

Welcome Max Duboff

Post by “wbernys” of July 1, 2026 at 9:56 PM

Hello [Max DuBoff](#), sorry for not saying hi earlier but happy to have you here! Your articles look great, by the way, just read them, and match my own thoughts. Do you know (or are allowed to share) if Emily Austin has any new works on Epicurus coming out? I really enjoyed her book and hoped she would do more!

From my own understanding on the whole tranquility vs pleasure issue, i personally take naming pleasure as the highest good as an example of intellectual bravery of Epicurus, in not using terms with empty meaning, or dancing around the actual reasons people pursue things, this is what Epicurus really hated.

The funniest example of this is how the other philosophies try to justify friendship, for us it's easy, because it brings us pleasure to have someone who cares about us and we can trust, but Seneca has to dance around this, saying it's for *"the purpose of practicing friendships, in order that his noble qualities may not lie dormant...he may have someone by whose sickbed he himself may sit or whom he may himself release when that person is held prisoner by hostile hands."* and Aristotle says true friendship is just a "respect between two people for their virtue". Which is rather laughably ad hoc and clearly trying to find a justification for friendship in their rather unhuman ethical frameworks.

I spoke with [Martin](#) about this sort of bravery, basically that Epicurus could have used any similar term like Tranquility or flourishing, but these terms are empty if they don't grasp at what we really want from these, Pleasure.

It is the pleasure we get from tranquility and flourishing that we want from it, same with friendship, not them by themselves. So it is pleasure we want, and is the ultimate goal, not just tranquility, although it is a great pleasure.

Similar with using "Virtue" or "Honor" as an empty term, if not connected with the pleasure they bring. It's meaningless if not connected with pleasure.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Did Emily Austin make a mistake in entitling her book "Living For Pleasure?" Should she have titled it "Living For Ataraxia/Tranquility"?

Of course not! Like i said intellectual bravery requires naming pleasure, not just tranquility by itself, as the true goal, and am happy Epicurus does so. But she goes on the first chapter to say "Epicurus considers that stable anxiety free state the ultimate pleasure, we'll call it tranquility, although Epicurus wrote in Greek, so he called it Ataraxia"

So pleasure is clearly the absolute goal, but mostly defined the absence of disturbance, which is itself a pleasure. I don't think ultimate pleasure, but certainly a pleasure worth pursuing, like all others if not outweighed by pain.