

Is Self Preservation a Virtue?

Post by "Cassius" of November 7, 2019 at 2:22 PM

Ah Godfrey that reminds me that we miss you (and others) who have not been able to attend the Skype Book Reviews.

This past week [JAWS](#) raised the excellent point that DeWitt's list seems to be more of his personal list of how to fit Epicurean positions into a "virtue framework," rather than there really being a list of "Epicurean virtues" documentable in the texts.

Did they in fact have a list of "virtues" different from the standard list? Did they consider it useful to have their own list of characteristics that constituted a "special" list that they considered "virtues."

I am not sure that they did, but maybe / probably they just used the existing terminology, like they used the existing term for "gods."

So this is an area that DeWitt is helpful but we probably need to be careful to interpret HIM sympathetically, just like he interprets Epicurus favorably.

We have in Torquatus a list where he goes through the standard virtues, so we definitely have that as a point of reference, but whether he too was considering them as especially Epicurean, or just referring to the non-Epicurean list, is probably the same question as before.

So I am not sure if "Epicurean virtue" really conveys something that is a one-to-one equivalent with the term "virtue" as it is normally used. I wonder if "Epicurean virtue" means much more than "any tool which is practically successful in the attainment of pleasure." (And I continue here to not attach "and avoidance of pain" because are they not the same thing when looked at through Epicurean glasses?)