

"Next Big Idea" Podcast Interviews Emily Austin

Post by "Godfrey" of January 26, 2023 at 6:32 PM

Emily Austin's interview with The Next Big Idea podcast dropped today. It's a great interview and quite favorable to Epicurus. Rufus (the interviewer) mentions some other authors that he's interviewed on the podcast and that some of us have read, so I was quite pleased that he made the connections. Definitely check it out! 👍 👍

[The Next Big Idea - Wondery | Premium Podcasts](#)

Also on Google podcasts, Apple podcasts, etc.

Image not found or type unknown



[Next Big Idea Podcast with Rufus Griscom | Podcast](#)

The Next Big Idea Podcast, with Rufus Griscom, groundbreaking ideas with the power to change the way you see the world. Part of the LinkedIn Podcast Network
nextbigideaclub.com

Post by “Cassius” of January 26, 2023 at 7:23 PM

Epicurus owned two cloaks and subsisted mostly on bread and olives?

Good grief! Where do people get this stuff?

Let's set up a new thread for this podcast and I will move these there!

"Because pleasure... is the small joys that emerge ... in a word... tranquility."

Immediate correction: He says he thinks everyone should replace their reverence for Stoicism with reverence for Epicurus! So i will cut him a lot of slack! 😊

Post by “Godfrey” of January 26, 2023 at 7:32 PM

There are some "moments," but she generally gets back to clarify them in good fashion.

Post by “Cassius” of January 26, 2023 at 7:54 PM

This book and this writer in her interviews is conducting the most aggressive and rigorously pro-Epicurean and non-Stoic campaign in public in a very long time. This is all very interesting and welcome.

The idea of her saying good things about Epicurus but also bad things about the Stoics at the same time is probably blowing the minds of 80% of these podcast audiences!

Post by “Cassius” of January 26, 2023 at 8:40 PM

Just finished listening to the full thing. I concur with Godfrey. Emily does a great job.

Perhaps the one new item I think I caught in this interview is around the 45 minute mark where there is an exchange relating to ambition, which again I think was handled very well by Dr. Austin,

So if I were rating the interviews she has given (other than ours



) I would say that this one has the "pro" that the interviewer is very positive about the book and about the superiority of Epicurus over Stoicism. The only reason I might tell someone to listen to one of the other interviews first is that this interviewer is so talkative about his own views that it seemed to me that he didn't give Emily nearly enough time to talk for herself.

But this is definitely a podcast that has a very positive total effect. I gather there are a lot of people who like the "next big idea" approach, and I suspect their audience will really like what they hear in this interview. And in the end that's what it's all about, so I give it a thumbs up.

Post by "Don" of January 26, 2023 at 10:23 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Epicurus owned two cloaks

I saw this all over the internet, but no source.

- Seneca, in letter 87, talks about having two cloaks: one as a spread, one as a cover.
- Eupolis calls the sophists "parasites" because they had two cloaks to choose from when they visited the agora. (in *Flatterers*, fragment 159)
- Juvenal in Satire 13, talks about the Cynics having two cloaks; the Stoics, one.

I have no idea where Epicurus only having two cloaks comes from.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

subsisted mostly on bread and olives

Mostly from same Internet searches... But at least he's eating bread, olives, water, and cheese.

PS: I would like to say this is a minor point. It's right off the bat so it stands out, but it's not a make or break because it seems having just two cloaks in ancient Greece wasn't that big of a deal. It's like "bread and water" being the quintessential daily meal and not some sort of "spartan" ascetic practice.

PPS. Still about 14 minutes to go in the podcast episode but so far 👍 👍 SO refreshing to hear such positive conversation on a mainstream podcast of Epicureanism and Epicurus! Can't wait to finish.... But it's late so I'll leave that till morning.

Post by “Don” of January 27, 2023 at 10:44 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

PPS. Still about 14 minutes to go in the podcast episode but so far 👍👍 SO refreshing to hear such positive conversation on a mainstream podcast of Epicureanism and Epicurus! Can't wait to finish.... But it's late so I'll leave that till morning.

Okay, finished up The Next Big Idea podcast episode with Emily Austin, and "Yes, yes, yes!" Some random thoughts to simply add to the κῦδος (kudos) she's already acquired.

btw, I double-checked and κῦδος is defined by LSJ as "glory, renown, esp. in war" and, in some ways, I'd say the Stoics are gonna see this as a "war." They've been largely unopposed in the popular arena for a long time. But, by Zeus, we have a new champion on the Epicurean side!



- The episode was lively, conversational, and a classic example of The Next Big Idea podcast format. You wanna share TNBI podcast with friends? Share this one!
- The Twentieth/kegger comment was amusing.
- The host was, as others have pointed out, extremely welcoming. What I found most interesting was his acknowledgement that he had had these "Epicurean" tendencies and thoughts *before* knowing about Epicurus. Epicurus was in some ways a validation of his intuition. I think that's a good thing and points to the "common sense" within the philosophy... As opposed to say Stoicism.
- And the contrasts consistently made between the classical and modern Stoics vs Epicureans was great!!
- Emily's consistent emphasis on "extravagant desires aren't bad" is refreshing!!
- I also liked Rufus saying the line about greed, satisfaction, and tranquility stopping him in his tracks was great. I realize it was an ad for the app, but it felt genuine too. The Stones excerpt was a nice touch.

I know I'm not saying anything novel in this post, so I'll end with "Thank you! To Emily! To Rufus! To The Next Big Idea for inviting her on! Well deserved and well played!"

Post by “Godfrey” of January 27, 2023 at 11:13 AM

Quote from Don

Emily's consistent emphasis on "extravagant desires aren't bad" is refreshing!!

To further this comment: as I recall, she mentioned that the extravagant desires are where the real work of the philosophy is done. This line of thinking agrees with my thinking that these desires are the "sweet spot" of working with the philosophy, so that makes me happy 😊