

PD24 - Commentary and Translation of PD 24

Post by “DaveT” of March 10, 2026 at 9:21 PM

[Cassius](#) I'm lost! Please see the quotes I attached below and bolded relevant parts. Looking at the beginning of [Kalosyni](#) 's post, below, then your reply, and your answer to my question to you for clarification has me lost. Especially the Jefferson quote.

Two points. As you noted I don't think we are far apart, if at all on almost everything. But I've lost the thread of what we are far apart on.

In your response to me, you quoted Thos. Jefferson; is he the modern philosopher you referred to and I asked about? I must not understand your train of thought. I was thinking perhaps you were referring to 20th century philosophers as being somehow out in left field.

Your referral to **radical skeptics**, has me confused again. Am I wrong to conclude that in your use of those two words, radical skeptics mean the philosophers of ancient Greece BCE? With respect, you seem to have a bone to pick with the skeptics of old and their influence on some. I believe I understand the battle of ideas between the school of Epicurus and the Skeptics with a capital S.

However, I'm not clear if you are referring to ancient Skepticism that has at best only a remote similarity to the modern scientific methods of finding truth only after experimental testing of any **concepts of any nature until there is a consensus to rule-out or rule-in unproven opinion.**

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

This points out how it is necessary, when you are first beginning an evaluation of truth, to be sure you have included all of your observations (as per the senses), and then also it is necessary to distinguish between various types of evidence and assign levels of trustworthiness onto each type (see [PD22](#)) - and it must be done correctly at the basic starting level or else your later observations will be made in error. And so we see that there are: 1) observations as per the senses, 2) conclusions that already exist through earlier opinions on the matter, 3) new inferences generated by the newest observations. All of these must be distinguished (one from another) and no conclusions should be stated as true until there are adequate observations which clearly confirm the conclusion.

PD.22: "We must consider both the real purpose, and all the evidence of direct perception, to which we always refer the conclusions of opinion; otherwise, all will be full of doubt and confusion." Bold added

[Quote from Cassius](#)

That's right, and it's not easy but what's the alternative? **You can throw up your hands and not even try to get it right. That's what is advocated by Socrates and the radical skeptics who say it's never possible to be confident of anything.** And what do you do then? - You give up studying nature and you retreat to wishful thinking about "virtue" - and let others make decisions for you.

That's a high price to pay to just to win a pat on the back from modern philosophers.

[Quote from DaveT](#)

Agreeing with your post, but I don't catch your meaning of this part.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I would like to be proven wrong, but my own perception is that the problems posed by skepticism and how to unwind them are much deeper than what many seem to think.

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