

# Questions Re PD 26 - PD30 From the 10/5/22 Zoom

Post by "Cassius" of October 6, 2022 at 8:30 AM

Several related questions came up last night which would be very good for discussion. If I am missing one in this list below, someone please add it:

1. [PD26](#) and [PD30](#) are almost identical. Why are they so similar and is there a significant difference between them?
2. [PD30](#) is pretty hard to follow whether in isolation or in context. Taken alone it could easily be used by Stoic sympathizers to say that Epicurus was basically preaching not to pursue any desire (even natural desires!) which takes significant effort, regardless of the amount of pleasure thereby obtained. Probably the first and most important observation is that no single statement should be taken out of context, and there are many other texts that would not lead in that direction, including Epicurus himself saying in the letter to Menoecus that we sometimes choose pain in order to pursue greater pleasure. But mainly using the text of [PD30](#) itself, what's the best translation and way to untangle it consist with the whole?
3. Also as to [PD30](#), some translators say "natural" desires while others say "physical" desires? Why this ambiguity in the translators? Which is correct? Of the translators, which ones make the most sense and seem most consistent with the rest of the philosophy?
4. PDs 26, 29, and 30 are tightly focused on the issue of proper analysis and dealing with desires. But why were [PD27](#) and [PD28](#) as to friendship inserted in the middle of that sequence, totally (or almost totally) breaking the train of thought?
5. Given the questions above (especially question 4), what is best position to take on whether the PD's were authored in the form we have them by Epicurus himself? Did he write them in that form? Or are they like the Vatican Sayings, clearly compiled by someone else, probably after Epicurus' death? We know they were referred to as "Authorized" but does that mean by Epicurus personally, or by later heads of the school? Epicurus himself advised the use of outlines in the letter to Herodotus, and this appears to be an outline, and in an outline we do "jump around" and we don't demand the kind of strict continuity between headings that we would in a continuous presentation. But does not the issue raised in item 4 raise the objection that Epicurus himself (or maybe even any one person) would not have created such a break as was created by putting [PD27](#) and [PD28](#) in that order, when they could easily have been placed elsewhere where they would be more in context?
6. Last but not least: [Onenski](#) raised the point (after reading a chapter in Martha Nussbaum) that [PD30](#) probably includes "romance/sexual love/etc" as a natural desire that (by the wording of the doctrine) should be dispelled Does it make sense to consider romantic love as falling under [PD30](#)?

We can split these questions up later over time, if needed, but I wanted to first get them recorded.