

# Nature and Pleasure and Pain

Post by “Joshua” of August 19, 2019 at 12:49 AM

I was being slightly tongue-in-cheek at the mention of 'duty' 😏

I'll be the first to admit that my reading of Stoic texts is somewhat dated. *Meditations* was actually the first philosophy book I ever read, some 12 or 13 years ago, and was the nearest thing to my 'handbook' as I transitioned from High School to College. I had a list of Benjamin Franklin's 12 virtues from his *Autobiography* tacked on to the corkboard in my dormitory. And when I went to Rome after Sophomore year I made a point of paying my respects to Marcus Aurelius on the Capitoline Hill, as well as visiting his Column.

There are things I'm happy to have "grown out of", as it were; and pessimism is one of them. It will be argued that Stoicism is not actually pessimistic; that it is not dour, but the shortest --if steepest--path to joy. Buddhists will say the same of their monks.

But if pleasure is the end, let us make pleasure the path. Not the straight and narrow way to the monastic mountaintop, difficult to trod--

Quote

where Stoics speak only to Cynics, and Cynics speak only to God--<sup>1</sup>

but the low and easy sun-dappled lane through fair country. *Do you doubt the way? Let Epicurus be your guide.*<sup>2</sup>

Welcome to the forum!

-josh

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<sup>1</sup>*Tongue once again firmly in cheek* 😏

<sup>2</sup>*Frances Wright, A Few Days in Athens*