

Epicurean Isonomy In The Context Of Statements By Balbus As To Gradations In Life In Book 2 of "On the Nature of the Gods"

Post by "Pacatus" of August 9, 2025 at 6:59 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I would presume that what this means is that abstractions such as "color" or "good" do not have an independent existence apart from the things that we are describing as colored or good. Nor do "happiness" or "pleasure" as concepts have any independent meaning apart from individual instances of real people experiencing real feelings.

On the other hand, words such as "color" and "good" are useful, and so everyone - including Epicurus - uses them.

I think that is about as good a summary argument against the actual existence of such universals as "redness" or "goodness" - while retaining their semantic usefulness - as one could expect. 👍👍👍

As one process philosopher that I once read put it: it is the error of assuming that for every "substantive" that we have in our language, there must be an actual "substance" (existent). Once you abandon Platonic idealism, such universals also fall away (Bertrand Russell notwithstanding).

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LATE EDIT: And, as you point out in another thread, those concepts can have meaning only in terms of contextualized actual individual experience.