

# Reducing "Tranquilism" to its Absurd Conclusion

**Post by "Cassius" of March 7, 2020 at 2:25 PM**

Yes it is an interesting subject of how much time to devote to the anti-Epicurean literature, especially in discussing it with people who really don't have much fair grounding in Epicurus in the first place.

On balance I have found it very helpful to me personally, in that once I read DeWitt and began to see what the issues really were, then these attacks on Epicurus, especially the older ones, began to make more clear to me what was really at issue in the argument, which is pretty obscured today since everyone things approximately along the same Platonic/Stoic lines.

In discussing pleasure while attacking Epicurus, the issues involved in pleasure in particular and feeling in general become easier to pick out.

I can understand how people going through trials in life, which is a time when people tend to pick up philosophy books, will see "absence of pain" as an attractive phrase, and they'll think it is directly related to Stoic "mind over emotion" material, and they'll just essentially stop, like a person with a headache taking an aspirin and thinking nothing further about the aspirin.

But that totally misses the point, and if it WERE the point, then 98% of these articles attacking Epicurus would never have been written. Cicero and the stoics and other key attackers were "right" to see how big a thread Epicurus was to them, because the issue isn't a better form of anesthetic, the issue is essentially \*everything\* about how we see the world and decide to live our lives, especially when we are young and healthy and vibrant and looking to decide how to spend our lives.