

Discussion of Blog Post: The Continuing Vitality of Epicurean Physics

Post by “Don” of May 3, 2026 at 10:37 AM

I firmly believe that "to be conscious" means to have a mind in a body.

I believe "to be conscious" needs a connection to the world outside oneself, needs the faculty of interoception, is inextricably integrated with sensation.

Are there degrees of consciousness? Sure, but it depends how we define the word. A baby is as conscious of itself as a being in their environment as an adult, maybe more so 😊 if you've ever experienced a baby in an uncomfortable full diaper.

Current and foreseeable AI are nowhere near this integration with the world. LLMs are never, ever, ever going to be "conscious." Will they become better at predictive modeling after they've ingested the entirety of the Internet, every text ever written by a human? Sure, but so what. When I was programming [Eliza-like](#) software in high school, I was impressed by how it *seemed* to be having a conversation. But all it did was follow instructions I had input. LLMs are merely a much more sophisticated model of this all over again.

I will grant there is a prediction component of consciousness (as in the [theory of constructed emotions](#)) but even that depends on input from the outside and internal stimulus and feedback.

I will also grant that there are degrees of consciousness. Is an amoeba conscious? Depends what we mean again. Is a dolphin conscious? I would say very likely. Is a chimpanzee? Definitely. The same as a human? No, they're a chimpanzee. They have a different connection to the world, but that is a matter of degree not kind I would offer.

AI software is not even an amoeba.