

We Need A Game Show With A Lightning Round Question: "Happiness or Pleasure? - Why?"

Post by "Little Rocker" of February 4, 2023 at 9:07 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

But my expectation would be that if we had more of the "point in issue" we would see that this is a very abstract debate being stated in very philosophical, rather than practical, terms.

I agree that for practical intents and purposes we can set the question aside. Epicurus inherited a debate and he definitely intends to situate himself within that debate using (roughly) the established terminology, but it seems to me that the most important thing to know is: 'we say pleasure is the goal.' That doesn't settle other important questions, like whether pursuing pleasure is far more about removing anxiety than walks on the beach at sunset, but it's pretty clear that pleasure is the goal.

For all their fussiness about making pleasure the goal, the anti-hedonists insisted that you weren't living well unless your life was a source of pleasure and that virtuous people have the best, most durable pleasure. For Aristotle, 'pleasure completes the activity,' and happiness is a life of excellent activity. They're all just a hop, skip, and jump from hedonism. Sometimes I think it just makes them uncomfortable to share a goal with animals.