

# Did Epicurus really oversell the power of science to diminish anxiety?

Post by “waterholic” of February 14, 2023 at 1:52 AM

"In the end, though, Epicurus might oversell science's power to diminish anxiety, at least for individuals who find themselves enmeshed in a powerfully anti-science environment" (from "Living for Pleasure: An Epicurean Guide to Life (Guides to the Good Life)" by Emily A. Austin)

I am happy to find a (somewhat) critical argument about Epicurus. He was far from infallible. Some of the ideas about the shape of atoms were simply laughable. But I have a hard time to accept this particular remark.

I assume this is a statement that is hard to generalise, argue or disprove. I can only share my personal experience. It is not that I read something new about the nature of the universe in DRN. It is the structure of argumentation, ethics logically assembled on it and the fact that this knowledge was there for human kind for millenia that did make a difference personally for me. It does help to put permanently to rest the notion that you as an individual are somehow the centre of the universe.

I suppose Epicurus did not claim that science (or rather physics in his understanding) can help **everyone** diminish anxiety, including people who are not open to critical thinking. A minimum requirement should be to study and contemplate. So I am not entirely sure where the overselling comes from.