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The Nature and Normativity of Love and Friendship

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

Philosophy

by

Ryan Matthew Stringer

Committee in charge:

Professor David O. Brink, Chair
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2019

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Chair

University of California San Diego

2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Signature Page.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
Vita.....	vi
Abstract of the Dissertation.....	vii
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
1.1. The Topics of This Work.....	1
1.2. An Outline of This Work.....	4
1.3. The Aims and Limits of This Work.....	8
Chapter 2: The Nature of Love and Friendship.....	11
2.1. The Desiderata That Theories of Love or Friendship Must Satisfy.....	12
2.2. The Fundamental Nature of Love.....	25
2.3. Satisfying the Desiderata of Love.....	40
2.4. The Fundamental Nature of Friendship.....	51
2.5. Satisfying the Desiderata of Friendship.....	54
2.6. The Psychological Grounds of Love and Friendship.....	59
2.7. Love, Friendship, and the Value of Their Objects.....	66
2.8. Conclusion.....	72
Chapter 3: Love, Friendship, and Justification.....	75
3.1. Justification and Reasons.....	76
3.2. Are Love and Friendship Subject to Rational Assessment?.....	81
3.3. Reasons for Love and Friendship.....	84
3.3.1. Reasons for Unspecified Love and Friendship: Value-Based Reasons.....	86
3.3.2. Reasons for Initial Specified Love and Friendship: Value-Based and Quality-Based Reasons.....	91
3.3.3. Reasons for Continuing Specified Love and Friendship: Value-Based, Quality-Based, and History-Based Reasons.....	96
3.3.4. Challenges to My Pluralistic Rationalism.....	98
3.4. Justified Love and Friendship vs. Unjustified Love and Friendship.....	109
3.5. Challenges to Completely Rational Love and Friendship.....	114
3.6. Conclusion.....	124
Chapter 4: The Reasons of Love and Friendship.....	128
4.1. Practical Reasons and Moral Duties.....	129
4.2. The Person-Based and Relationship-Based Reasons of Love and Friendship.....	132
4.3. The Moral vs. Non-Moral Reasons of Love and Friendship.....	136
4.4. The Special Reasons of Love and Friendship.....	138
4.5. The Weight of the Reasons of Love and Friendship.....	140
4.6. Conclusion.....	146

Chapter 5: The Duties of Love and Friendship.....	148
5.1. Are There Associative Duties of Love and Friendship?.....	151
5.2. The Voluntarist Objection to the Associative Duties of Love and Friendship.....	155
5.3. The Distributive Objection to the Associative Duties of Love and Friendship.....	160
5.4. The Respect Objection to the Associative Duties of Love and Friendship.....	167
5.5. The Grounds of the Associative Duties of Love and Friendship.....	171
5.6. The Weight of the Associative Duties of Love and Friendship.....	187
5.7. Conclusion.....	190
References.....	192

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Nature and Normativity of Love and Friendship

by

Ryan Matthew Stringer

Doctor of Philosophy in Philosophy

University of California San Diego, 2019

Professor David O. Brink, Chair

This dissertation provides answers to various philosophical questions about the nature and normativity of love and friendship. Chapter 1 introduces these questions and my answers to them, while chapters 2 through 5 elaborate on these answers. Chapter 2 addresses the questions about the nature of love and friendship and argues that they're best understood as *syndromes*, or as non-accidental condition-clusters that are accompanied by some set of symptoms indicating their presence. It also defends the thesis that love and friendship are psychologically grounded in reasons as well as several theses about the relations these phenomena have to their objects' non-instrumental value.

Chapters 3 through 5 address the questions about the normativity of love and friendship. Chapter 3 focuses on justification. It defends the rationalist position that love and friendship can be rationally assessed as justified or unjustified, and further argues that there are three types of reasons—value-based, quality-based, and history-based reasons—that can justify love and friendship. This chapter also argues that these phenomena are justified overall just in case the balance of reasons renders them rationally appropriate and defends the thesis that love and friendship can be completely rational.

Chapters 4 and 5 address questions about the normative significance of love and friendship. Chapter 4 focuses on reasons. It argues that love and friendship generate person-based and relationship-based reasons, that these reasons are a mix of moral and non-moral ones, and that these reasons can be special in two different ways. It also defends multiple theses pertaining to how the reasons of love and friendship stack up against others that we may have. Chapter 5 focuses on duties. It argues that love and friendship generate irreducible, *sui generis*, special moral duties that (1) are directly grounded in the augmented moral statuses that our beloveds and friends have for us in virtue of our special relationships with them and (2) outweigh competing duties unless the contents of the latter duties are more significant than those of the former duties and the difference in significance here has reached a certain threshold.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Love and friendship are common elements of human life. Many of us have been fortunate enough to experience them first-hand in the form of intimate, personal relationships with others, and they appear quite frequently on film and in various works of literature. They are celebrated, cherished, longed for, sought after, fought for, destroyed, and taken for granted. Most people, it seems, regard love and friendship as central sources of meaning and happiness in life while simultaneously acknowledging their great potential for frustration and pain. They're so familiar, and so seemingly well known, that one might think them beyond the need for philosophical attention. However, just like other ordinary parts of human life, there are many philosophical issues surrounding love and friendship that call for philosophical treatment. These issues are the focus of this work, and the specific ones that I aim to address pertain to the *nature* and the *normativity* of love and friendship. Also, these latter issues that fall under the normativity side of the nature-normativity divide can be sub-divided into ones pertaining to *the justification* of love and friendship and ones pertaining to *the normative significance* of these phenomena. Let me say a bit more about these issues.

1.1 The Topics of This Work

Let's begin with the three issues that fall on the nature side of the divide. First and foremost is the metaphysical issue of how we should fundamentally characterize and analyze love and friendship. What are love and friendship? What kinds of things are they, and what are

their constituent features? This issue is the largest of the three, so it shall receive the most treatment.

The second issue here is whether love and friendship are psychologically grounded in reasons. Are love and friendship responses to perceived considerations that seem—if only unconsciously—to justify or warrant these responses? It's important to note that the issue here is *not* that of whether love and friendship are psychologically grounded in *normative* or *good* reasons, or in considerations that actually provide justification for these phenomena. In fact, the issue of whether love and friendship are psychologically grounded in normative reasons is only intelligible against the background of the separate issue described here, which is that of whether love and friendship are psychologically grounded in what Franklin-Hill and Jaworska (2017) call *normative motivational reasons*, which refer to considerations that the subjects of these phenomena take (if only unconsciously) to justify or warrant their love or friendship. For in order to address the issue of whether love and friendship are psychologically grounded in considerations that actually provide justification for them, we must first determine whether love and friendship are psychologically grounded in considerations that are taken to justify them, and then we must determine whether or not the considerations actually provide the perceived justification. I will not be explicitly addressing the issue of whether love and friendship are psychologically grounded in considerations that actually provide justification for them, but the issues that I shall be addressing will provide the resources for addressing this other issue.

The third and final issue here is how love and friendship relate to the value of their objects, and more specifically to how they relate to the non-instrumental value of their objects (as opposed to any instrumental value that these objects may have because of the advantages that they provide for lovers or friends). Are love and friendship responses to non-instrumental value

that our beloveds and friends possess? Do these phenomena instead involve mere projections of such value onto their objects? Or is the relation between these phenomena and such value more complex than these questions suggest? It's important to see how this issue differs from the previous one and therefore warrants separate treatment.

Now let's look at those issues that fall on the normativity side of the divide, beginning with those pertaining to the justification of love and friendship. The first issue here is whether love and friendship are the kinds of things that are subject to normative appraisal or rational assessment. Can these things be justified or unjustified? If they can be (and I will argue that they can), then this propels us into our next issue, which is that of what normative reasons might actually justify love or friendship. What are such reasons for love or friendship? Why love or be friends with anyone instead of no one? Why love or be friends with particular people instead of other people or no one? Answering these questions will unearth the normative reasons that can (pro tanto) justify love or friendship, which will then set us up to address the related issues of when love or friendship is all-things-considered justified by such reasons, and when they are instead all-things-considered unjustified. The last issue is whether love or friendship can ever be completely rational (i.e., guilty of no charge of irrationality), or whether they will instead always be irrational to some degree.

In addition, there are the normative issues pertaining to the normative significance of love and friendship, or to whether and how these things alter our normative situations. There are two sets of issues here that I shall address. One set pertains to what we can think of as *the reasons of love and friendship*. Do love and friendship give rise to new normative reasons? If so, what's the nature of these reasons? Are they moral or non-moral reasons? Are they special reasons? If so, in what way are they special? And how do they stack up against other reasons that populate our

normative economies?¹ The other set of issues here pertains to what we can think of as *the duties of love and friendship*. Do love and friendship also carry with them special moral duties, by which I mean moral duties that only participants of loving relationships or friendships have to each other because they are in those very relationships? If so, what are the grounds of these duties? And how do they stack up against other moral duties that we have?²

1.2 An Outline of This Work

These are the issues and questions that I will be addressing in this work. In the next chapter, I shall address those issues falling under the nature side of the nature-normativity divide, beginning with the central metaphysical issue of how we should fundamentally characterize and analyze love and friendship, which again will receive the most attention. After discussing the desiderata that successful views on this matter must satisfy, I will present and defend *syndrome* conceptions of both love and friendship, which, as the label suggests, understand these phenomena in terms of *non-accidental clusters of conditions in people that are accompanied by some set of symptoms that indicate their presence*. Starting with love, I will discuss other conceptions of it from both everyday life and the philosophical literature before pointing out their apparent shortcomings. Then I shall present my syndrome view of love as a response to

¹ These issues pertaining to the reasons *of* love and friendship addressed in chapter 4 are importantly different from the issue of the reasons *for* love and friendship dealt with in chapter 3. This latter issue is about the reasons that might back love and friendship themselves, while the former issues are about the practical reasons to do other things that love and friendship might create. The difference here is analogous to the difference between inquiring into the reasons that might back car ownership itself versus the reasons that we would acquire to do other things (e.g., spend money on repairs for a particular car) once we have taken the plunge and become car owners.

² These two sets of issues here do not exhaust those pertaining to the normative significance of love and friendship. A third set of issues, which lies beyond the scope of this work, pertains to what we can think of as *the permissions of love and friendship*. Do love and friendship carry with them special moral permissions, by which I mean mere moral permissions to do certain things that we only have because we are in loving relationships or friendships? If so, what are their grounds? These are important questions about the normative significance of love and friendship, but I will not address them in this work.

these other views, and indeed as an improvement upon them because it avoids their apparent shortcomings and satisfies the previously established desiderata. As I will argue, love is best understood as a condition-cluster that (1) varies across cases due to variations in love's objects across cases; (2) contains an identifiable core—one of *affectionate loyalty*—that's always present in some form, which allows us to univocally categorize the various cases and kinds of love as love despite the variation in love across cases and kinds; and (3) is accompanied by some non-empty set of behavioral and emotional expressions indicating the condition-cluster's presence, where this set of such expressions also varies across cases because their manifestation is a function of several factors that vary across cases. After presenting this syndrome conception of love and demonstrating its ability to satisfy the desiderata that successful theories of love must satisfy, I will then present my syndrome conception of friendship and demonstrate that it does a great job of satisfying the desiderata that successful theories of friendship must satisfy. As I will argue, friendship should be understood as *a pair of comparable syndromes in two people*, where these syndromes consist of *love and respect for the other* along with *a disposition to enjoy the time spent with the other*. And, just like with love, these syndromes are accompanied by certain behavioral and emotional expressions that indicate their presence, yet these expressions can vary across cases as well.

Next I will move on to the issue of whether love and friendship are psychologically grounded in reasons. I will argue that they are, and also that these reasons must take a certain shape: they must consist in real or apparent facts pertaining to the traits, qualities, or statuses of our beloveds or friends. Last I will address the issue of how love and friendship relate to the value of their objects. However, because the answer here depends (among other things) on how we understand the “value” in question here, I will offer five different interpretations of this value

and then argue that there are different relations obtaining between these phenomena and this value depending (among other things) on which interpretation we're under. As part of this discussion I will also be arguing for the radical thesis that love and friendship are literal creators of special, agent-relative moral value.

In chapter 3, I will venture out into normative territory and address those issues that fall under the justification of love and friendship. After a preliminary discussion about justification and the corresponding reasons that provide it, I will address the first issue of whether love and friendship are subject to being rationally assessed as justified or unjustified by arguing for the rationalist position that love and friendship are indeed subject to such assessment. Here I will address a few anti-rationalist arguments before offering some positive support for rationalism.³ Next I will address the related issue of what normative reasons can actually justify love and friendship by arguing for a pluralist position according to which there are three types of such reasons—value-based reasons, quality-based reasons, and history-based reasons. Then I will respond to challenges to my pluralistic rationalism. After this I will move on to the issue of when love and friendship are all-things-considered justified or unjustified and will argue that they're justified just in case the balance of reasons renders them rationally appropriate, where such reasons consist in non-comparative facts pertaining to (1) benefits or costs tied up with loving or being friends with people, (2) their character traits, or (3) intimate histories shared with them.

In chapters 4 and 5, I will address our final set of issues pertaining to the normative significance of love and friendship. Chapter 4 will focus on the reasons of love and friendship. After a brief discussion about the relationship between practical reasons and moral duties that is intended to justify my separate treatment of them, I will first address the issue of whether love and friendship give rise to new normative reasons and, if so, what kinds of reasons these are by

³ I borrow the distinction between rationalism and anti-rationalism from Jollimore (2011).

arguing for three main positions. First I will argue that love and friendship do give rise to at least two types of reasons—person-based reasons and relationship-based reasons. Second, I will argue that some of these reasons are moral ones, while others are non-moral ones. And third, I will argue that some of these reasons are special in the sense of only being had by participants in loving relationships and friendships, while others are special in the sense that they're stronger or weightier compared to other reasons with comparable contents that the relationship participants may have. After this I will move on to our last issue of this first set, which is that of how the reasons of love and friendship stack up against others that we may have. Since several questions actually arise here given the variety of comparisons between different kinds of reasons that we can try to make, I will address this issue by arguing for multiple theses that provide answers to these questions. My general answer to how the reasons of love and friendship stack up against others, however, is that sometimes they win and sometimes they're outweighed; it all depends on the nature of the reasons in play.

Chapter 5 will then focus on the duties of love and friendship. After offering some clarifying remarks about these duties, including a detailed discussion of how they are special, I will address the issue of whether love and friendship generate special moral duties by arguing that they do. I will argue for this by offering some defeasible, phenomenological evidence for these duties and responding to three well-known objections—the voluntarist objection, the distributive objection, and the respect objection—to the reality of these duties. Then I will address the issue of the grounds of these duties by arguing for a non-reductionist theory according to which loving relationships and friendships generate irreducible, *sui generis*, special moral duties that are directly grounded in the augmented moral statuses that our beloveds and friends have for us in virtue of our special relationships with them. After arguing against

reductionist theories of these duties as well as several other non-reductionist theories of them, I will offer my theory as the most promising of the lot because it avoids the problems that plague its rivals. Last, I will address the final issue of how these duties of love and friendship stack up against other duties. On the one hand, when these competing duties have comparable contents or the contents of our duties of love and friendship are more significant than those of the competing duties, then the duties of love and friendship outweigh competitors. On the other hand, when the contents of our competing duties are more significant than those of our duties of love and friendship, which duties win out will depend on how much of a difference in significance there is here. If the difference here has reached a certain threshold level, then the competing duties will outweigh those of love and friendship. If, however, this threshold isn't reached, and the contents of our competing duties aren't that much more significant than those of our duties of love and friendship, then these latter duties will still win out even if their contents are comparatively less significant in their own right.

1.3 The Aims and Limits of This Work

At the most general level, this work aims to address a variety of metaphysical issues surrounding love and friendship, where some of these issues are non-normative ones and others are normative. It aims to offer a host of philosophical theories and positions that provide answers to several philosophical questions about love and friendship and that together constitute a provisional metaphysics of love and friendship that contains both non-normative and normative branches. It aims, in short, to offer a provisional account of the reality of these important phenomena by focusing on their nature and their normativity. As a treatise on the metaphysics of

love and friendship, this work does not offer an epistemology of love and friendship. It does not, for example, answer any important questions about when one knows—or is justified in believing—that someone loves them or that they share a friendship with them. Nevertheless, my syndrome theories of love and friendship advanced in the next chapter have epistemological merit because they provide a metaphysical framework for epistemological theorizing about these phenomena. For these theories imply that we can know when we have genuine love or friendship by ascertaining when their constituent features obtain, and so an epistemology of love and friendship should give us an account of when we can know or be justified in believing that they obtain.

Furthermore, even though this is best thought of as a metaphysical treatise, it is one that has interesting implications for, and connections with, both moral philosophy and theoretical psychology. Although chapter 2 will offer a non-normative metaphysics of love and friendship, it will simultaneously offer a basic theoretical psychology of these phenomena just by understanding them as psychological in nature. And the normative metaphysics of these phenomena advanced in chapters 3 through 5 hooks up with several interesting topics and discussions in moral philosophy. For instance, the metaethical doctrine known as moral rationalism is relevant to the normative significance of love and friendship dealt with in chapters 4 and 5, while the positions on the reasons *for* love and friendship advanced in chapter 3 and those on the reasons *of* love and friendship advanced in chapter 4 have interesting implications for metaethical debates on the nature of normative reasons (these debates also inform the positions in chapter 4).⁴ If these positions are correct, then they will establish important constraints for metaethical theorizing about normative reasons, and at the very least they point to

⁴ The basic idea of moral rationalism is that moral duties constitute or imply practical reasons, which means that if we have a moral duty to do something, then that fact by itself either constitutes a good reason for us to do it or implies that we have such reason to do it.

the need for metaethical theories of normative reasons to be sensitive to what they imply for love and friendship. Additionally, my discussion of the duties of love and friendship in chapter 5 effectively contains a very modest defense of moral realism, and so the non-reductionist, realist theory of these duties advanced in that chapter has interesting and controversial implications for the intractable debate on moral realism.⁵

Besides these metaethical topics, the discussions in chapters 3 and 5 hook up to a few important topics and debates in normative ethics as well. My discussion of the reasons for love and friendship in chapter 3, for example, will intersect with value theory by covering ways in which love and friendship may be valuable or beneficial for us. Also, and more significantly, my non-reductionist, non-consequentialist theory of the duties of love and friendship advanced in chapter 5 has interesting and controversial implications for the central debate in normative ethics between consequentialists and non-consequentialists as well as the debate over the fundamental nature of morality between impartialists and their detractors. In fact, if my theory here succeeds, then it establishes the failure of consequentialism—or at least the failure of maximizing act-consequentialism—and that morality is not, as impartialists maintain, just a system of categorical imperatives demanding that we do whatever will have the best payoff in terms of impartial value. Even though this work is a metaphysical treatise on love and friendship, then, it aims to establish some rather dramatic conclusions for moral philosophy.

⁵ The basic idea of moral realism is that moral properties and duties are genuine, objective features of the world.

Chapter 2: The Nature of Love and Friendship

As I explained in the previous chapter, this chapter deals with the philosophical issues falling under the topic of the *nature* of love and friendship. These are the issues of (1) how we are to fundamentally characterize and analyze these phenomena, (2) whether these phenomena are psychologically grounded in normative motivational reasons,⁶ and (3) how these phenomena relate to the non-instrumental value of their objects. Addressing the first issue requires me to first nail down some desiderata that viable theories of love or friendship must satisfy. Then I will present my syndrome conception of love as a response to the variety of rival views of love's fundamental nature that can be found in the philosophical literature and in everyday life and argue that this conception of love satisfies the previously established desiderata and avoids the shortcomings of those rival views. After this I will present my syndrome conception of friendship, which builds on my syndrome conception of love, and will argue that it also satisfies the earlier established desiderata. From here I will argue that love and friendship are psychologically grounded in normative motivational reasons. Last I will address the third issue by distinguishing different kinds of non-instrumental value and defending multiple theses about the relations that love and friendship have to these kinds of value in their objects, including the radical thesis that love and friendship are literal creators of agent-relative moral value in their objects.

⁶ Recall from chapter 1 that "normative motivational reasons" refer to the considerations that the subjects of love or friendship take, perhaps unconsciously, to justify or warrant their love or friendship.

2.1 The Desiderata That Theories of Love or Friendship Must Satisfy

A successful account of love or friendship must satisfy some rather demanding theoretical desiderata. One of the most important here is that of *extensional adequacy*: a successful conception of love or friendship should capture all and only cases of love or friendship.⁷ However, since we cannot clearly locate these cases due to reasonable disagreement over them, a more realistic goal is to locate adequate ranges of them in order to provisionally test the extensional adequacy of our theories.

Let's begin with love. Since I will be concerned in later chapters with the normative significance—and in particular the *moral* significance—of love and friendship, I will restrict my focus in establishing an adequate range of cases of genuine love to those that most clearly seem to be morally significant, which are those cases of interpersonal love in which the parties involved share a personal relationship. Restricting our range this way may constitute what Shpall (2017) calls unwarranted “humanism” with respect to love’s objects, but we can simply treat whatever range we come up with for our purposes here—along with whatever conclusions we draw from it—as tentative and revisable.

Let's start by locating the cases that tend to animate theories of love. Not surprisingly, some commentators focus primarily or exclusively on the love between romantic partners in order to theorize about romantic love (e.g., Nozick 1989; Giles 1994; and Green 1997).⁸ Though the details will certainly differ across cases, every case of love between romantic partners is of course characterized by romance. This typically includes a relatively stable, mutually consensual sexual dimension, but since there are asexual individuals who still seek or enjoy romantic

⁷ This desideratum appears to map on to what Harcourt (2017) calls the desideratum of “generality.”

⁸ Nozick still recognizes other kinds of love (e.g. parental love).

relationships, the romantic dimension of love between romantic partners needn't involve sex, and even when it does it goes beyond sex. In addition to sex (or instead of sex), romance presumably includes other intimate, leisure activities intended to (a) be shared specifically with the other and (b) indicate the special status of the other as one's romantic partner. At any rate, the love between romantic partners must involve some form of romance. And yet, as a form of *love*, the love between romantic partners goes well beyond—and indeed runs deeper than—merely engaging in romantic activities. Besides engaging in these activities, romantic partners in love will characteristically feel deep affection for and attachment to each other, and they will trust and respect each other. They will also care deeply for each other, and will more generally be deeply devoted to each other. They will typically be ready to assist, support, comfort, or protect each other when needed—even if such things entail significant personal costs—and they each will expect the other to provide such things when they're needed unless the personal costs of doing so would be too high or unreasonable. At the limit, romantic partners in love will be ready to give their very lives for each other when needed, yet they will not expect this of each other because they will each regard the loss of the other's life as too costly.

In a similar yet slightly different fashion, some philosophers focus on this central case of love between romantic partners as well as the case of love between close, non-romantic friends in order to craft their theories of such love (e.g., Abramson and Leite 2011; Jollimore 2011). And this, too, is hardly surprising because, apart from the romantic dimension that's absent in the fresh case of close, non-romantic friendship love, such love is remarkably similar to that between romantic partners in terms of its characteristic features. Although there's no romantic dimension, close friends who love each other typically spend lots of time together engaging in shared activities that are intended to (a) be shared specifically with the other and (b) indicate the special

status of the other as one's friend. Also, just like we saw in the case of love between romantic partners, the love between close friends goes well beyond merely engaging in these shared activities. Besides this, close friends who love each other will feel deep affection for and attachment to each other, and they will trust and respect each other deeply—indeed much more so than most other people. They will also care deeply for one another and will be fiercely loyal to one another. Like romantic partners in love, close friends who love each other will typically be ready to assist, support, comfort, or protect the other when needed despite the personal costs, and they will each expect the other to readily offer such things when needed unless, again, the personal costs of such things are too high or unreasonable. As we might say colloquially, close friends who love each other “have each other's backs” in the truest sense of that phrase, and they will each legitimately expect the other to have their back.

In opposition to this tendency to focus only on these cases of reciprocal love between romantic partners or between close, non-romantic friends, however, is Harry Frankfurt's insistence that parental love offers the most illuminating paradigm for theorizing about love (Frankfurt 2001, 2004). Here we are to think of the gentle, affectionate, devoted parent who pours the majority of her time, energy, and other resources into taking special care of her children. She is focused on providing for their basic needs and more generally for promoting their good despite the costs to herself. Like a loving romantic partner or a loving close friend, this loving parent is ready to assist, support, comfort, or protect her children despite the personal costs, which her children will of course come to expect from her. But rather than focusing on only some of these cases when it comes to theorizing about love in general, we should include all three of them in our range of cases to use for testing the extensional adequacy of our theories of love's fundamental nature. In fact, these three cases—while certainly of central importance—are

a subset of what I shall call *paradigmatic cases of interpersonal love*, which also includes relevantly similar cases of love for parents, siblings, grandchildren, grandparents, or other traditional family members. And though these paradigmatic cases are probably the most important ones for testing extensional adequacy, they should not be the only cases of interpersonal love included in our adequate range for testing such adequacy. While we must be careful of being too inclusive here, in order to avoid being overly sentimental about love we should include what I shall call *fringe cases of interpersonal love*, such as those involving meddlesome aunts, cranky grandfathers, smothering parents, over-competitive siblings, or other people that we evaluate negatively as the beloveds (Velleman 1999; Zangwill 2013).⁹

Now let's move on to friendship, where it will be helpful to begin by looking briefly at how Aristotle thought of friendship. According to him there are three kinds of friendship, which are defined and differentiated by the three possible grounds of friendship: the pleasure gained from it, the utility gained from it, or the virtuous characters of the parties involved. Accordingly, the three kinds of friendship for Aristotle are pleasure-friendship, utility-friendship, and virtue-friendship, where the last kind of friendship is the perfect or most complete kind, while the other two count as friendship because they approximate it. I think, however, that only this last kind of friendship, which has been called "end-friendship" or "companion-friendship" (Thomas 1990; Badwar 1993), is the only kind of friendship deserving of the name, so this is what I shall be focusing on in my ensuing discussions of friendship.

Now we've already located one kind of true friendship to include in our case-range for testing the extensional adequacy of our theories of friendship: the case of close, non-romantic friendship sketched above. And while it's of central importance, close friendship is not the only

⁹ Some cases of professed love for the kinds of people that Velleman mentions will surely not be genuine, but it seems a bit too strong to write every such case off as inauthentic.

kind to include here. In fact, close friendship is probably not the most common kind of friendship; the most common kind is probably friendship that isn't close. And though it's hard—if not impossible—to specify exactly how to differentiate between close and non-close friendship, the latter is probably best characterized as a watered-down version of close friendship. So unlike close friends, non-close friends will typically spend less time together engaging in shared activities. Furthermore, non-close friends won't like or trust each other as much as close friends do, and they won't be attached to each other. They also won't care for each other as deeply or be as loyal toward each other. Though they'll typically be ready to assist, support, or stand up for each other, they typically won't do so with the same readiness, or at the same level of personal sacrifice, as close friends will. Non-close friends will still “have each other's backs,” yet they typically won't do so to the extent that close friends will, and so the expectations that these friends will typically have of each other will be less demanding than those that close friends will have of each other.

Although we have located only two kinds of friendship, this should be sufficient for our purposes here because, unlike love, friendship doesn't seem to admit of many different kinds, but rather varies in intensity or degree. We can therefore move on to the next theoretical desideratum that theories of love or friendship must satisfy, which I shall call *data accommodation*: successful theories of love or friendship will accommodate or vindicate obvious, central truths about them. But since it would be too tall of an order to locate every such central truth here, I will focus instead on locating a healthy amount of them—particularly those that other commentators or theories have rightfully located—in order to test our theories.¹⁰

¹⁰ Although extensional adequacy and data accommodation are similar in that they both require our theories of love or friendship to get certain pre-theoretical things right about these phenomena, they can be distinguished by *what they require our theories to get right*. Extensional adequacy assumes that we can pre-theoretically identify cases of genuine love or friendship (i.e. the extension of these terms) and then requires our theories to evaluate these cases

Let's begin with a few truths pertaining to general features of love and friendship. First we have the basic fact that love and friendship are neither shallow nor fleeting, but are rather *deeply rooted and stable* (Naar 2013).¹¹ Furthermore, their depth is clearly *scalar*: we can and do love some things more deeply than others, and friends clearly vary in closeness across cases.

Another important and widely accepted datum is that love involves *care or concern for its object* (Brown 1987; Soble 1990; Giles 1994; LaFollette 1996; Noller 1996; Brink 1999; Frankfurt 2001; White 2001; Frankfurt 2004; Helm 2010; Abramson and Leite 2011; Jollimore 2011; Smuts 2014a; Franklin-Hill and Jaworska 2017; Wonderly 2017). Another is that friendship involves *mutual care or concern* (Telfer 1971; Blum 1980; Annis 1987; Friedman 1989; Badhwar 1993; Cocking and Kennett 2000; Jeske 2008; Helm 2010, 2013a; Seglow 2013). While it makes sense to care about someone without loving them or being friends with them, it doesn't make sense to love or be friends with someone without caring about them and their good. Of course, this care takes a special form when it's part of love or friendship. Lovers and friends don't care about their beloveds and friends (or their good) for the sake of personal gain or in any other instrumental way, but rather do so *non-instrumentally*, or for the sake of the beloveds and friends themselves. Also, this care is *partial*: compared to concern for the good of non-beloveds or non-friends, lovers and friends are especially concerned about the good of their beloveds and friends, and they will generally privilege or favor this good in their deliberations and actions. And besides being non-instrumental and partial, this care is also *particularized*: unlike the non-instrumental, impersonal concern that we might have for particular people as instances of general types of things (e.g., as sick or poor persons), lovers and friends care about their beloveds and

correctly, whereas data accommodation assumes that there are obvious, pre-theoretical truths central to our understanding of love (e.g. love involves concern for its object's welfare) and then requires our theories to accommodate or vindicate them.

¹¹ Naar only discusses love, but his observations about love can and should be extended to friendship.

friends as the particular things that they are rather than as a mere instances of general types of things (Frankfurt 2001, 2004). A central data point that viable theories of love must accommodate, then, is the fact that love involves this kind of special concern for its object, while one that viable theories of friendship must accommodate is that friendship involves special concern that's mutual.

Other central data points pertain to certain affective aspects of love or friendship. For instance, it seems that love must involve *a disposition to feel affection for the beloved*,¹² and in friendship it must be mutual: friends must have dispositions to feel affection for one another (Telfer 1971; Blum 1980; Armstrong 1985; Annis 1987; Thomas 1987; Friedman 1989; Thomas 1990; Badhwar 1993; Cocking and Kennett 2000; Arneson 2003; Jeske 2008). For just as we saw with special concern, it doesn't seem to make sense to love someone or be friends with them without being disposed to feel—and at some points actually feeling—affection for them even if it does make sense to be so disposed toward someone without loving them or being friends with them.

Also, as many people agree, love involves what Kolodny (2003) calls *emotional vulnerability*: loving things makes us especially susceptible to certain beloved-focused emotional experiences or reactions (Brown 1987; Nozick 1989; White 2001; Helm 2010; Franklin-Hill and Jaworska 2017; Hurka 2017; Smith 2017; Wonderly 2017).¹³ So for example, the beloved's joy

¹² This is in line with Noller (1996), who counts affection as an aspect of love, as well as Abramson and Leite (2011), who make love affectionate. My syndrome view of love, as we shall see, agrees with and vindicates this point, but it also insists that love is “affectionate” in two different ways that are worth distinguishing: love itself partly consists of the disposition to feel affection, which then, barring very unusual conditions, will manifest itself to some extent in the form of emotional expressions of this disposition (i.e., actual feelings of affection).

¹³ Smith (2017) suggests that this emotional vulnerability is only present in personal love for others and is in fact what sets it apart from the impersonal love for humanity in general that Christianity champions. As I will argue later when addressing an objection to my syndrome theory based on the possibility of such impersonal love, however, if such “love” can obtain without emotional vulnerability then it falls short of genuine love, and is rather something that merely resembles it (e.g., Kantian moral respect in religious clothing). Smith himself recognizes that this impersonal “love” looks a lot like mere Kantian moral respect, yet he still accepts the idea that it's genuine love

or happiness, along with events that will or might make her joyous or happy, will tend to elicit the lover's joy, happiness, or even excitement. Similarly, the beloved's safety and security, as well as things that will or might promote them, will tend to elicit the lover's satisfaction, comfort, or relief. And conversely, the beloved's sorrow, unhappiness, or suffering will tend to trigger the lover's sorrow, unhappiness, or compassion, while events that will or might promote these negative states in the beloved will tend to trigger the lover's hostility, anger, or indignation. Likewise, the beloved's being in actual or potential danger will tend to trigger the lover's worry, fear, or panic, while events that will or might put the beloved in danger will tend to trigger the lover's hostility, anger, or indignation. Generally speaking, then, when we love something we are disposed to experience a certain pattern of beloved-focused emotional reactions, where this pattern consists, on the one hand, of (a) certain positive emotional reactions in response to the beloved's positive welfare states as well as to events that will or might promote them, and on the other of (b) certain negative emotional reactions in response to the beloved's negative welfare states as well as to events that will or might promote them. And in friendship, once again, these affective dispositions must be mutual.

Yet another affective data point here is the fact that love, sometimes at least, involves *attachment to the beloved* (White 2001; Abramson and Leite 2011; Harcourt 2017; Wonderly 2017), where such attachment at least partly consists in affective dispositions to experience, on the one hand, feelings of security or comfort when in sufficient proximity to the beloved, and on the other to experience feelings of distress due to separation from the beloved or to the mere prospect thereof.¹⁴ The fringe cases of interpersonal love suggest that love needn't involve

instead of rejecting it based precisely on the fact that such "love" seems to be nothing more than mere Kantian moral respect in religious clothing.

¹⁴ As it is defined here, attachment clearly resembles what we earlier called "emotional vulnerability" in that both constitutively involve affective dispositions to experience certain beloved-focused emotions. The difference,

attachment, but it's clear enough that attachment will at least be involved in many of the paradigmatic cases of interpersonal love, especially the three central ones. And something similar is true of friendship. Cases of non-close friendship suggest that friends needn't be attached to one another, while close friends will be—or at least are rather likely to be—attached to one another. However, unlike what we saw with special concern, affection, and emotional vulnerability, the attachment found in friendship needn't be mutual.

Still other central data points pertain to certain conative and cognitive aspects of love or friendship. One important point here is the fact that love involves *a non-instrumental desire for the beloved to fare well and flourish* (Green 1997; Frankfurt 1998, 2001, 2004; Hurka 2017; Wonderly 2017), while another is the fact that, yet again, this desire must be mutual in friendship (Arneson 2003). It just makes no sense to think that we could love someone or be friends with them without desiring that they fare well and flourish for their own sake even if such desiring can occur outside of love and friendship. Additionally, love often involves a desire for a personal relationship with the beloved (Nozick 1989; Giles 1994; Green 1997; Reis and Aron 2008), while friendship involves mutual desires for the shared activities and experiences of friendship (Telfer 1971; Cocking and Kennett 2000; Jeske 2008).

As for the cognitive aspects of love or friendship, the most important ones pertain to beliefs about and corresponding perceptions of the other's value. Specifically, love clearly involves *believing and perceiving that the beloved is irreplaceable or non-fungible* (Ehman 1976; Brown 1987; Kraut 1987; LaFollette 1996; Lamb 1997; Velleman 1999; Frankfurt 2001; White 2001; Solomon 2002; Kolodny 2003; Frankfurt 2004; Grau 2004; Landrum 2009; Helm

however, lies in the precise focus of these emotional experiences: The experiences that flow from emotional vulnerability are focused on the beloved's welfare states and how things will or might affect them, whereas the experiences that flow from attachment are focused on the lover's proximity to the beloved. For further discussion of attachment, see the similar yet slightly different analyses of Harcourt (2017) and Wonderly (2017).

2010; Jollimore 2011; Smuts 2013; Zangwill 2013; Wonderly 2017). If something is non-fungible, then one cannot replace it without a loss a value, and so to regard one's beloved as non-fungible is to regard it as something that one cannot replace without a loss of value. Now even though we can probably admit that our beloveds, typically at least, *can* be replaced—I can, for instance, have a good romantic partnership with somebody other than Bethany or trade cats with a friend—we cannot, qua lovers, admit that we can replace our beloveds *without a loss of value*. Unlike replacing our mere commodities (e.g. vehicles) with others that fill their roles just as well or better, replacing our loved ones would inevitably leave us with a sense of loss that we could never reverse with another like object. The same is surely true about friendship: true friends will likewise regard each other as non-fungible. They will not just be able to replace each other without a sense of loss.

Closely related to this doxastic-perceptual dimension of love, it seems, is the volitional fact that love involves *an unwillingness to trade the beloved in for a replacement* (Nozick 1989; Velleman 1999; Helm 2010; Zangwill 2013; Smuts 2014b). I don't care what other cats are out there or what other potential romantic partners are out there; I wouldn't trade my cats or my romantic partner in for different cats or a different partner precisely because I love them. And surely the same is true about friendship: true friends will not be willing to trade each other in for replacements.

Although it's not entirely clear how to categorize these next points, it seems that love further involves some kind of *respect for the beloved*, and when possible some level of *trust in the beloved* (Vlastos 1981; Helm 2010). More specifically, love must involve what Darwall (1977) calls “moral recognition respect” as opposed to “appraisal respect,” where the former is the kind of respect championed by Kantian moral theory and the latter is the common notion of

respect that refers to the positive regard of others based on the positive appraisal of their characteristics. Love needn't involve appraisal respect because we can easily envision fringe cases that lack it.¹⁵ However, love does need to involve moral recognition respect because, yet again, it just makes no sense to love someone without also morally respecting them even if the opposite makes perfect sense. As for trust, cases of parental love for infants demonstrate that it's not always involved in love because it's not always possible to trust or distrust something. The other cases of interpersonal love, by contrast, are those in which trust is possible, yet they do not suggest any particular level or profile of trust in the beloved. They rather suggest that the trust involved in love varies considerably, and even that there can be significant distrust involved (think again of the fringe case we just envisioned earlier in this paragraph). Nevertheless, it's hard to imagine loving something that you cannot trust in the slightest, so it seems that love must involve, when possible, at least some level of trust in the beloved.

