

Interesting video - "The McGurk Effect"

Post by "EricR" of January 21, 2018 at 11:09 AM

I came across this video and thought it worth sharing here. It illustrates how the mind interprets sense data and can create illusory experiences. Of note is that this will be seen by many people as evidence that the senses are not trustworthy. I'm interested to know what folks here think.

<https://youtu.be/G-IN8vWm3m0>

Post by "Cassius" of January 21, 2018 at 2:54 PM

Very interesting! I don't think there is any issue with the fact that the brain takes all its inputs and assembles a conclusion, as stated at 2:57 in the video. Of COURSE we can't always trust what we see or here or any other sense - that is the purpose of multiple exposures and examining the facts from as many different sides as we can. Epicurus absolutely knew that and taught to compensate for it, and it's just a fallacy of anti-Epicureans to suggest that he would be taken aback by this kind of things.

So in the end I think this is an excellent video for getting to the root of the issue - illusions do NOT invalidate the need for sensation, and that's just the point that Lucretius argues about sensations in Book IV.

Post by "EricR" of January 21, 2018 at 4:48 PM

The validation via the senses is actually demonstrated in the video. It is suggested to close the eyes and notice that what is actually being heard. Those who take this video as evidence that "the senses can't be trusted" will possibly miss that part.

I would add that the video reminded me of a conversation I mentioned in the audio chat last week. I got into a debate with a friend, a medical doctor no less, who stated bluntly "I don't trust my senses". I got a tad annoyed at the obvious fact that he was telling me this so was assuming I could hear him. But I chose to ask him more about what he meant. Turns out he defines the "senses" as the entire mechanism of sense data + mental construction. So when the mind creates an illusion as it does in the video, he would say "see, the senses create

illusions".

This way of defining the senses is a common error and we need to be on top of it with clear distinctions between "sense data" and "mental constructions".