

Loving Life? Or Loving Anesthesia?

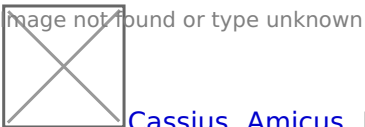
Post by "Cassius" of June 1, 2015 at 9:47 AM

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One of our friends shared this graphic with the comment "What else can one wish for.....love life!♥" I agree that this is an excellent picture of pleasure - ordinary, understandable, non-platonic pleasure. But the majority of the Epicurean authorities out there would have you believe that this picture has very little, if anything, to do with Epicurean pleasure. They would have you believe that anything more than bread and water is "unnecessary" and that if you work to save money for a vacation to a place like this, you are unnecessarily disturbing your tranquility because you can be just as happy - in fact MORE happy, by cultivating "katastematic" pleasure - a big word that they rarely take the trouble to explain to you - and when they try it is little more than gibberish. I suggest that stoics should stay in their caves, and that open-minded people should question the stoic-ascetic commentators. Students of Epicurus should ignore the ascetic sniping and look to the same standard of pleasure and the good life to which Epicurus referred ""For I at least do not even know what I should conceive the good to be, if I eliminate the pleasures of taste, and eliminate the pleasures of sex, and eliminate the pleasures of listening, and eliminate the pleasant motions caused in our vision by a visible form."



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- [Cassius Amicus](#) I really need to collect examples of statements like this:

"Epicurus conceived of pleasure in two ways. "Kinetic" pleasure is that pleasure felt while performing an activity, such as eating or drinking. "Katastematic" pleasure is that pleasure felt while being in a state. This is the pleasure of not being disturbed, of being free from pain. Both types of pleasure occur in the body and the soul. The absence of pain (katastematic pleasure) in the soul (ataraxia), though, is the highest good for Epicurus." The clear implication of this statement is that the goal of life is "absence of pain" rather than "pleasures of taste, and eliminate the pleasures of sex, and eliminate the pleasures of listening, and eliminate the pleasant motions caused in our vision by a visible form." So this - and many other - commentators, would have us believe that Epicurus recognized the good by sensing active pleasures, but then defined the "highest good" as something else entirely - the *negation* of sensation. Hogwash.

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