On Sex & Love in Lucretius’ DRN 4

1. Epicureanism
   a. Emotions not inherently bad, as long as they stem from the right sort of desires
   b. One should avoid empty desires which are artificial and do not correspond to our nature
2. DRN 4: Transition from Dreams to Sex
   a. Dreams lead to sexual dreams, which lead to orgasms, which suggest the subject of sex (4.1037-1057)
3. Outlook
   a. Love
      i. Epicureans regard love as an illness of the soul which requires a cure
      ii. In pursuit of ataraxia, love should be avoided
      iii. Position of Lucretius’ discussion on love in DRN 4 at the end (4.1030-287)
   b. Sex
      i. Sexual relationships fine as long as one can avoid being trapped
      ii. Sexual love v. sexual intercourse
         1. Sexual intercourse eases a biological desire
         2. Emotional love corrupts the natural desire and transforms it into something painful, unnatural, and insatiable
            a. love leads to the death of reason (Smith 2005, 74)
4. Medical Analogies
   a. The disease: love
      i. progressive disease
      ii. ulcus, vulnus, ictus
      iii. Two sorts of moods of love: passive and unhappy v. active and wild (Caston 2006, 281)
   b. The cure:
      i. Sleep with other people (e.g. prostitutes)
      ii. Separation and the issue of simulacra
         1. Not a valid cure
5. Violent & Primal Imagery
   a. nec reperire malum id possunt quae machina vincat: / usque adeo incerti tabescunt
      vulnere caeco. (4.1119-20)
   b. In the midst of their rabies (4.1083), the lovers assault each other’s bodies
   c. Military imagery (1.32-40; 4.1037-57)
6. Marriage
   a. The purpose of Roman marriage is to produce a child
   b. Second best option for the wise man; image of the continuous drops of water wearing out the stone (4.1283-7)
7. Future Questions: Lucretius on love & friendship