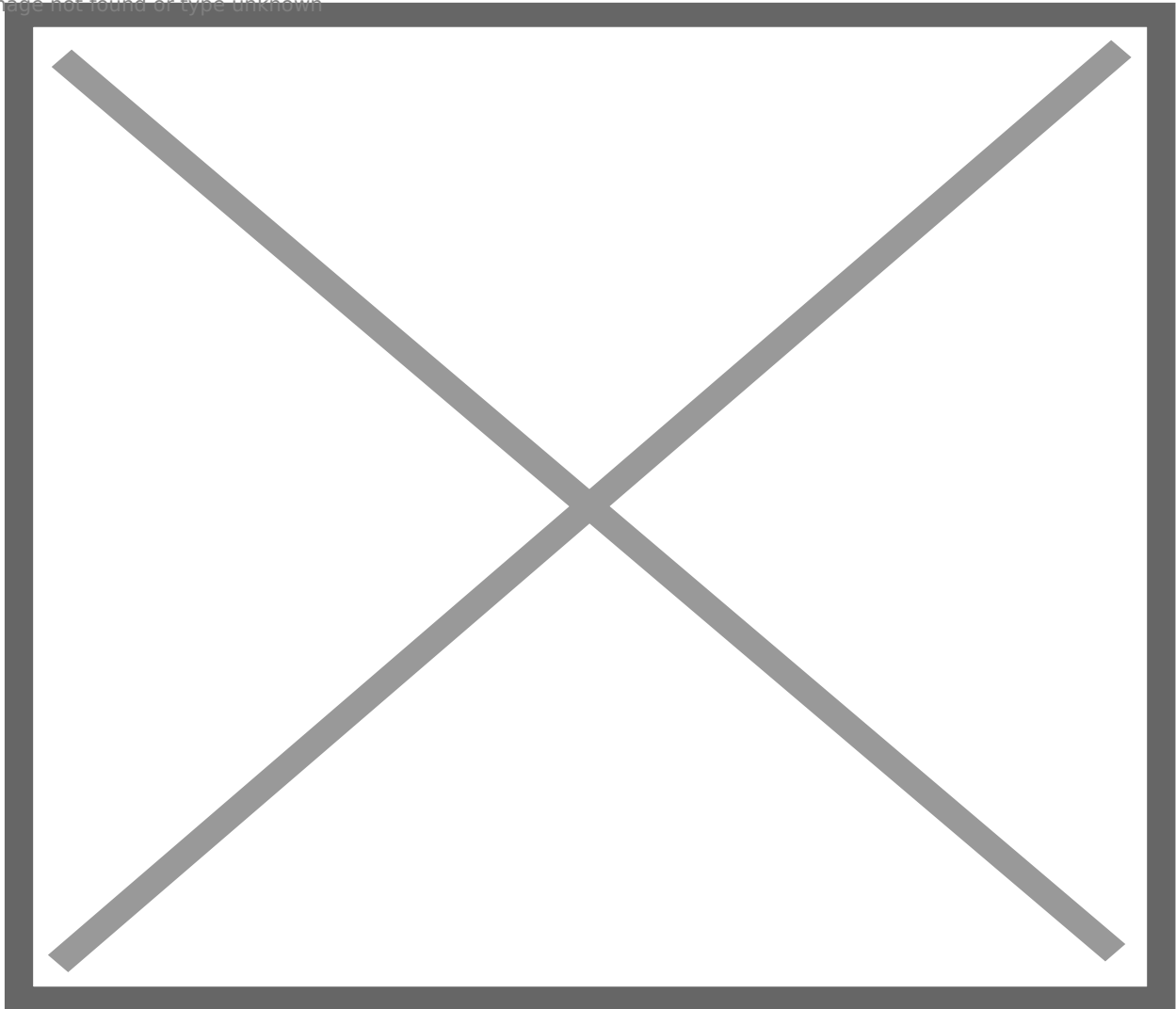


Sunday February 14, 2026 - Zoom Meeting - Lucretius Book Review - Starting Book One Line 159

Post by "Cassius" of February 14, 2026 at 7:34 PM

This week we pick up at line 159 - the beginning of the argument in support of "nothing comes from nothing"

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[EpicureanFriends Side-By-Side Lucretius](#)

Multi-column side-by-side Lucretius text comparison tool featuring Munro, Bailey, Dunster, and Condensed editions.

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Post by “Joshua” of February 15, 2026 at 1:01 PM

Quote

For the art of mechanics, now so celebrated and admired, was first originated by Eudoxus and Archytas, who embellished geometry with its subtleties, and gave to problems incapable of proof by word and diagram, a support derived from mechanical illustrations that were patent to the senses. For instance, in solving the problem of finding two mean proportional lines, a necessary requisite for many geometrical figures, both mathematicians had recourse to mechanical arrangements, adapting to their purposes certain intermediate portions of curved lines and sections. But Plato was incensed at this, and inveighed against them as corrupters and destroyers of the pure excellence of geometry, which thus turned her back upon the incorporeal things of abstract thought and descended to the things of sense, making use, moreover, of objects which required much mean and manual labour. For this reason mechanics was made entirely distinct from geometry, and being for a long time ignored by philosophers, came to be regarded as one of the military arts.

