

Episode 203 - Cicero's On Ends - Book Two - Part 11 - Do The Senses Have Jurisdiction To Pronounce On The Supreme Good?

Post by "Cassius" of November 26, 2023 at 6:58 AM

Welcome to Episode 203 of Lucretius Today. This is a podcast dedicated to the poet Lucretius, who wrote "On The Nature of Things," the only complete presentation of Epicurean philosophy left to us from the ancient world. Each week we walk you through the Epicurean texts, and we discuss how Epicurean philosophy can apply to you today. If you find the Epicurean worldview attractive, we invite you to join us in the study of Epicurus at EpicureanFriends.com, where you will find a discussion thread for each of our podcast episodes and many other topics.

This week we continue our discussion of Book Two of Cicero's On Ends, which are largely devoted Cicero's attack on Epicurean Philosophy. "On Ends" contains important criticisms of Epicurus that have set the tone for standard analysis of his philosophy for the last 2000 years. Going through this book gives us the opportunity to review those attacks, take them apart, and respond to them as an ancient Epicurean might have done, and much more fully than Cicero allowed Torquatus, his Epicurean spokesman, to do.

Follow along with us here: [Cicero's On Ends - Complete Reid Edition](#). Check any typos or other questions against the original PDF which can be found [here](#).

This week we work through Section XII, starting roughly here:

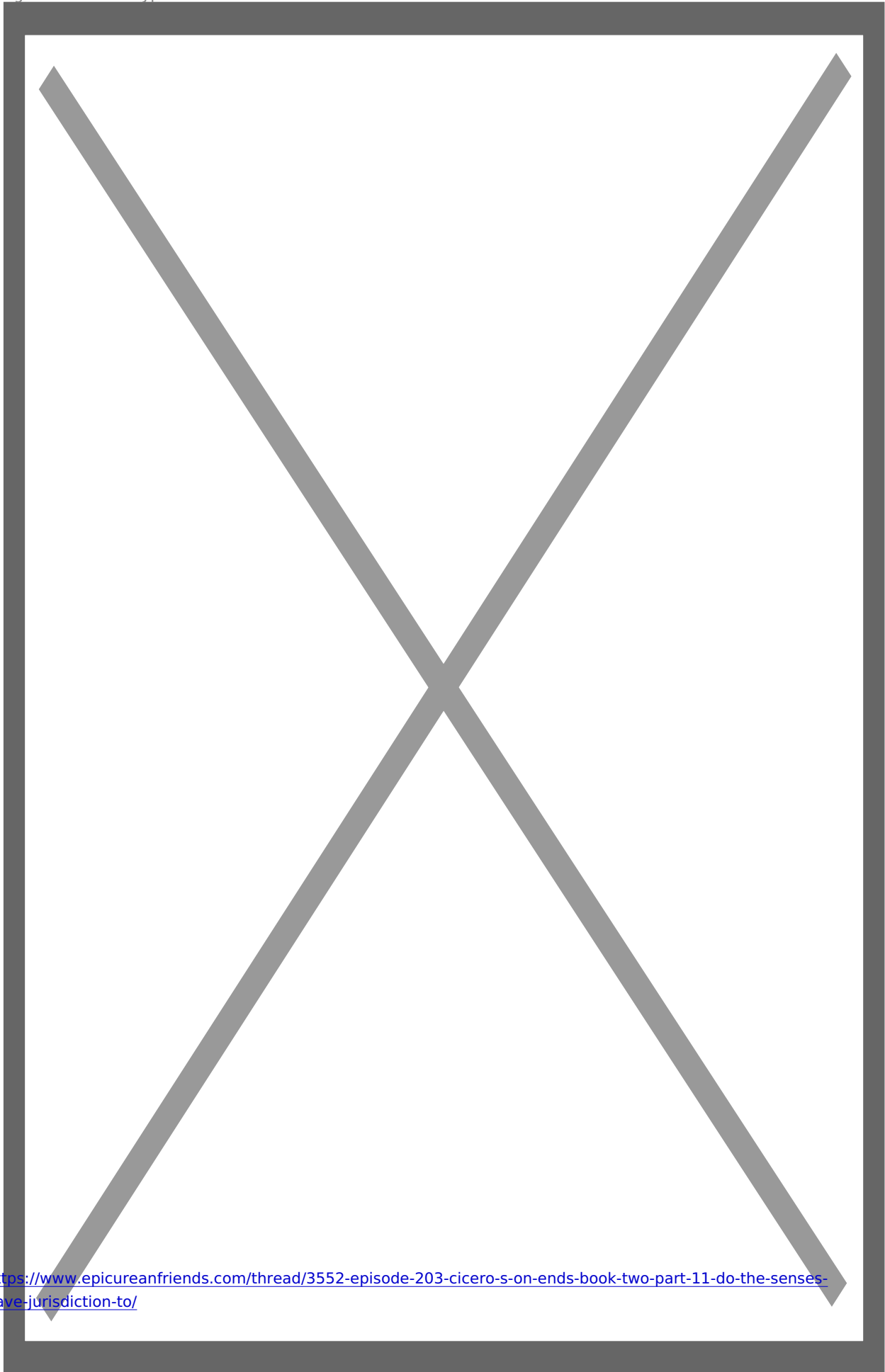
XII ... Now as to his statement that pleasure is decided by the senses themselves to be good, and pain to be evil, he allows more authority to the senses than our laws grant to us when we act as judges in private suits. For we are unable to decide anything, except that which falls within our jurisdiction. In this matter judges often uselessly add, in giving their decision, the words if a thing falls within my jurisdiction; since if the affair was not within their jurisdiction, the decision is none the more valid for the omission of the words. On what do the senses decide? On sweet and bitter, smooth and rough, nearness and distance, rest and motion, the rectangular form and the circular. Reason then will declare an unbiased opinion, aided first by the knowledge of all things human and divine, which may justly be called wisdom, then by the association of the virtues, which reason has appointed to be rulers over all things, you to be the attendants and handmaidens of the pleasures; truly then the opinion of all these will in the first place declare concerning pleasure that there is no chance for her, I will not say to occupy alone the throne of the supreme good, but none even for her to occupy it with morality in the way described. As to freedom from pain their opinion will be the same.

