

Sunday November 2, 2025 - Zoom Discussion 12:30 PM EST - Continuation of Discussion of Nature of Pleasure

Post by "Cassius" of October 28, 2025 at 4:46 PM

I am still processing most of DaveT's post but I have to first comment on this part, because it may indicate a part of the reason I am still working on trying to know exactly where you are going DaveT.

Because when you say this

[Quote from DaveT](#)

To paraphrase physicist Brian Greene's statement: he is content to know that he is composed of particles of matter formed by natural processes from star formation. Since matter can only be converted to energy and vice versa, his atoms exist forever. Can't be more Epicurean than that!

... I see an immediate warning flag. As far as "atoms existing forever" goes, both Democritus and Epicurus agreed on that, but you definitely CAN get "more Epicurean than that, because despite this common ground Epicurus diverged sharply from Democritus on skepticism and determinism and therefore presumably on many other ethical issues. I suspect that this observation plays into the problem we're confronting about terminology. I have no clue about any other aspects of Brian Greene's thinking or who he is, but I would not generally conclude say that anyone "can't be more Epicurean than that" simply because he thinks things are ultimately made of atoms and void. The role of pleasure and pain in the canonical test of "truth" still remains to be resolved.

And maybe the reason I point this out is that for all we know Brian Greene or any average atomist may be completely against the ethical conclusions that Epicurus reached. Epicurus factors in many additional canonical and physics-based conclusions that are not yet resolved simply by saying that everything is composed of atoms and void. So we have sort of a parallel here in terms of the need to be very clear in our definitions of pleasure, life, virtue, gods, etc.