

Aristotle on Friendship and the Lovable

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Abstract: In this paper, I argue that Aristotle's basic principle, that all friends love only because of the lovable, is egoistic. First, I argue that 'the lovable' (τὸ φιλητὸν) refers to that which appears to contribute to one's own happiness. Second, I argue that the lovable is the final cause of love. This means that in loving only because of the lovable, all friends love only for the sake of what appears to contribute to their own happiness. As Aristotelian love for others requires that these others appear to contribute to one's own happiness, it is in some sense egoistic.

Keywords: Egoism, altruism, love, friendship, Aristotle, lovable

In 1958, G. E. M. Anscombe published her influential "Modern Moral Philosophy," arguing that the language of obligation that grounds modern (Western) ethical systems is itself grounded on a divine law framework no longer endorsed by them, leading to an incoherence in these systems. What has followed in philosophical scholarship is probably non-accidental: the resurrection of a long-overlooked option, newly christened as "virtue ethics," and inquiry into whether it can fill the shoes of modern systems. Interest in virtue ethics has gone hand-in-hand with interest in perhaps its most influential progenitor, Aristotle, and in what his ethics has to offer in comparison to modern options. Now an apparent feature of the modern options that many scholars find attractive and would like to find in Aristotle's ethics is robust concern for others. Such a finding is not immediate; Aristotle's ethics, as with virtually all ancient Greek options, takes *one's own* happiness or living well (εὐδαιμονία) as central. In order to see whether or not

this eudaimonistic framework can accommodate robust concern for others, one must naturally turn to Aristotle’s account of friendship¹—not only for this account itself, but also for its consequences for justice, which Aristotle claims is coextensive with friendship.² The relevance of Aristotelian friendship has not been lost upon scholars; just over a decade after Anscombe’s challenging work, the literature on Aristotelian friendship, relatively ignored for 2500 years, experienced explosive growth.

The ensuing debate has often been framed around three options: Aristotelian friendship is egoistic, altruistic, or neither. For evidence, interpreters on all sides draw overwhelmingly from material after *EN VIII.2*. Altruistic interpretations appeal to the way that *EN VIII* goes on to develop *VIII.2*’s notion of wishing goods for the sake of (ἔνεκα) *x*, and how *EN VIII* characterizes loving *x* because of (διὰ) *x* himself, or on account of (κατὰ) *x* himself, or for who *x* is (ἣ ὁ ἐστίν). The idea is that when Aristotle says that a virtue friend *y* wishes goods for *x*’s sake, or loves *x* for who *x* is, *x* contributes to *y*’s own happiness—but *y*’s own happiness is not the ultimate final cause or end of *y*’s love (let us call this interpretation ‘pure altruism’),³ where ultimate ends are those that are not subordinated to another end (*EN I.7*, 1097a30–b6). Or *y*’s own happiness *is* an ultimate end, but one that is not prioritized over *x* (let us call this ‘mixed altruism’).⁴ Egoistic interpretations of Aristotelian friendship often draw their strength from *EN IX.8*, the discussion of self-love (φιλαυτία); Aristotle seems to endorse a praiseworthy form of self-love whereby virtuous agents maximize the superlatively valuable fine (τὸ καλὸν) for themselves and over others.⁵ Here, *y*’s own happiness is an ultimate end of loving another person *x*; pure egoism holds that one’s own happiness is the *only* ultimate end, while mixed egoism holds that the other’s happiness is also an ultimate end but one that does not take priority over one’s own happiness. Aristotle’s crucial notion of “another self” sets both altruistic and egoistic interpretations on their heels. When Aristotle says *x* loves *y* as another *self*, presumably some kind of identification obtains. But understood in one way, the identification involved in other selfhood renders nonsensical both egoism and altruism. Egoism presumes that one prioritizes oneself over the other; but in the case of other selves, this might amount to prioritizing

oneself over oneself (where the other has been identified with oneself). The case is similar with altruism where one prioritizes the other over oneself; with other selves, we might get the prioritization of the other over the other (where oneself has been identified with the other). No prioritization between other selves seems permissible here, and we seem to have a third way between altruism and egoism, what might be called ‘non-prioritization.’⁶ Two quick notes are in order about these categorizations. First, they are primarily about ultimate ends and not results; giving up one’s life to save others might be extremely other-regarding yet egoistic if the prioritized ultimate end is one’s own happiness, specifically the virtuous activity that is at least the most important aspect of Aristotelian happiness. Second, many readings do not appeal to the notion of prioritization; for example, if pure altruist interpretations of Aristotelian love are right in denying that one’s own happiness is an ultimate end or even an end at all (in a way to be specified below), there is not really a question of whether or not we should prioritize the other, who is on this picture the only (ultimate) end of love. In the last section of the paper, I will focus on ‘prioritization’ and suggest why it is important for the above categorizations.

To preview work from elsewhere, the aforementioned pieces of post-VIII.2 evidence for non-egoism may not be decisive. Love of other selves, for example, parents’ love for children (*EN* VIII.12), centers on how these other selves specially facilitate one’s own virtuous activity by being one’s own product (*EN* IX.7). But while *Physics* III.3 suggests that the activity of the mover (like the producer) is coextensive with the activity of the moved (like the product), it also suggests that the activity of mover and the activity of moved are different in essence or account (*λόγος*), and *EN* IX.7 and IX.9 make clear that the producer values her product, her other self, for her activity qua her own. We can understand wishing goods for another’s sake and loving the other for himself too as egoistic. These forms of concern center on the other’s virtue, but Aristotle makes clear that what is fundamentally valuable is not virtue or virtuous character but what it facilitates: virtuous activity. Furthermore, Aristotle makes clear that what is important here is *one’s own* virtuous activity. For example, after suggesting that pleasure friendships and utility friendships dissolve if pleasure and utility do, respectively, *EN* IX.3 recommends that we

leave behind our virtue friends whose virtue we have outstripped, on account of insufficient shared living (συμβιοῦν), that is, shared virtuous activity. This implies that Aristotelian friendship is not, at least in its paradigmatic form, charity or tutelage; the shared activity is equal and reciprocal, for, as we find out in *EN IX.9*, one's own self-knowledge is at stake, not merely building up the self-knowledge of others. As anticipated in *EN VIII.3*, 1156b14–17, the friend's virtue then is valued for the *self*-knowledge required for *one's own* happiness.

All that said, what I am going to now argue is that an egoistic interpretation of Aristotelian friendship is largely secured before we even get to the aforementioned topics. Specifically, it is largely (but not wholly) secured by the end of *EN VIII.2*, by the way that Aristotle frames his entire discussion of friendship (this has been hitherto unnoticed, even by proponents of egoistic interpretations). At the beginning of the exposition of his own theory, Aristotle claims that all friends love *only because of the lovable*. I will argue that this means that friends love *only for the sake of their own happiness*; Aristotelian friendship is therefore egoistic. In section 1, I assess *EN VIII.2's* claim that all friends love only the lovable. I argue that 'the lovable' refers to what appears good for oneself; so all friends love only what appears good for themselves (section 1.1). Further, I argue that Aristotle understands the good for oneself as that which contributes to one's own happiness (section 1.2). So we must understand Aristotle's fundamental principle as follows: all friends love only because of the lovable, what appears to contribute to their own happiness.

This may seem to immediately secure an egoistic understanding of Aristotelian friendship, but another step remains. For 'because of' might track not the final cause, but only the efficient cause; one loves another not *for the sake of* contributions to one's own happiness, but only *in response* to how the other has contributed to one's own happiness. Hence we might still have a form of pure altruism; one's own happiness is not an end, while the other's is. I resist this conclusion in section 2. I use Aristotle's account of friendship dissolutions to show that the lovable must be the final cause of love; friends stop loving if the prospect of the lovable does, and the only way to explain the friends' responses is to appeal to the lovable as the final cause.⁷

So when Aristotle says that friends love *because of* their own happiness, he means that they love *for the sake of* their own happiness; one's own happiness is an end, and, as we will see, an ultimate end. This denies pure altruism.

Further, Aristotle says that friends love *only* because of the lovable, *only* for the sake of their own happiness. In section 3, I explore whether we should understand 'only' here as indicating a sufficient and necessary condition or a merely necessary condition. I leave this open, but as we will see, if 'only' indicates a merely necessary condition, this potentially leaves open mixed altruism and non-prioritization, both of which deny that one's own happiness is the prioritized ultimate end. Reflecting on the notion of prioritization and on earlier arguments, I suggest that we have prioritization of one's own happiness and therefore a sort of egoism.

Above, I have characterized the lovable as a reason for friendship, but what kinds of reasons are implicated? Is Aristotle appealing to the lovable as a reason for (1) why agents get into friendships or (2) why they maintain friendships? Further, is Aristotle going beyond bare explanations to (3) justifications (what *Aristotle* takes as reasons favoring love) or (4) motivations (what Aristotle takes *the agent herself* to take as reasons favoring love)? These specifications are important for the debate among egoist, altruist, and non-prioritizing interpretations. Appealing to one's own happiness as a reason for getting into friendship (1) is relatively uncontroversial. But we would not yet have egoism unless we take one's own happiness as a reason for maintaining a friendship (2); for without this, the promotion of one's own happiness would not be a necessary condition for friendship. Or we might accept egoistic reasons for (1) and (2) and yet take these as explanatory only in a bare sense; this would fall short of assigning normative weight to them (3) or taking them as the motivations of the agent (most relevantly, the virtuous agent) (4).

