

---

## The Determination of Truth in Allegory of the Cave, a Book by Socrates

The truth of an event is often difficult to discover due to the endless perspectives in which that event can be viewed. As I explored the question of what it means to find the truth this semester, I have come to the realization that truth is often falsely represented as a single, definite perception of event or concept. However, I believe the truth is the perception of an event or concept that a person has accepted as true. My experiences in university have led me to believe the most important part of determining what is true is not to remain ignorant and act as though no truth exists, but rather to gather every possible account of an event and determine the truth that is most commonly accepted.

It is often assumed that the truth is a concrete fact that accurately reflects reality, but I believe the truth is largely affected by the knowledge they have gained through exposure to the world. The Allegory of the Cave, told by Socrates, shows the instability of the truth through the story of prisoners trapped inside a cave. The prisoners have only been exposed to a 2-dimensional life in the form of shadows cast on the wall in front of them and, therefore, believe there is nothing in existence beyond their understanding of the world. A prisoner is forcibly dragged from the cave and thrusts into the sunlight and experiences the world in 3-dimensions for the first time. The result of this exposure is that the prisoner comes to the realization that the world he knew in the cave was only a shallow interpretation of the world he was currently experiencing. Upon realizing that “the “knowing” that passes as the norm” [1] within the cave was not “the “knowing”” [2] he was experiencing outside the cave, the man began to feel sorry for the prisoners still trapped in the cave and goes back to teach them what he learned. However, upon sharing his knowledge with the prisoners they “let him know that he had gone up but only in order to come back down into the cave with his eyes ruined -- and thus it certainly does not pay to go up”. This metaphor uses the way of life within the cave and the way of life outside of the cave to represent two different truths. When Socrates speaks of the prisoners believing the escaped man had ruined his eyes, he suggests that when a person hears an opposing viewpoint they will think of the opposing belief as being misguided or wrong. People come to accept the truth in different ways because their understanding of the truth is affected by their current experiences and knowledge of the world. When applying the logic behind Socrates’ allegory, one can also question the truth discovered by the escaped prisoner.

Socrates believed that the truth lay in the world of the forms, a world unreachable by most and in which goodness, or the purest truth, could be found. This belief suggests that there is no pure truth to be found in the world. In the Allegory of the Cave, the escaped prisoner’s first truth of

---

### Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

**GET HELP**

---

2-dimensional life within the cave was replaced by the second truth of the 3-dimensional world, which many people in modern day accept as the true world in its purest sense. However, Socrates argued that there is a purer world that many people could not access. The greater meaning of The Allegory of the Cave is to suggest that no concrete truth can be discovered without accessing the world of the forms. It suggests that even the impression of the world we currently live in may be a shallow impression of a greater world we are unable to see. Truths accepted by many may never be a 100% depiction of an event as the truest version of the truth lay in a world inaccessible to us. However, though it is possible that the purest truth may be unattainable, we must continue to search for the truth in the purest form accessible.

It is impossible to progress as a species if we surrender to the idea that no truth can be found outside of the world of the forms. Because of this, we have chosen to rely on the form of the truth that can most easily be obtained based on its credibility, our own morals and our knowledge of the world.. In "The Return of Martin Guerre", Natalie Davis attempts to find the purest form of the truth behind Arnaud du Tilh's impersonation of Martin Guerre. I believe her perception of the truth is largely affected by her own personal interpretation of evidence, which has been skewed by her feminist desire to introduce empowered women to French peasant culture. Davis had to rely on accounts of peasants alive during Martin Guerre lifetime in order to determine if Bertrand had been aware that Arnaud du Tilh was not Martin Guerre. When making her argument, Davis states, "By the time she had received him in her bed, she must have realized the difference; as... there is no mistaking "the touch of the man on the woman.""[3] This belief may have been accepted by Davis because of her own desire to believe that Bertrand was an empowered woman and could not be "so easily fooled"[4]. Davis had evidence to support that Bertrand and Arnaud Du Tilh had been in bed together. She may have used her assumption that Bertrand would have noticed the differences in sexual interactions with Tilh as an argument proving that Bertrand must have known Du Tilh was not Martin Guerre. It is important to understand that the belief most easily accepted as the truth by Davis may have been affected by her desire to introduce powerful women into French peasant culture. Davis has been regarded as "a pioneer in feminist studies"[5] and it would be foolish to assume that her own personality did not affect how she interpreted the story of Bertrand and Arnaud du Tilh. From this, you can see that a person's understanding of the truth can be affected by their own personal values.

When contemplating if Davis' perception of the truth is one that we can accept as our own, you must consider the endless perceptions of the truth that contradict Davis' own. Every truth is created as a result of the creator's ability to accept it and should not be used to invalidate other truths as neither truth can be 100% proven as being right or wrong. The world of the forms holds the purest truths and, without access to this world, no truth created can be the purest form of the truth. Just as the prisoners and the man who escaped the cave in The Allegory of the Cave believed in their perceptions of the world, Davis has come to accept her own perception of

---

## Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

**GET HELP**

---

Bertrand ability to see through Du Tilh's deception. Every perception of our truth can be represented by the 3-dimensional perception of the world seen by the escaped prisoner. His perception of the world has been accepted as true to us, just as Davis has accepted her interpretation of the story of Bertrand and Du Tilh as true. As a result, we must rely on the form of the truth that best aligns with our values and the evidence found while removing our values and emotions from the situation. Only then can we come to the purest form of the truth within our ability to create.

My experiences in university have taken me on a journey which has allowed me to discover truths within myself. I have found that I am extremely skilled at accepting truths that are based on how easily I can accept them instead of the evidence supporting them. Though it has been difficult to find the evidence, just as Davis struggled to find her own, I understand now that it is crucial to form our truths based on the evidence we can find. With a clear perception of evidence, gathered using the logical mind instead of the emotional mind, you can plan your reactions in a way that will be most beneficial. It has taught me that what we choose to believe affects everything in terms of our reactions. The truth is most commonly viewed as an idea that is "in accordance with reality". However, it can also be interpreted as "a belief that has come to be accepted true". The question "how do you know what is true" assumes that there is only one truth, but who determines what is true? The pure form of the truth lies in a realm that exists, yet is inaccessible to us. However, as complex biological creatures, we attempt to reach the purest form of the truth because it is the only way to progress in society. Without a perceived version of the truth it would be impossible to react to any event in time. Therefore, to find the truth, we must gather as much evidence as possible, remove the effects of personal values, and create a truth that can be considered by the majority as true.

---

## Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

[GET HELP](#)