

# How has the word epicurean come to mean excess?

Post by “Eikadistes” of May 13, 2023 at 9:41 AM

[Quote from Nate](#)

**Christianity.**

To be fair, Hedonists (albeit *Cyrenaics*, or *Epicureans*, or *others*) have **always** been accused of excess by their philosophical and religious opponents. One of the first criticisms we find of Epicurus comes from Timocrates, the brother of Metrodorus, who accused Epicurus of being a glutton and a pervert.

Even then, Stoics like Seneca, and critics like Cicero, still demonstrate genuine admiration for Epicurus, and recognize that most of his philosophical positions were dignified and respectable.

With the (possible) sole exception of Gassendi and his followers in the Renaissance, Christian clergy, scholars, and theologians have operated on the principle that Epicureanism is at least misguided and at most **pure evil**. St. Augustine lambasts Epicureanism. Dante degrades Epicureans in his *Divine Comedy*. Pamela Gordon's excellent book *The Invention and Gendering of Epicurus* shows how, for **millennia**, opponents of Epicureanism (primarily Christians) bastardized his name with slurs (primarily accusing him of being effeminate because Christian culture has been so hostile to femininity). The examples are extensive.

But, to reiterate: **Christianity** is the biggest reason.

**(You can read Gordon's book for free at this publicly-hosted location that in no way, shape, or form implicates EpicureanFriends as infringers of copyright: <https://librosycultura2.files.wordpress.com/2018/02/gordon...of-epicurus.pdf>)**