

Alt-tech outreach

Post by “Matthaios” of February 7, 2021 at 9:22 PM

There are new green pastures out there among the social medias that are becoming an alternative to the major tech giants (Facebook, Twitter, Youtube etc.). What comes to mind is Gab.com, Odysee.com, Minds.com etc.

One of the first things I do is search for Epicurus / Epicurean on these alternatives and there doesn't seem to be anything solid. This could be an opportunity to establish an Epicurean community and have a natural monopoly in the philosophy department among these sites by being the first.

I am willing to start the groups, but my concern is that I am a novice at best within this philosophy, so am not sure how effective of an admin I would be.

I mention those three alternatives specifically as I believe they are the front-runners.

Let me know your thoughts on this, and if I do create a group, even if it is to be a place holder, should I name it "Epicurean Friends"?

Post by “Titus” of February 8, 2021 at 4:45 PM

Sounds a great idea to be among the first players in the market. Like investing in start-up companies 😊 . However, I think here's already a great platform for discussion and the board is also mentioned in the wikipedia article on Epicurus in 'external links'. So there's already a significant advantage. I would rather promote intensifying posting on EpicureanFriends 😊

Post by “Elayne” of February 9, 2021 at 7:24 AM

[Cassius](#) Idk if you have a copyright on "Epicurean Friends" or if that can be done-- but I hope that name will not wind up being used on gab or minds, because you have made so much effort to keep this site free of modern political controversy. Both those sites are well known as

havens for a certain extreme political perspective. As we have discussed, EP does not dictate an individual's political stance-- that would be determined by individual assessment of pleasurable choices. And if groups of politically like-minded Epicureans gather and have political conversations, in every imaginable ideology, that's to be expected! But there could be disastrous consequences if this group's name became associated with one ideology. There are some people who would not want to participate in your site should it be seen as connected somehow to these others, because such participation could be socially and professionally risky as well as personally unpleasant -- factors a wise person should include in their pleasure decisions.

TDLR: imo, any groups formed on sites known for heavy political activity need their own names and should not be associated with this group in any way.

Post by “Don” of February 9, 2021 at 7:51 AM

I don't see Epicurean Friends listed in the USPTO database, but trademarking the name isn't a bad idea to preserve the identity. That being said, one has the responsibility to defend their own trademark. There's no trademark police.

I'm not a lawyer (and you are [Cassius](#) !), but I think you can use TM or SM (service mark) if you want to "plant a flag". The (R) is only legal once the trademark is actually registered.

For anyone interested, <https://www.uspto.gov/trademarks/basics> and <https://www.uspto.gov/trademarks#trademarks-0> .

(I'm still curious about intellectual property as I was manager of the department that ran the Patent and Trademark Resource Center at my library)

Post by “Cassius” of February 9, 2021 at 8:48 AM

OK this is a deep subject about which I have a lot to say. I am going to set this here for the moment and then compose a long post and come back. First, however, thanks to Matthaïos for bringing up the topic and offering to help with publicity, and thanks to Titus for pointing out that there is a link to us on the wikipedia page. I am not sure when that was added or how, but glad to see it there. In general I agree with Elayne's comments, but I want to go into a lot more detail about my thoughts. More soon.....

Post by “Cassius” of February 9, 2021 at 8:46 PM

Argh the day is pretty much gone and I only got about 1/3 of the way through what I wanted to type, going through all the platforms I have participated in and my thoughts on each. I will finish it and post it hopefully tomorrow morning.

In the meantime another general comment: I think all of us who have been at this a while are sensitive to how difficult it is to keep together a community and keep it from fracturing over issues that really are not central to the community itself. There's probably no way to incorporate those divergent interests - it's a lot easier to say "stick to the very basics" and exclude everything else than it is to try to come up with compromise solutions. Even here on Epicureanfriends it's been tempting to set up sub-forums on topics and say "let's have those who think XXX post here" and "let's have those who think YYY post there" but that would probably create more hard feelings than would be worth it.

And I am not even really talking about controversial political issues -- even issues like discussion of different views of the [Epicurean gods](#) can create a lot of heat.

