

Gosling & Taylor, The Greeks on Pleasure.

Post by "Cassius" of June 29, 2020 at 3:33 PM

[Quote from JJElbert](#)

Epicurus believed that both aspects of his philosophy were discoverable through an epistemology of sensation, feeling, and anticipation—an epistemology that was therefore not strictly empirical.

Joshua just posted this sentence recently in another thread. I could find countless numbers where I list the epistemology the same way.

And yet I can't get free of the feeling that in this list - sensation, feeling, and anticipation - we are still spinning around with less precision than we should. Do not the words "sensation" and "feeling" denote almost exactly the same thing to us today in English? At least in terms of touch, we tend to say after we touch something "How does it **feel**?" Not so with sight, or hearing, or smell, or taste, however.

Do the names of the categories really tell us what the difference between the "five senses" are from the "feelings" of pain and pleasure? I know at times I have deferred to a term like "natural faculties" as the catch-all name to include all three but I have no strong opinion that any formulation I've ever heard really captures the subject well.

Maybe the standard terms of sense / sensation and feeling are indeed the best words to use, but we definitely need a very clear definition attached to them at the start as to what they are intended to convey, and what they include and what they don't.

And of course in this discussion we haven't really touched at all on anticipations, but if indeed this list of three has any parallel at all within it, then anticipations must be a form of "sense" as well -- at least in the manner of speaking so as to reference a "faculty of contact between our minds and the world outside our minds" or a "faculty by which our minds make contact with the world outside our minds" or a "mechanism by which our minds perceive the world outside our minds."

But even then we probably need to include more than just "the world outside our minds" since we are pretty clearly including the pleasure or pain we feel at our own thoughts/memories, which are presumably part of and within our own minds.