

Diet, Fasting, And Anti-Establishmentarian Tactics

Post by “Cassius” of August 23, 2019 at 2:34 PM

As long ago as 2012 I have been interested in the work of science writer Gary Taubes, especially in his efforts to investigate issue of low-carb diets and their effect on heart disease, diabetes, and the like. I read his "Good Calories / Bad Calories" shortly after it came out, and commented in a [post at NewEpicurean](#) that I thought the tactics he was using to popularize his theories in the face of "establishment" opposition might be applicable to our work with Epicurean Philosophy.

I have continued to follow his work and in part because of that (and because a friend was recently diagnosed with Cancer) I came across this video below by Dr. Thomas Seyfried and his continuation of work from mid-century Germany linking cancer to mitochondrial problems rather than exclusively to genetics. This is an issue that Taubes mentioned in his 2012 book developed to a much higher level.

I see that Seyfried has a number of videos over the last several years, but the one I am linking here impresses me for his passion and his presentation of evidence. I not only find this fascinating, but I continue to think there is a strong parallel between this medical controversy and our Epicurean controversies against "orthodox" interpretations of Epicurus.

Our equivalent to the groundbreaking work of Otto Warburg, at about the same period of time, might be the groundbreaking work of Norman Dewitt.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=APwnkpD_Bfl

Post by “Martin” of August 24, 2019 at 5:12 AM

If our equivalent to the work of Otto Warburg is the work of Norman Dewitt, I very much hope that we are not the equivalent of Thomas Seyfried.

I see no reason to doubt the validity of the lab work done by him and his team and those whose work he references. However, out of his passion to help cancer patients, he resorts to conclusions and recommendations which are exaggerated, misleading, overly general, premature.

He implies that the aspects of cancer as a genetic disease and as a metabolic disease are mutually exclusive. This is nonsense. They go hand in hand. Main stream oncological research has followed up with a lot of work on Warburg's results.

Those gross professional mistakes and associating himself with known quacks certainly has damaged Seyfried's reputation among scientists and increased his popularity with conspiracy theorists.

So, he is rather an example of how not to proceed to promote a philosophy.

Low-carb diets are probably OK to try out. I see a good chance that they may help with diabetes and maybe even slow down the growth of some types of cancer cells. However, for most types of cancers, they are probably irrelevant. Even those types which are slowed down are unlikely to get cured by the low-carb diets because the body maintains a considerable level of glucose in the blood to prevent death from extreme hypoglycemia.

Post by “Cassius” of August 24, 2019 at 5:30 AM

Good points, Martin, so I changed my "is" to "might be" in that last sentence.

Yes I am not competent to comment on the medicine, other than to state that in my own case, low-carb dieting has been the best method for me to control weight and blood sugars.

The issue I find interesting and relevant to us here is the parallel involved when people in a scientific field find themselves at odds with an entrenched establishment, and how they go about dealing with getting themselves heard in today's world.

For years I have followed various podcasters and websites in this field, and it's interesting to me how they network, share information, have conferences, etc. Usually there seems to be a major book or set of books involved, in this case many of which were generated originally by Gary Taubes, a science writer who is outside of the medical field himself.

In our case there are very few books with a view of Epicurus such as that of Norman DeWitt. Probably the progression in our Epicurus work will need to follow a similar route, with more books that specifically embrace the non-mainstream view.

I suppose we can currently add the book by Gosling & Taylor, and the articles by [Nikolsky](#) and Wenham, but there is much much more to be done.

Post by “Cassius” of August 24, 2019 at 8:44 AM

Martin this reminds me that we need to find some good videos on the physics issues. I know that Alex is very impressed with Victor Stenger and to the extent I have read into him that seems promising. 1. Do you know of videos we should add? 2. Do you consider Stenger to be a good representative of someone who is friendly to Epicurean physics?

Similarly I bet we can find some videos on the math/geometry vs. reality issues.

Post by “Martin” of August 24, 2019 at 11:49 PM

Let me take some time (quite some time actually) to dig up something. From about 1985 to about 2016, I have mostly ignored popularized physics because I found it too diluted and misleading in my study. Meanwhile, I have read a few popular physics books written by physicists but not yet Stenger. He is on my path because of the recommendation by Alex.