

# Welcome BrainToBeing

**Post by “Don” of December 9, 2023 at 12:14 AM**

Great stuff, [BrainToBeing](#) !! Glad to have you aboard our little boat here.

I really like your "bootstrap" contribution to the discussion. From my perspective, that dovetails in many ways with what we've (I've) been trying to articulate here on the forum for awhile. If I understand where you're coming from...

To go with a computer metaphor: We have innate, inborn "operating systems" and some basic software that can be applied to make sense of novel situations in our experience? We use those basics as the foundation for more complex behaviors and beliefs as we grow? We get thrown into a world, bombarded by sensory input, and our operating system and basic "programs" begin to sift, sort, organize, and construct our understanding of reality.

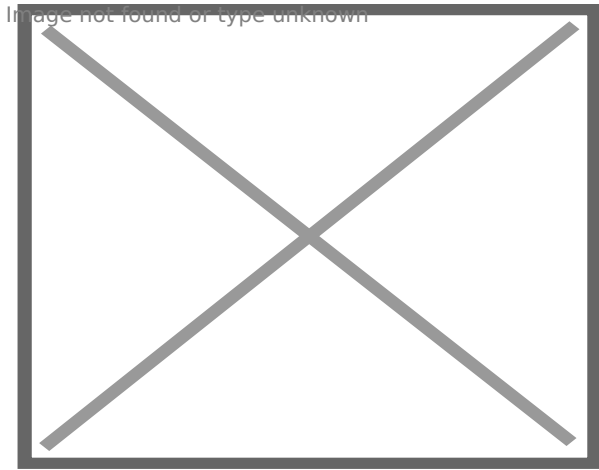
This reminds me of the work of Dr. Lisa Feldman Barrett (and others...I'm just more familiar with her name) who talks about our brains being "prediction engines." According to her work, our brains are constantly using past experience to predict what the flood of sensory data coming in "means," and therefore how to react to it. If we, in fact, DID only react to incoming stimuli after it came in...we'd end up dead. We can't "react" fast enough in real time. Our brains are constantly predicting what actions should follow and act on that. Which, as I understand, is why we jump away from a "snake" on the trail only to "see" later that it was actually just a stick. Our brains do a prediction THEN an observation like: "We're in the woods. What things do we expect to see in the woods? We need to be aware of dangers in the woods. We've seen long slender things before that are snakes. Snakes are dangers. Long slender thing on trail.. SNAKE! JUMP! Take a second observation.... Oh! Just a stick."\*\*\*

For my part, I see those predictions as prolepsis against which incoming sense data is compared. BUT I can also see some of the bootstrapping to be connected as well.

I should also state explicitly that, as obvious as it is, Epicurus did NOT have access to the latest research in psychology, neuroscience, physiology, etc. He was working on observation and intuition and trying to make sense of his world with the tools he had. However, he came up with (or, at least, refined) the idea of atoms - tiny particles that make up the universe - LONG before we had observational evidence... So, I think he was doing pretty well with those tools that he had.

\*\*\*PS: Note - My example is an over-simplification of the process. For more detail, see the following:

[The brain is a prediction machine: It knows how well we are doing something before we even try — Department of Experimental Psychology](#)



### [Interceptive predictions in the brain](#)

Intuition suggests that perception follows sensation and therefore bodily feelings originate in the body. However, recent evidence goes against this logic:...

