

# Crooked Thinking or Straight Talk?: Modernizing Epicurean Scientific Philosophy

**Post by “Matteng” of November 6, 2023 at 3:59 PM**

Hi all,

I've found the book "Crooked Thinking or Straight Talk?: Modernizing Epicurean Scientific Philosophy" with an interesting Table of contents and a good Reading sample / preface

<https://amzn.eu/d/dxKtjQM>

Does anyone know the book or have any recommendations for it?

---

**Post by “Titus” of November 6, 2023 at 4:39 PM**

I haven't read the book, but it seems it is kind of an "individual" work of the author, his own thoughts on Epicurus. Springer is a reputable publisher. The author has his own [wikipedia entry](#).

At a glance, the author seems to summarize contents which seem to be already known to ordinary students of Epicurus. The table of contents features current political issues he discusses in relation to Epicureanism.

I would buy on sale 😁

---

**Post by “Cassius” of November 6, 2023 at 4:40 PM**

**Both the book and the author are absolutely new to me, so thanks for pointing this out! Maybe someone else has some familiarity with one or the other.**

## About the Author

Ken Binmore is a mathematician turned economist and philosopher. He has held chairs at the London School of Economics, the University of Michigan, and University College London. He has

<http://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/3476-crooked-thinking-or-straight-talk-modernizing-epicurean-scientific-philosophy/>

been involved in a range of applied projects, including the design of major telecom auctions in various countries across the world. The telecom auction he organized in the UK raised \$35 billion, prompting Newsweek magazine to describe him as the “ruthless, poker-playing economist who destroyed the telecom industry”. He has contributed to game theory, experimental economics, evolutionary biology and moral philosophy. His books include Natural Justice (OUP), Does Game Theory Work? (MIT Press), A Very Short Introduction to Game Theory (OUP), and Rational Decisions (PUP). He is currently a Visiting Professor of Economics at the University of Bristol and a Visiting Professor of Philosophy at LSE.

---

### **Post by “Joshua” of November 6, 2023 at 5:34 PM**

#### [Beware the Casual Polymath](#)

We live in times of great disaggregation, and yet, seem to learn increasingly from generalists. In the past, an expert in one field of Psychology might have...

[www.applieddivinitystudies.com](http://www.applieddivinitystudies.com)

I'm not saying he is one, I'm just saying there are red flags.

---

### **Post by “Pacatus” of November 6, 2023 at 6:01 PM**

I read the sample on Amazon: his writing style is pleasantly light-fingered, nondogmatic (in the modern conventional, generally pejorative, sense) and humorous.

When reading his comments on, e.g., Plato’s error in thinking that the propositions of a model (at least if internally coherent) must represent some idealized reality, I was reminded of a comment I read sometime back by a process philosopher about the silliness of many metaphysicians in acting as if every substantive (noun) in our language must represent some actual (even if idealized) substance (thing). Or that every existent must possess some innate real essence (e.g., “redness” must be a real substance, not just a color description on the spectrum).

It's a bit pricey for me now, but I put it in my Amazon wishlist for future consideration.

---

### **Post by “Novem” of December 11, 2025 at 11:51 PM**

<http://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/3476-crooked-thinking-or-straight-talk-modernizing-epicurean-scientific-philosophy/>

I bought a used copy of it and Natural Justice; I just heard of him on Philosophy Substack in metaethics. [One person](#) was influenced by Benmore to develop a theory of evolutionary and game-theoretic Humean constructivist metaethics--and he mentions Epicurus as a precursor.

---

## Post by “Patrikios” of December 18, 2025 at 9:40 PM

### [Quote from Matteng](#)

I've found the book "Crooked Thinking or Straight Talk?: Modernizing Epicurean Scientific Philosophy" with an interesting Table of contents and a good Reading sample / preface

Free download of a 4-page summary is available here:

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/367211936\\_Special\\_Issue\\_on\\_Crooked\\_Thinking\\_or\\_Straight\\_Talk\\_M](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/367211936_Special_Issue_on_Crooked_Thinking_or_Straight_Talk_M)