As I will indicate throughout, my egoistic interpretation involves all (1)–(4). It is particularly important that it involves justification (3) and motivation (4), for denying egoism at (3) or (4) is compatible with some purely altruistic interpretations. These infer from at least virtue friendship's featuring wishing goods for the other's sake and loving the other for himself,

that one's own happiness is not an end at all of loving another person, leaving the other person as the sole end. Most often, this denial of egoism is made at the level of motivation (4). The idea is that when an agent loves her friend, she takes the friend's happiness and not her own as an end (and presumably a reason in favor) of this love. As we will explore in section 2, some suggest that one's own happiness is not even an implicit end (let alone a motivation) of friends, including virtuous ones, which is to deny egoism at the level of justification (3). The idea is that *Aristotle* does not take the agent's own happiness as an end (and presumably a reason in favor) of loving another.⁸ Before proceeding, it is important to note both that the purely altruistic interpretations I have just mentioned are formulated differently from the way that I have formulated pure altruism and that my arguments nevertheless do not speak past them. Such interpretations suggest (usually at the level of motivation) that the other's happiness is love's end, not specified as an ultimate end (in contrast to my formulation of pure altruism), and denies not that one's own happiness is an ultimate end (in contrast to my formulation of pure altruism), but that it is an end at all. I think that these interpretations intend to specify the other's happiness as an *ultimate* end; at any rate, they should, for Aristotle suggests that without a terminal point, desire (and presumably love) would end up in a fruitless regress (*EN* I.2, 1094a18–21). This converges on one part of my formulation of pure altruism: the other is an *ultimate* end of love. And in section 2, I will show that one's own happiness is an ultimate end of loving another, which implies that it is an end simpliciter. So my argument denies pure altruism on both formulations, even though the formulations diverge as to whether one's own happiness is denied the status of an end simpliciter or only the status of an ultimate end.

1. The Lovable as That Which Promotes One's Own Happiness

In section 1, I argue that the lovable, that because of which Aristotelian friends love, is what appears to contribute to one's own happiness. I first establish that the lovable is what appears

good for oneself (section 1.1). Since ‘the lovable’ then refers to the good for oneself, I turn to the ‘good for oneself’ and argue that it means ‘that which contributes to one’s own happiness’ (section 1.2). After dealing with a problematic passage from *EN VIII.3* (section 1.3), I conclude that when Aristotelian friends love because of the lovable, they love because of what appears to contribute to their own happiness (note that “Aristotelian friends” refers to all friends in Aristotle’s theory; as this includes virtuous people in virtue friendships, section 1 captures Aristotle’s justifications for friendship).

1.1. The Lovable as That Which Appears Good for Oneself

Let us begin by laying out the basics of Aristotelian love found in *EN VIII.2*:

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[A] It seems . . . that not everything is loved, but only the lovable, and this is good or pleasant or useful; [B] but the useful seems to be that because of which some good or pleasure arises, with the result that only the good and the pleasant are lovable as ends. [C] Do people then love the good [simpliciter] or the good *for themselves*? [D] For these things sometimes clash. Likewise also concerning the pleasant. [E] But *each person* seems to love the good for himself, [1] and the good [simpliciter] on the one hand is lovable *simply*, [2] but the [good] *for each* on the other hand is [lovable] *for each*.⁹ [F] But each loves not what *is* good for himself but what *appears* [good for himself].¹⁰ (*EN VIII.2*, 1155b18–26, emphasis added)

[A] δοκεῖ . . . οὐ πᾶν φιλεῖσθαι ἀλλὰ τὸ φιλητόν, τοῦτο δ’ εἶναι ἀγαθὸν ἢ ἡδὺ ἢ χρήσιμον· [B] δόξειε δ’ ἂν χρήσιμον εἶναι δι’ οὗ γίνεται ἀγαθόν τι ἢ ἡδονή, ὥστε φιλητὰ ἂν εἴη τὰγαθόν τε καὶ τὸ ἡδὺ ὡς τέλει. [C] πότερον οὖν τὰγαθὸν φιλοῦσιν ἢ τὸ αὐτοῖς ἀγαθόν; [D] διαφωνεῖ γὰρ ἐνίοτε ταῦτα. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ περὶ τὸ ἡδύ. [E] δοκεῖ δὲ τὸ αὐτῷ ἀγαθὸν φιλεῖν ἕκαστος, [1] καὶ εἶναι

ἀπλῶς μὲν τὰγαθὸν φιλητόν, [2] ἑκάστω δὲ τὸ ἑκάστω· [F] φιλεῖ δ' ἕκαστος οὐ τὸ ὄν αὐτῷ
ἀγαθὸν ἀλλὰ τὸ φαινόμενον.

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What does this passage have to say about the lovable? (A) gives us three *examples* of lovable things, the good, pleasant, and useful; but what is Aristotle's *general characterization* of the lovable? To answer this question, we need to get clear on how many times the lovable is actually talked about in this passage. 'The lovable' (τὸ φιλητόν) does not show up in (C) and (F) but I think that Aristotle is describing the lovable in these sections. This is suggested by (A)'s statement that not *everything* is loved, but the lovable. Following most translators, I think the idea is that *only* lovable things are loved. So when (C) and (F) are talking about what people love, they must be talking about the lovable, because only the lovable is loved. While (C) reads, "do people then love the good [simpliciter] or the good for themselves," we might then understand "is the *lovable* the good [simpliciter] or the good for oneself." And while (F) reads, "but each loves not what is good for himself but what appears good for himself," we might then understand, "the *lovable* is not what is good for oneself but what appears good for oneself." This straightforwardly answers our question about the general characterization of the lovable: the lovable is not what *is* good for oneself but what *appears* good for oneself.

Before turning to some objections to the above interpretation, it would perhaps be prudent to sum up the multiple kinds of goodness that are at stake with the lovable. The lovable is what *appears* good for oneself, which does not always track what *is* good for oneself; for example, a vicious person loves money, what *appears* good for him, even though money in fact *is not* good for him, since his vicious use will lead to (objective) self-harm (*EN* IX.8, 1169a11–15). Note that what *is* good for oneself is to be distinguished from what Aristotle labels 'the good [simpliciter],' or synonymously and perhaps in terms more clearly cordoned off from the Platonic form of the good that he rejects (*EN* I.6), 'the good simply [ἀπλῶς]'; the latter refers to that which is good for healthy, virtuous people (*EN* V.1, 1129b1–6, VII.12, 1152b26–33).

Various resources are good simply, but not what is good for the vicious person, given the vicious person's bad use. Or surgery is *not* good simply but is good for an *unhealthy* virtuous person. All these contrasts should not be taken to imply mutual exclusion; we might have a scenario where, say for a healthy virtuous person, the good *simply* is what *is* good for her and what *appears* good for her.¹¹

Now for three objections. First, one might think that my understanding of the lovable as what appears good for oneself renders (E) nonsensical; (E) finishes with '*the lovable* for each/oneself,' which would expand to '*what appears good for oneself* for oneself.' However, I take it that by the end of the passage it is clear that 'the lovable' is shorthand for 'the lovable for oneself.' Aristotle begins by asking what the lovable is in (A) and concludes in (C)–(D) that what is axiologically important about love is relativized (lovable *for oneself*) rather than not (lovable *simply*). The idea then is that, strictly speaking, it is the lovable *for oneself* that is what appears good for oneself; but since Aristotle has eliminated the lovable *simply* as a topic of interest, it is alright for him to use the abbreviated 'the lovable' instead of 'the lovable *for oneself*.'¹² So 'the lovable' in (A) that Aristotle asks about turns out to just be 'the lovable for each' in (E); Aristotle is not relativizing 'the lovable' by adding 'for each' to it in (E). It is noteworthy that he similarly slides between "the wishable [τὸ βουλητὸν]" simpliciter (*EN* III.4, 1113a21) and "the wishable for each [ἐκάστῳ]" (*EN* III.4, 1113a25) as 'what appears/seems good for each person.'

Second, one might think that my understanding of the lovable as that which appears good for oneself confuses the genus of the lovable with the species of the lovable; one might instead argue that Aristotle's comments in the passage above apply to the good as species and not as genus of the lovable.¹³ This interpretative issue has existed since at least Aspasius; in his commentary on *EN* VIII, Aspasius notes that Aristotle takes the good as both the genus of the lovable (what appears good for oneself) and as a species of the lovable (along with the pleasant and the useful).¹⁴ Aspasius goes on to suggest that 'the good' is distinct in each case; the lovable as the good (genus) includes good things (species), that is, things that are choiceworthy (αἰρετὸν)

on account of themselves (whether solely, like happiness, or also on account of something else), as well as useful things (species), that is, things that are choiceworthy only on account of something else. I will follow Aspasius’s general idea that ‘the good’ is used differently as genus and species of the lovable, without adopting the details (as I will suggest in section 3, one cannot straightforwardly apply the schema of the choiceworthy to the lovable).

Finally, one might worry that Aristotle’s designation of the lovable as what *appears* good for oneself and not what *is* good for oneself leaves Aristotle open to some kind of radical subjectivism, where mere appearances dictate what an agent loves. Indeed, this disregard for the connection between appearance and reality might seem endorsed by the passage; immediately after concluding that the lovable is what appears good and not what is good, Aristotle says that “this will make no difference [διοίσει δ’ οὐδέν]” (*EN* VIII.2, 1155b26). I take Aristotle to mean not that what appears good and what is good are the same, but that what appears good tracks what is good, probably in a final causal sense; that is, when one loves what appears good for oneself, it is not this mere *appearing* of goodness that makes the thing lovable, but rather the *goodness* that appears, the goodness upon which the appearing of goodness is based.¹⁵ This seems to be the dynamic at the end of *EN* III.4; Aristotle explains that in many cases of moral error, “the deception seems to arise because of the pleasure [ἡ ἀπάτη διὰ τὴν ἡδονὴν ἔοικε γίνεσθαι], for although it is not good it appears good [οὐ γὰρ οὕσα ἀγαθὸν φαίνεται]” (*EN* III.4, 1113a34–b1). People choose things because they appear good, and similarly in cases of love; Aristotle seems to assume that agents can access only objects that appear to them in the first place. Yet the appearance of goodness is not fundamental; *EN* III.4’s agents are *deceived* into choosing what *appears* good when they are ultimately after what *is* good. As Aristotle immediately goes on to conclude, “people then choose the pleasant as good, and flee pain as bad [αἰροῦνται οὖν τὸ ἡδὺ ὡς ἀγαθόν, τὴν δὲ λύπην ὡς κακὸν φεύγουσιν]” (*EN* III.4, 1113b1–2). The point is that people are deceived into choosing the pleasant “as good,” as what *is* good for themselves, when it is merely what *appears* good for themselves; still, they choose it *as* what is good for themselves, not as what merely appears good for themselves.

