

# Prolepsis of the gods

Post by “Don” of June 26, 2025 at 5:15 PM

## [Quote from Rolf](#)

Actually, could somebody take a crack at explaining fundamentally what prolepsis is? Is it innate knowledge that we're born it? I'm more confused than I thought! 😞

The HUGE problem is that there are not a lot of surviving texts that speak specifically to prolepsis. That's one reason [Bryan](#)'s compiling uses of the word and related words is so helpful, seeing the word/s in context.

There are a VARIED number of interpretations of prolepsis, starting as far back as Cicero! I don't know whether we'll ever have the concept from an Epicurean perspective definitively described.

That said, with due respect to [Cassius](#) and others bringing in Meno and the theory of knowledge, I **\*\*personally\*\*** see prolepsis, ancient concepts of memory formation, the workings of the psychē (mind/soul), to be of tangential importance to applying Epicurus' philosophy in the modern world to my way of living. I find the investigations that the ancients dealt in and how they arrived at their findings of fascinating intellectual curiosity. But eidola do not grind grooves into my psychē to make subsequent similar eidola easier to intercept. Brains don't work that way.

What Epicurus does give me is a firm commitment to finding physical causes completely devoid of woo-woo. It might not be eidola and psychē, but it is a physical, natural, material cause to my memories, thought, and other mental processes. The Letter to Pythocles is a testament to finding material, physical causes to phenomena.

So, I don't get hung up on the specific details taught in the ancient school; but I think there are principles that are directly applicable from then to now.