-Plutarch, [Life of Marcellus](#)

Post by “Joshua” of February 15, 2026 at 1:49 PM

[Robert](#) From the [Thread](#) on Thomas More's *Utopia*:

Quote

[Utopus] made a solemn and severe law against such as should so far degenerate from the dignity of human nature, as to think that our souls died with our bodies, or that the world was governed by chance, without a wise overruling Providence: for they all formerly believed that there was a state of rewards and punishments to the good and bad after this life; and they now look on those that think otherwise as scarce fit to be counted men, since they degrade so noble a being as the soul, and reckon it no better than a beast's: thus they are far from looking on such men as fit for human society, or to be citizens of a well-ordered commonwealth; since a man of such principles must needs, as oft as he dares do it, despise all their laws and customs: for there is no doubt to be made, that a man who is afraid of nothing but the law, and apprehends nothing

after death, will not scruple to break through all the laws of his country, either by fraud or force, when by this means he may satisfy his appetites.

Post by “Cassius” of February 15, 2026 at 3:10 PM

Those two Joshua along with the material on Archimedes we need to come back to next week on the podcast

Post by “Joshua” of February 15, 2026 at 3:17 PM

Quote

Those two Joshua along with the material on Archimedes we need to come back to next week on the podcast

From the same work of Plutarch linked above:

Quote

And yet Archimedes possessed such a lofty spirit, so profound a soul, and such a wealth of scientific theory, that although his inventions had won for him a name and fame for superhuman sagacity, he would not consent to leave behind him any treatise on this subject, but regarding the work of an engineer and every art that ministers to the needs of life as ignoble and vulgar, he devoted his earnest efforts only to those studies the subtlety and charm of which are not affected by the claims of necessity. These studies, he thought, are not to be compared with any others; in them the subject matter vies with the demonstration, the former supplying grandeur and beauty, the latter precision and surpassing power. For it is not possible to find in geometry more profound and difficult questions treated in simpler and purer terms. Some attribute this success to his natural endowments; others think it due to excessive labour that everything he did seemed to have been performed without labour and with ease. For no one could by his own efforts discover the proof, and yet as soon as he learns it from him, he thinks he might have discovered it himself; so smooth and rapid is the path by which he leads one to the desired conclusion. 6 And therefore we may not disbelieve the stories told about him, how, under the lasting charm of some familiar and domestic

Siren, he forgot even his food and neglected the care of his person; and how, when he was dragged by main force, as he often was, to the place for bathing and anointing his body, he would trace geometrical figures in the ashes, and draw lines with his finger in the oil with which his body was anointed, being possessed by a great delight, and in very truth a captive of the Muses. And although he made many excellent discoveries, he is said to have asked his kinsmen and friends to place over the grave where he should be buried a cylinder enclosing a sphere, with an inscription giving the proportion by which the containing solid exceeds the contained.

Post by “Cassius” of February 15, 2026 at 3:29 PM

Quote

Quote

And yet Archimedes possessed such a lofty spirit, so profound a soul, and such a wealth of scientific theory, that although his inventions had won for him a name and fame for superhuman sagacity, he would not consent to leave behind him any treatise on this subject, **but regarding the work of an engineer and every art that ministers to the needs of life as ignoble and vulgar, he devoted his earnest efforts only to those studies the subtlety and charm of which are not affected by the claims of necessity.**

So at least partially at the feet of the Socratic-Pythagorean axis and their deprecation of "natural science" we can lay the charge that they held back one of the greatest engineering minds of the ancient world from further practical discoveries.

Absolutely disgusting to think about.

Post by “Robert” of February 16, 2026 at 11:29 PM

[Quote from Joshua](#)

[Robert](#) From the [Thread](#) on Thomas More's *Utopia*:

Quote

[Utopus] made a solemn and severe law against such as should so far degenerate from the dignity of human nature, as to think that our souls died with our bodies, or that the world was governed by chance, without a wise overruling Providence: for they all formerly believed that there was a state of rewards and punishments to the good and bad after this life; and they now look on those that think otherwise as scarce fit to be counted men, since they degrade so noble a being as the soul, and reckon it no better than a beast's: thus they are far from looking on such men as fit for human society, or to be citizens of a well-ordered commonwealth; since a man of such principles must needs, as oft as he dares do it, despise all their laws and customs: for there is no doubt to be made, that a man who is afraid of nothing but the law, and apprehends nothing after death, will not scruple to break through all the laws of his country, either by fraud or force, when by this means he may satisfy his appetites.

Thank you, Joshua! How familiar do you think More might have been with Epicurus? His argument seems almost a direct response to the position expressed in [PD34](#) and elsewhere.

Post by “Joshua” of February 17, 2026 at 2:21 AM

Quote

How familiar do you think More might have been with Epicurus?

Thomas More (1478-1535) published Utopia in 1516; for reference, here are some of the relevant texts from antiquity by first Latin translation, first Latin printing, and the first Aldine press edition of the Greek text:

Text	Earliest Latin Translation	First Latin Printing	First Aldine Press Edition (Greek Text)	
Diogenes Laertius, Lives	c.1430		1472	1497
Cicero, De Finibus	N/A		1471	
Cicero, De Natura Deo.	N/A		1471	
Lucretius, DRN	N/A (rediscovered 1417)		1473	
Lucian, Luciani Opusculi	see note	see note		1503

Note: A collection of works by Lucian referred to as the *Luciani Opusculi* were translated collaboratively by Thomas More and Desiderius Erasmus between 1505-1506

No matter to what humanists he may be indebted, More uses certain classical sources in common with them. He shows familiarity with such standard treatises on statecraft as those by Isocrates, Xenophon, Aristotle, and Dio Chrysostom; but the most evident influences are Plato, in both the *Republic* and the *Laws*, and Plutarch, particularly in the life of Lycurgus of Sparta. Nor should one overlook the content and style of the *Germania* of Tacitus. For ethical and philosophical doctrines, particularly Stoicism and Epicureanism, the main sources are Diogenes Laertius, Cicero, and Seneca. The tone of

ia commenting on More's sources;

So to answer your question, he appears to have been quite familiar with the standard texts on Epicureanism!