

Dr. Brady
Phil 337
Summer 2006

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Hinkle 220, x2036

Philosophy of Friendship
E/RS Elective Course

This course will consider philosophical discussions of the nature of friendship. The basic question of the class will be how, or whether, friendship is integral to a good life. We will also explore the intersection of friendship and the larger community in which one lives.

As an E/RS elective, this course is organized around the ethical analysis of a socially significant issue. The social significance of the theme of friendship can be found in the fact that friendship is one of the first ways we learn to look beyond ourselves to develop a concern for others. Because friendship stands at the intersection of an individual life and the life of a community, it provides a unique opportunity to explore the questions of what we owe others, and whether we owe everyone the same things. Our ethical analysis of the issue of friendship will occur through the exploration of the place of friendship in the best life.

Texts: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* VIII-IX (e-reserves)
Montaigne, "Of Friendship", "Of Cruelty" (e-reserve)
Emerson, "Self-Reliance", "Friendship"
Lewis, *The Four Loves* ("Friendship", "Charity")

Grading:

Participation	25% of course grade
Quizzes	25%
Term paper	50%

Participation: This is primarily a discussion class, which means that I expect students to be active participants in the course. Preparation for discussion requires reading the assignment at least twice, and making notes on questions or comments you have. You should also reread your class notes regularly, and be prepared to ask questions on anything we have discussed.

- In order to supplement class discussion we will use the discussion board on Blackboard. I will occasionally post questions for student response, but the primary purpose of the forum will be for you to post questions about topics that we do not discuss in class or that you would like to discuss further.
- In addition to your responsibility for daily participation, the class will be divided into groups, and each group will be responsible for guiding discussion for one week.

Quizzes: We will have five short quizzes, one at the end of each week. These will be in-class quizzes that will require you to discuss a quote from the texts we read that week.

Papers: You will write one term paper, which will be due Sept. 1, 2006. This paper will examine a debate about friendship in light of at least one of the authors we read.

Plagiarism: You will be expected to follow the policy for academic honesty as outlined in the Xavier University Catalog. Violation of this policy will result in an F on the assignment. A second violation of this policy will result in an F for the course.

- All papers will be submitted to turnitin.com, a service that checks papers against those on the web and in its database. Once your papers are submitted, they will be automatically added to the database. If you have any questions or concerns about this service, please see me.

Class Schedule

Week of :

- July 3-6 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book VIII, ch. 1-5, 8, 10, 16
Aristotle's definition of friendship – what is distinct about this kind of love?
How are friendships of pleasure and use genuine friendships?
How does Aristotle describe unequal friendship, and why does inequality between friends matter? What are the responsibilities of each party in such friendships?
- July 10-13 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book IX, ch. 3-4, 8-11
Friendship and its relation to the best life – is this account of friendship selfish?
What is the relation between friendship and self-love (and how does Aristotle define self-love)? Why do we want friends? Why can't friendship be unconditional?
- July 17-20 Montaigne: "Of Friendship", "Of Cruelty" (p. 135-144, 306-311)
Montaigne's definition of friendship – what is distinct about this kind of love?
Why are the natural connections of family or erotic love insufficient?
Why are unequal friendships impossible?
What is the difference between virtue and natural goodness, and why should we value natural goodness? How is Montaigne's friendship more like natural goodness than it is like virtue?
- July 24-27 Emerson: "Self-Reliance", "Friendship" (p. 19-32, 39-50)
Emerson's definition of friendship – what is distinct about this kind of love?
Why are personal relations a threat to friendship rather than its basis?
Why does Emerson emphasize the importance of difference in unity?
How does Emerson define self-reliance, and what are his criticisms of conformity? How is self-reliance compatible with friendship?
- July 31-Aug 3 Lewis, "Friendship", "Charity" (p. 57-72, 77-90, 116-125)
Lewis' definition of friendship – what is distinct about this kind of love?
What is the difference between companionship and friendship? Why is friendship the "least natural" of the loves?
What is the danger in the exclusiveness of friendship, and how can this exclusiveness be good despite that danger?
What is charity, and how does it complete friendship? Why can't friendship be unconditional?