

# "Facts don't care about your feelings."

Post by "Cassius" of November 6, 2020 at 10:02 PM

## [Quote from Don](#)

...we use our initial reaction as \*one\* criteria in concert with others + reason to bring it all together.

Am I getting closer?

Yes I think that is exactly the point, and I think that's also the answer to any concerns that anyone has about the "spiritual" experiences being discussed in the reverence and awe threads. The feelings are real and must be accounted for, but not by holding opinions that cannot be validated through a reasoned analysis of all the evidence available to us through all of the faculties.

"Spiritual" experiences are real in the sense that they describe real feelings which are occurring. But at the same time, we have all sorts of other evidence to consider as well regarding the nature of the universe, the absence of supernatural universe-creating gods, and the like. ALL the evidence has to be factored in so that we arrive at a reasoned opinion about the subject we're talking about. The reasoned opinion we end up with must acknowledge the reality of the feeling, but it must also acknowledge the reality of the other data, with the result being that no matter how intense the spiritual feeling we aren't going to throw out the evidence received through the other faculties.

And there you arrive at the conclusion that there are some times when we just have no reasonable alternative but to "wait" because we cannot come to an acceptable theory that incorporates all the evidence to our satisfaction. The only irreversible error would be to throw out some of the data and treat it as if it did not exist, because ruling out the reliability of any of the legs of the canon will thereby mean that our error can never be properly corrected. [Edit: And that is why I do not think it is proper to "throw out" the data of any experience, whether we call it 'spiritual' or whatever. If we experience it, something caused it, and it is far better to look patiently for the cause than to throw out the experience as if it did not happen.]

From Book 4, what i think is quite possibly the most important passage in Lucretius (and this version is an example of why I find Browne 1743 to be frequently the best in the deepest sections):

Quote

And though reason is not able to assign a cause why an object that is really four-square when near, should appear round when seen at a distance; yet, if we cannot explain this difficulty, it is better to give any solution, even a false one, than to deliver up all Certainty out of our power, to break in upon our first principle of belief, and tear up all foundations upon which our life and security depend. For not only all reason must be overthrown, but life itself must be immediately extinguished, unless you give credit to your senses. These direct you to fly from a precipice and other evils of this sort which are to be avoided, and to pursue what tends to your security. All therefore is nothing more than an empty parade of words that can be offered against the certainty of sense.

Lastly, as in a building, if the principle rule of the artificer be not true, if his line be not exact, or his level bear in to the least to either side, every thing must needs be wrong and crooked, the whole fabric must be ill-shaped, declining, hanging over, leaning and irregular, so that some parts will seem ready to fall and tumble down, because the whole was at first disordered by false principles. So the reason of things must of necessity be wrong and false which is founded upon a false representation of the senses.

Even in this passage, and especially in that last sentence, I think we could probably better translate. "So the reason of things must of necessity be wrong and false which is founded upon a false representation of the senses" seems to me to be another statement of giving credence to all legs of the canon as in [PD24](#) quoted above, rather than 'false representation of the senses' which seems a little too narrow. Likewise I think all of this passage should be read to refer to all three legs of the canon and not just seeing/hearing/tasting/touching/smelling.

Certainly the five senses are the first that come to mind, but the other two legs are of equal or at times superior concern to us. Pleasure and pain give us the motivations for life itself, and preconceptions also (depending on the various asserted definitions) appear to be essential to proper living. For example, there are times when we will in fact jump off that precipice, or step in front of the oncoming carriage, if such an action enables us to save the life of a friend in a situation where to do otherwise would poison our choice to live on having failed to do so,