There are two implications worth drawing out. First, Aristotle's designation of the lovable as what *appears* good and not what *is* good does not imply radical subjectivism; the two are not the same, and the former is valuable for the sake of the latter. In fact, we will see in the next section that Aristotle needs this axiological distinction to deny the attempt to block 'the good' here from referring to one's own happiness and a regress problem that comes with such an attempt. Second, *EN VIII.2*'s account of friends loving because of the lovable is not restricted to the level of *de re* but also has implications at the level of *de dicto*. When Aristotle depicts people as choosing or loving something *as* what is good for themselves, not as what merely appears good for themselves, he is clearly making a claim concerning the *de dicto*. Consider a case of vicious people who love money, what appears good for them. They love this not as what merely *appears* good for them, but as what *is* good for them; if these people do not have this in mind already, they would answer thus if questioned. However, Aristotle might say that money is *not* good for them, *in reality*; what *is* good for them, *in reality*, is correction. This suggests that the lovable is a motivation for love; Aristotle's explanation of deception hinges on the fact that people love or choose things that appear good for themselves as what *they take* is good for themselves, where, as in *EN V.1*, 1129b3–6, what *they take* is good for themselves sometimes fails to track what is good for themselves *in reality*.

1.2. The Good for Oneself as That Which Contributes to One's Own Happiness

So the lovable is what *appears* good for oneself, which tracks what *is* good for oneself. How are we to understand the 'good for oneself'? Of the lovable (that is, what appears good for oneself) things, the useful is not lovable "as an end" but teleologically reduces to the good or the pleasant, which *are* lovable "as ends" (B); one pursues the useful for the sake of something further, the good or the pleasant. Now, it is difficult to understand *x*'s being useful to *y* without *x*'s somehow contributing to *y*'s happiness. And if the useful is simply a means to the ends of the good or the

pleasant, we should understand the good and the pleasant as contributing to y 's happiness. That is, if what is useful contributes to happiness, and if what is useful just contributes to what is good or pleasant, then it is hard to see how the good to y and the pleasant to y have nothing to do with y 's happiness. It seems then that all the lovable things are good for oneself in the sense of contributing to one's own happiness. However, one might argue that the useful is for the sake of only a subset of good things and pleasant things, those that contribute to one's own happiness, so this leaves room for good things and pleasant things that do not have to do with one's own happiness. The lovable, the genus of these three lovable things, then is not good for oneself in the sense of contributing to one's own happiness.

Whether or not the good and the pleasant are good for oneself as contributing to one's own happiness depends on how they are lovable "as ends." Utilizing *EN* I.7, 1097a30–b6's schema of the choiceworthy for the lovable, we might say that this designation "as ends" precludes being (α) lovable only for the sake of something else (as the useful is), leaving the good and the pleasant as either both (β 1) lovable for the sake of themselves and (β 2) lovable for the sake of something else, or (γ) lovable only for the sake of themselves and nothing further. If there is a subset of good things and pleasant things that are lovable independently of happiness, and there is a subset of good things and pleasant things that are lovable *not* independently of happiness, then the good and the pleasant contain some elements that are (β 1) lovable for the sake of themselves (assuming that this is axiologically independent of happiness, something that will be questioned in section 3) *and* other elements that are (β 2) lovable for the sake of something else, respectively. But if the good and the pleasant must have to do with one's own happiness, then they are (γ) lovable only for the sake of themselves and nothing further, as direct contributions to one's own happiness (which *EN* I.7 designates as choiceworthy only for the sake of itself and nothing further); for (γ) is the only option that remains, since being (α) is incompatible with being lovable "as an end" and on this score being (β 2) is no different from being (α).¹⁶

So are the good and the pleasant lovable “as ends” in a way independent of happiness, being (β1) lovable for the sake of themselves and (β2) lovable for the sake of something else? Or are the good and the pleasant lovable “as ends” in a way not independent of happiness, being (γ) lovable only for the sake of themselves and nothing further, as direct contributions to happiness? In response to this question about interpretation, two answers about translation avail themselves. The lovable is that which appears good for oneself, where this ‘for oneself’ is one way to render the Greek dative αὐτῷ and can be understood as referring to happiness (dative of advantage). We could also render the dative as ‘to oneself’ and understand this as referring to a point-of-view (dative of reference): that is good *to* oneself (that is, what appears to oneself good, with the ‘to/for oneself’ modifying ‘appears’), which may or may not be what is good *for* oneself (that is, what appears good for oneself, with the ‘to/for oneself’ modifying ‘good’). This allows lovable things like the pleasant and the good to be good to me in the sense of good in my point-of-view independently of my own happiness.

There are two problems with this point-of-view reading. First, Aristotle cannot understand the pleasant to *x* as having no connection whatsoever to *x*’s happiness; he makes a great effort to connect pleasure directly to the activity of happiness (*EN* VII.13, X.4). And as the good is conjoined to the pleasant as one of the things that is lovable as an end, we might think it strange that ‘the pleasant’ refers to our happiness and ‘the good’ not—especially because Aristotle seems to explain the pleasant by further appeal to the good.¹⁷

The second problem with taking the ‘good to *x*’ as referring to *x*’s point-of-view is that of redundancy when speaking of what appears good; what *is* good to *x* taken in this point-of-view sense seems no different from what *appears* good to *x*. This conflation not only contradicts *EN* VIII.2’s explicit distinction between what is good to/for *x* and what appears good to/for *x*, where we found at the end of the last section that the former axiologically grounds the latter. The conflation also leads to an infinite regress: as ‘good to himself [αὐτῷ ἀγαθόν]’ in the point-of-view sense unpacks into ‘what appears good to himself,’ ‘what appears *good to himself* [τὸ φαινόμενον {αὐτῷ ἀγαθόν}]’ becomes ‘what appears *what appears good to himself* etc.’ We

avoid this infinite regress by respecting Aristotle’s axiological distinction between what is good for oneself and what appears good for oneself. Now, one could avoid this regress by suggesting that the ‘point-of-view’ refers not to appearances but to the de dicto dynamics delineated at the end of the previous section; that is, we should understand ‘what is good to me’ as referring to what is *taken as* good to me. But it is inexpedient to build de dicto elements into ‘what is good to/for oneself’ itself; Aristotle sometimes uses the expression in connection with the level of de re and *not* the level of de dicto, and vice versa. For example, in the case of a vicious person, money is not good for him (a purely de re instance of ‘good for oneself’) although it appears good for him and, deceived, he pursues it as what *is* good for him (a purely de dicto instance of ‘good for oneself’).

What then does the ‘good for oneself’ track, if not what is good in one’s point-of-view? Consider *EN* VIII.5, 1157b33–34. After discussing the lovable in the context of virtue friendship, Aristotle says: “And the ones loving the friend love the good for themselves [καὶ φιλοῦντες τὸν φίλον τὸ αὐτοῖς ἀγαθὸν φιλοῦσιν], for when a good person becomes a friend he becomes a good for whom he is a friend [ὁ γὰρ ἀγαθὸς φίλος γινόμενος ἀγαθὸν γίνεται ὃ φίλος].” Even if we concede that a good person *x* *seems* good to *y* without connection to *y*’s happiness, we might still ask what explains this extra stage, when *x* becomes *y*’s friend (that is, when *y* loves *x*), of *x*’s *becoming* a good *for y*. The most obvious suggestion is that *x* who becomes *y*’s friend is now a good for *y* in the sense of contributing to *y*’s happiness or living well.¹⁸

A similar idea appears in *EN* VIII.7:

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[A] And it is wondered, whether friends might wish to their friends the greatest of goods, for example, to be gods; [B] for they will no longer be friends for them, nor then goods [οὐ γὰρ ἔτι φίλοι ἔσονται αὐτοῖς, οὐδὲ δὴ ἀγαθά]; [C] for friends are goods. [D] If then it has been finely said that the friend wishes to his friend goods for the sake of that one [that is, his friend], it must be that that one [that is, his friend] remain whatever sort that he is; [E] it is then to the [friend]

being a human that he will wish the greatest goods. [F] But perhaps not all [the greatest goods]; [G] for to himself most of all does each person wish goods. (*EN* VIII.7, 1159a3–12)

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(A) asks whether friends wish each other the greatest goods, like deification, for, as (B) puts it, deification means that the now-deified people (taking them as the implied subjects of “will be [ἔσονται]”) will no longer be friends for the wishers (taking them as the referents of “for them [αὐτοῖς]”), which entails that the now-deified people will no longer be goods—presumably, *for the wishers*. Or we can understand (B) this way: deification means that the wishers (taking them as the implied subjects of ‘will be’ instead) will no longer be friends for the now-deified people (taking them as the referents of ‘for them’), which entails that the wishers will no longer be goods—presumably, *for the now-deified people*.¹⁹ The former reading is probably correct, whereby the problem at hand is the prospective loss to the wisher himself; the self-regarding tilt of (F) and (G) suggests this. But in either case, we get the idea that friends are goods *for x*. It is most plausible that a direct contribution to happiness is at stake. And the fact that the passage is discussing wishing goods to *x* makes it implausible to think otherwise; for how could we wish goods to *x* in a way that is divorced from *x*’s happiness?