Something similar is again true of friendship. Although levels of trust will vary across cases (and perhaps even within cases), friendship must involve mutual trust (Blum 1980; Armstrong 1985; Annis 1987; Thomas 1987; Friedman 1989; Thomas 1990; Badhwar 1993, Lamb 1997; Jeske 2008). It must also involve mutual respect (Armstrong 1985; Friedman 1989; Badhwar 1993), yet it not's entirely clear what form this respect must take. Friendship does necessarily involve mutual moral respect for the same reason that love must involve such respect, but unlike love, which can survive without appraisal respect, it's not so easy to envision a case of true friendship where such respect isn't mutual. Let's go ahead and say, then, that friendship must involve mutual respect of both varieties.

¹⁵ As an illustrative example of such a case, imagine a sibling who loves her brother just because he is her brother even though he's had a long history of drug addiction, virtually non-existent employment, and constant mooching off of her and other family members along with some occasional theft of their property. While appraisal respect can surely facilitate love and may even be present in most cases, it will not be present in cases such as this one.

In addition to those things already countenanced, there are several others that commentators have claimed to be involved in friendship. Besides, for instance, the desires for shared activities or experiences that friends mutually have, friendship characteristically involves *actually shared activities or experiences* (Telfer 1971; Blum 1980; Armstrong 1985; Annis 1987; Badhwar 1993; Jeske 2008; Helm 2010; Helm 2013a; Seglow 2013). Friends typically spend time together, whether they're just passing the time with one another or engaging in more defined joint pursuits. And these shared activities or experiences of friendship must take a certain form. Friends do not share the activities or experiences of friendship accidentally, or as the result of the parties engaging in their own pursuits (e.g., such as two people that just so happen to be attending the same concert). They also don't share them as foreseen by-products of doing their own things. Rather, they do so intentionally. Also, they do not engage in these activities or have these experiences with each other solely for the sake of cooperative mutual advantage (e.g., cooperative monetary gain or business exchange), or only as part of occupying certain roles that demand such activities or experiences (e.g., members of an admissions committee). Friends do and experience things together when their agency runs free and at least partly for the sake of doing or experiencing it particularly with one another. Friends also tend to enjoy these activities and experiences (Blum 1980; Badhwar 1993).

Moreover, many commentators maintain that the shared activities and experiences of friendship must involve some degree of *intimacy* (Blum 1980; Thomas 1987; Friedman 1989; Thomas 1990; La Follette 1996; Jeske 2008; Helm 2010, 2013a; Seglow 2013), while some maintain further that these intimate activities will involve *the sharing of self-information* (Annis 1987; Thomas 1987; Friedman 1989; Thomas 1993; Jeske 2008). However, it seems a bit too strong to claim that friendship *must* involve intimacy, as we could imagine a couple of “manly”

fishing buddies who regularly get together to drink and fish without ever getting intimate in any way. Perhaps intimacy is a rather common part of friendship, especially close friendship, but we shouldn't hold it as being a necessary feature of friendship (Armstrong 1985). Accordingly, let's say that intimacy and the sharing of self-information are sometimes involved in friendship, especially in close friendship, yet they needn't be involved in friendship *per se*.

Finally, some commentators claim that friendship must involve *an equality of some kind between the friends* (Thomas 1987; Friedman 1989; Thomas 1990; Helm 2010). Unfortunately, it's not at all clear what such equality amounts to, and I don't see much value in embarking on a full-blown inquiry into this matter. Instead, I think that we can plausibly interpret such equality in terms of our final feature of true friendship, which is that friends must be *mutually receptive to influence, direction, and interpretation* (Cocking and Kennett 1998, 2000; Helm 2010). If two people claimed to be friends yet one party was (a) completely resistant to the other's influence or direction, (b) completely insensitive to the other's interpretation of their thinking or behavior, and (c) had all authority over what they do when spending time together, then it's hard to see them as real friends. Real friends, by contrast, will be susceptible to influence from the other on their behavior or thinking. They will be open—indeed especially open—to direction by the other, whether this direction takes the form of explicit directives to behave or think in certain ways or whether it is instead merely implicit in how the other behaves or thinks. Neither will try to dominate the other or the time they spend together, and each will be sensitive to how the other interprets their behavior or thoughts. Such mutual receptivity is not only a defining feature of true friendship, but it explains how friendship can be a vehicle for moral growth or deterioration, and why friendship plays such a large role in gender socialization.

In addition to extensional adequacy and data accommodation, two final desiderata that theories of love or friendship must satisfy are what I shall call *normative neutrality* and *moral illumination*. According to the former, theories of love or friendship cannot define them in ways that makes them ideal or good by definition, but must rather define them neutrally in order to (a) preserve the important distinction between membership in the kind and excellence of that kind and thereby (b) allow for love or friendship to take good and bad forms (Harcourt 2017). According to the latter, theories of love or friendship must be able to explain why love or friendship is a positive moral phenomenon that's nevertheless morally dangerous (Cocking and Kennett 2000).

2.2 The Fundamental Nature of Love

With our desiderata nailed down we can now move on to our first issue of how to fundamentally characterize and analyze love and friendship. Let's start with the former. What is love? It is, to be sure, a unidirectional logical relationship obtaining between a subject (or a lover) and an object (or a beloved): love obtains between a lover, *L*, and a beloved, *B*, just in case *L* loves *B*. Love is also the glue—whether unidirectional or bidirectional—that holds together and partly defines loving relationships, where these “relationships” here are not mere logical ones, but are rather more substantial ones that are typically grounded in a shared history of interaction and that typically involve repeated interaction over time that, in turn, typically involves expressions of love, such as showing special concern for the other. But what is this glue that holds together and partly defines loving relationships? What is the fundamental stuff that grounds the unidirectional logical relationship of love?

The answer that I shall present and defend here is inspired by the dizzying array of views on the fundamental nature of love that can be found in the scholarly literature and everyday life. According to many of these views, for example, love is an *attitudinal* phenomenon: it's an attitude, or a collection of attitudes, that we have toward things. Perhaps the most familiar of these views, which is very prevalent in popular culture, is the purely *affective* view—let's call it “Affective Primitivism”—that construes love as a mere feeling of affection toward the beloved. (I have yet to hear this view clearly echoed in the philosophical literature, but Kraut (1987) comes close by asserting that love is a feeling.) Yet in contrast to this purely affective attitudinal view are *conative* views, which construe love as a set of desires that we have toward the beloved (Nozick 1989; Green 1997; Reis and Aron 2008), as well as *cognitive* ones, which instead construe love as an appreciation or an awareness of the beloved's value (Ehman 1976; Velleman 1999), or primarily as a way of seeing the beloved and the world (Jollimore 2011).¹⁶ And in contrast to these apparent “purebred” attitudinal views are those that seem to construe love as a hybrid attitudinal state consisting of affective, conative, and cognitive attitudes (Soble 1990; Helm 2010).

However, in opposition to all of these attitudinal views, some people think of love as a *behavioral* phenomenon: love is not a feeling or any kind of attitude, but is rather something that we do.¹⁷ And in a similar yet slightly different fashion, Harry Frankfurt (2001, 2004) maintains that love is primarily a *volitional* phenomenon—a “configuration of the will” in his elegant and

¹⁶ Two things should be noted here. One is that Green and Nozick are only interested in romantic love rather than love in general (even though Nozick countenances other, non-romantic objects of love). The other is that Jollimore, who appears to be interested only in interpersonal love, says many things to suggest that such love, on his “vision” view, isn't purely cognitive or even solely attitudinal, so it may not be accurate to categorize him as a cognitivist about love. He does, however, appear to put himself into the cognitivist-attitudinal camp by explicitly claiming that love is a kind of perception (p. xi) and repeatedly claiming that it's largely an appreciation of the beloved (pp. xv, 6, 25, 99).

¹⁷ In my experience this behavioral view has not been nearly as popular as Affective Primitivism, yet I have come across a few adherents of it. My aunt Glenda recently expressed this behavioral view by posting a meme on Facebook that said something like *love is not something that you say, but something that you do*.

memorable words—rather than an attitudinal one: love has less to do with believing, feeling, or mere desiring than with having a practical, disinterested concern for the beloved, where this consists in having a certain set of volitional dispositions and constraints geared toward the promotion of the beloved’s good for its own sake.¹⁸ Other accounts construe love as a kind of attachment to the beloved (Abramson and Leite 2011; Harcourt 2017), where this again at least partly consists of the affective dispositions described earlier.¹⁹ Still other accounts construe love more broadly as set of different kinds of dispositions (Naar 2013; Franklin-Hill and Jaworska 2017), or instead as a complex of different attitudes and dispositions (Hurka 2017), or as a state of valuing a personal relationship shared with the beloved that’s constituted by an enormously complex set of attitudes and dispositions (Kolodny 2003).

Now even though each of these views seems to get *something* right about love, each still appears to fall short in some way. The attitudinal views that construe love as solely affective, cognitive, or conative will each be too simplistic for failing to recognize love’s two other attitudinal dimensions as well as love’s dispositional and volitional dimensions. And the hybrid attitudinal views, at least as I’ve interpreted them here, still fall short by not recognizing love’s dispositional and volitional dimensions.²⁰ Similarly, the purely behavioral view is much too simplistic for failing to recognize love’s attitudinal and dispositional dimensions; and it more generally fails by misconstruing love as an outward performance rather than an internal condition of the organism. Also, if we continue to maintain the intuitive distinction between

¹⁸ Noller (1996) makes a strikingly similar claim when she says that love is not primarily about having one’s own needs fulfilled; it’s rather primarily about caring for the other person.

¹⁹ Abramson and Leite (2011) are only concerned with what they call the “reactive love” between romantic partners and close friends, which they construe as an affective attachment.

²⁰ This charge may not stick if I have unfairly represented these views as purely attitudinal. It may also not stick if desires count as volitional states and at least one of the attitudinal states that such views claim to constitute love should be given a dispositional analysis.

attitudes and dispositions, then Naar's purely dispositional view falls short for failing to recognize love's attitudinal dimensions.²¹

Furthermore, even if Jollimore's vision view and Frankfurt's volitional view can avoid similar charges of oversimplification, they fall short by claiming that love is primarily a matter of either perception or volition when love isn't largely a matter of anything in particular.

Frankfurt's view also seems to misconstrue love as being too narrowly focused: on his view love is focused solely on the beloved's good instead of her *agency or will* (Ebels-Duggan 2008).²² As for the attachment views, they run afoul of the fringe cases of interpersonal love, which suggest that love can't just be attachment because it needn't even involve attachment. They also suffer from their own problems with oversimplification by not explicitly recognizing all of love's attitudinal and dispositional dimensions. So for example, Abramson and Leite (2011) construe love for friends and romantic partners as an affectionate attachment to them that typically manifests itself in good will and other characteristic ways, but this still doesn't explicitly recognize the conative and cognitive dimensions of love that the attitudinal views of love get right or the volitional dispositions of love that Frankfurt's view champions. At best this view merely gestures towards many of the attitudes and dispositions that constitute love.

Last we have Kolodny's relationship view, which runs into problems by making love metaphysically dependent on the parties involved sharing a personal relationship. Most significantly, this dependence implausibly renders interpersonal love in the absence of such a relationship impossible. Stump (2006) presses this point by offering the literary example of

²¹ This charge will not stick if attitudes are to be given dispositional analyses. If so, then Naar's view may not be at odds with the one that I propose and defend here.

²² Though Ebels-Duggan's criticism of Frankfurt's "benefactor view" seems on point here, her "shared-ends view" seems to suffer from the opposite problem because it construes love as solely focused on promoting the beloved's ends that issue from her will. In other words, while Frankfurt's view misconstrues love as being too narrowly focused on the beloved's good, Ebels-Duggan seems to misconstrue love as being too narrowly focused on the beloved's will.

Dante's unrequited love for Beatrice, with whom he shares no personal relationship whatsoever, as a counterexample to this view. Still other—and indeed more troublesome—apparent counterexamples are cases of parental love for human organisms that are still in, or freshly out of, the womb, as the parties involved don't appear to share the requisite relationships. Moreover, by fundamentally construing love in terms of valuing a personal relationship, this view doesn't seem to capture the fringe cases sufficiently well. For even though we may value our relationships in such cases, we might instead resent them or find them mostly burdensome, and may ultimately wish that we didn't have them.

Since these views seem to get some stuff right about love yet ultimately fall short in some way, we must find a new way of understanding love that does justice to what these views get right yet avoids their apparent shortcomings. And to this end, I propose that we fundamentally understand love as *a syndrome that's typically caused by a shared history of interacting*.²³ More specifically, I propose that we should think of love as a rather complex, organically-caused, psychological condition of the organism that's (a) typically caused by a shared history of interacting and (b) defined by an organized cluster of conditions that are accompanied by a non-empty set of symptoms indicating that cluster's presence in the organism. Fully understanding love, then, requires that we first distinguish between the condition-cluster that just *is* love, on the one hand, and the non-empty set of symptoms that *indicate its presence* on the other.

Next we must understand what the condition-cluster and the corresponding set of symptoms look like. Beginning with the condition-cluster, it isn't completely uniform across cases, but instead varies in principled ways depending on love's object. Also, despite its principled variation across cases, the condition-cluster has an identifiable core that's always

²³ I owe this idea of treating love as a syndrome to David Brink. I later came across the same idea in Kolodny (2003), Franklin-Hill and Jaworska (2017), and Hurka (2017).

present in some form, which allows us to univocally categorize the various cases and kinds of love as love despite the principled variation in love across cases and kinds. I will unpack this core in much more detail in a little bit, but at a basic level my syndrome view claims that *an affectionate loyalty* constitutes this core of love, where the loyalty part here is in turn partly constituted by special concern.

As for the corresponding set of symptoms that indicate love's presence, my syndrome view claims that it must be non-empty because it seems impossible for love to be present without manifesting itself in some way, at some time. Nevertheless, there can be considerable variability within this set of symptoms across cases because the manifestation of these symptoms is a function of several factors. Besides manifesting differently across cases due to variability in both the lover's nature and the beloved's nature, their level of manifestation will differ across cases because their manifestation will be a function not only of the lover's love, but also of the presence or absence of other psychological conditions in the lover (e.g., depression), the nature of various environmental factors bearing on the relevant parties (e.g., how intertwined their lives are), and perhaps other things. And though we'll get into the specific nature of these symptoms in a bit, in general these symptoms are going to consist in *certain emotional experiences* as well as *certain kinds of behavior*.

Now let's dig a little deeper and get into the specifics of the condition-cluster that constitutes love as well as the corresponding symptoms that indicate its presence, beginning with the ever-present, affectionate loyalty that constitutes the core of the condition-cluster. According to my syndrome view, the following two constituents constitute love's core, which always partly or completely constitutes love:

(1) A disposition to feel particularized affection for the beloved.

(2) Loyalty toward the beloved.

And the first constituent here is important because it captures the truth in Affective Primitivism—namely, that feelings of affection are integral to love—yet it corrects this popular view by specifying that it's *the disposition* to have such affection that's a constituent of love and that this disposition is merely *a* constituent of love rather than the whole of it. It also importantly specifies that the disposition is to feel *particularized* affection for the beloved, or affection for the beloved *as the particular thing that it is* rather than as an instance of a type. So for instance, unlike the affection that I'm disposed to feel toward the feral cats as cats running around my apartment complex, I'm disposed to feel affection toward my beloved cats as the particular cats that they are. And the loyalty constituent here, which captures the true but vague idea that love involves “commitment” or “devotion” to its object (Lamb 1997; Frankfurt 2004; Helm 2010; Jollimore 2011), is, like love itself, an enormously complex, multi-dimensional phenomenon that varies in principled ways depending on love's object. It requires quite a bit of unpacking.

Let's start with the fact that to be truly loyal to someone is to have a curiously mixed orientation toward that person. On the one hand, the subject of loyalty regards its object in the property-like way of *belonging to her* (Oldenquist 1982). Phaedra's loyal nurse, for example, must see Phaedra as her Phaedra.²⁴ On the other hand, the subject of loyalty sets its object as a final end, or as something of ultimate, non-instrumental importance (Oldenquist 1982). Phaedra's loyal nurse has certainly set Phaedra as such an end. Furthermore, objects of loyalty are special both as perceived belongings and as final ends. As perceived belongings, objects of loyalty are, unlike mere pieces of property, treated as irreplaceable or non-fungible. Since she is

²⁴ I borrow the characters of Phaedra and her nurse from Euripedes' play *Hippolytus*.

loyal to Phaedra, Phaedra's nurse will necessarily see Phaedra as irreplaceable and also will necessarily be unwilling to trade her in. As final ends, objects of loyalty are both privileged and particularized. Compared to the majority of our final ends, our objects of loyalty receive privileged treatment. They're more important ends that, generally speaking, enjoy priority and partiality in deliberation and action. Also, our objects of loyalty are set as final ends as the particular things that they are rather than as instances of certain types of things. So for instance, Phaedra's loyal nurse has set Phaedra *qua Phaedra* as a privileged final end, which wouldn't be the case if, say, the nurse had set Phaedra *qua queen* as such an end. In this latter case the nurse wouldn't be loyal *to Phaedra*; indeed, she wouldn't really be loyal to any particular person at all since her "loyalty" would be readily transferrable to anyone who happens to occupy the slot of queen.

Thus far, then, we have seen that love's loyalty consists of two overarching dimensions. The "belonging" dimension consists in the subject regarding the beloved as an irreplaceable belonging that she's unwilling to trade in, while the "final-end" dimension consists in the subject setting the beloved as the particular object that it is as a privileged final end. Now this latter dimension requires its own unpacking because to set another person *qua* that person as a privileged final end depends on the person's nature. If that person is sufficiently developed (e.g., the adult Phaedra), it amounts to setting both her *good* and her *will* as such as privileged final ends, where the former refers to the person's welfare, happiness, or the like, while the latter refers to things such as the person's wants, preferences, decisions, aims, or goals. The final-end dimension of love's loyalty in these cases, then, consists in two analogous sub-dimensions based in these ends: one of them—which is none other than the special concern for the beloved that many commentators stress as a core feature of love—is all about the beloved's good, while the

other is all about the beloved's will. By contrast, if the person is in the womb or a neonate that lacks a will (e.g., the unborn or newborn Phaedra), then setting that person *qua* that person as a privileged final end only amounts to setting that person's good as such an end. So in these cases, the final-end dimension of love's loyalty effectively collapses into special concern for the person.²⁵

Spelled out in more detail, the final-end dimension of love's loyalty is to be understood as follows. When love's object lacks a will (e.g., the unborn Phaedra), the final-end dimension of love's loyalty collapses into special concern for the beloved, where this concern is oriented toward the beloved's good and is further analyzed as follows. At the most fundamental level, this concern is constituted by the belief and corresponding perception that the beloved's welfare, as the particular thing that it is, is a privileged final end that must be respected, protected, supported, advanced, or otherwise promoted. And in addition to this fundamental doxastic-perceptual part, love's concern is constituted by other cognitive elements as well. Consequent on the fundamental doxastic-perceptual component, it seems, is a circumstantially robust, heightened attentional sensitivity to the beloved's welfare states and to how events will or might affect these states (Franklin-Hill and Jaworska 2017). In other words, because of how lovers represent the beloved's welfare, both this welfare and any events that will or might affect it take on a special salience for them across a wide range of circumstances (if not all circumstances). Furthermore, in virtue of representing the beloved's welfare as a privileged final end that must be

²⁵ I want to note two things here. First, Brink's (1999) distinction between the *object* and the *manner* of love can help to illustrate my claims in this paragraph. Regardless of whether we have a sufficiently developed Phaedra or a neonatal Phaedra, in both cases the object of love—the thing that is loved—is a person. However, because of the agential differences between these objects, the manner in which we love these objects, which constitutively involves setting them as privileged final ends, differs: with a sufficiently developed Phaedra, we set her good and her will as such ends, but with a neonatal Phaedra, we set only her good as such an end because she lacks a will. Second, I may be wrong to assume here that neonates lack a will. Perhaps they have a very rudimentary one with only wants. If so, then the final-end dimension of love's loyalty may not quite collapse into special concern, although it may be dominated by it.

promoted, the lover will be cognitively disposed—again across at least a wide range of circumstances—to certain normative perceptions. In particular, the lover will be disposed to perceive (a) facts pertaining to how actions will or might affect the beloved’s welfare as special reasons to perform, or to refrain from performing, those actions; and (b) actions that will or might affect the beloved’s welfare in certain ways as mandated or forbidden by especially stringent requirements or constraints (Frankfurt 1998, 2001, 2004; Jollimore 2011).²⁶

Besides these cognitive constituents, love’s concern is partly constituted by affective, conative, and volitional components as well. Starting with the affective, love’s concern is partly constituted by the set of affective dispositions that define the emotional vulnerability outlined above (Smuts 2014a; Franklin-Hill and Jaworska 2017; Wonderly 2017). As for the conative, love’s concern is partly constituted by a non-instrumental desire for the beloved to fare well and flourish (Wonderly 2017), as well as the related desires for others to show the beloved goodwill and to know how the beloved is actually faring. And finally, since mere desires aren’t enough to dispose the will to action, we must further include here a set of volitional dispositions geared toward the promotion of the beloved’s good (Frankfurt 2001, 2004). So love’s concern, under my syndrome view, is partly constituted by a set of circumstantially robust, volitional dispositions to (a) non-instrumentally respect, protect, support, advance, or otherwise promote the beloved’s welfare, and indeed to (b) generally privilege the beloved’s welfare over the welfare and the wills of non-loved objects.

However, when love’s object has a will (e.g., the adult Phaedra), the final-end dimension of love’s loyalty has another sub-dimension in addition to that of love’s concern. This new

²⁶ I again want to note two things here. First, special “reasons” here refer to normative or good reasons. Second, ends-in-themselves or reasons are only “special” or “privileged” in a *relative* or *relational* sense: they’re only “special” or “privileged” relative to, or in relation to, others that aren’t (or that aren’t as much—there will be layers of privileging in our hierarchy of ends and their corresponding reasons).

dimension—let’s call it *love’s service*—is oriented toward the beloved’s will and is to be analyzed in an analogous fashion. So at the most fundamental level, love’s service is constituted by the belief and the corresponding perception that the beloved’s wants, preferences, decisions, aims, and goals—all as the particular things that they are—are generally special or privileged ends-in-themselves that must be respected and served.²⁷ And consequent upon this doxastic-perceptual part is a circumstantially robust, heightened attentional sensitivity to the beloved’s wants, preferences, decisions, aims, and goals, as well as to things that do or might relate to them. Also consequent upon the doxastic-perceptual part is a set of cognitive dispositions to perceive (a) facts pertaining to how actions will or might relate to the beloved’s wants, preferences, decisions, aims, and goals as special reasons to perform, or to refrain from performing, those actions (Ebels-Duggan 2008; Jollimore 2011); and (b) actions that relate to these things in certain ways as mandated or forbidden by especially stringent requirements or constraints.

Next there are the analogues of the affective dispositions that constitute the emotional vulnerability of love’s concern as well as those of the conative and volitional elements of this concern. So as part of love’s service, the lover is disposed to experience a certain pattern of beloved-focused emotional reactions, where this pattern consists, on the one hand, of positive reactions in response to the fulfillment of the beloved’s will as well as to events that will or might promote this fulfillment, and on the other of negative reactions in response to the frustration of the beloved’s will as well as to events that will or might promote this frustration. So for example, the beloved getting what she wants or prefers, or her carrying out a decision or

²⁷ Notice the inclusion of “generally” here, which is not included in love’s concern. For unlike the beloved’s welfare, which is always a special end for the lover, the beloved’s wants, preferences, decisions, aims, or goals are only generally so. Certain things here—such as a desire to commit suicide or a decision to cheat on one’s romantic partner—need not be (and probably will not be) graced with the same treatment enjoyed by the beloved’s will more generally.

achieving a goal, will tend to elicit the lover's satisfaction, happiness, or even relief, as will those things that help the beloved. And conversely, the beloved not getting what she wants or prefers, or her failure to carry out a decision or achieve a goal, will tend to elicit the lover's disappointment, frustration, or sadness, while those things that promote this failure will tend to elicit the lover's dissatisfaction, unhappiness, or even hostility. As another part of love's service, the lover has non-instrumental desires for (a) the general fulfillment of the beloved's will, (b) people to generally respect and serve this will, and (c) to know the beloved's will. Finally, love's service also contains a set of circumstantially robust, volitional dispositions to non-instrumentally respect and serve the beloved's will, and indeed to generally privilege this will over the welfare and the wills of non-loved objects.²⁸

Now let's go beyond love's core and look at how love is sometimes partly constituted by other constituents as well depending on love's object. Consider first the difference between cases in which love's object is a sufficiently developed being with a will that can affect the lover through action versus those cases in which it isn't. In the latter cases, love's object cannot be trusted or distrusted; it's just not the kind of thing that can be either precisely because it lacks the requisite will. In the former cases, however, love's object is an appropriate object of either trust or distrust because it has such a will. My syndrome view of love maintains that love will behave differently across these cases because of the difference in the applicability of trust: when and only when love's object is an appropriate object of trust or distrust is love partly constituted by (3) some level of particularized trust in the beloved. In fact, it seems that such trust is a rather

²⁸ It's worth noting here that these sets of volitional dispositions constitutively involved in love's concern and love's service under my syndrome view appear to map onto the "standing intentions to act in the beloved's interests" that Kolodny (2003) includes as constituents of love.

fundamental constituent of love in these cases, as it's hard to imagine having any of love's core constituents toward something that you don't trust whatsoever.²⁹

Next consider cases in which the beloved is another sufficiently developed being with an *independent* will and the capacity to act and speak. In these cases, the lover is completely subject to the beloved's actions and words, and compared to those that issue from non-loved people, the lover is especially sensitive to her beloved's actions and words. Generally speaking, the beloved's positive actions or words will tend to have greater positive impacts on the lover than they would have if they came from the non-loved, while negative actions and words will tend to have greater negative impacts. Of course, there are certainly exceptions to this general tendency: your parents or longtime spouse telling you, for instance, that you're attractive may not be anywhere near as uplifting as a stranger or casual acquaintance saying so. Nevertheless, your beloved's words and deeds tend to carry extra power for you, especially when they're negative. It just cuts deeper when our loved ones disrespect, wrong, or otherwise mistreat us compared to when the non-loved do so in comparable ways. And since none of this can apply to cases where the beloved lacks an independent will or the capacity to speak and act, my syndrome view of love maintains that love will again behave differently across cases due to differences in its objects' wills: when and only when its object has an independent will with the capacity to speak and act is love partly constituted by (4) an emotional sensitivity toward the beloved's words and deeds such that her words and deeds as such tend to have greater emotional impacts on the lover compared to those from the non-loved.³⁰

²⁹ The fact that such trust seems so fundamental to love in these cases suggests that such trust may be only a necessary, enabling condition of love rather than a constituent of it. I must admit that I'm not entirely sure where to draw the line between necessary, enabling conditions and full-blown constituents of love, but even if I've placed trust on the wrong side of that line here, my syndrome view would only need to be modified accordingly rather than rejected.

³⁰ This emotional sensitivity—and perhaps the emotional vulnerability defined above—could be part of what Giles (1994) has in mind when he claims that vulnerability seems to be a central feature of (romantic) love.

Consider next cases of romantic love. Such love makes no sense in the absence of a desire for a romantic partnership, and so my syndrome view claims that romantic love is partly constituted by (5) a desire for such a relationship with the beloved.³¹ A similar desire may also be a constituent of other kinds of love, such as parental love or non-romantic friendship love, although the specific relationships desired across these cases will of course be different. By contrast, such a desire will be absent in at least some of the fringe cases of interpersonal love—we may desire no intimate relationship with loved ones that we don't enjoy being around—yet it's difficult to draw a hard and fast line between cases of interpersonal love in which love is partly constituted by such a desire and cases in which it isn't. Perhaps the only thing that we can say is that such a desire is likely to be present in those paradigmatic cases of interpersonal love outlined earlier, especially the three central cases of romantic love (where it *must* be present), non-romantic love between close friends, and parental love, whereas it's not likely—or at least considerably less likely—to be present in the fringe cases. And something similar is true of (6) attachment, which is an inherently particularized phenomenon (i.e., we only become attached to things as the particular things that they are rather than as instances of a type). It will again be absent in at least some of the fringe cases, but in at least many of the paradigmatic cases—such as the three central cases—it will be a constituent of love. And though it's again difficult to draw a hard and fast line between cases in which love is partly constituted by attachment and those in which it isn't, generally speaking it's much more likely to be a constituent of love in the paradigmatic cases and less likely in the fringe cases.

³¹ I want to note two things here. First, this desire seems to map on to the desire for a “we” or a union that Nozick (1989) and Giles (1994) believe to be constitutive of romantic love. Second, “the” desire in question here is perhaps best understood as *a set* of desires for all of the various things that constitute a romantic partnership. So for example, “the” desire for a romantic partnership that's partly constitutive of romantic love is perhaps best understood as a set of the romantic lover's desires for whatever such a romantic partnership consists of, including (a) the desire to engage in consensual sexual activity with the beloved and (b) the desire for the beloved to reciprocate the lover's desires toward the beloved that Green's (1997) conative theory claims as constituents of romantic love as well as (c) the desire to be loved back that Giles (1994) claims to be a constituent of such love.

To summarize briefly, then, under my syndrome view *love is always constituted by at least the two core constituents that compose affectionate loyalty, and sometimes it's further constituted by particularized trust, emotional sensitivity, attachment, or a desire for a personal relationship of the appropriate type.*

This brings us to the emotional experiences and kinds of behavior that constitute love's symptoms under my syndrome view. According to this view, because love is constituted by the two core constituents and often by some combination of the other four non-core constituents as well, the set of symptoms that indicate love's presence will consist of emotional experiences and certain kinds of behavior that flow from these constituents. So for example, the disposition to feel affection toward the beloved that lies at love's core will result in actual feelings of affection toward the beloved, where this affection may in turn lead to affectionate glances, soft shoulder punching, hugging or kissing, or other behavioral expressions of this affection. And love's loyalty, which also lies at love's core, is perhaps the most fruitful source of the expressions in question. The affective dispositions of love's caring and love's service, for instance, will typically manifest themselves in the emotional reactions outlined above. Likewise, the heightened attentional sensitivities of each sub-dimension here will often result in the lover literally paying attention to the beloved, while the volitional dispositions of each will typically manifest themselves in behavioral patterns of non-instrumentally respecting and serving both the beloved's welfare and its will at the expense of competing considerations.

Similar things could be said about love's other constituents, but instead of going into what their manifestations might look like rather than leaving this up to the reader, it's worth reiterating that there must be room for considerable variability in the level and nature of symptoms that love expresses across cases, which means that the examples provided here (e.g.,

affectionate glances) shouldn't necessarily be taken as required manifestations of love such that their absence automatically indicates love's absence. Nor should the mere presence of certain behaviors that resemble these symptoms be taken as such symptoms. Affectionate glances or hugging, for example, may be such a symptom, but it may also be an instrumentally beneficial bluff. Patterns of respecting and serving others may be symptoms of genuine loyalty toward them, or they could instead be ultimately self-serving behaviors. Determining when certain behaviors or apparent emotional experiences are genuine symptoms of love may not be easy or straightforward, and the fact that certain behaviors or appearances can mimic genuine symptoms of love points to the need for an epistemology of love that tells us when certain things are, or are likely to be, genuine symptoms of love rather than imposters. Such an epistemology, however, will have to be developed elsewhere. It's more important at this point to take a look at how well my syndrome view of love satisfies the desiderata that theories of love must satisfy yet avoids the shortcomings of the other views.

2.3 Satisfying the Desiderata of Love

Beginning with extensional adequacy, it doesn't look like my syndrome view founders on any of the cases that need to be captured. Unlike the attachment views or the relationship view, respectively, my view doesn't founder on the fringe cases of interpersonal love by implying that love always involves attachment or that it always involves valuing a relationship shared with the beloved.³² Instead, my syndrome view seems to capture both the fringe and the paradigmatic cases quite well. Starting with paradigmatic cases of parental (or grandparental) love for the

³² To be fair, Abramson and Leite (2011) do not pretend to offer an account of love in general; they only offer an account of the "reactive" kind of love that we find in cases of romantic love and friendship love. However, the fringe cases strongly suggest that their view could not be extended into a viable account of love in general.

unborn or neonates who lack wills, my syndrome view claims that the two core constituents, attachment, and a desire for an intimate, personal relationship of the appropriate type constitutes this love. My view also claims that the final-end dimension of love's loyalty in these cases collapses into love's concern. However, over time these beloveds will develop their own independent wills and will eventually become people that can act and speak. Accordingly, my syndrome view further claims that, in such cases, the final-end dimension of love's loyalty will not only sprout an extra sub-dimension over time corresponding to the development of the beloved's will (i.e., love's service), but that the trust and emotional sensitivity constituents will become part of the lover's love as well.

Consider next the paradigmatic cases of love between romantic partners and between close, non-romantic friends. In these central cases the beloved is a separate individual that has an independent, sufficiently developed will to make them fitting objects of trust and emotional-sensitivity, so my syndrome view claims that love in these cases is constituted by the two core constituents, trust, emotional-sensitivity, attachment, and a desire for an intimate, personal relationship of the appropriate type. It also claims that the final-end dimension of love's loyalty in these cases consists of love's concern and love's service.

Finally let's consider the remaining cases of interpersonal love. In these cases, too, the beloved is a separate individual that has an independent, sufficiently developed will to make them fitting objects of trust and emotional-sensitivity, so my syndrome view claims that love in these cases is constituted by at least the two core constituents, trust, and emotional-sensitivity, and that the final-end dimension of love's loyalty again consists of love's concern and love's service. It also claims that, more often in the paradigmatic cases compared to the fringe cases,

love is further constituted by attachment or a desire for a personal relationship of the appropriate type.

Moving beyond extensional adequacy we come to data accommodation, and as I will show my syndrome view accommodates the data we located earlier while bringing greater clarity to it. Let's begin with those data points pertaining to love's depth and stability. The most basic point here—that love is deep and stable—is easily accommodated by my syndrome view. For on this view, love is always partly constituted by loyalty, which in turn is analyzed as an enormously complex phenomenon that's deep and stable by being multi-dimensionally rooted in our psychologies. Moreover, on my syndrome view love is sometimes partly constituted by attachment, which itself seems deep and stable. As for the scalar nature of love's depth, my syndrome view easily accommodates this, too, because on this view love's depth can vary in many places. The mere presence of attachment makes love deeper than love without attachment, while the affection that lovers as such are disposed to feel can be deeper or more intense. Also, the trust and emotional-sensitivity constituents all appear to be scalar as well, and loyalty varies in depth depending on how much its object is privileged in relation to other final ends.

Next we have the fact that love involves special concern for its object. Under my syndrome view, love “involves” this concern in two related ways. First, love involves this concern in the sense that love—and in particular the final-end dimension of love's loyalty—is partly constituted by the various attitudinal and dispositional components that jointly constitute this concern. Second, love can and often will involve corresponding expressions of this concern, which my syndrome view treats as symptoms of love. And something similar will be true of most of the other data points as well. Under my syndrome view, the set of beloved-focused, welfare-based, affective dispositions constituting what we called “emotional vulnerability” along

with the non-instrumental desire for the beloved to fare well and flourish are both constitutive parts of love's concern, and so love will involve them in the same dual fashion: on the one hand love involves them both in the sense that it's partly constituted by them, and on the other love can and often will involve corresponding expressions of them. Ditto for the disposition to feel affection or for attachment: love involves the former, and may involve the latter, in the sense of being partly constituted by the former and perhaps the latter; and love can and often will involve corresponding expressions of them. And when it comes to the related points of (a) believing and perceiving that the beloved is irreplaceable or non-fungible and (b) being unwilling to trade the beloved in, once again love involves both in the sense that love's loyalty is partly constituted by both, and it also may involve corresponding expressions of them.

Now let's take the claims that love involves, when possible, some level of trust in the beloved and that love often involves a desire for an intimate, personal relationship of the appropriate type with the beloved. As we've seen, under my syndrome view love involves trust only in cases where the beloved has a will that can affect the lover and can therefore be an appropriate object of trust, and yet again love involves trust in these cases in the same dual fashion: on the one hand love involves trust by being partly constituted by it, and on the other love can and often will involve corresponding expressions of trust. Something similar, of course, is true of the desire for an intimate, personal relationship of the appropriate type with the beloved: only in some cases will love be partly constituted by this desire and involve corresponding expressions of it.

Then we have the idea that love involves moral recognition respect for the beloved, which my syndrome view accommodates as follows. Though it's hard to pin down exactly what such moral respect amounts to, it roughly amounts to setting other people as final ends. So, since

loyalty to others, as we've seen, fundamentally amounts to setting them, as the particular people that they are, as *privileged* final ends, loyalty encompasses and entails moral respect even though it goes beyond it. Accordingly, on my syndrome view love involves moral respect in the same two ways that it involves loyalty: on the one hand love is partly constituted by the various attitudinal and dispositional components that jointly constitute them, and on the other love can and typically will involve corresponding expressions of them.

This brings us to the final desiderata of normative neutrality and moral illumination, which my syndrome view satisfies quite well. Beginning with normative neutrality, my syndrome view analyzes love neutrally and thereby preserves the possibilities of both good and bad love. More specifically, if we understand "good" love to be rational love and "bad" love to be irrational love, then it's clear that my syndrome view allows for both possibilities because it's perfectly neutral on the question of whether the condition-cluster that constitutes love in any given case is sufficiently backed by normative reasons. Alternatively, if we understand "good" love to be love that's valuable or beneficial to either the lover or the beloved and "bad" love to be love that's burdensome to either the lover or the beloved, then again my syndrome view allows for both possibilities by remaining neutral on the question of whether the condition-cluster that constitutes love in any given case will be beneficial or burdensome to either party. For all that my syndrome view has said about the fundamental nature of love, love could bring meaning and fulfillment to the lover, or it could instead bring her misery and hardship. Likewise, love could be a welcome addition to the beloved's life that satisfies her overwhelming desire to be loved and showers immense benefits on her, or it could instead be an unwanted reality that the beloved wishes wasn't there. On either interpretation of "good" and "bad" love, then, my syndrome view virtuously allows for both possibilities.

