

BOOKS AND IDEAS PODCAST

With Ginger Campbell, MD

Episode #45

Online 12/19/2011

Fifth Anniversary Review

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INTRODUCTION

This is [Books and Ideas](#), and I'm your host, Dr. Ginger Campbell. This is Episode 45, and today I'm taking a few minutes to reflect back on the last five years. Yes, this is the fifth anniversary of *Books and Ideas*.

Now, if you listen to my other podcast, you probably know that I usually do an annual review episode of the [Brain Science Podcast](#), but this will be a first for *Books and Ideas*. I plan to look back at some of the highlights from the past five years, and I will tell you a little bit about what I have planned for next year.

Before I continue, I want to remind you that you can get episode show notes and free transcripts at booksandideas.com. You can also send me email at docartemis@gmail.com. And if you want to make sure you never miss an episode of one of my podcasts, be sure to sign up for my [newsletter](#) on the website.

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FIFTH ANNIVERSARY REVIEW

I want to start out by giving you a little bit of background. This will be especially for those of you that are relatively new listeners. Both [Books and Ideas](#) and the [Brain Science Podcast](#) were launched in December of 2006. And, believe it or not, at first I tried to put out a show every week, alternating between *Books and Ideas* and the *Brain Science Podcast*. It didn't take me long to realize that I couldn't keep up that pace; and over the intervening years, *Books and Ideas* has evolved into a semi-monthly show.

I'm often asked why I produce two podcasts, when the *Brain Science Podcast* is such a demanding enterprise. Well, the answer is quite simple. I enjoy reading about a wide variety of subjects, and I wanted an outlet to explore topics that didn't really fit into the *Brain Science Podcast*. *Books and Ideas* has given me a chance to talk with a wide variety of interesting people, which is why, even though it has a smaller audience than the *Brain Science Podcast*, it's actually the show I would least like to give up.

But, let's look back on five years. That's not a bad record, when you consider that [podcasting](#) really just started in 2004. At any rate, I think one reason that *Books and Ideas* hasn't found a large audience is that it doesn't really fall into any sort of niche. I've done episodes on science, philosophy, history, and medicine; and I've talked to a wide range of interesting people, including scientists, philosophers, writers, psychologists, physicians, and historians.

I want to take a few moments to thank each of the 33 guests that have appeared on *Books and Ideas*. My first [guest](#) was historian Matthew Cobb, who wrote the book, [Generation](#), which looks at the 17th century's attempts to unravel the mysteries of reproduction. Other historians who have come on the show include [Holly Tucker](#) and [Jennifer Michael Hecht](#).

I also want to thank a couple of my earliest listeners, who graciously agreed to be part of the podcast. In [Episode 10](#) I interviewed Kirk McElhearn, who is an

American who's lived in France for many years. And [Episode 13](#) was my Harry Potter episode, where Patrick Pricken, who is in Germany, was the only co-host that I've ever had on the show.

Now, naturally, quite a few scientists have appeared on *Books and Ideas*. The first one was [Lee Silver](#); then I had astronomer, [Pamela Gay](#); [Robert Schleip](#); [Eugenie Scott](#); NASA's [Les Johnson](#); [Daniel George](#); and [Sheril Kirshenbaum](#). Nobel Prize winning physicist, [Frank Wilczek](#) graciously took the time to do [two](#) episodes; and these are two of my favorites.

Even though *Books and Ideas* does tend to have a science focus, I have interviewed several fiction writers, including podcasting pioneers [Mur Lafferty](#) and [Christiana Ellis](#), horror writer, [Scott Sigler](#); [Tabitha Grace Smith](#), from *Buffy Between the Lines*; novelist, [Skyler White](#); and, of course, just last month, bestselling author, [Karen Traviss](#).

As I mentioned earlier, *Books and Ideas* sometimes features topics that don't quite fit on the *Brain Science Podcast*, so there have been quite a few psychologists, including [Delany Dean](#), who talked about the use of meditation; author, [Eric Maisel](#); [Bruce Hood](#); and [Carol Tavis](#).

We also had [Dan Ariely](#), author of *Predictably Irrational*. And he's not really a psychologist; I think what he does is considered behavioral economics. I have had the privilege of speaking with several physicians, including [Neel Varshney](#); neurologist and podcaster, [Steven Novella](#); medical historian, [Robert Martensen](#); and of course, [Dr. Paul Offit](#), who has been on the show [twice](#), helping to dispel the misinformation about vaccine safety.

One area that hasn't appeared as often as I had expected is philosophy. But last year I did talk to [Massimo Pigliucci](#) about the philosophy of science; and I've also talked to [Tom Clark](#) about naturalism.

Let's see; who have I left out? Well, last year I talked to [Sue Bailey and Carmen Flowers](#) about their unusual approach to death. And one of my all-time favorite guests was [Kyla Duffy](#), from [happytailsbooks.com](#), which is a great place to learn about dog rescue.

