

Against the stoics

Post by “Cassius” of October 4, 2019 at 6:50 AM

Excellent points Charles and Todd.

Todd, I was referring to a discussion we had on a Skype call, the one Charles is referring to, in which [JAWS](#) referred to "the area under the curve." We have not yet done a graphic but have that on the to do list.

Basically we were discussing the feasibility of illustrating the issue of how long we should want to live by a standard x-y graph, with "pleasure" on the vertical Y axis, and time on the X axis.

That would make "the area under the curve" representative of the sum of pleasures over a lifetime.

But for the reasons we have repeated here, it does not seem correct that Epicurus was suggesting that the "area under the curve" as a result of time should be our ONLY concern. And we have to consider "what exactly are we measuring on the Y axis?" Is it "intensity" of pleasure, or how do we measure pleasure?

Epicurus also says in the letter to Menoeceus that "life is desirable" so it would seem that it is true that it is in fact desirable to live as long as possible, so long as pleasure dominates over pain, while at the same time it is not "necessary" to live forever in order to be satisfied with life.

I think both of these considerations are true, and as we explore and think about Epicurean philosophy it would be great to work on articulating this with more precision, because most of us are trapped in sort of a religious perspective that if we are not immortal singing songs in heaven we are somehow miserable.