in the company of another like yourself, and never will your soul be in turmoil either sleeping or waking but you will be living like a god among men, for in no wise does a man resemble a mortal creature who lives among immortal blessings.

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Vagelis Baltatzis

[Vagelis Baltatzis](#) [Elli Pensa](#) I am here in a friendly discussion with [Cassius Amicus](#).

I responded to a point of the table and gave evidence from the stoic works for it. ...

[See More](#)

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Ilkka Vuoristo

[Ilkka Vuoristo](#) [admin hat]

Yup. This discussion is now taking a break for at least 8 hours.

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [3](#) · [February 23 at 7:06pm](#)

Cassius Amicus

[Cassius Amicus](#) Vagelis: I am sorry I was away this afternoon and could not respond sooner. There are many references on the internet to sentiments like the graphic below from Eusebius, who would be expected to know the situation but whom I have not quoted so far in my chart in preference for actual Stoics. As to your Epictetus quote I do not find that to be particularly clear, especially in light of the underlying divine fire context that is typical of stoicism - if you have others please post them. In the meantime I believe the following from Eusebius to be more representative. Also there are many references to this quote from Marcus Aurelius who is willing to entertain, at least, an afterlife, which to an Epicurean would be a very dangerous and damaging admission of a fantasy:: "Live a good life. If there are gods and they are just, then they will not care how devout you have been, but will welcome you based on the virtues you have lived by. If there are gods, but unjust, then you should not want to worship them. If there are no gods, then you will be gone, but will have lived a noble life that will live on in the memories of your loved ones." —Marcus Brian Aurelius

Also Lactantius: CHAP. XVIII.—THE PYTHAGOREANS AND STOICS, WHILE THEY HOLD THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL, FOOLISHLY PERSUADE A VOLUNTARY DEATH.

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/164-a-challenge-to-the-stoics-show-us-we-are-wrong-in-how-epicureans-view-stoicism/?postID=213#post213>

Others, again, discuss things contrary to these, namely, that the soul survives after death; and these are chiefly the Pythagoreans and Stoics. And although they are to be treated with indulgence because they perceive the truth, yet I cannot but blame them, because they fell upon the truth not by their opinion, but by accident. And thus they erred in some degree even in that very matter which they rightly perceived. For, since they feared the argument by which it is inferred that the soul must necessarily die with the body, because it is born with the body, they asserted that the soul is not born with the body, but rather introduced into it, and that it migrates from one body to another. They did not consider that it was possible for the soul to survive the body, unless it should appear to have existed previously to the body. There is therefore an equal and almost similar error on each side. But the one side are deceived with respect to the past, the other with respect to the future. For no one saw that which is most true, that the soul is both created and does not die, because they were ignorant why that came to pass, or what was the nature of man. Many therefore of them, because they suspected that the soul is immortal, laid violent hands upon themselves, as though they were about to depart to heaven. Thus it was with Cleanthes 441 and Chrysippus, 442 with Zeno, 443 and Empedocles, 444 who in the dead of night cast himself into a cavity of the burning Ætna, that when he had suddenly disappeared it might be believed that he had departed to the gods; and thus also of the Romans Cato died, who through the whole of his life was an imitator of Socratic p. 89 ostentation. For Democritus 445 was of another persuasion. But, however, "By his own spontaneous act he offered up his head to death; " 446 **No automatic alt text available.**

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Vagelis Baltatzis

[Vagelis Baltatzis](#) Cassius Amicus , this is ok. this is fb. We all have our everyday lifes ,work, responsabilites etc. . Its normal to comment after many hours. It is not like some teens in youtube comments , where they have to answer fast in order to appear as "winners" 1f61b.png 😊 . This is a discussion about history of philosophy, which takes time and effort.

To be honest I think Lactantius and Eusebius are not trustworthy. They are Christians and write some 100 or 150 years later than Marc Aurel . They read hellenistic philosophy through their own christian bias and they want to see christian "truths" in pagan philosophers. It is very easy to misunderstand stoic philosophy if you have a christian background. Lactantius confuses here the Pythagorians with the Stoics. With this logic , we should also look at the christian description of Epicurianism to learn about Epicurianism.

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/164-a-challenge-to-the-stoics-show-us-we-are-wrong-in-how-epicureans-view-stoicism/?postID=213#post213>

Marc Aurel did not write a presentation of stoic philosophy. He was a stoic philosopher, but the Meditations are his personal diary. In a diary you write many thoughts and existential doubts that came in your mind, not just a presentation of the X or Y philosophical system. As I understand this point of Mark Aurel, he takes different possibilities and says that everything is fine. As a matter of fact, we do not know 100 % what happens after our death. It is similar to the arguments of Socrates in his Apology.

