

Analysing movies through an Epicurean lens

Post by “Kalosyni” of May 13, 2025 at 3:30 PM

[Quote from Rolf](#)

1) While movies can be valuable tools for exploring philosophy, they are rarely a perfect depiction of Epicurean principles unless that's the filmmaker's intention. I believe it's crucial that we acknowledge where a movie and its characters align with the philosophy and where they diverge. Not all elements of a film will resonate with Epicurean thought.

2) At the same time, I believe that almost any movie can be analyzed through an Epicurean lens, particularly if we operate under the assumption of psychological hedonism. After all, most characters are in pursuit of pleasure and avoiding pain, though they may differ in how effectively they navigate that pursuit. Examining this aspect of characters' motivations can provide insights into the challenges they face in seeking pleasure—whether it's through their choices, desires, or failures.

Many movies are 1) "good" vs "evil" - people trying to escape aliens, apocalypse, war, bad people, or death; or 2) people doing foolish/unethical things and having bad consequences or terrible unhappiness; or 3) people involved with supernatural/superstitious elements (fantasy genre) and which also contains elements of 1 and 2.

During the time I was married, I watched a lot of movies with my then husband (usually drama, independent, and foreign) and so perhaps I've had my fill (and I no longer have much of an urge to watch movies).

As Epicureans, if we lived in communities with other Epicureans, then we would not have time for movies - we would be busy doing "barn-raising" and helping each other out to be self-sufficient, and having potlucks dinners together.

I think movies are "sold" to the masses by the few who are the "movie-makers". And you really need to ask yourself: What kinds of messages are they conveying? What thoughts are they "telling" you to think? And are they ramping up your internal fears of death?

Also, most movie plots are the opposite of this:

VS72: "He who is at peace within himself also causes no trouble for others."

But this is just my opinion, and others here might feel differently.