

How Supporters of Epicurus Should Approach The Effect of Modern Scientific Discoveries In Their Promotion of Epicurean Philosophy

Post by "Cassius" of August 16, 2020 at 6:22 PM

Philos as to the neo-epicurean issue, I think we are almost there on that and almost all other issues.

I do not mean to be condescending by saying this, but I gather that you have not yet had time to spend much time reading the past posts on this site. It's not necessary for you to do that, but I do think that many of these issues will become more clear to you as you read more. I especially recommend [Elayne](#) 's essays on pleasure which are linked to on the first page. You and her have quite a bit in common, but as you will see Elayne is at least as firm as I am on the "absence of pain" issue, even though she is closer to you on the physics issues.

I don't know how much background time you have spent discussing these issues with Hiram, but I think you will see as you read more here how it is we evolved in different directions, and how we are basically going our separate ways. I still wish Hiram well personally and will always consider him to be a friend (at least as much as you can be entirely over the internet having met someone) but you will want to come to understand more about how he diverged from what we are doing here.

As the work week starts I am going to have less concentrated time to respond, but i again repeat that all your topics and questions are of great interest and I think both I and others here will be happy to address them all. These types of discussions are what a forum is designed to facilitate.

As to the specific question about being a "Neo-Epicurean" I don't think we've tried to "trademark" that term in any way, so you do you and use whatever words you like. As you are currently using it I do not see your issues as being the targets of our major concerns, so from that point of view it does not cause a problem. If you are looking for label to describe yourself, however, eventually I think you will be able to do much better than that.

By the way, I started my website using the name New Epicurean from the point of view that I was someone "new" to Epicurean philosophy, and the blog was my running record of my studies into the topic. To me, "neo-Epicurean indicates more of a divergence than someone who is consistent on the core aspects would probably want to convey, because (as I think Martin and Elayne would agree) we don't think that Epicurus ever intended that the scientific discovery part of his philosophy was ever to be frozen in time. That means that if the "neo" is used to indicate mainly the physics updates, I bet an ancient Epicurean would say that that

wasn't a necessary prefix..

The term I really have the most issue with is "hedonist." The ancient Epicureans did not seem to use that to refer to themselves, and I think the word obscures critical aspects of the philosophy. And also it's probably true that the Epicureans really did consider their grouping to be related to Epicurus as a particular example, without crossing a line over into cult-like behavior. I tend to equate this in my mind with being a fan of the "Miami Dolphins" or some such. That's a trite example, but I do think that there is a significant aspect in which the real history of Epicurus as a person serves as an example worth emulating from the point of view I'll paraphrase as "reverence for the wise man does the most for the person doing the reverencing."