The few survived stoic works that we have are from Epictetus, Musonius Rufus and very few pages of Hierocles. Seneca has some platonic elements, hence we should check Seneca with Epictetus. Even Epictetus and Seneca do not have a formal stoic presentation, but there is a vivid discussion with students and their questions and problems.

Epictetus and Musonius Rufus nowhere say something about soul surviving after death. From a stoic point of view, god is nature. Our elements are part of Nature. They will go back to form other objects, but our consciousness ends.

I think we should understand the philosophers from their own eyes. Epictetus is very clear on this. He answers "you will not be" and he makes a naturalistic analogy between our death and the harvesting of corn (ear is an old word of corn), with the grapes -> raisins or the fresh fig -> dry fig

To be honest, I am surprised that you think Epictetus may have afterlife views, because Epictetus wants to cure the fear of death, which may come from a wish to have immortality. It is not death that we are afraid of. We fear our idea of death according to Epictetus.

Another source of Epictetus that death is the end of our consciousness (and this is natural and normal).

"He has given me senses and primary conceptions; and when he does not provide necessities, he sounds the recall, he opens the door and says, "Come." Where? To nothing you need fear, but to that whence you were born, to your friends and kindred, the elements. So much of you as was fire shall pass into fire, what was earth shall pass into earth, the spirit into spirit, the water into water. There is no Hades, nor Acheron, nor Cocytus, nor Pyriphlegethon, but all is full of gods and

divine beings. "

PS. gods/god are the elements .

god is the Universe/Cosmos. the word "god" is very misunderstood today , because of Christianity. It should be better to say the Universe is an organism, in other words that biology and physics are interconnected.

Epictetus Discourses book 3, CHAPTER XIII

WHAT A 'FORLORN' CONDITION MEANS, AND A 'FORLORN' MAN

p.366

I think it is fair, in light of the evidence, to correct the point 6 and to write : according to the survived works of "authentic" Stoics like

Epictetus ,Musonius Rufus , the stoic view is that death is the end of consciousness and this is a natural process . According to some later writers, some earlier Stoics (but we do not have their actual works to judge) may also had the view that the material soul survives until the next εκπύρωση(ekpyrosis).

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Vagelis Baltatzis

[Vagelis Baltatzis](#) on POINT 11)" is Life a thing of value ? "

you write about the stoic position only "Do not consider life to be a thing of value "

To be honest, I think its polemical and unjust to write only this as the stoic answer, without to explain the full story from the stoic perspective. You write only this for the only people in the ancient world who were against the death penalty and against the (common in the ancient world) exposure of infants.

Firstly, I will give citations for their view to prove that stoically its rational and in our

nature to love and to respect the human life and then I will give citations about stoic applied ethics about the death penalty and the ancient child exposure.

On point 11 , the term "indifference" is a stoic technical term, which is not similar to the everyday use of the word indifference. The technical term "indifference" means something that is not a necessary condition of my wellbeing(eudaimonia,ataraxia). Life and death are natural processes of the Universe .Its natural that we all are going to die . Many people we know have died or will die , becausee of age,sickness etc. If some people die, this will not hamper necessarily my eudaimonia(wellbeing) and also if they life , this does not mean that I have eudaimonia necessarily. This can be observed easily as many people ,who have dead relatives are happy, and many people , who have alive relatives are not happy. This means that life and death are not necessary conditions on our wellbeing. We only think that they are and this thinking may decrease our wellbeing.

So, life is an ""indifferent" but it is a preferred "indifferent"(προηγμένο αδιάφορο-proegmeno adiaphoro) like health, sex, marriage, wealth etc. They are not necessary conditions of our wellbeing(as also people who do not have them can be happy) , but they are preferred . For example we prefer to have health and we tace care of out body and mind, but even if we were sick , even then we could be happy.

"{61} Again, of things indifferent, they call some preferred (proëgmena), and others rejected (apoproëgmena). Those are preferred, which have some proper value (axian), and those are rejected, which have no value at all (apaxian echonta). And by the term proper value, they mean that quality of things, which causes them to concur in producing a well-regulated life; and in this sense, every good has a proper value. Again, they say that a thing has value, when in some point of view, it has a sort of intermediate power of aiding us to live conformably to nature; and under this class, we may range riches or good health, if they give any assistance to natural life. Again, value is predicated of the price which one gives for the attainment of an object, which some one, who has experience of the object sought, fixes as its fair price; as if we were to say, for instance, that as some wheat was to be exchanged for barley, with a mule thrown in to make up the difference. [106] G Those goods then are preferred, which have a value, as in the case of the mental goods, ability, skill, improvement, and the like; and in the case of the corporeal goods, LIFE, health, strength, a good constitution, soundness, beauty; and in the case of external goods, riches, glory, nobility of birth, and the like"

Diogenes Laertius :Stoic Doctrines (2)

Sections 94-159

<https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3...I5svQ9MAWSREk7o>

Also ,

"In the same way though life is indifferent, the way you deal with it is not indifferent. Therefore, when you are told 'These things also are indifferent', do not be careless, and when you are urged to be careful, do not show a mean spirit and be overawed by material things."

