

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

Post by "Cassius" of September 7, 2025 at 2:22 PM

We had a very good followup discussion on this in today's zoom meeting.

Clearly people are coming at this from different angles, all of which are legitimate. The reaction of some, however, was "I thought this problem was settled," or to the effect that they did not understand why the question exists.

That was the intent of my followup to Raphael's post. In addition to the on-the-surface question of whether pleasures differ from one another, and in what contexts (if any) it is good Epicureanism to consider that some pleasures are different, better, or more valuable than others, I see a very practical application of this question being as follows:

Cicero, Plutarch, and many critics, including some "friends," say that Epicurean philosophy leads to the conclusion that the best life for everyone is the equivalent of "playing pushpins" - with pushpins being understood to mean any very simple, very unambitious, very safe, past-time. Is this a correct conclusion? If not, why not? {I trust it is clear that my own answer is a very firm "NO", but just in case lurkers read this in isolation I want the record to be clear.}

And while "Epicurus didn't do that" may be part of the answer, the full answer needs to be clear, concise, persuasive, and compelling, both philosophically and practically.

We'll return to this next Sunday and can continue in the meantime here on the forum.