Post by “Cassius” of November 26, 2023 at 3:40 PM

In this episode we address Cicero's objection that the senses do not have the "jurisdiction" to pass on what is the supreme good, and that reason requires that virtue be identified with the supreme good, perhaps by itself and perhaps combined with "thought and action," which are identified by Cicero's preferred philosophers as the primary natural endowments of man.

Related to this issue is the entire question of the legitimacy of looking at Nature to answer the question of what is the supreme good, and one thing we mention in the Episode is Hume's "is - ought" criticism of certain moral arguments. We don't get into that particularly far, but here is a reference.

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<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/3552-episode-203-cicero-s-on-ends-book-two-part-11-do-the-senses-have-jurisdiction-to/>

Post by “Cassius” of November 27, 2023 at 7:32 AM

I've only just started working with this podcast, but I want to point out an issue that comes up very near the beginning that we did not go into very far:

Cicero says the following near the beginning of Section XII. I am underlining the part I want to highlight:

Quote from Cicero On Ends Book 2 - Cicero Addressing Torquatus

XII. Now as to his statement that pleasure is decided by the senses themselves to be good, and pain to be evil, he allows more authority to the senses than our laws grant to us when we act as judges in private suits. For we are unable to decide anything, except that which falls within our jurisdiction. In this matter judges often uselessly add, in giving their decision, the words if a thing falls within my jurisdiction; since if the affair was not within their jurisdiction, the decision is none the more valid for the omission of the words. On what do the senses decide? On sweet and bitter, smooth and rough, nearness and distance, rest and motion, the rectangular form and the circular. Reason then will declare an unbiased opinion, aided first by the knowledge of all things human and divine, which may justly be called wisdom, then by the association of the virtues, which reason has appointed to be rulers over all things, you to be the attendants and handmaidens of the pleasures; truly then the opinion of all these will in the first place declare concerning pleasure that there is no chance for her, I will not say to occupy alone the throne of the supreme good, but none even for her to occupy it with morality in the way described. As to freedom from pain their opinion will be the same.

