

# How Emotions Are Made: The Secret Life of the Brain by Lisa Feldman Barrett

Post by "Cassius" of April 15, 2021 at 8:55 PM

1 - Godfrey those last quotes about essentialism are from LFB?

2. - Thank you for all the effort in those posts!

3. - I am going to have to reflect for a while on what you wrote, but as usual I have this starting point:

It looks to me like we are going to run into the usual danger here: Are we talking about "concepts" and "conceptual thinking" or are we talking about "preconcepts"?

In other words, in the broader discussion everyone seems to agree that there is such a thing as "conceptual thinking." Whether we call that "logic" or some form of "abstract reasoning" or whatever, there is a human process wherein we define terms (eg "capitalism" or "communism") and then we use those terms as markers by which to evaluate the objects of our concern at a particular moment. I would argue that this covers as well the examples of Diogenes Laertius, in that we form a concept of a cow, and use that to judge new animals that we see, and we form a concept of Socrates, and use that to determine if the person we meet is in fact Socrates. These examples are "conceptual reasoning" and no one - surely not Epicurus - would deny that they exist.

But is this process of conceptual reasoning the same thing that is referred to as "PRECONCEPTIONS" or "ANTICIPATIONS" in Epicurean theory? I tend to think that it is NOT the same thing, and that we are talking about two distinct mechanisms and products of that mechanism.

It does not seem likely to me that Epicurus would have held that CONCEPTIONS (the product of definition and logical analysis) would be considered to be a criteria of truth, for the reason that the process of logical reasoning and definition which forms conceptions is inherently a matter of "opinion" and not something that occurs by nature WITHOUT opinion, which appears to be a criteria of something being considered a part of the canon of truth.

So in our discussion I think we need to be careful to be clear that the part of the canon of truth that we would like to examine is the "preconceptions / anticipations" and that these are not simply the mind's definition of a certain number of objects to which it has been exposed in the past.

Everyone is of course free to agree or disagree with the comments I have made here, but I think for maximum clarity we ought to be evaluating modern research in light of this distinction

so that we can be sure we are talking about the canon of truth vs something very different.