Then we have moral illumination, which my syndrome account satisfies with the final-end dimension of love's loyalty. For on the one hand, as we've seen this dimension of love's loyalty amounts to setting the beloved's good and her will as privileged final ends, where this loyalty is partly constituted by volitional dispositions to respect and serve these ends. Therefore, since many—if not the majority—of love's objects will be other sentient beings, love will generally respect and serve the ends of morality by generally respecting and serving the welfare and wills of these beings. On the other hand, since the final-end dimension of love's loyalty privileges the welfare and will of its object, there's always the risk of privileging these ends too much, or of respecting and serving them in immoral ways.

Now that I've shown how my syndrome view satisfies our desiderata quite well, I must address how it simultaneously avoids the shortcomings of rival views. For starters, we've already seen that my view doesn't seem to founder on the fringe cases of interpersonal love. Also, unlike most of its rivals, my syndrome view clearly construes love as a condition-cluster that's fully and appropriately multi-dimensional: rather than presenting love as solely attitudinal or dispositional, on the one hand, or as primarily or completely cognitive, affective, conative, or volitional on the other, it construes love as a condition-cluster that's attitudinal, dispositional, cognitive (indeed perceptual, doxastic, and attentional), affective, conative, and volitional, where none of these dimensions are considered primary. It therefore avoids the problems with oversimplification or overemphasis that most of its rivals seem to face. And unlike the purely behavioral view, my syndrome view doesn't misconstrue love as an outward behavioral performance rather than an internal condition of the organism, but instead virtuously construes love as such an internal condition while managing to incorporate behavior into the right story about love in the form of corresponding symptoms of love.

Furthermore, unlike the views of Frankfurt and Ebels-Duggan, respectively, my syndrome view doesn't construe love as being solely focused on the beloved's good or her will, but rather construes love, through the final-end dimension of love's loyalty, as being focused on *both*. And besides being more intuitively appealing, this dual focus of my view better explains what I shall call *love's fragmentation*, which refers to the occasional phenomenon of love pulling the lover in opposite behavioral or emotional directions. I know that my cats, for instance, don't much like going to the vet, and so my love for them makes me not want to take them. At the same time, though, I know that taking my cats to the vet is for their own good, so my love also makes me want to take them. I also imagine that it's not unusual for loving parents to face situations in which they want to give their beloved children whatever they want just because they want it, while simultaneously wanting *not* to give their children what they want because doing so would not be good for them. And similarly, we may sometimes have mixed emotions toward our beloveds getting what they want, making certain decisions, or adopting certain goals. We might, for instance, be somewhat glad or happy about these things on the one hand, yet simultaneously worried, disappointed, or worse about them on the other. On my syndrome view these experiences are explained by love's loyalty, and in particular by the dual nature of the final-end dimension of this loyalty: it's all about respecting and serving the beloved's good *and* her will, and though respecting and serving these things largely overlap and are typically in harmony, this dual service creates an internal conflict in the form of the lover being torn in conflicting behavioral or emotional directions in certain circumstances.

Before moving on to consider two important objections to my syndrome view of love, it's worth highlighting the fact my view vindicates a few plausible intuitions that many of us have about love. For example, many of us quite plausibly believe that there's at least a tension—if not

an outright inconsistency—between loving something and regularly abusing it. Such things don't fit easily together, and for many of us they don't fit together at all. But why is there such a lack of fit here? On my syndrome view, such regular abuse not only suggests a lack of moral recognition respect, but more generally a lack of loyalty. In particular, this regular abuse consists of volitional dispositions to mistreat the other, which runs directly counter to respecting and serving the other's welfare and will. Furthermore, many of us have certain plausible beliefs about the nature of romantic love. More specifically, we believe that, when we love other persons romantically, we do *not* (a) merely use them for consensual sex, (b) view them as people to merely settle for until better people come along, or (c) regard them as personal servants. Treating others in any of these ways is flatly inconsistent with romantic love, and under my syndrome view it's not hard to see why: these orientations toward others imply a willingness to trade them in for better replacements and no belief in their non-fungibility, and more generally a lack of loyalty towards them. These orientations also imply no desire for a romantic partnership and no attachment. Someone who's oriented toward another in any of these ways, then, simply cannot love that person romantically because he lacks most of the constituents of such love.

Despite its apparent ability to satisfy the earlier established desiderata that any viable theory of love must satisfy, there are at least two important objections to my syndrome view of love that target its extensional adequacy. The first objection maintains that my view is extensionally deficient (and therefore false) because it doesn't capture genuine cases of love in which the lovers are very small children or non-human animals because such creatures aren't sufficiently developed to house the requisite, complex mental machinery of love. While it's hard to say exactly when a creature is sufficiently developed in terms of this mental machinery to qualify as a potential subject of love under my syndrome theory, it's clear enough that really

small children and at least most non-human animals, including our companion animals, will not qualify, yet there are surely (a) many genuine cases of parental love throughout the non-human animal kingdom, (b) many genuine cases of very small children loving their parents, and (c) at least some cases of non-human companion animals loving their “owners.”

Although intuitively forceful, this objection doesn't necessarily sink my theory because it's not entirely clear that it has located genuine cases of love that my theory fails to capture. Though it's understandable—and perhaps even irresistible—to interpret certain behaviors of very small children or of non-human animals as indicators of love for others, the fact that love seems to be a very complex, multi-dimensional mental phenomenon coupled with their lack of mental development casts serious doubt on the idea that very small children and most non-human animals can genuinely love. While I admit that it would be very nice if my cats genuinely loved me as I do them, and if genuine love could be found throughout the non-human animal kingdom, and if really small children could love others as they presumably say or act like they do, the reality may very well be that most non-human animals, including our companion animals, simply cannot genuinely love because they cannot reach a sufficient level of mental development to do so, and that many small children, though capable of telling others that they love them and acting like they do, at best have something that merely resembles true love for others and must yet develop into full-blown subjects of love. Perhaps genuine loving, like fluently speaking a language or being virtuous, can only be found in people that have reached a rather high level of mental development. Furthermore, even if there are some genuine cases of love in which the lovers are non-human animals or small children, it's not entirely clear that my theory cannot capture them. For at this point it's just not clear what these cases look like, yet without these details we cannot definitively say that my theory fails to capture them.

The second objection, by contrast, maintains that my syndrome view fails because it renders impossible the kind of universal, impersonal love for humanity that Christianity champions. For under my syndrome view love must be directed toward particular objects as the particular objects that they are rather than as instances of object-types, which implies that love for other people must be personal rather than impersonal.³³ However, even if this Christian ideal of universal love is extremely difficult to achieve, it's surely *possible* to achieve, and so my theory must be false.

Though also quite forceful, this second objection doesn't necessarily sink my view either because Christianity arguably encourages an ideal that at best *almost* reaches true love. To see why let's construct a hypothetical, secular ethical ideal that almost reaches true love that I'll call *Affectionate Kantian Respect*, which someone lives up to when she meets the following conditions. Whenever she sees another person, P, she feels affection for P as a person. She also regards P, as a person, as one of her people and as something of non-instrumental importance in its own right. Digging deeper, she regards P's good and P's will as things of non-instrumental importance in their own right that must be respected and served as far as possible. She's disposed to pay attention to how P is faring and whether P needs help with her ends; she sees facts pertaining to how things will or might affect P's welfare or ends as normative reasons to do or not do certain things; she desires for P to fare well and for P to get what she wants within morally acceptable limits; she's disposed to feel good when P fares well and gets what she wants within morally acceptable limits and bad when P doesn't; and she has volitional dispositions to non-instrumentally respect and serve P's welfare and ends as far as possible. She's even disposed to trust P until she has sufficient evidence to warrant distrusting P.

³³ My syndrome view here is thus in agreement with Frankfurt (2001, 2004), Jollimore (2011), and Zangwill (2013), which means that this objection, if successful, would sink their views as well as mine.

Now even though this Kantian ideal clearly resembles true love, it falls short of it and should therefore be distinguished from it because *there's no partiality or favoritism toward any of its objects as particular objects*. While everyone is an object of the Kantian saint's affectionate respect, no one is a privileged individual. No one is special. So long as something is merely a certain kind of thing—namely, a person—it receives the same impartial treatment as any other person. The kind of concern that the Kantian saint has for other people is not special—it's impartial and general rather than partial and particularized. Furthermore, if we were to weaken this ideal in order to make it more achievable—for example, by extracting the disposition to feel affection for any other person as a person or boiling it down to non-instrumental universal goodwill—then it would even more clearly fall short of true love by lacking even more necessary features of such love. For surely there can be no love for something without a disposition to feel affection for it, and so our Kantian ideal will fall shorter of universal love if it no longer contains the disposition to feel affection for any other person as a person. This ideal will fall even shorter of universal love if we were to boil it down to non-instrumental universal goodwill because such goodwill needn't be accompanied by the disposition to feel affection for any other person as a person, any emotional vulnerability toward others, or any trust in others. Consequently, any religious analogues of these Kantian ideals would fall short of true love as well for the same reasons. Perhaps there are practical reasons to call such ideals “love,” but this only means that it's sometimes prudent to fudge the truth. Strictly speaking they don't amount to true love.

2.4 The Fundamental Nature of Friendship

This brings us to the question of how we should fundamentally characterize and analyze friendship. What is friendship? Unlike love, which we saw to be a unidirectional logical relationship, friendship is a bidirectional logical relationship: friendship obtains just in case two people are friends with each other, and two people, X and Y , are friends with each other just in case X is a friend of Y and Y is a friend of X . So even if there could be situations in which only one person can be said to be a true friend, such a situation, even if it involves a true friend, does not involve a true friendship. For that we must have two people that are friends with each other.³⁴ And besides being a bidirectional logical relationship, friendship is a “relationship” in the more substantial sense of being something that’s grounded in a shared history of interaction and that typically involves repeated interaction over time that, in turn, typically involves expressions of friendship, such as mutual loyalty. But what is this something that’s grounded in a shared history and tends to express itself? What is it that materializes in the parties involved that makes them friends with each other?

Here I propose and defend an answer to the question of friendship’s fundamental nature that’s similar too—and indeed that largely piggybacks on—my answer to the previous question about love’s fundamental nature: friendship should be understood as *a pair of very comparable syndromes that obtains between two people due to a shared history of interacting*, or as a pair of very similar condition-clusters obtaining between two people as the result of a shared history of interacting that is accompanied by a set of symptoms that indicate the presence of these condition-clusters in the two parties. So, just like we saw with love, to understand friendship

³⁴ It is, therefore, possible for person X to befriend person Y without Y reciprocating because it’s possible for X to be a friend of Y without Y being a friend of X . In such a situation, however, we would only have a single friend rather than a true friendship.

under my syndrome view of friendship, we must again draw a distinction between the pair of condition-clusters that constitutes friendship and the corresponding symptoms that indicate the reality of this pair.

Now let's take a closer look at these things, beginning with the pair of condition-clusters that constitutes friendship. According to my syndrome view, while these condition-clusters could be exactly the same, they needn't be strictly symmetrical; they only need to be very comparable. Accordingly, the syndromes that obtain between and thereby make people friends can be somewhat different from each other, on the one hand, yet must be largely the same on the other in order to be very comparable. Despite the fact that these syndromes that jointly constitute friendship can vary, then, under my syndrome view of friendship there is a common core to each of the syndromes—and therefore a (relatively) symmetrical core to friendship itself—that allows us to characterize people as friends within and across cases.

What makes up this core? In agreement with other commentators (Thomas 1990; Badhwar 1993; Helm 2010, 2013a), my syndrome view of friendship claims that this core is largely constituted by *mutual love*, and indeed by a mutual love that, according to my syndrome view of love, would have to obtain between the kinds of people that can be friends. So for starters, given the core of love under my syndrome theory, the core of friendship under my syndrome view of *it* consists of (1') mutual dispositions to feel particularized affection for the other and (2') mutual loyalty, where the final-end dimensions of this mutual loyalty are both two-dimensional. Also, since the parties involved will have the right kind of wills to be appropriate objects of trust and emotional-sensitivity, the core of friendship further consists of (3') mutual particularized trust and (4') a mutual emotional sensitivity toward each other's words and deeds such that each one's words and deeds tend to have greater emotional impacts on the

other than they would otherwise have if they had instead come from the non-loved. And though interpersonal love in general needn't be partly constituted by a desire for a personal relationship of the appropriate type, the mutual love between friends is partly constituted by (5') mutual desires for—or at least the symmetrical openness to—the interactions, activities, or experiences of friendship as described above.³⁵

In addition this mutual love, the other elements of friendship's core under my syndrome view of it are (6') mutual appraisal respect, which again refers to the kind of respect constituted by the positive regard of another based on the positive appraisal of that person's characteristics (Darwall 1977), as well as (7') mutual dispositions to experience enjoyment due to interacting or to engaging in the activities or experiences of friendship. Under my syndrome view of friendship, then, it's these seven conditions that jointly constitute the core of friendship that defines it. And venturing beyond this core, just as we saw with love, friendship is also sometimes partly constituted by attachment even though it needn't be so. This attachment may be symmetrical or asymmetrical, and when it's symmetrical it signifies a close friendship.

Next we come to the symptoms of friendship, which, like those of love, generally consist in certain behaviors and emotional experiences that typically flow from the various constituents of the pair of condition-clusters that constitutes friendship. Perhaps the most characteristic symptoms here are (a) the interactions, activities, and experiences of friendship as described earlier, including intimacy and the sharing of self-information, along with (b) mutual enjoyment of these things. And just like we saw with love, the mutual loyalty that constitutes a large part of friendship will typically manifest itself in a variety of behavioral and emotional ways (e.g., the parties will mutually influence each other's behaviors through suggestion or direction).

³⁵ Just to be clear, my syndrome view of friendship maintains that mutual love is always involved in friendship because it's always part of the core of friendship. This may seem objectionable because it doesn't allow room for friendship without love, but I will deal with this kind of objection to my view in the next section.

However, there is no particular set of symptoms that must be present in order for two people to be friends. There can be a significant amount of variability in the set of symptoms that indicate friendship because the manifestation of these symptoms will again be a function of several factors. Friends will typically display their loyalty and share activities, for example, but they may not do so if they live far away from each other and live independent lives, or if they have too many other pressing matters to deal with in their lives (such as more important friends or loved ones to which to attend). Friends may typically engage in intimate, non-sexual behaviors together and share information about themselves with each other, but the internalization of certain norms, such as masculine gender norms, may inhibit such behavior among friends. Friends also typically enjoy their shared activities and experiences, but they of course need not always enjoy them, and a depressed or a stressed friend may consistently have a hard time enjoying them.

2.5 Satisfying the Desiderata of Friendship

Just like my syndrome view of love, my syndrome view of friendship does quite well in terms of satisfying the desiderata that viable theories of friendship must satisfy. Beginning again with extensional adequacy, my syndrome view of friendship doesn't seem to founder on either close or non-close friendships, but rather appears to capture them pretty well. For under my syndrome view of friendship, close friendship is constituted by the seven conditions that jointly constitute the defining core of friendship along with mutual attachment, and it will typically manifest itself in a variety of ways, especially in the characteristic ways just described above. By contrast, non-close friendship is constituted by the seven conditions that jointly constitute the

defining core of friendship, and though attachment may be present in one of the parties, it's not likely to be present in either party. Also, compared to close friendships, the dispositions to feel affection, the loyalty, the trust, the emotional sensitivity, and the desires for friendship activities and experiences that partly constitute friendship will tend to be less deep in non-close friendships, and the corresponding symptoms will tend to be less abundant. This captures the basic idea from earlier that non-close friendships are probably best thought of as watered-down versions of close friendships.

Of course, it's easy enough to envision potential counterexamples here. Consider, for instance, the humorous case from the television show *Seinfeld* where Jerry tries to "break up" with a guy from his past named Joel who wants to be friends with Jerry even though Jerry doesn't really like him and doesn't want to hang out with him. When Jerry tries to end things, Joel breaks down and cries, so out of pity Jerry takes it back and says that they can still be friends. But since Jerry (at best!) doesn't really have affection for Joel, has no desire to engage in the activities and experiences of friendship with him, and isn't disposed to enjoy the time they spend together, they don't count as friends under my syndrome theory of friendship even though, by their own lights, they are friends. Now this, to be sure, is an interesting case, but it doesn't necessarily constitute a genuine counterexample to my theory. For one thing, just because Jerry and Joel think that they're friends doesn't mean that they are. People can be wrong about whether their relationships are genuine friendships. Also, the fact that Jerry is motivated to spend time with Joel out of pity rather than affection and the desire for the activities and experiences of friendship strongly suggest that they are not really friends (a "friend" out of pity is no friend at all). So even if my syndrome view does imply that Jerry and Joel aren't real friends, this doesn't sink my view because, upon closer inspection, it doesn't look like they're real friends.

Other, and perhaps more troublesome, potential counterexamples here are (a) what appear to be the all-too-familiar cases of small children being friends despite the fact that they do not house the requisite mental machinery of friendship under my syndrome view of it, and (b) cases of non-close friendship where the friends don't love each other. Don't these cases sink my view? Not necessarily. Like the case of Jerry and Joel, these cases may not be genuine cases of friendship. The people involved may do what friends do, but as the case of Jerry and Joel shows, people can do what friends do without being friends. Small children may not be able to house the requisite mental machinery of friendship, but they will hopefully grow into it, and before they do so they can be legitimately called "friends" even if in reality they are merely friends-in-training. Two people who don't love each other under my syndrome theory may appear to be friends by hanging out all the time, but since they don't love each other, they don't have the mutual psychological depth to warrant calling them friends rather than people who merely pass the time together or engage in activities together. Although we shouldn't make friendship too hard to come by here, we also shouldn't make it too easy to come by.

Overall, then, none of these potential counterexamples clearly work, and so my syndrome view still appears to satisfy the desideratum of extensional adequacy. Let's move on then to the next desideratum of data accommodation, which my syndrome theory also satisfies quite well. Starting with the fact that friendship is deep and stable, my syndrome view of friendship accommodates this easily by making mutual love, which is deep and stable, a constitutive part of friendship. As for the related point that friendship varies in closeness, my syndrome view accommodates this in part by making mutual attachment, which makes friendship deeper or closer when present, something that may or may not be a constituent of friendship. My view further accommodates this fact by construing friendship in terms of mutual affection, loyalty,

trust, emotional sensitivity, and desires for friendship activities and experiences, all of which can vary in depth across cases of friendship. And when these things are comparatively deeper, the friendships they constitute tend to be closer, while the opposite tends to be true when these things are not as deep.

Most of the other data points here are accommodated by my syndrome view of friendship in the same dual fashion as we saw earlier when looking at how my syndrome view of love accommodated the data of love. Under my syndrome view of friendship, for instance, friendship involves things such as mutual dispositions to feel affection and mutual special concern (which is part of mutual loyalty) by being partly constituted by them. Friendship also can, and typically will, involve corresponding expressions of these constituents, which again are treated as symptoms of friendship. And since the mutual emotional vulnerability and the mutual desires for each other to fare well and flourish are constituents of mutual special concern, they will be involved in the same dual fashion as it was. Likewise for the mutual desires for the shared activities and experiences of friendship, the mutual trust, the mutual moral and appraisal respects, the mutual dispositions to enjoy spending time together, and the mutual attachment. On the one hand, friendship always involves everything but the mutual attachment in the sense that it's partly constituted by them all under my syndrome theory, and sometimes friendship is further constituted by mutual attachment. On the other, friendship can involve corresponding expressions of these things—which my view again treats as symptoms of friendship—and it typically will involve corresponding expressions of the mutual desires for the shared activities and experiences of friendship, the mutual trust, the mutual moral and appraisal respects, and the mutual dispositions to enjoy spending time together. And most notable here are the expressions of the mutual desires for the shared activities and experiences of friendship and the mutual

dispositions to enjoy such things, which, respectively, take the form of actual shared activities and experiences along with actual enjoyment of such things. I earlier described these things as characteristically, yet not necessarily, involved in friendship, and my syndrome view of friendship accommodates this fact by construing these things as symptoms of friendship that are typically, but not necessarily, present.

Next we have the data points to the effect that friendship sometimes, yet not always, involves intimacy and the sharing of self-information, and that it always involves the mutual receptivity to influence, direction, and interpretation. Starting with intimacy and the sharing of self-information, my syndrome theory accommodates the fact that friendship only sometimes involves these things by making them characteristic symptoms of friendship that may nevertheless be absent in certain cases of genuine friendship. As for the mutual receptivity to influence, direction, and interpretation, my syndrome theory can accommodate this with the mutual loyalty and the mutual emotional sensitivity that partly constitute friendship under my theory. Because friends are mutually loyal, on the one hand, they will each have a set of circumstantially robust, volitional dispositions to serve each other's wills, which is why they are mutually receptive to each other's influence and direction. On the other hand, because friends are particularly sensitive to the other's words and deeds, they will be particularly sensitive to how they interpret each other.

This brings me to the final desiderata of normative neutrality and moral illumination, which my syndrome view of friendship also satisfies quite well. Starting with normative neutrality, my view analyzes friendship neutrally and thereby preserves the distinction between "good" and "bad" friendship. More specifically, if we understand the former to be rational friendship and the latter to be irrational friendship, then my syndrome view of friendship

preserves this distinction because it allows friendship to be sufficiently backed or forbidden by normative reasons. If, however, we understand “good” friendship to be valuable to the parties and “bad” friendship to be burdensome, then again my syndrome view preserves the distinction because it allows for both valuable and burdensome friendships. And if we instead understand “good” friendship to be that which serves as a vehicle for the growth or preservation of moral virtue and “bad” friendship to be that which leads to moral deterioration in the parties, then again my syndrome view preserves this distinction because it makes room for both possibilities through mutual loyalty and the expressions of friendship, which can have either kind of effect on our moral characters.

As for moral illumination, my syndrome view of friendship satisfies it quite easily through its mutual loyalty condition. For on the one hand, since friendship is partly constituted by this mutual loyalty, each party will set the other’s welfare and will as privileged end-in-themselves, and so each party will have circumstantially robust, volitional dispositions to respect and serve the other’s welfare and will. Therefore, since these dispositions will tend to manifest themselves in the form of actually respecting and serving these ends, friends will tend to serve the ends of morality at least with respect to their friends. On the other hand, since each party will set the other’s welfare and will as *privileged* ends, they perpetually run the risk of privileging these things too much, or of respecting and serving them in immoral ways.

2.6 The Psychological Grounds of Love and Friendship

Now that we’ve addressed the issue of how to fundamentally characterize and analyze love and friendship, we can move on to the next issue of whether these phenomena are

psychologically grounded in (normative motivational) reasons. Are love and friendship responses to considerations that we take—perhaps unconsciously—to *warrant* such responses? On the surface it may not look like it because love and friendship are not the kind of things that we can straightforwardly choose or will on the basis of perceived reasons that seem to warrant them. Though love and friendship may typically depend on voluntary choice for their existence and, indeed, may sometimes even depend on the parties involved (a) voluntarily committing to having the relevant type of relationship with each other or (b) voluntarily choosing to do things calculated to initiate or sustain such a relationship, we still can't straightforwardly choose to start or continue loving someone, or to initiate or continue being friends with someone, on the basis of facts about them that seem to make loving or being friends with them rationally appropriate as we can straightforwardly choose to enter or remain in our cars on the basis of facts that seem to make such behavior rationally appropriate. The facts that seem to make loving or being friends with others rationally appropriate may indeed motivate people to voluntarily commit to loving or being friends with these others, or to voluntarily choosing to do things calculated to initiate or sustain love or friendship with them, but these voluntary actions alone cannot successfully lead to or sustain true love or true friendship. Whether such love or friendship will be successfully initiated or sustained is never due solely to our voluntarily choices to initiate or sustain them because we cannot voluntarily choose to initiate or sustain the psychological realities that constitute these phenomena. We might be able to make these realities possible or more likely through our voluntary choices, but whether these realities actually materialize also depends crucially on mysterious factors of fortune that lie beyond our control that must work in tandem with our voluntarily choices to produce or sustain love or friendship (Thomas 1987, 1990). In fact, these factors of fortune beyond our control are needed to complete any process of initiating

or sustaining love or friendship set into motion by our voluntary choices, which means that love or friendship still ultimately “just happen to us” even if our voluntary choices have played a role in their materialization (Thomas 1987, 1990). Therefore, since love and friendship are not things that we can straightforwardly choose or will on the basis of perceived reasons that seem to warrant them, but are rather things that are ultimately due to factors beyond our control, it’s tempting to see them as things that aren’t psychologically grounded in reasons (i.e., things that happen to us aren’t the kinds of things for which we have reasons; we only have reasons for what we do or will).

Now even though love and friendship cannot be straightforwardly willed on the basis of perceived reasons that seem to warrant them, and are indeed things that must ultimately just happen to us, this does not show that they aren’t psychologically grounded in reasons. Just consider the analogous case of belief, which is a mental state that *is* psychologically grounded in reasons even though it, too, cannot be straightforwardly willed or chosen on the basis of perceived reasons or evidence that seems to support it, but is rather, much like love or friendship, something that must ultimately just happen to us. For even though our voluntary choices may put us in a position to come to believe certain things, we still must rely on other, psychological factors beyond our control to ultimately produce beliefs in us. Even if we’re staring at conclusive evidence, E, for some belief, B, we cannot, by a sheer act of will, come to adopt B on the basis of E as we can straightforwardly will to do things on the basis of perceived reasons that seem to warrant them. For these beliefs to actually materialize, the part of our rationality that’s beyond our control—the part that ultimately produces the doxastic results that are warranted by the evidence in our cognitive grasp—must be functioning properly. But even though this is true, it doesn’t mean that belief is not something that we hold on the basis of considerations that we

take—perhaps unconsciously—to warrant them. Belief is indeed such a state; and so both love and friendship, which are likewise things that cannot be straightforwardly willed on the basis reasons, and are rather things that ultimately just happen to us, can still be psychologically grounded in reasons.

In fact, there are some pretty good grounds for thinking that love and friendship are psychologically grounded in reasons. Consider first the familiar scenario in which a beloved asks her lover for reasons why she loves her and the lover responds by trying to unearth such reasons. In such a scenario, the beloved isn't seeking explanatory reasons that illuminate the mere causal history of the lover's love: she isn't seeking a story about God or good fortune creating the right causal circumstances for the lover's love to materialize, or about the psychological, physiological, biological, or social conditions and causal processes involved in the materialization of the lover's love. The beloved here is instead asking for reasons that are supposed to render her lover's love for her an *appropriate or fitting* response to her, and so the beloved is effectively presupposing that her lover's love for her is psychologically grounded in the relevant reasons. Also, since the lover responds to the request by trying to locate and provide the relevant reasons rather than rejecting the beloved's request as resting on a mistaken presupposition, the lover is effectively vindicating the beloved's presupposition here. This familiar scenario, then, strongly suggests that love is psychologically grounded in the relevant reasons. And since we can easily envision an analogous scenario occurring between friends, we also have reason to think that friendship is likewise psychologically grounded in the relevant reasons.

Additionally, there are some normative grounds for thinking that love and friendship are psychologically grounded in reasons. If—as I will argue in the next chapter when we venture

into normative territory—love and friendship are subject to normative appraisal or rational assessment, then it seems reasonable to think that they will be sensitive to this fact. More specifically, if any given case of love or friendship is either justified or unjustified, then it's plausible to suppose that any instance of love or friendship will be sensitive to this fact by being grounded in what are taken to be reasons that justify it. Again the analogous case of belief is instructive here. Belief is definitely subject to normative appraisal or rational assessment: any given belief will be justified or unjustified, warranted or unwarranted. And given this, we should expect belief to be sensitive to this fact by being psychologically grounded in what's taken to be evidence that justifies or warrants it, which seems to be exactly what we find to be true about belief. Analogously, then, we should expect love and friendship to be the same way if they, too, are subject to normative appraisal or rational assessment.

Assuming then that these are good grounds for thinking that love and friendship are psychologically grounded in reasons, the next question to ask is: what reasons are they grounded in? Though the specific reasons that ground love or friendship probably vary across cases, I think that we can establish what these reasons will generally look like from reflection upon the nature of love and friendship. First, though, we should draw distinctions between initial and continuing love, as well as initial and continuing friendship, since the reasons that we might have for these things may change over time due to our changing relationships with others over time.

Now the central kind of reason here can be uncovered by revisiting Aristotle's three kinds of friendship—pleasure-friendship, utility-friendship, and virtue-friendship, which are again defined and distinguished by what psychologically grounds the relationship between the parties involved. Aristotle thought that only the last kind of friendship is true or perfect friendship, while the others are degenerate cases that only approximate, and that merely resemble, real friendship.

And it's not difficult to see why: people who associate with each other *only* because of the mutual pleasure they gain from each other's company or because of some other personal benefit gained from each other (e.g., they just want someone else to spend time with them) may behave like friends do, but they don't have the right orientations to each other to be true friends because they are only in it for their own advantage. In particular, people who associate with each other or have a relationship solely for their own personal advantage will lack many of the mutual characteristics that constitute friendship: they will at least lack mutual special concern and mutual loyalty, which are both non-instrumental and particularized orientations toward others, and they will probably lack the mutual beliefs in the other's non-fungibility and the mutual unwillingness to trade the other in for a replacement. For if all one cares about is fun or some other personal advantage, then wouldn't this make that person's associates who are valued only for how fun or otherwise advantageous they are replaceable without a loss of value? Wouldn't such a person be willing to trade in these associates for replacements if those replacements would be more personally advantageous? The upshot here is that true friendship, whether initial or continuing, cannot be psychologically grounded in one's own personal advantage, but must instead be grounded in what's taken to be the other's good character traits. This isn't to say that friendship must be grounded in the other's good character traits, as this would rule out friendship between people with lousy character traits. Instead, friendship must be psychologically grounded in what are *taken to be* the other's good character traits, even if these evaluations are massively wrongheaded or factually mistaken.

Now the case of love, by contrast, is curiously a bit messier than this, even though it, too, cannot be psychologically grounded in one's own personal advantage because anyone who's oriented toward another solely for the sake of such advantage will at least lack the special

concern and loyalty that largely constitute love, and they will probably lack the belief in the other's non-fungibility and the unwillingness to trade the other in for a replacement that also partly constitute love. Unlike friendship, which seems to be psychologically grounded solely in what are taken to be the other's good character traits, it seems that love can be psychologically grounded in different kinds of considerations depending on whether it's initial or continuing love that we're talking about here. Starting with initial love, though it can, and in many cases will (e.g., the case of friendship love), be grounded in what are taken to be good character traits, it seems that it can also be grounded in biological-relational traits. Recall, for instance, the fringe case of love envisioned earlier in footnote 14 in which the lover loves her brother simply because he is her brother. In this case the brother is loved not because of his good character traits, but rather just because he is the lover's brother. And I would also imagine that something similar is true in other cases of love, such as cases of parental love for the unborn, infants, and the like. Though their parents may love them because they are precious or adorable or whatever, chances are their parents love them simply because they are their children. So it seems that the psychological grounds of initial love, then, can be found in what are taken to be the beloved's good character traits *or* in biological-relational traits that the beloveds can have.

Finally we have continuing love, and though it, too, can be grounded in the beloved's good character traits or in her biological-relational traits—the psychological grounds of initial love can, and in many cases will, continue to so ground love—a third set of relevant traits here are traits that the beloved can have in virtue of non-biological relationships shared with the lover. So for example, in many cases of romantic love, such love is initiated before the parties involved get married, and so the parties' initial love for each other cannot be grounded in their marital relationship. However, after the parties get married, then each one's love for the other can, I

presume, be psychologically grounded in the fact that the other is one's spouse. So when it comes to continuing love, it seems that it could be psychologically grounded in good character traits as well as relational traits that are either biological or non-biological in nature.

2.7 Love, Friendship, and the Value of Their Objects

This brings us to the final issue of this chapter, which is how love and friendship relate to the non-instrumental value of their objects. When we love others or are friends with them, are we responding to their non-instrumental value? Or are love and friendship instead bestowals or mere projections of such value onto others? According to *appraisal views* they are responses to non-instrumental value, while according to *bestowal views* they are mere projections of such value (Helm 2010, 2013b). However, I think that the relationship between such value and these phenomena is much more complicated than these views suggest. In fact, I think that there are multiple relationships here, and that to see them all we must look at the different ways in which “non-instrumental value” can be interpreted.

One way to interpret “non-instrumental value” is in terms of *intrinsically valuable qualities*. On this interpretation, then, the issue in question becomes that of whether love and friendship are responses to intrinsically valuable qualities that others possess, or whether they merely project such qualities onto others. Let's begin with friendship, which we saw above to be psychologically grounded in what's taken to be the other's good qualities, where these qualities are considered “good” in and of themselves rather than because of their advantageousness for the friend. Because friendship is psychologically grounded in this way, friendship is always at least a response to *what's taken to be* non-instrumental value. However, whether friendship is a

response to such value or a mere projection of it depends on whether (a) the other person actually has the apparently good qualities that they seem to have as well as whether (b) these apparently good qualities are, in fact, good. If either of these conditions is not met, then friendship will be a mere projection of non-instrumental value under this interpretation of it. For if, on the one hand, the other person doesn't really have the apparently good, friendship-grounding qualities that they seem to have, then our friendship with them cannot be a response to their good qualities. Instead, we would be effectively projecting these apparently good qualities—and thus non-instrumental value—onto them. On the other hand, if the other person did really have the apparently good, friendship-grounding qualities that they seem to have, but these qualities were actually lousy or objectively valueless ones instead of good ones, then although we would be responding to the other's actual qualities here, we would still be projecting non-instrumental value onto them. By contrast, friendship is a response to the other's intrinsically valuable qualities—and thus to non-instrumental value—when and only when (a) they actually possess the apparently good, friendship-grounding qualities that they seem to have, and (b) these apparently good qualities are actually good ones.

Something similar will be true of love, except the situation here is a bit more complicated and indeterminate given the more expansive psychological grounds of love. We saw above that these grounds can be found in what are taken to be the beloved's good character traits (just as we see in friendship), but they can also be found in relational qualities that the beloveds can have in virtue of biological or other relationships with their lovers. Insofar as love is grounded, then, in the beloved's apparently good character traits, the story about love's relation to the non-instrumental value of its object will be the same under this first interpretation of such value as the story just told about friendship. Things get more complicated and indeterminate, however,

when we consider the other possible grounds of love. Everything hangs on whether those who love on the basis of these extra grounds see the relational qualities in question as non-instrumentally valuable, and of course on whether these qualities are in fact so valuable. The qualities of being someone's sibling or of being someone's spouse, for example, seem to be neutral ones. If they are, then if people do love in virtue of such qualities and see them as possessing non-instrumental value, then these people would clearly be projecting such value rather than responding to it. If, however, these people don't see such qualities as possessing such value, then these people would not be projecting *or* responding to such value. And if, by contrast, the love-grounding qualities do constitute non-instrumentally valuable qualities, then those who love in virtue of them will be straightforwardly responding to non-instrumental value under this interpretation of it.

Besides referring to intrinsically valuable qualities, we could instead interpret "non-instrumental value" as some sort of holistic, intrinsic, non-moral value that our beloveds or friends may possess. So for example, I used to have a red '88 Isuzu Pickup that had the kind of value that I'm talking about here. Besides its obvious instrumental value, the truck as a whole had *sentimental value*, which is a kind of intrinsic, non-moral value that I obviously projected onto the truck. Similarly, it seems clear enough that we see our beloveds and our friends as having such sentimental value just by being our beloveds and our friends, where such value is known to be only in our minds and is therefore a mere projection onto our beloveds and friends. We have also seen that a constituent of both love and friendship is the belief in, and corresponding perception of, the beloved's non-fungibility, which for our purposes here means that love and friendship both constitutively involve seeing the beloved as holistically possessing an intrinsic, non-moral, unique—and therefore irreplaceable—value. And whether this

perception merely projects such value onto the beloved or is instead a response to such value straightforwardly depends on whether our beloveds and friends actually have such value: if they don't have such value, then this perception projects it onto them; if they do have such value, then this perception is a response to this value. But do our beloveds and friends ever have such value, or do love and friendship always merely project such value? Rather than trying to answer this question here, I will have to save it for the end of the next chapter when I address what's known as "the fungibility problem."

In addition to the interpretations already considered, one final way to interpret "non-instrumental value" here would be in terms of non-instrumental *moral* value, where this, in turn, could be either the basic, intrinsic kind that every person as such is thought to possess, or else a special kind that belongs uniquely to beloveds and friends as such. On this interpretation, the issue in question becomes that of whether love and friendship are responses to either kind of non-instrumental moral value that others may possess, or whether they merely project such value onto others. And it is my contention that love and friendship are not responses to either kind of value, nor are they mere projectors of either kind of value. More specifically, I think that, on the one hand, love and friendship are not responses to the basic kind of moral value that we all intrinsically possess solely in virtue of our personhood, nor do they merely project this kind of value onto their objects. For as we saw in the previous section, love and friendship are psychologically grounded in apparently good character traits or, in the case of love, in relational qualities, not (pace Velleman 1999) in our mere personhood or any generic value that such personhood may have. So neither love nor friendship is a response to our basic moral value. And since we have such value just because of our personhood, we have it before we can be the object

of love or friendship, which means that neither phenomenon merely projects such value onto their objects.

On the other hand, I also maintain that love and friendship are not responses to, nor mere projectors of, any special kind of moral value that beloveds and friends as such may possess, but are instead *literal creators of such special moral value*. For one thing, people obviously could not have special moral value as beloveds and friends *before* love or friendship materializes; they could only have such value as the result of these things. So love and friendship cannot be responses to the special moral value in question here. However, love and friendship do seem to project special moral value onto their objects. For as we've seen, both of them are constituted in part by loyalty, where such loyalty sets the other's welfare and will as *special or privileged ends-in-themselves* rather than as generic ones with equal moral importance to any other person's welfare or will. And by assigning this special or privileged status to the beloved's or the friend's welfare and will, which outstrips the impartial moral importance of welfares and wills across persons, love and friendship appear to project this special value onto their objects. Nevertheless, love and friendship do not *merely* project this special value because, as I shall now argue, our beloveds and friends as such have special moral value for us.

