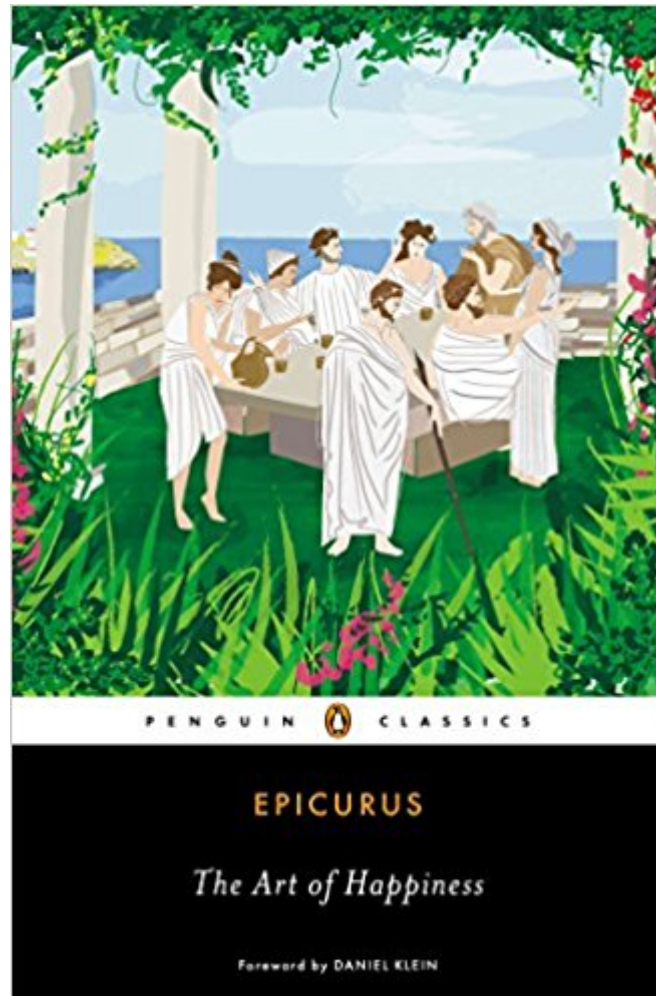




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The Art Of Happiness (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

The brilliant writings of a highly influential Greek philosopher, with a foreword by Daniel Klein, author of *Travels with Epicurus*—about life and death, religion and science, physical sensation, happiness, morality, and friendship—attracted legions of adherents throughout the ancient Mediterranean world and deeply influenced later European thought. Though Epicurus faced hostile opposition for centuries after his death, he counts among his many admirers Thomas Hobbes, Thomas Jefferson, Karl Marx, and Isaac Newton. This volume includes all of his extant writings—his letters, doctrines, and Vatican sayings—alongside parallel passages from the greatest exponent of his philosophy, Lucretius, extracts from Diogenes Laertius' *Life of Epicurus*, a lucid introductory essay about Epicurean philosophy, and a foreword by Daniel Klein, author of *Travels with Epicurus* and coauthor of the *New York Times* bestseller *Plato and a Platypus Walk into a Bar*. For more than sixty-five years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,500 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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Customer Reviews

Epicurus was an ancient Greek philosopher and the founder of the school of philosophy called Epicureanism. Only a few fragments of his works remain, and much of what is known about his philosophy derives from later followers and commentators. Daniel Klein is author of *Travels with Epicurus* and coauthor of the New York Times bestseller *Plato and a Platypus Walk into a Bar*.

This is Penguin Classics's re-issue of "The Philosophy of Epicurus: Letters, Doctrines, and Parallel Passages from Lucretius" published in 1963. The Art of Happiness (Penguin Classics) has a new foreword by Daniel Klein, author of the very good related book *Travels with Epicurus: A Journey to a Greek Island in Search of a Fulfilled Life*. The foreword is excellent and the translation by George Strodach is very readable and clear. Professor Strodach also provides an extensive Introduction and learned Notes that make up the bulk of the book. Most of the actual writings of Epicurus and his students have to do with epistemology and metaphysics rather than the art of happiness, the putative subject of the book. This material is interesting - it covers such things as his theory of atoms, sensation, knowledge, and religion (with a wonderful excursion into theories of meteorology). The actual writings on how to live a good life, what we might refer to as his ethics, is a very small portion of the book. However Strodach's Introduction and Notes are scholarly and eccentrically entertaining. He offers a condemnation of religion that is very much like the writings of what are characterized as The New Atheism - writers such as Dawkins and Hitchens - and concludes that religion's net effect on humanity is negative. He also offers an unexpected defense of UFO's. If you are interested in the Epicurean approach to the good life, I recommend reading Klein's book instead of this one. If you are interested in reading the original source material on Epicurus for an insight into ancient Greek thought, this is an excellent textbook.

I had to read this for an undergraduate course at Georgetown University. I ended up buying additional copies to give as gifts. This is one text for school I have actually re-read on my own time, and I get something new out of it each reading. Highly recommend.

To think about what the giants of those days were thinking about we have slid back instead of forward in THIS millenium... so far. G Kossow

Great book. What a stimulating read! It's incredible how the ancients had it all figured out. Makes you realize how little we've progressed.

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