

Welcome DaveT

Post by "Cassius" of January 16, 2025 at 9:19 PM

Welcome [DaveT](#) !

There is one last step to complete your registration:

All new registrants must post a response to this message here in this welcome thread (we do this in order to minimize spam registrations).

You must post your response within 72 hours, or your account will be subject to deletion.

Please say "Hello" by introducing yourself, tell us what prompted your interest in Epicureanism and which particular aspects of Epicureanism most interest you, and/or post a question.

This forum is the place for students of Epicurus to coordinate their studies and work together to promote the philosophy of Epicurus. Please remember that all posting here is subject to our [Community Standards / Rules of the Forum](#) our [Not Neo-Epicurean, But Epicurean](#) and our [Posting Policy](#) statements and [associated posts](#).

Please understand that the leaders of this forum are well aware that many fans of Epicurus may have sincerely-held views of what Epicurus taught that are incompatible with the purposes and standards of this forum. This forum is dedicated exclusively to the study and support of people who are committed to classical Epicurean views. As a result, this forum is not for people who seek to mix and match some Epicurean views with positions that are inherently inconsistent with the core teachings of Epicurus.

All of us who are here have arrived at our respect for Epicurus after long journeys through other philosophies, and we do not demand of others what we were not able to do ourselves. Epicurean philosophy is very different from other viewpoints, and it takes time to understand how deep those differences really are. That's why we have membership levels here at the forum which allow for new participants to discuss and develop their own learning, but it's also why we have standards that will lead in some cases to arguments being limited, and even participants being removed, when the purposes of the community require it. Epicurean philosophy is not inherently democratic, or committed to unlimited free speech, or devoted to any other form of organization other than the pursuit by our community of happy living through the principles of Epicurean philosophy.

One way you can be most assured of your time here being productive is to tell us a little about yourself and your background in reading Epicurean texts. It would also be helpful if you could

tell us how you found this forum, and any particular areas of interest that you have which would help us make sure that your questions and thoughts are addressed.

Please check out our [Getting Started](#) page.

We have found over the years that there are a number of key texts and references which most all serious students of Epicurus will want to read and evaluate for themselves. Those include the following.

["Epicurus and His Philosophy"](#) by Norman DeWitt

[The Biography of Epicurus by Diogenes Laertius](#). This includes the surviving letters of Epicurus, including those to [Herodotus](#), [Pythocles](#), and [Menoceus](#).

["On The Nature of Things"](#) - by Lucretius (a poetic abridgement of Epicurus' "On Nature"

["Epicurus on Pleasure"](#) - By Boris [Nikolsky](#)

The chapters on Epicurus in [Gosling and Taylor's "The Greeks On Pleasure."](#)

[Cicero's "On Ends" - Torquatus Section](#)

[Cicero's "On The Nature of the Gods" - Velleius Section](#)

The Inscription of Diogenes of Oinoanda - [Martin Ferguson Smith translation](#)

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

Lucian Core Texts on Epicurus: (1) [Alexander the Oracle-Monger](#), (2) [Hermodotus](#)

[Philodemus "On Methods of Inference"](#) (De Lacy version, including his appendix on relationship of Epicurean canon to Aristotle and other Greeks)

"The Greeks on Pleasure" -Gosling & Taylor Sections on Epicurus, especially the [section on katastematic and kinetic pleasure](#) which explains why ultimately this distinction was not of great significance to Epicurus.

It is by no means essential or required that you have read these texts before participating in the forum, but your understanding of Epicurus will be much enhanced the more of these you have read. Feel free to join in on one or more of our conversation threads under various topics found throughout the forum, where you can to ask questions or to add in any of your insights as you study the Epicurean philosophy.

And time has also indicated to us that if you can find the time to read one book which will best explain [classical Epicurean philosophy](#), as opposed to most modern "eclectic" interpretations of Epicurus, that book is Norman DeWitt's Epicurus And His Philosophy.

(If you have any questions regarding the usage of the forum or finding info, please post any questions in this thread).

Welcome to the forum!

Not Neo-Epicurean, But Epicurean

1. Not "flourishing," "human potential," "self-actualization," or "meaningfulness," but happiness grounded in the feeling of pleasure.
2. Not "absence of pain" as a full statement of the goal of life, but "the Feelings are two, pleasure and pain" and "Pleasure is the beginning and the end of a happy life."
3. Not virtue for the sake of virtue, but virtue as instrumental for the attainment of pleasure.
4. Not "the greatest good for the greatest number," but "Every desire must be confronted with this question: What will happen to me if the object of my desire is accomplished and what if it is not?"
5. Not "humanism," "transhumanism," "individualism," "collectivism," "egoism," "altruism," "social progress," "Marxism," "democracy," "tyranny," or any "one size fits all" political ideal of any kind, but social structure based on friendship which "is formed and maintained by means of a community of life among those who have reached the fullness of pleasure."
6. Not "hard determinism," but "some things happen from necessity, some from chance, and others through our own choice."
7. Not "supernaturalism," but "materialism."
8. Not "supernatural gods," or "life after death," but confidence in a fully material universe and "for those men for whom wisdom is possible, and who do seek it, such men may truly live as gods."
9. Not only "short term hedonism," but "it is to continuous pleasures that I invite you."
10. Not "rationalism," but "all reason is dependent upon sensations."
11. Not fearful of death nor careless of losing life, but valuing life for the opportunity of pleasure it brings.

