

# Revisiting Issues of The Use of AI in Epicurean Philosophy

**Post by "Cassius" of April 2, 2026 at 7:34 AM**

Ok there's a lot to address there but here's at least a start:

All of the facts you've cited about current levels of penetration into the wider culture are very true from my perspective as well.

But I don't see those facts as the starting point of the analysis.

You can't even begin to penetrate the culture at all with a position until you have a clearly articulated position.

In fact, I'd hazard to say that I am happy that cultural recognition of Epicurus is so low given for what passes as the conventional wisdom about Epicurus.

Nothing exists to fight for in the culture unless and until there is a body of work that effectively translates what the ancient understanding of Epicurus was into modern terms.

So that's the place we have to start.

And I do think that good progress is being made, and I'd put Austin's and DeWitt's books into that category. But "books" aren't the goal either, and are becoming less and less relevant.

What you've described as real people engaging on social media and a regular drumbeat of activity are certainly the goal. But that can't come until we have more people confidently advocating what needs to be advocated.

And that's where AI as a tool become useful. A lot of good work has been produced here and other places, but it needs to be organized and presented persuasively. For example with the podcast in particular I think there has been a lot of useful formulations which most people even here on the forum are not aware of. AI will be useful, as it has been with the transcripts, in getting that material easier to access.

Another example are the "charts" or "side by side" versions of Lucretius and DL 10 and the collections of quotations. Those are all prepared using AI coding and would simply not have been reasonably possible without it.

In terms of social media posting most any of them that get any traction need some kind of graphic. AI makes possible creative and persuasive charts and graphics that would also otherwise be functionally impossible to most of us.

That's the first line of activity I am talking about. We need lots "summary" material that brings argument together in the way Epicurus talked about in Herodotus to enable people to go back and forth between the outline and the details. AI can help a LOT with that.

But no amount of slickness of presentation is going to be of any help if we have no more than a handful of people who can talk about Epicurus without corrupting him with skepticism, with idealism, with "retreatism," with falling into talking about "tranquility" as the real goal of life, with inability to talk about pleasure as the goal of life without apologizing for active pleasures, and characterizing basic aspects of the Epicurean approach to prudence and practical wisdom as obsolete.

Until we've got a core group of activists who are solid on those issues its probably better that our social penetration remains exactly where it is now! 😊

Most of what I've written in this post is directed toward using AI to make more effective presentations. But there's another level too. It isn't a possible or satisfactory goal to "produce an AI version of Epicurus," because a model is not a living thing and cannot possibly take into account all actual real-world circumstances. But the process of creating an "algorithm" that an "AI version of Epicurus" would follow is almost exactly the same kind of training material that educating real human Epicureans requires.

So that's a second aspect of what we're talking about.

I'll close with saying that I don't think you're being pessimistic. You're one of the people who we really owe a lot to for the work you've put into Epicurus already. It's not being pessimistic to point out what a big job we face because that's the reality. It's food for motivation, not pessimism, just like Lucretius and Diogenes of Oinoanda and many others DID NOT \*\*\* let the size of the job stop them from what they accomplished. [\*\*\* - thanks for the correction Martin!]

But none of that would have been possible had the earliest Epicureans not articulated the standard. The first step in going forward is to recover that.