This would apparently be in partial response to what Torquatus has said previously:

[Quote from Cicero On Ends Book 1 - Torquatus Addressing Cicero](#)

[30] Every creature, as soon as it is born, seeks after pleasure and delights therein as in its supreme good, while it recoils from pain as its supreme evil, and banishes that, so far as it can, from its own presence, and this it does while still uncorrupted, and while nature herself prompts unbiased and unaffected decisions. So he says we need no reasoning or debate to shew why pleasure is matter for desire, pain for aversion. These

facts he thinks are simply perceived, just as the fact that fire is hot, snow is white, and honey sweet, no one of which facts are we bound to support by elaborate arguments; it is enough merely to draw attention to the fact; and there is a difference between proof and formal argument on the one hand and a slight hint and direction of the attention on the other; the one process reveals to us mysteries and things under a veil, so to speak; the other enables us to pronounce upon patent and evident facts. Moreover, seeing that if you deprive a man of his senses there is nothing left to him, it is inevitable that nature herself should be the arbiter of what is in accord with or opposed to nature. Now what facts does she grasp or with what facts is her decision to seek or avoid any particular thing concerned, unless the facts of pleasure and pain?

[31] There are however some of our own school, who want to state these principles with greater refinement, and who say that it is not enough to leave the question of good or evil to the decision of sense, but that thought and reasoning also enable us to understand both that pleasure in itself is matter for desire and that pain is in itself matter for aversion. So they say that there lies in our minds a kind of natural and inbred conception leading us to feel that the one thing is good for us to seek, the other to reject.

The issue I am raising is that of terminology as to the three legs of the Epicurean canon: When Epicurus refers to "the senses" is he referring only to the five (seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling), or does "the senses" also include "the feeling of pleasure and pain" and "the prolepsis" as well?

Torquatus has said that pleasure and pain are "perceived" (Reid's word) directly, but does he mean that seeing and hearing and the rest tell us directly that something is pleasurable or painful, or is that a feeling that is added on by the separate faculty of pleasure and pain?

This becomes important in addressing Cicero's objection that the senses "do not have jurisdiction" to pass on what is the ultimate good.

Where does the "jurisdiction" really lie in Epicurean terms?

Are pleasure and pain perceived directly by seeing / hearing / touching / tasting / smelling?

Or do those senses report truly whatever it is that they report, and then a separate faculty (the feeling of pleasure and pain) passes "judgment" or "feeling" on whether it is painful or pleasurable?

If I recall Dewitt argues that "the five senses" and "the feeling of pleasure and pain are independent faculties but operate concurrently.

Anyone have a different take on that?

Does care need to be taken to state that pleasure and pain need to be "felt" (or some other word) rather than "sensed"?

This also bears on the topic we examine throughout the podcast as we look at whether "reason" is the ultimate arbiter of the supreme good, or whether we simply look to what is present in nature as the arbiter (and that nature gives us only the feeling of pleasure and pain as arbiter) of the supreme good.

Post by “Don” of November 27, 2023 at 8:17 AM

The "feelings" of pleasure and pain are πάθη (pathē).

The "senses", perceptions, sense-perceptions, sensations (including mental perceptions) are αἴσθησις (aisthēsis).

Two different words, two different connotations.

We can't decide whether something is pleasurable or painful. It's immediate, pre-rational.

αἴσθησις is also the word used in PD2. It also can refer to "consciousness" in general.

Post by “Cassius” of November 27, 2023 at 8:29 AM

So then it would be useful to look at the Latin employed by Cicero writing for Torquatus and Cicero writing for himself to see if this distinction is preserved.

Post by “Cassius” of November 27, 2023 at 8:38 AM

And joining the issue of Hume's "is - ought" question to this distinction, it seems to be that we have Epicurus saying that Nature has given us one faculty (feeling / pathe) by which to determine what to choose and what to avoid, and there is no question but that what "is" given (feeling /pathe) clearly "ought" to be followed.

And the question is not "whether" to follow it, but "how" to follow it successfully.

It sounds to me like Epicurus would not be very impressed with Hume's supposed problem, or at the very least he would say it has a very direct answer. The issue is not whether to comply with our natural faculties, but how to assess theories that there are considerations that trump our natural faculties (thereby elevating "Nature" over "logic" and "supernatural religion")

Other views on that?

Post by “Eoghan Gardiner” of November 27, 2023 at 9:30 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

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very useful thank you

Post by “TauPhi” of November 27, 2023 at 11:36 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

We can't decide whether something is pleasurable or painful. It's immediate, pre-rational.

