

Vaughn (Lewis) - "Living Philosophy"

Post by "Cassius" of January 12, 2020 at 5:01 PM

Well this quickly illustrates what we were also talking about, how everybody in the world seems to share the same view that Epicurus's view of the ideal life was as an ascetic hermit cave-dweller. There's no wonder that so many people who read the modern material get the view that they do -- and why so many of them ignore Epicurus thereafter. I would certainly ignore him myself if I thought this was an accurate summary.

Read DeWitt and there is nothing whatsoever stated in summary form that looks remotely like this.

And if you read the Gosling & Taylor book, along with backup articles by [Nikolsky](#) and Wentham, you see that's there's very little justification for writing like this other than that you have a pre-conceived notion that Epicurus was essentially a Stoic.

There is no way that the ancient Stoics and Epicureans would have found among themselves like they did if this is what Epicurus taught, UNLESS they were simply playing word games and haggling over meaningless definitions, because a life such as is described here is indistinguishable from Stoicism.

Epicurus

The Greek philosopher Epicurus (341-271 BCE) is considered the founder of Epicureanism, the hedonistic theory that life's highest aim is happiness attained through moderate pleasures and the avoidance of mental disturbance. Hedonism is the doctrine that pleasure is the supreme good, a perspective that many others after Epicurus also maintained (including, for example, the utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill). But Epicurus' hedonism is of a peculiar kind and is often misunderstood. Contrary to popular myth, he did not propose what Epicureanism has sometimes been taken to mean: recklessly sensual, overindulgent living. He believed the true life of pleasure consists in an attitude of imperturbable emotional calm that needs only simple pleasures, a sensible diet, a prudent moral life, and good friends. As he puts it: