

Any Recommendations on “The Oxford Handbook of Epicurus and Epicureanism”?

Post by “Eikadistes” of November 5, 2025 at 4:33 PM

It's an exceptional resource. It also may *not* be the best resource for new students.

As an academic text, *The Handbook* is organized as a collection of essays from respected scholars. In total (in over 800 pages), they present a synoptic view of Epicurean Philosophy; in *particular*, each focuses on a specific topic; some of those topics are much more narrow in scope than other overviews. Sometimes, the topics covered express interpretative disagreements in contemporary scholarship; in these cases, a background in the philosophy may be assumed by the author.

I think that students *may* struggle with the presentation — for example, depending on the author, and the author's *voice*, they *may*, or *may not* assume that you already know ancient Greek, or may or may not employ non-standard, in-text citations, or may over-use academic jargon, so I anticipate that some of the essays might strike new readers as being (understandably) obfuscating. Some of the topics are tangential, and inter-disciplinary, so I think of *The Handbook* as more of a supplement.

Still, each essay is filled with great information. The book is expansive, and the authors, as one would expect of academics, provide voluminous support for their analyses. You'll also find a wealth of peripheral, historical information as it relates to non-Epicureans, and modern philosophers.

It's also chunky enough that it stands up on its own on a bookshelf.