

Keen Reasoning Based on the Evidence of the Senses

Post by "Cassius" of November 29, 2022 at 10:39 AM

Connects directly and in fascinating ways we need to explore! If the glove doesn't fit you must acquit!

We have to be able to identify when the evidence supports multiple causes, and when it supports only a single conclusion.

That seems to be directly the issue in [PD24](#), which by reason of its inclusions in the doctrines indicates how important this issue was to Epicurus:

[PD24](#). If you reject any single sensation, and fail to distinguish between the conclusion of opinion, as to the appearance awaiting confirmation, and that which is actually given by the sensation or feeling, or each intuitive apprehension of the mind, you will confound all other sensations, as well, with the same groundless opinion, so that you will reject every standard of judgment. And if among the mental images created by your opinion you affirm both that which awaits confirmation, and that which does not, you will not escape error, since you will have preserved the whole cause of doubt in every judgment between what is right and what is wrong.

It's definitely not easy to articulate this since we've been acclimated to the skeptical position that nothing is knowable, but it does all fit together when you think about it. You have to firmly identify in your mind the method, realize that you're not omniscient and this is the only real standard you have, and then not get shaken by arguments like "You can't be sure because you haven't been there."

I was thinking a few minutes ago, that's EXACTLY the implication in Cicero's jab at Velleius -- he's saying that since Velleius had NOT just come down from the Epicurean intermundia, he shouldn't be taking any firm positions on it.

Unless we firmly identify the fallacy in thinking that "you haven't been there so you don't know" invalidates every claim of knowledge, we never get anywhere.

I have never stuck my head in an oven and turned on the gas and lit a match but i am CERTAIN that that is not something that will benefit me from doing. And no amount of "you don't know because you haven't done it" will shake my confidence in that conclusion.