

Post Announcing Opening of Forum - May 15, 2015

Post by "Cassius" of May 16, 2015 at 8:04 PM

THIS WEEK IN EPICUREAN PHILOSOPHY - 05/16/2015

** This is the one hundred and sixth in a series of weekly reports on news from the world of Epicurean Philosophy. Our home base for discussion is <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/> Copies of these posts, and links to active Epicurean websites, are stored at EpicurusCentral.wordpress.com.

** We welcome all participants and lurkers. If you apply to participate and don't receive a reply promptly, please send an email to an admin about your interest in the group. We are here to discuss Epicurean Philosophy, have fun, and in the words of Lucian, "strike a blow for Epicurus - that great man whose holiness and divinity of nature were not shams, who alone had and imparted true insight into the good, and who brought deliverance to all that consorted with him!"

**Tonight I am going to deviate from my normal format in order to announce the launching of a new project. I hope will prove to be an important supplement to - and not replacement of - the work of the Epicurean Philosophy Facebook group.

Over the last several years we have had many great discussions on Facebook. Lots of very helpful information has been posted. Many people have contributed enormous amounts of time to post on complicated issues of philosophy, and those posts were greatly helpful and appreciated. And yet all that work is effectively gone -- disappeared into the ether and into the abyss of Facebook and the inexorable scrolling of the Facebook timeline. The "search" feature, it is true, can recover things if we know what we are looking for. But it is largely useless for new people and for finding specific information.

For that reason I am in the initial phases of launching a new website with dedicated, professional forum software - <https://www.epicureanfriends.com/www.EpicureanFriends.com>. Rough edges have to be smoothed out, but the framework of the website is operational and can already be browsed by anyone who is interested.

By using state-of-the-art forum software, we can organize discussions by topic for easy reference by new people. Direct linking will also make it easier to reuse content on other web sites, so that we will less often have to reinvent our wheels after we once devote the effort to post and explain particular issues.

Let me emphasize this as clearly as I can: EpicureanFriends.com is ****NOT**** intended to be, and will not be, a replacement for the Facebook discussion. I fully expect that most of my own time, and most of the time of the other leaders of the Facebook group, should continue to be spent

on Facebook. It is here that in a free-flowing manner we can interact with people from all over the world, and find out who shares our interests and who is just passing through.

Epicureanfriends.com will have a distinctive organizational feature that dramatically separates its purpose and operation: All posting, except by a few of our established admins and leaders on the Facebook website, will be moderated for content before appearing on the site. New registrants will be given the status to submit questions and of course read all posts. They can also post new comments and start new threads, but all such posts will be moderated.

Given the moderation aspect, I expect the website to get off to a slow start and grow slowly-possibly *very* slowly. Anyone is free to register a user account, and submit posts, and I hope everyone with a sincere interest in supporting Epicurean philosophy will do so. But discussion will not be free-wheeling as it is on the Facebook site, and we will not be looking for regular posting from people who are not already supportive of the core ideas of Epicurus. Unless your post is deemed to contribute to the goal of providing reference material for the future, or directly contributing to a positive discussion of the particular topic, it will probably not be approved.

NOTE WELL: We should ****all**** acknowledge that no one has the right to say what "is" or "is not" Epicurean philosophy. The meaning of various doctrines is hotly contested. The interpretations you will find on Wikipedia and other philosophy sites is the "mainstream," "orthodox" and "majority" view. Everyone has a right to interpret Epicurus as they see fit.

But *not* everyone will have the right to post to Epicureanfriends.com. The tone there is expected to be more than just a superficial "facebook friendship," and we are expecting posters to be true friends of Epicurean philosophy.

The purpose of Epicureanfriends.com will be to continue the work that the admins and leaders of the Epicurean Philosophy Facebook forum have started at that forum and in their individual websites.

Broadly, that means that EpicureanFriends.com will be devoted to a fundamental, positive, pleasure-centered view of Epicurus and his philosophy. And when I say "pleasure-centered," I mean firm and uncompromising and unembarrassed adherence to the Lucretian formula that "Divine [Pleasure is the Guide of Life.](#)"

This means that the tenor of Epicureanfriends.com will be expected to oppose interpretations that make Epicurus into an ascetic, a friend of stoicism, or a determinist. There are many other attitudes and goal that are not consistent with the effort to give full faith and credit to the overall thrust of Epicurean Philosophy. We will expect those attitudes to be checked at the door and left outside.

One way of describing this viewpoint and attitude is to say that it should be similar with that of Norman DeWitt, whose "Epicurus and His Philosophy" is widely admired among the leaders of our group. Another point of comparison is Frances Wright, whose "A Few Days In Athens" was a landmark work toward restoring Epicurus to the prominence that he deserves. And another

point of reference is to Cosma Raimondi, whose letter from 1429 displays the zeal in defense and promotion of Epicurean philosophy that our current Facebook leadership team shares.

Epicureanfriends.com will tackle every difficult question that is relevant and appropriate to address. The distinctive feature is that we will tackle these issues in a way calculated to reinforce the pro-Epicurean viewpoint. There are many other websites where anti-Epicurean, pro-Stoic, or simply Eclectic views can be discussed. The purpose here will be to assist those who are truly dedicated to Epicurean philosophy in furthering their work.

At present the website is little more than a skeleton. As soon as I personally have the time, one of my first efforts will be to go back through my posts at our various websites and the facebook page, and copy/paste/rewrite them into posts according to topic at Epicureanfriends.com. Many people have provided links and excellent commentary, and excerpts from these can be reused or linked on the new website so they can more easily be found in the future.

That aspect of the work - gathering existing material - is something that I would appreciate anyone's help in doing. And I do mean anyone - even if you have just been a "lurker" here and not previously posted. When you register with the new site, you will be able to submit threads and posts, and if you are motivated to do so and have the time, you too can assist in preparing posts on the various topics. It's not necessary for you to write up lengthy original material - links and excerpts under each topic will be a valuable start.

I ask your patience and indulgence in the problems that will no doubt arise in launching this. And please remember that the website may sit largely unused for many weeks or months until we get a nucleus of material and people interested in the goal. The goal of the site will never be complete, but it has to start with a first step.

The goal of the site will always remain clear. In the spirit of Cosma Raimondi, Frances Wright, and others, it is being set up to promote Epicurean philosophy in its full, positive, vigorous form - the form launched by Epicurus himself.

**Thanks to all who participated the the Facebook forum this week. As always, if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, please add a comment or participate in the Epicurean Philosophy Facebook Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/> or hop around the internet world of Epicurean Philosophy by checking the links here: EpicurusCentral.wordpress.com

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Live Well!

Cassius Amicus