Imagine that you are standing on the shore of a body of water and two people are in the water drowning. You can save one, and only one, of the drowning individuals with minimal risk to your own welfare. Now suppose that one person is not a loved one or a friend, while the other is one of these things. No matter who that first person is, the second person here, unlike the first, has a moral claim to your rescue simply because they are your loved one or your friend. Of course, both people here could have moral claims to your rescue on the basis of different facts. The first person may be a doctor who will be unable to save more lives should you refuse to save

them, or they may be loved by many other people who will suffer from their loss, or they may be more virtuous than your loved one. But this doesn't change the fact that your loved one seems to have a special moral claim to your rescue here because they are *your* loved one while the other is not. And this seems to suggest that your loved one here really has special moral value for you. In fact, if we stipulate that there are no morally relevant differences between the drowning individuals other than the fact that one person is your loved one or your friend while the other is neither, then it seems rather obvious that you should, on pain of moral failure, save the former individual. It is of course bad to not save someone when you can, but here you cannot avoid bad consequences, and it would surely be worse—and therefore wrong—to let your friend or loved one drown rather than the stranger. But if it would be morally worse and thus wrong to let your friend or loved one drown, then that person's basic welfare must be more important, or have greater moral value, than the other's welfare (which is why the friend or loved one has a special moral claim to your rescue in the first place).

Furthermore, consider the apparent moral asymmetries with respect to straightforwardly wronging your loved ones or friends compared to wronging strangers instead. As concrete examples, consider the differences between maliciously sabotaging a stranger's lifelong goal of becoming a doctor vs. doing it to a friend or a loved one, and the differences between punching a stranger in the face out of boredom vs. doing it instead to a friend or a loved one. Though all of these actions seem wrong, it would clearly be worse—indeed *morally* worse—to treat our friends or loved ones in either of these ways. But why is this true? Because the welfare and the wills of our friends and loved ones as such are generally more important, or generally have greater moral value, than the welfares and the wills of others. Overall, then, it appears that our friends and other loved ones as such have special moral value for us; and so even if love and friendship do

involve projections of special moral value onto their objects, these aren't *mere* projections because love and friendship give rise to special, agent-relative moral value.

Of course, the idea that love and friendship can literally give rise to special, agent-relative moral value may seem too fantastic, far-fetched, or metaphysically extravagant to accept, but this worry will evaporate if we are willing to accept other ideas about moral value. In particular, suppose that we accept the idea that people really possess a basic moral value in virtue of their personhood such that their welfares and wills are morally important for everyone. Now let's further suppose that we accept the intuitive idea that, while all people possess a basic moral value in virtue of their personhood, it's nevertheless the case that *virtuous* people have more moral value than the vicious such that the welfares and the wills of the former are generally more important to respect and promote than those of the latter. By accepting these ideas, we are accepting, first, that people possess a basic, agent-neutral moral value, and second that some people can possess comparatively more or less agent-neutral moral value in virtue of their moral character. But if we accept the idea that good moral character, which is special and intrinsic to the individual, can augment moral value in an agent-neutral way, then it's not much of a stretch or any more metaphysically extravagant to think that love and friendship, which are special relations between people, can augment moral value in an agent-relative way.³⁶

2.8 Conclusion

In this chapter I've addressed the three issues pertaining solely to the nature of love and friendship. Beginning with the central metaphysical issue of how to fundamentally characterize

³⁶ I will elaborate on these ideas in chapter 5 when discussing my non-reductionist account of the special duties of love and friendship.

and analyze these phenomena, we've seen that they're best understood as complex, psychological syndromes within and between people that typically stem from a shared history of interacting. More specifically, love is best understood as an organically caused, affectionate loyalty that can take different shapes across cases and that manifests itself in a variety of behavioral and emotional ways, while friendship is best understood as an amalgam of mutual love, mutual appraisal respect, and mutual dispositions to enjoy spending time together that can also take different shapes across cases and that also manifests itself in a variety of behavioral and emotional ways. Next we inquired into the psychological grounds of love and friendship, and there we found that friendship is grounded in what are taken to be the other's good qualities, while love is grounded in what are taken to be the beloved's good qualities or in relational qualities that the beloveds can have due to shared relationships.

Last we addressed the thorny of issue of how love and friendship relate to the non-instrumental value of their objects, where we found that the relation here depends (among other things) on how we interpret the notion of "non-instrumental value." If we interpret it to mean "intrinsically valuable qualities," then the relation here will be different across cases. Starting with friendship, it's a response to non-instrumental value when the other person actually possesses the apparently good, friendship-grounding qualities that they seem to have and these apparently good qualities are actually good ones, otherwise it's a mere projection of such value onto the other. As for love, it's relation to non-instrumental value on this interpretation of it is a bit more complicated. Insofar as love is grounded in the beloved's apparently good qualities, love's relation to such value is no different than friendship's relation to it: love is a response to it when the beloved actually possesses the apparently good, love-grounding qualities that they seem to have and these apparently good qualities are actually good ones, otherwise it's a mere

projection of such value onto the beloved. However, insofar as love is grounded in relational qualities, its relation to non-instrumental value under this interpretation of it depends on whether (a) the lovers see these qualities as non-instrumentally valuable ones and (b) these qualities are actually valuable in this way. If (a) is true but (b) is false, then love is a mere projector of non-instrumental value. If (a) and (b) are instead both false, then love is neither a response to nor a projector of such value. And if, finally, both (a) and (b) are true, the love is a response to such value.

If, however, we interpret “non-instrumental value” to refer to the special, holistic, non-moral, purely sentimental value that our beloveds and friends as such seem to possess, then it’s clear that such value is a mere projection onto our beloveds and friends because we know it to be only in our minds. And if instead we interpret “non-instrumental value” to refer to the holistic, non-moral, non-fungible value that we can’t help but see in our beloveds and friends, then whether love and friendship are mere projectors of such value or responses to it depends on whether our beloveds and friends actually have such value: if they don’t have such value, then love and friendship merely project it; if they do have such value, then love and friendship are responses to it. And finally, if we interpret “non-instrumental value” to refer to either the basic, intrinsic kind of moral value that every person as such is thought to possess or to a special kind of moral value that belongs uniquely to beloveds and friends as such, then love and friendship are neither responses to nor mere projectors of either kind of value. Instead, they appear to be literal creators of the special kind of moral value.

Chapter 3: Love, Friendship, and Justification

Now that I've addressed those issues falling under the nature side of the nature-normativity divide, we're ready to venture out into normative territory, beginning with those issues that pertain to *the justification of love and friendship*. As explained in chapter 1, the first issue here is (1) whether love and friendship are subject to being rationally assessed as justified or unjustified. If they are (and I will argue that they are), then we can ask (2) what reasons actually justify love or friendship as well as (3) when love or friendship is all-things-considered justified or unjustified. And the final issue here is (4) whether love or friendship can ever be completely rational (i.e., guilty of no charge of irrationality), or whether they will instead always be irrational to some degree.

Since this chapter is about justification and reasons, which are concepts that tend to be used ambiguously in philosophical discussions of love and friendship, I will begin by distinguishing different kinds of justification and reasons that will be important for our discussion. Then I will defend the basic rationalist thesis that love and friendship are subject to rational assessment. Next, I will address the issue of what reasons actually justify love or friendship by defending a pluralistic theory of these reasons according to which there are three basic kinds of such reasons—value-based reasons, quality-based reasons, and history-based reasons.³⁷ After this, I will briefly address the issue of when love or friendship is all-things-considered justified or unjustified by essentially arguing that either is justified just in case the balance of reasons renders it rationally appropriate. Lastly, I will address multiple arguments purporting to show that love and friendship will always be irrational to some degree. Although

³⁷ Hurka (2017) seems to offer the same pluralistic theory of the reasons for love.

there will always be cases of irrational love or friendship, I will defend the attractive idea that there can be cases of love or friendship that are guilty of no charge of irrationality whatsoever.

3.1 Justification and Reasons

At the most basic level, the relationship between justification and reasons is pretty simple: reasons constitute or provide justification. However, both “reasons” and “justification” admit of different interpretations, where the different interpretations of one map onto those of the other. So for example, in chapter 1 I drew a distinction between *normative reasons*, which are considerations that actually justify our beliefs, actions, or whatever, and *normative motivational reasons*, which are considerations that we take to justify our beliefs, actions, or whatever. This distinction, then, corresponds to the distinction between *actual justification* for our beliefs, actions, or whatever, which is a normative matter, and *perceived justification* for these things, which is a psychological matter. We dealt with this latter matter with respect to love and friendship in chapter 2 when dealing with the nature of these phenomena, so in this chapter we’ll be concerned with the possibility of actual justification and the normative reasons that might provide it. Before we can directly tackle this issue and other related ones, though, we must draw some more distinctions that correspond to different senses of “actual justification” and the “normative reasons” that can provide it.

Let’s begin by drawing a distinction between *fact-relative justification*, *evidence-relative justification*, and *belief-relative justification*.³⁸ Something enjoys fact-relative justification when

³⁸ This distinction here is inspired by Parfit’s (2011) distinction between fact-relative, evidence-relative, and belief-relative wrongness. It appears to improve upon the distinction between “objective” and “subjective” justification by showing that there are at least three types of justification rather than only two, and that these three types can be placed, in the order as presented, on a spectrum of objectivity to subjectivity.

objective facts justify that something regardless of whether or not we have access to or awareness of those facts. So for example, if there were an airplane part falling from the sky and about to lethally crush me as I write this, this fact would justify my moving out of the way so as to avoid getting crushed to death. Chances are that I wouldn't know and couldn't know about this, but this fact, if it were a fact, would still make it appropriate for me to move out of harm's way and would therefore justify me doing so. By contrast, something enjoys evidence-relative justification when the available evidence justifies that something, or when the available evidence suggests a conclusion that would, if it were an objective fact, justify that something in the fact-relative sense. So for example, as I sit here and write this I hear nothing that sounds like airplane parts falling from the sky above me, and more generally I detect nothing in my environment indicating any impending doom from a falling airplane part. I could of course be mistaken about this, but the available evidence strongly suggests that I am safe where I sit, and this, if it were an objective fact, would justify my action of remaining where I am. I am therefore justified relative to the available evidence in remaining where I am. And then there's belief-relative justification, which something enjoys when it's justified relative to one's beliefs. So if I come to sincerely believe that I'm going to be crushed to death by a falling airplane part, then I'd be justified in the belief-relative sense in moving out of harm's way because, if my belief were true, then I'd be justified in the fact-relative sense in moving out of harm's way. For the sake of simplicity and because both evidence-relative and belief-relative justification are to be understood by reference to fact-relative justification, my focus in this chapter will be on the possibility of love and friendship enjoying fact-relative justification and, accordingly, on the objective facts—which in turn constitute the normative reasons—that might provide it.

Next let's draw an important distinction between what I shall call *agent-relative justification* and *agent-neutral justification*, which corresponds to a distinction between *agent-relative reasons* and *agent-neutral reasons*. Agent-relative justification is of course supplied by agent-relative reasons, which are reasons that people have in virtue of something beyond their mere personhood, their moral agency, or their causal position in the world.³⁹ So for example, I have no reason to work on my dance moves because I have no desire to become a better dancer for its own sake and no other aim that would be served by becoming a better dancer. Other people, however, might have the goal of becoming a better dancer for its own sake or some other aim that would be served by becoming a better dancer, so these individuals would have a reason to work on their dance moves (namely, it will help them reach, or will increase the odds that they will reach, whatever goal they have here). Only some people have reasons to work on their dance moves, and they have them in virtue of something beyond their mere personhood, their moral agency, or their causal position—namely, some desire or aim that they have, such as impressing other people with their dance moves. Any reasons that people might have to work on their dance moves, then, will be agent-relative reasons. In fact, all of our reasons that are grounded in our desires or aims are agent-relative reasons.

There are, however, other plausible candidates for agent-relative reasons besides those that are grounded in our desires or aims. Reasons grounded in accrued benefits, for example, will be agent-relative ones as well. For some things will be beneficial for some but not for others, and so facts about the benefits of things will be reasons only for some people in virtue of their

³⁹ This characterization of agent-relative reasons obviously strays from the orthodox conception of such reasons as justifying considerations that make essential reference to the agents that have them and is informed by Jeske's (2008) unorthodox conception of such reasons as those based in more than our mere causal positions in the world. For as we shall see later, quality-based reasons for love or friendship can come in both agent-neutral and agent-relative varieties, and yet the agent-relative ones make no reference to the agents that have them (they instead, like all quality-based reasons, cite facts about the beloved's or friend's qualities). The orthodox account is therefore inadequate because it cannot accommodate these agent-relative reasons.

dispositions to benefit from these things rather than their personhood, moral agency, or causal position. Also, our intimate relationships with others appear to ground agent-relative reasons (Jeske 2008). In virtue of my romantic partnership with Bethany I have a reason to privilege her over others (she is my beloved spouse) that no one else has, while all of her friends—and only her friends—have a reason to privilege her over strangers (she is their friend Bethany). It's the intimate relationships rather than our personhood, moral agency, or causal position that gives us these reasons, which makes them agent-relative ones.

By contrast, agent-neutral justification is supplied by agent-neutral reasons, which are reasons that people have just because of their personhood, their moral agency, or their causal position in the world.⁴⁰ It's controversial whether there are any such reasons, but moral reasons are the paradigmatic example of them. So if, say, it is morally obligatory to not harm the innocent, then the very fact that not harming the innocent is morally obligatory could count as an agent-neutral moral reason not to harm the innocent because it would be a moral reason for every moral agent as such. Also, facts about how our actions will harm or will not harm others could count, respectively, as moral reasons against or for performing those actions, and they would be agent-neutral ones because we would have them because of our causal position in the world (i.e., our ability to harm or not harm). Both agent-relative and agent-neutral reasons and their corresponding kinds of justification will be relevant to our ensuing discussion about love and friendship.

Finally let's draw the very important distinction between *pro tanto justification* and *all-things-considered justification*. Something enjoys *pro tanto* justification when it's justified by

⁴⁰ This characterization of agent-neutral reasons builds on Jeske's (2008) unorthodox characterization of such reasons as those based in one's mere causal position in the world. I've modified her characterization so that we can accommodate all possible agent-neutral moral reasons (namely, facts about right and wrong) as well as the agent-neutral, quality-based reasons of love and friendship that I will discuss in a bit.

some set of reasons to the extent that it's backed by that set of reasons regardless of any other reasons that might be in play. So for example, the fact that *I would respect your property rights by not stealing your car* is a reason that supplies pro tanto justification for me to not steal your car because not stealing your car is justified to the extent that it's backed by this reason regardless of any other reasons that might be in play. Suppose further, however, that stealing your car is the only way for me to heroically speed down the highway and save a child who's just been kidnapped. If this were true, then I would have pro tanto justification to not steal your car as well as pro tanto justification to steal your car because each option here is backed by a reason that justifies that option to the extent that it's backed by that reason. By contrast, something enjoys all-things-considered justification when, and only when, it's justified overall—or rendered rationally permissible—by some set of reasons.⁴¹ Unlike pro tanto justification, which is supplied by reasons regardless of whether there are any other reasons in play, all-things-considered justification is supplied by a set of reasons that's not outweighed by competing reasons.⁴² Returning then to the example of stealing or not stealing your car, though both options are backed by a set of reasons and therefore enjoy pro tanto justification, the option that's backed by the set of reasons that isn't outweighed by the set of reasons backing the other option will enjoy all-things-considered justification as well. Generally speaking, then, something enjoys all-

⁴¹ By logically equating all-things-considered justification with rational permissibility I do intend to imply that such justification is *not* to be logically equated with rational optimality. Something is rationally optimal just in case it's backed by the strongest set of reasons, and though this is sufficient for all-things-considered justification (and for rational permissibility), it isn't necessary. In cases of ties, where some set of reasons favors A and another set favors not-A yet neither set outweighs the other, neither set of reasons will render what they back rationally optimal, but they will render either option all-things-considered justified (and rationally permissible).

⁴² The following considerations suggest that things will enjoy all-things-considered justification so long as they're backed by sets of reasons that aren't outweighed by competing sets of reasons. In cases like those envisioned in the previous footnote where sets of competing reasons tie and therefore neither set is outweighed, we're justified in doing either option. Alternatively, in cases where there's no tie and one set of reasons does outweigh the other, we're justified in doing whatever is backed by the strongest set of reasons, which is the only set of reasons that isn't outweighed by the other. Since these two kinds of cases seem to be the only possibilities here, and in both it's a set of non-outweighed reasons that renders something all-things-considered justified, it seems to follow that all-things-considered justification is supplied by a set of reasons that isn't outweighed by competing reasons.

things-considered justification when, and only when, the reasons that support it are not outweighed by the reasons that speak against it. Like agent-relative and agent-neutral justification, both pro tanto and all-things-considered justification will factor into our ensuing discussion about love and friendship. In fact, the second issue that we shall address is concerned with locating reasons that provide pro tanto justification for love and friendship, while the third issue that we shall address is concerned with specifying when love and friendship are all-things-considered justified or unjustified.⁴³

3.2 Are Love and Friendship Subject to Rational Assessment?

We're now ready to address whether love and friendship can be justified or unjustified as rationalism maintains, or if they rather elude rational assessment altogether, as anti-rationalism maintains.⁴⁴ Let's start by considering a couple of arguments against rationalism. One argument is that love and friendship are analogous to being hungry or being in pain, which are not subject to rational assessment.⁴⁵ Being hungry or in physical pain aren't things that can be rational or irrational, but are rather mere effects of causal factors beyond our control that ultimately just happen to us. Love and friendship, the argument maintains, are the same way: as things that ultimately just happen (or don't happen) to us due to causal factors beyond our control, love and

⁴³ Before moving on it's worth noting that Smuts (2014a) seems to offer another, extremely loaded conception of "justification" that's both psychological and normative and that draws a non-accidental link between the psychological and the normative. Put in the terms used here, he seems to think of "justification" as what we take to be our justification that non-accidentally amounts to actual justification. In other words, Smuts seems to think that "justification" for love (or anything else) would have to consist in normative motivational reasons for it that amount to full-blown normative reasons for it, where the former reasons non-accidentally amount to the latter reasons because the former reasons are responses to the latter reasons. I will not be explicitly addressing the question of whether love can ever have this kind of justification, but my discussion of the psychological grounds of (or the normative motivational reasons for) love from the last chapter as well as the upcoming discussion of the normative reasons for love in this chapter provide the psychological and the normative materials for doing so.

⁴⁴ I borrow the "rationalism/anti-rationalism" distinction from Jollimore (2011).

⁴⁵ I'm here extending an argument that Smuts (2013) presses only in the case of love. I must extend it given my syndrome view of friendship, which holds that mutual love is partly constitutive of friendship.

friendship are not subject to rational assessment. However, once again the case of belief shows that love and friendship, even if ultimately due to factors beyond our control, may still be subject to rational assessment because belief is certainly subject to such assessment even though it, as we saw in the last chapter, is ultimately due to psychological factors beyond our control. Love and friendship cannot be written off as eluding rational assessment altogether, then, just because they're likewise ultimately due to psychological factors beyond our control.

A second argument against the rationalist thesis that love and friendship are subject to rational assessment maintains that these phenomena aren't subject to such assessment because they aren't responsive to reasons.⁴⁶ You can't talk someone out of loving another or being friends with that other just by citing reasons against these things, yet if love or friendship were subject to rational assessment then they would be responsive to these reasons. However, the case of belief blocks the inference from reasons-unresponsiveness to not being subject to rational assessment because belief is often unresponsive to reasons that speak against it even though belief is, once again, subject to rational assessment. Religious beliefs, for example, are subject to rational assessment even though they're often unresponsive to the reasons against holding them. Likewise, the fact that love and friendship are sometimes—or even most of the time—unresponsive to reasons does not signify that they aren't subject to rational assessment. At most this shows that they're irrational sometimes or even most of the time, just as belief that isn't responsive to reasons is irrational rather than non-rational or a-rational. So love and friendship cannot be written off as eluding rational assessment because they're sometimes or even mostly unresponsive to reasons. In fact, to accuse them of being unresponsive to reasons seems to imply that there are reasons to which they're unresponsive, yet if there are such reasons, then they're subject to rational assessment.

⁴⁶ I'm again extending an argument that Smuts (2013) presses only in the case of love.

Let's now consider some modest grounds in favor of the basic rationalist thesis that love and friendship are subject to rational assessment. First of all, it's pretty easy to think of cases where they seem to be rationally appropriate as well as cases in which they seem to be rationally inappropriate. Love for one's own small children seems rationally appropriate, while love for the small children of complete strangers down the street seems rationally inappropriate (Kolodny 2003). Love for a life partner or friendship with a person that's playful, sensitive, kind, caring, supportive, respectful, and loyal seems rationally appropriate, while love for a partner or friendship with a person that's cold, overly selfish, insensitive, controlling, abusive, and disloyal seems downright irrational. Yet such evaluations, as assessments of love or friendship's rationality, imply that these phenomena are subject to rational assessment.

Moreover, recall the first strand of support for the thesis in the previous chapter that love and friendship are psychologically grounded in (normative motivational) reasons. There we considered the familiar scenario in which the beloved (or the friend) asks her lover (or her friend) why she loves (or is friends with) her and the lover (or friend) responds by trying to locate the relevant reasons that psychologically ground her love (or friendship). This scenario strongly suggested that love and friendship are psychologically grounded in normative motivational reasons. Now this by itself doesn't show that love and friendship are subject to rational assessment. However, given that love and friendship are psychologically grounded in normative motivational reasons, we may then be inclined to ask: are these reasons *good* ones? In other words: are these normative motivational reasons also full-blown normative ones as well? Insofar as this question seems to make sense and doesn't seem to rest on a mistake, it follows that there is some standard of normative reasons for love and friendship that we can use to measure whether the normative motivational reasons that psychologically ground our love or friendship

are, if factually correct, actually good ones. But the reality of such a standard of course implies that love and friendship are subject to rational assessment.

So far, then, we have found some decent grounds for thinking that love and friendship are subject to rational assessment, yet insufficient grounds for thinking that they aren't. We can therefore tentatively proceed on the rationalist assumption that love and friendship are subject to rational assessment—they can be justified or unjustified—and turn to the normative reasons that might actually justify them.⁴⁷

3.3 Reasons for Love and Friendship

In order to locate the reasons that can (pro tanto) justify love or friendship, we must start by making some important distinctions. Two such distinctions, which we saw in the last chapter, is that between initial and continuing love and that between initial and continuing friendship. Others can be extracted from the following questions pertaining to the justification of love and friendship:

Q1: Why love or be friends with anyone instead of no one?

Q2: Why love or be friends with someone in particular instead of no one or someone else?⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Since I defined friendship in the previous chapter as a bidirectional logical relationship that obtains just in case two people are friends with each other, my talk so far and in the ensuing discussion of “friendship” being subject to rational assessment and there being reasons that justify or count against “friendship” must be technically understood, respectively, as (a) the unidirectional logical relationship of *being someone's friend* as being subject to rational assessment as well as (b) there being reasons that justify or count against this unidirectional logical relationship. For the sake of simplicity, however, I will continue in the ensuing discussion to speak of reasons that justify or count against friendship.

⁴⁸ Jeske (2008) and Helm (2013b) pose similar questions.

Now the first question here is asking for reasons that justify participation in the business of loving or being friends with others instead of staying out of them altogether; it isn't asking for reasons to love or be friends with any particular person. It's analogous to asking for reasons to be *a* car owner, but not the owner of any particular car, instead of not owning a car at all. This question, then, seeks justification for what I shall call, for lack of a better label, *unspecified* love and friendship. By contrast, the second question clearly asks for reasons to love or be friends with some particular person rather than no one at all or someone else. It's analogous to asking for reasons to own a particular car rather than some other car or eschewing car ownership altogether. So this question seeks justification for what I shall call *specified* love and friendship.

Since the distinctions between initial and continuing love and between initial and continuing friendship only matter when it comes to specified love and friendship, we effectively have three kinds of love and friendship here—*unspecified love and friendship, initial specified love and friendship, and continuing specified love and friendship*—each of which can be the focus of a justificatory inquiry. Now it's true that unspecified love and friendship cannot exist apart from specified love and friendship and vice versa: being in the love or friendship business in general requires loving or being friends with particular people, while loving or being friends with particular people automatically brings us into the love or friendship business in general. So I don't mean to imply here that the three kinds of love and friendship are completely separable. Rather, I think that, just as we can draw useful theoretical distinctions among general car ownership, initial ownership of particular cars, and continuing ownership of particular cars, we can draw the above theoretical distinctions among the three kinds of love and friendship and make each kind the focus of a justificatory inquiry in order to unearth the pluralism of reasons that can justify love and friendship.

3.3.1 Reasons for Unspecified Love and Friendship: Value-Based Reasons

Let's begin then with unspecified love and friendship, which again refers to the general business of loving or being friends with others. Why should we love or have friends at all, especially given the pain, frustration, unhappiness, and other costs that love and friendship are very likely to bring? As far as I can see the only viable answers here will cite what I shall call *value-based reasons* for love or friendship, where such reasons consist in facts pertaining to how love or friendship actually, probably, or potentially promotes, or is required for, something valuable.⁴⁹ And to unearth specific reasons here, we must now ask: What valuable things do loving or being friends with others in general actually, probably, or potentially promote? What valuable things require either?

A few answers here come from Harry Frankfurt (1998, 2001, 2004). Speaking only of love, he maintains that love in general is valuable *because it satisfies our need for final ends*. We all need things that we regard as non-instrumentally important or valuable to serve as final ends that will give shape to our practical reasoning and ultimately to our lives, and love and friendship both supply us, through their objects, with such final ends. One value-based reason for unspecified love or friendship, then, is that it meets our need for final ends. Also, Frankfurt further maintains that loving others is inherently important or valuable to us, and I think that being friends with others is no different. That is, loving or being friends with others is like

⁴⁹ That a thing, T, is required for some valuable thing, V, may not always constitute a reason for T; it may only do so when certain enabling conditions are in place. So for example, even though putting gas in your empty car is required for driving it, this fact seems to count as a reason to put gas in your empty car only if driving your gas-filled car is a live option. In the ensuing discussion, then, I will locate *possible* reasons for love or friendship that consist in facts pertaining to how love or friendship is required for something valuable in order to leave it an open question as to whether the relevant enabling conditions obtain for these facts to amount to full-blown reasons.

engaging in hobbies or having fun: they are all valuable to us in their own right (or “all by themselves”) instead of being valuable only because they lead to something else that’s valuable in its own right (e.g., a better world).⁵⁰ So another possible value-based reason for unspecified love or friendship is simply that it’s inherently valuable to us.

Besides these value-based reasons, the only other possible ones that I can see are those based in the possible value of loving relationships or friendships that require love for or being friends with the other party as a constitutive feature. So for example, some people think that these relationships are *intrinsically* valuable: they’re valuable in their own right, or apart from their contribution to other valuable things. If so, then since love is indeed required for loving relationships and being friends with others is required for friendship, another possible value-based reason for unspecified love or friendship is that it’s required for participation in intrinsically valuable relationships.

Now this potential value-based reason is based in the intrinsic value of loving relationships or friendships. However, these relationships may have non-intrinsic value as well, and this value is another potential source of reasons here. So for instance, it’s quite plausible to suppose that loving relationships and friendships are valuable because they are constituents of good or flourishing lives (Annis 1987). If so, then these relationships would be *extrinsically* yet *non-instrumentally* valuable: they’re extrinsically valuable because they promote something else that’s intrinsically valuable (namely, a flourishing life), yet they’re non-instrumentally valuable because they’re constituents of, rather than means to, a flourishing life. And so, as a constituent feature of loving relationships or friendships, which are here supposed to be constituent features

⁵⁰ This isn’t to say that loving or being friends with others is no more valuable or important than engaging in hobbies or having fun. The comparison here is meant to show that loving or being friends with others is like these other things in that they’re valuable to us in their own right, and this is perfectly compatible with loving or being friends with others being much more valuable to us than the other things.

of flourishing lives, love for or being friends with others is likewise a constituent feature of flourishing lives, which in turn means that loving or being friends with others is required for such lives. So another possible value-based reason for unspecified love or friendship is that it's required for living a flourishing life.

Finally, in addition to their alleged intrinsic value and extrinsic-yet-non-instrumental value, loving relationships and friendships can definitely have *instrumental* value: they can function as means to other valuable ends or benefits. So for instance, as we noted about friends in particular in the previous chapter, the other parties involved in our loving relationships and friendships tend to “have our backs”: not only do they tend to be particularly disposed to defend us from verbal or physical attacks compared to those with whom we share no relationship, but they tend to be particularly disposed to help us out of jams and assist us in our various pursuits or personal projects. Furthermore, these relationships can have psychological, moral, epistemic, and hedonistic benefits. Beginning with the psychological benefits, loving relationships and friendships can combat loneliness and boredom, and can foster confidence and self-esteem (Annis 1987; LaFollette 1996). Although there are certainly exceptions, those with which we share loving relationships and friendships tend to be rather keen on helping us feel good about ourselves, especially during times when we're having difficulty with self-confidence. And though it's certainly possible to be bored when you're with friends or loved ones, or lonely when you have friends or loved ones, these individuals will make both boredom and loneliness less likely insofar as these individuals are precisely the kind of people that will be generally motivated to reduce our experiences of boredom and will be generally ready to keep us company when we need it. Moreover, loving relationships and friendships can help satisfy our needs for things such as comfort and meaning in life. When we're sad or heartbroken, worried or scared,

it's our friends and loved ones that tend to be the ones willing and ready to make us feel better. They're typically the ones that we can go to for comfort in times of distress, and they will typically be the most comforting people to which to turn. And when most of us think about what it is that makes life worth living, friends and loved ones come readily to mind and are at the top of the list. In fact, it's hard to imagine living a meaningful life without friends and loved ones.

In terms of the moral benefits, loving relationships and friendships can lead to moral growth or good behavior (Friedman 1989; LaFollette 1996). This of course will not always happen; in many cases our relationships can lead to moral deterioration or wickedness (e.g., loving parents who nevertheless teach their kids to be white supremacists or friends who encourage cruelty). However, these relationships can also inspire the opposite. So for example, as Phaedrus claims in Plato's *Symposium* (178d-179a), love between boyfriends inspires them to refrain from doing anything disgraceful and instead inspires them to strive for honor. A similar example is the generic one where a beloved makes their lover want to be a better person. Yet besides the power of loved ones and friends to inspire us to be morally better, they can also straightforwardly help us to improve on this score by correcting our moral beliefs through conversation or our general conduct through explicit direction or sanctioning. As for the epistemic benefits, loving relationships and friendships can lead to increased knowledge and understanding, especially self-knowledge and self-understanding (LaFollette 1996). Though our friends and loved ones may fill us with false information or misunderstandings, they can also be trustworthy sources of knowledge and understanding with respect to many things, especially those things with which they have more experience. And, even if some of our friends or loved ones may be hesitant to tell us what we are like or why we do what we do, they are, as Plato and Aristotle thought, like mirrors in that they're good sources of self-knowledge and self-

understanding, where this can take the form of new perspectives on oneself that can then positively influence one's thoughts and behaviors.

Last we have the potential hedonistic benefits: loving relationships and friendship can be significant sources of pleasure or enjoyment, and in many cases they will be “life-enhancing” in the sense that enjoyable activities will be even more enjoyable when enjoyed with someone with whom we share a loving relationship or a friendship (Telfer 1971). Once again, however, there will be exceptions here—some loving relationships or friendships may not be very enjoyable, and consensual sex with a stranger, for instance, may be more enjoyable than having such sex with your beloved romantic partner. But typically, at least, our loving relationships and friendships—especially the latter—will be enjoyable things, and our friends and loved ones will typically make otherwise enjoyable things more enjoyable (e.g., concerts). They can also make things enjoyable that wouldn't otherwise be so (e.g., doing chores).

Overall, then, more possible value-based reasons for unspecified love or friendship consist in facts pertaining to how such love or friendship is required for the instrumental benefits that these relationships can provide. We therefore have the following set of possible reasons that can provide justification for unspecified love or friendship (whether initial or continuing):

(R1) It meets our need for final ends.

(R2) It's inherently valuable for us.

(R3) It's required for living a flourishing life.

(R4) It's required for participation in intrinsically valuable relationships.

(R5) It's required for any benefits that the relevant relationships can, are likely to, or will provide.

3.3.2 Reasons for Initial Specified Love and Friendship: Value-Based and Quality-Based

Reasons

Let's now switch our focus to the reasons that can justify specified love or friendship, where such love or friendship again refers to love for or being friends with particular people. And let's begin with *initial* specified love and friendship, or coming to love or be friends with particular people. Now the first thing to notice here is that the above value-based reasons that can justify unspecified love and friendship can apply, with suitable modifications, to initial specified love and friendship as well: beginning to love or be friends with particular people (1) can meet our need for final ends, (2) can be inherently valuable to us, either as a mere instance of love or friendship or as the particular instance that it is, (3) satisfies a requirement of having a flourishing life, (4) satisfies a requirement of having intrinsically valuable relationships, and (5) is required for accruing any benefits that the relevant relationships with these people will (or are likely to, or might) instrumentally provide. Of course, these reasons can only apply in certain justificatory contexts. If, for example, we are seeking justification for coming to love or be friends with particular people *instead of no one at all*, then they can all be applied as stated. However, if we are rather seeking justification for coming to love or be friends with particular people *instead of other particular people*, then (1) and (2) will not apply because they will be true of both options, and therefore cannot favor one option over the other. Only versions of (3), (4), and (5) that indicate the superiority of loving or being friends with particular people over others in terms of value promotion can apply here.

In addition to these value-based reasons, which are all forward-looking reasons, there are also *quality-based reasons* that can justify initial specified love or friendship. And rather than consisting in facts pertaining to such love or friendship's actual, probable, or potential connection to some kind of value promotion, these reasons consist in facts pertaining to *the potential beloved's or friend's personal qualities*.⁵¹ Yet not just any old fact about personal qualities will count as a genuine justifying reason for initial specified love or friendship. For instance, facts about a person's hair color, height, shoe size, or the like don't count because they don't render love or being a friend a rationally appropriate response to that person. Yeat's Anne Gregory may captivate men or impress other women with her yellow hair, but her hair color does not show love or friendship to be a fitting response to her. Likewise, facts about a person's racism, misogyny, homophobia, greed, insensitivity, inconsiderateness, cruelty, abusiveness, unfaithfulness, unreliability, untrustworthiness, and so on don't count because they, too, don't render love or being a friend a rationally appropriate response to that person. They rather speak *against* the rational appropriateness of coming to love or befriend those who have them and thereby count as reasons against both love and friendship. Eva Braun could have been smitten with Hitler due to his relentless anti-Semitic passion for exterminating Jews, and his murderous lackeys may have thought that he was the coolest because of it, but instead of showing love or friendship to be a fitting response to Hitler, this passion counts against the rational appropriateness of loving him or being his friend.⁵² Generally speaking, then, facts pertaining to

⁵¹ These quality-based reasons will also include any facts pertaining to the unique value that particular people have. For even though these facts pertain to value, they do not pertain to the actual, probable, or potential *promotion* of any value by coming to love or be friends with these people, but rather pertain to a kind of non-relational value that people might have (i.e., value they might have in their own right).

⁵² Of course, people may be justified in the belief-relative sense in loving or befriending the morally depraved even if they wouldn't be justified in the fact-relative sense. Their moral beliefs, for instance, may make it look like exterminating Jews is virtuous, and so Hitler's passion, under these morally warped lenses, would mistakenly look like a reason-giving virtue rather than a horrific vice that counts decisively against the rational appropriateness of loving or being friends with him.

the shallow or immoral qualities that others have do not constitute reasons that justify coming to love or befriend them (Abramson and Leite 2011). It's instead only those facts pertaining to morally acceptable qualities that define who the potential beloveds or friends are (LaFollette 1996; Helm 2010) that can render love or friendship a rationally appropriate response and thereby constitute reasons that justify their initiation.

Also, when it comes to love, it's only those facts pertaining to morally acceptable qualities that define who the potential beloveds are and *that make these individuals lovable things* that constitute reasons that justify coming to love them. And when it comes to being friends with another, it's only those facts pertaining to morally acceptable qualities that define who the potential friend is and *that makes that person a lovable, respectable thing that's fitting for the desire for the interactions, activities, and experiences of friendship* that constitute reasons that justify becoming friends with them. And these defining, morally acceptable qualities can provide agent-neutral reasons for love or friendship, or they can provide agent-relative reasons. Our moral virtues, for instance, are reason-giving qualities (Abramson and Leite 2011) that provide agent-neutral reasons for love or friendship because, insofar as they are present, they make people lovable, respectable, and fitting for the desires of friendship to anyone. By contrast, so long as they aren't shallow or immoral qualities, our specific interests or passions, our senses of humor, and the like will be reason-giving qualities that provide agent-relative reasons for love or friendship because they make people lovable, respectable, and fitting for the desires for the interactions, activities, and experiences of friendship to only people with compatible or comparable characters. The artist's passion for producing art, for example, is a reason for those who share a comparable or similar passion to start loving or being friends with them, yet it wouldn't be a reason for someone who absolutely despises art and regards it as a waste of time

and resources. Unlike the other's moral virtues, which make initial love or friendship rationally appropriate and therefore justified independently of what our characters are like, whether the other's non-moral character traits will make love or friendship rationally appropriate depends on what our non-moral characters are like and, in particular, on whether our non-moral characters are compatible with his or her character.

Furthermore, the facts that constitute these quality-based reasons will be different depending on the justificatory context. If we are again seeking justification for coming to love or be friends with particular people rather than no one at all, then the relevant facts needn't be comparative ones pertaining to qualitative differences across persons that favor some over others. Instead, these facts will pertain only to the other's personal qualities that meet the two conditions above and thereby render a response of love or friendship rationally appropriate. But if we are rather seeking justification for coming to love or be friends with particular people instead of other particular people, then the relevant facts here will need to be the comparative ones just described. So for example, if we're asking why we should come to love Betty instead of no one at all, then we can cite her moral virtues, her wonderful sense of humor, and her fondness of cats. However, if we're asking why we should come to love Betty instead of Linda, then we would need to cite qualitative differences between Betty and Linda that favor Betty, such as Betty's superior moral virtues, her better sense of humor, or the fact that Betty likes cats more than Linda does (dog people should feel free to switch dogs and cats here).⁵³

Now one might object to the above restrictions placed on these quality-based reasons on the following grounds. First of all, "lovable" is not a determinable quality because there are no

⁵³ Asking why we *should* come to love Betty instead of Linda or no one at all, which is our concern here, is different from asking why we *do* come to love Betty instead of Linda or no one at all. And though this latter question is not our concern here, it's worth noting that non-normative factors of mere fortune will always be heavily involved in explaining why people end up loving certain people instead of others or no one (e.g., we meet some people first or have spent more time with them at work or something).

constraints on the determinate qualities that we might take to ground it (Taylor 1976). It's instead the lover's gaze that alone determines what qualities make others "lovable". And because it's rationally appropriate to love what's lovable, it's rationally appropriate to love others in virtue of the qualities that make them lovable, which in turn means that these qualities provide reasons that justify coming to love these others. But since the lover's gaze alone determines what qualities make others lovable, it follows that the lover's gaze alone determines what qualities provide reasons that justify coming to love others. Shallow or immoral qualities, then, can provide such reasons if the lover sees them as ones that make others lovable. We could also run a structurally identical argument with respect to the quality of being a "lovable, respectable person that's fitting for the desires of friendship" that culminates in the friend's gaze alone determining what qualities provide reasons that justify coming to be friends with others, which again means that shallow or immoral qualities can provide such reasons.

