

# Article - Lucretius on the Nature of Parental Love - McConnell

Post by "Cassius" of August 29, 2019 at 10:43 PM

Exactly Joshua. I think you are correct here:

## [Quote from JJElbert](#)

When we talk about desire with regards to it being natural and necessary, surely what we mean is that the experience of a desire is natural (or not), while the satisfaction of a desire is necessary (or not). [Am I wrong here!?!]

How ridiculous to accept the idea that Epicurus would argue straightforwardly that it is not "natural" to love one's children. As you say, all pleasure is natural, as we did not create the mechanism ourselves, so anything in which we find pleasure is a natural result of that experience. Now some pleasures cost much more in pain than they are worth, but that does not make the pleasure, or the pain, any less "natural."

I continue to refer to Torquatus' statement as the most logical expression of what natural / necessary is all about -- that *"the principle of classification being that the necessary desires are gratified with little trouble or expense; the natural desires also require but little, since nature's own riches, which suffice to content her, are both easily procured and limited in amount; but for the imaginary desires no bound or limit can be discovered."*

Now I am thinking that this argument maybe got mixed up in the issue of friendship and what is the motivating force for friendship in the first place (?) Maybe those who were attacking Epicurus were trying to argue that even with children the same issue is involved as Torquatus discusses with friends:

*"Other Epicureans though by no means lacking in insight are a little less courageous in defying the opprobrious criticisms of the Academy. They fear that if we hold friendship to be desirable only for the pleasure that it affords to ourselves, it will be thought that it is crippled altogether. They therefore say that the first advances and overtures, and the original inclination to form an attachment, are prompted by the desire for pleasure, but that when the progress of intercourse has led to intimacy, the relationship blossoms into an affection strong enough to make us love our friends for their own sake, even though no practical advantage accrues from their friendship,"*

And so maybe that argument mutated into "there is no NATURAL motivation to love our children any more than it is to love our friends - because Epicurus said It is all a question of

advantage."

Maybe - as I am just speculating here, but there must be some explanation for this "bizarre" discussion.