

The Art of Frugal Hedonism

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I always find myself of two minds when Don and Cassius discuss this. It definitely feels odd to start off by describing Epicurus with a term people commonly associate with something else and then tack on--'but not in the familiar sense.' It risks sounding like, 'he's a gastroenterologist, but not like any gastroenterologist you've ever met.' It's what leads to the charge that he's a hedonist in name only. But then if you *don't* call him a hedonist, then you risk making it sound like the goal isn't pleasure. Not to mention that he does the same thing himself--he identifies the aim as pleasure, then complains that people misunderstand what he means, so he tries to clear it up.

I'll be curious, Don, to find out whether 'frugal hedonism' ends up weighing in on the other stuff--like, you could be a frugal hedonist and still await your heavenly reward or be a frugal hedonist and still think the death of a child is part of a well-ordered cosmos.

As a related anecdote, my partner and I are very different people with entirely different skill sets who thankfully share the actually important commitments, and I remember when I was explaining the basics of Epicureanism to him, he said, 'Oh, I think I watched an interview with an Epicurean on [an episode of Cheap RV Living](#).' So I watched it and thought, 'Well, I can see why he would think that.' Especially when they talk about community, death, and memories.