Our Posting Policy At EpicureanFriends.com:

"No Partisan Politics," "No Supernatural Religion," and "No Absolute Virtue"

This forum is dedicated to promoting the philosophy of Epicurus, and not to any partisan political positions whether "left," "right," or "center." The task of rediscovering Epicurean philosophy requires that such discussions be held elsewhere. Posts violating this rule are subject to removal.



Epicurean philosophy firmly rejects the viewpoint that there are any supernatural forces or absolute virtues or Platonic ideals of any kind. Argument which is based on supernatural claims, or "absolute" virtues or ideals of any kind, are in violation of this rule and subject to removal.

**Nothing can be created
from nothing.**

**Nature has no gods over
her.**

**Do not assign to the
gods anything that is
inconsistent with
incorruption and
blessedness.**

Death is nothing to us.

**There is no necessity to
live under the control of
necessity.**



**He who says "Nothing
can be known" knows
nothing.**

All sensations are "true."

**Virtue is not absolute or
an end in itself - all good
and evil consists in
sensation.**

**Pleasure is the guide of
life.**

**By "Pleasure" we mean
all experience that is not
painful.**

**Life is desirable, but unlimited time contains no greater
pleasure than limited time.**

Post by "DaveT" of January 19, 2025 at 10:08 AM

Hello, Martin. I appreciate your welcome message. I first became familiar with Epicurus' through Matthew Stewart's book, *Nature's God*. He traced the impact of Epicurus' thoughts in *De Rerum Natura* through early American history and it's impact on Thomas Jefferson and other leaders of the revolution in formulating the goals of American national goals of achieving Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness in our founding document, the Declaration of Independence.

As a now retired attorney and an author, I have always been fascinated with the historical underpinnings of the founding of the United States. Now, having been exposed to Epicurus, as well as my own newly begun comparative study of the ancient Greek philosophers with

Epicureanism I've happily discovered EpicureanFriends.com and this community. I'm hoping to deepen my understanding of past and present philosophy through this community. Best, Dave

Post by “Don” of January 19, 2025 at 10:11 AM

Welcome aboard!

Post by “Cassius” of January 19, 2025 at 10:27 AM

Good to have you Dave!

I moved your post over to this location where it will be more findable.

Yes, the Thomas Jefferson connection is significant to many of us - if you didn't see it, we discussed it recently in [the welcome thread for Al Hakiim von Grof](#).

Be sure to let us know if there's anything we can help you with, or if you have questions. Given your background I'd recommend to you the DeWitt book as the place to start for the deepest background, and the Emily Austin book for good practical advice. And of course as a Jefferson fan the connection to Frances Wright's <http://www.afewdaysinathens.com> is something you will want to check out.

If you come across references to Epicurus or his ideas in Jefferson that we don't already have listed at the link below, please let us know. If you run across other founding fathers with connections to Epicurus please let us know too.

[Thomas Jefferson Resources](#)

Post by “Al-Hakiim von Grof” of January 19, 2025 at 11:25 AM

Welcome! The Jefferson connection is also very fascinating to me. I'm looking forward to any findings and ideas you decide to post here.

Post by “Eikadistes” of January 19, 2025 at 2:19 PM

[Quote from DaveT](#)

Hello, Martin. I appreciate your welcome message. I first became familiar with Epicurus' through Matthew Stewart's book, *Nature's God*. He traced the impact of Epicurus' thoughts in *De Rerum Natura* through early American history and its impact on Thomas Jefferson and other leaders of the revolution in formulating the goals of American national goals of achieving Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness in our founding document, the Declaration of Independence.

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See, guys! I keep harping on **everyone** to read *Nature's God*. (It is so good!)

Also, welcome, Dave! We're happy to have you.

Post by “Don” of January 19, 2025 at 4:01 PM

I'm sold...

<https://search.worldcat.org/en/title/879642283>

That's the WorldCat link if anyone wants to borrow from their public library.

Post by “Cassius” of May 6, 2025 at 5:48 AM

[DaveT](#) thank you for joining us in our First Monday Zoom last night. As it appears that you have an interest in fiction writing, I thought I would point out the little-known piece of fiction writing by Thomas Jefferson's friend Frances Wright, which we have posted at:

[A Few Days In Athens](#)

We have much discussion of it here at the forum which you can look up if interested. Some caution is needed because there are definitely some questions as to whether Ms. Wright was orthodox Epicurean in her treatment of "gods" and perhaps of some aspects of skepticism. And I also usually warn people that the first chapter introducing Epicurus is a little too "flowery" for some people, so be sure to read a couple of chapters before you give up if that's the case for you.

But in general I think it's an extremely well done book which deserves to be a lot better known.

Hopefully at some point A Few Days In Athens will help inspire other fiction writers to try their hand at something similar.

Post by "DaveT" of May 6, 2025 at 1:51 PM

[Cassius](#) Thanks. I have just figured out my personal computer settings that were blocking me from signing in and replying to conversations and notifications. Yes, I did read the novel by Frances Wright. Ironically, the style is "modern" and colloquial when compared to the translations from the ancient Greek materials. I kept in mind to treat it as fictionalized history and enjoyed reading it.