


The Nature of the Universe - Not Random, But Undirected?

Post by "Cassius" of December 3, 2019 at 10:39 AM

Here is a definition of "random" from dictionary.com. As you indicate, Martin, the three standard definitions, especially the first one, is probably in whole or part acceptable (but .."pattern?")

. It is the "slang" definitions that are the problem for ordinary people, I think, and in developing this discussion I am thinking that this "slang" meaning is increasingly overtaking the standard definitions in normal discussion. And in these senses, the slang version of "random" contains (I think) much the same objectionable content as you and I (and apparently Epicurus too) agree is indicated by "chaotic."

random

 [ran-duhm] [SHOW IPA](#) 

SEE SYNONYMS FOR *random* ON [THESAURUS.COM](#)

adjective

- 1 proceeding, made, or occurring without definite aim, reason, or pattern:
the random selection of numbers.
- 2 **Statistics.** of or characterizing a process of selection in which each item of a set has an equal probability of being chosen.
- 3 **Building Trades.**
 - a (of building materials) lacking uniformity of dimensions:
random shingles.
 - b (of ashlar) laid without continuous courses.
 - c constructed or applied without regularity:
random bond.
- 4 **Slang.**
 - a unknown, unidentified, or suspiciously out of place:
A couple of random guys showed up at the party.
 - b odd or unpredictable, often in an amusing way:
my totally random life.