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*Psychological Hedonism Refuted by Philosophy and Neuroscience,
Working Together*

Abstract:

Psychological hedonism is the thesis that pleasure, or the avoidance of pain, is ultimately the only end sought by anyone, everything else being sought just as a means to these ends. Philosophers have both embraced it and rejected it since ancient times, and psychologists have been similarly ambivalent for as long as psychology has been a distinct discipline. Recently Kent Berridge has made new arguments against psychological hedonism, drawing on his work distinguishing "wanting" and "liking" systems in the brain. I argue that Berridge's arguments are not successful on their own, but that successful arguments can be made drawing upon the neuroscience that he and others have engaged in, along with some philosophical principles.