

How Should We Evaluate Abstractions?

Post by “Cassius” of December 26, 2025 at 10:04 PM

One additional thought to add to this is that I would recommend anyone interested in this issue to check out what Norman DeWitt has to say in emphasizing Epicurus' commitment to deductive reasoning.

While atoms are not abstractions, we don't have any direct ability to see or touch them directly, so the inferences we draw about them and how they operate are certainly abstract to a degree, and I think this is what the topic is largely about.

Are "abstractions" the same as "concepts?" If so, we certainly do conceptual reasoning all the time, and I think the question is whether those concepts are supported by evidence of the sensations, anticipations, and feelings (such as when we base our inferences about atoms on things we *can* see and touch and smell etc.)

This note will also serve as a reminder that after we complete Tusculan Disputations we're going to at least visit Philodemus' "On Signs/On Methods Of Inference" which is directly related to this topic.