Am I missing something here? If this would be the case, we could throw Epicurean calculus out of a window, forget about any form of philosophy and jump from the nearest, highest building because flying sounds like something cool to do this Monday evening.

Post by “Don” of November 27, 2023 at 12:35 PM

[Quote from TauPhi](#)

[Quote from Don](#)

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Good point. I should clarify my point.

My understanding is that we can experience pleasure or pain, per Epicurus and modern neuroscience (pleasure vs displeasure/pain). The feeling itself is automatic. You experience one of the two. That's why you pull your hand away from a hot stove. That's why you make yummy noises when you eat something you enjoy.

That said, we can *choose* whether or not to engage in an experience - to fulfill a desire - be it one we anticipate pleasure or one we anticipate will be painful that leads to pleasure.

But the feeling *itself* is pleasurable or painful before we put a rational value on it.

Post by “Cassius” of November 27, 2023 at 1:54 PM

Yes ---- The identification of the supreme good is not the same issue as knowing how to pursue and achieve it, and that is why Epicurus puts such a high premium on the practical value of reason and prudence. They don't identify the good for us, Nature does that, but they can tell us how to pursue it. Not even animals (at least the intelligent ones) blindly pursue all immediate pleasure and avoid all immediate pain. Being "blinded by desire" in Torquatus' words is a good turn of phrase. We use the senses to achieve pleasure and avoid pain, but it's the separate faculty of feeling that tells us what is painful or pleasing. The intelligence requires reason and judgment, the feelings don't involve reason or judgment and they are (like the senses) never "wrong" or "right."

Quote from Letter to Menoeceus

[129] And for this cause we call pleasure the beginning and end of the blessed life. For we recognize pleasure as the first good innate in us, and from pleasure we begin every act of choice and avoidance, and to pleasure we return again, using the feeling as the standard by which we judge every good. And since pleasure is the first good and natural to us, for this very reason we do not choose every pleasure, but sometimes we pass over many pleasures, when greater discomfort accrues to us as the result of them: and similarly we think many pains better than pleasures, since a greater pleasure comes to us when we have endured pains for a long time. Every pleasure then because of its natural kinship to us is good, yet not every pleasure is to be chosen: even as every pain also is an evil, yet not all are always of a nature to be avoided. [130] Yet by a scale of comparison and by the consideration of advantages and disadvantages we must form our judgment on all these matters. For the good on certain occasions we treat as bad, and conversely the bad as good.

Quote from Cicero / Torquatus On Ends Book One

[32] X. ... Surely no one recoils from or dislikes or avoids pleasure in itself because it is pleasure, but because great pains come upon those who do not know how to follow pleasure rationally. Nor again is there any one who loves or pursues or wishes to win pain on its own account, merely because it is pain, but rather because circumstances sometimes occur which compel him to seek some great pleasure at the cost of exertion and pain. To come down to petty details, who among us ever undertakes any toilsome bodily exercise, except in the hope of gaining some advantage from it? Who again would have any right to reproach either a man who desires to be surrounded by pleasure unaccompanied by any annoyance, or another man who shrinks from any pain which is not productive of pleasure? [33] But in truth we do blame and deem most deserving of righteous hatred the men who, enervated and depraved by the fascination of momentary pleasures, do not foresee the pains and troubles which are sure to befall them, because they are blinded by desire, and in the same error are involved those who prove traitors to their duties through effeminacy of spirit, I mean because they shun exertions and trouble. Now it is easy and simple to mark the difference between these cases. For at our seasons of ease, when we have untrammelled freedom of choice, and when nothing debars us from the power of following the course that pleases us best, then pleasure is wholly a matter for our selection and pain for our rejection. On certain occasions however either through the inevitable call of duty or through stress of circumstances, it will often come to pass that we must put pleasures from us and must make no protest against annoyance. So in such cases the principle of selection adopted by the wise man is that he should either by refusing certain pleasures attain to other and greater pleasures or by enduring pains should ward off pains still more severe.

Post by “Cassius” of November 27, 2023 at 1:58 PM

[TauPhi](#) that is a good question and a good example of the benefit of going through "On Ends" to bring out these issues in articulating central ideas.

