

Can you seek happiness and be full of joy when there is a war in Europe? Wes Cecil podcast.

Post by "Don" of May 17, 2022 at 10:50 PM

Hmm... I'm not sure I follow your reasoning, although it wouldn't be the first time we've talked past each other. So I'll prattle on myself.

When I read "X is the product of war" I read that as "War is necessary for X."

I think I understand what you're saying about ALWAYS and CAN BE, but I read that as making it possible to say, "I want to feel pleasure so I'll go to war." or "War gives me pleasure."

Some people may feel pleasurable feelings while fighting a war, but, overall, I would have to posit that war is not a choice-worthy source of pleasure because you are putting yourself in danger of being killed and other - let's say - hazards. And, yes, I'm judging whether someone's pursuit of pleasure is choiceworthy or not in this case. I think I have precedent for that from Epicurus himself.

Even on the side of the one who does not choose war but has war thrust upon them, war does not "produce" pleasure. Here's how I'm playing out that scenario in my head (*Oh, save me Zeus! I'm going down the road of hypotheticals!!!*)

- Let's say my life is stable, comfortable, overall pleasurable with episodes now and again of pain.
- Something happens and I have to defend my home and family from hostile forces... I'm now in a war.
- My life is now unstable, dangerous, with an overall abundance of pain with small episodes of pleasure.
- I am fighting a war to return peace and stability to my life so I can again have a life that is stable, comfortable, and has more pleasure than pain. I did not choose to fight this war, but I now have no choice but to engage in war.
- My side wins the war. I can piece my life back together hopefully and find more pleasure than pain in my existence.

So, given this scenario, I would not say the "pleasure" I feel after the war is a "product" of the war. I felt pleasure for fleeting moments while fighting the war. I will hopefully feel more pleasure as a result of the absence of conflict and a return to peace and stability. But the war did not "produce" pleasure. It may have created an environment conducive to experiencing feelings of pleasure more likely, but I'm just having problems with that phrasing of produce and product.

PS. I reread [Cassius](#) 's post in the light of morning and pulled this out:

Quote

The test is always in the consequences, because if a thing in fact generates any degree of pleasure, it is pleasurable at least for that moment. Maybe not a wise idea at all, but the proof of whether any pleasure is generated is in the actual result for the time that pleasure is generated, rather than all the ultimate consequences of pain which may or may not occur later.

I think we're saying similar things here and in my paragraph that starts "Some people may feel pleasurable feelings while fighting a war..." Here I'm thinking of mercenaries and those who feel pleasure in the sense of power (I'm assuming) they feel engaging in battle. Maybe even those who are "fighting for a cause" although this latter may fall in my bullet points. Although I still maintain that mercenary pleasure isn't choice worthy for the same reason endless strings of drinking parties are not choiceworthy.