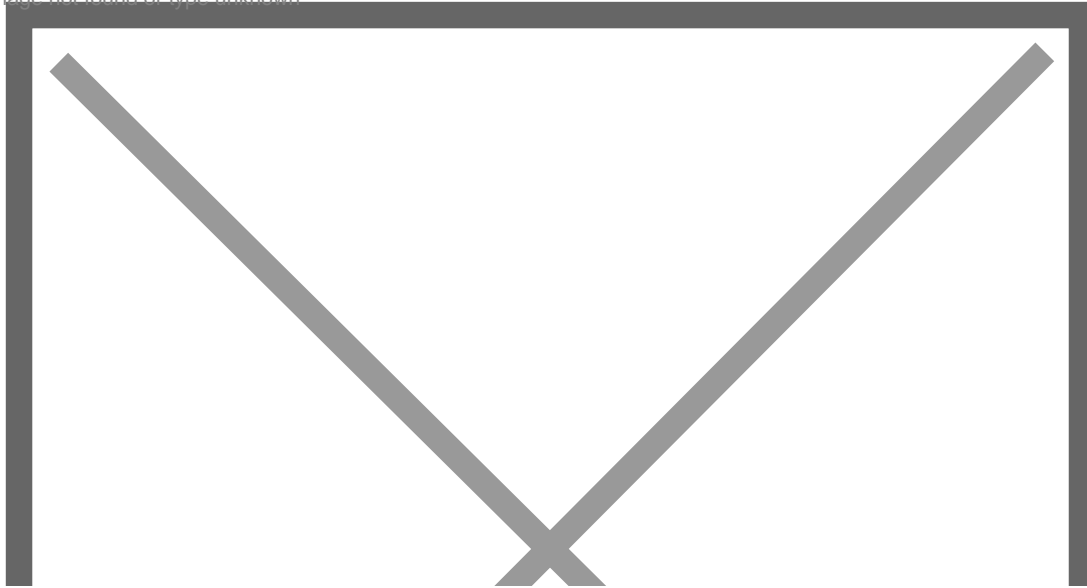


EpicureanFriends Wiki

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the EpicureanFriends Wiki. Our wiki is still in early stages of organization, so if you don't find something you need, [ask in the forums](#).

2. History And Purpose Of EpicureanFriends.com

EpicureanFriends was established in 2015 by a group of friends interested in the study of of [Classical Epicurean Philosophy](#), freed from the intrusion of contemporary politics, Stoicism, Platonism, Humanism, Buddhism, Judeo-Christianism, and other "isms" with which many seek to combine it. Our forum, Zoom meetings, and other interactions allow us to implement Epicurus' recommendation in his letter to Menoecus: *"Meditate therefore on these things and things akin to them night and day by yourself; and with a companion like to yourself, and never shall you be disturbed waking or asleep, but you shall live like a god among men. For a man who lives among immortal blessings is not like unto a mortal being."*

In order to build and maintain a constructive environment to attain this goal, over the years we have refined our organizational documents, including our [Community Standards](#), our [Not Neo-Epicurean, But Epicurean](#) statement, and our [Key Posting Policy](#) statement, all of which you will find in [this section of the wiki](#).

A major aspect of these community rules is that we prohibit the discussion of contemporary partisan political issues in our activities. The goal of EpicureanFriends is to focus exclusively on the identification and understanding of Epicurean philosophical doctrine, and we exclude from EpicureanFriends activities all discussion of contemporary partisan political issues, leaving such matters solely to our participants' personal discretion. This is not because we accept the contention of detractors that Epicurus taught extreme versions of "living unknown" or avoidance of "all" political action, but because constructive study of timeless philosophic issues is our priority here, and divisive political discussion of transient political issues would pose a major obstacle to that goal.

2.1. Who Is Welcome To Participate At EpicureanFriends.com?

EpicureanFriends.com welcomes all who are sincerely interested in Epicurean Philosophy to read our public forums and make use of our public resources. All participants at EpicureanFriends have studied and been a part of other worldviews in the past, and it would be absurd to completely refuse engagement with those who hold views that we ourselves have held in the past. We have extensive public discussion threads and resources explicitly for the purpose of allowing people who do not consider themselves fully Epicurean to

read and learn about the philosophy of Epicurus.

However, as an explicitly pro-Epicurean forum, our goal is to provide a place for those who do consider themselves to be primarily Epicurean to communicate productively with each other about [Classical Epicurean Philosophy](#). For that reason, regular posting privileges and attendance at our online Zoom meetings are reserved only to those who agree to our [Community Standards](#), our [Not Neo-Epicurean, But Epicurean](#) statement, and our [Key Posting Policy](#) statement.

