

An Epicurean Understanding of Pleasure

Post by “Godfrey” of October 6, 2021 at 2:14 AM

That's a juicy question [Marco](#) !

There has been a controversy over the centuries over just that, and the terminology is "katastematic" v "kinetic" pleasure. Katastematic is considered "stable" pleasure and kinetic is considered "active" pleasure. There's a ton of technical debate over whether there are actually two types at all and whether one is a "higher" pleasure or whether pleasure is pleasure, period.

Here's a place on the forum to explore the subject:

[Kinetic and Katastematic Pleasure](#)

The "go to" paper on the subject is [Nikolsky](#)'s article in the forum filebase: [Nikolsky - Epicurus On Pleasure](#)

As I recall, I got a lot out of reading Wenham's paper which is shorter and maybe a good preparation for reading [Nikolsky](#). I can't find Wenham's paper in the filebase, so I've attached it below.

Having said all that, I see that your question also touches on "duration", which is often combined with "intensity" in describing pleasure. I think this terminology is more practical, where the katastematic/kinetic debate might be considered more philosophical. "Practical" as in choosing between pleasures of varying durations and intensities in a given situation, with the knowledge that a given pleasure is not universally better than any other pleasure.