Epictetus Discourses, book 2,

CHAPTER VI

ON WHAT IS MEANT BY 'INDIFFERENT' THINGS

The stoic philosophical position is the middle way between asceticism(in the modern sense) and self-indulgence.

STOIC APPLIED ETHICS

As we see , although life is an stoic "indifferent", our approach to life(to ours and to the life of others) is not indifferent and it is antistocic to be indiffirent towards life. Stoicism and at particular Epictetus ' teaching is about humanism and admiration to the human lives . He even writes that the death penalty(even for criminals) is wrong and inhuman(he writes this 2.000 years ago, in an age where human life was not much worth in the contemporary ancient roman culture). Even 50 years ago this idea of Epictetus would be revoltionary. Even today in some parts of the USA and China this idea of Epictetus is revoltionary. Do you know of any other ancient who were against the death penalty(even for criminals) ?

"What!" you say. 'Ought not this robber and this adulterer to be put to death?'

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/164-a-challenge-to-the-stoics-show-us-we-are-wrong-in-how-epicureans-view-stoicism/?postID=213#post213>

Nay, say not so, but rather, 'Should I not destroy this man who is in error and delusion about the greatest matters and is blinded not merely in the vision which distinguishes white and black, but in the judgement which distinguishes good and evil?' If you put it this way, you will recognize how inhuman your words are; that it is like saying, 'Should I not kill this blind man, or this deaf one?' For if the greatest harm that can befall one is the loss of what is greatest, and a right will is the greatest thing in every one, is it not enough for him to lose this, without incurring your anger besides? Man, if you must needs harbour unnatural feelings at the misfortune of another, pity him rather than hate him; give up this spirit of offence and hatred: do not use these phrases which the backbiting multitude use, 'These accursed and pestilent fools'."

Epictetus, Discourses, book 1 , CHAPTER XVIII

THAT WE SHOULD NOT BE ANGRY AT MEN'S ERRORS

p.256

Furthermore (and this is also for point 10 about children and women, although I will write another day only for point 10) , in the ancient grecoroman world it was morally accepted to expose the infants if they family could not economically afford them or(often) if they were girls. Sex-selection was very common in the ancient world and most families (indirectly by exposing) killed most of their female infants.

https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%...l7Uo3cj1FqB_03E

**Guess who were against infanticide ? The "inhuman" Stoics 1f61b.png  !
Especially Musonius Rufus , the teacher of Epictetus**

XV.

EΙ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΤΑ ΓΙΝΟΜΕΝΑ ΤΕΚΝΑ ΘΡΕΠΤΕΟΝ

XV

SHOULD EVERY CHILD THAT IS BORN BE RAISED?

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/164-a-challenge-to-the-stoics-show-us-we-are-wrong-in-how-epicureans-view-stoicism/?postID=213#post213>

<https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%...QvATFz0qEdKNKM0>

(I will not post the text here, it would be too difficult for the reader. It's already too difficult. You can read the text in the above link. As I said above this is also for point 10 about children and women, because often infanticide was done for female children.

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Cassius Amicus

Write a reply...

Elli Pensa

[Elli Pensa Vagelis Baltatzis](#) You misunderstood the shit was not for you. Was for the teachings of your teacher Epictetus who was slandered Epicurus in a worst way.

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [February 23 at 10:18pm](#)

Vagelis Baltatzis

[Vagelis Baltatzis](#) It is not appropriate to call someone names if you disagree with them . I also disagree with Epicurus on many points . I did not say that Epicurus is shit.

Maybe Epictetus was wrong in this view of the Epicurians. Maybe he was right. He lived in a time with actual Epicurians and maybe knew their teaching better than me and you. Maybe he was biased . That's not the point.

The point is that disagreement with arguments is a healthy thing in the philosophical pursuit. But if we start to insult Epicurus, Epictetus ,Aristoteles etc only because we disagree with them, then the philosophical discussion is stoned to death ..

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Elli Pensa

[Elli Pensa](#) Epictetus DID NOT USE THE CANON. Actually he did not use any kind of reasoning according to Nature. Epicurus did not know the epicurean philosophy better than any Epicurean in every era. 1f61b.png 😊

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Cassius Amicus

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/164-a-challenge-to-the-stoics-show-us-we-are-wrong-in-how-epicureans-view-stoicism/?postID=213#post213>

Write a reply...

