

Accelerating Study of Canonics Through Philodemus' "On Methods of Inference"

Post by "Cassius" of April 6, 2026 at 10:56 AM

Given that many of our recent discussions have focused on identifying the Epicurean position as to knowledge, and whether "probability" is the best we can do on any topic, I've produced using Claude an initial outline of the analysis of Philodemus made by DeLacy and Sedley. The current result seems to me to accord with my prior reading from both sources, and this outline brings the sources and references together in a much tighter presentation that we've had available before.

Just to be clear, it is a primary goal of EpicureanFriends.com to produce accurate and understandable material to help new people develop a general level of understanding of Epicurus. Even after ten years of online activity, we've previously only scratched the surface of review of this work by Philodemus, despite the fact that it clearly and firmly addresses one of the most controversial aspects of Epicurean philosophy. These are issues we are grappling with now on the Lucretius Today Podcast, and we're going to turn even more directly to them when we finish Academic Questions and move directly to this book.

if you have an absolutist rejection of all use of AI in philosophical work, you certainly are under no obligation to read any of all of this document. If, on the other hand, you're in tune with the urgency and desirability of using any tool possible to better understand Epicurean philosophy and explain it to others, then I welcome your review of this summary and your suggestions for improving it. Please post those in the thread linked below.

The full version of the current analysis outline at EpicurusToday.com:

[Philodemus - On Methods of Inference - Outline and Analysis](#)

Forum thread for discussion, comments, suggestions:

Thread

[Analysis of Epicurean Canonics](#)

I have asked ClaudeAI to take the DeLacy translation and commentary, as well as Sedley's essay On Signs, and produce a detailed outline and analysis of the work based on those two authorities. After reviewing the result it looks pretty good to me, and extremely useful.

Given it's length and easier presentation in markdown format than here, I'll link it first (where it is easier to read). The full text follows after the link. Given the duplicate effort in maintaining two copies I will probably...

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/5017-accelerating-study-of-canonics-through-philodemus-on-methods-of-inference/>



Cassius

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