So I think in general the best answer to all these questions comes down to something like encouraging everyone to post where-ever they want, and where-ever they can spread the general message about Epicurus through their own local communities, but to always point back here as the place where at the very highest level we'll remain devoted explicitly to the philosophy as a philosophy, and cooperate on learning and understanding the basic doctrines, while leaving the "local application" to the individual locales

I'll leave it at that for now but i do have a lot more to say about the latest developments in platforms and censorship issues. So far we're pretty isolated from those because very few people know who we are, but I want us to dream big and hope for lot wider impact as time goes by, and I remain convinced that even though we're off everyone's radar right now, if we ever were to break through into a wider community we too would come under the full-force scrutiny of modern censorship. Right now in the USA we face virtually no censorship issues ourselves today, but already in many places in the rest of the world we'd fall under some types of blasphemy prohibitions, and/or be at risk for our personal safety for Epicurean religious views. I want us to have a world-wide reach and also to make the core Epicurean documents available everywhere, so the issue of how to do that without becoming captive to other agendas is a huge one. And that may make for some strange bedfellows or unconventional methods.

We're all aware of the highly-charged political issues that get labeled as fake news or historical revisionism of many types Well my view is that no matter what issue you want to name, and no matter how politically incorrect it is to take a position on something today, all of those pale in comparison to the "historical revisionism" that would result from someone making a full

2000+year review of world history from an EPICUREAN perspective. It's kind of ironic, but by sticking to the core doctrines we can seem like at the moment that we're being "safe," but in the end the core doctrines are really more explosive than any of today's charged political issue you'd care to name. I think we need to look at these issues from that perspective and plan accordingly.

Post by “Matthaios” of February 9, 2021 at 9:30 PM

I appreciate the responses and the concerns. I think I understand the risks involved and would not want the reputation of this group tarnished in any way. In order to create separation, let me disclose what I have in mind.

I will start a group named "Epic Path", where I post my own spin on certain things. It won't solely be focused on Epicureanism, but I will throw it in from time to time, such as sharing some memes and videos. I won't shy away from that being a major part of the group/page, but for followers that have real interest in it, they will be referred here for further education.

Outside of that, I will post on topics I find that could be subjectively related to Epicureanism, such as health, wealth, happiness promotion, and freedom from politics (if these sites are bastions of extremism, then maybe the Epic Path will lead some out).

If it does get to the point where some of these alternatives become truly viable options for social media, and are becoming more diversified in their views, then I will post again here.

Not sure how active I will be on it, but it'll be an interesting side hobby.

Edit: I haven't had a chance to read Cassius's comment, even though I posted this after, had it up for some time. I will re-read what was posted later tonight or tomorrow.

Post by “Cassius” of February 10, 2021 at 6:44 AM

Just like you've done yourself Matthaios, most people are probably going to word search for Epicurus and find any Epicurean subgroups that way. Then it also seems most of the time there are going to be group descriptions that tell when the subgroup is about. I think the truth is that in every case a local group on a particular page is going to be unique, but it can still point to resources for further reading, such as we do here in regularly mentioning the Norman DeWitt

book or other core resources, and it's in that context that this Epicureanfriends forum can be listed as a place for more in-depth discussion.

That's probably the best general guideline for proceeding in any context - just go ahead and mention Epicurus / Epicurean/ or Lucretius in the name so it's searchable, then point out that anyone not familiar with the philosophy should take the time to look up the details, and then refer to the links and reading material such as here: <https://www.epicureanfriends.com/wcf/index.php?faq/#entry-24>

Post by "Cassius" of February 10, 2021 at 4:41 PM

Well I have managed to lose the material I typed so far so I have to begin again, but that's fine. In the meantime I would like to know if people have other ideas as to platforms that ought to be on the radar. Let me start a poll:

Post by "Martin" of February 11, 2021 at 8:29 AM

Line.

Post by "Cassius" of February 11, 2021 at 2:37 PM

As if to show that I have a trivial thought for every occasion, I want to share this clip of a line I think is appropriate to the thread.

We're early in the work of trying to reinvigorate an Epicurean school on the internet, but as opportunities arise I think this cliché will apply ---

And that is: if anyone sees an appropriate place for philosophical discussion where it would be helpful to take quick action to bring up Epicurus and Epicurean philosophy, they should not wait for orders from "headquarters," and they should even say "to the devil with the orders" - they should use their best judgment and "ride to the sound of the guns." 😊

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ypLeEMh-vKU>

Post by “Protonus” of February 11, 2021 at 11:08 PM

I was also going to suggest trademarking the name if it's a concern...