Jimmy Daltrey

[Jimmy Daltrey](#) I thought "heaven" was a far far later innovation, not even the early Christians thought that the dead went to heaven, but that the dead were kind of sleeping and would come back to life. Souls were considered to be substantial and either hung around for a bit or dispersed. You have Elysium, Hades and Tartarus, but I honestly don't know that the Athenian philosophers thought them to be real. I get the impression most were agnostic about an afterlife.

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Jason Baker

[Jason Baker](#) It is helpful to be clear on what is meant by heaven. Is it the intermundia, the space between physical worlds, is it the intermundia, the space between ideal worlds, is it the place where clouds race, is it the place where the gods dwell? Does your so...[See More](#)

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Jimmy Daltrey

[Jimmy Daltrey](#) If Cassius Amicus could elaborate it would be good. I doubt very much Cicero meant the book came from the realm of the dead. It would be most ironic if he meant it came from the gods.

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [February 24 at 1:56pm](#) · [Edited](#)

Cassius Amicus

[Cassius Amicus](#) [Jimmy Daltrey](#) Oh I think that the meaning WAS that if fell from the gods, but with the important qualifier of "as if" and/or tongue in cheek humorous implication, as of course that could not happen.

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [3](#) · [February 24 at 4:40pm](#)

Alexander Rios

[Alexander Rios](#) Plato's gods (stars, moon, sun, planets ...) gave it (our faculties) to us, so we could set Plato straight, because he gave them (his gods) so much boring tedious work to do.

</sarcasm>

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Jimmy Daltrey

[Jimmy Daltrey](#) I'm lost, what does Platos gods have to do with Epicurus or Stoics?

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [February 24 at 6:18pm](#)

Alexander Rios

[Alexander Rios](#) First, I was just playing...

but much of Epicurus' philosophy is a counter reaction to Platos' philosophy. The Stoics didn't show up until Epicurus was old, and even so they were negligible (not popular during his lifetime). The state promoted Plato. Platonism was everywhere during his youth.

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Jimmy Daltrey

[Jimmy Daltrey](#) That's what I was thinking. Plato is the Theist in this story. The quarrels with the Stoics seems to be later and centred on free will from the Epicurean side and human kinship from the Stoics. Both are materialistic with naturalistic ethics.

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Alexander Rios

[Alexander Rios](#) I don't know much about the Stoics, but their Providence, Universal Reason, talk of Sacrifice, accepting your Fate, and pursuit of Virtue... stink of Religion to me, even if they claim no supernaturalism.

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [February 25 at 4:24pm](#)

Jimmy Daltrey

[Jimmy Daltrey](#) There is a teleological element, arguing from nature a flower will flower, a river will flow downstream, a horse will run and a dog will bark, virtue is simply acting in accordance with your nature. The principle point of disagreement between Epicureans and Stoics is whether pleasure or reason is primary in humans. I haven't got to the Skeptics yet.

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Jimmy Daltrey

[Jimmy Daltrey](#) The virtues are no different in Epicureanism.

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/164-a-challenge-to-the-stoics-show-us-we-are-wrong-in-how-epicureans-view-stoicism/?postID=213#post213>

<https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3...XzjMzCzpOKijZWE> however the emphasis is different.

[Epicurus | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#)

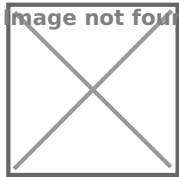
Epicurus is one of the major philosophers in the Hellenistic period, the three centuries following the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C.E. (and of IEP.UTM.EDU

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Jimmy Daltrey

Jimmy Daltrey https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%...FTQN_gtOaWdmIEE

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[Hellenistic Philosophy: Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics](#)

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Jimmy Daltrey

Jimmy Daltrey I hope I'm not sidetracking your group, I find this very interesting, but if it isn't the kind of debate you'd like, let me know. (I am an atheist btw)

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · February 25 at 5:33pm · [Edited](#)

Cassius Amicus

Write a reply...

Matt Jackson

Matt Jackson As I am somewhat of a newcomer to Epicurean philosophy it might be good to see my perspective. I'm an avowed materialist and naturalist, rabidly so. I formerly pursued idealist paths so I am very well versed in that area. So all Providence and idealism is out. I do not believe in managing and suppressing my emotions as in Buddhism and Vedanta and seeing the world as an illusion. I am drawn to hedonism as I believe NOTHING supersedes my personal pleasure (barring the obvious wellbeing of my loved ones as that is inextricably tied to my happiness). What would the benefits of Stoicism be for me given the description I have relayed to you?

Just curious, if you were hypothetically trying to sell someone on it?

*** I'm just looking for a list of perceived positive things. No arguments, just what you think the positive things would be.**

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Vagelis Baltatzis

[Vagelis Baltatzis](#) Actually you did this question in the epicurian group . I could give you an answer from a stoic point of view , but obviously you are here to hear the epicurian point of view on your question. Hence, I will be silent.

