

Comparing The Pleasure of A Great Physicist Making A Discovery To The Pleasure of A Lion Eating A Lamb

Post by “kochiekoch” of September 4, 2025 at 4:31 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

My take on the debate on the thread here is that pleasure is pleasure and the two are of equal value in the moment, but the scientist with his great discovery has the greatest pleasure over time.

As for me, the pleasure I get from a great poem is not at all the same as the pleasure I get from push-pin. I can certainly differentiate the two and prefer one to the other, so I would not agree with the underlined section if the question is how "I" value them to me. The two are not of equal value to me no matter how long the experience.

Right. That's why Bentham says to look at the issue without prejudice. You would certainly THINK poetry would be the better pleasure. Not so according to him if you're getting more pleasure from push-pin.

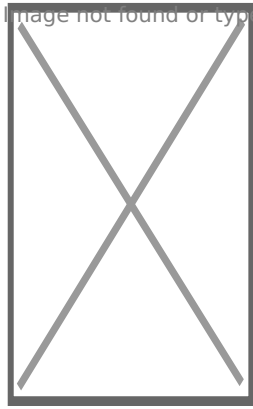
Of course, the pleasure of discovery and paleoeating might not be equivalent at the time. The scientist might have a migraine headache at the time. The lion might not be hungry, but picking up a small, easily captured snack for fun. As you point out it would be subjective.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I'd still like to find the Bentham citation directly to see what is being referenced.

Coming right up:

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[The Rationale of Reward](#)

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What this quote did was set off John Steward Mill and he came up with the misrepresented quote, attributed to Bentham, that push-pin was as pleasurable as poetry.

Of note, pins in the 18th century were fabulously expensive compared to now. A bunch of pins would cost a day's wage for a skilled workman. A single sewing needle would cost the same. All because they were hand made. Push-pin could be serious gambling! 😊