

Discussion of the Article - Too Long UnPraised And UnAppreciated - Aulus Gellius And The Clearest Ancient Testimony That Absence of Pain Equals Pleasure

Post by "Cassius" of July 20, 2026 at 9:49 AM

This thread is for discussion of the article:



<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/5190-discussion-of-the-article-too-long-unpraised-and-unappreciated-aulus-gellius-and/>

Blog Article

Too Long Unpraised And Unappreciated - Aulus Gellius And The Clearest Ancient Testimony That Absence of Pain Means Nothing More Than Pleasure

[...]

Centuries of commentators have treated this and similar statements as an invitation to make something other than pleasure the real goal of Epicurean philosophy -- a neutral resting state, a merely negative condition, a "tranquility" or "static pleasure" standing above and apart from pleasure as ordinarily understood. The clearest evidence against that reading does not come from an Epicurean apologist. It comes from a Roman grammarian with no stake whatsoever in Epicurean ethics, writing...



Cassius

July 20, 2026 at 9:47 AM

Post by "Charles" of July 20, 2026 at 2:09 PM

I admire the clarity of purpose as of late in combatting this idea. It's been some time since I've engaged with Stoic and Christian communities online but this was always the primary charge they levied on Epicurus, which in their mind was humoring him. There's definitely a linguistic chain of events here which is causing the misunderstanding. Most translations and the brevity of the PD's highlight the removal of pain which incentivizes the reader to assume the emphasis is on "removing bad to achieve good" so to speak.

Total pleasure requires absolute and constant pleasure to the degree pain is not possible.

Post by "Cassius" of July 20, 2026 at 3:02 PM

Good to hear from you Charles.

If we can't be clear in Epicurean philosophy about the centrality of pleasure, we don't need to be talking about Epicurean philosophy at all.

Might as well also forget the positions on gods and death - which not coincidentally is exactly what a lot of the videos in my "[World's Worst Epicurus Videos](#)" thread are doing.