



University of Haifa
אוניברסיטת חיפה



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Technion
טכניון

Max-Wertheimer Minerva Center for Cognitive Processes and Human Performance

אנו שמחים לארח את

Professor Michael Kubovy
University of Virginia, Department of Psychology

Prolegomena to a Theory of Pleasure

When philosophers write about pleasure, they often understand it to include "all pleasant feeling or experience, such as elation, ecstasy, delight, joy, and enjoyment," and pain to include "all unpleasant feeling or experience: aches, throbs, irritations, anxiety, anguish, chagrin, discomfort, despair, grief, depression, guilt and remorse." They believe that what gives us pleasure are momentary states which we seek, and what gives us pain are momentary states which we avoid. They often argue against motivational hedonism - that humans maximize the balance of pleasure over pain thus construed - because it cannot accommodate acts of self-sacrifice and many other phenomena of human behavior.

Let us call the kind of pleasure just mentioned pleasantness. I propose to focus on a different concept of pleasure, which I call pleurability (and its opposite, painfulness). This involves postulating that a human life is a fabric of episodes, whose pleurability we judge just as ineluctably as we experience the pleasantness of a moment. When we judge the pleurability of an episode, its unfolding in real time is less important than the sequence of emotions it afforded. For an episode to be pleurable, it need not (and probably cannot) consist only of pleasant moments. I will illustrate these ideas by describing a research project - now just underway - on the pleurability of a basketball game. I will also argue that the value of episodes is not only determined by their pleurability, but also by their depth. I will conclude my talk by re-examining hedonism and argue that this framework that could serve as a foundation on which to build a theory of decision making as well as a theory of well-being.

ההרצאה תתקיים ביום ד' ה 8 ליוני 2005 בשעה 10:30
בחדר סמינרים במעמק"ה, אוניברסיטת חיפה.
נשמח לראותכם בין אורחנו.

המעוניינים באישור כניסה לאוניברסיטה יתקשרו לאתרי 8249430