

New Religious Landscape Study from Pew Research

Post by “Pacatus” of April 17, 2025 at 4:32 PM

Another “interesting take” on [Don](#) ‘s position above (which was a game-changer for me), that I came across in my reading. The quote is about the Aristippian Cyrenaics, but seemed to me to be relevant here: some pleasures may not be contingently choiceworthy because they would lead to greater pains – but pleasure itself, *in se*, is intrinsically choiceworthy.

“In [the example cases, a particular] pleasure is not choiceworthy given the circumstances, since its acquisition involves more than countervailing pains. ***But it remains choiceworthy for itself and in itself.*** In other words, its intrinsic ability to motivate choosing is *a matter of its self-evident phenomenal character*, which is not altered by prudential circumstances.”

– Kurt Lampe, *The Birth of Hedonism: the Cyrenaic Philosophers and Pleasure as a Way of Life*. [My generalizing edits in brackets.]

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Note: Lampe seems generally to think that ***some*** of the differences between the Cyrenaics and the Epicureans (while real and worthy of note) have been perhaps overstated – to the detriment of the Cyrenaics as philosophers. [At least in terms of what Lampe calls “mainstream Cyrenaicism” – e.g. of Aristippus and Aristippus the Younger (the “Metrodidact”), and presumably Arete, the Younger’s mother who inherited the role of teacher from her father, Aristippus the Elder (and who might be one of the unsung women philosophers of antiquity)].