1.3. A Problematic Passage

Still, one passage poses a major problem for my interpretation. After discussing the fact that the three lovable objects lead to three different kinds of friendship, Aristotle says:

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[A] The ones loving because of the useful then love one another not on account of themselves, but insofar as something good arises for them from the other [οὐ καθ’ αὐτοὺς φιλοῦσιν, ἀλλ’ ἢ

γίνεται τι αὐτοῖς παρ' ἀλλήλων ἀγαθόν]. [B] And likewise also the ones [loving] because of pleasure; [C] for they do not cherish witty people for their being a certain sort [τῷ ποιούσ τινας εἶναι], but because these ones are pleasant for themselves. [D] Therefore the ones loving because of the useful are fond [of the other] because of the good for themselves [διὰ τὸ αὐτοῖς ἀγαθόν], and the ones [loving] because of pleasure [are fond of the other] because of the pleasant for themselves, and not insofar as the beloved is who he is [καὶ οὐχ ἧ ὁ φιλούμενός ἐστιν], but insofar as [the beloved is] useful or pleasant. [E] Therefore these friendships are according to accident; [F] for it is not insofar as the beloved is who he is [οὐ γὰρ ἧ ἐστὶν ὅσπερ ἐστὶν ὁ φιλούμενος], by this way, that he is loved, but insofar as they supply something good [ἀγαθόν τι] or [insofar as they supply some] pleasure. [G] Therefore such [friendships] are easily dissolved, if they do not remain like [they were]; [H] for if they are no longer pleasant or useful, they stop loving. (*EN VIII.3*, 1156a10–21)

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Aristotle does not explicitly mention virtue friendships in this passage, but we get an implicit description of virtue friendship through the description of what utility and pleasure friendships are not. Namely, these latter friendships do not, and virtue friendships do, involve loving the other “on account of himself” (A), “for being a certain sort” (C), and “for being who he is” (D), (F). This would seem problematic for my interpretation that all love centers on one’s own happiness, for it seems that the kind of concern characteristic of virtue friendship and absent in utility and pleasure friendships has to do with the other’s character, independently of one’s own happiness. As mentioned in the introduction and as will be explored in sections 2–3, virtue-centered concern such as is recorded in (A), (C), (D), and (F) actually are, ultimately, about one’s own happiness. It turns out that what sets pleasure and utility friendships apart from virtue friendships is not that they dissolve if the respective lovable objects do, (G), (H), but that they dissolve *easily* (G), and this because they are not anchored in something stable, namely virtue.²⁰

Even with this in mind, a problem remains. Aristotle seems to specially characterize utility friendships as centered on what is *good for oneself* (A), (D), (F); he sets pleasure friendships apart as centered on what is *pleasant for oneself* (B), (C), (D), (F). Does this threaten my interpretation that *all* friendships center on what is good for oneself, as that is here characterized as the *special* domain of utility friendship? No; recalling that *EN* VIII.2 speaks of ‘good’ as both species and genus of the lovable, we can conclude that it would be awkward to read the genus as being referred to by ‘good for oneself’ here. For as the genus of the lovable includes the pleasant, on this reading Aristotle would be setting utility friendships that center on the genus apart from pleasure friendships that center on something included in that very genus. So when Aristotle says that utility friendship centers on what is good for oneself, ‘good’ refers to the species of the lovable. And the reason why he speaks of ‘good’ rather than ‘useful’ is that only the good and the pleasant, not the useful, are lovable as ends; until the conclusion then, he talks only in terms of ‘good’ and ‘pleasant,’ with utility friendship centering on what is good for oneself, and pleasure friendship centering on what is pleasant for oneself.

There are two things worth noting. First, since Aristotle says that the useful is lovable for the sake of the good or the pleasant, nothing stops him (at least at this point) from describing utility friendship as centering on what is pleasant for oneself instead of what is good for oneself. I think that he chooses the latter for the sake of variety, and to make abundantly clear his idea that the good *and* the pleasant are lovable as ends, an idea that might be less clear if only ‘what is pleasant for oneself’ made an appearance. Aristotle’s choice here should then lead us to expect him to use ‘friendship because of the good’ for utility friendship, but the second thing worth noting is that *EN* utilizes ‘friendship because of the useful’ instead. Recall that the lovable, what *appears* good for oneself, is valued as what *is* good for oneself, which may or may not track what is good for oneself *in reality*. Aristotle’s claim that the useful is not lovable as an end is a claim about reality, one that is compatible with the fact that uninformed people pursue the useful *as the good* as something that is lovable as an end (see *EN* VIII.14’s utility-obsessed partners in unequal utility friendships). Still, despite utility friendship’s centering on what he calls ‘what is

good for oneself,' Aristotle nevertheless refuses to call utility friendship 'friendship because of the good,' calling it instead 'friendship because of the useful.' What explains this discrepancy, one that does not apply to pleasure friendships, frequently labeled 'friendship because of pleasure'? Note first that Aristotle does not even call virtue friendship 'friendship because of the good'; instead, he calls it 'friendship because of virtue.' Aristotle does not employ 'friendship because of the good' because it is ambiguous; both utility friendship and virtue friendship might be plausibly understood as centering on the good that is the species of the lovable, even though to treat the useful as the good that is lovable as an end is to lose one's grip on reality.

What all this means is that Aristotle's characterization of utility friendship as centering on what is good for oneself does not threaten my claim that *all* friendship centers on what is good for oneself. For the latter 'good for oneself' refers to the genus of the lovable, while the 'good for oneself' in this passage refers to the species of the lovable. And Aristotle invokes 'good' rather than 'useful' because he is interested in the ends of utility friendships; while the useful may not in fact be *objectively* lovable as an end, the non-ideal agents here nevertheless pursue the useful as good (species), *as if* it is lovable as an end. So my interpretation remains unscathed; in all friendships, the lovable is what appears good for oneself (section 1.1), and 'good for oneself' refers to what contributes to one's own happiness, not what is good in one's point-of-view apart from one's own happiness (section 1.2). Therefore, when Aristotle says "friends love only the lovable," he means that they love only what appears to contribute to their own happiness.

2. Is the Lovable the Final Cause of Aristotelian Love?

Immediately following the *EN* VIII.2 passage assessed in section 1.1, *EN* VIII.2, 1155b27 says that "there are three things *because of* which people love [τριῶν δ' ὄντων δι' ἃ φιλοῦσιν]," where this most likely refers to the three lovable things Aristotle has just listed: the pleasant, the useful, and the good (A). So the lovable is the *cause* of loving. We also saw from our VIII.2 passage that

only lovable things are loved (A); to put this in the causal language of 1155b27, love is *caused only* by the lovable. As ‘the lovable,’ ‘what appears good for oneself,’ refers to one’s own happiness, when Aristotle says that friends love only because of the lovable, this means that they love only because of their own happiness.

At the very least, then, one’s own happiness is a reason for getting into friendship. But whether or not this implies egoism depends on how we understand ‘because of’ (διὰ) in ‘loving only because of the lovable.’ While commentators have almost never doubted that ‘because of’ denotes efficient causation,²¹ they have debated whether it also denotes final causation. What is at stake is this. If Aristotle takes loving because of the lovable to mean that love is *only* efficiently caused by the lovable, that is, love is *only* set in motion by past or present contributions to one’s own happiness, then Aristotle does not designate one’s own happiness as an end. This purely retrospective reading whereby love *responds* to the lovable yields pure altruism; if one’s own happiness is not the end (and therefore not the ultimate end) of loving the other, presumably the other is the end (and at that, the ultimate end, if the love is not to succumb to a fruitless regress). However, if Aristotle takes friends loving because of the lovable to mean that their love is *finally* caused by the lovable, what appears to contribute to their own happiness, this means that they love *for the sake of* what contributes to their own happiness. The present section denies pure altruism by utilizing Aristotle’s account of friendship dissolutions to support this prospective reading. Love *points forward* to the lovable (one’s own happiness) as its end. Further, one’s own happiness is an *ultimate* end; love requires a terminal point, and the fact that one’s own happiness turns out to be prioritized suggests that it plays this role.²²

Before proceeding, I will address two preliminary issues. First, some commentators think that Aristotle’s language itself precludes any doctrine whereby the lovable is a final cause, suggesting that the causal preposition ‘because of’ (διὰ) in ‘all friends love only because of the lovable’ refers exclusively to the efficient cause.²³ However, I think that διὰ does not refer exclusively to the efficient cause in all contexts; depending on context, any one of Aristotle’s four causes and indeed more than one may be implicated (besides the final and efficient, there

are the material and formal). Most importantly for my purposes, $\delta\iota\alpha$ can refer to the final cause. Price gives many examples in the context of friendship where $\delta\iota\alpha$ is interchangeable with $\epsilon\nu\epsilon\kappa\alpha$, the latter of which clearly refers to the final cause: *EN* VIII.4, 1157a26–28, IX.1, 1164a8–10, IX.5, 1167a16–18, *Eudemian Ethics* VII.6, 1240a25, *Rhetoric* I.5, 1361b37, II.4, 1380b37.²⁴

This leaves open my argument that in Aristotle’s assertion that “all friends love only because of the lovable,” $\delta\iota\alpha$ must refer to the final cause, that the lovable must be the final cause of love.²⁵

Second, one might wonder what is meant by ‘retrospective’ and ‘prospective,’ and how these terms are related to the efficient and final causes, respectively. ‘Retrospective’ and ‘prospective’ are terms that I simply adopt from earlier discussions of this topic, in Cooper’s “Aristotle on the Forms of Friendship” and Whiting’s “The Nicomachean Account of *Philia*.”²⁶ These pieces do not feature dedicated discussion of these terms, simply using ‘retrospective’ in descriptions of the efficient cause and ‘prospective’ in descriptions of the final cause. This is what I think Cooper and Whiting have in mind, and it is this idea that I will assume. The efficient cause is what Aristotle takes to set things into motion. For example, when billiard ball x bumps into billiard ball y and sends y rolling across the table, x is the efficient cause of y ’s motion. The reason why one should describe this model as ‘retrospective’ is that y ’s motion *responds* to x ’s contact. Phrased in terms of love, y ’s loving x is a response to x ’s past or present utility (for example) to y ; utility sets off, sustains, or does both to y ’s love.²⁷ There are no prospective concerns here, and hence the model is retrospective; y ’s loving x at time t is a response to x ’s granting y utility at $t-1$ or t , and is not contingent on x ’s granting y utility at $t+1$. If one turns to the final cause, there *are* prospective concerns; if y loves x for the sake of utility, y ’s loving x at t is contingent on x ’s granting y utility at $t+1$.

