

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

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Comparing The Pleasure of A Great Physicist Making A Discovery To The Pleasure of A Lion Eating An Antelope.

I would like to start by addressing Tau Phi's assertion that "The pleasure of one cannot be evaluated as "greater" than the pleasure of another." I agree with this claim from a subjective perspective, because the lion is sustaining itself and having the pleasure of his bloody, fleshy meal, and is unaware of the profound joy that Albert Einstein experiences when discovering new scientific truths. Similarly, we, as humans, are unable to fathom the extraordinary pleasures that the gods, as Epicurus states, experience in their blissful existence.

From a third-party perspective—say, that of philosophers like Epicurus, Aristotle, or Plato and from our own experience—we could assert that Einstein's intellectual pleasure in making his groundbreaking discoveries represents a higher form of enjoyment compared to the more instinctual pleasure that a lion derives from devouring the antelope.

Personally, as someone who enjoys hearty meals like a thick porterhouse steak with potatoes and gravy, now and then, I can appreciate the immense satisfaction the lion finds in its bloody, fleashy feast. While all pleasures are inherently good, I believe that the higher pleasures of the mind—such as tranquility, intellectual fulfillment, and artistic creativity—hold greater value to me than bodily or material pleasures, which by the way, should not be dismissed as they are fundamental to our physical survival and mental, creative activities.

After enjoying my steak, I often take a walk on a lovely summer evening, allowing my meal to settle. However, just twenty minutes into my walk, my thoughts often drift to a painting I am working on; I find myself engaged in mentally exploring its technical challenges, such as perspective, tonal structure, artistic anatomy, etc., and its artistic application. This shift signifies a transition from a fleeting, material pleasure to a more enduring mental satisfaction. Again, I do not disavow the importance of our physical and material appetites, as many religious and philosophical systems have perpetrated historically on mankind. On the contrary, I enjoy them wholeheartedly when they arrive.

In my experience though, the enjoyment of physical pleasures tends to be short-lived, prompting me to seek out higher mental pleasures instead, such as reading history, philosophy, making music and art. At this very moment, as I write this post, I am immersed in the kind of intellectual engagement that Epicurus advocated nearly 2,300 years ago, a perspective echoed by other great thinkers throughout history.

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"The body receives as unlimited time the pleasure's limit; but the mind, grasping the reasons and causes of this pleasure and removing all fears and desires and superstitions, receives as unlimited time, both the pleasure's limit and the tranquility which comes from rational thought."

I quote here Kochiekoch: "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. He gets to enjoy the accolade's as his discovery is confirmed and also gets pleasure from contemplating his discovery. He can use it as well as a springboard for future discoveries and pleasures from that. All consistent with the Epicurean perspective of mental pleasures being superior because they can be enjoyed in the present, past and future."

I want to reaffirm my agreement with Tau Phi's statement: "The pleasure of one cannot be considered 'greater' than the pleasure of another." However, this statement is valid only from the subjective viewpoints of the Lion and Albert Einstein. From a third-party perspective, it is controversial, if not entirely an untenable assertion, particularly among those who appreciate the pleasures of intellectual, artistic thought, and creation, and who have reflected on their value. In that case, Albert Einstein's pleasure in his scientific discovery represents a longer-lasting mental pleasure, one that can produce further mental pleasures, as it did for Einstein throughout his life, till his death.

...Oh, and by the way...I am having sizzling, juicy pork chops with salad for dinner tonight! 😊