I suggest that good ettiquette is if you start a group somewhere you can feature a link back to this site so it has a good SEO score.

As for other sites, I use linkedin for networking, and think it'd be a good place to post Epicurean advice relative to our professions.

Post by “Cassius” of February 12, 2021 at 4:40 AM

Protonus I almost listed LinkedIn in the poll but I decided against it as not really being social media. I have always had a negative impression of it as a huge spam generator - do you use it productively for more than just looking up people?

Post by “Protonus” of February 17, 2021 at 10:13 PM

I found my new job with it, chat with former co-workers, and do networking with it, and follow a couple interesting people/groups. I'm inclined say it isn't a *huge* spam generator, but I'd be splitting hairs since there's certainly some spam on it.

Sadly, like Facebook et al, there's no shortage of BS political arguing and dogma.

Post by “Charles” of February 18, 2021 at 12:02 AM

At least in my personal experience, using Reddit & Discord, the Epicurean communities I started there largely ended up as failed experiments with the latter having limited success. I've raised the question for months now about whether or not I should re-do it, and I've spent those months figuring out exactly what went wrong aside from my own quietness time to time within

in.

I still consider it an option, but more restrictions and a better system or organizing role perms would have to be instituted, **especially** with partnerships and self-plugs on other servers.

As for Gab and Minds: I agree with Elayne.

Post by “Cassius” of February 18, 2021 at 5:36 AM

[Quote from Charles](#)

using Reddit & Discord, the Epicurean communities I started there largely ended up as failed experiments with the latter having limited success.

Charle's comments remind me of my own general impression about ALL our internet initiatives on the social platforms - including Facebook, which I consider to have been the most productive of all my own past investments of time. Even though I don't consider my Facebook efforts to have been a a 'success' any more than the other platforms, it is also true that the great majority of internet-based relationships that allowed us to get this EpicureanFriends forum off the ground came through Facebook.

I think the issue in all our internet time investments is something unrelated to the platforms themselves: the platforms can provide "advertising" but they cannot provide the substance or the reason to continue to stick together.

It seems to me that most of our efforts (I really mean "my own efforts" - I won't disparage anyone's efforts but my own) have amounted to saying "Hey, look here, look at what Epicurus said!" And while that activity definitely has its place, it's not sufficient to build a "team" or the kind of real-world relationships that are necessary in life. We almost end up being Platonists of a sort ourselves, spending 99% of our efforts manipulating words as if there will be some magic arrangement that will answer all our needs.

I started my active phase of internetting on Epicurus in about 2010, and as I look back on that time the most satisfying part of it has been forming the relationships that have ended up being our core people here and now on Epicureanfriends, largely because I think we share a mission in which we feel that Epicurean philosophy answers correctly some of our most core questions about life and how to spend our time. We sense that the answers are here, but we have only scratched the surface of implementing them, and we aren't going to be able to move to a next phase until we are able to move from internet-only to "real-world" action in our local circles.

The social media world will probably remain our best means of making initial contacts, but we still have to put together the structure of how to make friends and organize locally.

Post by “Elayne” of February 18, 2021 at 8:17 AM

[Cassius](#) , I have started thinking my most useful online activity (in terms of pleasure) is a combination of this site and just conversing with friends and family on FB-- people I see in person when there's not a pandemic.

I have realized that it may be an unnecessary effort to get large numbers of people interested in Epicurus and the historical details. There are multiple characteristics that would be necessary, not all of which were necessary in his time. People who want to participate in something like this are interested in history, science (at least to a degree), critical thinking, languages... interests which aren't necessarily relevant to their daily pleasures.

Most people who have adopted Platonist or Stoic ideas are unaware of the source. They've absorbed it unconsciously through the culture. Most people who accept elements of modern physics know very little about the science involved. Non-religious people are statistically likely to be better educated... but there's a pretty high degree of doubt and metaphorical takes on religion even in those who don't know much about physics.

I have many friends who are aware that their religious texts can't be literally true-- they like writers like Bishop Spong, who metaphorizes the whole thing. They know the mind is material if you ask, even if they also hold parallel incompatible religious beliefs. What they've retained is primarily the idealism... and that aspect, although sticky, can be argued against by appealing to real life experiences.

