

# Episode One Hundred Forty-Eight - "Epicurus And His Philosophy" Part 04 - True Opinions And False Opinions About Epicurus

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## Quote

For example, atoms cannot be observed directly; their existence and properties must be determined by deduction, and the principles thereby deduced serve as standards for assessing truth.

As mentioned a few weeks ago, this formulation is wrong. If you use only deduction, you are limited to logic and mathematics. Induction is necessary to justify a theory from which you want to deduce something about reality. At Epicurus time, direct observation of atoms was not possible, and we have no texts which show how Epicurus produced his axioms about existence and basic properties of the atoms. He might have obtained them by starting with a theory based on Democritus' atomism and alternating between checking how well the theory can explain all relevant observations and improving the theory. Democritus und his predecessors might have used a similar interplay between observations and precursor theories.