

# Anticipations

## Post by "JAWS" of March 26, 2018 at 9:10 PM

It might be a while before we get to the chapter in DeWitt regarding sensations, anticipations, and feelings, so let me post my question here so I don't have to wait for a discussion. 😊  
DeWitt talks about justice being an anticipation. What other anticipations are there?

In thinking through it myself, the only suggestion that I have come up with so far is honor. I think even young children have an innate sense of honor. If you say something they remember it and expect you to honor what you said. That's why I thought perhaps it would qualify.

Any other suggestions that you all might have?

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## Post by "Cassius" of March 27, 2018 at 4:14 AM

JAWS do you see honor as a subset of justice?

Before I forget I want to mention something that I want to record somewhere in the anticipation discussion: the short book "Dialog on Innate Principles" by Jackson Barwis. In that book Barwis articulates a theory that we have innate dispositions to find some ideas pleasing and others painful and if we did not we would have no means of understanding the meaning of concepts that carry an emotional loading. His view is something I believe is helpful in describing how Epicurus would view this topic. We are not born with innate "ideas" but with dispositional principles of functioning that make us find some abstract evaluations more pleasing than others just as some ice cream is more pleasing. <http://newepicurean.com/jacksonbarwis/> In my view that book is a gem and I read it regularly almost as poetry.

Here is a post I made on this topic <http://newepicurean.com/following-a-20...-anticipations/>

Back to Epicurus: if I recall DeWitt says the only other examples in the texts are divinity (where Epicurus says that false ideas of gods are NOT true anticipations) and there is something also about time.

Also the big debate as to anticipation is whether they are a description of the process of conceptualization (I have seen several cows in a field and I summarize them as concept "cow" so the next time I see one I compare to picture of cow stored in my mind). That is NOT Dewitts view but it is the majority view. I agree with DeWitt, using the model of Barwis, but that is a

fundamental issue that creates lots of heat in part because most adopt the total "blank slate" theory (which is IMHO much more Aristotlean than Epicurean).

Using your example, i think Barwis and Epicurus would contend that children find honoring ones word pleasing from the very first time someone keeps their word, and breaking ones word painful from the very first time, without need of prior experience. But the majority way experience is necessary in order to form the concept.

If you choose to follow DeWitt / Barwis on this be prepared for a lonely fight, but here again I believe this is the path to the only consistent understanding of Epicurus, the dilution of which by later Epicureans was a major error.

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### **Post by "jbaker" of March 27, 2018 at 12:49 PM**

I find this conceptualization of anticipations satisfying. I wonder if expectation might be more descriptive in some instances. When someone "gives their word" that they are going to do something I expect them to honor it and plan around the anticipation of that result. If all goes according to my expectations I am pleased because I have anticipated fortune, I have bet against the future and profited from the association with this person and their honor. If they do not honor their word, and it becomes a pattern, if I am wise I will adjust my expectations and make plans to defy fortune.

I do think this ties into the preconception of justice very closely, maybe even a precondition of conceptualizing justice.

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### **Post by "Cassius" of March 27, 2018 at 1:30 PM**

Here is one of the passages from Barwis that I think states very well a cores aspect of SOMETHING that is going on within us that is not simply the result of conceptualization of cows after setting multiple cows (to which a lot of people want to reduce Epicurus' view of anticipations). There's something within us that influences us *prior* to experience formed logically into concepts/propositions, and Epicurus would have seen that too:

*"The innate principles of the soul, continued he, cannot, any more than those of the body, be propositions. They must be in us antecedently to all our reasonings about them, or they could never be in us at all: for we cannot, by reasoning, create any thing, the principles of which did*

*not exist antecedently. We can, indeed, describe our innate sentiments and perceptions to each other; we can reason, and we can make propositions about them; but our reasonings neither are, nor can create in us, moral principles. They exist prior to, and independently of, all reasoning, and all propositions about them.*

***When we are told that benevolence is pleasing; that malevolence is painful; we are not convinced of these truths by reasoning, nor by forming them into propositions: but by an appeal to the innate internal affections of our souls: and if on such an appeal, we could not feel within the sentiment of benevolence, and the peculiar pleasure attending it; and that of malevolence and its concomitant pain, not all the reasoning in the world could ever make us sensible of them, or enable us to understand their nature."***

And then the same point is made a few paragraphs down, but here we have to substitute "Nature" for "God" / "Divine Creator":

*"The reason of man can create no principles in the natures of things. It will, by proper application, enable him to know many things concerning them which, without reasoning, he never could have known; and to explain his knowledge, so acquired, to other men; but the principles of all created beings are engendered with, and accompany, the existence which they receive from their Creator. And in a point so truly essential as that of morality is to the nature of such a creature as man; God has not left him without innate and ever-inherent principles. He has not left to the imbecility of human reason to create what he knew it never could create, and what we know it never can create.*

*Even in the abstracted sciences of arithmetic and geometry, reason can create no principles in the natures of the things treated of. It can lay down axioms and draw up propositions concerning numbers, extension, and solidity; but numbers, extension, and solidity existed prior to any reasoning about them.*

*And here I must observe that the assent or dissent that we give to propositions in these sciences, which are but little interesting to our nature, is drawn from a source widely different from that which we give to moral propositions. Thus, when we are told that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, and see the demonstration; we say simply, true. That they are equal to three right angles; false. These things being irrelative to morals, they move no conscious sentiment, and do therefore only receive our bare assent or dissent as a mere object of sense; in the same manner as when we say a thing is, or is not, black or white, or round or square; we use our eyes, and are satisfied.*

*But the truth or falsehood of moral propositions must be judged of by another measure; through a more interesting medium: we must apply to our internal sense; our divine monitor and guide within; through which the just and unjust, the right and wrong, the moral beauty and deformity of human minds, and of human actions, can only be perceived. And this internal*

*sense must most undoubtedly be innate, as we have already shown; it could not otherwise have existence in us; we not being able, by reasoning, or by any other means, to give ourselves any new sense, or to create, in our nature, any principle at all. I therefore think Mr. Locke, in speaking of innate moral principles, ought, at least, to have made a difference between propositions relative to morals, and those which have no such relation."*

<http://newepicurean.com/resources/jack...ate-principles/>