

Welcome Ifancya!

Post by "Cassius" of February 21, 2025 at 1:18 PM

Welcome [ifancya](#)

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 "ifancya" of February 23, 2025 at 6:22 PM

Hello all. Thank you for the welcome. My awareness of and interest in Epicurus was rekindled after reading Greenblatt's "The Swerve", and subsequently Ronald Melville's translation of Lucretius's "de rerum natura". I have since tried to find scholarly sources to read and learn more about Epicurus and his philosophy. I received a [recommended reading](#) list from a scholar in Greek History. Meanwhile, I also searched the internet and discovered this forum, which to me appears to be very informative and also appears to validate the [recommended reading](#) list I was sent. I conclude that I have a lot of homework before me and hopefully once I am better informed, I will be able to be a more active participant in this forum. At this time, I believe I

probably should start with Norman DeWitt's "Epicurus And His Philosophy" and perhaps Hermann Usener's "Epicurea"; however, I do not seem to be able to find a complete English translation of the latter, except for what is posted here as the latest version "Epicurea 9.11". Other recommended books have been Cyril Bailey's "The Greek Atomists and Epicurus: A Study", Benjamin Farrington's "The Faith of Epicurus", and John M. Rist's "Introduction to Epicurus". Any feedback on these additional recommendations would be greatly appreciated.

Post by "Cassius" of February 23, 2025 at 6:43 PM

Glad to have you IFancya! It sounds like you have made a lot of progress already.

Because you seem oriented toward the details, rather than the Emily Austin book I would recommend your going straight to the DeWitt book as the most meaty and sweeping of the two.

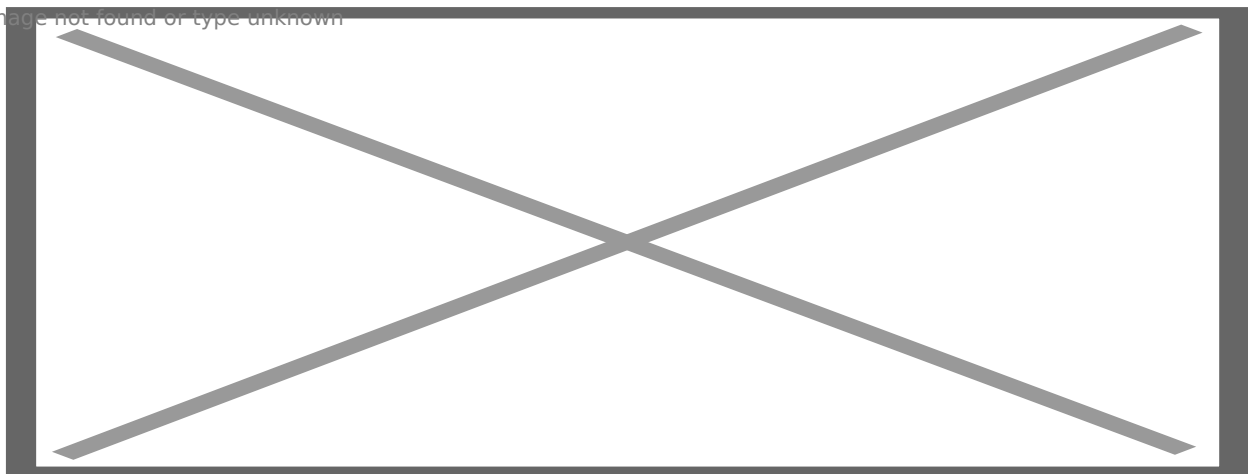
I would not worry about the Epicurea as it is more of a "glossary" and though it is organized by topic, it is not presented in a way to facilitate progressive understanding. It's more a reference for those who know what they are looking for to find supportive citations.

I'd also recommend anything by David Sedley, especially the Epicurus section of Long and Sedley's "The Hellenistic Philosophers."

I've also prepared a FAQ answer on that if you haven't seen it - let me find it.

Looks like the most recent update to the reading recommendation is at this link:

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[EpicureanFriends Wiki - Epicureanfriends.com](https://www.epicureanfriends.com)

www.epicureanfriends.com

Post by “Cassius” of February 23, 2025 at 6:47 PM

You'll see we generally start out recommending the DeWitt and the Austin books, but you are a special case given your reading already and your preference for a more detailed approach over a "lifestyle" approach.

I am sure others will have recommendations, including Sedley's "Lucretius and the Transformation of Greek Wisdom" since you already have some experience with Epicurus.

If you will let us know whether there are particular topics or aspects that interest you most, we can probably fine-tune the recommendations further.

Post by “Cassius” of February 23, 2025 at 6:51 PM

[Quote from ifancya](#)

Other recommended books have been Cyril Bailey's "The Greek Atomists and Epicurus: A Study", Benjamin Farrington's "The Faith of Epicurus", and John M. Rist's "Introduction to Epicurus". Any feedback on these additional recommendations would be greatly appreciated.

All of these books you listed are certainly high quality. I'd recommend you read at least the first chapter of DeWitt, take a look at the table of contents to see how it's organized, and then decide if that is where you prefer to start. DeWitt will introduce you to virtually every aspect of the philosophy in a general way. That will give you a better view of the "forest" before you go into detail on issues such as theology like the Farrington Book or atomism like the Bailey book you mentioned. I'm not familiar with Rist's introduction so I can't help much with a comparison there.

Post by “Godfrey” of February 23, 2025 at 6:59 PM

As I recall, the Farrington book addresses more than theology, and attempts to situate Epicurus within Greek philosophy and society.

Post by “Martin” of February 24, 2025 at 5:50 AM

Welcome Ifancya!

Post by “Kalosyni” of February 24, 2025 at 7:55 AM

[ifancya](#) Welcome to the forum!