I am not lacking in local friends, and I hope others on here are not either. I think I can bring the most pleasure to my friends (and thus to myself) by just spending time with them... because when we talk about life, when crises and decisions come up, I give my perspective, and I can help them see pleasurable choices and alternatives to Platonic or Stoic thinking even when they don't know where they got those ideas. To borrow a Christian framing, if they see me enjoying my life and here and there I mention what works for me, the example can attract them-- even if they never get interested in Epicurus or physics at all.

I've thought about this in regards to the blog I started, which is way too nerdy and detailed for most people. I'm not yet sure how to revise it to have broader appeal, but I think most people might be attracted to something with far less detail. They don't care about whether the universe is infinite or had a beginning-- and it causes unnecessary confusion if that conflicts with popular articles on modern physics. Just saying "everything is material and there's no

supernatural" is enough of a description of the physics aspect. If they are religious and need to be talked out of it, they can read from a plethora of atheist sources with thorough arguments, and perhaps links could be provided. But as Elli has pointed out, what most atheist sources are missing is the goal of pleasure. I don't even think it's necessary to explain that in a complicated way. But I'm still working on exactly how to state it... and it is devilishly hard for me to tame my own wordiness and tendency to get complicated. ☐☐

To get most people to start putting pleasure first would be a lot easier if we aren't expecting them to also be interested in Epicurus or to need to learn the correct understanding of ataraxia in order to combat modern academics, etc.

Post by “Cassius” of February 18, 2021 at 8:42 AM

I think what you've stated there Elayne is very likely the conclusion that many people will decide is best for them.

I don't think it's what Epicurus would conclude for himself if he were alive today, and I've always thought that there is naturally going to be a lot of different perspectives on any individual will choose to pursue Epicurus' insights once they are recognized. Epicurus and the core ancient Epicureans could have reached exactly the conclusions that you state -- but they did not, and it's interesting to think through why they didn't.

But probably near the starting point of any productive analysis is going to be recognizing that everyone isn't cut out to want to pursue a revolutionary / missionary philosophical revolution (kind of paraphrasing DeWitt there). I think we can presume that Epicurus and his core group recognized the same issue. For those who do want to pursue a separate school / movement format, we can't let the fact that "most people" aren't wired in that way stop us from pursuing that goal.

We're jumping off here from Charles' comments about the lack of more success on Reddit, Discord, etc. I think there are clear conclusions we can draw from that experience, just like you're drawing clear conclusions from your own. Thinking through it all and making adjustments to our expectations is important no matter which path we decided to pursue. Rather than get discouraged we can learn from the experience and both clarify goals and improve methods.

Post by “Don” of February 18, 2021 at 7:23 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I don't think it's what Epicurus would conclude for himself if he were alive today, and I've always thought that there is naturally going to be a lot of different perspectives on any individual will choose to pursue Epicurus' insights once they are recognized. Epicurus and the core ancient Epicureans could have reached exactly the conclusions that you state -- but they did not, and it's interesting to think through why they didn't.

In the spirit of SFOTSE (Sic Fac Omnia Tamquam Spectet Epicurus "Do Everything As If Epicurus Were Watching"), I'm curious what you think Epicurus *would* "conclude for himself if he were alive today"? And I'm not doing this to be provocative... Just curious. Because I'm not entirely sure myself.

Were the various "Gardens"/groups in the disparate cities in the ancient world independent? I got the impression that they looked to Athens post-Epicurus as a sort of "first among equals" but the Scholarch of the Athenian Garden didn't function like a Pope. It's that other's understanding?

Post by "Cassius" of February 18, 2021 at 8:28 PM

I am firmly in the camp of what I picked up from DeWitt that Epicurus was a philosophical revolutionary, and I think that if he were alive today he would be about 100 times more offended by the state of philosophy and society as he was at his own time, and motivated to try to change it

So I think he'd pretty much do what he did then - he'd devote himself to organizing his school - this time using all the assets of modern technology, and he'd set about doing his best to educate and "save" a world that is vastly more sick today than it was in his own time.

As to how the Athens group was looked upon I agree with your assessment. I can see the Athens looked at as perhaps first among equals, or something that went along with "tradition" but I too doubt that they would have been tightly hierarchically organized.