But, later you should also make this question to stoic fora and also ask about Epicurianism in stoic fora to have all views. Generally take also the modern scientific point of view in consideration. Have a critical and open mind and not fanatize yourself with philosophical views/schools(not from the past, neither from the modern age) . If it works for you , then its fine . just my 2c

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Cassius Amicus

Write a reply...

[Neo Anderthal](#) Profile picture type unknown

[Neo Anderthal](#) you will get herd control under equilibrium conditions judging from historical perspectives

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Cassius Amicus

[Cassius Amicus](#) In terms of an afterlife for those who deserve it ("heroes") this from Diogenes Laertius in his book on the Stoics is quite clear:

"151. Hence, again, their explanation of the mixture of two substances is, according to Chrysippus in the third book of his Physics, that they permeate each other through and through, and that the particles of the one do not merely surround those of the other or lie beside them. Thus, if a little drop of wine be thrown into the sea, it will be equally diffused over the whole sea for a while and then will be blended[67] with it. Also they hold that there are daemons (δαίμονες) who are in sympathy with mankind and watch over human affairs. *They believe too in heroes, that is, the**

souls of the righteous that have survived their bodies."***

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Cassius Amicus

[Cassius Amicus](#) Even MORE clear from the same source: "Nature in their view is an artistically working fire, going on its way to create; which is equivalent to a fiery, creative, or fashioning breath. And the soul is a nature capable of perception. And they regard it as the breath of life, congenial with us; from which they infer first that it is a body and secondly that it survives death. Yet it is perishable, though the soul of the universe, of which the individual souls of animals are parts, is indestructible. 157. Zeno of Citium and Antipater, in their treatises De anima, and Posidonius define the soul as a warm breath; for by this we become animate and this enables us to move. Cleanthes indeed holds that all souls continue to exist until the general conflagration; but Chrysippus says that only the souls of the wise do so.[71]"

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Vagelis Baltatzis

[Vagelis Baltatzis](#) This is from Diogenes Laertius who writes about the older Stoics. We do not have actual works of them to judge. In my opinion we should always give priority to the actual works, especially if there is a conflicting teaching.

But even in the account of Diogenes Laertius , firstly the demons and the heroes are quasi mythical beings like the epicurian gods.

The epicurians gods in the metacosmia(between the worlds) are also immortal if I am not mistaken. Does this mean that Epicurus believed in immortality ?

The wise are a role model , not actual people like you and me . No Stoic said that he was wise.

According to Diogenes Laertius , only Cleanthes hold the view that all souls exist until the next conflagration, and even then we do not know really what he believed or if the continuation of the soul (until he next ekpyrosis) implies continuation of the self identity.

Musonius Rufus and Epictetus speak many times about death and the fear of death many people have. In no occasion do they say that a self identity continues after death. They want that people overcame the fear of death. But they say nothing of an personal afterlife. The opposite, Epictetus says that "you will not be " , and compares us with the corn and the grapes after they die .

We should give priority to the actual stoic works we have and not to compilations about ideas hundreds years ago of their age(especially if its a disagreement) . We should say the opinion of Epictetus and we should also include in the second paragraph that according to Diogenes Lertius this and this ..

Look also at my comment and citations about point 11 of the table.

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Cassius Amicus

[Cassius Amicus](#) "The epicurians gods in the metacosmia(between the worlds) are also immortal if I am not mistaken. Does this mean that Epicurus believed in immortality?" For the gods, yes.

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Alexander Rios

[Alexander Rios](#) Some translations say the gods were/are incorruptible and do not say immortal.

Does incorruptibility mean immortality? Is immortality binary or on a relative scale?

I've been adjusting my opinion on the subject of real gods, after reading Lindsay's "Everyone's Wrong about God".

Lindsay argues that before Christianity, "immortality" was a relative scale, and not just binary (yes/no). So a being whose lifespan could exceed the lifespan of a human by an order of magnitude would effectively be considered immortal by a human.

Thinking about what a real god could be. My own ideas...

We speak of real gods, with bodies, senses, souls (nervous systems) made from bound elementary particles. They have maximal felicity. All good and evil come by sensation.

Perhaps incorruptibility means they can not be misled, from following their nature, their senses, instincts and feelings.

Their bodies must be made of bound elementary particles whose bonds can be cleaved, because they need to have internal movements to maintain themselves, to eat, and to grow up too. They can learn too, and recall the past, and make predictions (visualize futures), so they must have internal movements (reorganize their brains).

Perhaps they have regenerative capabilities similar to other animals that can regenerate cleaved limbs.

