

Propositional Logic, Truth Tables, and Epicurus' Objection to "Dialectic"

Post by "Cassius" of September 17, 2021 at 6:11 AM

This exercise is helping me see the connection between this "formal logic" problem and the problem of "necessity."

Since Epicurus was rejecting "necessity" in human life, in favor of "free will," then it's logical he would be suspicious of too-broad claims of "necessity" in anything involving human life.

Aristotle regards empiricism as inadequate because he believes that observation can never give necessary connections between objects. In the absence of causal knowledge the empirical scientist must base his knowledge on a study of signs, and inferences from signs are not reliable except in cases where the inferences may be converted into valid syllogisms. He says in one place that a science of physiognomy would be

combine Epicurus' rejection of dialectic with his rejection of "necessity" and it seems to me that you have a pretty sweeping rejection of the reliability of syllogistic logic in virtually every aspect of human affairs. That doesn't mean syllogistic logic isn't reliable in regard to "material" issues, because the letter to Herodotus points out that most things in the universe are as they have been set in motion from the "formation of the world."

So it looks like you end up with both necessity (and formal logic) being useful in most purely non-living affairs, but "free will," and therefore freedom from formal logic, in the affairs of living things with freedom of action.