

# Epicurus On Causation

Post by “Pacatus” of May 26, 2024 at 4:54 PM

## [Quote from Cassius](#)

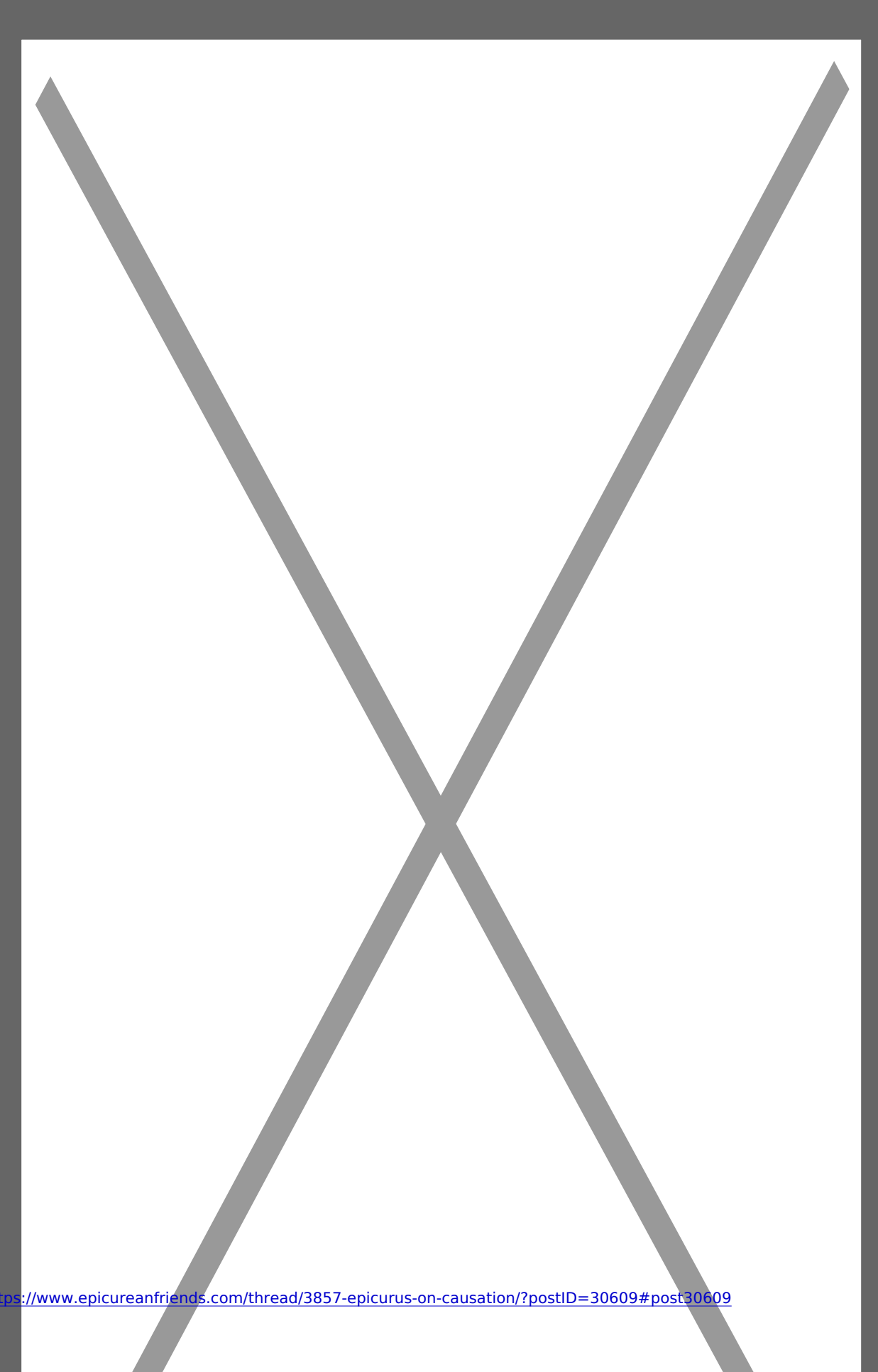
An existence possessing such a power I have never seen; and though this says nothing against the possibility of such an existence, it says every thing against my belief in it. And farther, the power which you attribute to this existence — that of willing every thing out of nothing, — being, not only what I have never seen, but that of which I cannot with any distinctness conceive — it must appear to me the greatest of all improbabilities.

This reminds me of how I think Pyrrhonists and Epicureans (both ancient and modern) seem to often talk past one another (not to say there aren't significant differences: they seem to have different understandings of “dogma” – and perhaps of “truth,” with the Pyrrhonists perhaps holding to what would now be called an “infallibist” version: that is, to claim to know truth about how the reality “really is,” one is claiming objective certainty – which a Pyrrhonist would say one cannot have about “non-evident” matters, even as one accepts inductive inference as the best guide we may have for agency – including further investigation). Epicurus' position in the quote would I think be perfectly acceptable to a modern Pyrrhonist like Adrian Kuzminski (*Pyrrhonism: How the Ancient Greeks Reinvented Buddhism*). Here is a debate between two modern advocates of each camp:

## [In Defense of Dogmatism](#)

The following is the continuation of the book review of Pyrrho's Way: The Ancient Greek Version of Buddhism, by Doug Bates. The first part of the review is...  
[theautarkist.wordpress.com](http://theautarkist.wordpress.com)

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## [Epicureanism Versus Pyrrhonism](#)

Comparisons between any two philosophies typically focus on their differences. This article will instead focus on similarities. In...

[pyrrhonism.medium.com](http://pyrrhonism.medium.com)

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Note: It also reminds me of Hume's skepticism about causality (perceived correlation versus actual cause) - but I think he might have done well to draw on Epicurus' early (original?) views on the possibility of any effect having multiple causes (causal over-determination), e.g. in the *Letter to Phytocles*.

[http://www.academyofathens.gr/static/philosophy/Abstract-Handout\\_Tsouna\\_010421.pdf](http://www.academyofathens.gr/static/philosophy/Abstract-Handout_Tsouna_010421.pdf)