Although seemingly plausible, this objection begs the question in asserting that "lovable" and "lovable, respectable, and fitting for the desires of friendship" are not determinable qualities because there are no constraints on the determinate qualities that we might take to ground them. In fact, this objection is outright mistaken in asserting this because there are constraints on the determinate qualities that can ground the determinable qualities in question. They are the very constraints that I've already spelled out above: these qualities must be morally acceptable ones that define who the other is as a person rather than immoral or shallow ones, and they must consist of either moral virtues or non-moral traits that are compatible with our own characters.

Alternatively, one may object that my account is *overly moralized* by restricting the reason-giving facts about qualities to those about morally acceptable qualities. For even if shallow qualities cannot provide reasons for love or friendship, maybe immoral qualities can.

Perhaps immoral qualities can provide agent-relative reasons for those with compatible or comparably immoral characters. If so, then my account is wrong to treat immoral qualities as giving rise to (agent-neutral) reasons *against* love or friendship and morally acceptable qualities as the only ones that can give rise to reasons *for* love or friendship. However, even though it may sometimes make sense for people with comparably immoral characters to love each other or be friends (e.g., white supremacists), this doesn't mean that immoral qualities can provide any justification for love or friendship. Indeed, they cannot. Just imagine asking a white guy why he is friends with another white guy, or why he's married to a white woman, and he responds by talking fondly of the other's white supremacist ideology and agenda. It may make sense for a fellow white supremacist to respond with love or friendship to other white supremacists given their comparable characters, but one's white supremacist qualities, like morally rotten qualities in general, do not provide any justification for any such response even if others have comparably deplorable characters. Only morally acceptable qualities, as my account maintains, can provide justification for love or friendship.⁵⁴

3.3.3 Reasons for Continuing Specified Love and Friendship: Value-Based, Quality-Based, and History-Based Reasons

This brings us to the reasons that can justify *continuing* specified love and friendship, or ongoing love and friendship with particular people. And the first thing to notice here is that both

⁵⁴ It may be worth noting here that it's still possible for love or friendship to be a fitting response to immoral people even if, as my account maintains, morally acceptable qualities are the only ones that can render such a response fitting. For as long as people have enough by way of moral virtue or reason-giving non-moral character traits to sufficiently counterbalance the reasons against loving or befriending them that stem from their immoral qualities, they can still be fitting objects of love in spite of their moral flaws. They just can't be such objects because of these flaws.

the value-based reasons and the quality-based reasons that can justify initial specified love and friendship can equally apply to continuing specified love and friendship. This isn't to say that these reasons will necessarily apply to continuing specified love and friendship if they applied to these things in their initial form because the qualities that define who people are, as well as the benefits that loving relationships can provide, can change for the worse over time. I'm only pointing out that the reasons that can justify initial specified love and friendship can remain in force to justify continuing these things. Yet besides the forward-looking value-based reasons and the quality-based reasons, there seem to be *backward-looking* reasons that can also justify continual specified love and friendship. And these additional reasons, which only apply to continual specified love and friendship, consist in facts pertaining to *intimate historical relationships or shared histories with the other parties* (Brink 1999; Kolodny 2003; Hurka 2017). So for example, it seems that the romantic partnership that I've shared with Bethany for almost 20 years is a good reason for me to continue loving her because it seems appropriate for me to do so in light of this shared history with her. Similarly, the fact that I've enjoyed a friendship with Noel for the last 6 years seems to give me a good reason to continue being friends with him. However, personal relationships and shared histories that are of poor enough quality do not provide reasons for continuing love; if, for instance, my romantic partnership with Bethany had been very bad for the last 15 of our 20 years together, then our shared history wouldn't provide a reason to continue loving her. As Hurka (2017) plausibly maintains, shared histories must be satisfying or sufficiently good in some way in order to be reason-giving, and we can go further by maintaining that our shared histories with others being sufficiently good *enables* these very same histories to count as reasons to continue loving or being friends with them.⁵⁵ Let's call these reasons *history-based reasons*.

⁵⁵ This idea of certain facts "enabling" other facts to count as normative reasons comes from Dancy (2004).

Now it's very important to distinguish these history-based reasons from value-based reasons that consist in facts about the potential, likely, or actual value of intimate relationships. For even if our histories with others must be sufficiently good or valuable in order to count as good reasons for continuing love or friendship with them, it is nevertheless those histories themselves, rather than the potential, likely, or actual benefits of continuing with the relationships, that seem to count in favor of such love or friendship in their own right. In other words, even if the potential, likely, or actual *benefits* of continuing with intimate relationships provide us with value-based reasons to continue loving or being friends with others, *our intimate or special histories with others themselves* seem to provide additional, history-based reasons to continue.

3.3.4 Challenges to My Pluralistic Rationalism

According to my pluralistic rationalism, then, initial specified love and friendship can be justified by value-based and quality-based reasons, while continuing specified love and friendship can be justified by value-based, quality-based, and history-based reasons. However, there are multiple challenges to my position that I must address. One comes from Kolodny (2003), who seems to adhere to a monistic rationalism that claims history-based reasons as the only ones that can justify love. Contra my pluralistic rationalism, then, such a monistic rationalism implies that only history-based reasons—or facts about personal relationships or shared histories with others—can justify continuing specified love. However, even if history-based reasons can justify such love, they are not the only ones that can do so; value-based and quality-based reasons will do important justificatory work in at least some cases of continuing

specified love. For example, suppose that you share a romantic partnership with Greg, who has fairly recently become cold, overly selfish, insensitive, distant, and unfaithful. And let's also suppose that your relationship with Greg is not very beneficial anymore, but is rather an almost constant source of frustration, disappointment, sadness, and resentment. In this scenario, continuing to love Greg might be rationally inappropriate all-things-considered in spite of your shared history with him in light of his nasty qualities and the relationship's going sour. By contrast, if the relationship had not gone sour, and if Greg had remained warm, selfless, sensitive, and faithful, then continuing to love him would have indeed been rationally appropriate and therefore justified. So facts pertaining to Greg's positive qualities and to the value of your relationship with him contribute significantly to the justification of continuing to love him, which means that quality-based and value-based reasons are doing some important justificatory work here. In fact, these two scenarios suggest that both quality-based and value-based reasons are required for the rational appropriateness of continuing specified love in at least certain cases, which means that history-based reasons are not the only ones that can justify such love.

Furthermore, consider what Kolodny's monistic rationalism implies about the justification of initial specified love. If facts about shared histories or relationships were the *only* ones that could justify love, then there could be no justification for initial specified love. This, however, seems false—such love can be justified (or unjustified). For suppose that Greg and Bob are both wanting a romantic partnership with you, but unlike Greg, Bob is warm, sensitive, faithful, and caring. You will also have a much better relationship with Bob, especially given his qualitative superiority. Given Bob's good qualities and the prospect of a good relationship with him, coming to love him seems appropriate and thus justified, whereas the opposite is true for

Greg in light of his lousy qualities and the prospect of a poor relationship. Under Kolodny's monistic rationalism, however, coming to love either person is *neither justified nor unjustified* because the only possible reason that could justify love is a relationship that hasn't yet materialized.

Moreover, consider the difficulty that Kolodny's monistic rationalism has for vindicating the justifiability of terminating love for people with lousy qualities, such as Greg mentioned above. How can no longer loving Greg be justified if facts about shared histories or relationships are the *only* ones that bear on the rational appropriateness of loving him? It doesn't seem like it can be justified; rather, it's either unjustified or neither-justified-nor-unjustified. For if facts about shared histories or relationships are the only ones that bear on the rational appropriateness of loving Greg, then the fact that you have had a romantic partnership with Greg will have one of two results. It could function as the only reason to continue loving him, with no reasons on the other side to counterbalance this one, in which case it would be unjustified to go against this reason and stop loving him. Alternatively, it may not function as a reason at all if the relationship hasn't been good enough to be reason-giving, in which case it would be neither justified nor unjustified to stop loving Greg because there are no reasons speaking in favor of it or against it. Either conclusion, however, seems false in so far as it seems completely justified to terminate love for people with lousy qualities precisely in virtue of those qualities. One advantage of my pluralistic rationalism that recognizes value-based, quality-based, *and* history-based reasons for love is that it allows us to justify coming to love people with good qualities or terminating love for people with lousy qualities.

A second challenge here comes from Helm (2010), who questions the validity of history-based reasons on the grounds that it's unclear how facts pertaining to shared histories with others

can provide any justification for continuing specified love. Though many of us will feel the intuitive force of thinking that having a special history with someone is a good reason to continue loving him or her instead of loving no one or someone else, we might be hard-pressed to explain *how* such history is a reason here. How does sharing an intimate, special history with someone provide any justification for continuing to love (or to be friends with) that person? I don't think that there's an explanation here, yet I also don't think that this gives us good grounds for doubting the validity of history-based reasons. We may not be able to explain how intimate or special histories can provide justification for continuing specified love or friendship, but we're in no better position when it comes to explaining how other historical considerations count as reasons. For instance, we can't explain why the fact that you competently and freely promised last week to read some of my poems and give me feedback on them this week constitutes a reason to do what you promised, or why the fact that you treated me to lunch yesterday constitutes a reason for me to express gratitude and even reciprocate today. But the lack of explanation here doesn't bring into question the validity of these reasons; it only means that certain facts directly and non-derivatively justify certain things (which must be true of some facts if there is to be justification at all). Moreover, while we can't explain how special histories can provide justification for continuing specified love or friendship, we're no better off when it comes to explaining how the value of such love or friendship can provide such justification or how certain qualities of our beloveds or friends can do so. Instead, it seems to be a basic normative truth that facts pertaining to special histories shared with others, certain qualities that they possess, or the value of loving or being friends with them each render continuing to love or be friends with these people *pro tanto* rationally appropriate and thereby constitute reasons for continuing specified love and friendship.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ I don't mean to suggest here that nothing can be said to justify facts that directly and non-derivatively (i.e.,

A third challenge here is the following. Consider first the fact that continuing specified love is a constitutive part of loving relationships, and then notice what happens when we combine this with the intuitive thought that such historical relationships provide justifying reason for such love: historical relationships as a whole end up providing justification for continuing with a part of these very relationships. And yet the situation here seems analogous to claiming that one's history of holding a job in the fast food industry *per se* provides reason to continue taking orders from customers or mopping floors, which seems pretty absurd. After all, the fact that someone has had a certain job for an extended period of time *per se* does not seem to provide any justification whatsoever for continuing with any given part of that very job. Historical considerations here will justify only indirectly by pointing to certain advantages that are bound up with staying put in a particular occupation rather than switching (e.g., retirement savings, familiarity with the job requirements, and so on). So how, then, are historical relationships any different? How can such relationships with others directly justify continuing to love them when such love is a constitutive part of those very relationships?⁵⁷

Once again, I don't think that there's an explanation here. Instead, as we saw above, it just seems to be a basic normative truth that facts pertaining to intimate histories shared with others constitute *pro tanto* reasons for continuing to love them. Perhaps some support for the validity of these history-based reasons, however, can be found in the theoretical usefulness of having such reasons available when it comes to justifying our continuing love. In particular, there could be cases of continuing specified love for certain people such that (1) it would be

without explanation) provide justification for certain things. In fact, I've been defending facts that directly and non-derivatively justify continuing specified love or friendship by pointing to their intuitive appeal and to some companions in guilt.

⁵⁷ One might be tempted to deny the asymmetry here and maintain that history in both cases counts as a reason to continue. However, it seems very implausible to maintain that one's history of holding a fast food job *per se* provides any reason or justification whatsoever for continuing with certain parts of that very job. Also, even if this didn't seem so implausible, it wouldn't address the question of how a history of doing something (as opposed to the value of doing something) can provide any direct justification for continuing with a part of that very something.

rationally appropriate to replace them on the basis of value-based and quality-based reasons alone, and yet (2) it also seems all-things-considered rationally appropriate *not* to replace them. If we then had history-based reasons at our disposal, we could throw them into the mix so that we get what seems to be the right result. So for instance, let's bring Betty and Linda back, but this time let's suppose that I already share an intimate, historical relationship with Linda. Why should I continue to love Linda instead of replacing her with Betty? Even though Linda is morally virtuous, has a good sense of humor, and likes cats (but not as much as dogs), Betty has slightly superior moral virtues, a slightly better sense of humor, and likes cats much more than Linda does, which—in my estimation at least—makes her qualitatively superior to Linda. Let's also say that a relationship with Betty would be slightly more beneficial than the current one shared with Linda given the former's qualitative superiority: Betty's superior moral virtues will provide greater psychological benefits, her better sense of humor will lead to greater enjoyment, her greater fondness for cats will lead to her "owning" cats, which will lead to greater enjoyment as well, and her sheer newness will lead to more excitement. On the basis of quality-based and value-based reasons alone, then, it seems rationally appropriate to replace Linda with Betty. However, since Linda is still quite lovable, it also seems all-things-considered appropriate not to replace her with Betty, which we can then explain by claiming that my intimate, shared history with Linda supplies a reason to continue loving her that, when combined with the non-comparative facts about her lovable-making qualities and the benefits of my relationship with her, render it rationally appropriate to stick with Linda instead of replacing her with Betty.

A fourth and final challenge here is an anti-rationalist argument that tries to show that all three kinds of reasons for love and friendship—valued-based, quality-based, and history-based—

are illusory because they're inconsistent with the nature of these phenomena.⁵⁸ Starting with value-based reasons, if the potential, likely, or actual benefits of a loving relationship or a friendship were reasons that justified one's love or friendship, this would make the beloved or the friend replaceable because other people could provide these same benefits. However, since this consequence of value-based reasons conflicts with the very nature of love and friendship—as we saw in the previous chapter, our beloveds and our friends are irreplaceable—there can be no such reasons. Moreover, since both love and friendship constitutively involve special concern for the other, which we saw in the previous chapter to be non-instrumental by its very nature, then these things cannot be grounded in any benefits that the subject might or would accrue from them because this would make the concern involved instrumental after all rather than non-instrumental.

We get similar results with quality-based and history-based reasons. For if we suppose first that the defining, morally acceptable qualities of others—whether moral virtues or non-moral traits that are compatible with our characters—are reasons that can justify our love or friendship, then our beloveds or friends would again be replaceable because other people can instantiate these same qualities, and so we again have a conflict with the nature of love and friendship because our beloveds and friends are irreplaceable.⁵⁹ In fact, if these qualities were reasons that justify love or friendship, then since others can do a *better* job of instantiating these same qualities, then it follows that we'd be rationally required to trade our beloveds or friends in for better replacements (Jollimore 2017), yet we saw in the previous chapter that both love and friendship constitutively involve an unwillingness to trade in our beloveds and friends for such replacements. Either way it doesn't look like there can be quality-based reasons for love and

⁵⁸ This anti-rationalist argument is a reconstruction and an extension of anti-rationalist arguments only with respect to love mounted in Smuts 2013 and Smuts 2014b.

⁵⁹ Kolodny (2003) and Zangwill (2013) seem to offer similar arguments against quality-based reasons for love.

friendship. And if we next suppose that our shared histories with our beloveds or friends can justify our love or friendship, then even if no potential replacements *currently* share such histories with us, such histories will be easy to create with any of these potential replacements that are willing to share a loving relationship or a friendship with us. So once again it seems that our beloveds and our friends would be replaceable if shared histories justified loving or being friends with them, yet our beloveds and friends are not replaceable. So there are no history-based reasons for love or friendship.

Although seemingly plausible, every part of this anti-rationalist argument is questionable. Let's take the parts in order. Even if we suppose that (a) the potential, likely, or actual benefits of loving relationships and friendships are value-based reasons that can justify love or friendship and this would (b) make beloveds and friends replaceable because other people could provide these same benefits, this doesn't conflict with the nature of love and friendship. For as we saw in the last chapter, these phenomena constitutively involve *the belief in and corresponding perception of* the other's irreplaceability or non-fungibility, and this is perfectly consistent with the other being actually replaceable. In other words, (a) and (b) would not genuinely conflict with the natures of love and friendship, but would at worst show that love and friendship constitutively involve beliefs that are not only false, but that are irrational due to their unwavering nature. Yet it's not even clear that this actually results because we may not believe our beloveds and friends to be irreplaceable or non-fungible in the sense that would render these beliefs false by the actual fact of their being replaceable with respect to the benefits they can provide through intimate relationships with them. In fact, I don't think that love and friendship constitutively involve believing that the other is irreplaceable with respect to the benefits that they can provide through sharing the requisite relationships with them. Instead, our beloveds and

friends are irreplaceable in some other sense, which we shall discuss in more detail later in this chapter when we address challenges to the very possibility of a completely rational love or friendship. Accordingly, the belief in the other's irreplaceability that partly constitutes love or friendship is not falsified by the fact that our beloveds and friends are replaceable with respect to the benefits they provide through our personal relationships with them.

Next consider the added point that, because they constitutively involve special concern for the other, love and friendship cannot be grounded in the benefits that they can provide, where this is supposed to sink the idea that these benefits can provide justification for these phenomena. Even though it's true that love and friendship cannot be psychologically grounded in these benefits precisely because they constitutively involve special concern for the other that's by nature non-instrumental, it doesn't follow that these benefits no longer constitute normative reasons that make love or friendship rationally appropriate and therefore rationally justified to the extent that they're present. The situation here is somewhat analogous to what we might think of the deterring effects of punishment. The fact that punishing people for wrongdoing will likely deter others from wrongdoing is obviously a good reason to punish people for wrongdoing, yet this fact cannot be our reason for punishing people because, if it were, then we'd be using them as mere means to our end of deterring others from wrongdoing. In other words, the deterrent effects of punishment constitute normative reasons for us to punish because they render punishment *pro tanto* rationally appropriate, but they cannot be among the considerations that motivate us to punish because then we'd be using those punished as mere means rather than treating them as ends-in-themselves. At best we can recognize the deterrent effects of punishment as fortunate by-products of justly punishing others only for the sake of justice that, along with the serving of justice, make such punishment rationally appropriate. Something

similar can then be true of love and friendship. Because of the nature of these phenomena, the benefits of loving relationships and friendships cannot be motivating the parties involved, for otherwise we don't have genuine love or friendship. Yet this doesn't imply that these benefits aren't normative reasons for them, as these benefits still render these things rationally appropriate and therefore justified to the extent that they're present even though they cannot possibly be our reasons for loving or being friends with others.⁶⁰

Next we have the claim that the qualities of others can't be reasons that justify one's love or friendship because then the beloved or the friend would be replaceable given that other people can instantiate these same qualities, which is again supposed to conflict with the nature of love and friendship since our beloveds and friends are irreplaceable. But again, love and friendship constitutively involve *believing in* the other's irreplaceability, so at worst the other's qualities render these beliefs false and irrational because these qualities constitute justifying reasons that render the beloved or the friend replaceable. Yet it's also not clear that this even results this time around either because we may not believe that our beloveds and friends are irreplaceable with respect to the general qualities that they may share with others. And finally, even if potential replacements can do a better job of instantiating the same qualities that justify our current loves or friendships and this rationally requires us to trade our beloveds or friends in for those better

⁶⁰ In case the analogy with deterrence is unclear, consider another. Suppose that you're an agnostic, and that an eccentric atheist billionaire will give you a million dollars to start disbelieving in God. While the fact that you will receive a million dollars by becoming an atheist is obviously a good reason to actually become one, it is not a reason that could actually motivate you to become an atheist given the nature of belief. For belief is, roughly speaking, a mental state in which we regard a proposition as true for the sake of the truth (as opposed to, say, for the sake of argument as we would when making a mere assumption), and so any reasons that could motivate us to adopt a given belief would have to be considerations that indicate its truth rather than its prudential payoff. In the hypothetical case I've constructed here, the only reasons that could actually motivate someone to truly believe that there's no God would be epistemic considerations that suggest the non-existence of God (e.g., the probable existence of gratuitous evil). The fact that you would receive a million dollars for coming to believe that there's no God, then, could not be your reason for coming to have this belief even though it is surely a good reason to come to have it. I'm arguing above for a similar conclusion with respect to love and friendship: though they cannot be our reasons for loving or being friends with others given the nature of love and friendship, the potential, likely, or actual benefits from doing so are still good reasons for doing so.

replacements, this would again only make our unwillingness to do so irrational—there would yet again be no conflict with the nature of these phenomena. Moreover, we may not be rationally required to trade up because the reasons that favor replacement may be non-insistent or warranting reasons rather than insistent or requiring ones (Kolodny 2003; Abramson and Leite 2011). As the names suggest, non-insistent or warranting reasons are considerations that warrant or justify something, yet do not require that something on pain of irrationality. By contrast, insistent or requiring reasons are considerations that pro tanto justify something *and* require it on pain of irrationality. So for example, if you clearly observe your significant other cheating on you in public, then your observation constitutes an insistent or requiring reason to believe that he or she is an unfaithful partner: your observation not only justifies this belief, but failing to believe this would be patently irrational because of this observation. However, if you live on the coast and enjoy relaxing on the beach, then the fact that driving to the beach will allow you to relax on it constitutes a non-insistent or warranting reason to drive to the beach: this fact pro tanto justifies you driving to the beach, but it doesn't render failing to drive to the beach pro tanto irrational. If others then have superior reason-giving qualities compared to our beloveds or friends, if these qualities happen to provide merely non-insistent or warranting ones, then they will not rationally require that we trade up even if they render it rationally permissible to do so.

Last we have the idea that shared history can't justify love or friendship because if it did, it would render the beloved or the friend replaceable, which conflicts with the nature of these phenomena. But again there is no such conflict here: because love and friendship constitutively involve believing in the other's irreplaceability, shared history would at worst render these constitutive beliefs false and irrational by being justifying reason for love or friendship. Also, yet again this may not even result because again we may not believe that our beloveds and friends

are irreplaceable with respect to shared history. How we see our beloveds and friends as irreplaceable will be something that we tackle at the end of this chapter, so for now it will suffice to conclude that no part of this anti-rationalist argument succeeds in undermining my pluralistic rationalism.

3.4 Justified Love and Friendship vs. Unjustified Love and Friendship

Now that we have unearthed and defended these three different kinds of reasons that can pro tanto justify love and friendship, we can move on to addressing the issue of when love and friendship are all-things-considered justified or unjustified. Let's begin with unspecified love and friendship of either the initial and continual variety, which again can only be justified by value-based reasons. And here the answer is pretty simple: such love or friendship is justified just in case the value-based reasons for it outweigh or equal the reasons against it, where these latter reasons are constituted by facts pertaining to the actual or expected costs of such love or friendship. Just like being a car owner in general, being in the love or friendship business in general is justified just in case the actual or expected costs do not outweigh the actual or expected benefits, which implies that unspecified love or friendship is unjustified just in case the costs do outweigh the benefits.⁶¹

Things aren't so simple, however, when it comes to initial specified love and friendship and to continual specified love and friendship because, as we've seen, there are more than just value-based reasons in play, which means that justification isn't straightforwardly measured by

⁶¹ I'm not saying here that love and friendship are completely like car ownership, or that lovers and friends should be constantly subjecting their love and friendships to cost-benefit analyses. I'm only drawing a parallel with car ownership to establish a normative claim about when unspecified love and friendship are justified or unjustified; I'm not saying anything about how lovers and friends should (or must) think.

balancing values. And to further complicate matters, it's not clear how we are to weigh value-based, quality-based, and history-based reasons against each other, or even how we are to weigh the different quality-based reasons against each other. Nevertheless, I think that we can nail some things down here. To begin with, it seems clear enough that either kind of specified love or friendship is justified just in case the balance of reasons renders such love or friendship all-things-considered rationally appropriate, where this balance obtains just in case the reasons that render such love or friendship pro tanto rationally appropriate collectively outweigh or equal any reasons that render it pro tanto inappropriate.⁶²

Furthermore, although we cannot precisely state when the former reasons collectively outweigh the latter ones—or vice versa—given the above difficulties with weighing the different kinds of reasons against each other, and will instead have to make intuitive judgments of this matter on a case-by-case basis, I think that we can locate some useful facts that will help us make such judgments. First and foremost, we need to locate the relevant facts that constitute the reasons to consider in each case. For we saw in the last section that the facts constituting the three different kinds of reasons that can justify specified love or friendship differ slightly depending on the justificatory context. When seeking reasons that justify coming to, or continuing to, love or befriend someone *instead of no one at all*, such reasons can be found in *non-comparative* facts pertaining to (1) any value actually, probably, or potentially promoted by loving or being friends with that person, (2) that person's morally acceptable, defining qualities

⁶² I'd like to note two things here. First, I'm once again only asserting a normative claim here about when love and friendship are justified or unjustified; I'm not saying that lovers or friends should be constantly assessing the balance of reasons to see if love or friendships are rationally appropriate. Second, the claim here about when specified love and friendship are justified or unjustified is true about unspecified love and friendship as well, but in the case of specified love and friendship we cannot state in exact terms when the balance of reasons renders either rationally appropriate, whereas we can do so in the case of unspecified love and friendship: the balance of reasons renders them appropriate just in case the value-based reasons in favor of them equal or outweigh the value-based reasons against them, where this happens just in case their actual or expected benefits equal or outweigh their actual or expected costs.

that make her a fitting object of love or friendship, or (3) any intimate histories shared with that person. However, when seeking reasons that can justify coming to, or continuing to, love or befriend someone *instead of someone else*, such reasons can be found in *comparative* facts pertaining to (1') any greater value actually, probably, or potentially promoted by loving or being friends with the former instead of the latter, (2') the former's superior morally acceptable, defining qualities that make her a fitting object of love or friendship, or (3') any intimate histories shared with the former instead of the latter. So which reason-constituting facts are relevant when it comes to determining whether the balance of reasons renders specified love all-things-considered rationally appropriate?

I contend that it's only the non-comparative facts that are relevant here. To see why, let's first bring Linda and Betty back again, but let's suppose that I don't have an intimate history with either so that only value-based and quality-based reasons will be relevant here. Which person should I love or be friends with? Recall that when it comes to the comparative facts, Betty is superior: while Linda is morally virtuous, has a good sense of humor, likes cats, and would give me an instrumentally valuable relationship, Betty has slightly superior moral virtues, a slightly better sense of humor, likes cats more, and would give me a more instrumentally valuable relationship. So these reasons favor me coming to love or befriend Betty over Linda and thereby render it rationally appropriate to do so. But does it follow that it would be rationally *inappropriate* for me to love or befriend Linda instead? It certainly doesn't seem like it. Despite the comparative facts constituting reasons that favor loving or befriending Betty over Linda, there are many non-comparative facts about Linda that still seem to render it rationally appropriate to love or be friends with her (e.g., she still has many good qualities and would still give me an instrumentally valuable relationship). And something similar is of course true about

Betty: the comparative facts pertaining to her superiority over Linda can be translated into non-comparative facts about Betty that render it rationally appropriate to love her. Moreover, if we were to suppose instead that Linda is a morally rotten person, has a lousy sense of humor, despises all non-human animals, especially cats, and would give me a very costly relationship, whereas Betty would still be superior because she is not so rotten, has a slightly less lousy sense of humor, despises all non-human animals a little less, and would give me a less costly relationship, then even though the comparative facts would again favor loving or befriending Betty over Linda, *it would be rationally inappropriate to love or be friends with either in virtue of the non-comparative facts about their rotten characters and the costly relationship that I would have with either of them.* It therefore seems to be the non-comparative facts that really matter when it comes to determining whether the balance of reasons renders specified love or friendship all-things-considered rationally appropriate, where the reasons that render such love or friendship pro tanto appropriate are again the non-comparative facts pertaining to (1) any value actually, probably, or potentially promoted by loving or being friends with the other, (2) the other's morally acceptable, defining qualities that make her a fitting object of love or friendship, or (3) any intimate history shared with the other, while the reasons that render love pro tanto inappropriate are the non-comparative facts pertaining instead to (4) the other's negative or immoral qualities, or (5) the superior costs of loving or being friends with the other compared to their benefits.

Now that the relevant facts to consider for determining whether the balance of reasons renders specified love or friendship all-things-considered rationally appropriate or inappropriate have been found, we should try to locate some useful facts for determining when the balance goes one way or another. A few such facts stem from Hugh LaFollette's (1996) suggestion that

good reasons for love lie in qualities that support good personal relationships, where these relationships must refer to those that have more value than bad relationships. If this suggestion is right, then it follows that quality-based reasons and value-based reasons for specified love or friendship will tend to hang together, which in turn means that, when a love- or friendship-favoring set of one kind of reason is present, chances are that a love- or friendship-favoring set of the other kind is also present, and so the balance of reasons is likely to lie in favor of love or friendship. And conversely, if there are many rotten qualities present in the actual or potential beloveds or friends, which ground reasons against specified love or friendship of either variety and are likely to undergird poor relationships with them, then the odds are that the balance of reasons will not lie in favor of love or friendship.

In fact, it looks like the actual or potential other's moral qualities are particularly important to pay attention to when trying to discern which way the balance of reasons goes. Not only are these qualities going to positively correlate with the benefits that one will tend to receive from sharing a relationship with those who possess such qualities, but they seem to be particularly important in their own right for determining the rational appropriateness or inappropriateness of specified love or friendship. For on the one hand, when someone is thoroughly immoral, it will be rationally inappropriate to love or be friends with that person regardless of any reasons that weigh against those grounded in that person's rotten character. So even if, for example, you share an intimate history with a passionate and single-minded artist, whose single-minded passion for producing art makes him lovable to you, it would nevertheless be all-things-considered rationally *inappropriate* to continue loving him if he is an overwhelmingly selfish, self-centered, insensitive, inconsiderate, disrespectful, abusive, unfaithful wretch. In sufficient numbers, then, the reasons against specified love or friendship

that stem from our morally rotten qualities will trump other reasons entirely. On the other hand, when someone is morally exemplary, it will be rationally appropriate to love or be friends with that person because they are not only universally fit for love or friendship in virtue of their exemplary moral character, but there will not be much of the reasons against love or friendship just discussed to weigh against the reasons that justify love or friendship.

3.5 Challenges to Completely Rational Love and Friendship

My discussion thus far suggests that love and friendship can be justified overall. In particular, it suggests that (specified) love and friendship are justified overall just in case the relevant, non-comparative facts render either all-things-considered-rationally-appropriate. Despite this, however, there are at least three challenges to the possibilities of completely rational love or friendship, which is love or friendship that's guilty of no charge of irrationality whatsoever. It's still possible for love and friendship to be guilty of some charge of irrationality even if they can sometimes be practically all-things-considered justified in virtue of the relevant, non-comparative facts, so in this final section of this chapter I will address three challenges to the possibilities of completely rational love or friendship and will attempt to vindicate these possibilities.

The first challenge here is the following.⁶³ As we saw in the previous chapter, initial love for or friendship with other people is psychologically grounded in certain character traits that they seem to possess, which makes both initial love and friendship responses to certain perceived character traits. Additionally, there seems to be a rational constraint of consistency on our

⁶³ My reconstruction of this challenge is based on similar discussions found in Lamb (1997) and Jollimore (2011, 2017).

property-based responses to other people. So for example, if we appropriately adopt an attitude of respect or pity for someone based on certain properties that we see in them, then we are rationally constrained to respond in the same way to any other people that seem to have these same properties. Likewise, the rational constraint of consistency seems to demand that we respond in kind to any other people that seem to have the same traits to which our love or friendship is a response. However, our responses of love and friendship do *not* seem to be sensitive to this constraint, but are rather special, exclusive responses to certain people. These responses thus seem to be irrationally inconsistent even if they're originally appropriate, and so we seem to be unavoidably irrational when coming to love or becoming friends with other people, which seems to carry forward into continuing love or friendship (if a response of initial love or friendship is doomed to irrationality, then it's hard to see why persisting in either response would be any different).

Although forceful, I think that we can meet this challenge in two ways.⁶⁴ One begins by wheeling out our earlier distinction between insistent/requiring reasons and non-insistent/warranting ones (Kolodny 2003; Abramson and Leite 2011). While both kinds of reasons render responses to them *pro tanto* rational, only insistent/requiring reasons render the lack of response to them *pro tanto* irrational. Yet the rational constraint of consistency on our appropriate responses discussed above is only valid when these responses are called for by insistent/requiring reasons: it's only when perceived properties in things demand a certain

⁶⁴ It will not meet this challenge to argue that we aren't necessarily irrationally inconsistent for failing to love or be friends with everyone that has the same qualities that ground our current loves or friendships with others because we simply can't love or be friends with so many people. For even though it may be true that we will max out our capacities for love and friendship at certain points and thus that the rational constraint of consistency will not require that we extend our love and friendship beyond these points, this rational constraint of consistency will nevertheless demand that we extend our love and friendship to others with the same qualities that ground our current loves or friendships until we reach these points, yet our responses of love and friendship do not seem sensitive to even this constraint, but are rather special, exclusive responses to only certain people regardless of whether we've reached our maximum capacity for love and friendship.

response on pain of irrationality that we must so respond to them whenever we seem to find them. Therefore, if we insist that the perceived character traits to which love or friendship are appropriate responses provide only warranting reasons for love or friendship (Abramson and Leite 2011), then the rational constraint of consistency doesn't apply to love or friendship, and so this first challenge collapses.

Alternatively we can maintain that, while the rational constraint of consistency does apply to love and friendship, it's not necessarily irrational to respond with love or friendship to only certain people in virtue of their qualities. For there are two ways of understanding "qualities" here: we could either understand them as the general qualities that many people share, or as the particular instances of these qualities that have an idiosyncratic character to them. So for example, we could understand "Bethany's playfulness" as referring to her general quality of playfulness that others have as well, or to her particular, idiosyncratic way of being playful. But if we understand "qualities" in the latter sense, then even if we are rationally required to respond with love or friendship to others that have the same qualities as those that ground our current loves or friendships, this rational constraint will never really "kick in" because others will not have the same particular, idiosyncratic qualities that ground our current loves or friendships (they will instead have their own particular, idiosyncratic qualities). It therefore may not violate this constraint and thereby be irrationally inconsistent to love or be friends with only certain people in virtue of their qualities.

The second challenge here stems from the volitional feature that we saw in the previous chapter to be common to both love and friendship of being unwilling to trade the beloved or friend in for a better replacement (i.e., to "trade up"). And the challenge here is pretty simple: isn't it just straightforwardly irrational to be unwilling to trade in for a better replacement? It

certainly seems like it, and so it seems that love and friendship is at least somewhat irrational in virtue of this common constitutive feature. However, once again I think that there are two ways of meeting this challenge. One is to concede that this unwillingness can sometimes be irrational, but also to insist that it may not be irrational, and that whether it's irrational or not depends on the reasons in play (especially quality-based and value-based reasons, as they're what measure how much better any potential replacement might be). So for example, if the good qualities of a potential replacement are much better than a current beloved's or friend's qualities, and the potential relationship with the replacement would have much more value than the current relationship, then an unwillingness to replace the current beloved or friend does seem irrational. However, if the relevant qualities of the potential beloved or friend and the value of the potential relationship with that person aren't too much better, respectively, than the relevant qualities of the current beloved or friend and the value of the relationship with him or her, then the fact that you have an intimate history with the current beloved or friend constitutes a history-based reason that tips the scales in favor of not trading up. In such a case it would not be irrational to be unwilling to trade up.

Alternatively we can argue that the unwillingness to trade up is not irrational so long as the non-comparative facts render it rationally appropriate to love or be friends with someone. Recall yet again our example of Betty and Linda. We saw above that, so long as the non-comparative facts render it rationally appropriate to love or be friends with Linda, it doesn't matter if the comparative facts favor loving or being friends with Betty instead; it's still rationally acceptable to love or be friends with Linda. And so long as it's rationally acceptable to love or be friends with Linda, it's rationally acceptable to be unwilling to trade her in for a better replacement. Now this, to be sure, is a counterintuitive conclusion, as it seems obvious that an

unwillingness to trade something in for something better is patently irrational. However, it's important to recognize that this only holds up when the "something" in question here is a mere commodity that occupies a place in our lives only because of its ability to serve as a means to our own ends. For when we are judging the rationality of holding on to a mere commodity, the comparative facts—those pertaining to how well the commodity serves our own purposes compared to alternatives that could replace it—are all that matter. If something else could serve our own purposes better than that which we currently have, then unless our current possession has some sort of special, sentimental value to make it preferable to potential replacements, it would be irrational not to replace or to refuse to acquire the superior commodity in the first place. But as we saw above things seem to be different when it comes to the objects of love or friendship. These do not occupy places in our lives just because of their instrumental benefits, and as such they are not to be regarded in the same way. Unlike mere commodities, whether it's rational to latch onto them is determined by the non-comparative facts rather than the comparative ones, and so unlike the unwillingness to trade in mere commodities for better replacements, it's not necessarily irrational to be so unwilling to trade in beloveds and friends.