While some Epicurean teachings may overlap with those of other philosophies, EpicureanFriends does not encourage eclecticism, and is not the place for extended argument in favor of non-Epicurean philosophies.

Non-members of the forum are welcome to review our resources, and those who sincerely and with an open mind wish to ask questions about how Epicurean philosophy contrasts with other schools of thought are welcome to set up an account.

Past threads on these issues include:

1. [General Discussion of Contrasts Between Epicurus And Other Philosophers](#)
 1. [Contrasting Epicurus With Platonism](#)
 2. [Contrasting Epicurus With Stoicism](#)
 3. [Contrasting Epicurus With Buddhism](#)
 4. [Contrasting Epicurus with Existentialism / Nihilism](#)
 5. [Contrasting Epicurus With Humanism](#)

Please understand that there are many forums on the internet where other philosophies can be discussed and advocated and compared at length. EpicureanFriends was founded to promote [Epicurean](#) philosophy, and we ask for your understanding that we moderate the forum with that goal always in mind.

3. Classical Epicurean Philosophy

[Classical Epicurean Philosophy](#) is a worldview that rejects many commonplace assumptions of other philosophies, including the prevailing views of "[pleasure](#)," "[gods](#)," "[virtue](#)," and even "[good and evil](#)." In Epicurean terms, pleasure embraces much more than sensory stimulation, "[gods](#)" exist but are not supernatural, and it is important to act "[virtuously](#)," but "[virtue](#)" is not desirable as an end in itself, but as a means of obtaining pleasure. Likewise, "Good" and "evil" are not abstract absolutes, but are ultimately evaluations based on sensations of pleasure and pain felt by real living things. "Practical Reason" is held to be essential for living wisely, but "dialectical logic" is rejected as misleading. It is a major goal of EpicureanFriends to explore Epicurean terminology in these and other areas so we can appreciate the philosophy as the ancient Epicureans understood it. For more on terminology and similar topics, [check out our FAQ page](#). We also particularly recommend [Episode 222](#) of the Lucetius Today Podcast where we discuss key terminology issues surrounding "happiness" and "pleasure" and "virtue."

In order to clarify the distinctive aspects of [Classical Epicurean Philosophy](#) for both new readers and regular members alike, we place special emphasis on a number of the most central aspects of Epicurean doctrine. These points include:

1. [Nothing Can Be Created From Nothing.](#)
2. [Nature Has No Gods Over Her.](#)
3. [Do Not Assign To The Gods Anything That Is Inconsistent With Incorruption And Blessedness](#)
4. [Death Is Nothing To Us.](#)
5. [There Is No Necessity To Live Under The Control Of Necessity.](#)
6. [He Who Says "Nothing Can Be Known" Knows Nothing.](#)
7. [All Sensations Are "True."](#)
8. [Virtue Is Not Absolute Or An End In Itself - All Good And Evil Consists In Sensation.](#)
9. [Pleasure is The Guide of Life.](#)
10. [By "Pleasure" We Mean All Experience That Is Not Painful](#)

11. [Life Is Desirable, But Unlimited Time Contains No Greater Pleasure Than Limited Time.](#)

We also have a longer [Foundations of Epicurean Philosophy](#) document, written in progressive narrative form, which is based closely on the ancient texts and contains much more detail.

Epicurean philosophy is generally divided into Physics, Canonics, and Ethics, and we organize our forums along similar lines. The following subsections incorporate the eleven areas of focus listed above into the larger context of the field of Epicurean Philosophy where they are found:

3.1. Physics

Epicurus erected his entire philosophy upon his understanding of the nature of the universe, including how it is composed of and governed by elemental particles moving through space. Click here for our Wiki entry on [General Principles of Epicurean Physics](#). Click here for our [Physics](#) discussion forum.

3.2. Canonics

Canonics, often known as "epistemology," is closely related to physics. At the same time that we observe and derive our conclusions about the nature of the universe, we must examine what it means to "know" anything. What is truth? What is real? Is confidence in knowledge (or "certainty") possible? Click here for our wiki entry on [General Principles of Epicurean Canonics](#) and here for our [Key Citations In Canonics](#) that remain from the ancient world. Click here for our [Canonics](#) discussion forum.

3.3. Ethics

Ethics is the application of Physics and Canonics to determine the best way to live. Click here for our [Epicurean Ethics](#) page and here for our [Ethics](#) discussion forum.