Of course in the end that organization plan (or lack thereof) may have contributed to their downfall. I think at the time they were not aware of what a force Judeo-Christianity was evolving into, and had they realized it sooner, and what they were up against, I think they would have seen the necessity of closer organization in order to battle the new threat.

Post by “Elayne” of February 19, 2021 at 12:32 PM

[Cassius](#) but here is the critical difference, the thing Epicurus definitely would not be doing, and I don't think I explained it sufficiently or you wouldn't disagree lol. Epicurus would not:

- 1) Have to get people interested in a prior historical figure no longer present and argue with them over what that person meant;
- 2) Have to get people to figure out what people hundreds of years ago thought about physics, compared to current research.

Those are the two major barriers, as I see it, to folks getting specifically interested in Epicurus-- and if they do get interested, these are barriers to understanding his philosophy.

Epicurus in his time had the benefit of being able to explain the philosophy directly, using current observations. I have no reason to think he wouldn't do the same today-- using all the current science at hand. That is the way I think people today could learn it... but the historical and physics issues are a substantial barrier to practicing and teaching it the way Epicurus did.

Post by “Cassius” of February 19, 2021 at 1:51 PM

Well what you're saying there Elayne is basically the development of a new philosophy, which kind of goes along with your thoughts for a new blog. As for me personally that's more than I think I could possibly tackle -- I have a hard enough time working within a shared existing framework. And especially as to some of the physics issues, I am really not comfortable taking a position on specific theories and theorists since being a scientist isn't really my focus.

You're certainly correct that the existing framework requires a "history" component that would not be required were one starting a new philosophy. Maybe it's just my personal orientation or disposition, but I doubt I personally can separate out the "history" from my interest in the subject and motivation to pursue it. For example on the issue of religion, for me personally it isn't really the whole story to say "there is no supernatural god." I personally am much more into what I see as the Lucretian framework of illustrating the problems of religion by references to the history of how we got here and the specific outrages that have happened in the name of religion. And it really isn't possible from my point of view to understand where we are without understanding those questions of how we got here.

So no doubt you are correct that for some people "the historical and physics issues are a substantial barrier to practicing and teaching it the way Epicurus did. But on the other hand I am convinced that there are others for whom it's exactly those historical and physics issues

that spur the interest and motivate the study. I agree with you that it would be good to work to show how the philosophy can appeal to everyone, but I guess that means that there's a division of labor involved in different people pursuing their different interests in it.

Post by “A_Gardner” of February 19, 2021 at 3:49 PM

[Quote from Charles](#)

At least in my personal experience, using Reddit & Discord, the Epicurean communities I started there largely ended up as failed experiments with the latter having limited success. I've raised the question for months now about whether or not I should re-do it, and I've spent those months figuring out exactly what went wrong aside from my own quietness time to time within in.

I still consider it an option, but more restrictions and a better system or organizing role perms would have to be instituted, **especially** with partnerships and self-plugs on other servers.

As for Gab and Minds: I agree with Elayne.

Don't consider them failed, but just an experiment. I still believe Discord has one of the highest potentials as an online community.

I don't say this as empty encouragement either, but because I'm also a part of a really large Stoic server as well, and they're still flourishing. It may do well to study their server for ideas if you want to try to change up your current Epicurean.

Your server was a great start, and I take responsibility for the lack of activity since you made me a mod there, however that was a glaring issue in of itself.

These servers can be a true commitment and need people to actively not only promote but to engage others as well, and a lot of discussion I tend to notice happening was either "dry" academia or people asking questions but responses took too long to happen (as both you and I have been incredibly busy).

The sense of community and fellowship can feel lacking at times in my opinion, and there's something to be learned from the "Broics" in regards to engagement and community there.

The catch 22 of this however, is that as a community grows, especially online, voices become drowned out and new hierarchies and "roles" have to be established in order to still keep older members feeling as engaged as newer and/or more active members.

Post by “Cassius” of February 20, 2021 at 8:35 AM

[Quote from A Gardner](#)

I still believe Discord has one of the highest potentials as an online community.

You said several things I wanted to comment on A_Gardner and this is one.

Why do you say this about Discord? Are you referring to the abilities of the platform technologically, or are you referring to the type of person that is a member of the general Discord community. My impression in the past has been that Discord is largely devoted to "gamers." Are you suggesting that that type of community is a good target for an Epicurean community, or is there another reason?

