

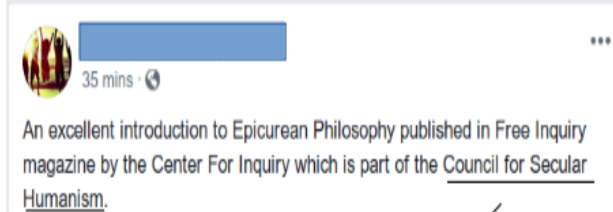
A Pattern I Observe In The Connection (Or Lack Thereof) Between Humanism And Epicurean Philosophy

Post by "Cassius" of May 30, 2019 at 8:17 PM

My goal in the discussion of "Humanism" has been to generate "light" rather than "heat," but since the goal of life is "light" (pleasure), and not the avoidance of "heat" (pain), I have more to add. The accompanying graphic is not a "proof" of anything. It is simply a summary of my observation, over many years, of a common thread that binds what I find to be the majority view of "Humanism" to what I find to be a popular but flawed view of Epicurus.

The text on the left is from an article that just came to my attention. It is what is often considered to be a "good" article about Epicurus. However the version of Epicurus that it promotes, I submit, is not a version that Epicurus would recognize or endorse, and not only because he would not appreciate being called a liar.

I certainly understand that many people will disagree with my commentary on the right. Everyone has to evaluate for themselves whether this pattern and connection really exists, and their own view of it.



An excellent introduction to Epicurean Philosophy published in Free Inquiry magazine by the Center For Inquiry which is part of the Council for Secular Humanism.

<https://philarchive.org/archive/SAKGM.1.doc>

Epicurus considered the ultimate goal of human life to be happiness, which he conceived of as a state he called "undisturbedness" or tranquility. This form of happiness consists in simply having a body free of pain and a mind free of disturbance, to the greatest degree possible given the human condition. It is attained with the help of philosophy, not religion. He first identified the primary sources of disturbance, and then showed how a philosophical understanding of the facts of nature can eliminate them.

Epicurus was a hedonist, seeing pleasure as the primary good, but he was a peculiar sort of hedonist. He defined pleasure as the absence of pain, making pleasure very easy to achieve and maintain.

Strangely, Epicurus affirmed the existence of gods, for fallacious empirical reasons: everyone has ideas of gods, perceptions and ideas come from really existing things, therefore gods exist. But these gods were part of the material world, composed of It is possible that Epicurus feigned belief in these gods in order to cover the sort of accuse suffered by Anaxagoras and Socrates.

Humanism is a progressive philosophy of life that without

The Humanist Impeachment of Epicurus

Step 1. Assign a definition to "happiness" that appeals to quietism, separation from society, and passivity, while making no mention of "pleasure." Highlight the implication that the focus of Epicurean philosophy is the elimination of pain, not the pursuit of pleasure.

Step 2. Label Epicurus a "hedonist," an inherently negative term, but say that he should be forgiven for this indiscretion because he defined pleasure as "absence of pain," which - if true - would mean that Epicurus taught a version of pleasure that removes all positive content from the word and stifles the emotions and motivations of most healthy, active, and positive people.

Step 3. Accuse Epicurus of being a liar who misrepresented his true beliefs about the doctrine that he highlighted as crucial to happiness and listed FIRST in his summary letter to Menoecus and FIRST in his Principal Doctrines

WHY?