

Discussion of the thread - Against Katastematic Supremacy - Pleasure Is A Unified Whole And Not A House Divided - Forum Editorial Policy

Post by "Cassius" of July 17, 2026 at 1:27 PM

Dave's questions and this thread have me constructively focusing on the issue of what IS really important to focus on. I'm working on some new thoughts for articles about the general issue of the public perception of what "hedonism" means and how much of a problem that word can be.

I was watching a short clip this morning of someone who was mad about an issue and he concluded by accusing his opponents of being "greedy" and essentially focusing on their own pleasures of the moment to the exclusion of concern about future generations. Whether he was right or wrong on the particular issue isn't nearly as important as the fact that he specifically called his opponents "hedonists" as if there is no other possible meaning of the word beyond a narrow focus on the immediate bodily-pleasures-of-the-moment.

1. Is it worth anyone's time to write material trying to rehabilitate the word hedonism?
2. Does it make more sense just to explain that that's not what Epicurus was about?
3. Why is it in fact so hard for people to weigh the pleasures of the moment against the pains that are sure to follow? Aren't there ways to work on improving that situation without talking as if pleasure and desire should be entirely abandoned?

I tend to think that one of the most effective lines of argument is to look to the actual lives of the ancient Epicureans to see how *they* implemented the philosophy. The contents of Epicurus' will and his last letter are extremely helpful in putting to rest any ambiguities because we can see how Epicurus himself lived his philosophy.

Many of us here and I am one of them love to spend time digging into the details of the surviving fragments to glean more out of them, but can I say that I really have time to do that given that I can't seem to eat right and exercise enough and already have a clear focus on the balance of short and long term and greater and lesser pleasures and pains? No, I can't say that I've come nearly far enough on the basics, and spending too much time on nonessential details may in my case at least be a way of procrastination from what really needs to be done.

So there's all sorts of things that need to be addressed, not only in others but in ourselves. And a time and a proper way to say everything - even *denouncing with righteous indignation* those who are so blinded by desire that they choose a lesser but immediate pleasure that will cost them a future but much greater pain.

Quote from Torquatus On Ends 1:33

On the other hand, we denounce with righteous indignation and dislike men who are so beguiled and demoralized by the charms of the pleasure of the moment, so blinded by desire, that they cannot foresee the pain and trouble that are bound to ensue; and equal blame belongs to those who fail in their duty through weakness of will, which is the same as saying through shrinking from toil and pain.