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FRIENDS WITH BENEFITS:

OTHER REGARD IN EPICUREAN ETHICS

by

WILLIAM P. BAIRD

Under the Direction of Timothy O'Keefe

ABSTRACT

Friendship and hedonism are both major components of Epicureanism. I attempt to relieve the tension that seems to follow from endorsing both of these. I argue that Epicurean friendships require valuing a friend's well-being in the same way as one's own and that embarking on such friendships is what David Schmidtz terms a maieutic end – one that is achieved by taking on a new set of ends. This conception fits with other-regarding concern that is espoused throughout the Epicurean texts discussing friendship and, as I argue, remains consistent with other psychological and ethical commitments of Epicureanism.

INDEX WORDS: Epicureanism, Epicurus, Friendship, Hedonism, Ethical egoism, Maieutic ends, Other-regard, Cicero, Hellenistic ethics, Rationality, Community

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by

WILLIAM BAIRD

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Master of Arts

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May 2011

DEDICATION

To Laura, Jessica, and Jasmine. Without you I would have finished this thesis much sooner.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Friendship and hedonism are both embraced by the Epicureans. On the face of it, holding both of these as central to one's philosophy seems problematic. Generally speaking, an egoistic hedonist refers only to her own pleasure when determining her actions, and friendship is often thought to require valuing another's well-being for its own sake. In this paper I argue that such a tension is relieved within Epicureanism.

Torquatus, the Epicurean spokesperson in Cicero's *On Moral Ends*, explains that seeking out friendships is motivated by hedonistic considerations, as friendship is sought solely because the greatest pleasure for oneself will be attained by doing so. However, Torquatus also states that friends must love each other at least as much as they do themselves (*DF* I 67).[1] This gives rise to an apparent problem for Epicurean friendship – I must *love* my friend in order to attain for myself the greatest amount of pleasure. There seems to be a serious conflict between ends in such a friendship. In this thesis, I argue that the Epicurean position on friendship should be understood as follows: one decides that she ought to pursue loving friendships by way of an egoistic utility calculation, and, once she has made the decision to love her friends, a person values the pleasure of her friends for its own sake, the same way she does her own pleasure. Thus, friendships are instrumentally valuable for the pleasant life they provide, yet the well-being of friends comes to be valued for its own sake, as a means to no further end.

In chapter two of this thesis, I describe Epicureanism's take on pleasure and reason, both of which are vital to properly understanding friendships, and I describe the role of the

[1] Henceforward, references to ancient texts will follow these conventions: Cicero's *De Finibus* (On Goals) = *DF; Kyriai Doxai* (Principal Doctrines) = *KD*; *Sententiae Vaticanae* (Vatican Sayings) = *SV*; Epicurus' *Letter to Menoeceus* = *Ep. Men.*; Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* (On the Nature of Things) = *DRN*; and Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Philosophers* = DL. Translations, unless otherwise noted: *DF* – Raphael Woolf, 2001; *DRN* – Martin Ferguson Smith, 2001; *KD*, *SV*, *Ep. Men.*, and DL – Brad Inwood and L. P. Gerson, in *Hellenistic Philosophy*, 2nd ed., 1997.

community in providing the structure for such friendships. However, given the scanty remains of Epicurus' own writings, this exegesis is situated within a heavily debated area of Epicureanism,

and I appeal to David Schmidtz's work on ends in order to flesh out what I argue is the correct Epicurean position on the rationale behind choosing ends.

In the third chapter I give an overview of the philosophical debate surrounding the characterization of Epicurean friendship. There are two prominent but competing views on the topic. Julia Annas and Phillip Mitsis hold that friendship in Epicureanism is other-regarding and that this is inconsistent with commitments in Epicurean psychology and ethics. Tim O'Keefe, Eric Brown and Matthew Evans, on the other hand, hold that Epicurean friendship is purely self-regarding, and is thus consistent with the whole of Epicureanism. I argue that Epicurus actually held neither of these positions, but rather espoused the view that is wedged between them – friendship is other-regarding, and this other-regard is consistent with the rest of Epicureanism.

