

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

Post by “Godfrey” of October 6, 2022 at 8:30 PM

Here are three versions of [PD30](#):

[PD30](#) *“Among natural desires, those that do not bring pain when unfulfilled and that require intense exertion arise from groundless opinion; and such desires fail to be stamped out not by nature but because of the groundless opinions of humankind.”* St.-Andre (2008)

[PD30](#) *“Those natural desires which create no pain when unfulfilled, though pursued with an intense effort, are also due to groundless opinion; and if they are not dispelled, it is not because of their own nature, but because of human vanity.”* Epicurus Wiki

[PD30](#) *“When those natural desires, which do not lead to pain if they are not satisfied, are violent and insistent, it is a proof that there is an admixture of vain opinion in them; for then energy does not arise from their own nature, but from the vain opinions of men.”* Yonge (1853)

In outline:

Those natural (or bodily, in some translations) desires which

1. don't bring pain when unfulfilled (another of Epicurus' double negatives)
2. AND
 - require intense exertion
 - (or) are pursued with intense effort
 - (or) are violent and insistent desires
3. are driven by vanity, not by their own nature

This seems like catnip for someone with an ascetic point of view. However, in plain, modern English, at least by my paraphrasing:

[PD30](#) "Say you have a natural desire, and that if you don't fulfill it, it's not a big deal to you. If you do pursue it, it's going to require a lot of effort and potential pain. Do you think that this desire is worth pursuing? It would seem that your potential gratification would be outweighed by your potential suffering. Might it be wiser to spend your limited time pursuing something that's a bigger deal to you?" Godfrey (2022) 😊

Put this way, is this really ascetic or is it just common sense? [PD26](#) seems to confirm this view:

[PD26](#) *"The desires that do not bring pain when they go unfulfilled are not necessary; indeed they are easy to reject if they are hard to achieve or if they seem to produce harm."* St.-Andre (2008)