

Talking About Epicurus With Someone Who Is Secular Humanist / Atheist

Post by "Cassius" of April 8, 2018 at 8:47 PM

This thread is to kick off discussion of how to approach discussing Epicurus with someone who is secular humanist / atheist.

This would seem to be a category that almost doesn't have to be discussed, because secular humanists/atheists are often thought of as already Epicurean. In fact, however, it has been my experience that this is far from the truth. Secular humanists often adopt Judea-Christian ethics almost totally, simply dispensing with the idea of a supernatural god. That's a good start, but in Epicurean terms it doesn't go nearly far enough to firmly endorse pleasure as the guide of life, death as the end of consciousness, and - even more controversially - the Epicurean view of justice as not built on abstract absolutes, but on the individual happiness of the people concerned.

For example, it is possible that in dealing with someone of this background that there are references in Nietzsche, or Dimitri Liantinis, which would point the way more directly to Epicurus.

Anyway this is a kickoff thread -- please add your suggestions.