Post by “Joshua” of November 27, 2023 at 2:42 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

And joining the issue of Hume's "is - ought" question to this distinction, it seems to be that we have Epicurus saying that Nature has given us one faculty (feeling / pathe) by which to determine what to choose and what to avoid, and there is no question but that what "is" given (feeling /pathe) clearly "ought" to be followed.

And the question is not "whether" to follow it, but "how" to follow it successfully.

It sounds to me like Epicurus would not be very impressed with Hume's supposed problem, or at the very least he would say it has a very direct answer. The issue is not whether to comply with our natural faculties, but how to assess theories that there are considerations that trump our natural faculties (thereby elevating "Nature" over "logic" and "supernatural religion")

Other views on that?

"we have Epicurus saying that Nature has given us one faculty (feeling / pathe) by which to determine what to choose and what to avoid,"

But this is Epicurus' implicit ought, not a description of how things are.

What Hume is actually asking is how do get from something like this;

"Some things cause pain."

To this;

"We ought to avoid things that cause pain."

Why should we avoid things that cause pain? You might say, because Nature has given us pain a guide. Okay, why should we follow Nature? Because that is the surest road to the life of happiness. Okay, why should we pursue happiness? Because the happy life is the best of all possible lives. Okay, why do we want to live the best life? Because it's the most pleasant life. Why do we want the most pleasant life? Because it's the best life. Why--

--because I said so!

The problem is unsolvable in Hume's terms, not just for Epicurus but for everyone. There's nothing wrong with that--I actually think we're better off without absolute oughts, which is the same thing as saying that we're better off without absolute morality. If God commands you to sacrifice your firstborn, even allowing a God there is no absolute morality to say that you should follow his whims.

This is why *Euthyphro* is my favorite Socratic dialogue. Even assuming the existence of a God, we are still left with only *rational* oughts. If I was Epicurus' lawyer I would tell him to take that deal. Take the deal that leaves you and everyone else, even God himself if he was real, on the same footing. *If I want to live a blessed life, then I should live a life of pleasure, and for all the reasons Epicurus states. But I accept this knowing that it was my choice--and that if even the gods were real, they would choose it for themselves.*

Post by “Bryan” of November 27, 2023 at 2:48 PM

Great quote!

Quote from Cicero On Ends Book 1 - Torquatus Addressing Cicero

...it is enough merely to draw attention to the fact; and there is a difference between proof and formal argument on the one hand and **a slight hint and direction of the attention** on the other; the one process reveals to us mysteries and things under a veil, so to speak; the other enables us to pronounce upon patent and evident facts.

Our senses are honest witnesses, but honest witnesses are not always accurate and each one does not have the full story. We have to judge between their testimonies to find the truth and the best way to live given our circumstances.

The senses (sensations of the external world from outside our body) , the feelings (sensations of our body), anticipations (sensations of the external world from inside our body) -- any and all sensations - are honest witness and the basis of our "criteria of truth."

Then we have to apply our attention ἡ ἐπιβολή to them and use our reasoning, ὁ λογισμὸς, to make a choice or form a concept, ἡ νόησις.

Post by “Eoghan Gardiner” of November 27, 2023 at 2:49 PM

"Is pious pious 'cause God loves pious? Socrates asked whose bias do y'all seek."

I have heard too many brain numbing attempts using the doctrine of divine simplicity to answer this issue.

Post by “Cassius” of November 27, 2023 at 4:59 PM

[Quote from Joshua](#)

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[Quote from Joshua](#)

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oughts, which is the same thing as saying that we're better off without absolute morality. If God commands you to sacrifice your firstborn, even allowing a God there is no absolute morality to say that you should follow his whims.

I think this is where I am personally happy to part ways with Hume, but before I travel down that road, the first question I always try to ask is "What did Epicurus think?" Not because I am automatically going to defer to Epicurus, but I am always extremely curious to know his position before I decide whether I am agreeing with it or not. I "think" that I can predict that Epicurus would part company with Hume, but I would be happy to entertain any suggestions that he would not.