4. History Of The Epicurean School

4.1. Timelines of Epicurean History

- Joshua's [Timeline of Epicureanism From Classical Athens to Late Antiquity](#)
- Twentier's [Timeline of Ancient Epicurean History](#)

4.2. How Does Epicurean Philosophy Differ From Stoicism?

For a detailed treatment of many aspects of the differences, complete with cites to the ancient authorities, please see the comparison chart [here](#).

Another useful comparison chart, this one focused on the different Stoic and Epicurean views of the goal of life, is [here](#):

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Discussion of this question is [here](#).

4.3. How Does Epicurean Philosophy Differ From Buddhism?

5. Forum Organization

Registered members of the Forum are invited to start in the [General Discussion forum](#), or any of our many [Special Topic forums](#). For a selection of our most significant discussions check our [Featured Forum Threads](#) page. If you're looking for something you don't see, use the [Search function](#) at the top of each page. You can also search by [Popular Tags](#) or review our [Full List of Tags](#). We also have many hyperlinked [Outlines](#) that will

assist in navigating through the forum structure, along with a list of [Forum Short-Cuts](#) to help you find the most popular forums. You can view the most recent posting from across the site at our [Latest Posts](#) page.

We welcome to the forum all who are sincerely interested in the study of Epicurus and who wish to collaborate with the EpicureanFriends community. After registering for an account you will be given "Introductory Member" basic level access, which allows you to post in basic forums, and, after introducing yourself and participating for a brief period, attend our [First Monday Meet-and-Greet](#) Zoom meeting. **Before you register, please be sure to read our foundational documents.** These include our [Community Standards](#), our [Not Neo-Epicurean, But Epicurean](#) statement, and our [Key Posting Policy](#) statement. If you too are interested in pursuing [Classical Epicurean Philosophy](#), your next step is to register for an account! [To Create An Account Click Here.](#)

6. Frequently Asked Questions

We have a [FAQ](#) to answer many of the questions that normally come up during study. If you have an account and find something missing, let us know and we'll add to it if your question is a common one.

7. Recommended Reading

We always recommend that readers consult the original works of Epicurus, and we maintain here a collection of [Ancient Epicurean Texts](#), including [Diogenes Laertius Book 10](#) (which contains all of Epicurus' Letters), [Lucretius' De Rerum Natura](#), and many others.

For people who are brand new to Epicurus, we recommend that you start with the two books we recommend most: [Epicurus and His Philosophy](#) by Norman DeWitt, and [Living For Pleasure: An Epicurean Guide to Life](#) by Emily Austin:

1. The most sweeping, thorough, and innovative "textbook" of Epicurean philosophy available is Norman DeWitt's "[Epicurus and His Philosophy](#)." No other book presents the full sweep and detail of the philosophy as well as this one. The opening chapter of DeWitt's book can be [read for free here](#), and an article ("Philosophy For The Millions") summarizing DeWitt's perspective is [here](#).
2. The most current and best general introduction to [Epicurean ethics](#) is [Dr. Emily Austin's "Living For Pleasure"](#). This is a very readable introduction to Epicurean ideas on how to live that is consistent with the general approach here at EpicureanFriends. Our 2023 interview with Dr. Austin on the Lucretius Today podcast is a good introduction to her book.

There are of course other good books about Epicurus, and we maintain a section of our forum devoted to discussion of them [here](#). A word of caution is appropriate: There are many different interpretations of Epicurus, and many of them "adulterated" with Stoic, Buddhist, Judeo-Christian, Platonic, or other philosophies and religions, according to the preferences of their authors. We recommend that those seeking to understand Epicurus start with [Epicurus and His Philosophy](#) and [Living For Pleasure](#), and then review Diogenes Laertius Book Ten and Lucretius, before moving to other works. The DeWitt and Austin books provide a firm grounding in classical Epicureanism, and they point out where the reader can expect to find controversies elsewhere as to what Epicurus really taught.

