

PD 25 meaning? by Woolf (2004)

Post by "Cassius" of May 11, 2026 at 9:32 AM

I see this and I can see where it supports where you are coming from wberny's. What I am not convinced of is that talking in terms of "psychology" is helpful to a philosophical discussion, as I see much potential damage in it for the reasons we are discussing. Is focusing on "psychological hedonism" not just a method of "apologizing for" hedonism?

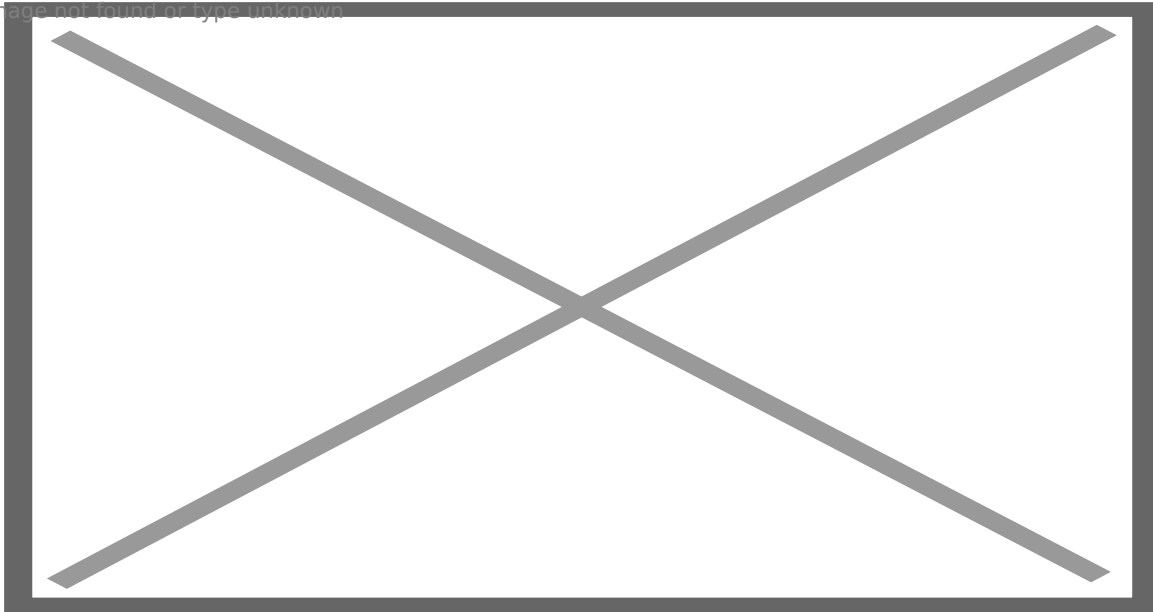
I would say that Epicurus is not advocating the pursuit of pleasure because we "have to" pursue pleasure, he is advocating for it because Nature prescribes it, we have the ability to ignore Nature's prescription, and we will live better if we follow Nature rather than substituting our own goals. Do you see that part differently?

Quote

psychological hedonism, in philosophical [psychology](#), the view that all human action is ultimately motivated by desires for [pleasure](#) and the avoidance of [pain](#). It has been espoused by a variety of distinguished thinkers, including [Epicurus](#), [Jeremy Bentham](#), and [John Stuart Mill](#), and important discussions of it can also be found in works by [Plato](#), [Aristotle](#), [Joseph Butler](#), [G.E. Moore](#), and [Henry Sidgwick](#).

Because its defenders generally assume that agents are motivated only by the prospect of their own pleasures and pains, psychological hedonism is a form of psychological [egoism](#). Psychological egoism is a broader notion, however, since one can hold that human actions are exclusively self-interested without insisting that self-interest always reduces to matters of pleasure and pain. As an [empirical](#) thesis about human [motivation](#), psychological [hedonism](#) is logically distinct from claims about the value of desires. It is thus distinct from axiological or normative hedonism, the view that only pleasure has [intrinsic value](#), and from [ethical](#) hedonism, the view that pleasure-producing actions are morally right.

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