In chapter four I argue that the Epicureans did, in fact, hold that friends should be valued for their own sakes. I provide textual support for this conclusion from Cicero's *On Moral Ends*, and I also argue that Epicurean egoism recommends that friends be valued in this way. My argument from egoism appeals to a thought experiment to show that a community where everyone values the well-being of a friend for its own sake is the best environment for living a tranquil life, which is Epicureanism's *telos*. As such, living in a community of other-regarding friends is the end towards which Epicurean egoists should strive, and the type of friendship embraced in such a community is the one Epicurus embraced, or at least is that which he should have endorsed.

Finally, in the fifth chapter I explain how an Epicurean would come to engender other-

regarding friendships. I argue that entering into such relationships is the equivalent to pursuing what David Schmidtz terms a maieutic end. A maieutic end is one that is achieved by taking on a new set of ends.[2] In the case of a friendship, the new set of ends one must pursue includes the well-being of one's friend as a final end. With friendship understood in this way, I argue that Epicurean friendship avoids the psychological doublethink that may seem inherent in embracing a friendship where one values a friend's well-being for its own sake because doing so will further one's own interests. I argue that valuing friends for their own sakes does not undermine Epicurean hedonism and is tenable within Epicurean psychology.

2 OVERVIEW OF RELEVANT EPICUREAN TENETS

2.1 Pleasure

Epicurus believed a pleasant life is the *telos*, the end that is a means to no further end and towards which all else is a means (*DF* I 29, 42). His primary reason for holding this view was the "Cradle Argument." The Epicurean variant of this argument claims that infants immediately seek only their own pleasure. This is supposed to show that pleasure is the natural goal of life, and thus we should structure our lives around achieving our own pleasure, as babies do not hold false beliefs that could cloud their judgment of what is good.[3]

Annas believes that the Epicureans espoused the commonly accepted Aristotelian view that the *telos* is "complete," in that all of one's ends are aimed at this one final end. In fact, Annas finds fault with Epicurean ethics for holding that pleasure can serve as such a complete end, arguing that there are good parts of life that are not aimed at one's own tranquility, such as

[2] Schmidtz (1995) 61.
[3] For the Epicurean version of the Cradle Argument, see *DF* I 30 and II 30-33. O'Keefe (2010) 113-115 provides an overview of the function of the Cradle Argument in Epicureanism and how it relates to the versions put forward by other philosophical schools.

virtue.[4] However, support for attributing to Epicurus such an all-encompassing understanding of the *telos* as to require that all ends a person has are aimed at one's own pleasure is scant,[5] and it does not seem that holding pleasure to be a complete end is warranted in the least by the Cradle Argument. Thus, when discussing the *telos*, I do so with a weaker sense in mind than Annas has. On my view of Epicureanism, living a pleasant life is the *telos*, or the ultimate goal of life. I develop this understanding more clearly in the next section, but for now it suffices to note that Epicurus unequivocally held that pleasure (tranquility) is the highest good.

While Epicurus held that all pleasure is good, some pleasures are not choice-worthy, as it is sometimes necessary to choose to incur some pain with the anticipation that greater pleasure will result in the long run. Likewise, one must sometimes choose to forgo some pleasure, with the foresight that embracing this pleasure will lead to an intensely painful state (*Ep. Men*. 129). Epicurus does not explicitly distinguish between *necessary* and *unnecessary* pain, but he implies that there is such a distinction in his acknowledgment that some pains should be undertaken as a necessary means to secure greater pleasure or to avoid greater pain (*Ep. Men.* 129). These pains are what I refer to as "necessary," as they are required to reach the desired end.

Epicurus' notion of pleasure is further developed by his making two distinctions between different pleasures: kinetic and static pleasures that differ in kind, and bodily and mental pleasures that differ in degree. The following table sorts out different pleasures along these lines:

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[4] Annas (1993) 188.