But back to the personal part:

I personally am willing to go with an authority on something, like I go with a brain surgeon when I need brain surgery, IF I can first check out the thing in which I am placing my confidence and if I decide that it is worthy of confidence. In the case of "Nature" as a guide I tend to see Hume's infinite regression of "why's" as akin to Democritus' apparent infinite regression to "nothing truly exists except matter and void" and to me that way lies nihilism and despair and the abyss. [Thanks to the Sedley article which describes it better than I can] it appears to me that Epicurus rejected Democritus' radical atomic reductionism, and I am thinking he would reject Hume's reductionism for analogous reasons. At some point you have to make a practical decision to "live," and that point is where we "trust the senses," which amounts to "trusting what Nature gave to us" for survival.

Quote from David Sedley, Epicurus' Refutation of Determinism, p 33

In confirmation of this, we can return to the close and apparently conscious parallelism between Epicurus' treatments of determinism and scepticism. The sceptics refuted in Lucretius IV must be, or prominently include, those fourth-century Detilocriteans like Metrodorus of Chios, Anaxarchus, and even Epicurus' own reviled teacher Nausiphanes, who had played up the sceptical side of Democritus' thought, and against whom Epicurus was eager to marshal the positive empiricist arguments which Democritus had also bequeathed.³⁹ This scepticism was the result of what I shall call reductionist atomism. Because phenomenal objects and properties seemed to reduce to mere configurations of atoms and void, Democritus was inclined to suppose that the atoms and void were real while the phenomenal objects and properties were no more than arbitrary constructions placed upon them by human cognitive organs. In his more extreme moods Democritus was even inclined to doubt the power of human judgment, since judgment was itself no more than a realignment of atoms in the mind XXX.

Epicurus' response to this is perhaps the least appreciated aspect of his thought. It was to reject reductionist atomism. Almost uniquely among Greek philosophers he arrived at what is nowadays the unreflective assumption of almost anyone with a smattering of science, that there are truths at the microscopic level of elementary particles, and further very different truths at the phenomenal level; that the former must be capable of explaining the latter; but that neither level of description has a monopoly of truth. (The truth that sugar is sweet is not straightforwardly reducible to the truth that it has such and such a molecular structure, even though the latter truth may be required in order to explain the former). By establishing that cognitive scepticism, the direct outcome of reductionist atomism, is self-refuting and untenable in practice, Epicurus justifies his non-reductionist alternative, according to which sensations are true and there are therefore bona fide truths at the phenomenal level accessible through them. The same will apply to the XXX, which Epicurus also held to be veridical. Pleasure, for example, is a direct datum of experience. It is commonly assumed that Epicurus must have equated pleasure with such and such a kind of movement of soul atoms; but although he will have taken it to have some explanation at the atomic level, I know of no evidence that he, any more than most moral philosophers or psychologists, would have held that an adequate analysis of it could be found at that level. Physics are strikingly absent from Epicurus' ethical writings, and it is curious that interpreters are so much readier to import them there than they are when it comes to the moral philosophy of Plato or Aristotle.

(I haven't gone back and got those pesky Greek letters in my computer yet, thus the "XXX's" 😊)

Post by “Joshua” of November 27, 2023 at 6:42 PM

Quote

At some point you have to make a practical decision to "live," and that point is where we "trust the senses," which amounts to "trusting what Nature gave to us" for survival.

Yes, but this to me is tantamount to living with rational rather than absolute oughts.

My answer is very similar to yours; if I started every morning waking up to Hume's Guillotine, the problem of determinism, the claims made of simulation or the brain-in-a-vat thought experiment, Pascal's Wager, Last Tuesday-ism, Calvinist double-predestination, or idealism of any other stripe, I'd never get out of bed.

So, like Thomas Jefferson, I shove all that crap in a corner and

"recur ultimately to my habitual anodyne, "I feel: therefore I exist." I feel bodies which are not myself: there are other existencies then. I call them "matter". I feel them changing place. This gives me "motion". Where there is an absence of matter, I call it "void", or "nothing", or "immaterial space". On the basis of sensation, of matter and motion, we may erect the fabric of all the certainties we can have or need."

Post by “Cassius” of November 28, 2023 at 11:47 AM

[Quote from Joshua](#)

The problem is unsolvable in Hume's terms, not just for Epicurus but for everyone

Also on the same point here's something else I'd like to come back to in the future. I don't know to what extent Bentham agreed with Hume on this issue, and of course my next question would be how (if at all) Frances Wright dealt with it in "A Few Days In Athens." I suspect I don't have enough time in this lifetime to launch off into study of Bentham and Hume and Mill on this issue, but it would make a good project to look into how far the Utilitarians got into this question and how they related it to their interest in Epicurus. I can think of aspects of "A Few Days In Athens" that seem to be touching on it, but I don't recall anything that jumps out at me as how she dealt with it (or communicated that it didn't need to be dealt with.

