

Reverence and Awe In Epicurean Philosophy

Post by “Elayne” of October 23, 2020 at 5:49 PM

Ah, interesting, Susan-- I actually don't think it is something in the baby, the music, or the aurora, any more than I think the pain of a hot pepper is in the pepper. Sure, capsaicin is in the pepper, but for birds it isn't painful. I think all feeling responses are properties of the subject doing the feeling, and that similar stimuli will often bring about similar feelings because we are in the same species. I don't think the Aurora Borealis, absent an observer, contains anything that would universally provoke awe.

We know some of the typical human triggers of awe. Things that are vast in size tend to do it, like mountains. I haven't read about a single common feature, but I would be interested to hear your hypothesis. Paul Pearsall wrote a whole book about Awe, which he proposed was actually a specific basic emotion.

Why we evolved awe would be an interesting evolutionary biology question-- does it serve some sort of fitness function? I bet this was an interesting talk-- the blurb describes awe as having a pro-social function, so maybe it has helped humans survive and reproduce.
<https://positiveorgs.bus.umich.edu/events/the-evo...of-the-sublime/>