

The Axiology of Pain and Pleasure (are they intrinsic good/bad ?)

Post by “Don” of May 29, 2024 at 11:23 PM

I tried to read (briefly, admittedly quick reviews of PDF papers and Wikipedia) about the "naturalistic fallacy," but I am failing to see how it is a "fallacy." I get the idea, I think. For example, from the first line of the Wikipedia article:

In philosophical ethics, the naturalistic fallacy is the claim that it is possible to define good in terms of natural entities, or properties such as pleasant or desirable. The term was introduced by British philosopher G. E. Moore in his 1903 book Principia Ethica.

From my perspective, the only real meaning of "good" is in relation to "feeling positive" either physically or psychologically. I'll call that "good/positive feeling" "pleasant" or say that it is "pleasurable" for lack of any better term. If someone wants to go off on morals, that's up to them. The moral sense of good, The Good, etc., ultimately, it seems to me to have no other referent than that positive feeling. To remove it from that original sense is painting oneself into a corner, being trapped in a puzzle of one's own making.

Diogenes Laertius says that "[Epicurean] ethics (ἠθικὸν)... deals with things to be chosen and rejected (αἰρετῶν καὶ φευκτῶν haireton & pheukton), with the manner of living a human life (βίωσις bion), and with the end-goal. (τέλος telous.)" Ethics then applies how to actualize that positive feeling in one's life. That's it. Walking around, talking about "the good" in an abstract way is pointless. Ethics, it seems to me, in the Epicurean sense is simply how to make one's actions align with arriving at that positive physical and psychological feeling.