

# Another mainstream article claiming ataraxia is the goal

Post by “Cassius” of September 23, 2022 at 8:18 AM

Was Cicero capable of and familiar with the tactic of taking words out of context and giving them meanings not originally intended or understood when it is to his advantage?

Consider this from *De Officiis* (Marcus Tullius Cicero. *De Officiis*. Translated by Walter Miller. Loeb Edition. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1913.)

33 Injustice often arises also through chicanery, that is, through an over-subtle and even fraudulent construction of the law. This it is that gave rise to the now familiar saw, "More law, less justice." Through such interpretation also a great deal of wrong is committed in transactions between state and state; thus, when a truce had been made with the enemy for thirty days, a famous general went to ravaging their fields by night, because, he said, the truce stipulated "days," not nights. Not even our own countryman's action is to be commended, if what is told of Quintus Fabius Labeo is true - or whoever it was (for I have no authority but hearsay): appointed by the Senate to arbitrate a boundary dispute between Nola and Naples, he took up the case and interviewed both parties separately, asking them not to proceed in a covetous or grasping spirit, but to make some concession rather than claim some accession. When each party had agreed to this, there was a considerable strip of territory left between them. And so he set the boundary of each city as each had severally agreed; and the tract in between he awarded to the Roman People. Now that is swindling, not arbitration. And therefore such sharp practice is under all circumstances to be avoided.