

Comments on Videos on Epicurus By Professor G. Stadler of ModernStoicism.com

Post by "Cassius" of January 4, 2019 at 10:13 AM

Over at [facebook someone posted](#) a link to the videos described here: <https://gbsadler.blogspot.com/2019/01/eight-...1p6tYIIEkg2SxEo>

Sorry that these following comments are disjointed but I wanted to cut and paste several here:

In fairness to the professor, that's what he is - a professor. His job isn't to say what is right and what is wrong - he's there to expose people to ideas, and so when you get all these tangents about "this reminds me of this" and "this reminds me of that" then he sees himself as being helpful, rather than running around in confusion and in circles and never getting anywhere.

The detachment of the Stoic/Platonic approach totally controls the academy. Their job isn't to help people live better, it's to publish, get tenure, and recycle facts in never-ending eclecticism that - whether intentional or not - keeps people helplessly confused and never leads to any useful medicine.

And so for a similar reason the ancient Epicureans criticized Socrates, as well summarized in Mark Riley's "Epicurean Criticism of Socrates"

There's no single issue more important than this one in the study of Epicurus. Sometimes we can generate some interesting heat by mentioning anticipations or Epicurean views of gods, but nothing is more decisive in determining one's view of Epicurus than the (in my view totally false) argument that Epicurus taught katastematic/static pleasure as the goal of life.

Also I see that on his page Prof. Stadler is very honest that he is not operating from the viewpoint of being an epicurean himself. So that is additional fair warning for anyone viewing these videos:

Also, Sadler's project is called "REASON.IO" --- that says a lot right there!

One of the videos is entitled "Epicurus on Moving and Static Pleasures - Philosophy Core Concepts" which seems to be a repetition of exactly the problems that will ****destroy**** any normal person's interest in Epicurus.

Good grief - there's no doubt what position Sadler is teaching. Again, it's good to know what is going on here, but someone who follows this path will end up in Stoicism - which was largely responsible for generating this problem in the first place.

But to repeat I am not posting this to criticize Prof Stadler. He's doing you a favor by presenting in ten minutes the central problem. Unless you can get past this and see the error in the presentation you'll never see what the ancient Epicureans saw, and you'll file Epicurus away as just another book on your shelf.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9MOqMyqAf0&feature=youtu.be>

The quickest antidote to this video? To really get it you'll need to read Gosling and Taylor on the background of these arguments, but good summaries are provided in the [Nikolsky](#) (Epicurus on Pleasure) and Wentham (Cicero's On Presentation..) articles in our Files section here in this group. If you start off with DeWitt you learn the correct position from the beginning, and you never get tripped up by these arguments.

One other find from Professor Stadler's website - he is a leader / writer at ModernStoicism . com - <https://modernstoicism.com/author/gregory-sadler/> ...which is another indication he might not be the best source for interpretation on Epicurus...