

"They Mistake For Pleasure The Mere Absence of Pain" - Thomas Jefferson

Post by "Cassius" of December 28, 2021 at 1:29 PM

As I post this new comment to an old thread we're in the process of revisiting the "absence of pain" issue in several threads, and in looking at the list of old threads the title of this one caught my eye.

We didn't explore this quote at the time, but at some point in the future I would expect someone to do that. In the meantime I would particularly recommend Jefferson's "Head and Heart" letter to recent additions to our forum, especially [Kalosyni](#) and others who are exploring this topic. You have to first get your bearings on what is going on in the letter before you can fully appreciate it, but by the time you get to the end I think you'll appreciate that Jefferson does a good job of giving both sides of the "head vs heart" (a good proxy for Stoic/Platonic/Aristotelian vs Epicurean") debate.

And I think you'll agree that he comes down firmly, and for very good reasoning, on the side you would expect. (At least, the side you'd expect if you're read Jefferson's [letter to William Short](#).)