The third and final challenge here is what I referred to toward the end of the previous chapter as "the fungibility problem." And this problem, as I understand it, stems from the doxastic feature that we saw in the previous chapter to be common to both love and friendship of believing in the beloved's or the friend's non-fungibility, which is believing that the beloved or friend cannot be replaced without a loss of value. Now this problem is most easily seen as a result of trying to justify love or friendship. So suppose, for example, that you tried to justify loving or being friends with someone by recourse to the value that it would realize or that requires it (i.e., with value-based reasons). Since loving or being friends with certain people

instead would do at least as good of a job at realizing, or satisfying a necessary condition of, the relevant value here, it looks like your beloved or your friend is fungible—you *can* replace him or her without a loss of value. Similarly, if we tried to justify loving or being friends with someone by recourse to their good qualities (i.e., with quality-based reasons), then again, since there will be at least some other people that could do at least as good of a job at instantiating these qualities, it looks like your beloved or friend is fungible. And finally, if we try to justify loving or being friends with someone by recourse to an intimate history shared with him or her (i.e., with history-based reasons), then once again, since we can have such a history with loads of other people instead, it yet again looks like your beloved or friend is fungible. Therefore, no matter how we try to justify love or friendship, we end up with the beloved's or the friend's fungibility, which then renders false our belief to the contrary as a lover or a friend. And insofar as our love or friendship necessarily commits us to a false belief, it is irrational to some degree.⁶⁵

Although forceful, I think that this challenge can be met as well. Recall first from the last chapter that love and friendship constitutively involve seeing the other as possessing a kind of non-moral, intrinsic, unique (and therefore irreplaceable) value. Consequently, the above problem of love and friendship necessarily committing us to a false belief only materializes if our beloveds and friends lack this specific kind of value. But if they possess this value, then there's no fungibility problem even if they're fungible with respect to other kinds of value (e.g., the value realized by sharing personal relationships with them) because the belief in the

⁶⁵ I want to note two things here. First, this third challenge is distinct from the previous one because it's based on a *doxastic* feature of love and friendship as opposed to a *volitional* one, and as a result the irrationality that love and friendship supposedly commit us to according to this third challenge is epistemic irrationality as opposed to practical irrationality. Second, although the fungibility problem is most easily *seen* as a result of trying to justify love or friendship, the problem still remains for those anti-rationalists who deny that love or friendship can be justified. For even if there are no normative reasons for love or friendship, these phenomena will still constitutively involve the belief in the beloved's or the friend's non-fungibility, but as the discussion in this paragraph shows, our beloveds and our friends *are* fungible with respect to valuable qualities, valuable histories, or valuable relationships. So it still looks like love and friendship necessarily commit us to a false belief and are irrational insofar as they do.

beloved's or the friend's non-fungibility that's constitutive of both love and friendship does not attempt to capture these other kinds of value. The crucial question for whether we can dissolve the fungibility problem, then, is whether our beloveds and friends do in fact possess the kind of non-moral, intrinsic, unique value that we must see in them.

Though far from conclusive, the following provides good grounds for thinking that our beloveds and friends can possess the kind of value in question. First of all, it's plausible to suppose that people are bearers of genuine, non-moral, intrinsic value, and that, as appearances suggest, people bear such value on the basis of their qualities. Next recall the distinction that we drew above in our second response to the first challenge between personal qualities in their generic and their particular, idiosyncratic forms, where the former are qualities that different people can share, while the latter are ones that only particular individuals can have (barring of course the possibility of exact qualitative duplicates). Now, since people bear genuine, non-moral, intrinsic value on the basis of their qualities, we can draw a parallel distinction between this value in its general form that supervenes on generic qualities and this value in particular, idiosyncratic forms that supervene on particular, idiosyncratic qualities, where the former value is value that many different people can share, while the latter is value that only particular people can have. This latter kind of value is the non-moral, intrinsic, unique kind of value in individuals that we're after here, so it looks like love and friendship needn't involve the false belief that our beloveds or friends possess this kind of value because it looks like they can possess it in virtue of their particular, idiosyncratic qualities.

Of course, one may object to this solution on the following grounds. When we believe that our beloveds and friends each possess a kind of non-moral, intrinsic, unique (and therefore irreplaceable) value, we don't believe that they possess this kind of value only with respect to

other actually or potentially existing people. In other words, we don't believe that they are each non-fungible with respect to only other actually or potentially existing people, such that none of those people could ever replace them. Instead, we believe that our beloveds and friends are non-fungible with respect to *all theoretically conceivable people*, including exact qualitative duplicates of our beloveds and friends. Not even an exact qualitative duplicate of a beloved or a friend could replace them without a loss of value. Accordingly, even if our beloveds and friends are non-fungible with respect to other actually or potentially existing people in virtue of their particular, idiosyncratic qualities (which are only so compared to the qualities of other actually or potentially existing people), they will not be non-fungible with respect to exact qualitative duplicates in virtue of particular, idiosyncratic qualities precisely because their qualities are no longer particular or idiosyncratic with respect to these duplicates (they are rather exactly the same). Love and friendship, then, still necessarily commit us to a false belief in the non-fungibility of our beloveds and friends because these individuals, though non-fungible with respect to other actually or potentially existing people, are not non-fungible with respect to exact qualitative duplicates.

In response to this, some may maintain that our beloveds and friends are still non-fungible even with respect to exact qualitative duplicates because, unlike these duplicates, our beloveds and friends share a history with us (Grau 2004). In other words, their sharing a history with us gives our beloveds and friends a unique, non-moral value that makes them non-fungible. But even if this is true, it doesn't quite solve the fungibility problem. For that problem, as I've described it, is that love and friendship seem to necessarily commit us to a false belief—and thus are to some degree irrational—because they necessarily commit us to the belief that the other has a non-moral, unique, irreplaceable value that's *intrinsic* to them, where this belief is hard to

vindicate because it's hard to locate this specific kind of value. Yet the value that one may have in virtue of sharing a history with someone is not intrinsic to that person, but is rather something that the lover or the friend projects onto that person. This kind of value will therefore not vindicate the right belief. Moreover, shared history does not account for the irreplaceable value of every beloved because such a history is not always there. Parents who fall in love with their children as soon as they find out about their existence in the womb would surely find their children to be irreplaceable, yet since they have no shared history it cannot be that which makes their children irreplaceable. And if love at first sight is a genuine phenomenon, then once again there can be no shared history to make the loved-at-first-sight irreplaceable. Such cases suggest that the irreplaceable value that our beloveds and friends necessarily seem to have is intrinsic to them rather than projected onto them due to their history with us. And just in case those cases are not sufficient here, take a moment to reflect upon your beloveds and your friends and ask yourself if they are irreplaceable to you simply because they share a history with you. Chances are this isn't the case because, on the one hand, other people in your life share a history with you even though you don't see them as irreplaceable. And on the other hand, if you were to envision your beloveds or friends as having a history without you, then even though such a history would lead to a present in which you don't love them, you'd still believe that your beloveds or your friends are non-fungible. Removing their shared history with you would probably not change your belief in their non-fungibility. Yet this indicates that there's supposed to be something special about them, some value intrinsic to them, that renders them non-fungible even with respect to exact qualitative duplicates. And the fungibility problem is, once again, the problem of locating this value and thereby vindicating the belief in such value to which love and friendship

seem to necessarily commit us in order to avoid the consequence of love and friendship being necessarily irrational to some degree.

At this point I see only two responses to the problem. One is to simply bite the bullet and accept that love and friendship are necessarily irrational to some degree because they do necessarily commit us to believing in the other's non-fungibility with respect to all real, potential, and theoretically possible people, including exact qualitative duplicates. This isn't what we were after here, but it would at least be in line with the popular thought that love is an inherently irrational phenomenon. However, a potential solution to the problem lies in adding our haecceities to the mix of particular, idiosyncratic qualities that can ground the value we're after here. With respect to other actually or potentially existing people, your beloveds and friends possess a non-moral, intrinsic, unique and therefore irreplaceable value in virtue of their unique set of particular, idiosyncratic intrinsic qualities (or in the particular, idiosyncratic ways in which they instantiate general intrinsic qualities). Yet with respect to exact qualitative duplicates, your beloveds and friends can only possess the same kind of value as the duplicates in virtue of their set of particular, idiosyncratic intrinsic qualities unless we include their haecceities in the mix. Once we include them, we get things that set your beloveds or friends apart from their exact qualitative duplicates and therefore something that can help ground the value that we're after here. The only question left to consider, then, is whether haecceities can do the work we need them to do here. And though it may seem strange, I think that they can, or at least that it's plausible to entertain the thought that they can. After all, there does seem to be some intuitive pull to the thought that, compared to all of her exact qualitative duplicates, it's my beloved's simply being her that makes her irreplaceable with respect to those duplicates. This isn't to say that her haecceity is the only thing that gives her the value we're after here; her other qualities do

as well. All I'm saying is that her haecceity is what gives her a value that sets her apart from her exact qualitative duplicates and thus the combination of it with her other particular, idiosyncratic qualities delivers the value that we're after here. If haecceities plus particular, idiosyncratic qualities deliver this value, then our beloveds and friends can have the value that we believe them to have, which in turn means that love and friendship may not necessarily commit us to false beliefs about their objects' value.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I've ventured into normative territory and tackled the issues pertaining to the rational justification of love and friendship. Beginning with the issue of whether these phenomena are subject to rational assessment, we've seen, on the one hand, that none of the anti-rationalist arguments purporting to show that they aren't subject to such assessment succeed, and on the other that there are some pretty good grounds for agreeing with the rationalists that they are subject to such assessment. It's therefore pretty safe to conclude, along with the rationalists, that love and friendship are subject to rational assessment. Then we addressed the related issue of what normative reasons can justify these phenomena, and there we found three types of such reasons: value-based reasons, quality-based reasons, and history-based reasons. Value-based reasons refer to facts pertaining to how love or friendship actually, probably, or potentially promotes, or is required for, something valuable. These reasons alone can justify unspecified love and friendship, but they can also justify specified love and friendship of either the initial or continual variety. Quality-based reasons refer to facts pertaining to morally acceptable, defining personal qualities that make the beloved or the friend a fitting object of love or friendship. These

reasons can justify specified love and friendship of both the initial and continual varieties. And history-based reasons refer to facts pertaining to histories shared with the beloved or the friend. Unlike the other reasons, history-based ones can only justify continuing specified love and friendship.

Next we tackled the issue of when love and friendship are all-things-considered rationally justified or unjustified, and there we were only able to establish some general conclusions. Beginning with unspecified love and friendship of either the initial and continual variety, we saw that such love or friendship is justified just in case the value-based reasons for it outweigh or equal the reasons against it, where these latter reasons refer to facts pertaining to the actual or expected costs of such love or friendship. As for specified love and friendship of either the initial or continuing variety, we saw that, while it's not at all clear how to weigh value-based, quality-based, and history-based reasons against each other—or even how to weigh quality-based reasons against each other—these phenomena are justified just in case the balance of reasons renders them all-things-considered rationally appropriate, where this balance obtains just in case the reasons that render them pro tanto rationally appropriate collectively outweigh or equal any reasons that render them pro tanto inappropriate. We also saw that, when it comes to trying to determine on a case-by-case basis where the balance of reasons here lies, one should be looking only for the *non-comparative* reason-constituting facts pertaining to (1) any value actually, probably, or potentially promoted by loving or being friends with the other, (2) the other's morally acceptable, defining qualities that make her a fitting object of love or friendship, (3) any intimate history shared with the other, (4) the other's negative or immoral qualities, and (5) the superior costs of loving or being friends with the other compared to their benefits.

Last we tackled the issue of whether love and friendship can ever be completely free of irrationality by addressing three challenges to the possibilities of completely rational love or friendship. The first challenge tried to show that love and friendship are guilty of irrationality because, as special or exclusive responses to only certain people on the basis of their apparent properties, they're inconsistent responses to those properties. However, we saw that exclusive responses to others on the basis of their properties can be justified if they're rationally warranted yet not rationally required by those properties, or if those properties are particular to the individual that has them. So long, then, as love and friendship are appropriate responses to properties to begin with, they can be rational if they're rationally warranted yet not rationally required by those properties or if they're appropriate responses to properties that only particular individuals have.

The second challenge tried to show that love and friendship are necessarily irrational because they constitutively involve the unwillingness to trade their objects in for better replacements. Yet we saw that history-based reasons might be able to tip the scales of rationality in favor of not trading up, and also that love and friendship can still be rational, despite their unwillingness, if they're rationally appropriate in virtue of the relevant non-comparative facts. And the third challenge tried to show that love and friendship are necessarily irrational because they constitutively involve the false belief in the other's non-fungibility with respect to all theoretically conceivable people. However, we were able to locate at least a theoretical possibility for the truth this constitutive belief: our beloveds and friends can have unique value with respect to all theoretically conceivable people in virtue of their particular instantiations of generic personal qualities along with their haecceities because the former can make them irreplaceable with respect to any actual or potential person, while the latter can make them

irreplaceable with respect to exact qualitative duplicates. Until it can be shown otherwise, then, a completely rational love or friendship still seems entirely possible.

Chapter 4: The Reasons of Love and Friendship

With the normative issues falling under the justification of love and friendship now addressed, we're ready to move on to our other set of normative issues pertaining to *the normative significance of love and friendship*. How, if at all, do love and friendship alter our normative situations?⁶⁶ Do they give rise to normative reasons for action that we otherwise wouldn't have? If so, what's the nature of these reasons? Are they moral or non-moral? Are they special? How do they stack up to other reasons that we have? Do love and friendship also give rise to special moral duties (where again these moral duties are those that only lovers and friends have because of their participation in loving relationships and friendships)? If they do give rise to special moral duties, what are the grounds of these duties? Are these irreducible, *sui generis* special duties grounded in love or friendship itself, or can they be reduced to other kinds of duties that can be found outside of love and friendship? And how do these duties stack up to others that we have?⁶⁷

As I explained in chapter 1, this chapter will focus on addressing the above questions pertaining to normative reasons. After a brief but important discussion about the relationship between normative reasons for action and moral duties that is intended to justify treating them separately in this chapter and the next, I will answer the questions whether love and friendship give rise to new normative reasons and, if so, what kinds of reasons these are. First I will argue

⁶⁶ In previous chapters I dealt with love as a psychological condition—or as a syndrome—of the organism, whereas in these last two chapters I will be dealing with loving relationships and their normative significance. The normative significance of love in the absence of loving relationships will therefore not be addressed.

⁶⁷ One could also ask: “Assuming that love and friendship have normative significance, what kind of significance do they have? Is it moral or non-moral?” I will effectively be answering this question (my answer is that they have *both* kinds of significance) by addressing the above question about whether the reasons that love and friendship generate are moral or non-moral (my answer is that they generate both) as well as the question about whether they give rise to special moral duties (my answer is that they do).

that love and friendship at least give rise to *person-based reasons*, which are constituted by facts that either (1) identify certain people as our loved ones or friends or (2) specify how certain actions do or might relate to the welfares or wills of our loved ones or friends, as well as *relationship-based reasons*, which are constituted by facts that specify how certain actions will or might affect our loving relationships or friendships. Then I will argue that some of these reasons are moral ones, while others are non-moral ones. I will also argue that some of these reasons are special in the sense of only being had by participants in loving relationships and friendships, while some are special in the distinct sense that they're stronger or weightier compared to other reasons with comparable contents that the relationship participants may have. As for how the reasons of love and friendship stack up against others that we may have, I aim to show that the answer will vary depending on the nature of the reasons in play. Sometimes the reasons of love and friendship win out, and sometimes their competitors outweigh them; their fate here depends on the balance of different sorts of reasons.

4.1 Practical Reasons and Moral Duties

As we have seen, normative reasons for things are considerations that actually justify those things. In the previous chapter we talked about normative reasons *for* love and friendship, while in this chapter we're concerned with the normative reasons *of* love and friendship, where these reasons are, specifically, reasons *for action*. Let's call reasons for action "practical reasons." What is the relationship between practical reasons and our moral duties?

Any answer to this question will, unsurprisingly, be controversial, and will depend on whether one is an internalist or an externalist about practical reasons, on the one hand, and on the

other on whether one holds a certain brand of moral rationalism that will be defined below. According to reasons-internalism, the only practical reasons that agents have are internal ones, which are reasons that are dependent on an agent's motivations in the sense that an agent has them because, and only because, he or she has some element in his or her "subjective motivational set"—some desire, interest, value, concern, commitment, or whatever—that is served by performing the actions favored by the reasons (Williams 1980). So let's say, for example, that I have a reason to drink some coffee—namely, that it will wake me up and give me energy. This would be an internal reason because I would not have it if I had no desire, aim, or whatever that would be served by becoming more awake and energized via drinking coffee. I would only have a reason to drink coffee if I had a desire or the aim to stay awake, or to do something important that requires being awake and having more energy than I could muster without coffee. An implication of reasons-internalism, then, is that the relationship between moral duties and practical reasons (assuming the former exist) is a function of each agent's motivational set: an agent's moral duties are practical reasons for that agent just in case she has a desire or a commitment to be moral. If she has no desire or aim to be moral, then the fact that something is her moral duty is no reason for her to do it, whereas if she does have a desire or a commitment to be moral, then the mere fact that something is her moral duty is a reason for her to do it. On this view, then, moral duties can be practical reasons, but they need not be so, and even if they are they will certainly not be exhaustive of our practical reasons because we will have all sorts desires, interests, or commitments besides our commitment to being moral that will give us practical reasons.

By contrast, reasons-externalism denies that our practical reasons are all internal ones and maintains instead that some or all of our practical reasons are independent of our motivational

sets. So for example, if some behavior is unhealthy for you, then the very fact that it is unhealthy seems to be a reason not to engage in that behavior regardless of whether you have a desire for or an interest in being healthy. Also, according to certain brand of moral rationalism (which entails reasons-externalism but isn't necessarily entailed by it), if some action is morally obligatory, then the mere fact that it is morally obligatory constitutes a reason to perform that action regardless of whether you have a desire or a commitment to be moral (Shafer-Landau 2003, 2009).⁶⁸ Accordingly, if both reasons-externalism and this brand of moral rationalism are true, then moral duties must be practical reasons, but once again they will not be exhaustive of these reasons. Moral duties may necessarily be practical reasons for us all, but we will certainly have many other reasons to do things.

Overall, then, the situation is this. Assuming that we have moral duties, these duties either can, yet need not be, practical reasons for us, or else they must be practical reasons for us. Either way, we will have other practical reasons besides those considerations pertaining to our moral duties. So, since moral duties will not exhaust our practical reasons and may not even be such reasons in the first place, we can divide our inquiry into the normative significance of love and friendship by focusing on the practical reasons that they might give rise to, on the one hand, and to the moral duties that they might give rise to on the other.

⁶⁸ We can distinguish here between *weak* moral rationalism, which holds that moral duties constitute pro tanto or defeasible reasons for action, and *strong* moral rationalism, which holds that moral duties constitute sufficient reasons for action. This distinction, however, has no bearing on the point of this section, which is just that practical reasons and moral duties, while perhaps related, are far from co-extensive and, as such, deserve separate philosophical treatment.

4.2 The Person-Based and Relationship-Based Reasons of Love and Friendship

Although we must entertain the possibility that love and friendship generate special moral duties that constitute practical reasons for everyone bound by them, we can bracket this possibility and begin our inquiry into the normative significance of love and friendship by asking: what reasons other than these potential ones, if any, do loving relationships and friendships generate? I believe that intuitively appealing examples along with theoretical support strongly suggest that these relationships at least give rise to both person-based reasons and relationship-based reasons. Again, the person-based reasons here are either facts that identify certain people as our loved ones or friends, or else they're facts specifying how certain actions do or might relate to the welfares or wills of our loved ones or friends. So for example, the mere fact that *Bethany is my beloved spouse* seems to be a reason for me to give her a ride home from the airport rather than no one or someone else, which is a reason that I obviously wouldn't have if Bethany wasn't, in fact, my beloved spouse. Also, the fact that *giving Bethany a ride home would make her happy instead of angry* seems to be another reason for me here that I again wouldn't have if Bethany wasn't my beloved spouse who has come to count on me for rides home from the airport and is emotionally vulnerable to my decisions on whether to meet her expectations. Moreover, the fact that *me giving Bethany a ride home is what she wants* is yet another reason for me here that I wouldn't have if Bethany wasn't my beloved spouse who always wants me to pick her up from the airport. These are three different facts, but they all seem to be practical reasons that I have because of my romantic partnership with Bethany, and they are person-based reasons because they either identify Bethany as my beloved spouse or else specify how my actions will affect her welfare or fulfill her will. The relationship-based reasons, by

contrast, are facts that specify how certain actions will or might affect our loving relationships or friendships. So for example, if cooking a meal for Bethany sustains our romantic partnership, then that seems to constitute a good reason for me to cook her a meal that I wouldn't have in the absence of such a relationship. Or suppose that I have upset my friend Fred to the point that he is thinking about dissolving our friendship, but that he will not do so if I do something nice for him. The fact that *doing something nice for Fred will save our friendship* seems to be a reason for me to do something nice for him, where again I wouldn't have this reason if, in fact, we didn't share a friendship in the first place.⁶⁹

These intuitively appealing examples of reason-constituting facts are further supported by multiple theories of practical reasons. Under desire-based theories (e.g., Williams 1980; Schroeder 2007), where *all* of our practical reasons are grounded in our desires, and under Michael Smith's (2017) hybrid theory, where only some of our practical reasons are grounded in our desires,⁷⁰ loving relationships and friendships will generate new reasons because they will generate new reason-giving desires. For, generally speaking, our reason-giving desires constitute the background conditions that allow certain facts to count as reasons (Goldman 2005; Schroeder 2007). That is, when we have some desire for an object, O, that satisfies whatever conditions need to be satisfied for it to give reasons (e.g., it isn't based on false belief), then facts pertaining to how our actions will or might promote O will constitute reasons for us to perform those actions. Now, because of my relationship with Bethany I want Bethany to fare well and get what she wants, and I also want our relationship to continue. Therefore, because of these desires, facts that specify how actions of mine will or might promote Bethany's welfare, or will or might fulfill

⁶⁹ It should be evident that both person-based and relationship-based reasons are agent-relative ones because they are reasons that we have in virtue of our loving relationships and friendships rather than our mere personhood, moral agency, or causal position in the world.

⁷⁰ As I understand it, the only other reasons that we have according to Smith's account are respect-based reasons, where the "respect" here is Kantian moral respect.

her desires, or will sustain our relationship, will constitute reasons for me to perform those actions.

Alternatively, consider Harry Frankfurt's (2004) theory of practical reasons, which holds that care (or love) grounds all of our practical reasons. Under this theory the general story for how reasons are generated is virtually identical to how desires generate reasons under the desire-based theory, except the reason-generating entity is not mere desire for some object, but rather caring about it. So when we care about some object, O, and this care satisfies whatever conditions need to be satisfied for it to give reasons (e.g., not based on false belief), then again, facts pertaining to how our actions will or might promote O will constitute reasons for us to perform those actions. Accordingly, since we will care about the welfares and the desire-satisfaction of those with which we share loving relationships and friendships, and since we will care about those relationships themselves, under Frankfurt's theory our loving relationships and friendships will again give us both person-based and relationship-based reasons.⁷¹

Although the reason-constituting facts may be different, our loving relationships and friendships will give rise to practical reasons on other theories of such reasons as well. Consider first Christine Korsgaard's (1996) theory, which holds that our practical identities ground our practical reasons. "Practical identities" are descriptions under which we value ourselves and find our actions to be worth undertaking. We may value ourselves as spouses, parents, children, friends, citizens, practitioners of certain professions, adherents of certain religions, champions of certain causes, and so on and so forth, and when we do these things constitute our practical

⁷¹ The similarity of Frankfurt's theory to desire-based theories (e.g., those of Williams and Schroeder) that use "desire" as a term of art denoting anything that we might find in our motivational sets, including our cares, may make one think that Frankfurt's theory isn't really an alternative to desire-based theories. However, even though these inclusive desire-based theories agree with Frankfurt's theory that our cares ground practical reasons for us, Frankfurt's theory is still an alternative to them because it holds that only cares—rather than anything that could count as a "desire"—is what specifically grounds practical reasons.

identities. Under Korsgaard's theory these identities are the sources of our reasons, and since our loving relationships and friendships will presumably change our practical identities, they will likewise change our practical reasons. To return again to the example of my relationship with Bethany, that relationship has changed my practical identity: as a result of that relationship I am Bethany's romantic partner and primary caregiver, and I'm also a participant of the relationship itself. Yet part of having a practical identity is being bound by its associated norms, which provide reasons for us to do whatever they say. So for example, I seem to have a reason to attend to Bethany when she's sick in the fact that doing so is what a primary caregiver does (or maybe in the fact that doing so is what the norms of caregiving require), which I have only because of my identity as Bethany's primary caregiver. And I may also have a reason to do things that will sustain our relationship—namely, that that's what participants in relationships do (or are required to do)—only because of my identity as a participant in our relationship.

Next and last, consider a value-based theory of practical reasons, where our reasons are grounded in the promotion of objective value. Generally speaking, under such a theory facts pertaining to how our actions promote objective value or objectively valuable things will count as reasons for us to do those very actions. If we plausibly assume, then, that loving relationships and friendships are objectively valuable things, under a value-based theory of practical reasons facts pertaining to how our actions sustain loving relationships or friendships will constitute reasons for us to perform those actions that we wouldn't have if these relationships didn't exist in the first place. Furthermore, if we grant that a special kind of objective value attaches to loved ones caring for loved ones, or friends caring for friends (Keller 2013), then under this theory facts pertaining to how our actions will realize this special value will constitute reasons for us to

perform these actions that we again wouldn't have in the absence of the relevant relationships because our actions wouldn't have the special objective value in question here.

Overall, then, it should be evident that the basic thesis that love and friendship give rise to practical reasons that we otherwise wouldn't have is firmly supported by intuitively appealing examples and by multiple theories of practical reasons. And according to the examples and a few of those theories, love and friendship give rise to person-based and relationship-based reasons, while according to a few other theories love and friendship give rise to identity-based and value-based reasons as well. Now I'm not sure if we should countenance all of these reasons, but given the strong, converging support that person-based and relationship-based reasons receive from both the intuitively appealing examples and the first three theories of practical reasons that we discussed, I contend that we can be pretty confident that love and friendship do indeed give rise to these two types of reasons. At any rate, I will proceed on this assumption.

4.3 The Moral vs. Non-Moral Reasons of Love and Friendship

We can now move on to the issue of whether the practical reasons that love and friendship generate are moral or non-moral reasons.⁷² The answer to this question, of course, will depend on how we differentiate between moral and non-moral reasons. One way to differentiate them is to hold that moral reasons are facts that make explicit reference to clearly moral properties or duties. That is: facts that proclaim certain actions to be morally right or wrong, obligatory or forbidden, good or evil will count as moral reasons, and so will facts that proclaim

⁷² Jeske (2017) thinks that the distinction between moral and non-moral reasons is neither necessary nor helpful, so she would presumably reject the need to address this issue. I think, however, that this is an important issue to address because the distinctively *moral* significance of love and friendship is an important part of their more general normative significance.

certain actions to be our duty. We may also include here (perhaps among others) facts pertaining to whether actions are just or unjust, or whether they respect or violate the moral rights of others. Any other reasons will then be non-moral ones. This, however, is not how I propose that we differentiate between moral and non-moral reasons because this way of differentiating between these reasons will categorize some reasons as non-moral when they arguably should be categorized as moral ones. So for example, suppose that a stranger is drowning through no fault of my own. If trying to save them would likely result in my own death, then the enormous risk that trying to save them would pose to me would disable any pro tanto duty that I would have to save others from grave danger and thereby render my failure to try to save them morally permissible. But since the tremendous personal risk here is a consideration that's relevant to determining the moral status of my failure to save the stranger from drowning, it seems to be a moral reason even though it makes no explicit reference to clear moral properties or duties. To account for this, then, I propose that we define moral reasons disjunctively: a fact constitutes a moral reason just in case it either (1) makes explicit reference to clear moral properties or duties, or else (2) is directly relevant to determining the moral status of an action. Accordingly, the reasons of love and friendship will be moral ones just in case they satisfy one of these conditions, and otherwise they will be non-moral ones.⁷³

Given this way of differentiating between the moral and non-moral reasons of love and friendship, it seems clear that the reasons of love and friendship will be a mixed bag: some will be moral, and others will be non-moral. If love and friendship do indeed give rise to special

⁷³ I want to note two things here. First, I obviously haven't specified when facts are directly relevant to determining the moral status of an action (indeed I don't have a general account of this relevance), and it may of course be difficult to determine if a fact is so relevant and thus counts as a moral reason. Nevertheless, I think that my proposal here is extremely plausible and that, until a better one is forthcoming, we can just use intuition or argument to make our best judgment as to whether certain facts satisfy this second proposed condition. Second, I haven't offered a reductive account of moral reasons because the term "moral" shows up in the analysans and the analysandum, but this is no more problematic than defining a "geology expert" as someone who has a lot of knowledge about geology.

moral duties that constitute practical reasons for those bound by them, then these reasons will obviously be moral ones because they make explicit reference to clear moral duties. Yet even if we again bracket the possibility of these reason-constituting special duties, the mixed-bag thesis still seems to hold up. For let's suppose that I face a situation where morality demands that I help either Bethany or a stranger, but I can only help one person. Here the fact that *Bethany is my beloved spouse* seems to constitute a person-based *moral* reason for me to favor her because it makes it obligatory—or at least permissible—for me to help her instead of the stranger. In other words, since this fact seems directly relevant to determining the moral status of my helping Bethany instead of the stranger, it seems to be a moral reason rather than a non-moral one. Similarly, the fact that *taking Fred out for a ridiculously expensive dinner is the only way to save our friendship* seems to constitute a relationship-based *moral* reason to take Fred out for such a dinner because it appears to ground a moral permission—or at least can ground such a permission—for me to do so despite the moral reasons against doing so (e.g., the money would be better used, morally speaking, if given to charity). By contrast, the fact that *Fred wants to go out for a ridiculously expensive dinner with me* seems to constitute a relationship-based *non-moral* reason for me to join him for such a dinner because mere facts about what Fred wants in terms of luxury cannot ground moral permissions or obligations to act against the moral reasons to give to charity instead.

4.4 The Special Reasons of Love and Friendship

Next we have the issue of whether the practical reasons of love and friendship are special reasons. If love and friendship give rise to special moral duties that constitute reasons for those

bound by them, then those reasons will obviously be special in a sense that will be discussed in the next chapter. But even if we again bracket this possibility, at least some of the person-based and relationship-based reasons of love and friendship still seem to be special in at least one of two ways. On the one hand, at least some of these reasons seem special in the sense that only the relationship participants have them. The fact that *Bethany is my beloved spouse* is a reason for me, and only for me, to favor her in situations where morality demands that I help her or a stranger when I can't help both. The fact that *taking Fred for a ridiculously expensive dinner is the only way to save our friendship* and the fact that *Fred wants to go out for a ridiculously expensive dinner with me* are both reasons for me and only me to take him out for such a dinner.

On the other hand, at least some of these reasons seem special in the sense that they're stronger or weightier compared to other reasons with comparable contents that the relationship participants may have. So let's say, for example, that I'm standing on the shore of a riverbank, that two people are drowning in the water, and that I can only save one of them. If I jump in, grab the person on the left, and swim them to shore, then *I will save my beloved spouse Bethany's life*, whereas if I jump in, grab the person on the right, and swim them to shore then *I will save a stranger's life*. Regardless of which option I choose here I will save a person's life, so the reasons that I have to take each option have comparable contents. However, my reason to take the first option—that it will save my beloved spouse Bethany's life—is a stronger reason than that to take the second option—that it will save a stranger's life. Generally speaking, then, when I could either promote the welfare of person A to certain degree or that of person B to the same degree, but not both, and person A is a friend or a beloved while person B is neither, then the fact that *one option will promote A's welfare to a certain degree, D*, constitutes a stronger reason to take that option compared to the reason to take the other option that's constituted by

the fact that *the other option will promote B's welfare to degree D*.⁷⁴ Something similar will be true in situations where we could either respect the autonomy of person A in a certain way or that of person B in the same way, but not both, or where we could either respect or protect the rights of A or the same rights of B, but not both. Perhaps we could summarize this second sense in which some of the reasons of love and friendship are special by saying that, all else being equal, we have more reason to benefit or appropriately treat our loved ones or friends compared to strangers.

4.5 The Weight of the Reasons of Love and Friendship

This brings us to our last issue of how the reasons of love and friendship stack up to other reasons that we have. We just saw that the person-based reasons of love and friendship seem to be stronger than other person-based reasons with comparable contents. Also, if there are special moral duties of love and friendship that constitute practical reasons for those bound by them, then these reason-constituting duties will likewise be stronger than our reason-constituting, general moral duties to others with comparable contents. But what if the contents of our person-based reasons of love and friendship are no longer comparable to the contents of the competing person-based reasons? Or what if we are no longer weighing person-based reasons against each

⁷⁴ An alternative take on the scenario I've offered here would argue that I have most reason to save Bethany because there are *two* reasons to save her—doing so will save a person's life and doing so will save my beloved spouse's life—but only *one* reason to save the stranger—doing so will save a person's life. Accordingly, we cannot conclude on the basis of this case that promoting the welfare of a friend or loved one to degree *D* constitutes a stronger reason than promoting the welfare of a stranger to the same degree. Now I'm not sure what to say about this alternative take on the reasons in play here, but even if we grant that there are three reasons in play rather than only two and that the two reasons to save Bethany clearly outweigh the one reason to save the stranger, we can still raise the issue of how the reasons to save Bethany *individually* stack up to the reason to save the stranger. Obviously, the fact that saving Bethany *will save a person* has the same weight as my reason to save the stranger, as this reason is constituted by the same fact, but how does this fact stack up against the fact that saving Bethany *will save my beloved spouse*? There are three possibilities: the fact that I will save a person either weighs less than, more than, or the same as the fact that I will save my beloved spouse, yet I don't see any reason to doubt my above conclusion that it weighs less.

other? How do our reasons of love and friendship stack up against our reasons of self-interest? And how do the reasons of love and friendship stack up against competing moral reasons? Do the moral reasons always win out, or do the reasons of love or friendship sometimes carry the day?

Let's take these questions in order. We said above that facts pertaining to how our actions will promote the welfare of our loved ones or friends to a certain degree, D , constitute stronger reasons than facts pertaining to how our actions will promote the welfare of strangers to the same degree, and based on this we can draw the further conclusion that facts pertaining to how our actions will promote the welfare of our loved ones or friends to degree D will constitute stronger reasons than facts pertaining to how our actions will promote the welfare of strangers to a smaller degree. But what happens when we can promote either the welfare of our loved ones or friends to degree D , or the welfare of strangers to some higher degree, $D+$? I think the answer here depends on how much of a difference there is between D and $D+$. So long as $D+$ isn't too much higher than D , then the reasons of love and friendship will still be stronger, yet if $D+$ reaches a certain level compared to D then this will no longer be true. So for example, if I face a choice between saving a stranger's life and preventing Bethany from, say, having her arms and legs broken, then I think that the fact that I will save Bethany's limbs with one option constitutes a stronger reason than the fact that I will save a stranger's life with the other option. However, if I face a choice between saving a stranger's life and preventing Bethany from getting punched, then it seems plausible to say that the fact that I will save Bethany from getting punched with one option is not a stronger reason than the fact that I will save a stranger's life with the other option. It's hard to pinpoint the threshold that $D+$ must reach relative to D before the relevant reasons of

love and friendship no longer outweigh those on the other side, but it seems clear enough that there is some threshold here.

What happens, though, if we are no longer considering person-based reasons alone? Let's say that I could spend some large chunk of money on a ridiculously expensive dinner with Fred to save our friendship, or else I could give that money to charity instead. The fact that spending the money on the dinner with Fred will save our friendship is a relationship-based reason to spend the money on the dinner, whereas the fact that giving the money to charity would do an enormous amount of good—it may even save lives—is a person-based reason to give the money to charity instead. Which of these reasons, if any, is stronger here? The answer to this may depend on the importance of my friendship with Fred. If he is my best friend, or even a really close friend, then I'm inclined to say that my reason to spend the money on a dinner with Fred does indeed outweigh the person-based reason to give to charity. Similarly, if Fred were my romantic partner rather than a mere friend, then I'm even more inclined to say that my reason to spend the money on a dinner with Fred outweighs the person-based reason to give to charity. If, however, Fred is not that close of a friend, then saving the friendship probably isn't worth forgoing the good that giving to charity would do—this good indeed seems to be worth the sacrifice of my friendship with Fred. In that case it seems right to say that the person-based reason to give to charity does indeed win out. Generally speaking, then, I'm inclined to say that the relationship-based reasons of love and friendship will outweigh competing, stranger-based reasons when the relationships in question reach a certain level of importance in the participants' lives, although it's again hard to pinpoint where this threshold lies.

Next we have the question of how the reasons of love and friendship stack up against those of self-interest. Let's say that reasons of self-interest are facts pertaining to how our actions

will benefit us in some way. Although our reasons of self-interest will often—if not usually—favor the same actions as our reasons of love and friendship do, there will surely be times when they conflict, and it's those times that we're interested in here. Let's start with a rather extreme scenario in which I could save Bethany from lethal harm by sacrificing my own life to save her. If I take action then *I will save Bethany's life*, whereas if I take no action *I will preserve my own life*. So here I face competing, person-based reasons—one of love and another of self-interest. Which reason, if any, wins out? Honestly, I'm not sure. If the personal cost of saving Bethany were not so large, then my reason to take action would certainly win out, but as the personal cost goes up and approaches the maximal cost—my own life—it becomes less clear that my reason to take action wins out. Furthermore, the quality of our potential future lives may be relevant here as well. If only one of us is dying from a terminal disease, then it may be more rational to preserve the life of whichever one of us will have more life to live. However, if we ignore the complicating factor of quality-of-life, then I believe that we can at least say that, when the lives of our loved ones or friends are at stake, then the personal costs that we might incur from saving those lives must be pretty high before we can even entertain the possibility that reasons of self-interest will outweigh those of love or friendship.

What happens, though, when we lower the stakes? Let's return to the scenario where Bethany is at the airport expecting me to give her a ride home. I could spend the time that it would take to pick her up doing things that would benefit me particularly, or I can pick her up and make her happy rather than angry. Here I again face competing, person-based reasons: the fact that one option will make Bethany happy instead of angry is a reason of love, while the fact that taking the other option will benefit me particularly is a reason of self-interest. Now in this case it seems pretty obvious that, unless the benefit that I will accrue from failing to pick her up

is substantial or important enough, my person-based reason of love will trump my reason of self-interest. If my reason of self-interest is just, say, that the failure to pick Bethany up will allow me to continue watching a fun TV show or secure some other trivial benefit, then my reason of love will definitely win out. If, however, I'm under a deadline to finish a seminar paper, and staying home is the only way that I can finish on time, then my reason of self-interest arguably wins out here. Generally speaking, then, it seems that which reasons win out depend on what all is at stake, and that the benefits of acting for our own gain relative to its costs for our loved ones or friends must reach a certain threshold before reasons of self-interest will outweigh the reasons of love or friendship.

