

Epicurean Physics and Modernity

Post by “Apollonius” of July 24, 2019 at 7:40 AM

The Epicurean "Weltanschauung" is so modern! And no one has described this better than Stephen Greenblatt in *The Swerve*:

“Understanding the nature of things generates deep wonder. The realization that the universe consists of atoms and void and nothing else, that the world was not made for us by a providential creator, that we are not the center of the universe, that our emotional lives are no more distinct than our physical lives from those of all other creatures, that our souls are as material and as mortal as our bodies — all these things are not the cause for despair. On the contrary, grasping the way things really are is the crucial step toward the possibility of happiness. “

Post by “Cassius” of July 24, 2019 at 8:33 AM

Excellent summary, and I like that he does it without going overboard in the opposite direction (we often see the argument that since we are such a speck in a vast universe we are totally "insignificant," which is true in a sense, but does not mean that we need to crawl in a hole and die, ashamed to be no more than a worm.

While we live we have the possibility of pleasure and happiness, and that is a lot to be happy about.

Post by “Joshua” of July 24, 2019 at 6:08 PM

His Getty lecture was great. I really wish he had read the audiobook himself, it always enhances the experience if they're good at.

The Italian gentleman who *did* read the audiobook did well though, and his native language helped a lot with all of the Italian words and names.