

Do Pigs Value Katastematic Pleasure? (Summer 2022 K / K Discussion)

Post by "Cassius" of July 12, 2022 at 8:43 AM

And back on DeWitt's point, these discussions also remind me of what I think is (to me) the most clear and unmistakable way of referring to pleasure -- as "the guide" of life more so than "the good."

Lucretius Book 2

At quidam contra haec, ignari materiai,
naturam non posse deum sine numine reddunt
tanto opere humanis rationibus atmoderate
tempora mutare annorum frugesque creare 170
et iam cetera, mortalis quae suadet adire
ipsaque deducit dux vitae dia voluptas
et res per Veneris blanditur saecula propagent,
ne genus occidat humanum.

So I tend to think of DeWitt's point being that life is our greatest "good in terms of an 'asset'" while pleasure is the "guide" for what we do with that asset.

Pleasure as "the guide" seems a lot more compelling to me in many cases. Trying to decide what "the good" is often seems like a word game that never has an end, sort of like Epicurus' talking about walking around endlessly harping on the meaning of good.

But seeing pleasure as "the guide" of life is (to me) a lot more clear. I know what a guide is. And I know that even with a guide I can make mistakes, or get sick, or for any number of reasons fail to reach my destination. It's like that cliché we hear a lot today about how "the journey is more important than the destination." Yes I want a good idea of what the destination looks like so I can set off with that goal in mind, but for the day to day walking along the path to that final goal, which I may be unlucky enough never to reach, what I want is a reliable GUIDE. Lucretius' "Divine Pleasure, Guide of Life" is really a good phrase for that.