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Cassius Amicus

[Cassius Amicus](#) Alexander have you read the section of On the Nature of the Gods.... The idea seemed to have been that the Gods have control of their atoms and the ability to replace them continuously. I think DeWitt says deathlrss rather than immortal. It may well be that effective deathlessness is readily reachable with technology so although the same race of beings was not originally deathlrss (from eternity) but eventually achieved deathlessness.

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Cassius Amicus

Write a reply...

Jimmy Daltrey

[Jimmy Daltrey](#) I still don't see any suggestion of a heavenly afterlife or suggestions of a non-physical realm, where souls of the dead may go (which are like air, but still matther). Is there a non physical realm? The closest to that would appear to be the metacosmia", you've refer to. If the gods are in the void between atoms can they be physical? I thought that for Hellenic philosophers in general, the gods were physical

beings, immortal, but material.

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Cassius Amicus

[Cassius Amicus](#) I think underlying this question as to the gods and also the question of the afterlife is the disagreement between Stoics and Epicureans as to what type of "material" we are talking about. The Epicurean position on the gods is in the Velleius presentation of Cicero's "On the Nature of the Gods" but the bottom line is that for Epicureans ALL things - including gods, men, and souls, are made of natural and inanimate atoms. In that framework there is no room for ambiguity as to continuation of ANYTHING that is uniquely "you" after death other than the atoms themselves. The Stoics and others were hedging by focusing on a "Divine fire" that is infused and/or animated by "reason," and so there was a strong implication of transmigration of souls such as even in the Epictetus quote posted above, or even outright life after death in the references to the "heroes". Again the bottom line is that most everyone but the Epicureans were looking for comfort in finding themselves to be part of some divine scheme controlled by a divine reason, and as a result they were content to hand themselves over to their destinies (since those were determined by the gods). Epicurus rejected in absolutely clear terms supernatural gods, out--of-body souls, or continuation of your uniqueness in any way. And that is why regardless of the stoic ambiguity as to what happens after death (leading to Marcus Aurelius fluttering hopelessly in the wind) the fundamental disagreement between Epicurean and Stoic was wide as could be.

<https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3...YI7GNjINWxjqmO8>

[Velleius On Divinity - EpicureanDocs.com](#)

“Cicero’s Tusculan Disputations; Also, Treatises on The Nature of The Gods, and On The Commonwealth, literally translated, chiefly by C. D. Yonge, New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, Franklin Square 1890

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Jimmy Daltrey

[Jimmy Daltrey](#) Sorry Cassius, I still don't get it. Even the divine fire is fire not a Christian style "Holy ghost". There was a kind of vitalism at the time, however again, the "life force" was an airy, firey real thing, not some supernatural emanation. If this "soul" or "life force" could live separately from the cadaver, or indeed move from being to another is moot and nobody is really sure, however. It is a "thing" in the same way a rock is a thing. in fact, from a monistic point of view, there is nothing but "things" in different forms. Even thoughts are things. Excuse me for questioning

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you, but the dualism you appear to be addressing isn't within these traditions. Are you thinking of the Platonists or Pythagoreans?

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [February 25 at 1:22pm](#) · [Edited](#)

Cassius Amicus

[Cassius Amicus](#) No need to excuse your self for questioning me! 1f642.png 😊 I am just another researcher trying to do the best I can. 1f642.png 😊 and part of the issue here is that I am not primarily interested in opposing modern stoicism or anyone else, except as it appears as a result of trying to clarify Epicurean philosophy, which is my main goal. So I can't afford the time to survey every stoic who ever lived as that's not my purpose. I have to rely on the generalizations that are supported by credible people from the period and most all that I read points to stoicism having a model of a universe with every component (including souls) ordered by a central organizer. Not everyone will agree with this but I think a practical result of the model is for normal people to believe that their souls are part of this divine order and surrender to the idea that they belong to God for eternity and thus to trust Him for whatever happens later. I think that explains the stoic Christian affinity and I think that was terrible for the history of the world.

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Jimmy Daltrey

[Jimmy Daltrey](#) As I understand Monism there is no God and Us dichotomy. Everything is made up of matter and there is nothing outside it, nothing that is not matter, nothing that is not of the same stuff as us. You appear to be describing Plato, whose theory of insubstantial forms, a transcendent "One", and supernatural souls were picked up on by the Christians from the Neo-Platonists. The Christians (I know a bit about Christians) picked up on Stoic ethics but the theology is dualistic and Platonic but I know at least that the Stoics were monistic materialists. There is only the physical world.

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Cassius Amicus

[Cassius Amicus](#) Jimmy I never hear you use the term "divine fire." Why not? "The principle of the nature of the Divine Fire gives understanding as to Physis being the intelligent and purposeful Whole of which we are a part - hence the idea that each individual is a 'spark of the Divine Fire'."

