

Is All "Ataraxia" Equal?

Post by "Cassius" of November 19, 2023 at 3:14 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

Those feelings are going to be either pleasurable or painful (positive or negative).

But within "pleasurable" and "painful" are there not obviously *degrees* or pleasurable or painful? And are we not going to choose those pleasures which we find to be more pleasurable than others?

Saying that 100% pleasure is the height of pleasure is one thing, but is "height" the same for everyone in all circumstances? 100% is, yes, but what if two vessels that are 100% full are different sizes? Are the different sizes and therefore quantities and qualities of pleasures they contain of no relevance?

[Quote from Pacatus](#)

I forgot this, and just wanted to say that, although Utilitarianism influenced neoclassical economics (efficient choice based on "marginal utility"), the notion of cardinal utility ("utils") was dropped. Constrained choice, based on relative preference, became the model. And in no way am I advocating for that former utilitarian position.

I haven't read far enough into this to know the history, and I am not sure that I have the time to go there. But you're not stating why the notion of "cardinal utility" was dropped, and I suspect I am in agreement that "cardinal utility" is indeed something worthy of discussion that should not be dropped. If "relative preference" is a reference to how "other people" view pleasure and that leads to "the greatest good for the greatest number," then I would say that is the erroneous track, and the right track is to indeed analyze what "for you" brings you the greatest pleasure.

I think we're still on the same initial question. Some pleasures are more pleasing to me/you/everyone than others, correct, and should we not discuss the reasoning as to why that is the case?