

## PD 25 meaning? by Woolf (2004)

Post by “wbernys” of May 10, 2026 at 8:56 PM

### [Quote from Cassius](#)

Do you have a link to what you are referring to here? I would like to see the argument he is advocating.

Sure this comes from Cooper's 1999 book called *Reason and Emotion: Essays on Ancient Moral Psychology* and is in the chapter on Pleasure and Desire in Epicurus.

Unfortunately i was able to access it only as a student through my school's library and can't share it. But i'll share a relevant portion.

"This *Principal Doctrine* (25) is warning Epicureans to beware of drifting off in their day-by-day practical thinking into the snares of these other—rationalist— philosophers' ethical doctrines. Epicurus is insisting strongly that the whole range of ideas about nobility of action and about the supreme value of simply having a mind constituted in a certain way which produces actions in accord with itself, which lie at the center of this philosophical tradition in ethics, is totally at odds with the "empiricist" approach to human life for which Epicureanism stands. And of course, in insisting on this, he is presupposing that it is psychologically possible for a human being, even an educated and committed Epicurean, to act in pursuit of other goals than pleasure as the ultimate object of their action—goals other than any pleasure, goals other than pleasure according to any construal of the form or circumstance of pleasure that is the right one to take as one's ultimate guide in life. This shows that Epicurus cannot, consistently with this Doctrine, at any rate, have been a hedonist in the psychological theory of human decision and action" Pg. 491

Woolf directly responds to these in his article "What kind of Hedonist was Epicurus" (2004), you can get a Jstor (i think free with 100 article a month) account to read it.