[5] The main source on this point is Cicero's *On Moral Ends*, where Torquatus identifies the *telos* as that to which everything else is an end (*DF* I 29 and 42), but Cicero's account is sprinkled with his own flourishes on Epicurean doctrines. It seems quite plausible that Cicero is simply putting his own understanding in the Epicureans' mouths, perhaps incidentally, in order to clarify that the meaning of *telos* is not lost in translation from Greek to Latin, which is one of the purposes of *DF* I, according to Cicero himself (*DF* I 1).

TABLE 1.1 Types of Pleasure[6]

	Kinetic	**Static/Katastematic**
Bodily	Titillation of the senses or the process of fulfilling a bodily desire	Not being in bodily pain, including having all bodily appetites/desires fulfilled (*aponia*)
Mental	Joy of reflecting upon past, present, or future pleasures	Having confidence of being free from pain in the future, having no regrets of the past and being generally content with life (*ataraxia*)

Kinetic pleasures are those arising from 1. the titillation of the senses, such as tasting something that is pleasantly sweet, 2. being in the process of fulfilling a desire, such as being in the act of eating barley cakes to sate hunger, or 3. joyful reflection on some past, present, or future pleasure, such as remembering how good those barley cakes really were. These pleasures are active, in the sense that they involve some movement of the senses or the mind.[7] Kinetic pleasures, understood by the likes of the Cyrenaics to be hedonism's highest good, are taken by the Epicureans to be inferior to static pleasures (*Ep. Men.* 131). While valuable for their own sakes, kinetic pleasures are not to be sought with the same vigor as static pleasure. Static pleasure constitutes living pleasantly, and is thus the Epicurean *telos*.

Static pleasure is a different kind of pleasure than kinetic pleasure. Static pleasure is being in the passive state of lacking pain, and, like kinetic pleasures, static pleasures come in both bodily and mental forms. *Aponia*, or lacking bodily pain, is straightforwardly defined – one

[6] This chart is adapted from O'Keefe (2010) 117-120, which provides an overview of the Epicurean distinctions regarding pleasure, as they are put forward in *DF* I, DL X, *DRN* III, *KD* and *SV*.
[7] Epicurus believes the mind is composed of atoms, so describing it as undergoing "movement" is appropriate.

is in *aponia* when she is not presently feeling bodily pain.[8] *Aponia* is the conjunction of not having a throbbing headache, nor suffering the pangs of hunger, nor having unsatisfied bodily desires, and so on for every bodily pain. *Ataraxia*, often and appropriately translated "tranquility," is the lacking of mental pain, and this type of pleasure is not as straightforwardly defined as the others. *Ataraxia* is the lack of "regret, fear, and anxiety"[9] that arises from the conjunction of not being in distress over one's past, being confident that one will be in the state of *aponia* in the future, and being in a state of general contentment about life, which includes not fearing death or the gods. Also, where *aponia* is partially constituted by having all bodily desires fulfilled, *ataraxia* requires having all mental desires fulfilled. For "it is from desire that enmity, discord, dissension, sedition, and war is born. … Wisdom alone will free us from the onrush of appetite" (*DF* I 44, 46). To be in the optimal state of static pleasure (tranquility), one must have no unfulfilled desires and be worry-free about the present and the future. Torquatus claims that *ataraxia* is the "highest pleasure" (*DF* I 38). It is of a higher degree of pleasure than *aponia,* and, as a form of static pleasure, is more desirable than kinetic pleasures because it is the most important constituent of living pleasantly (the *telos*).

In addition to the distinction between kinetic and static pleasure, the Epicureans also distinguish between mental and bodily pleasures that differ by degree. The details of the distinction between these pleasures are difficult to parse and debatable, but a complete characterization of this distinction is not as important for my project as is the relation between mental and bodily pleasures. Torquatus claims that "mental pleasure and pain may be much greater than bodily pleasure and pain" (*DF* I 58), and Epicurus is famous for having said that the joy (kinetic mental pleasure) of reminiscing about past pleasurable discussions with a friend

[8] For the Epicureans, all pain is kinetic.
[9] O'Keefe (2010) 120.

outweighed his "unsurpassed" bodily pain on his deathbed (DL X 22). Intense mental pleasure can eclipse and neutralize one's bodily pain. Thus, one should strive to achieve mental pleasure, as having mental pleasure is essential for living pleasantly.