I've included this from Chapter 15 as an example, but it's not determinative. Chapter 15 is really deep and deserves a lot of consideration on its own:

Quote

Until we occupy ourselves in examining, observing, and ascertaining, and not in explaining, we are idly and childishly employed. — With every truth we may discover we shall mix a thousand errors; and, for one matter of fact, we shall charge our brain with a thousand fancies. To this leading misconception of the real, and only possible object of philosophical inquiry, I incline to attribute all the modes and forms of human superstition. The vague idea that some mysterious cause not merely precedes but produces the effect we behold, occasions us to wander from the real object in search of an imaginary one. We see the sun rise in the east: instead of confining our curiosity to the discovery of the time and manner of its rising, and of its course in the heavens, we ask also — why does it rise? What makes it move? The more ignorant immediately conceive some Being spurring it through the heavens, with fiery steeds, on wheels of

gold, while the more learned tell us of laws of motion, decreed by an almighty fiat, and sustained by an almighty will. Imagine the truth of both suppositions: in the one case, we should see the application of what we call physical power in the driver and the steeds followed by the motion of the sun, and in the other, an almighty volition followed by the motion of the sun. But, in either case, should we understand why the sun moved? — why or how its motion followed what we call the impulse of the propelling power, or the propelling volition? All that we could then know, more than we now know, would be, that the occurrence of the motion of the sun was preceded by another occurrence; and if we afterwards frequently observed the same sequence of occurrences, they would become associated in our mind as necessary precedent and consequent — as cause and effect: and we might give to them the appellation of law of nature, or any other appellation; but they would still constitute merely a truth — that is a fact, and envelope no other mystery, than that involved in every occurrence and every existence.”

Post by “Cassius” of December 1, 2023 at 5:26 PM

Marking another point we will want to discuss after Episode 203 is released:

Joshua does an excellent job of relating the Lucretian observation that eyes were not made for seeing (etc) to how this same reasoning would apply to refute what Cicero attributes to Aristotle -- that men were made for thought and action.

I didn't follow up Joshua's observations there firmly enough, and moved the discussion over to an "is-ought" issue -- but I just want to note that many times you see this section of Lucretius cited for its impact on or relationship to later evolutionary thought in biology, but you don't often see it applied to refuting the standard Platonic/Aristotelian position that we can derive that man is the "rational animal," or that men are made for "thought and action," from the supposition that things things were made for men by a designing / creating god.

Just wanted to mark this down for later discussion as it is an excellent point.

Post by “TauPhi” of December 1, 2023 at 6:01 PM

This reminds me of a speech delivered by one of my favourite writers (and philosophers) - Douglas Adams. He explains perfectly why humans tend to think that everything was created for us and everything revolves around our a**es. In my opinion, Adams does even better job than Lucretius.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ckR7TqptGHY>

Post by “Cassius” of December 2, 2023 at 6:20 AM

Episode 203 of the Lucretius Today Podcast is Now Available! After all the pre-release discussion and buildup I hope our audience will not be disappointed! At least I can say this: if it lacks anything in quality, it makes it up in length! 😊 There's a lot to think about in this episode that we may come back to in our next podcast, including:

1 - When Cicero says that Epicurus looks to "the senses" for his proof that pleasure is the good, is he stating Epicurus correctly? Did Epicurus in fact look to "the senses" or to the *separate* "faculty of feeling pleasure and pain?"

2 - In this episode I thought we generally did a reasonable job in remembering to include the prolepsis and the feeling of pleasure and pain when we discussed what tools Epicurus used to "look to" or "observe" Nature in coming to his conclusions. However I think we may need to hit that point even harder. When we look to "reality" for our standards, Epicurus seems to be including prolepsis and the feelings of pleasure and pain as just as real as the things we see or hear or touch, and that's a point that really deserves to be highlighted when we contrast the method of Epicurus against the method of Cicero (and the other philosophers of the world).

<https://www.spreaker.com/episode/57884944>