Post by “Elayne” of February 20, 2021 at 9:02 AM

[Cassius](#) , the point I'm trying to make is that ancient history and ancient physics wasn't part of Epicurus' philosophy in his day... nor was an absent historical figure. He didn't have to deal with that because he was right there, making current observations. He wasn't asking his students to study ancient history, ancient philosophers, or a different language. If he were here today forming groups, including online forums, I can't imagine any of those aspects would be the focus of his philosophy! He would definitely not be spending time arguing over what he said centuries ago, because if he were here now, he wouldn't have been alive centuries ago ☐.

So those aspects we are dealing with are actually _novel_ to his way of teaching and forming groups.

I think it is fine for people to be interested in history-- it can be a pleasure for many people. But history, translations, etc-- none of that was a focus for Epicurus himself. In that way, modern Epicureans are adding these aspects to his strategy of organizing students. And this increases the difficulty of attracting the widest public interest, if it is the primary structure.

Post by “Charles” of February 20, 2021 at 9:26 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

My impression in the past has been that Discord is largely devoted to "gamers." Are you suggesting that that type of community is a good target for an Epicurean community, or is there another reason?

While that was most certainly true around its launch and also remains true to this day, Discord has become mainstream enough to the point where there are tens of thousands (possibly hundreds) of servers dedicated to any topic. I would say it's become much closer to Reddit, and I agree with [A Gardner](#) about the potential.

Post by "Don" of February 20, 2021 at 11:51 AM

[Quote from Elayne](#)

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I definitely see where [Elayne](#) is coming from! If Epicurus Neoclou was developing his philosophy in 21st-century Athens and building his school, he'd be addressing life issues using modern tools and contemporary language and contemporary knowledge. No question there. I wonder if he would seem that much different than other authors in the self-help aisle of the bookstore today (or the Self-help section of the online bookstore website) given our modern sensibilities.

On another topic: Did Epicurus have a name for his philosophy or his school other than The Garden? Other than just physiology "the study of what is natural"? I believe later Epicureans thought of themselves as Epicureans, but Epicurus didn't refer to his school that way. Would it be better to go back to his - if he had it - non-self-referential designation? Concentrate on the "what" not the "who"?

Topic 3: I will admit one thing that attracted me to Epicurus (and Stoicism - briefly - before that) was the idea of a lineage. I like my philosophies road-tested, stress-tested. That's what first drew me to Buddhism and prior to that some forms of Christianity. You see people who are kind, altruistic, calm, and they follow a particular tradition... I thought "Well, there must be something there there." And for a certain personality type, there seems to be something helpful in those traditions. I still think some forms of meditation have a place in Epicurus's Garden practice. I'm thinking [Elayne](#) may find my idea of lineage or tradition irrelevant to the value of a/the philosophy, but I'll let her speak for herself. I find the idea of a connection across time and space comforting? interesting? I don't know the exact words. I also found a practical outlet for my interest in language and history in studying Epicurean philosophy (just as I did with Buddhism and Christianity), but as [Elayne](#) pointed out, this isn't a "selling point" for everyone.

What makes Epicurus's philosophy relevant is not the historical context. It's the universal human experience. What makes me choose one path over another? What does a philosophy have to offer to live *my* life "better" than I am right now? And how do I define "better"? Why do we still read Homer and Shakespeare? It's the universal human experience.

Epicurus also took part enthusiastically in the religious rituals and practices of his day. What possibilities does that open up for us in a predominantly Judeo-Christian environment? Could we commandeer some of their rituals for Epicurus (just like they did by building churches in temples)? As I remember reading somewhere, Epicurus took periodic fasts to experiment what would provide pleasure and true satiety. Sounds like Lent? I do NOT believe he lived on bread and water all the time, but I could see him gathering empirical evidence in this way periodically.

Okay, now I'm just musing out loud and getting far afield of the thread...

Post by "A_Gardner" of February 20, 2021 at 1:24 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

[Quote from A_Gardner](#)

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devoted to "gamers." Are you suggesting that that type of community is a good target for an Epicurean community, or is there another reason?

Similar to as [Charles](#) has already mentioned, Discord has grown beyond its gaming roots, with many diverse servers catering towards other topics popping up all the time.