All this is not to suggest that prospective and retrospective concerns cannot be combined, and that one and the same thing cannot be both the efficient and final cause at the same time. Rather, it is to suggest that if the lovable is the efficient cause of love, then we have at least a retrospective model, and if the lovable is *exclusively* the efficient cause of love, then we have an *exclusively* retrospective model.²⁸ I will go on to argue that Aristotle’s model of love features

prospective concerns. This has two results: (1) We do not have an exclusively retrospective model, and therefore the lovable is not exclusively the efficient cause of love. (2) As prospects are irrelevant to the material and formal causes just as they are to the efficient cause, an explanation of love requires an appeal to the only other cause remaining: the final cause.²⁹

It is worth noting an historical inspiration for the retrospective readings and perhaps more generally for modern Western understandings of interpersonal relations (though in most cases, these probably do not draw directly from this inspiration). The philosophical shift away from a prospective love expectant of reciprocity towards a retrospective love devoid of such expectations seems to reflect a linguistic shift, one observed by Konstan: early Christian preference for the language of kinship and discomfort with the prevailing language of the Greco-Roman world, of friendship.³⁰ The latter was understood as demanding that the other be as good as oneself,³¹ while the former was understood as presupposing non-elective equality (that is, we are all pre-elected children of God). Whereas the demand is prospective, the presupposition is retrospective; we are commanded to love our neighbors as ourselves (the equality presupposition found throughout the Gospels), because God *first loved* us (see for example John 13:34, 15:12–17, 1 John 4:19). This Christian idea that we love *x* because God first loved us is mirrored by the retrospective interpretation of Aristotle: we love *x* because *x* first loved us. But this seems to reverse Aristotle's dictum of loving because of the lovable; the retrospective model seems to suggest that something is lovable because of (past) loving, that fundamental is not the lovable quality of a person but the person who loved (this is perhaps why it makes sense for Christian love to be *commanded*, in response to God's love and not a person's lovability). This reversal should lead us to doubt this as an interpretation of Aristotle; and if Konstan is right in thinking that Christians, who I have characterized as adopting the retrospective model, rejected Greco-Roman norms concerning love, this reversal is doubtful a second time over as aligning Aristotle with the Christians.

I will now argue, using *EN IX.3*'s analysis of virtue friendship dissolutions, that the lovable is the final cause of love; for the prospect of the lovable matters. After discussing the dissolution of pleasure and utility friendships, *EN IX.3* turns to virtue friendships:

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[A] If one accepts [a friend] as good [ἐὰν δ' ἀποδέχεται ὡς ἀγαθόν], and [this friend] becomes and seems vicious, must he still be loved? Or is this not possible, if nothing is lovable but the good? Neither is the evil lovable nor should it be; for it is necessary that one not be a lover of evil, nor to become similar to the base; and it has been said that similar is a friend to similar. [B] Then must it be dissolved immediately? Or not in all cases, but only in the cases of those incurable in respect to vice [τοῖς ἀνιάτοις κατὰ τὴν μοχθηρίαν]? If [the relevant parties] are correctable [ἐπανόρθωσιν] they have greater need to be aided in reference to their character than to their livelihood [εἰς τὸ ἥθος ἢ τὴν οὐσίαν], to the extent that this is better and more akin to friendship. [C] But it would seem that the one having dissolved the friendship does not do anything strange; for he was not a friend to such a sort [οὐ γὰρ τῷ τοιούτῳ φίλος ἦν]; therefore when being unable to restore the person having changed, he leaves [ἀλλοιωθέντα οὖν ἀδυνατῶν ἀνασῶσαι ἀφίσταται]. (*EN IX.3*, 1165b13–22)

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Aristotle suggests that when a good friend becomes vicious, we should try to restore him, but if this vice is incurable, then we should dissolve the friendship. If the lovable (here, the good instantiated by the friend's goodness, that is, virtue) is relegated to just an efficient causal role, all that matters is its past and present setting of the love in motion; its prospects should not matter. However, two points suggest that the prospect of goodness does matter. First, Aristotle refers to *incurability* in (B) and (C) as grounds for dissolving the friendship; this modal claim must concern the prospect of goodness. Second, Aristotle clearly indicates that central to maintaining the relationship is *preserving* a lovable quality *into the future*, which again suggests

prospective concerns. He answers the question of whether a person should be loved by explaining what kinds of qualities are lovable (A); the following lines then emphasize the importance of preserving these qualities into the future. (B) prioritizes the *preservation* of the person's virtue over the preservation of the person ("their livelihood"). Finally, (C) suggests that when the person changes irrevocably from virtuous to vicious, when the relevant lovable quality is not *preserved*, the friendship is dissolved (C).³²

The efficient cause then fails to complete the explanatory picture. Now, in some cases, the efficient cause suffices; a person's exerting force on a cart is the efficient cause of the cart's motion and if the force yields, in response, the cart stops moving (accounting for the relevant background conditions). The question is whether it is right to think of love in the same way. If the lovable object runs out, the human stops loving; this mechanistic account is where the exclusively efficient causal model leaves us. But I would suggest that this is explanatorily incomplete because we want to know not just *that* the human agent stops loving in response to the lovable stopping; we want to know further *why* the human agent responds *in this way*.³³ And it seems that the explanation is to be found with the final cause; the human was loving for the sake of the lovable. That is, the cessation of loving is not mechanistic like the cessation of a cart's motion in response to the cessation of force; loving is for the sake of something, namely the lovable. And if this interest is no longer *viable*, as when the person becomes *incurably* vicious, the friendship dissolves. It seems then that the lovable is the final cause of love; at any rate, we are left with no other way to complete our explanation, as prospects are irrelevant to the two remaining causes, the material and formal.

It would be prudent to return to the introduction's palette of reasons. The lovable is clearly (1) a reason for getting into friendship; the friend is *accepted* as good, lovable (A), and, more generally, the lovable being the cause of love presumably involves at least (1). (2) Reasons for maintaining the friendship are also at stake; maintaining the friendship hinges on the *preservation* of the lovable. Further, Aristotle is describing the behavior of virtuous agents and is therefore providing (3) justifications; in (A), the friend is accepted as "good [*ἀγαθόν*]" and

presumably the person who accepts such a friend on these grounds is himself good. As Aristotle uses ‘complete [τελεία] friendship’ and ‘friendship of the good [ἀγαθῶν]’ interchangeably, and the former clearly involves virtuous people (*EN* VIII.5, 1157b36–58a1, VIII.6, 1158b1–11), it is highly likely that the ‘good’ here refers to the virtuous. And even without bothering to specify what kind of agents are at stake in the passage, we can straightforwardly infer normativity; Aristotle clearly endorses the friendship dissolutions in question.

Finally, it seems that the lovable is also (4) the motivation for friendship. The calculation surrounding the preservation of the lovable implies this; the agents themselves seem to take preservation of the lovable as a reason favoring love. Further, we must not forget Aristotle’s characterization of friendship as an equal exchange of the lovable. In the passage immediately succeeding our *EN* IX.3 passage, Aristotle claims that if adequate amounts of the lovable cannot be maintained, the friendship dissolves. Aristotle says this claim was “previously mentioned” (*EN* IX.3, 1165b31), presumably in a very similar remark at *EN* VIII.7.1158b33–35, 1159a3–5. This remark in turn exemplifies what immediately precedes it, a general principle that the lovable must be equalized in friendship (*EN* VIII.7, 1158b23–34). When the principle first arises in *EN*,³⁴ it is clear that this equalization manifests in a system of exchange:

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[A] And the ones loving the friend love the good for themselves, [B] for when a good person becomes a friend he becomes a good for whom he is a friend. [C] Each therefore also loves what is good for himself [τὸ αὐτῷ ἀγαθόν], and they exchange the equal in [what is good, designated by *EN* 3.4 as the object of] wish and in what is pleasant; [D] for friendship is called equality, and these things obtain most of all in friendship of the good people [λέγεται γὰρ φιλότις ἰσότης, μάλιστα δὲ τῆ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ταῦθ’ ὑπάρχει]. (*EN* VIII.5, 1157b33–58a1)

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We already assessed (A)–(B) in section 1.2, where I argued that the friend is good for oneself in the sense of contributing to one’s own happiness. Aristotle elaborates on this in terms of exchanging the equal (C), and the grounds for this interaction in friendship is that friendship is an equality (D), where the equalizing exchanges (“these things”) obtain most of all in complete friendship (“friendship of the good people”). In short then, friendship is a system of equal exchange of the lovable. But it is difficult to conceive of any system of exchange as not involving the agents taking a return as a reason favoring engagement in the system of exchange. Consider an economic example, which is not irrelevant since the present depiction of exchange among friends echoes *EN* V.5’s depiction of commutative justice. Let us say that two merchants enter into a relationship of exchange. It seems implausible that they did not take a return of goods as a reason favoring the initiation of the exchange relationship. And it also seems implausible that they do not take a return of goods as a reason favoring the sustenance of the exchange relationship. A similar point applies to friendship, where what is exchanged is the lovable. Now, such a motivation operates at least at the level of the friendship *as a whole*; this seems to be at stake with friendship dissolutions, when one party steps back to see whether the lovable is being sufficiently equalized. And perhaps the motivation of a return of the lovable occurs in the case of some individual actions *within* the friendship as well; perhaps this is what Aristotle implies when he illustrates one virtue friend “retaliating [ἀμύνεται]” against another who has benefited her, by doing him a good turn (*EN* VIII.13, 1162b10–11) and thus exercising her own virtue. It is therefore difficult to conceive of the lovable as not being the motivation of friendship.