The full list we recommend for students of Epicurus is as follows:

1. ["Epicurus and His Philosophy"](#) by Norman DeWitt
2. ["Living For Pleasure"](#) by Emily Austin
3. [The Biography of Epicurus by Diogenes Laertius](#). This includes the surviving letters of Epicurus, including those to [Herodotus](#), [Pythocles](#), and [Menoceus](#).
4. ["On The Nature of Things"](#) - by Lucretius (a poetic abridgement of Epicurus' "On Nature")
5. ["Epicurus on Pleasure"](#) - An article by Boris [Nikolsky](#)
6. The chapters on Epicurus in [Gosling and Taylor's "The Greeks On Pleasure."](#)
7. [Cicero's "On Ends" - Torquatus Section](#)

8. [Cicero's "On The Nature of the Gods" - Velleius Section](#)
9. [The Inscription of Diogenes of Oinoanda - Martin Ferguson Smith translation](#)
10. [A Few Days In Athens" - Frances Wright](#) - with the [criticisms referenced here](#).
11. Lucian of Samosata - Lucian mentions Epicurus in a number of articles, but among the best are [Alexander the Oracle-Monger](#), [Hermotimus](#), and others [listed here](#).
12. [Philodemus "On Methods of Inference"](#) (De Lacy version, including his appendix on the history of the Epicurean Canon)
13. *Lucretius and the Transformation of Greek Wisdom* by David Sedley, an in depth exploration of how Lucretius interpreted Epicurus
14. *The Sculpted Word* by Bernard Frischer, a study of Epicurean bronzes and marbles from the ancient world.
15. Haris Dimitriadis' ["Epicurus' And The Pleasant Life"](#)
16. Consider also the following essays/lectures/letters:
 1. The Letter of [Cosma Raimondi](#)
 2. Norman DeWitt's ["Philosophy For The Millions"](#)
 3. John Tyndall's [Belfast Address](#)
 4. An essay on Lucretius from George Santayana's [Three Philosophical Poets](#)
 5. Prof. Ian Johnston's [Lecture on Lucretius](#)
 6. Lucy Hutchinson's [Letter to the Earl of Anglesey](#), disavowing her very early translation of Lucretius

[Here is a "library" page](#) at NewEpicurean.com with links to where many additional translations are available for free on the internet.

[Profile of Past Reading](#)

[Discussion of this FAQ entry at EpicureanFriends.com is here.](#)

8. The Lucretius Today Podcast

In our Lucretius Today podcast we discuss the Epicurean texts in detail each week. Starting with [Episode One](#) in 2020 we went verse by verse through Lucretius' poem, and since then we have covered many other important Epicurean texts. Episodes of special note include [Lucretius Today Interviews Dr. Emily Austin](#), [Letter to Menoeceus](#), [The Canon, Reason, and Nature](#), [Epicurus and His Philosophy: The New Hedonism](#), and especially [Episode 200](#) (our anniversary episode discussing our past and future plans for the podcast). We have a page dedicated to a selection of [Quotes](#) used in the podcast, and the best place to familiarize yourself with the episode topics is [here](#).

[Lucretius Today Episode Guide](#)

9. Our Articles Section

We curate a number of selected [Articles](#) written by participants at EpicureanFriends which discuss Epicurus from the perspective of [Classical Epicurean Philosophy](#).

10. Our Epicurean Friends Youtube Page

We have a selection of useful videos produced over the years. Of special note are our [Seven Steps With Epicurus](#) slideshow and our [Foundations of Epicurean Philosophy](#) presentation.

11. Our Special Resources Page

Our [Special Resources Page](#) provides a variety of informative items prepared by our forum members.

12. Our Recommended Reading Page

In addition to the two books we recommend the most, referenced above, we have a full [Recommended Reading List](#) of **additional** books and articles.

13. Our Image Gallery

Our [images](#) section provides a collection of images, graphics, and memes by EpicureanFriends forum members. A special selection of our [Featured Images is here](#).

14. Personal Outlines of Epicurean Philosophy

As suggested by Epicurus to Herodotus, and as in the example Thomas Jefferson left to us in his personal writings, one of the best ways to internalize Epicurean Philosophy is to write it out in outline form. See our resources here for sample outlines that help you navigate this site, and work with others [who have posted for us their own outlines here](#).

15. Self Study Courses

Currently we have a [Quiz Section](#). In the future we hope to offer you organized programs in the form of an [Epicurean Week](#) and an [Epicurean Seven Week Program](#).

16. Zoom Meetings

Those who register an account and establish a pattern of productive participation will be invited to our First Monday Meet And Greet meeting, which we conduct on the first Monday of each month. Those who continue thereafter to participate productively will eventually be invited to become “Established Members,” and to join our Wednesday night Zoom study groups and our monthly Twentieth Meeting, and participate in sections of our discussion forum which are limited to Established Members.

17. Site Map

Our [site map](#) has a listing of all major sections of this site. If you have questions, please feel free to ask any member of our [Moderator Team](#).

Much More To Come!