

Laughing Atoms, Laughing Matter

LUCRETIUS' *DE RERUM NATURA* AND SATIRE

Laughing Atoms, Laughing Matter: Lucretius' De Rerum Natura and Satire offers the first comprehensive examination of Roman epic poet Lucretius' engagement with satire. Author T. H. M. Gellar-Goad argues that what has often been understood as an artfully persuasive exposition of Epicurean philosophy designed to convert the uninitiated is actually a mimesis of the narrator's attempt to effect such a conversion on his internal narrative audience—a performance for the true audience of the poem, whose members take pleasure from uncovering the literary games and the intertextual engagement that the performance entails.

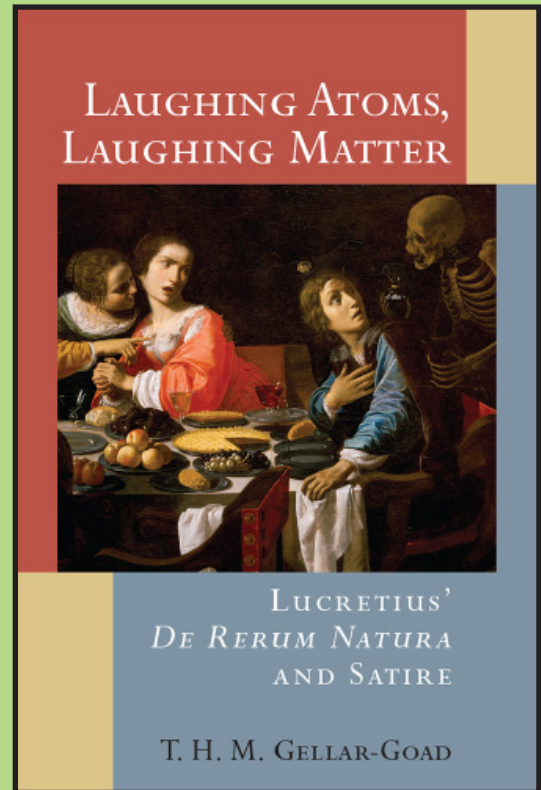
Gellar-Goad aims to track *De Rerum Natura* along two paths of satire: first, the broad boulevard of satiric literature from the beginnings of Greek poetry to the plays, essays, and broadcast media of the modern world; and second, the narrower lane of Roman verse satire, *satura*, beginning with early authors Ennius and Lucilius and closing with Flavian poet Juvenal. Lucilius is revealed as a major, yet overlooked, influence on Lucretius.

By examining how Lucretius' poem employs the tools of satire, we gain a richer understanding of how it interacts with its purported philosophical program.

"[T]his insightful book, showing us for the first time how pervasive Lucretius' satiric usage is, becomes an important one for a broad range of scholars from the history of physics to classicists and those who study the crucial role of poetry on the development of Western thought over the last two millennia."

- Sun News Tucson

T. H. M. GELLAR-GOAD is Associate Professor of Classics and Zachary T. Smith Fellow, Wake Forest University.



Save 30% at
press.umich.edu
with promotion code
UMLAUGHING

6 x 9.290 pp.

Hardcover 978-0-472-13180-8 | \$85.00

Also available as an ebook.



university of michigan press

Order at www.press.umich.edu or 800.621.2736