So virtuous people love for the sake of the lovable, what appears to contribute to their own happiness, where their own happiness figures into their reasons for getting into and maintaining the friendship, at the levels of motivation and of justification. Formally, this makes sense; but how, in substance, is love centered on the other’s virtue (the good that is lovable) ultimately for the sake of one’s own happiness? Note that in (A) of our *EN* IX.3 passage, Aristotle says that one should not love the vicious, because one becomes similar to what one

loves. Aristotle is straightforwardly appealing to the virtuous person's *own* happiness in prescribing the dissolution of the friendship, for becoming similar to the vicious person involves the opposite of happiness: misery (*EN* I.10, 1100b34–35, IX.4, 1166b6–29). The emphasis on one's own happiness becomes even more pronounced as *EN* IX.3 proceeds; Aristotle goes on to argue that virtuous people dissolve virtue friendships if the prospect of *equal* virtue fades, “for living together is [then] not possible [συμβιοῦν γὰρ οὐχ οἴόν τε]” (*EN* IX.3, 1165b30–31). As *EN* IX closes (chapters 9–12), we discover that living together amounts to shared virtuous activity, which is necessary for happiness. So *EN* IX.3's virtuous person dissolves the virtue friendship for the sake of his own happiness, whether it is to avoid the negation of it (as occurs when the prospect of the friend's virtue fades) or to avoid the encumbrance of it (as occurs when the prospect of *equal* virtue fades). In conclusion, it is hard to see one's own happiness as not being an *ultimate* end of loving others. One's own happiness is clearly an end. But love needs a terminal point, an ultimate end. One's own happiness seems an obvious candidate, as friendship seems wholly predicated on the facilitation of one's own virtuous activity.

3. Conclusion

Let us sum up. In section 1, we found that in Aristotle's principle that in all friendships, *y* loves *x* because of the lovable, ‘the lovable’ refers to one's own happiness. In section 2, we found that ‘because of’ in the principle implicates the ultimate final cause or end. Virtue friendships dissolve if the prospect of one party being virtuous fades, so the lovable (specifically the good) is considered at least prospectively as the end; and as love requires a terminus and seems wholly predicated on the lovable, the lovable is also the *ultimate* end. Putting these two results together, when *y* loves *x* because of the lovable, *y* loves *x* ultimately for the sake of *y*'s own happiness. As one's own happiness is the ultimate end of loving, Aristotelian love cannot be purely altruistic.

In addition, one loves *only* because of the lovable, for the sake of one's own happiness. Where does this put mixed altruism, whereby both oneself and the other are ultimate ends but the other is prioritized, and non-prioritization, whereby oneself and the other are ultimate ends and neither is prioritized?³⁵ Let us see how these options fare with stronger and weaker versions of Aristotle's basic principle, that all friends love *only* for the sake of their own happiness. The stronger version takes this principle to indicate that one loves the other *if and only if* this appears to contribute to one's own happiness. Note first that promotion of one's own happiness being sufficient for loving another would seem too strong for even mixed *egoism*. This last makes room for the other's happiness as an ultimate end, which would seem to require promotion of the other's happiness as necessary for love. Of course, this suggests incompatibility with mixed *altruism*. Mixed altruism holds that both one's own happiness and the other's happiness are ultimate ends but that the other's happiness is prioritized; promotion of the other's happiness seems necessary for love. Finally, that promotion of one's own happiness is sufficient for loving seems incompatible with non-prioritization, which holds that both one's own happiness and the other's happiness are ultimate ends of equal standing; it seems that promotion of one's own happiness is not sufficient for loving, but that promotion of the other's is necessary. The stronger reading of Aristotle's basic principle whereby promotion of one's own happiness is sufficient for love seems compatible only with *pure* egoism: one's own happiness is the only ultimate end and is therefore prioritized over all other ends.

Let us see how the various models fare with a weaker version of the principle: one loves the other *only if* this appears to contribute to one's own happiness. This weaker version seems to allow for mixed egoism. But it also seems to allow for mixed *altruism*. As we saw in the previous paragraph, mixed egoism makes room for the other as an ultimate end of love, which would suggest that promotion of the other's happiness is a necessary condition of loving the other; symmetrically, mixed altruism makes room for *oneself* as an ultimate end of love, which would suggest that promotion of *one's own* happiness is necessary. And with non-prioritization, it

would seem that both promotion of the other's happiness and promotion of one's own happiness are necessary.

As we might expect, this is where the notion of prioritization comes into play. Now, much of the literature actually dispenses with this notion and seems to assume that the notion of an ultimate end does all the work in distinguishing between altruism, non-prioritization, and egoism; non-egoism seems assumed as long as the other is an ultimate end, an end that is not subordinated to another end such as to one's own ultimate end (in most cases, this claim is made at the level of motivation). But an example shows why we should doubt the sufficiency of the notion of the ultimate end for distinguishing between egoism and non-egoism, and why we need to further appeal to the notion of prioritization. Let us assume x treats y as an ultimate end and not as a means, and that another ultimate end of x is his own happiness. Let us further assume x does an action z that promotes y 's ultimate end only if, per the conclusion of section 2, this will not diminish x 's own happiness. It does not seem that the fact that x treats y as an ultimate end by itself merits the label of 'altruism' or 'non-prioritization'; the other-regard is insufficient. It seems rather that we have mixed egoism, whereby the other is an ultimate end, just not one that is prioritized over or on par with one's own ultimate end.³⁶ Three options take oneself and the other as ultimate ends, and to distinguish between them we need to appeal to the notion of prioritization; only by answering the question of whose ultimate end gets *prioritized* under what conditions can we arbitrate between mixed altruism, mixed egoism, and non-prioritization (the question is simpler with pure egoism and pure altruism, where the sole ultimate end presumably trumps). And from what we have seen in *EN IX.3*'s account of friendship dissolutions, it seems that one's own happiness is prioritized, eliminating mixed altruism and non-prioritization.

But of the egoistic options, do we have pure egoism, where one's own happiness is the *sole* ultimate end, or mixed egoism, where it is an ultimate end that is prioritized over the other's happiness, which is *also* an ultimate end? This depends on how we understand Aristotle's threefold division of goods, already touched upon above: (1) goods that are choiceworthy only for the sake of something else, (2) goods that are choiceworthy both for the sake of themselves

and of something else, and (3) goods that are choiceworthy only for the sake of themselves. Goods of the first category are purely instrumental. Goods of the second category are not purely instrumental, as being choiceworthy not only for the sake of something else (namely, happiness) but also for the sake of themselves, where *EN* I.7, 1097a30–b6 and VI.12, 1144a1–5 elaborate on this in terms of being choiceworthy without anything else arising from them. And goods of the last category are ultimate, as not being choiceworthy for the sake of anything further (happiness is the only good in this category, according to Aristotle). To figure out whether Aristotle endorses pure egoism or mixed egoism, we must figure out whether virtue friends, friends *for the sake of whom* we wish goods, are merely choiceworthy for their own sakes (and also choiceworthy for the sake of one’s own happiness, giving us pure egoism), or also choiceworthy for the sake of nothing further (and so not subordinated to one’s own happiness, giving us mixed egoism).

Answering this question goes beyond the scope of this paper, which has been preoccupied with establishing simply the prioritization of one’s own happiness, egoism simpliciter, in Aristotelian friendship. Still, it is worth closing with at least a brief discussion of what is implied by the fact that goods choiceworthy both for the sake of themselves and for the sake of something further are choiceworthy apart from anything else arising from them (let us call these ‘intermediate goods’). Does this mean that friends, understood as choiceworthy apart from anything else, understood as including happiness, themselves provide sufficient reasons for Aristotelian love? No, for the ‘apart from anything else’ claim is not elaborated in terms of a complete divorce.³⁷ *EN* I.7, 1097b4–5 says that we choose intermediate goods “also for the sake of happiness, supposing that because of these we will be happy” and VI.12, 1144a3–5 says that such goods do as a matter of fact produce happiness; these claims come immediately after the ‘apart from anything else’ claims and despite both passages’ entertaining the counterfactual value of the relevant goods apart from their consequences (“we would choose [ἐλοίμεθα] ἄν] each of these even if nothing further resulted,” I.7, 1097b3–4, or “even if [εἰ μὴ] [these] produce nothing,” VI.12, 1144a2–3). But when happiness is in fact in play, Aristotle says we choose everything for its sake; this, the ‘supposing’ clause of *EN* I.7, 1097b4–5, and the observations of

this paper suggest that intermediate goods do not themselves provide sufficient reason for love when happiness is in play.