Basically, if you can think of a topic, there's bound to be a server either dedicated towards it, or including it in its discussion topics, as I mentioned being part of a rather large Stoic server as well, that includes channels for other philosophies.

Now granted, size of a server does not equal quality of course, but the way this one is organized from top to bottom is impressive and has led to quality discussions and topics despite having a large membership. If you're interested to take a look for yourself to see what I mean by its organization, please let me know and I'll share a link to it (provided you have a Discord of course, otherwise I don't think it will let you view the server).

Discord also is incredibly accessible and easy to use once it has been set up, allowing for online gatherings, screen sharing, discussions, and all those social features relatively seamlessly, as long as your connection is stable.

Post by “Godfrey” of February 21, 2021 at 1:29 PM

Here's an article from this morning's paper about reddit; something of a cautionary tale:

<https://www.latimes.com/business/techn...s-a-mixed-story>

Post by “Matthaios” of February 21, 2021 at 7:01 PM

[Quote from Elayne](#)

"Most people who have adopted Platonist or Stoic ideas are unaware of the source. They've absorbed it unconsciously through the culture. Most people who accept elements of modern physics know very little about the science involved. Non-religious people are statistically likely to be better educated... but there's a pretty high degree of

doubt and metaphorical takes on religion even in those who don't know much about physics.

To get most people to start putting pleasure first would be a lot easier if we aren't expecting them to also be interested in Epicurus or to need to learn the correct understanding of ataraxia in order to combat modern academics, etc."

[Quote from Elayne](#)

I am new to working within this forum, forgive me if I make mistakes. Elayne, to me it seems we are focused on "legacy" religion (still a danger), rather than say, a belief structure centered around collectivism and "selflessness". Many of the "educated" youth are being indoctrinated to almost despise pleasure, to view selflessness as a virtue, and to even hate themselves (white guilt, privilege etc.). I'm assuming the world is going to get on without them, and unfortunately, the beliefs they hold will lead to their own demise (imo), how would you suggest reaching them?

"We must free ourselves from the prison of public education and politics."

Post by "Cassius" of February 22, 2021 at 5:41 AM

[Matthaios I edited your posts to remove the colors and fonts. We need to make it more clear somewhere to stick to the standard forum fonts/colors/sizes, because with different themes (particularly dark vs light) it gets very difficult to read if we're not careful.]

As to your post there is one part that could be made more clear: *"I'm assuming the world is going to get on without them...."* I'm not sure exactly what you mean there unless that is just another way of stating *"leading to their own demise."*

Also another reminder: per the forum rules we need to stay away from current politics, so I need to caution against developing some of the specific examples in your post. We need to keep the discussion at the philosophical level (including religion, where the issues you reference appear). As long as we keep the discussion at a level which could apply to anyone anywhere, then integrating *"hate themselves..."* and *"lead to their own demise"* into a proper philosophical outlook are valid and important topics for the forum.

Post by “Elayne” of February 22, 2021 at 7:19 AM

[Matthaios](#) it's a bit difficult to answer you fully, given the no current politics rule (which I understand)... but I think I can say that there is a danger in thinking that EP leads to one political position or even a narrow range, because individuals take pleasure in different things. What looks like painful selflessness to someone else can feel like pleasurable social connections to others. Remember that meaningfulness is often one of the strongest pleasures for humans! I have had in fact opportunity to speak to many young people over the past year, whom I suspect may be in the group you are worried about, and I'm happy to say that they understand and practice EP principles easily! Even though they don't call it that. I've had some great conversations with them. Where I reached them was in person, at community events, and after that I connected online.

There are a lot of nonpolitical online places a modern Epicurus might show up besides history and philosophy sites, which don't get as much broad interest. I think Epicurus today would definitely be on physics forums, where there are mostly atheists already, reminding them about pleasure, but that's still narrow. I can most easily imagine him going to health-related online groups, physical and mental, talking about how health has no value apart from pleasure (just as nothing else has value without pleasure). Lots of people of all ages are interested in health, and what they really want, even if they don't articulate it, is physical and mental pleasure. Health is the most common modern day framing I know of for happiness-- it has become religion-like for many people.

He might use a range of platforms but I suspect given his writings that he didn't personally enjoy politics so would probably not show up on the platforms that are heavily political. However, those of us who enjoy politics can engage wherever we get pleasure engaging. I certainly do!