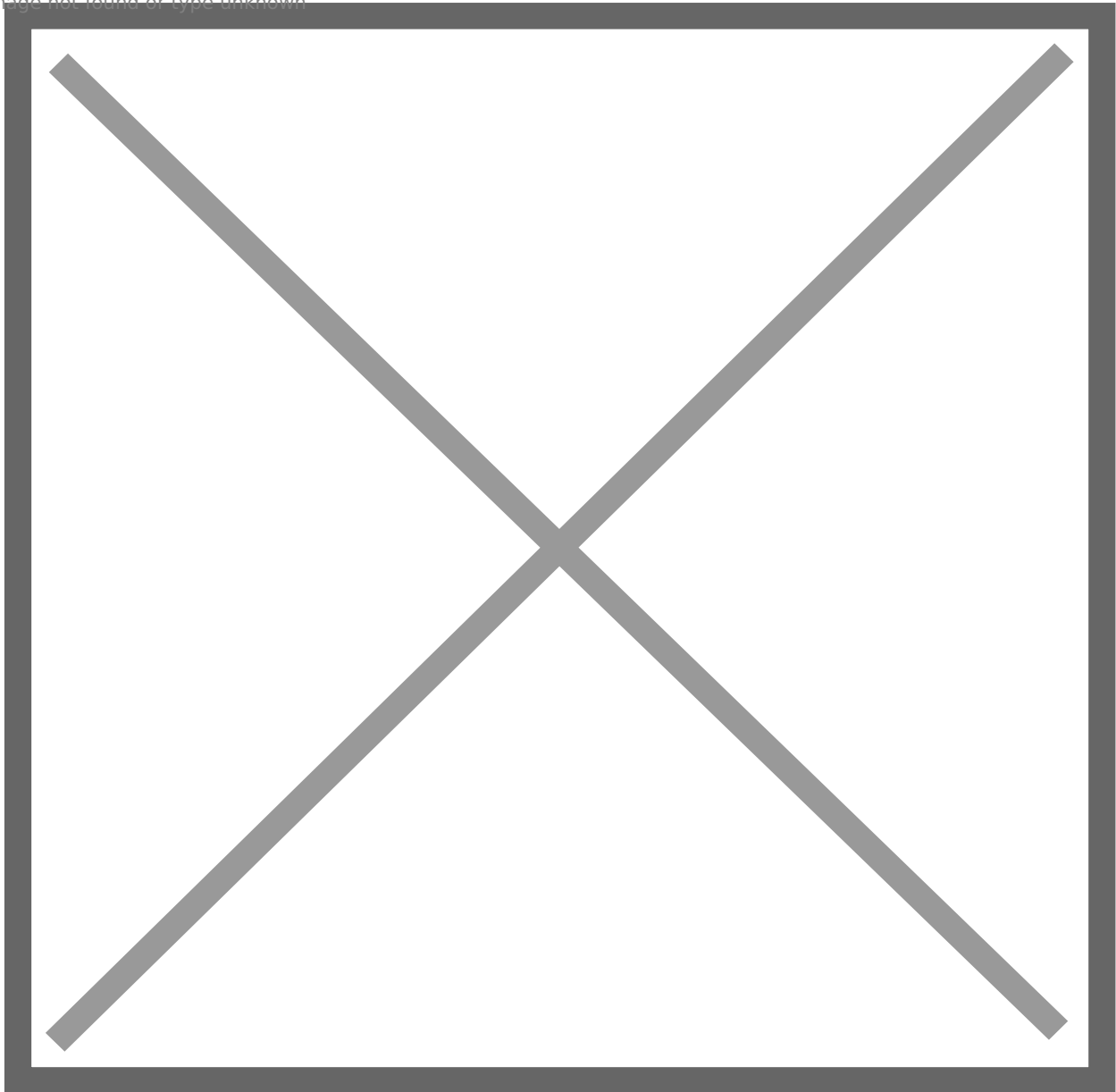
[www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)

#### Quote

the brain forms neural representations that are constructed from previous experience. These function as a generative model of how stimuli in the environment cause sensations. Rather than neurons simply lying dormant until information arrives via the external sensors of the body (that is, the eyes, ears and taste receptors, among others), the brain anticipates incoming sensory inputs, which it implements as predictions that cascade throughout the cortex.

See also

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[How your brain creates reality, explained by a neuroscientist](#)

Your 'social reality' isn't an absolute reality. A leading neuroscientist explains why.  
bigthink.com