

Dr. David Glidden's "Epicurean Prolepsis"

Post by "Cassius" of March 4, 2023 at 8:55 AM

Here's another point of terminology: If some people are concerned that the word "recognition" in "pattern recognition" is too strongly evocative of Plato suggesting we remember true forms from before we were born, or that gods are writing in our minds, or that there are "essences" in the world that are their equivalent, those people might get the same result from calling this "pattern appreciation."

As I understand English, "appreciation" carries most of the same meaning in terms of being able to identify what is being observed, but "appreciation" doesn't get caught up in implying an answer to the question of where the appreciation came from.

Pattern appreciation would just be a way to say that however it operates, the baby does "appreciate" that the mother's face is of significance to it shortly after birth than the blank white of the ceiling. No doubt we observe and learn to appreciate new and more intricate patterns the older we get, but also (I would say no doubt) we are born with some faculty within us that makes us better at this, and carry it further, than dogs and cats and the link.

We appreciate lots of details that other animals don't, but it is overbroad and confusing to say that we appreciate those patterns because we "recognize" them in full blown form from some kind of past experience. As I think Dr. Glidden says, what we are calling patterns are things that exist in the natural world that we are observing, and our minds are simply appreciating that these patterns (horses have long necks and tails) exist in nature.