So, that's just a very short overview of who has been on *Books and Ideas*. Now, there were a few early episodes that weren't interviews. I did an [episode](#) about Lee Smolin's book, [The Trouble with Physics](#), which I think is a pretty good one. But, for the most part, the show has evolved into an interview show.

If you want to listen to an episode featuring a certain guest or topic, the easiest way to find it when you're on the website, [booksandideas](#), is to use the search box that is at the top of the right sidebar. Just type in the guest's name, or a keyword like 'history' or 'philosophy,' or even the book title, and you should be able to find the right episode. And, of course, you can still get all these episodes in [iTunes](#).

If you want a [list of all the guests](#), all you have to do is hover your cursor over the words, 'Books and Ideas,' that appear in the blue banner at the top of the website, and you'll see that as one of the choices. And, if you're in a hurry, don't forget that you can get a free [transcript](#) for every episode.

So, it's kind of amazing that I talked about 5 years of this podcast in less than 10 minutes, since there are about 40 hours of content. But I want to look forward to 2012. I've been thinking a lot about whether I need to make any changes in the podcast for the coming year. And I would love to hear your feedback. You can write to me at docartemis@gmail.com.

One question I have for you is whether you would like to hear short book reviews, like I did early on, or whether you would prefer that I stick with the pure interview format. I've been thinking that I might be able to put the podcast out

more often if I intersperse some shorter episodes with the long-format interviews.

One thing I am going to try to move toward is making the show a little bit more personal. I tried to do this when I first started, and it didn't really feel right; so, I'm really not sure what this will mean. But one of the things I'm going to do is take some time, from time to time, to tell you a little bit about things I'm interested in that are closer to home. So, next month I'm going to be interviewing [Roger Reid](#), from the [Alabama Museum of Natural History](#).

I'm going to try to put the podcast out as close to monthly as I can. And I would really like to increase the audience size, so I will be encouraging you to try to help get the word out. I'll talk a little more about how you can do that in just a minute.

Before I get into my usual closing announcements and reminders, I do want to take a moment to thank every one of you for listening to the podcast; and especially to those of you who have taken the time to send me feedback (which helps me to know that you're not just downloading, but actually listening to the episodes), and also, to those of you who have sent in donations.

And, especially, I want to thank those of you who have bought the app, which is available for [iPhone](#), [iPad](#), and [Android](#) devices. I think I make about a dollar on each one of those; but it turns out, it does add up after awhile.

Also, I'd like to tell you that in January I'm going to be at the [ScienceOnline conference](#) in Raleigh, North Carolina; which means I'm going to be in Raleigh from January 18th through January 21st. So, even if you can't get into ScienceOnline (I think it's full now), if you live in that area and would like to get together, feel free to drop me an email.

So, just to sum up with some of the usual announcements that I tell you from time to time: First, there is one thing new, and that is that I am on [Google+](#),

which looks like it's going to be big in 2012. So, if you're using Google+, I hope you look for me. And also, I've started a Google+ page for the [Brain Science Podcast](#), [Books and Ideas](#), and for [sciencepodcasters.org](#). So, if you're on Google+, be sure to add these to your Circles; because if we can get enough interest, we can then use this as a way of setting up some live events.

Meanwhile, the best way to keep up with *Books and Ideas* is to sign up for the newsletter at [booksandideas.com](#). You can also find me on Facebook, where I have a [personal Fan page](#), and one for [Books and Ideas](#). You can follow me on Twitter, where I am [docartemis](#). And, of course, you can send me feedback at [docartemis@gmail.com](#).

As I mentioned before, the best way to keep up with me is to sign up for my [newsletter](#). That way, you get show notes automatically, and you won't miss any episodes. Of course, please do subscribe via [iTunes](#) or whatever podcatcher you use.

If you're interested in supporting *Books and Ideas*, there are several ways that you can help out. You can make a [donation](#). There is a tab for this at [booksandideas.com](#), on that blue banner that I mentioned before. Also, you can buy the *Books and Ideas* app for your [iPhone](#), [iPad](#), or [Android](#) device. The advantage of this app is that it allows you to read the transcripts right on your device; and it also allows you to stream episodes.

Even if you can't afford to support the show financially, you can help promote the show by leaving reviews on [iTunes](#), or wherever you get your podcasts. And please share the links to your favorite episodes via [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), or [Google+](#). It is now easy to do this. If you go to the website for the show notes for an episode, you will see buttons that you can click on for these. Word of mouth is the main way that this show gets new listeners.

One thing's for sure: there is no shortage of interesting guests and interesting books out there to talk about. And I'm really looking forward to doing some interesting episodes in 2012.

Thank you again for listening; and I look forward to talking to you again next year.

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Theme music for *Books and Ideas* is "The Open Door" by Beatnik Turtle. Be sure to visit their website at beatnikturtle.com.

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Transcribed by [Lori Wolfson](#)
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