

Plotinus and Epicurean Epistemology by Lloyd P. Gerson

Post by "Don" of October 16, 2022 at 8:43 AM

[Martin](#) 's post is spot on. I especially like:

[Quote from Martin](#)

The truth Plato and probably most ancient philosophers had in mind concerning the world does not exist or is unavailable.

The only edit I would suggest (and I could just be misinterpreting what he wrote) is when he writes:

[Quote from Martin](#)

What we can get from observations are tentative facts by using logic as a tool.

I would suggest: *What we can get from observations are tentative facts which can be expanded on and refined by using logic as a tool.*

Which seems to me about what Cassius is getting at.

When [Cassius](#) uses what I interpret as "[scare quotes](#)" around

[Quote from Cassius](#)

"science" and "logic"

Or modifies science and logic as

[Quote from Cassius](#)

true science and true logic .

is superfluous and sets up the wrong dichotomy. The divisions aren't "true" science or "science." There's science and theoretical science (like string theory) which may or may not be verified in the future but is currently untestable. There's science and pseudoscience (like creation science or flat-earthers) which is just making stuff up or wildly misinterpreting actual findings and ignoring data that don't support your position. Then there's science and just misinformation and propaganda that twist scientific findings out of all proportion for political or

nefarious end.

We don't follow science. Scientific discovery arrived at through the scientific method can be either accepted or rejected based on the validity of the research, the soundness of observations, the credentials of the researcher, etc. Science backed up by research, observation, etc. is just science.

For example, I had the opportunity this week to view Saturn and Titan as well as Jupiter and its 4 Galilean moons through telescopes set up for an astronomy event. I find it breathtaking to literally see those celestial bodies for myself. BUT I need science to help me understand what I'm seeing, what I'm observing. Epicurus himself advocated understanding the natural world as contributing "more than anything else to the tranquillity and happiness of life."

Same with logic. You have to define your terms before you can talk about "logic" or "true" logic. Epicurus engaged in formal logical arguments. You just have to know what logic is being used, if sound propositions are being used, etc.