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Jimmy Daltrey

Jimmy Daltrey Cassius I did mention divine fire two posts up when we were discussing the holy ghost. As I understand it this is pneuma, the life force, which pervades all matter. Kind of like an energy field (perhaps). Everything is just energy is the way I look at it. I suppose the bloke who wrote that blog can see it it as a god, like Spinoza I suppose, but I don't think anyone is postulating a transcendent fella like Jehovah. Richard Dawkins calls pantheism "sexed up atheism", Einstein was a pantheist apparently and here's Hawking: "However, if we discover a complete theory, it should in time be understandable by everyone, not just by a few scientists. Then we shall all, philosophers, scientists and just ordinary people, be able to take part in the discussion of the question of why it is that we and the universe exist. If we find the answer to that, it would be the ultimate triumph of human reason -- for then we should know the mind of God. (p.193)"

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Alexander Rios

Alexander Rios Hawkings deeply regrets saying that. See his subsequent works where he makes amends for saying/writing that mess.

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Jimmy Daltrey

Jimmy Daltrey I only took it as a metaphor. This is Einstein ; . He remarked that "the idea of a personal God is an anthropological concept which I cannot take seriously". When asked if he believed in God, Einstein explained: "I believe in Spinoza's God who reveals himself in the orderly harmony of what exists, not in a God who concerns himself with fates and actions of human beings."

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Alexander Rios

Alexander Rios Yes. Ok. Spoken by the man who died without accepting the consequences of quantum indeterminacy (swerve).

[Unlike](#) · [Reply](#) · [1](#) · [February 26 at 7:02pm](#)

Jimmy Daltrey

Jimmy Daltrey Lol..The ancient Greeks were silent on general relativity.....Nobody is perfect...The point is that Einstein and Hawking use God as a metaphor for the laws of nature. Neither believed in a big bloke with a beard passing moral judgements.

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Cassius Amicus

Write a reply...

Jimmy Daltrey

[Jimmy Daltrey](#) My view is, on a day to day basis, wherever are made up of waves or particles, it doesn't really make any difference. It's how we live our lives that is important. Keep a clear head and don't screw it up.

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Alexander Rios

[Alexander Rios](#) The standard model, is particles. That's what the experimentalists detect. It can all be cast into field theory too, but nobody detects fields... they compute fields... fields are abstractions of those models.

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Cassius Amicus

Write a reply...

Cassius Amicus

[Cassius Amicus](#) Just for completeness in this thread, I should include here what we Epicureans ought to consider of great reliability in understanding the stoic view of divinity - the testimony of the Epicurean Velleius as recorded by Cicero in "On the Nature of the Gods," in which he refers to "He (Chryssipus) attributes divinity to the sun, moon, stars, and universal space, the grand container of all things, and to those men likewise who have obtained immortality", The full cite is:

"Zeno (to come to your sect, Balbus) thinks the law of Nature to be the divinity, and that it has the power to force us to what is right, and to restrain us from what is wrong. How this law can be an animated being I cannot conceive; but that God is so we would certainly maintain. The same person says, in another place, that the sky is God. But can we possibly conceive that God is a being insensible, deaf to our prayers, our wishes, and our vows, and wholly unconnected with us? In other books, he thinks there is a certain rational essence pervading all Nature, indued with divine efficacy. He attributes the same power to the stars, to the years, to the months, and to the seasons. In his interpretation of Hesiod's Theogony, he entirely destroys the established notions of the Gods; for he excludes Jupiter, Juno, and Vesta, and those esteemed divine, from the number of them; but his doctrine is that these are names which by some kind of allusion are given to mute and inanimate beings. The sentiments of his disciple Aristo are not less erroneous. He thought it impossible to conceive the form of the Deity, and asserts that the Gods are destitute of sense; and he is entirely dubious whether the Deity is an animated being or not."

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/164-a-challenge-to-the-stoics-show-us-we-are-wrong-in-how-epicureans-view-stoicism/?postID=213#post213>

“Cleanthes, who next comes under my notice, a disciple of Zeno at the same time with Aristo, in one place says that the world is God. In another, he attributes divinity to the mind and spirit of universal Nature. Then he asserts that the most remote, the highest, the all-surrounding, the all-enclosing and embracing heat, which is called the sky, is most certainly the Deity. In the books he wrote against pleasure, in which he seems to be raving, he imagines the Gods to have a certain form and shape; then he ascribes all divinity to the stars; and, lastly, he thinks nothing more divine than reason. So that this God, whom we know mentally and in the speculations of our minds, from which traces we receive our impression, has at last actually no visible form at all.”