Are there situations where happiness is not in play? Perhaps (though the counterfactual nature of the ‘apart from anything else’ claims casts doubt on this); *EN* I.11 suggests that the affairs of loved ones have an effect, albeit a negligible one, on the dead, though this does not change their status as happy or not. Still, it is unclear how much weight non-egoistic interpretations can put on these happiness-less situations and indeed why we should focus on happiness-less situations at all, especially in regards to living. For the whole point, the final cause, of living is happiness, living *well* (*EN* I.7, 1097b33–98a18); happiness, the ultimate end, is the terminal point that stops life from being a fruitless regress of desire. And Aristotle crowns his inquiry into friendship with answers as to why happiness requires friends (*EN* IX.9–12) and how many friends happiness requires (*EN* IX.10, anticipated by I.7, 1097b7–14), not with an answer as to why one would choose friends independently of happiness.³⁸

Perhaps it is even wrong in the first place to assume that friends *are* intermediate goods, choiceworthy for their own sake and something further; *EN* I.7, 1097b4–5 and VI.12, 1144a3–5 at any rate do not list friends as examples. Of course, friendships feature being good-willed to *x*, that is, wishing goods for the sake of *x* (*EN* VIII.2, 1155b31); however, this might be understood as taking *x* as merely a beneficiary and not an end, to utilize *De Anima* 415b20–1’s distinction between two uses of ‘for the sake of’ (ἔνεκα). At any rate, *EN* IX.5, which restricts goodwill to virtue friendship (*EN* IX.5, 1167a12–18), as our *EN* VIII.3 passage from section 1.3 might lead us to expect, implies that the object of goodwill is not a sufficient reason for action: “goodwill can occur suddenly, for example as it does towards contestants; for people become good-willed to them and wish together with them, but they would not collaborate in any action” (*EN* IX.5, 1166b34–67a2). Finally, we might wonder why Aristotle bothers to posit the lovable, including the useful, the pleasant, and the good, when he has already posited the choiceworthy, including the expedient (τὸ συμφέρον), the pleasant, and the fine (τὸ καλόν) (*EN* II.3, 1104b30–31). Even if it is right to understand goods that are choiceworthy both for their own sakes and for the sake

of something further as *choiceworthy* independently of happiness, and even if it is correct to *choose* friends as such intermediate goods, it may yet be incorrect to understand the *lovable* as independent from happiness and to *love* friends independently of happiness.³⁹

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¹ I use ‘to love’ and ‘friendship’ as translations of the Greek verb φιλεῖν and noun φιλία, respectively. The scholarly consensus is that these translations are the best available, even if imperfect (φιλία covers non-intimate relationships like casual business partnerships and non-elective relationships like kinship, whereas ‘friendship’ often refers to relationships that are both intimate and elective).

² See *Nicomachean Ethics* (*EN*), Book VIII, Chapter 9, Lines 1159b25–60a8, VIII.11, 1161a30–b10, VIII.12, 1162a29–33, *Eudemian Ethics* VII.9, 1241b10–14, and VII.10, 1242a19–28. Citations of Aristotle use Bekker page numbers. All translations are my own.

³ Julia Annas, “Plato and Aristotle on Friendship and Altruism” and “Self-Love in Aristotle”; John Cooper, “Aristotle on the Forms of Friendship”; David Konstan, *Friendship in the Classical World*; Dennis McKerlie, “Friendship, Self-Love, and Concern for Others”; Paul Schollmeier, *Other Selves*; Suzanne Stern-Gillet, *Aristotle’s Philosophy of Friendship*; and Jennifer Whiting, “The Nicomachean Account of *Philia*.”

⁴ Terence Irwin seems to adopt mixed altruism, arguing for what he calls “altruism” in Aristotelian friendship while also emphasizing the importance of the friend’s role in one’s own “self-realization” (*Aristotle’s First Principles*, 394).

⁵ Roger Crisp, “Nobility in the *Nicomachean Ethics*”; John Tutuska, “Aristotle on the Noble and the Good”; and Erik Wielenberg, “Egoism and *Eudaimonia*-Maximization.” However, Tutuska argues that *EN* IX.8’s egoism is in tension with other parts of *EN*, and Crisp argues that *EN* IX.8’s egoism operates only at the level of justification and not at the level of motivation.

⁶ ‘Non-prioritization’ is the label I supply for the position endorsed by Charles Kahn, “Aristotle and Altruism,” 39; Richard Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good*, 142; Patrick Lee Miller, “Finding Oneself with Friends,” 346; Michael Pakaluk, “Identification and Identity in Aristotelian *Philia*”; Anthony Price, *Love and Friendship*, 106 (but see 124); and D. N. Schroeder, “Aristotle on the Good of Virtue-Friendship.”

⁷ Kenneth Alpern, “Aristotle on the Friendship of Utility and Pleasure,” does use Aristotle’s account of friendship dissolutions for related issues, but not squarely for the normative issues that are the interest of this paper; Alpern focuses on utility and pleasure friendships, while I focus on virtue friendships.

⁸ This might seem implausible, given Aristotle’s central claim that everyone chooses happiness for the sake of itself and for the sake of nothing else; however, some non-egoist interpreters suggest, against the tradition (and my own inclination), that this claim leaves open *whose* happiness is referred to (Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good*, 144–45; McKerlie, “Aristotle and Egoism”; and Whiting, “*Eudaimonia*,” 274).

⁹ In (E2) I supply ‘the good for each’ when the Greek only has ‘the . . . for each [τὸ ἐκάστῳ].’ I am here following C. D. C. Reeve, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Christopher Rowe, *Nicomachean Ethics*, and J. A. Stewart, *Notes on the Nicomachean Ethics*, 273, in taking ‘the good for each’ as subject and ‘lovable for each’ as predicate; Crisp, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Irwin, *Nicomachean Ethics*, and Pakaluk, *Nicomachean Ethics*, reverse this. Reeve, Rowe, Crisp, Irwin, and Pakaluk

all agree in translating the preceding (E1) “εἶναι ἀπλῶς . . . τὰγαθὸν φιλητὸν” as something along the lines of my translation, “the good is lovable simply.” This is to take the definite article τὸ (“the”), abbreviated in the passage as “τ’,” and the substantive adjective ἀγαθὸν (“good”) together as the subject, φιλητὸν (“lovable”) as the predicate. Then comes the contended (E2), “ἐκάστῳ . . . τὸ ἐκάστῳ” (“to each . . . the *x* to each”), which omits the substantive adjectives ἀγαθὸν and φιλητὸν that were included in (E1) and thus leaves it to the translators to supply them. Now it would seem most natural to take ἀγαθὸν as the implied subject modified by τὸ ἐκάστῳ, which is in subject position, and to take φιλητὸν as the implied predicate modified by the first ἐκάστῳ, which is in predicate position. For in the previous phrase (E1), ἀγαθὸν is taken together with τὸ and is subject, whereas φιλητὸν lacks the article and is predicate. But Crisp, Irwin, and Pakaluk would have us take ἀγαθὸν and φιλητὸν to reverse the roles that they play in the immediately preceding (E1) and, as implied, without any warning. This would seem to be misleading on Aristotle’s part.

¹⁰ One might wonder about the material I supply in (F), the ‘good for himself.’ In (F), Aristotle contrasts what is *good for himself* with what appears *somehow*; I think that the natural candidate for this somehow is good for himself.

¹¹ One might wonder how this schema of good simply, what is good, and what appears good fits in with *EN* I.7, 1097a30–b6’s schema of goods chosen only for the sake of other things, goods chosen both for the sake of other things and themselves, and goods chosen only for the sake of themselves. I think that the former schema is sensitive to the health and virtue of the agent (we might say, the agent’s functioning/end), and the latter not. Despite this contrast, the two schemas interact. For example, money is (1) a good that is choiceworthy only for the sake of something else, (2) good simply (the virtuous person will put it to good use), and (3) what appears good but not (4) what is good for the vicious person (who will put money to bad use, leading to objective self-harm).

¹² The story is different with what the lovable is analyzed in terms of, the good; here Aristotle is not prone to use the abbreviated ‘the good’ instead of ‘the good for oneself.’ Indeed, the passage takes ‘the good’ as synonymous with what contrasts with ‘the good for each,’ ‘the good *simply*’; just as the lovable for each corresponds with the good for each (E2), the lovable simply corresponds with the good [simpliciter] or good simply (E1).

¹³ It should be noted that this alternative reading would compress an already compressed passage even further; Aristotle would be switching between the pleasant and the good without warning.

¹⁴ “In *ethica Nicomachea commentaria*,” Section 161, Lines 22–28. Citations from this work accord with the system of the Gustav Heylbut text.

¹⁵ This reading goes back to at least Aquinas’s commentary on *EN* (*Sententia Libri Ethicorum*, Book VIII, Chapter 2, Lines 62–66; citations accord with the system of the Rene Antoine Gauthier text); see also Pakaluk, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 59.

¹⁶ Typically, commentators assume that elements in the class of goods that are choiceworthy both for their own sakes and for the sake of something further are *all both*; this differs from one subset of this class being choiceworthy for its own sake and the other subset being choiceworthy for the sake of something further. I am not committed to this latter understanding of the choiceworthy and the lovable. As I suggest in ns. 37–38, switching between the frameworks of the choiceworthy and of the lovable is not seamless, for happiness is defined in terms of the choiceworthy and the lovable is defined in terms of happiness. And as I will suggest now, I think that (β) that which is for the sake of something else and for the sake of itself is relevant only to the choiceworthy, with the useful being lovable (α) only for the sake of something else and the good and the pleasant being lovable (γ) only for the sake of themselves, as direct contributions to happiness. However, understanding things that are lovable for the sake of something else and for the sake of themselves in a bifurcated way is required by those who want to make room for good things and pleasant things that are lovable independently from happiness. As the useful

teleologically reduces to the good and the pleasant and as the useful most probably also teleologically reduces to one's own happiness, it is most probable that the useful's good/pleasant mediators have to do with one's own happiness. In regards to the criteria of being for the sake of themselves or for the sake of something further, how then, on this picture, are these good/pleasant mediators distinct from good/pleasant things that are lovable independently of happiness? Presumably, the former are not distinct from useful things by being lovable for the sake of something else, and *are* distinct from those good/pleasant things that are lovable independently of happiness by *not* being lovable for the sake of themselves. Hence, we have good/pleasant things that are lovable for the sake of themselves and those that are lovable for the sake of something further, and the good/pleasant *overall* is understood as that which is lovable both for the sake of itself and something further.

¹⁷ This is most apparent in *EN IX.9*'s discussion of why the happy person needs friends. 1170a21–22 says that the good by nature is good to decent people, and derives from this fact (διόπερ) that it is pleasant. 1170b1–2 claims that perceiving that one lives is pleasant on account of itself on the grounds (γὰρ) that life is good by nature. 1170b4–5 grounds (γὰρ) the claim that existence is good and pleasant on the claim that one is pleased *by* the good on account of itself.

