

A Word To The Wise About Arguments

Post by “Cassius” of January 13, 2018 at 9:45 PM

A graphic to illustrate an absurdity, followed by some wise words placed into the mouth of Epicurus by Frances Wright, [in chapter eight of "A Few Days In Athens:"](#)



Epicurus: "Explanation always approaches or widens the differences between friends."

Theon: "Yes, but we also entered into argument."

Epicurus: "Dangerous ground that, to be sure. And your fight, of course, ended in a drawn battle."

Theon: "You pay me more than a merited compliment, in concluding that to be a thing of course."

Epicurus: "Nay, your pardon! I pay you any thing but a compliment. It is not that I conclude your rhetoric and your logic equal, but your obstinacy and your vanity."

Theon: "Do you know, I don't think myself either obstinate or vain," said Theon, smiling.

Epicurus: "Had I supposed you did, I might not have seen occasion to give you the information." ... Well, and now tell me, was it not a drawn battle?"

Theon: "I confess it was. At least, we neither of us convinced the other."

Epicurus: "My son, it would have added one more to the seven wonders if you had. I incline to doubt, if two men, in the course of an olympiad, enter on an argument from the honest and

single desire of coming at the truth, or if, in the course of a century, one man comes from an argument convinced by his opponent.”

[Frances Wright - A Few Days In Athens](#)

Post by “EricR” of January 14, 2018 at 9:04 AM

Thanks for such good advice.

I came across a bit of helpful guidance on this a while back. The suggestion was to limit responses to someone and move on rather than engage in a time-consuming back and forth, even if they have the last word. So the formula is:

1. Post your statement, video, meme, lesson, comment etc.
2. When someone responds with a question or comment, respond once
3. If they come back with more, especially if argumentative, let it go and move on

This will often mean they will get the last word, but I try to remember I'm writing for all viewers. Of course one has to use some judgement on a case by case situation, but this guideline creates a auto-stop rather auto-argue! 😊

Post by “Cassius” of January 14, 2018 at 9:14 AM

I agree Eric, that that should be the rule in most situations. Some venues require more direct action, as a person who is "trolling" a particular site ends up being banned after a while if the argument loses all semblance of being productive. But in general I think that's exactly the right approach.