This brings us to the final question of how the reasons of love and friendship stack up against competing moral reasons, and the answer here of course depends on the nature of these reasons. If there are again special moral duties of love and friendship that constitute moral reasons for those bound by them, then those reasons can compete with our other reason-constituting moral duties, and this brings up the particular issue of how these competing duties stack up against each other. This issue, however, will be dealt with in the next chapter, so we will bracket it for now. Also, when the reasons that we've been discussing—person-based and relationship-based reasons plus those of self-interest—count as moral reasons, then we can simply reiterate our conclusions from earlier. Perhaps the only interesting question left to address here, then, is how our non-moral reasons of love and friendship stack up against competing moral reasons. When these reasons conflict, do the moral reasons always win out, or do the non-moral reasons sometimes carry the day?

Although some people may think that the moral reasons will always win, I believe that this is too high-minded.⁷⁵ Now of course the moral reasons will win out sometimes (if not most of the time). If, for instance, *my friend Fred wants me go around with him smashing car windows with baseball bats for kicks*, then even though this fact constitutes a non-moral reason for me to join him, the fact that *I would respect rather than violate my moral duties to (or the property rights of) other people by not joining him* would be a moral reason that seems to trump the former non-moral reason to join him.⁷⁶ But let's say that, instead of wanting to go around smashing car windows, *Fred wants to go to a baseball game with me*, which I again take to be a non-moral reason to go with Fred. Now I could do volunteer work for some charity organization or go to the airport and offer strangers rides home rather than go with Fred, and the good that I would do in each case seems to constitute moral reasons to perform one of these alternative actions rather than go with Fred. However, these moral reasons do not win out this time. Since it seems reasonable to give Fred what he wants by going to the game with him despite the good I could do by volunteering for charity, it seems that my non-moral reason to go with Fred is at least as weighty as the moral reason to volunteer instead for charity. And, since it seems patently unreasonable to go to the airport and offer strangers rides home rather than give Fred what he wants by going to the game with him, in this case it looks like my non-moral reason to go with Fred indeed outweighs my moral reason to go to the airport and offer strangers rides home.

⁷⁵ Smith (2017) appears to be such a person insofar as he maintains that respect-based reasons (which are moral) will always trump desire-based reasons (which will include reasons of love and friendship), and that Cocking and Kennett (2000) are mistaken to think that the reasons arising out of friendship may override moral considerations.

⁷⁶ On my account, then, the moral reason here outweighs the non-moral reason rather than blocking its formation. Generally speaking, I don't think that there are moral constraints on what can count as reasons of love or friendship. *Any* fact that specifies how our actions would or might advance the interests of our loved ones or friends counts as such a reason regardless of the morality of those actions, which is *not* to say that any such fact counts as a decisive or sufficient reason.

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I've addressed our first set of issues pertaining to the normative significance of love and friendship. Beginning with the related issues of whether love and friendship generate normative reasons for us that we otherwise wouldn't have and, if so, what kinds of reasons they are, after bracketing the possibility of love and friendship generating special associative duties that constitute practical reasons for those bound by them, I appealed to both intuitively compelling examples and to philosophical theories of practical reasons to argue that love and friendship do indeed generate at least person-based reasons and relationship-based reasons. Then I argued that some of these reasons are moral ones while others are non-moral ones, and that at least some of these reasons are "special" in the sense that they're had only by insiders to loving relationships and friendships while some are "special" in the sense that they're weightier compared to other reasons with comparable contents.

Next I addressed the issue of how these reasons of love and friendship stack up against other reasons that we may have by arguing for multiple claims. After reiterating the previous point that at least some reasons of love and friendship—namely, person-based reasons—are weightier compared to other person-based reasons (i.e., stranger-based reasons) with comparable contents and inferring from this that those person-based reasons of love and friendship will be weightier than stranger-based reasons with less significant contents, I first argued that, when these stranger-based reasons actually have more significant content compared to that of the person-based reasons of love and friendship, then which set of reasons wins out depends on how much more significant the contents of the former reasons are compared to that of the latter. If the difference is not too high, then the person-based reasons of love and friendship will still be

weightier than the competing stranger-based reasons; however, if the difference reaches a certain level, then the latter reasons will end up outweighing the former instead. Second, I argued that, when we are instead comparing relationship-based reasons of love and friendship to stranger-based reasons, then which set of reasons wins out depends on how important the relevant relationships are for the insiders to them: if they reach a certain level of importance then the relationship-based reasons of love and friendship will outweigh competing stranger-based reasons, but the opposite will be true if the relevant relationships have not reached this level of importance. Third, I argued that even though the reasons of love and friendship will typically dovetail with the reasons of self-interest, these reasons sometimes conflict, and which set of reasons wins depends again on what is at stake. Our reasons of love and friendship are more likely to win as the costs of self-interested behavior for our loved ones and friends go up, and the higher this cost becomes, the more significant the personal benefits of imposing these costs on our loved ones and friends must be before our reasons of self-interest can even hope to outweigh our reasons of love and friendship. As these personal benefits become less significant in their own right and less significant relative to the costs to our loved ones and friends, the less likely they are to outweigh our reasons of love and friendship. Our reasons of self-interest are more likely to win, however, when the benefits of acting for our own gain are very important ones or when those benefits are more significant than the costs of our so acting for our loved ones or friends. Fourth I argued that, when our reasons of love and friendship—whether moral or non-moral—conflict with moral reasons, sometimes the former win out and sometimes the latter do.

Chapter 5: The Duties of Love and Friendship

Now that I've addressed those issues pertaining to the reasons of love and friendship, we can move on to our final set of issues pertaining to the duties of love and friendship. Do love and friendship generate duties? If they do, what are their grounds? Are these duties irreducible, *sui generis* ones grounded in love or friendship itself, or can they be reduced to other kinds of duties that can be found outside of love and friendship (e.g., promissory duties)? How do these duties stack up against others that we have? I will answer these questions in this final chapter by defending a realist, non-reductionist theory of the duties of love and friendship according to which loving relationships and friendships generate irreducible, *sui generis*, special moral duties that are directly grounded in the augmented moral statuses that our beloveds and friends have for us in virtue of our special relationships with them. As part of my defense of this position, I will address three prominent objections to the reality of these duties: the voluntarist objection, the distributive objection, and the respect objection.

Before I defend my position here, however, I must make some clarifying remarks about the duties of love and friendship with which I'm concerned. First of all, these duties are *pro tanto* duties, which we may think of as presumptive or defeasible duties in virtue of certain facts, as opposed to *all-things-considered* duties, which are our actual duties that get determined by the *pro tanto* duties in force.⁷⁷ To illustrate, suppose that you are standing on the shore of a body of

⁷⁷ This distinction goes back at least to W. D. Ross (1930), although he used the terms "prima facie duties" and "conditional duties" to refer to what I'm calling "pro tanto duties." This distinction is also similar to the one we drew in chapter 3 between *pro tanto* and *all-things-considered justification*. Just like *all-things-considered* justification, which is determined by all of the normative reasons in play, *all-things-considered* duties are determined by all of the *pro tanto* duties in play. Also, just like *pro tanto* justification, which is defeasible and provided by reason-constituting facts regardless of any others in play, *pro tanto* duties are defeasible and hold in virtue of certain facts. These distinctions, however, are importantly different, as one concerns justification and the other concerns duty. One's justification for something may be grounded in one's duty to do it, and if duties necessarily constitute

water, a stranger is drowning in the water, and you can save them with very little risk to your own welfare. Because you can save them at a reasonable personal cost, you have a pro tanto duty to save them: it is presumptively your duty to save them because you can save them at a reasonable personal cost, but it may or may not be your actual duty to save them because there may or may not be a set of other morally relevant facts that ground a pro tanto duty to do something else. If there is no set of such facts and thus no competing pro tanto duty, then it is your actual duty, not just your pro tanto duty, to save the stranger. However, if there is such a set—say, your friend is in the water drowning as well and you can save them at a reasonable personal cost—then you’ll have a pro tanto duty to save your friend instead as well as a pro tanto duty to save the stranger, yet you won’t have actual duties to save both if you can only save one (you can’t have duties to do the impossible). Rather, you’ll have an actual duty to save one of them, and which one you have a duty to save will depend on the relative strengths of the two pro tanto duties in force. If the pro tanto duty to save your friend is stronger, then you’ll have an actual duty to save your friend rather than the stranger, but if the pro tanto duty to save the stranger is stronger, then you’ll have an actual duty to save the stranger. And if neither is stronger—if they have equal weight—then you’ll have an actual duty to save one of them, although it doesn’t matter which one.

Second, in addition to being pro tanto duties, the duties that I’m discussing here are *moral* duties. Wallace (2012) claims that the duties of love are non-moral duties, but I must confess that I find the concept of a non-moral duty to be an incoherent one. I understand that there are non-moral *requirements* of practical reason, of etiquette, of gender, of sports, and so on,

reasons then duty cannot fail to provide justification; but even so moral justification need not come from duty, and so there can be moral justification without duty. There can also be non-moral justification for things, and this justification would certainly not come from duty. Justification can, and more often than not does, obtain without duty.

but there are no duties or obligations other than moral ones. In other words, the concept of duty, as I understand it, is the concept of a moral category.⁷⁸ Third, I am not merely concerned here with duties to loved ones and friends. Since I'm interested in addressing the normative significance of love and friendship, I'm interested here in whether love and friendship generate special pro tanto moral duties to loved ones and friends that we otherwise wouldn't have and, if so, what it is that grounds these duties and how these duties stack up against others.

Fourth and last, these duties are “special” ones compared to our “general,” “natural,” or “universal” duties (Annis 1987; Scheffler 1994, 1997b; Jeske 1998, 2008; Seglow 2013; Jeske 2014), which are our duties to all other people in virtue of their personhood, such as not harming them without a just cause or respecting their basic rights (e.g., their rights to life and bodily control).⁷⁹ In general, special duties are those duties that we owe to only some other people in virtue of something beyond their mere personhood. These special duties include *promissory duties* to those to whom we have made valid promises, *contractual duties* to those with whom we have entered into valid contracts, *reparative or compensatory duties* to those persons that we have wronged, and *duties of gratitude* to our benefactors.⁸⁰ Also included within this category of special duties are what are standardly referred to as *associative duties*, which are duties that we have to our associates—our friends, romantic partners, family members, and possibly our fellow community members, teammates, and citizens—in virtue of the special relationships that we have with such people. Clearly, then, our question about whether love and friendship generate

⁷⁸ Perhaps Wallace is using “duty” and “requirement” interchangeably. If so, then his claim that the duties of love are non-moral duties just amounts to the claim that the requirements of love are non-moral requirements, which is not an incoherent claim. It is, however, still false because, even if there are non-moral requirements of love, some of these requirements will be moral ones. Or so I shall be arguing soon.

⁷⁹ We could—and, I think, should—expand this conception of general duties by construing them as duties to other sentient creatures in virtue of their sentience. For the sake of simplicity, though, I will stick with the typical construal of such duties as those to all other people in virtue of their personhood.

⁸⁰ I would also include *parental duties* to those that we have created or adopted as a distinct category of special duties here.

special moral duties is the same as whether love and friendship generate associative duties, which again are a sub-class of special duties as defined in relation to our general duties. And yet the associative duties of love and friendship may not just be “special” in relation to our general duties. While they certainly are special in relation to our general duties in the sense that, unlike our general duties to others, which are grounded in their mere personhood, our associative duties of love and friendship are grounded in the special relationships that we have with loved ones and friends, they may be “special” in relation to our other special duties as well. Indeed, as we shall see, on my non-reductionist account of the associative duties of love and friendship most of these duties are just weightier and more stringent—and therefore special—versions of the many different kinds of non-associative duties just enumerated. Accordingly, on my non-reductionist account the associative duties of love and friendship are not just special in relation to our general duties by being grounded in something additional to others’ personhood (i.e., loving relationships and friendships). Many of them are doubly special by being special in this first sense as well as special in relation to other duties that, too, are special in this first sense. I will explain this in more detail in the next section as part of my defense of the basic thesis that love and friendship do indeed give rise to associative duties. To this defense I now turn.

5.1 Are There Associative Duties of Love and Friendship?

The answer to this question will, unsurprisingly, be controversial. Moral skeptics who deny the existence of genuine moral duties will of course deny that there are associative duties of love and friendship, yet one need not be a moral skeptic to hold such a position with respect to these associative duties. Under certain moral theories, for example, there will be no associative

duties of love and friendship because, while we have moral duties, there are no special duties at all. Perhaps the clearest instance of such a theory is an act-consequentialist theory claiming that our only duties are to do whatever has the best consequences. While love and friendship may have an impact on what would have the best consequences and thus on what we have duties to do, they will not themselves generate any associative duties to our loved ones or friends because all duties are of the same kind—namely, duties to do what has the best consequences. To illustrate, let's look at an Act-Utilitarian account of our duties to loved ones and friends.

According to Act-Utilitarianism, whatever maximizes overall happiness in the world has the best consequences, and so our duties are to maximize happiness. If we then have duties to do things for our loved ones and friends, which we surely do if we have duties at all, then we will have these duties just in case doing these things for our loved ones or friends maximizes overall happiness in the world. If we have the duty to generally privilege our loved ones or friends, then this again is because, and only because, such privileging maximizes overall happiness in the world. These duties to loved ones and friends, however, are no different than any other duty, as all duties are duties to maximize happiness. Under this theory, then, there seem to be no special pro tanto duties. In fact, I don't think that there are any pro tanto duties at all, but rather only actual duties to maximize collective happiness, where each person's happiness is of equal moral value, because an action's promotion of some amount of happiness, *H*, does not seem to make it pro tanto optimal. In any event, since there are no special pro tanto duties, or even pro tanto duties at all, under Act-Utilitarianism, then there cannot be associative duties to loved ones and friends, which again are special pro tanto duties to loved ones and friends in virtue of our special relationships with them.

Although the challenges of moral skepticism and act-consequentialism call for more extensive treatment than what I can give them here, I will push back against these positions by defending the associative duties of love and friendship by offering some defeasible phenomenological considerations in support of them along with refutations to three objections to the reality of these duties.⁸¹ Such a defense will be far from conclusive or comprehensive, but it will provide a nice tentative case for the basic thesis that love and friendship do indeed generate associative duties to loved ones and friends.

One line of support for the reality of genuine moral duties in general is the experience that many of us have of being bound by them (Brink 1989), and we can extend this line of support to the associative duties of love and friendship. That is, we experience being bound by genuine moral duties to others, where some of these are special associative duties to loved ones and friends in virtue of our special relationships with them. More specifically, in virtue of our loving relationships and friendships we seem to have duties to our loved ones and friends that are (1) more extensive than our duties to others as well as (2) both graver and more stringent than comparable duties to others (Scheffler 1994; Lazar 2013, 2014).⁸² So for instance, we have no duties to give strangers rides home from the airport even when it would not be very burdensome to provide these services to strangers, yet we do seem to have such duties to our loved ones and friends when it would not be very burdensome for us to help them out. In this way our associative duties to loved ones and friends seem more extensive than our duties to others.

Furthermore, when we have the same duties to loved ones and friends as we do to strangers, the former seem “graver” than the latter in the sense that *the former seem to have more weight than the latter*. So for example, we have general duties not to kill innocent people, but in

⁸¹ For some good push back against act-consequentialism’s treatment of associative duties, see Brink (2001), who argues that act-consequentialism cannot adequately capture the scope or the weight of associative duties.

⁸² The useful concepts of “gravity” and “stringency,” which I will explain shortly, come from Lazar (2013, 2014).

a situation where you must foreseeably yet unintentionally kill an innocent fellow civilian in a self-defensive attack against foreign aggression, and the choice of whom to kill is between a loved one or a friend and a stranger, your pro tanto duty not to kill your loved one or friend is weightier than your pro tanto duty not to kill the stranger because you must fulfill the former instead of the latter to avoid wrongdoing. Similarly, we have general duties to save people from drowning when it would not be too risky for us to do so, but in our familiar situation in which you can only save one person from drowning and your choice is between a loved one or a friend and a stranger, your pro tanto duty to save your loved one or friend outweighs your pro tanto duty to save the stranger because, again, you must fulfill the former instead of the latter to avoid wrongdoing. The same also applies to our promissory, contractual, compensatory, and gratitude duties: they weigh more when owed to loved ones or to friends compared to when they're owed to strangers. Generally speaking, then, our loving relationships and friendships appear to “amplify” the weight of the general and special duties that we owe to loved ones and friends in the sense that these duties seem to weigh more than—and thus outweigh—the same duties owed to strangers.

Finally, when we have the same duties to loved ones and friends as we do to strangers, the former seem to be “more stringent” than the latter in the sense that *the former seem harder to disable by the personal costs of fulfillment*. Returning to one of our previous examples, we have general duties to save people from drowning when it would not be too risky to do so, but what counts as “too risky” here will be easier to meet if the person needing to be saved is a stranger than if the person is a loved one or a friend. In other words, our pro tanto duty to save a loved one or friend will require more in terms of cost or risk to ourselves before such a duty is disabled compared to the amount required to disable the same pro tanto duty to a stranger. Just as they do

with the weight of duties, then, our loving relationships and friendships appear to amplify the stringency of the general and special duties that we owe to loved ones and friends in the sense that these duties are harder to disable by the personal costs of fulfillment compared to comparable duties owed to strangers.

While subject to defeat, these phenomenological considerations at least create a reasonable presumption in favor of the basic thesis that love and friendship do indeed give rise to associative duties. However, there are at least three objections to this claim that must be refuted in order to preserve our reasonable presumption here: the voluntarist objection, the distributive objection, and the respect objection. In the next three subsections I will explain and address these three objections in order to preserve our reasonable presumption in favor of—and complete my provisional case for—the basic thesis that love and friendship generate associative duties.

5.2 The Voluntarist Objection to the Associative Duties of Love and Friendship

Let's begin with the voluntarist objection.⁸³ According to this objection, we can only have special duties by voluntarily incurring them; we cannot have special duties that are imposed on us involuntarily. Consequently, we cannot have associative duties in virtue of special relationships that are imposed on us involuntarily because such duties would be involuntarily imposed on us if we had them in virtue of these relationships. Yet as we saw in chapter 2, love and friendship are not things that are completely under our voluntary control, but are rather things that ultimately “just happen to us.” So, since loving relationships require mutual love, where the latter is ultimately something outside of the parties' control insofar as it “just happens to them,” loving relationships are involuntarily to at least some degree. And as something that

⁸³ This objection is discussed in Scheffler (1994, 1997a, 1997b), Brink (2001), and Seglow (2013).

ultimately “just happens to people,” friendship is involuntarily to at least some degree as well. Insofar as loving relationships and friendships are involuntary, then, they do not generate associative duties because such duties would be involuntarily incurred.

While seemingly plausible, this objection fails to demonstrate the non-existence of the associative duties of love and friendship for at least two reasons. First of all, this objection is based on the voluntarist principle that we can only have special duties voluntarily, yet this principle is highly problematic. It’s only clearly true if we restrict “special duties” to promissory, contractual, compensatory, and gratitude duties, which are obviously duties that we can only have voluntarily. And yet the fact that these four kinds of duty can only be had voluntarily does not imply that associative duties can only be had voluntarily, so this clearly true interpretation of the voluntarist principle cannot animate the voluntarist objection. We must instead understand the voluntarist principle to assert that *special duties as such can only be had voluntarily*, yet this interpretation of the principle, unlike the previous one, is highly problematic. Why should we grant it? Why should we believe that people must have special duties voluntarily? At this point the principle lacks a rationale (Brink 2001) and therefore begs the question. To avoid this, one may try to motivate the principle with the following argument. Special duties, qua duties, are burdensome, and it would be unfair for us to be saddled with those burdensome duties involuntarily. The unfairness of involuntarily incurred special duties, then, makes them morally problematic, and it seems plausible to suppose that we cannot have morally problematic moral duties. It therefore seems plausible to suppose that we cannot have special duties involuntarily, but can only have them voluntarily.

This rationale of the voluntarist principle, however, is itself problematic. For even if we grant the plausible claims that (a) we cannot have morally problematic moral duties and that (b)

unfair moral duties are morally problematic duties, this rationale, if successful, would prove too much. In particular, if special duties, qua duties, are burdensome, then our general duties, qua duties, are also burdensome. Furthermore, if it would be unfair for us to be saddled with special duties involuntarily, then it would also be unfair for us to be saddled with general duties involuntarily. Now we clearly don't have any way—other than suicide perhaps—to avoid our general duties, such as our minimal samaritan duties to do what we can to meet the basic needs of others at a reasonable personal cost. We have them involuntarily. It therefore follows that our general duties, including our minimal samaritan duties, are unfairly imposed on us, which makes them morally problematic duties that we then don't really have. If this rationale for the voluntarist principle were successful, then, it would prove that we don't really have any general duties, which I take to prove too much. Surely we at least have minimal samaritan duties as well as many other general moral duties (e.g., respecting liberty that doesn't harm others). We have them involuntarily, yet not unfairly (Scheffler 1997b). But if it isn't unfair for us to be saddled with these general duties involuntarily, then it isn't necessarily unfair for us to be saddled with special duties involuntarily. Put differently, if we can have general duties involuntarily yet fairly, then we can have other duties, such as special associative duties, involuntarily yet fairly. This undermines the above rationale for the voluntarist principle, which means that the principle still lacks an adequate rationale.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ An alternative rationale may explicitly appeal to the importance of human autonomy, but I must admit that I don't know how the importance of human autonomy is supposed to support the idea that duties can only be voluntarily incurred. Our autonomy—our capacity for self-direction or self-governance or self-determination—is morally important in the sense that it entitles us to what I shall call *the respect of non-interference*, which is a kind of respect that's at least constituted by not interfering with this capacity's free operation so long our exercise of this capacity isn't running afoul of any moral constraints or obligations. Yet even if we assume that we cannot have or probably don't have morally problematic moral duties, involuntarily incurred duties would not be morally problematic—and therefore existentially suspect—by failing to give us the respect of non-interference because they aren't agents interfering with our autonomy. In order for human autonomy to ground a voluntarist principle, then, it must be morally important for us in some other sense that has yet to be articulated and shown to ground such a principle.

Second, even if we were to grant the voluntarist principle that special duties as such can only be had voluntarily, the voluntarist objection still fails because loving relationships and friendships are sufficiently voluntary to generate associative duties (Jeske 1998; Brink 2001). Though it's true that loving relationships and friendships are somewhat outside of our control insofar as they involve psychological realities that we cannot straightforwardly will, it's not at all true that these relationships are completely outside of our control such that they aren't voluntarily generated. The actions and interactions that largely make up these relationships are voluntary, and even their psychological realities that we cannot straightforwardly will are voluntarily generated in so far as we voluntarily put ourselves into the situations where these realities will be created or sustained. So for example, Noel and I are friends, and I certainly did not straightforwardly choose to love or have appraisal respect for him, which are, on my syndrome account of friendship, required psychological realities of us being friends. However, I have chosen to spend enough time interacting with Noel for these psychological realities to develop (and continue) as a result of such interaction. The interactions that we've had were voluntarily entered into, and even though I couldn't straightforwardly choose to love him or have appraisal respect for him, I still chose the interactions that led to me loving and having appraisal respect for him. Our friendship, then, may be partly outside of our control because the requisite psychological realities are not just things that we can straightforwardly choose to happen, but since these realities were formed as a result of voluntary choice, our friendship itself was still voluntarily generated, and so our friendship is sufficiently voluntary to generate associative duties. Generalizing, then, we can say that even though parts of our loving relationships and friendships are somewhat outside of our control, the relationships are still generated by voluntary choices, and so they're sufficiently voluntary to generate special associative duties.

Now at this point, one may be tempted to cite certain cases of loving relationships between parents and young children as counterexamples to this second response to the voluntarist objection. After all, the younger the children, the less choice they've had when it comes to interacting with their parents in ways that will create loving parent-child relationships, and so any associative duties that the children may have toward their parents would be involuntarily incurred. However, the younger the children, the less likely they are to be moral agents with moral duties, and so even if younger children will have less choice to interact with their parents, they will not be saddled with involuntary associative duties if they are too young to have any moral duties at all. In order for a parent-child relationship of mutual love to constitute a genuine counterexample to this response to the voluntarist objection, the child involved must be a sufficiently developed moral agent with moral duties that has, at the same time, found herself with associative duties toward her parent that were not generated by her voluntary choices. Such a counterexample, however, may not be so easy to find given that the likelihood of choice when it comes to interacting with one's parents in ways that create or sustain a loving relationship is going to be positively correlated with the development of duty-bearing moral agency. That is, when there is no duty-bearing moral agency, there will be very little to no choice when it comes to interacting with one's parents in the relevant ways, and so there can't be any involuntarily incurred associative duties even though there is little to no voluntary choice. Conversely, as this duty-bearing moral agency develops, the possibility of choice when it comes to interacting with one's parents in the relevant ways at some point emerges and continues, after this point, to increase in likelihood. In any event, no such counterexample has yet been offered, and so the second response to the voluntarist objection remains undefeated. (And even if it could be

defeated, this wouldn't matter much because the voluntarist objection still fails in light of the first response to it that I offered.)

5.3 The Distributive Objection to the Associative Duties of Love and Friendship

Next we have the distributive objection, which will receive the most treatment of the three given its complexity and strength.⁸⁵ As the name suggests, this objection is animated by a concern for distributive justice (i.e., a fair distribution of burdens and benefits). In order to understand this objection, we must first return to our earlier characterization of the associative duties of love and friendship as those duties to loved ones and friends in virtue of our loving relationships and friendships that are, on the one hand, more extensive than our duties to others, and on the other are both graver and more stringent than comparable duties to others. Now these associative duties give our loved ones and friends, respectively, more extensive and stronger moral claims on us compared to the moral claims that strangers have on us, which are correspondingly less extensive and weaker.⁸⁶ To briefly illustrate, let's return again to two familiar situations. In one situation I have a *pro tanto* duty to pick Bethany up from the airport, whereas I have no such *pro tanto* duty to strangers. Now corresponding to this asymmetry is an asymmetry in moral claims: strangers have no moral claim to a ride home from the airport, yet Bethany does have such a claim. She therefore has more extensive moral claims compared to strangers in virtue of our romantic partnership. In the other situation, you can only save one

⁸⁵ This objection is discussed in Scheffler (1994, 1997a, 1997b, 1999), Brink (2001), Lazar (2009), and Seglow (2013).

⁸⁶ I am not sure if these "moral claims" here should be understood as *claim-rights*. One reason for thinking that they should not be understood as *claim-rights* is that, if they were such rights, then this would effectively render all moral duties as duties of justice, but these do not seem to be the only duties that we have. To be sure, some of our moral claims on others are based on our moral rights, but the moral claims that we generally have on others are probably better understood as correlates of the duties that they have to us, where these duties could be, yet need not be, grounded in our rights.

person from drowning and your choice is between a loved one or a friend and a stranger, yet your pro tanto duty to save your loved one or friend (1) outweighs your pro tanto duty to save the stranger and (2) is harder to disable by the personal costs of fulfillment. Because the pro tanto duty to save your loved one or friend outweighs the pro tanto duty to save the stranger and is harder to disable by the personal costs of fulfillment, the stranger has a weaker moral claim to your rescue compared to your loved one or friend.

There is, then, an asymmetry in moral claims that associative duties to loved ones and friends would generate: they would give our loved ones and friends stronger and more extensive moral claims on us compared to the moral claims that strangers have on us. Now, since these moral claims are resources—namely, *normative* resources (Scheffler 1997a)—associative duties would effectively create an unequal distribution of these resources, and it's this inequality in normative resources that animate the distributive objection. In particular, this objection questions the fairness of this distributional inequality, but the exact way that it does so is open to two different interpretations.⁸⁷

One interpretation is a *prioritarian* one. Since loving relationships and friendships are valuable things, the insiders of these relationships benefit largely just by having them. At the same time, however, the outsiders to these relationships do not benefit from these relationships, and so the insiders of these relationships have an advantage over the outsiders in this regard.⁸⁸ And yet, as we just saw in the previous paragraph, these relationships are supposed to give rise to duties that the insiders have to each other that, in turn, give these insiders more extensive and stronger moral claims on each other compared to the moral claims that outsiders have on them. Overall, then, the insiders of these special relationships are not only better off than outsiders in

⁸⁷ The two slightly different interpretations of the distributive objection that I'm about to discuss come from Scheffler's many essays discussing this objection.

⁸⁸ I borrow the labels "insiders" and "outsiders" from Brink (2001).

virtue of participating in the relationships themselves, but they receive extra benefits in the form of more extensive and stronger moral claims on one another that make them better off than the outsiders *even more*, whose claims on the insiders are accordingly less extensive and weaker. But this, according to this first interpretation of the distributive objection, is unfair to outsiders because it effectively makes them, the worse-off, even more worse off: since they are already disadvantaged compared to insiders just by being outsiders, they are disadvantaged *even more* compared to insiders by having their moral claims on insiders weakened and rendered less extensive due to the more extensive and stronger moral claims that the insiders have on one another.

The other interpretation of the distributive objection is more straightforwardly egalitarian in spirit. According to Scheffler (1994), the distributive objection is animated by the ideal of equality, or the idea that all people are of equal moral value and importance. So, as matter of justice or fairness, people are to be given equal moral concern, where this in turn means that there should be, for any given bearer of moral duties to others, an equal distribution of the corresponding moral claims on the moral concern of that duty-bearer. Clearly, however, the distributional inequalities that arise from associative duties contravene this ideal of equality, and so they appear to be unfair. Though I am skeptical of this ideal of equality as a fundamental moral truth,⁸⁹ there is surely at least a justified presumption in favor of human equality: people are to be given equal moral concern, and therefore have equal moral claims on others, unless there is a legitimate moral explanation that demonstrates otherwise. As such, there is at least a presumptive unfairness in the distributional inequalities of moral claims that result from the

⁸⁹ My skepticism is based, on the one hand, on obvious counterexamples: the Hitlers and sociopaths of the world are not as morally valuable or important as virtuous people. On the other hand, the prospects of finding a rationale for even the weaker claim that all people have equal *basic or unearned* moral worth, which is compatible with denying that all people have equal moral worth overall, are rather dim. For discussions of these dim prospects see Arneson (1999) and (2015).

associative duties of love and friendship, as there has been no legitimate moral explanation provided as of yet that shows such inequalities to be fair.

The upshot of the distributive objection in either case, then, is that the distributional inequalities in moral claims that necessarily result from the associative duties of love and friendship appear to be unfair, and therefore unjust; and so the distributive objection purports to locate a systematic tension between distributive justice and the associative duties of love and friendship. This surely makes these alleged duties morally problematic duties, and so, given again the plausible assumption that we cannot have morally problematic moral duties, it follows that we don't really have the associative duties of love and friendship.⁹⁰

Although apparently quite forceful, this objection also fails to show the non-existence of the associative duties of love and friendship. For starters, this objection is partly based on the implicit assumption—which in turn is based on the Schefflerian idea that moral claims are a kind of resource—that the moral claims that we have on each other corresponding to the moral duties that we have to each other are part of the *currency* of distributive justice, such that any inequality in the distribution of these claims constitutes at least a presumptive distributional unfairness. It is, however, quite dubious—if not downright mistaken—to treat the moral claims that we have on each other as a resource to be included in the currency of distributive justice (Lazar 2009). After all, even if these moral claims can be thought of as “normative resources,” they are not actual resources that we can straightforwardly use to better our lives in some way. We can of course press our moral claims on others, and this *may* result in an improvement in our lot, but

⁹⁰ I have yet to see the idea that we cannot have morally problematic duties explicitly articulated as a key premise of both the voluntarist and distributive objections, but I don't see how they can be objections to the reality of associative duties of any stripe without such a premise. At any rate, I take it that both of these objections rely on such a key premise. Also, I'm obviously interpreting the distributive objection as aiming to show that we don't actually have associative duties of love and friendship rather than aiming to show that such duties are real yet systematically overridden by considerations of distributive justice. I interpret the objection in this manner because it's supposed to be an objection to *the duties themselves* rather than *our acting in accordance with such duties*.

whether this happens is due to the actions of those upon which we press our claims rather than our own actions. We cannot straightforwardly use our moral claims upon others as we could use freedoms, opportunities, wealth, income, or other plausible candidates for the currency of distributive justice.

Moreover, I know of no prominent philosophical theory of distributive justice that includes moral claims on others as part of the currency of distributive justice. Let's start with John Rawls' (1971) "justice as fairness" theory, which is surely the most prominent theory of justice here. It effectively claims that certain liberties, opportunities to secure positions of social and economic advantage, wealth, income, and the social bases of self-respect constitute the currency of distributive justice. By contrast, Robert Nozick's (1974) "entitlement theory," which is arguably the most famous rival to Rawls' theory, effectively claims that material possessions over which we can have property rights constitute the currency of distributive justice. And similarly, Ronald Dworkin's (1981) "equality of resources" theory claims that material resources constitute this currency. Then there's the so-called "capabilities approach" to the currency of distributive justice fathered by Amartya Sen and adopted by well-known theorists such as Elizabeth Anderson (1999) and Martha Nussbaum (2003), which holds that capabilities—roughly, actual abilities to be or do certain valuable things—are the currency of distributive justice. And despite the differences among these theories, they all effectively agree that moral claims on others are not part of the currency of distributive justice. Now these theories may all be mistaken about the currency of distributive justice, but the fact that all of these plausible, well-known, influential theories converge on the same negative verdict for including moral claims in the currency of distributive justice casts serious doubt on the already dubious assumption made by the distributive objection that moral claims are part of this currency.

Though we may not need to say anything more to defeat the distributive objection, there are at least two other ways of refuting it. One way comes from David Brink (2001), and the basic idea of his rebuttal is that the distributive objection focuses only on the moral benefits that insiders receive from associative duties and mistakenly ignores the moral burdens that such duties place on insiders as well. More specifically, associative duties place extra moral demands on insiders compared to general duties because (1) associative duties are more extensive than general duties and (2) associative duties are more stringent than general duties in the sense that the former are harder to disable by the personal costs of fulfillment than the latter are. Accordingly, even if insiders to loving relationships and friendships gain moral benefits in the form of more extensive and stronger moral claims on each other compared to the claims of outsiders on them, insiders are also saddled with the increased moral burdens of having extra moral demands placed on them. These moral burdens, then, balance out the moral benefits, and so the latter does not result in a net moral advantage for the insiders and thus does not result in an unfair moral advantage over outsiders. Put differently, once we factor in the moral burdens of the associative duties of love and friendship, which are burdens that insiders have and outsiders don't, then there will be no tension between these duties and distributive justice because, even if there is an unequal distribution of moral benefits (or moral claims) between insiders and outsiders that favor the insiders, there's also an unequal distribution of moral burdens (or moral duties) between insiders and outsiders that favors the outsiders, which when combined result in neither the insiders or outsiders being the better off in terms of their share of moral burdens and benefits.

Alternatively, even if we were to grant that insiders do have a net advantage over outsiders and thus that there is an overall inequality between insiders and outsiders (insiders,

after all, have the benefits of the relationships themselves as well), we can still defeat the distributive objection to the associative duties of love and friendship with the following rebuttal. First notice that the more extensive and stronger moral claims that insiders to loving relationships and friendships are supposed to have on each other compared to the moral claims that outsiders have on these insiders must arise from the associative duties of love and friendship, which in turn would necessarily arise from the loving relationships and friendships themselves. If there are associative duties of love and friendship, then, the moral claims that necessarily arise from them along with the relationships that necessarily give rise to the duties (and thus to the claims as well) are metaphysically packaged goods such that they cannot be metaphysically disentangled from one another. Let's call these packages of goods the "associative packages" of love and friendship.

Notice next that these associative packages are not appropriate objects to which anyone could be entitled as a matter of justice: no one is so entitled to a loving relationship or a friendship with another person, so no one could be so entitled to any associative package that's constituted by such a relationship with another person and the moral claims that come with it.⁹¹

⁹¹ One possible challenge to this claim is the idea that children are entitled, as a matter of justice, to loving relationships with their parents—or at least some parental figure—and thus to the associative packages that are constituted by these relationships and the moral claims that come with them. This idea, however, is not clearly true, as children are not clearly entitled to full-blown loving relationships even if they are entitled to things that would occur within such relationships, such as having their basic needs met. Moreover, if some child's parents die, yet they are entitled to loving relationships with a parental figure, then it would follow that they suffer an injustice if no one steps up and enters into a loving relationship with them. But even if it is sad and unfortunate for no one to step up here, it's not clearly an *injustice*. Furthermore, suppose that children are entitled to loving relationships with their parents or some parental figures, such that these relationships—and thus the moral claims that come with them—constitute part of the currency of distributive justice. Even so, we would still generally not be entitled to loving relationships or friendships with other people, and so the argument I'm making here would still generally hold up. Also, any unjust distribution of these relationships and their associated moral claims among children would not result from an inherent tension between the associative duties generated by these relationships and distributive justice. There would be no such tension because these duties do not necessarily generate distributional inequality in the moral claims that children have on their loving parental figures. If all parents survived and were appropriately wired so that they try to enter into loving relationships with their children and succeed in doing so, then there would be no injustice in the distribution of these relationships or the moral claims upon parents that come with them. Any injustice here would be the result of other factors, such as parents dying (or leaving) and no one stepping in to take their place, or parents not being sufficiently equipped to have loving relationships with their children. The upshot

At most one could be entitled to *a sufficient level of opportunity to secure the associative packages of love or friendship*. And yet, even if this were so—and it's not clear that it is because it's not clear that such opportunity is part of the currency of distributive justice—the associative duties of love and friendship would no longer be existentially suspect because they'd no longer be morally problematic. For if we were entitled only to sufficient levels of opportunity to secure the associative packages of love and friendship, then any unfair inequalities in the moral claims of these packages would really be generated by the unfair or unjust conditions that led to them—namely, the unjust distribution of opportunities to secure the associative packages of love and friendship—rather than the associative duties of love and friendship. Fair initial conditions with respect to the opportunity to secure the associative packages of love and friendship will generate no unfair inequalities in the distribution of these packages and thus no unfair inequalities in the distribution of moral claims. This ultimately reveals the lack of a systematic or inherent tension between distributive justice and the associative duties of love and friendship and thereby undermines the charge that these duties are morally problematic ones.