¹⁸ In agreement with Aquinas (*Sententia Libri Ethicorum*, VIII.5, 123–44) and Aspasius (“In ethica Nicomachea commentaria,” 172.32–73.5); they explain how it is that one becomes a good to another by appealing to a mutual exchange of goods. This general thought is echoed in Arthur W. H. Adkins, “‘Friendship’ and ‘Self-Sufficiency,’” 39–43; Christopher Gill, “Altruism or Reciprocity,” 317–22; Lorraine Pangle, *Aristotle and the Philosophy of Friendship*, 37; and Kelly Rogers, “Aristotle on Loving Another for His Own Sake,” 300–301.

¹⁹ *EN IX.4*, 1166a19–23 presents a similar thought experiment but its main point concerns continued existence and/or personal identity, rather than, as here, distribution of goods.

²⁰ Even virtue friends require what is pleasant for themselves, for living together (*EN VIII.5–6*, *Eudemian Ethics VII.2*, 1237b5–7); and what is important about living together is their own

virtuous activity, what is good for themselves (*EN IX.3, IX.9–12*). Now, it might be true that a pleasure or utility friend is “good-willed not towards the other, but rather to himself [οὐκ . . . εὖνους ἐκεῖνῳ εἶναι, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἑαυτῷ]” (*EN IX.5, 1167a16–17*), but Aristotle’s point is that such a friend is good-willed only to himself and not that virtue friends are not good-willed to themselves; indeed, in the immediately preceding *EN IX.4*, Aristotle constantly claims that virtuous people display various features of friendship, including goodwill, to themselves. The way that pleasure and utility friends pursue what is pleasant and good for themselves, respectively, is different from virtue friends in that the former pursue these things independently of virtue (“who the person is”).

²¹ Stewart seems to think that διὰ refers exclusively to the final cause (*Notes on the Nicomachean Ethics, 279, 406*).

²² One might think that the present section is unnecessary for securing the final causal status of the lovable. For Aristotle clearly says that friends love because of the lovable and section 1.1 has secured that the lovable, that is, what appears good, is *finally* caused by what is good. So one might think that however we understand ‘because of’ in the formula ‘loving because of the lovable,’ the lovable’s being finally caused by what is good suggests that the loving that is caused by the lovable is also finally caused by what is good. An example shows why this inference is too quick. Utility friends love because of apparent utility, but clearly they do so on the assumption that the appearance of utility tracks the reality of utility; they would not be contented with the mere appearance of utility. But this is compatible with their love being efficiently and not finally caused by utility; they might love solely in response to how the other appears to contribute to their own utility, where such a response is predicated on this appearance of utility tracking the reality of utility. Put generally, even though love is caused by the lovable, what appears good, which is itself finally caused by what is good, love might be only efficiently caused by what is good; love only responds to and is not for the sake of the good that axiologically grounds what appears good.

²³ Whiting is clear about the exclusiveness of $\delta\iota\alpha$ referring to the efficient cause (“The Nicomachean Account of *Philia*,” 285). She claims to follow Cooper, but Cooper is less committed. He claims that a retrospective reading of $\delta\iota\alpha$ is “in itself *more* plausible” than a prospective reading, but also says that “understanding the ‘because’ in this causal way makes it *at least as much* retrospective as prospective” (“Aristotle on the Forms of Friendship,” 323, emphasis added). But in what Cooper goes on to say, he seems to suggest that $\delta\iota\alpha$ *can* refer *just* to the efficient cause, and that it does (as opposed to merely can) would seem required for his overall argument: that wishing goods for the other’s sake features in pleasure and utility friendships. That is, it is unclear that pleasure friends can wish goods for each other’s sakes, assuming with Cooper that this is disinterested, when the love constitutive of their relationship takes their own pleasure as the end. I take it this is why Whiting, who supports Cooper’s overall argument, argues that $\delta\iota\alpha$ refers *exclusively* to the efficient cause.

²⁴ *Love and Friendship*, 151. Price is here followed by Matthew Walker (“Utility and Choiceworthiness of Friends,” 155n26). Irwin also believes that $\delta\iota\alpha$ refers to the final cause (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 274).

²⁵ This is not to say that $\delta\iota\alpha$ refers to the final cause wherever ‘the lovable’ is mentioned. Consider a section of our *EN* VIII.2 passage: “[B] but the useful seems to be that because of which [$\delta\iota$ ’ $\omicron\upsilon$] some good or pleasure arises, with the result that only the good and the pleasant are lovable as ends.” Plausibly, ‘because of’ here refers only to the efficient cause. But despite the preposition’s close proximity to discussion of loving because of the lovable, it is not a case of loving because of the lovable, but only a case of one lovable thing causing other lovable things to arise; at any rate, these other lovable things are labeled ends or final causes in the immediate context. For these reasons of context, *EN* X.2, 1172b21 seems wrongly invoked by Irwin in *Nicomachean Ethics*, 274, to show that the lovable is final causal and by Whiting in “The Nicomachean Account of *Philia*,” 285–86, to deny this (I do not have the space to fully address

Whiting's counter to Irwin on this passage, but it is worth noting that Whiting does not address Price's examples, which would support Irwin, and I hope that my positive case will suffice).

²⁶ Pakaluk, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 87, uses 'antecedent' and 'consequent' instead.

²⁷ This conjunction of 'past' and 'present' is important, for it indicates a distinction between Aristotle's efficient cause and the Humean (and modern) version of it. Returning to our example of the billiard ball, Hume would say that x 's contact with y is a cause that temporally precedes and does not temporally coincide with y 's motion that it causes. Aristotle seems to suggest that the efficient cause is not temporally divorced from its effect (Christopher Shields, *Aristotle*, 77–79), at least not always.

²⁸ The converse is false; it is not the case that if we have a retrospective model, then we are talking of efficient causation. For we could be talking about material or formal causation instead (see n. 29 for an illustration).

²⁹ The soul (formal cause) and body (material cause) of a human not being present at $t+1$ makes no difference for the human's being a human at t .

³⁰ *Friendship in the Classical World*, 156–57.

³¹ *Friendship in the Classical World*, 158–60.

³² For this straightforward interpretation of the passage, see the commentaries of Aquinas (*Sententia Libri Ethicorum*, IX.3, 95–99) and Michael of Ephesus ("In ethica Nicomachea ix-x commentaria," Section 476, Lines 26–32; citations accord with the system of the Heylbut text).

³³ *Metaphysics* I.1, 981a30–b3 would imply that this is especially true with assessments of virtuous agents. The passage suggests that the actions of manual workers are akin to those of lifeless things, like the burning of fire; they are done without knowledge, mechanistically. Given Aristotle's notorious denial of virtue to such manual workers (*Politics* I.13, III.5, VI.4, VII.9) and his depiction of the virtuous as having attained self-knowledge (*EN* II.4, IV.3, IX.9), we might expect at least Aristotle's account of virtue friendship to be far from the mechanistic model.

³⁴ An analogous principle occurs earlier, when *EN* V.2–6 frequently claim that justice is underpinned by equality. The sharing of this principle between friendship and justice perhaps explains their coextensiveness (see n. 2).

³⁵ It is important to carefully parse out ‘the other,’ due to a nuance that has emerged over the course of this discussion. It is true that Aristotle takes one’s virtue to be central to one’s identity, but he does not conflate the two. Insufficient recognition of this distinction leads to the following interpretative problem concerning our *EN* IX.3, 1165b13–22. One might think, per David Bostock, *Aristotle’s Ethics*, 171, and Price, “Friendship (Books VIII and IX),” 190, that the passage is confusingly saying this: loving *x* for *himself* (δι’ αὐτον, καθ’ αὐτον, ἧ ὁ ἐστιν) amounts to loving *x* for something that *x* can lose, *x*’s virtue, but even if *x* loses his virtue, *x* is still *himself* (i.e. the same individual). But individuality is not fundamentally implicated in loving *x* for himself; this type of concern centers not on *x*’s individual self, but on his virtue. Aristotle is recommending that we leave the individual other because she has lost her virtue. Indeed, he even recommends that we leave the individual other because she does not have as much virtue as we ourselves do. This suggests a prioritization of self over the individual other on account of something to be distinguished from this individual other, namely the individual other’s virtue.

³⁶ This applies even if we accept those “inclusivist” interpretations of happiness whereby others are a part of one’s own happiness. We might do everything for the sake of this aggregate, but there are still questions of which parts to prioritize; for example, should we prioritize our own virtuous activity or the other’s? *EN* IX.3 suggests the former.

³⁷ It is true that happiness is formally defined in terms of the categories of choiceworthiness. But this does not mean that goods that are choiceworthy both for their own sakes and for the sake of something else are valuable independently of happiness. In purely formal terms, such goods are choiceworthy for the sake of something else, namely, that without which there would be an infinite regress and desire for anything at all pointless. This something else is, in formal terms, that which is choiceworthy only for the sake of itself, and in substantial terms, happiness.

³⁸ In presupposing the context of happiness for love, Aristotle perhaps echoes the suggestion in Plato's *Lysis* that love is axiologically grounded in a terminal "dear [φίλον]," (Stephanus Page 219, Section c, Line 5, through Section d, Line 2), happiness. So while happiness (which we choose) is defined in terms of the choiceworthy (n. 37), the lovable is defined in terms of happiness (which we do not love); correlatively, happiness is understood as that which is choiceworthy only for its own sake, whereas what is lovable "as an end," only for its own sake, is understood as that which directly contributes to happiness.

³⁹ I would like to thank Roger Crisp, Terence Irwin, Karen Margrethe Nielsen, Anthony Price, and the editors and anonymous referees at the *Journal of the History of Philosophy* for comments on various drafts of this paper.