Post by “Cassius” of February 22, 2021 at 9:26 AM

Matthaios I am low on time as I write this so I know my response will seem clipped. Both Elayne and I have written lengthy comments on the issue of politics and I will try to come back and link them here.

The point I want to emphasize is that I do not believe that in general terms Epicurean philosophy and politics are incompatible at all. Elayne is very politically active, as was Frances Wright, and certainly Thomas Jefferson, and Cassius Longinus, and Atticus, and I would even dare say that Epicurus himself was not averse to it. But the example of Epicurus is what I think

we need to commit ourselves to following in this group, because the mixture of modern politics into this forum would be detrimental to the main goal of providing a foundational place for everyone who is interested in Epicurus to explore and sharpen their understanding.

it is my view that it is totally appropriate for people to pursue their interest in applying Epicurus to politics. On the left there is R Hanrott with his Epicurus.today blog, and many of the other Epicurean pages on the internet treat politics implicitly or explicitly. I think there are certainly logical limits on which political movements would embrace Epicurus (I can't see any religion-based movement doing so) but on the other hand I do not think there are many other bright lines we could draw if we are rigorously clear about the non-absolute nature of Epicurean justice and the rest of the philosophy.

I think in my role here it is best to take the position that everyone should pursue their study and application of Epicurus as best they see fit, while also understanding that the messy political issues of today fade into the background when you consider the two thousand year history of Epicurean philosophy and all the opposition it has faced from so many quarters in the past. I want to first see the growth of a foundational base of people who are really keyed in to the basic issues, and I think that this forum and my personal efforts best fit if we limit ourselves HERE to that goal. But at the same time it is very true that all of us have our own personal lives to live, and there will be many times in which the issues of today, including contemporary politics, MUST take precedence if we are to survive.

Post by “Cassius” of February 22, 2021 at 6:40 PM

[Matthaios](#) I am back and have time to add this: If you or anyone else have specific suggestions for sub-groups on other platforms, I hope you (and everyone) will let us know here so that any who are interested and able can help out. That's pretty much what I have tried to do with initiatives like on Reddit and Discourse, but I don't think I/we have done it systematically enough.

We have this list of Epicurean Websites: <https://www.epicureanfriends.com/wcf/index.php?links/>

But we don't feature that list prominently, and it's more just a list of static websites than it is a list of discussion platforms. We need to assemble links to the available forums at Reddit, Discourse, etc, and make that list more easily accessible, and anyone who starts a new subgroup somewhere else we can add that to the list as well.

Post by “Cassius” of February 23, 2021 at 1:39 PM

We have a list of Epicurean websites [elsewhere](#), but we don't have a list of Epicurean "discussion forums." I've made this list but I bet there are others. Anyone aware of other "discussion-oriented" sites that have a subforum devoted to Epicurus? Here is my current list. I know that there are other Facebook groups but my criteria would be "public." I was thinking there might be subforums devoted to Epicurus on some of the Atheist forums, but so far I can't locate any:

OTHER PUBLIC DISCUSSION FORUMS/GROUPS DEVOTED SPECIFICALLY TO EPICUREAN DISCUSSION (Not just websites)

Discord:

Older EpicureanFriends forum: <https://discord.com/channels/39266...238208812810241>

Newer Epicurean Philosophy Forum: <https://discord.com/channels/39266...238208812810241>

Reddit:

Epicurean Philosophy

https://www.reddit.com/r/Epicurean_Philosophy/

Epicureanism

<https://www.reddit.com/r/Epicureanism/>

Epicurus

<https://www.reddit.com/r/Epicurus/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy>

Post by "Cassius" of February 25, 2021 at 6:38 AM

I don't want to get this thread off the track of its focus on expansion of Epicurean activity on other internet platforms. However I want to insert this pointer to another thread that will discuss something I think is important to any such effort, which is, that in establishing a foothold on any platform I would recommend not trying to duplicate the depth of Epicureanfriends.com, but rather focusing on a few key aspects of Epicurean philosophy and keeping the discussion focused on practical application of those core issues.

I make that argument and discuss what those core issues might be here: [RE: Planning And Execution of A Local Group](#)

Post by “Godfrey” of April 26, 2021 at 12:19 PM