5.4 The Respect Objection to the Associative Duties of Love and Friendship

This brings us to the respect objection.⁹² Suppose we have two white supremacists that are friends or romantic partners only because they're white people that share a passion for white supremacy and that spend a healthy amount of time together talking the white supremacy talk and treating non-whites as such with disrespect. Would these people owe special associative

here, then, is that this challenge either rests on a false premise about children being entitled to loving relationships, in which case it fails, or else its premise is true, in which case I would only need to reformulate my argument in order to get the same result that there's no inherent tension between distributive justice and the associative duties of love and friendship.

⁹² This objection is introduced in Seglow (2013).

duties to each other? It may not seem like it given that such duties would presumably be morally problematic due to the deplorable basis and contents of the special relationships that would generate them. But if there wouldn't be associative duties in *these* cases, then why would there be such duties in other cases? If we have good reason to doubt that there'd be associative duties in cases of love or friendship where the relationships are based on or involve severe failures of respect toward other people, then we have good reason to doubt that there are associative duties of love and friendship at all.

Like the other two objections, this one does not provide sufficient grounds for doubting or rejecting the existence of the associative duties of love and friendship. At most this objection provides good grounds for believing that there are no associative duties of love or friendship in some cases and thus that love and friendship per se do not generate associative duties. Even so, however, there can still be associative duties of love and friendship in other cases—namely, those in which the relationships are not based in severe failures of disrespect toward other people. In fact, I see no reason at this point to think that there cannot be moral constraints on the kinds of loving relationships or friendships that can generate associative duties; indeed, this objection suggests that there are such constraints (namely, that these relationships must have morally acceptable grounds before they can generate associative duties).⁹³

Furthermore, this objection does not even provide sufficient grounds to believe that there are no associative duties of love or friendship in cases where the relevant relationships are based

⁹³ Further support for this comes from the fact that there are moral constraints on duty-generating promises and agreements. A promise to the KKK to work toward the purification of the white race, for instance, does not generate a promissory duty to work toward this despicable goal. And agreeing to murder an innocent person in exchange for a healthy amount of money does not generate a contractual duty to murder. Making promises or entering contracts of moral disrespect do not generate promissory or contractual duties, but this doesn't at all suggest that there are no promissory or contractual duties. Rather, it only goes to show that there are moral constraints on the kinds of promises or agreements that can generate special promissory or contractual duties. At most, then, the respect objection shows that there are analogous moral constraints on the kinds of special relationships that can generate associative duties.

on severe failures of moral respect toward others. Though it's true that certain loving relationships and friendships may be partly grounded in morally disrespectful attitudes toward others, it's not at all clear that this implies that they cannot generate associative duties because such duties would be morally problematic. It may seem plausible to think that these duties would be problematic because of the morally problematic relationships that generate them, but we can't reject compensatory duties as morally problematic ones just because the conditions that generate them are morally problematic (such duties aren't morally problematic despite the morally problematic conditions that generate them). In fact, these duties demonstrate that we cannot infer that duties would be morally problematic from the fact that those duties would be generated by morally problematic conditions, which means that we cannot infer that the associative duties of love and friendship would be morally problematic from the fact that the relevant relationships are morally problematic.

At this point, however, one may think that the associative duties of love and friendship in cases where the relevant relationships are partly grounded in severe failures of moral respect toward others would still be morally problematic—and thus actually non-existent—based on the following kind of reasoning. Let's return to our familiar scenario in which two people are drowning in the water, and there's a person on the shore who can save either of the two people, but not both, at a reasonable personal cost. Let's also say that one of the drowning people is a friend or a loved one of the person on the shore, while the other drowning person is a stranger. Now as we've seen, the person on the shore has a pro tanto duty to save her friend or loved one that's stronger (i.e., graver and more stringent) than her pro tanto duty to save the stranger precisely because of the difference in their statuses (one person is a friend/loved one while the other is a stranger). But now let's suppose further that the person on the shore and her

friend/loved one are both white supremacists, while the other drowning person does not have morally objectionable attitudes toward any group of people. Does the person on the shore still have a stronger pro tanto duty to save her friend or loved one over the stranger? If the person on the shore has associative duties to her fellow white supremacist friends or loved ones, then she must still have a stronger pro tanto duty to save her friend or loved one over the stranger, yet this doesn't seem right precisely because of the difference in the moral characters of the people drowning. In fact, given this difference, it seems that the person on the shore actually has a stronger pro tanto duty to save the stranger over the friend or loved one.

Although there's much truth to this new line of reasoning, it still does not show that there are no associative duties of love and friendship in those cases where the relevant relationships are partly based in failures of moral respect. For in the very complicated case in question, we can grant *both* that the person on the shore has a pro tanto duty to save her friend or loved one over the stranger precisely because of the difference in their statuses as well as a pro tanto duty to save the stranger over the friend or loved one precisely because of the difference in their moral characters. That is, because one person is a friend or loved one while the other is a stranger, the former person has a stronger claim to rescue. At the same time, however, because the other person has a much better moral character than the friend or the loved one, she has a stronger claim to rescue. In fact, given how much of a difference there is in moral character between the drowning parties, I'm inclined to think that it's more morally important, all-things-considered, to save the stranger over the friend or loved one, and so we can still get the overall verdict of this case correct while granting that there are still associative duties that the white supremacists owe one another. What we generally have to remember about these associative duties is that they're pro tanto duties that may be overridden by other pro tanto duties, and that, in cases of associative

duties between white supremacists or other morally rotten individuals, these duties may be quite likely to be overridden by competing pro tanto duties. We therefore need not think that the associative duties of love and friendship in the cases at issue here will morally require morally reprehensible people to privilege each other over others.

In the end, then, none of these three objections to the associative duties of love and friendship succeed, and so the reasonable presumption in favor of the basic thesis that love and friendship generate associative duties remains undefeated. We shall therefore proceed on this presumption and inquire next into the grounds of these associative duties.

5.5 The Grounds of the Associative Duties of Love and Friendship

Following terminology from Scheffler (1997b) and Wallace (2012), we can separate those who believe in the associative duties of love and friendship into *reductionists* and *non-reductionists* with respect to the grounds of such duties. According to reductionists, the associative duties of love and friendship can effectively be reduced to some other kind of duty. So for example, Annis (1987) reconstructs the foundation of friendship as mutual voluntary pledging, which amounts to reconstructing the formation of friendship as the result of mutual promises made between the parties. The associative duties of friendship under this reconstruction, then, would be grounded in voluntary promises and would therefore be promissory duties. And we could of course extend this kind of reconstruction to loving relationships, which would make the associative duties of both love and friendship into promissory duties. Alternatively, one could maintain that the associative duties of love and friendship are really just contractual duties or, instead, are just duties to meet the expectations

that you've knowingly and intentionally led others to have about your behavior.⁹⁴ Generally speaking, then, reductionists maintain that the associative duties of love and friendship, while genuine *pro tanto* special duties, are nevertheless reducible to other kinds of special duties that can be found outside of loving relationships and friendships.

By contrast, non-reductionists deny that the associative duties of love and friendship can be reduced to some other kind of special duty and instead maintain that these duties are *sui generis*, irreducible special duties. Yet there is still considerable disagreement among non-reductionists with respect to the exact grounds of such duties. According to Samuel Scheffler (1997b), who is arguably the original non-reductionist here, such duties are grounded in loving relationships and friendships that we have net reason to value.⁹⁵ Similarly, Diane Jeske (1998, 2008, 2017) believes that the associative duties of love and friendship are grounded in intimate loving relationships and friendships. According to David Brink (2001), certain interpersonal psychological relations obtaining between insiders to special relationships ground associative duties in the same way that certain intrapersonal psychological relations that ground our persistence as persons over time ground the demands of prudence. However, according to Simon Keller (2006, 2013) and Jonathan Seglow (2013), the associative duties of love and friendship are grounded in the special goods that only the insiders to these relationships can provide each other. And, as I understand Seth Lazar's (2014) non-reductionism, the associative duties of love and friendship are grounded in the fact that the actions demanded by the duties are appropriate responses to the valuable relationships that we share with our loved ones and friends. And last there is my view briefly described at the beginning of this chapter, which is the most similar to

⁹⁴ Jeske (2014) discusses, though does not endorse, these kinds of reductionism. And similarly, Wallace (2012) discusses, though does not endorse, the latter kind of reductionism.

⁹⁵ Scheffler actually argues for the more general claim that associative duties are grounded in special relationships that we have net reason to value. It follows from this general claim, though, that the associative duties of love and friendship are grounded in the relevant kinds of relationships that we have net reason to value.

Jeske's view. Like Jeske, I think that intimate loving relationships and friendships ground the associative duties thereof, but unlike her view, which seems to ground such duties directly in these relationships, my view grounds such duties directly in the agent-relatively augmented moral statuses that loved ones and friends have in virtue of our special relationships with them. On my view, then, our loving relationships and friendships indirectly ground the associative duties of love and friendship by directly grounding the augmented moral statuses of our loved ones and friends, which in turn directly grounds the associative duties of love and friendship. In the remainder of this subsection I will motivate my view by leveling criticisms against the reductionist views and the other non-reductionist views that do not get any traction on my view.⁹⁶

The reductionist views of the associative duties of love and friendship briefly described above are problematic for at least four reasons. First of all, they're counterintuitive insofar as the associative duties of love and friendship, like all associative duties, seem to be fundamentally different from the other kinds of special duties to which reductionists seek to reduce them.⁹⁷ Second, they're problematic because loving relationships and friendships are not actually generated by simple, discrete actions in the way that promissory, contractual, or expectation obligations are generated by voluntary promises, agreements, or expectation-generating actions (Jeske 1998). Though loving relationships and friendships are generated in some sense by

⁹⁶ For Jeske, there is no deeper story to tell about how or why intimate loving relationships and friendships generate the associative duties thereof. Just like promises, which directly and brutally generate pro tanto duties to keep them, loving relationships and friendships directly and brutally generate associative duties. My view slightly diverges from this by claiming that (a) it's the agent-relatively augmented moral statuses of loved ones and friends in virtue of our intimate relationships with them that generate the associative duties of love and friendship, and that (b) there is no deeper story to tell about these duties. Now this lack of a deeper story here may sound unsatisfying, but as I will essentially argue later on my story here avoids the problems with its rivals, which gives it the strongest claim to truth despite the fact that it goes no deeper than it does.

⁹⁷ Seglow (2013) appears to level this first criticism against reductionism when he claims that it's at odds with the phenomenology of moral experience, while Wallace (2012) appears to level this same criticism by claiming that reductionism is at odds with the "normative appearances" of things.

voluntary choices, we've seen that they are really generated by a complex mix of choice and fortune, which is not how other special duties are generated. Given the different way that loving relationships and friendships are generated, then, it would be a mistake to assimilate the associative duties of these relationships to other kinds of special duties.

Third, these reductionist views cannot capture the gravity of our associative duties of love and friendship (Bazargan-Forward, forthcoming). Suppose, for example, that these associative duties are really just promissory duties in disguise. My associative duty to, say, protect my spouse Bethany from harm would then be a promissory duty to protect her from harm. But now suppose that I have promised two strangers that I would protect them from harm such that I now have promissory duties to them both to protect them from harm. If I then face a runaway trolley situation where Bethany is on one track and the two strangers on are on the other and I get to decide which track the trolley is going to head down, I have to decide to keep my promise to Bethany or to the two strangers. If my associative duty to Bethany is just a promissory duty in disguise, then surely my promissory duties to the two strangers would collectively outweigh the same promissory duty to Bethany given that each of those two duties seems equivalent to my duty to Bethany, yet this does not seem right—my associative duty to protect Bethany from harm seems to outweigh my promissory duties to the strangers.⁹⁸ And something similar is true if we

⁹⁸ Bazargan-Forward offers a different set of cases to make this point against reductionism. Suppose that you can either save your daughter or three strangers from starvation at a reasonable personal cost. If associative duties were promissory duties, then your associative duty to save your daughter would be a promissory duty to save her, and if so then it would not outweigh your general duties to save the strangers instead. One can see this by looking at a different case where you can either save a stranger that you've promised to save or three strangers to which you've made no such promise. In this case your general duties to the three strangers would outweigh your promissory duty to save the other stranger. The same would then be true of your associative duty to your daughter given that it's a promissory duty, yet this seems wrong: your associative duty to save your daughter outweighs your general duties to save the strangers instead. Although I agree with the point that these cases are trying to make, I've chosen not to rely on these cases because I'm not sure if they really demonstrate reductionism's inability to capture the gravity of associative duties. The main problem is that they presume that a promissory duty to save a stranger would not outweigh general duties to save three other strangers, yet it's not entirely clear that this is true. In fact, if it's not true, then the reductionist could flip these cases on their head in favor of reductionism by arguing that (a) a promissory

say instead that the associative duties of love and friendship are just contractual duties or duties of expectation in disguise. If I'm a bodyguard getting paid to protect some family from harm and I again face a runaway trolley situation where I have to choose whether the trolley will crash into Bethany or the family I'm paid to protect and thereby expected to protect, then if my associative duty to protect Bethany is just a contractual or expectation duty in disguise, then again my contractual or expectation duties to protect the family members would outweigh my contractual or expectation duty to protect Bethany. Either result, however, seems wrong: my associative duty to protect my beloved spouse would outweigh my contractual or expectation duties to the family.

Fourth, it's not clear how these reductionist views can account for the fact that our promissory, contractual, and expectation obligations to our loved ones and friends are special—i.e., graver and more stringent—versions of those very obligations. So for example, when we make promises to our loved ones or friends, our corresponding obligations to keep those promises are graver and more stringent compared to the obligations that we would have to strangers for making those same promises. But how can this be if associative duties to loved ones and friends are just promissory duties in disguise? How do the promises that I make to loved ones and friends carry more moral significance than those made to strangers? If associative duties are just promissory duties in disguise, our loved ones and friends are those that we have special associative duties to just because we've made implicit promises to them that generate these duties, and it's hard to see how *this* would give our explicit promises to these individuals more moral significance than the same promises to strangers to which we've made no implicit promises.

duty to save the stranger does outweigh the general duties to save the three other strangers, and therefore (b) your associative duty to save your daughter, as an analogous promissory duty, does so as well, which is the right result.

Next let's look at the non-reductionist views, and let's begin with Keller's (2006, 2013) "special goods" view along with Seglow's (2013) very similar "relationship goods" view. According to the special-goods view, the insiders to special relationships can provide goods to their fellow insiders that outsiders cannot provide. It is good, for example, for a stranger to help Jill meet her basic needs, but it's even better if Jill's friend or loved one helps her meet those same basic needs. It is good for me to give strangers rides home from the airport, but it's even better if friends or loved ones take those same strangers home instead. Generally speaking, then, when our friends and loved ones do beneficial things for us, it has more value than if strangers did those same beneficial things for us. This is at least one sense in which our loved ones and friends can provide "special" goods for us. Also, there are arguably certain benefits that only our friends and loved ones can provide. As an illustrative example, consider someone who wants to go have fun at a concert but will not have fun unless she goes with someone to the show. Chances are she will not have the fun time that she is after with just any old person; instead, she will probably need to go with a friend or perhaps a loved one in order to have a good time. In this case, then, it is only the person's friends or loved ones that can provide the benefit that the person is after here, and this is another sense in which our loved ones and friends can provide "special" goods for us.

Furthermore, according to the special-goods view, it is the provision of special goods that ground our associative duties of love and friendship: it is because we can provide special goods to our loved ones or friends by doing certain things that we have associative duties to do those things. So if, say, I have an associative duty to pick up Bethany from the airport, then it's because *my* picking her up has more value than anyone else picking her up. In other words, my picking her up constitutes a special good, one that no one else can provide, and this is why I have

an associative duty to pick her up from the airport. Also, if I have a pro tanto associative duty to rescue Bethany from drowning that's weightier than my pro tanto general duty to rescue a stranger instead, this is because the value of me rescuing Bethany is higher than the value of me rescuing the stranger instead. In other words, the good of me rescuing Bethany is a special good, and this is why I have a special associative duty to rescue her over the stranger.

The relationship-goods view, by contrast, maintains that the insiders to special relationships can co-produce and co-enjoy certain goods that, as the name of the theory suggests, can only be so produced by the insiders to such relationships. Only two friends, for instance, can co-produce the shared experiences of friendship, which are goods that can only be enjoyed within the special relationships of friendships. Friends can also co-produce the good of mutual concern, but such a good can be co-produced by insiders to loving relationships of many kinds as well. And it is the unique ability of insiders to co-produce these kinds of goods that ground their associative duties to one another. That is, it's because we can produce or sustain certain relationship goods with certain actions that we have associative duties to perform those actions. So for example, Bethany and I have associative duties to meet each other's basic needs, and we have these duties to perform the requisite actions because they produce or sustain relationship goods (such as, perhaps, mutual concern and intimacy). Very much like the special-goods view, then, the relationship-goods view holds that special goods that can only be produced within relationships ground associative duties such that we have such duties to do certain things because those things result in special goods.

Both of these views, however, run into some serious problems. For starters, the relationship-goods view is based on the misguided idea that associative duties are only positive duties to associates that go beyond what we owe people in general, which is an

oversimplification of such duties (Scheffler 1994). Though we surely do have such positive associative duties, some of our associative duties, as we've seen, are just graver and more stringent versions of our general duties, and some of these duties are negative ones (i.e., not to kill unjustly). Furthermore, both views ground associative duties in the realization of goodness, yet this is problematic because it's not at all clear that the mere realization of goodness—even special goodness—can give us a duty to do something. Friends can co-produce the relationship good of friendship experiences, but are we morally obligated to have such experiences? It doesn't seem like it even though they would be relationship goods. Likewise, it would be a special good for many people if Lady Gaga came and cut the turkey at Thanksgiving even though she isn't obligated to do this for anyone. Some duties may realize special goods, but this probably isn't why they're duties.

Another problem with these two views, as Jeske (2014, 2015) points out, is that they threaten to collapse into consequentialism: if the realization of special goods is what grounds duty, then wouldn't the most of it, impartially construed, ground duty? It certainly seems like it, but this would deliver the wrong verdict in certain cases where one should still privilege their loved ones or friends over strangers even though that wouldn't realize the most in terms of special goods. By way of illustration, suppose that you can help save your loved one from drowning or you can help another person save two of their loved ones from drowning.⁹⁹ If the realization of special goods is what grounds duty, then it seems as if we'd have a duty to help the other person save two of their loved ones rather than save our own loved one because that would realize the most in terms of special goods. But surely we have an associative duty to save our own loved one and let the strangers fend for themselves, one that outweighs any duty we may have to help save the strangers from drowning instead.

⁹⁹ This case comes from Jeske and Fumerton (1997).

Finally, two more problems with these views are that they threaten to (a) obligate us to do what we can to enter into loving relationships or friendships and (b) strip these relationships of their moral significance. If relationship goods or other special goods are the grounds of associative duties such that we have these duties to perform certain actions because those actions realize or sustain relationship goods or other special goods, then two problematic things appear to follow. First of all, if we aren't in a loving relationship or friendship with someone but could co-produce relationship goods with that person or provide that person with special goods if we were in such a relationship with them, then we would surely be obligated to try to enter into such a relationship with that person because doing so is the first step in co-producing relationship goods with them or providing them with special goods, which we are obligated to do under the two theories in question. However, it is surely demanding too much of us to obligate us to try to enter into loving relationships or friendships with other people. Given their intimacy, their demands, and their potential psychological costs, they are not the kind of things that we could be required to try to enter into on pain of moral failure. Second, if we can co-produce relationship goods with someone or provide them with special goods, then it doesn't seem to matter if we are currently in the kind of relationship with them that would make the realization of these goods imminently possible. That is, if the realization of relationship goods or other special goods is what grounds associative duties such that our ability to realize these goods with certain actions is what obligates us to perform those actions, then it is our ability to realize such goods, rather than being in the kinds of relationships that make the realization of such goods imminently possible, that has moral significance for us. The relevant kinds of relationships are still necessary for realizing relationship goods or other special goods, but they no longer have moral significance in the sense that *they* no longer generate special moral duties.

Next let's look at Scheffler's (1997b) view, which maintains that the associative duties of love and friendship are grounded in loving relationships and friendships that we have net reason to non-instrumentally value because, more generally, associative duties are grounded in relationships that we have net reason to so value. The problem with this view, as Arneson (2003) and Jeske (2014) point out, is that it doesn't seem like relationships that we have net reason to non-instrumentally value per se generate associative duties. Arneson provides the counterexample of collegueship, while Jeske provides the counterexample of a book club: we presumably have net reason to value our relationships with other colleagues or the other members of a book club, but we don't have special associative duties to these other people just because we're colleagues or members of the same book club. Such counterexamples thus suggest that having net reason to value loving relationships and friendships is not the reason why they generate associative duties even if we do, in fact, have net reason to value such relationships (and surely we do). Of course, one may object to these counterexamples by claiming that the relationships in question *do* generate associative duties that are not quite as strong as the associative duties of love and friendship, but even if it's somewhat plausible to think this true in the colleague case, it seems rather implausible to think that I have associative duties to people just because we happen to be in the same book club. We might be *permitted* to privilege our fellow book club members in virtue of our participation in the same club, but it seems a bit far-fetched to think that we are *required* to do so on pain of moral failure.

Now let's look at Brink's (2001) view, which appeals to a psychological account of personal identity and the demands of prudence to analogously ground the associative duties of love and friendship. Since (1) the demands of prudence—such as that to be especially concerned about one's own welfare whether present or future—bind individual persons as such and (2) a

person's personal identity over time consists in certain psychological connections obtaining between her earlier and later selves, especially deliberative ones, it follows that (3) these psychological connections ground the demands of prudence. But if, as Brink argues, the same kind of psychological connections that obtain between our current and future selves also obtain between the insiders of loving relationships and friendships, then we should show special concern for our loved ones and friends because of the psychological connections that we have to them just as we should show special concern for our future selves because of the psychological connections that we have to them. Moral demands to show special concern for loved ones and friends are thus grounded in the same kind of psychological connections that ground prudential demands to show special concern for our future selves.

Despite its ingenuity, this view faces some problems. If we take seriously the intriguing suggestion that the same kind of psychological connections that ground the intrapersonal demands of prudence obtain between insiders to loving relationships and friendships and thereby ground analogous interpersonal demands, two problems emerge. One is that this suggestion appears to have some problematic first-order moral implications. For besides grounding the demands of prudence, the psychological connections that make someone one and the same person over time will likewise ground moral permissions to put one's future self at certain risks or even do certain things to oneself. So for example, it's permissible for me to make my future self bear the costs of my eating Popeyes for dinner or for going on a bender tonight that I wouldn't be able to make other people bear for me if I could do so. It's also permissible for me to physically hurt myself in certain ways if I decide to do so. However, if the same kind of psychological connections that make me one and the same person over time and thereby ground such moral permissions obtain between insiders to loving relationships and friendships, then it

seems that it would be permissible after all for me to make my loved ones and friends bear certain costs for me or even to hurt them in the same ways that I can permissibly hurt myself.¹⁰⁰

The other problem is that, if the same kind of psychological connections that ground the intrapersonal demands of prudence obtain between insiders to loving relationships and friendships and thereby ground analogous interpersonal demands, the following dilemma arises. On the one hand, if we accept that the psychological connections obtaining between someone's current and future selves that make her one and the same person over time ground the demands of prudence, then those same connections obtaining between that person and her loved ones or friends would give rise to more demands of prudence rather than moral demands. We therefore wouldn't have associative duties to our loved ones and friends; we'd only have prudential requirements to be partial toward them in the same way that we have such requirements to be partial toward ourselves. On the other hand, if we accept that the psychological connections obtaining between us and our loved ones or friends ground special moral duties toward them, then those same psychological connections obtaining between our current and future selves would ground special moral duties toward ourselves. It is highly doubtful, however, that we have any duties to ourselves, let alone special ones. As Arneson (2003) convincingly argues, it doesn't seem appropriate to morally criticize someone for failing to meet their special duties to themselves by not privileging themselves over others as they should privilege their loved ones and friends over others, yet this would be appropriate if we had special duties to ourselves just as we have special duties to our loved ones and friends. It may be morally permissible to privilege

¹⁰⁰ Similar problems emerge when we consider the moral significance of freely making promises. Though we're obligated to keep our freely made promises to others, especially to our loved ones and friends, we surely aren't obligated to keep our promises to ourselves (assuming we can make such promises in the first place). And yet if the same kind of psychological connections that make us the same persons over time and thereby grant us moral permissions to break promises to ourselves obtain between insiders to loving relationships and friendships, then it seems that we would likewise be permitted to break our promises to loved ones and friends rather than having special associative duties to keep these promises.

oneself over strangers as one should privilege their loved ones and friends over strangers, but it is not morally obligatory to do so.

Next we have Lazar's (2014) non-reductionist view of the grounds of associative duties, which is based on what he calls "The Appropriate Response View" of ethical reasoning (henceforth ARV). According to ARV, to act wrongly is not, as maximizing-teleological views maintain, to fail to maximize agent-neutral value, but rather to fail to respond appropriately to specific reason-giving properties. And with regard to associative duties, Lazar's ARV-account of them maintains that we have such duties to do certain things because doing those things are appropriate responses to the valuable properties of the special valuable relationships that ground them. This ARV-account therefore implies that we have associative duties of love and friendship because the things that those duties require us to do are appropriate responses to the valuable properties of loving relationships and friendships.¹⁰¹

Despite this account's apparent plausibility, it faces an unresolved Euthyphro dilemma: Do we have duties to do certain things because those things are appropriate responses to other things, or are certain actions appropriate responses because they are our duties? It may be plausible to maintain that appropriateness grounds duty, but this would not be more plausible than maintaining instead that duty grounds appropriateness, and we have no reason at this point to agree with the ARV-account that the first possibility is the right one. We need such a reason,

¹⁰¹ Lazar's view is actually a bit hard to nail down. For besides the relationship-based interpretation of his ARV-account of associative duties that I've just discussed, Lazar also says some things to suggest a person-based interpretation that maintains instead that we have associative duties to do certain things because those things are appropriate responses to the persons that we share special relationships with in virtue of their moral statuses. He also suggests, when explaining the amplification of associative duties, that loyalty and betrayal are key factors involved in the grounding of such duties: we have associative duties to do certain things or refrain from certain things in part because those things, respectively, constitute loyal actions or actions of betrayal. To be honest I'm not sure how all of this is supposed to fit together, so I'm going to ignore these complications and continue to use the relationship-based interpretation of Lazar's ARV-account of associative duties as stated above. The criticisms that I'm going to level against this interpretation apply to the person-based interpretation as well, so I see no need to worry about my narrow focus on the relationship-based interpretation.

however, to agree with how the ARV-account would resolve this dilemma before we can get on board with the account itself. Moreover, I think that we have a very good reason to resolve the dilemma in favor of duty grounding appropriateness rather than appropriateness grounding duty: supererogatory action is surely an appropriate response to situations even though it, by definition, is not action that we are ever duty-bound to perform, yet if appropriateness grounded duty, as the ARV-account implies, then the supererogatory would, incoherently, be obligatory.

This leaves Jeske's view (1998, 2008, 2017), which grounds associative duties directly in intimate relationships: it is just because we have loving relationships and friendships with others that we have associative duties to them. However, one potential problem with Jeske's view is that the importance or value of individuals is missing from the grounds of associative duties (Keller 2013): it is simply intimate relationships that directly ground associative duties, where this includes no mention of the value or importance of the insiders to the relationships. This objection, however, suggests that Jeske's view just needs some modification rather than wholesale rejection, and this leads us to my view, which can be understood as Jeske's view suitably modified: loving relationships and friendships augment the moral statuses of our loved ones and friends for us, and it is their agent-relatively augmented moral statuses that directly ground our associative duties to them. Let me spell out my non-reductionist view in a bit more detail.

Some (e.g., Keller 2013) proclaim it a basic moral truth that everyone matters morally and that nobody matters more than anyone else. The distributive objection to associative duties that we earlier refuted is animated by the idea that everyone has equal moral value or importance. Now I think that this is a bit too strong, and that such an egalitarian idea needs qualification before it can be considered a basic moral truth. Rather than claiming that everyone

has equal moral value or importance overall, we should say, as we did in chapter 2, that everyone *qua person* has equal moral value or importance. That is, insofar as we are persons, we possess equal moral value or importance such that (a) our welfares and wills should not be run roughshod over in the pursuit of personal ends or otherwise disrespected and (b) our welfares should be promoted so long as the costs of doing so aren't unreasonable.

Unlike its ancestor, this modified egalitarian claim grants us equal moral value or importance only to the extent that we are people, and this leaves room for factors other than our mere personhood to have an impact on our overall moral value or importance. So for example, this modified egalitarian claim is compatible with the attractive idea from chapter 2 that, even though everyone *qua person* has equal moral value or importance, people have unequal moral value or importance in virtue of differences in their moral characters. In other words, even though, in virtue of our personhood, our welfares and wills shouldn't be run roughshod over in the pursuit of personal ends or otherwise disrespected and our welfares should be promoted so long as the costs of doing so aren't unreasonable, it is more important to satisfy these general moral goals for the virtuous rather than for the vicious. This is all that it means for the virtuous to have more moral value than, or be more morally important than, the vicious, which in turn is just another way of saying that the virtuous have *augmented moral statuses* compared to the vicious. It's also important to recognize that this status augmentation is an *agent-neutral* one: the virtuous have a higher moral status compared to the vicious on everyone's moral scorecard rather than on just some people's moral scorecards.

Now this picture of how the virtuous have agent-neutrally augmented moral statuses is going to serve as my model for the analogous idea that loved ones and friends have agent-relatively augmented moral statuses that lies at the heart of my non-reductionist view of the

associative duties of love and friendship. So just as some people can have augmented moral statuses in virtue of their virtuous moral characters despite the fact that all people, qua people, have equal moral value or importance, some people can also, despite this egalitarian fact, have augmented moral statuses in virtue of the loving relationships and friendships that they share with others. That is, even though, in virtue of our personhood, our welfares and wills shouldn't be run roughshod over in the pursuit of personal ends or otherwise disrespected and our welfares should be promoted so long as the costs of doing so aren't unreasonable, it is more important to satisfy these general moral goals not just for the virtuous rather than for the vicious, but also for our loved ones and friends rather than for strangers. However, unlike the agent-neutral moral-status augmentation of the virtuous, the moral-status augmentation of a loved one or a friend is *agent-relative*: loved ones and friends have a higher moral status only for those who share loving relationships or friendships with them. And it is this heightened moral status that grounds the associative duties of love and friendship: because of this heightened status, we not only have duties to loved ones and friends that we don't have to strangers, but any general, promissory, contractual, compensatory, or gratitude duties become graver and more stringent compared to these same duties that we owe to strangers.¹⁰²

Before we move on to our last issue of the weight of the associative duties of love and friendship, it's worth noting how my non-reductionist view avoids the problems that the other non-reductionist views face. It doesn't, for instance, ground associative duties in the realization of special goods, so it avoids the problems that plague the special-goods view and the relationship-goods view. It also avoids the problem with Scheffler's view because it grounds

¹⁰² Just to be clear, I'm not grounding the associative duties of love and friendship in the *psychological* fact that loved ones and friends tend to have a heightened moral status for us. I'm rather grounding these duties in the *normative* fact that loved ones and friends objectively have a heightened moral status for us regardless of our subjective views about their moral statuses.

associative duties in augmented moral statuses rather than in relationships that we have net reason to value, which may not generate augmented moral statuses. My view also avoids the problems with Brink's view and the problems with Lazar's view because, respectively, it doesn't try to ground associative duties in the same psychological connections that ground the demands of prudence nor does it rely on the controversial and seemingly false idea that appropriateness grounds duty. And my view also avoids Keller's objection to Jeske's view while staying true to the basic spirit of Jeske's view by directly grounding associative duties in the augmented moral value or importance of our loved ones and friends, which they have in virtue of the intimate relationships that we share with them. Insofar as my non-reductionist view avoids these problems that plague its rivals, then, it seems to be the most promising version of the non-reductionist lot.¹⁰³

5.6 The Weight of the Associative Duties of Love and Friendship

This brings us to our final issue of how the associative duties of love and friendship stack up against other duties that we have. Now this issue is a rather large one that deserves more extensive treatment than what I can give it here, so I will focus on trying to establish a few general conclusions on this matter.¹⁰⁴ To begin with, since the nature of many of our associative

¹⁰³ It's also worth noting here that my view offers a unified account of the grounds of associative duties—namely, they're grounded in agent-relatively augmented moral statuses that people have in virtue of intimate relationships shared with them—that meets the consequentialist-skeptic's demand for such an account. Arneson (2003), who is such a skeptic, claims that the lack of such an account renders consequentialist skepticism of associative duties more plausible, so my non-reductionist account of the grounds of associative duties makes such skepticism less plausible.

¹⁰⁴ The conclusions that I will argue for here are in line with, and indeed expand upon, Brink's (2001) idea that our associative duties and our general duties "condition each other." It's worth noting, however, that this idea could be interpreted in two ways (and I believe that Brink has both in mind). One is that these duties "condition each other" in the sense that they function as mutual constraints on how we can discharge these duties. So for example, I have an associative duty to help Bethany reach her goals, but I also have general duties not to unjustly harm other people. These latter duties, then, constrain what I can do to discharge my associative duty to Bethany: I cannot help her

duties of love and friendship are just graver and more stringent versions of general, promissory, contractual, compensatory, and gratitude duties to strangers, we can conclude right away that associative duties of love and friendship are weightier duties compared to our duties to others when these duties have comparable contents. So when, for example, I have associative duties to help loved ones or friends along with general duties to help strangers in the same ways, my former duties will be weightier than my latter duties. Ditto for my associative duties not to unjustly harm my loved ones and friends compared to my general duties not to unjustly harm strangers in the same ways. And similarly, my associative duties to keep my promises to my loved ones and friends, to honor my contracts with them, to make reparations when I've wronged them, and to show my gratitude for what they do for me are weightier than my special duties to keep the same promises to strangers, honor comparable contracts with them, make reparations for the same wrongdoings, and show gratitude for what they do for me. Also, if we were to create an asymmetry in content by making the content of the associative duties more significant than that of the analogous general and special duties to strangers, then the associative duties will again be weightier duties. My associative duties not to unjustly harm my loved ones and friends, for example, are weightier than my general duties not to unjustly harm strangers in comparable ways, and so of course my associative duties not to unjustly impose greater harm on my loved ones and friends are weightier than my general duties not to unjustly impose lesser harm on strangers.

reach her goals by unjustly harming other people. Conversely, I have general duties to help other people meet their basic needs, but I also have an associative duty to respect Bethany's property rights. And my associative duty to Bethany likewise constrains how I can discharge my general duties to help other people meet their basic needs: I cannot do this by taking Bethany's possessions and selling them without her permission. The other sense in which these duties may "condition each other" is that they can come into conflict with each other, and sometimes our associative duties outweigh our general ones, whereas sometimes our general duties outweigh our associative ones. This latter sense obviously deals with the weight of associative duties and how they stack up against other duties that we have, which is what I'm concerned with here in this section.

Things become much more interesting and complicated, however, when we create the opposite asymmetry by making the content of our duties to strangers more significant than the content of our associative duties to loved ones and friends. My associative duties to help meet the basic needs of my loved ones and friends are weightier than my general duties to help meet the basic needs of strangers, but how do my associative duties to do less significant things for my loved ones and friends stack up to my general duties to help meet the basic needs of strangers? My associative duties to prevent unjust harm to my loved ones and friends are weightier than my general duties to prevent comparable harm to strangers, but how do my associative duties to prevent smaller harm to my loved ones and friends stack up to my general duties to prevent more harm to strangers? My associative duties to keep my promises to loved ones and friends are weightier than my special duties to keep comparable promises to strangers, but how do my associative duties to keep promises to do less significant things stack up to my promises to do more significant things for strangers?

I believe that it would be mistaken to think that our associative duties to loved ones and friends or our duties to strangers systematically outweigh the other. Associative duties do not carry lexical priority over our duties to strangers, and duties to strangers do not always outweigh our associative duties when the contents of the former are more significant than those of the latter. My associative duty to prevent Bethany from getting a paper cut, for instance, does not outweigh my general duty to prevent a stranger from being killed unjustly; the latter duty indeed outweighs the former. At the same time, however, my general duty to prevent a stranger from being killed does not outweigh all of my associative duties to prevent Bethany from non-lethal harm: my associative duty to prevent her from, say, getting beaten and raped, for example, clearly outweighs my general duties to prevent unjust lethal harm to strangers. It's hard to say

exactly when associative duties outweigh our duties to strangers or vice versa when the contents of the latter duties are more significant than that of our former duties, but we can say generally that the difference in significance here must reach a certain threshold before the duties to strangers outweigh our associative duties. The difference between a paper cut and murder is clearly enough to make our duties to prevent unjust lethal harm to strangers graver than our associative duties to prevent our loved ones and friends from getting paper cuts, but the difference between getting beaten and raped and getting murdered is not enough to make our duties to prevent unjust lethal harm to strangers graver than our associative duties to prevent our loved ones and friends from getting beaten and raped.

5.7 Conclusion

In this final chapter I've addressed our second set of issues pertaining to the normative significance of love and friendship. First I addressed the issue of whether love and friendship generate associative duties (i.e., special moral duties that we have only to our loved ones and friends in virtue of our special relationships with them). Against the moral and consequentialist skeptics I argued that they do, and in defense of this position I offered both phenomenological considerations and detailed rebuttals of the voluntarist, distributive, and respect objections to these associative duties. Next I addressed the issue of the grounds of the associative duties of love and friendship. After criticizing reductionist views and several non-reductionist views of these duties, I ultimately argued for a non-reductionist theory of these duties according to which these duties are special, irreducible moral duties that are directly grounded in the agent-relatively augmented moral statuses that our loved ones and friends have in virtue of our special

relationships with them. Last, I touched briefly on the issue of how the associative duties of love and friendship stack up to other duties that we have, and there I argued that these associative duties often—though not always—outweigh other duties that we have (especially because many of these associative duties are just weightier versions of our duties to strangers with comparable contents).

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