

# Welcome Wbernys!

Post by “Don” of October 7, 2025 at 10:28 PM

## [Quote from wbernys](#)

i ended up understanding him more fully and now am a full Epicurean (except for you know antiquated scientific views like the size of the sun as most of you are i hope).

You may find Gellar-Goad's article on "the size of the sun" an interest counterpoint to that "as most of you are I hope." 😊

[https://resolve-he.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/9B9D08457AB2AE45B44845464818346A/9781009281393c10\\_168-185.pdf/lucretius\\_on\\_the\\_size\\_of\\_the\\_sun.pdf](https://resolve-he.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/9B9D08457AB2AE45B44845464818346A/9781009281393c10_168-185.pdf/lucretius_on_the_size_of_the_sun.pdf)

It's a provocative article, and one that's got a lot of discussion on the forum. I'll admit that I had never thought of the "size of the sun" issue in this way before, offhandedly dismissing it as "Oh, Epicurus can't be right about everything." Gellar-Goad brings an intriguing (and fairly convincing) argument against that perspective.

## Quote

The Epicureans did not believe that the sun was the size of a human foot. They distinguished between the sun's actual size and the size of its appearance, the latter of which was the only magnitude measurable from earth with the technology available. In this matter as almost everywhere else, the Epicureans appealed to the truth of sense-perception - with the important caution that discerning reality from appearance requires perception-based judgment, which itself is not guaranteed to be true.

...

In closing I argue that the size of the sun is an Epicurean shibboleth. In Epicurus, in Lucretius and in Demetrius, we see the same nostrum repeated, with progressive elaborations that do not fully clarify the basic precept. The persistence of Epicureans in this formulation is not so much the result of reflexive dogma or pseudo-intellectual obscurantism as it is a passphrase, a litmus test. Think like an Epicurean, and you will figure out that the sun's appearance and the sun itself are two related but distinct things with two different sizes; that you must keep the infallible data of the senses, tactile as well as visual, in proper perspective when making judgments about your perception; and that the available data is insufficient to estimate the sun's magnitude to an acceptable degree of confidence. Think that Epicureans believe the sun's

diameter is a foot, that they are absurd, and you have exposed yourself as un-Epicurean.

There's also an extensive thread about that, too: ["Lucretius on the Size of the Sun", by T.H.M. Gellar-Goad](#)