

# Must an Epicurean believe in gods?

Post by "Rolf" of April 16, 2025 at 5:04 PM

## [Quote from Don](#)

That said, whether you take a realist or idealist position on [Epicurean gods](#) is secondary - in my opinion. David Sedley is the main popularizer of this position, but I believe it was floating around prior to his and A.A. Long's exposition of it. I usually go to Lucretius point about "you can use Bacchus to refer to wine, Ceres to refer to the grain harvest, etc, but know you're using metaphors" kind of thing. I can walk into a cathedral and be awed by the grandeur. That doesn't mean I need to accept the theology inherent in the architecture. I can enjoy religious music but don't need to believe in gods. I probably think of myself as a functional atheist. I find it unlikely there are gods of any kind with an objective physical existence. Are there aliens more intelligent than humans? Sure, I can believe that. But they are not "gods" but simply other beings in the infinite universe.

That's a reasonable explanation. I'd say my thoughts align with yours on this Don, at least at this stage. I agree that the important thing here is the materialistic view of reality (ie. The three points you listed). Thanks for the great write-up!

## [Quote from Cassius](#)

So there are many deep implications of the physics and epistemology that you never get to until you get past the superficial idea that Epicurus only cared about "pleasure" and nothing else.

Ahh okay, I see where you're coming from. Is this what's known as "canonics"? I hadn't heard that term before coming here. I ought to read up on this area of the philosophy. DeWitt's book is on its way so I'll dive in once I'm finished with Austin's.

## [Quote from Cassius](#)

even to the point of conquering death

Woah, I was following until this part. What's the logic here?