“Persæus, another disciple of Zeno, says that they who have made discoveries advantageous to the life of man should be esteemed as Gods. The very things, he says, which are healthful and beneficial have derived their names from those of the Gods. He therefore thinks it not sufficient to call them the discoveries of Gods, but he urges that they themselves should be deemed divine. What can be more absurd than to ascribe divine honors to sordid and deformed things? Or to place among the Gods men who are dead and mixed with the dust, to whose memory all the respect that could be paid would be but mourning for their loss?”

“Chrysippus, who is looked upon as the most subtle interpreter of the dreams of the Stoics, has mustered up a numerous band of unknown Gods; and so unknown that we are not able to form any idea about them, though our mind seems capable of framing any image to itself in its thoughts. For he says that the divine power is placed in reason, and in the spirit and mind of universal Nature; that the world, with a universal effusion of its spirit, is God. He also says that the superior part of that spirit, which is the mind and reason, is the great principle of Nature, containing and preserving the chain of all things; that the divinity is the power of fate, and the necessity of future events. He deifies fire also, and what I before called the ethereal spirit, and those elements which naturally proceed from it — water, earth, and air. He attributes divinity to the sun, moon, stars, and universal space, the grand container of all things, and to those men likewise who have obtained immortality. He maintains the sky to be what men call Jupiter; the air, which pervades the sea, to be Neptune; and the earth, Ceres. In like manner he goes through the names of the other Deities. He says that Jupiter is that immutable and eternal law which guides and directs us in our manners; and this he calls fatal necessity, the everlasting verity of future events. But none of these are of such a Nature as to seem to carry any indication of divine virtue in them. These are the doctrines contained in his first book of the Nature of the Gods. In the second, he endeavors to accommodate the fables of Orpheus, Musæus, Hesiod, and Homer to what he has advanced in the first, in order that the most ancient poets, who never dreamed of these things, may seem

to have been Stoics.”

“Diogenes the Babylonian was a follower of the doctrine of Chrysippus; and in that book which he wrote, entitled “A Treatise concerning Minerva,” he separates the account of Jupiter’s bringing-forth, and the birth of that virgin, from the fabulous, and reduces it to a natural construction.”

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Jimmy Daltrey

[Jimmy Daltrey](#) <<Zeno (to come to your sect, Balbus) thinks the law of Nature to be the divinity>> Pantheism. See my Einstein quote above. It would be an error to assume they were theists as we would understand modern Christians, Muslims or Jews. Remember that there is only the physical world, nothing can come from outside the physical world and there is no such thing as the supernatural or a spiritual realm. This is why i am an Igtheist. Before we start discussing Gods, we should establish what we mean by "God". To date, there is no consensus on what a God is, natural, supernatural, immanent or transendent, physical or spiritual, intervening or indifferent, so the question of "is there a god?" Is a bullshit question. We would be better off stopping lunatics teaching creationism in schools, preaching hellfire to gays and blowing themselves up in public spaces than trying to fit ancient Greeks into 21st century conceptions of what a god is or isn't. Every ancient Greek or Roman of any school, Epicurean or Platonist, would have sacrificed to the Gods. The Christians were in fact the first "atheists" in refusing to sacrifice to the State gods and were put to death for it.

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Jimmy Daltrey

[Jimmy Daltrey](#) I remain an atheist btw 1f600.png ? Image background or type unknown

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Cassius Amicus

[Cassius Amicus](#) " I remain an atheist btw 1f600.png ?" Then unless you restate your case in Epicurean terms, with a proper definition of a "god," you write yourself out of the Epicurean garden! [Please note the 1f609.png 😊]

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Jimmy Daltrey

[Jimmy Daltrey](#) I don't think there are any spooky things intervening in our lives and when we die that's it. I think that covers it 1f602.png ?

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Cassius Amicus

[Cassius Amicus](#) And neither did Epicurus! But that was not his definition of a god
1f609.png 🤔

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[Jimmy Daltrey](#) Image did not load or type unknown

[Jimmy Daltrey](#) I don't believe in supermen living on hills either, or indifferent beings hiding in the gaps between atoms...What does intrigue me is how Epicurus accounted for such complexity in the universe, how matter organises itself into so many different complex structures, but it is early days in my reading, must get on with that.

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[Cassius Amicus](#) Image did not load or type unknown

[Cassius Amicus](#) *And Epicurus' gods did not live in hills, or hide in the gaps between atoms, either. We don't have the detail we would like due in part to the apparently missing final book of Lucretius, but Cicero/Velleius makes clear that any "gods" that exist would live in an environment that allowed them to be selfsustaining and trouble-free (which is clearly not the Earth). As for the complexity of the universe both the letter to Herodotus (if I remember correctly) and Lucretius specify that we should logically conclude that the universe is filled with life, and if it is both eternal and infinite then we should expect to find not only deathless creatures, but numberless amounts of them. That's in my view also a logical reference to the "isonomia" principle mentioned by Velleius.*