

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

Post by “Don” of July 14, 2022 at 4:49 PM

[Quote from Nate](#)

I think it is important to re-state that the mind is a type of body, and that the satisfactions of the mind are, themselves, pleasures of the body. Regardless of any schema designed to organize the different pleasures into categories, all pleasures are pleasures of the body, require some type of energetic motion to instigate, and some of those active bodily pleasures are felt by the mental organ instead of the visual, auditory, chemical, kinesthetic, or thermal organs.

I think this is an important observation. Yes, the mind is a body composed of atoms just like the rest of the physical universe. I also think there are katastematic and kinetic pleasures, but I'll get to that in a moment. Nate's point though is one reason I'm always skeptical of some commentators saying that the motion of kinetic has to do with atoms moving. I don't think that's it at all.

[Quote from Nate](#)

I am very suspicious of the concept of katastematic pleasures in the first place because the related word *katastēmatikós* was elsewhere used to describe "sedation". If that were accurate, then the Cyrenaics would have a legitimate point about equating ataraxia with dreamless sleep.

On re-reading your post, Nate: Are you saying you're skeptical of the concept itself of katastematic pleasures? Or that Epicurus used that dichotomy between katastematic/kinetic?

As for Epicurus using the term, in my mind, I'm (fairly firmly) convinced that he did. The quote from *On Choices and Avoidances* in Diogenes Laertius plus other citations and references sort of clinches it for me. By Zeus, even DeWitt seems to have accepted it 😊

On the concept itself, I am not too concerned about colloquial uses of the term katastematic like "sedation." LSJ simply glosses it as "pertaining to a state or condition."

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, Kk , κατάσση^τος , καταστηματικός](#)

see also

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, κατάστημα](#)

So, to me, katastematic pleasures are those that pertain to a state of being (a state of being free of fear, a state of being free of pain, a state of being calm, a state of being in homeostasis, etc.) which can be extended with little effort. Once the "fear of death" is eliminated, one can exist in a state free of the fear of death indefinitely (as long as one doesn't fall back into error... although the characteristics of the wise one include "once the sage has become wise, they will no longer fall back into ignorance". Once you eliminate a false belief, it's eliminated.)

Kinetic pleasures - those sanctioned by the Cyrenaics and others as "pleasures" - are active pleasures in which one engages in the moment. Kinetic pleasures are fleeting but they provide variety to one's existence.

Katastematic pleasure is the music playing in the background of the movie scene pulling the story together. Kinetic pleasures are the explosions and action sequences and provide the variety to the story. Both are necessary for an interesting superhero movie (Sorry, best film analogy I could come up with!)