

Episode 298 - TD26 - Facts And Feelings In Epicurean Philosophy - Part 1"

Post by "DaveT" of September 13, 2025 at 1:13 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

To any audience of normally educated people, all you have to do is strip "absence of pain" of its explanation, and Epicurean philosophy becomes ridiculous.

Not sure I can agree that normally educated people would view those three words as ridiculous. While keeping in mind we are discussing a small aspect of avoiding pain by pleasurable sensations/thoughts, I think even poorly educated people who hear (rather than read) as well as anyone educated can understand that putting your feet up at the end of a rough day can diminish pain. It simply feels good, to chill. So, whether they think the good thoughts or just go blank, it doesn't seem ridiculous to me.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Cicero and Plutarch and Seneca and others did exactly that. They gave the Epicurean slogans detached from the Epicurean explanations in physics and canonics, and thereby they wrote the narrative that has prevailed ever since.

I understand that, but of course educated individuals who, on their own time or professionally, understand the nature of things by reading and studying can see through adversarial attacks. Those individuals, since the Enlightenment had, and continue to have, out sized influence on the modern world.

I'm thinking that there will never be a popular understanding or adoption of Epicureanism as "Epicureanism". Rather, the influence on the Western world will continue to be indirectly felt by the progress of Epicurean principles, at the very least in overcoming superstition and religious doctrine about life after death.

So, can we say that Epicureanism, though a personal guide to happiness, has little direct influence on individuals, but its greatest influence, ironically, is through the impact on the modern world's science, art, and governance of societies?

[Quote from Cassius](#)

And the worst part is that many of today's friends of Epicurus continue to do exactly the same thing, burying the philosophy deeper rather than doing anything to recover

the explanation.

Can you discuss specifics here? And individuals?

What negative impact do you think those “friends” have on any understanding of the Epicurean pursuit of happiness? I’m thinking of the common behavior of people in seeking pleasure over pain by living prudently, but the value of keeping friendships, of understanding natural laws, avoiding superstition, etc.