

# Democritus' "Nothing is truly real but atoms and void" statement

Post by "Cassius" of October 4, 2022 at 5:05 PM

HA!

1 - Thanks Joshua for the cite.

2 - Yes it is sort of a dilemma isn't it? I would think that also relates to the issue of speaking publicly in crowds, etc, and the general issue of speaking clearly. If you know the people you are talking to will not understand or accept your message, do you even talk to them? That's the reason (well, one of them) I don't invite myself onto the local nursing home circuit to tell all the 90 year olds that they have been wrong all their lives in religion and that their last breath will in fact be their last. 😊

But really the important point in this discussion I think is that I do think Epicurus meant that he would speak fully and completely, even though it might not be understood, and that he would in fact strive to make himself as clear as possible. The issue here is not that these clips are incorrect in and of themselves - they are not. But they are not the "whole truth" that is relevant to the issue, and if we know that by speaking only part of the truth that the statement we make will be misconstrued, then I would think that we would strive to be as clear as possible and tell the whole truth that is less likely to be misinterpreted. But of course the caveat I have been trying to include is that at least in the case of Epicurus I feel like he did in fact speak the whole truth, and that the rest of it has been lost to us (for reasons that Cicero and other opponents would be to blame for). In the case of Democritus I presume it is more likely that Epicurus had the full texts of Democritus, so if the Epicureans felt like he needed to be criticized on that point, there might be more reason to defer to their judgment, since they probably knew more about what Democritus said than we know about what Epicurus said.