

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

Post by "Godfrey" of April 17, 2021 at 2:30 PM

Digressing to post #31:

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Skepticism, nihilism, rationalism, idealism, and on and on are the primary philosophical opponents that we are playing against just as much as we're playing against schizophrenia or other "clinical" conditions. We aren't in the game solely to respond to clinical conditions that developed naturally, though we do want to respond to those too.

"Predictions," perhaps as a fine-tuning or an evolution of anticipations, provide both a response to other philosophies and a tool for working with clinical conditions. This is because of the information that we are able to modify our predictions (although it is a process and takes work) as a means toward increasing our pleasure. Also, as LFB takes pains to point out, there is no pure "rationality" as it is always affected by our affect.

Understanding the processes she describes in her book not only provides arguments against other philosophies, but because the processes do seem to have a relationship to the Canon then they also provide support for the Epicurean view of life.

The affective circumplex is something that can be evaluated as to whether it gives us a better understanding of pleasure and pain. That information is valuable to an Epicurean to the degree that it can be put into practice.

As to clinical conditions, I came across this short podcast:

<https://shows.acast.com/one-thing-pain...lorimer-moseley>

At about 7 plus minutes there is a description that sounded to me like a practical application of the Canon. Although that's my interpretation; the interviewee was discussing information from his scientific work and not anything about Epicurus. But that is exactly what, to me, is so interesting: we keep running across science that seems to correspond to EP. This doesn't make me want to become a scientist, but it does motivate me to try to understand ways to incorporate new information into my pursuit of Epicurean pleasure as the two seem to be mutually reinforcing.

Physics seems to me to be more of an intellectual exercise and perhaps not as useful for daily living. (Unless, of course one is a physicist [Martin](#) !) But neuroscience seems to have direct applications to daily living. One doesn't need to be a neuroscientist, but one can get value from

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/1951-how-emotions-are-made-the-secret-life-of-the-brain-by-lisa-feldman-barrett/?postID=11770#post11770>

reading up on it (to the point where it brings one more pleasure than pain 😊)