

Researchers Prove Altruism Begins In Infancy- is this an anticipation?

Post by “Hiram” of February 10, 2020 at 7:38 PM

I'm planning on discussing this actually in my Twentieth message. Lucretius wrote on the origins of compassion for the weak and for neighbors in the fifth book of *De Rerum Natura*, which is the most complete and fascinating discussion of Epicurean anthropology (it's generally assumed that he based his poem on Epicurus' books *On Nature*)

*And when they saw an offspring born
From out themselves, then first the human race
Began to soften. For 'twas now that fire
Rendered their shivering frames less staunch to bear,
Under the canopy of the sky, the cold;
And **Love reduced their shaggy hardness;**
And children, with the prattle and the kiss,
Soon broke the parents' haughty temper down.
Then, too, did **neighbours 'gin to league as friends,
Eager to wrong no more or suffer wrong,
And urged for children and the womankind
Mercy, of fathers, whilst with cries and gestures
They stammered hints how meet it was that all
Should have compassion on the weak.** And still,
Though concord not in every wise could then
Begotten be, a good, a goodly part
Kept faith inviolate- or else mankind*

*Long since had been unutterably cut off,
And propagation never could have brought
The species down the ages.*

Lucretius, in De Rerum Natura 5:1015-27

(also, the book *The Bonobo and the Atheist* is an anthropological account of the origins of morality, for which I wrote a review

<http://societyofepicurus.com/the-bonobo-and...st-book-review/>)