Understanding these different types of pleasure is necessary in order to understand Epicurean friendship. Friendship is supposed to be indispensable in the pursuit of *ataraxia.* It gives me the confidence that, in the future, my friends will help me satisfy my then-present bodily needs, and thus, in the future, I will be more likely to attain *aponia* (*DF* I 66). Friendship is good insofar as it helps me attain *ataraxia.* Confidence in my future well-being is much more important than the actual help my friends may end up providing in times of need, as Epicurus states, "We do not need utility from our friends so much as we need confidence concerning that utility" (*SV* 34). Having loyal friends is a vital component of being able to live tranquilly, and the way one comes to understand that one should seek out friends is through rational calculation regarding one's own utility.

2.2 Reason and Choosing Ends

Epicurus has an instrumental conception of reason. Reason is used to determine which beliefs, desires, and actions will best lead to the state of lacking pain – *aponia* and *ataraxia*. Reason performs "sober calculation which searches out the reasons for every choice and avoidance and drives out the opinions which are the source of the greatest turmoil for men's souls" (*Ep. Men*. 132). Reason is an instrument that can help rid our lives of unnecessary pain by identifying unnecessary desires and troublesome beliefs about the world, ones that we can then purge from our sets of desires and beliefs.

Epicurus thinks that we should use reason to determine which ends, if pursued, will result in the most pleasant life. Rational deliberation allows us to figure out which ends are most

desirable, or, in other words, which ends, if pursued, have the best chance of resulting in tranquility in mind and painlessness in body. In discussing the ends/objects of desire we should seek, Epicurus states, "some [desires] are necessary for happiness and some for freeing the body from troubles and some for life itself. The unwavering contemplation of these enables one to refer every choice and avoidance to the health of the body and the freedom of the soul from disturbance, since this is the goal of a blessed life" (*Ep. Men*. 127-128). David Schmidtz's discussion of choosing ends in *Rational Choice and Moral Agency* is helpful in clarifying how reason functions in determining the ends we should pursue. The Epicurean writings we have do not expound on choosing ends in the way that Schmidtz does, but Schmidtz develops his understanding of a final end in much the same way as the Epicureans – a final end is one that is pursued for its own sake, not for the sake of any other end.[10] Given this understanding of a final end, Schmidtz then discusses a process by which one can determine the proper ends to pursue for their own sake.

Schmidtz claims that there is a "distinction between *pursuing* a final end (which by definition we do for its own sake) and *choosing* a final end (which we might do for various reasons)."[11] Bringing this distinction to bear on Epicurean hedonism, we pursue our final ends because we think that attaining them will be pleasurable and will help us live pleasantly. To quote Cicero's formulation of the Epicurean *telos*, pleasure "is that which is a means to no other end, but rather is itself the end of all other things" (*DF* I 42). This is what makes an end final for the Epicureans – that its achievement is pleasurable. If achieving an end is pleasurable, then there is no further reason needed for a person to pursue it. For instance, I pursue the final end of not being hungry, a static pleasure, because attaining this end is inherently pleasurable and is a

[10] Cf. *DF* I 29 and 42 and Schmidtz (1995) 60.
[11] Schmidtz (1995) 61.

partial constituent of *aponia*. Getting food, on the other hand, is not a final end, but an instrumental one, as it is not inherently pleasurable when achieved, yet getting food is a goal that can serve one well in the pursuit of his final ends. Having food can be instrumental in achieving my final end of lacking hunger, but getting food is only pleasurable insofar as it brings about my final end of not being hungry.

While I pursue my final ends because their attainment is pleasurable, *my choice of which final ends to pursue* is based on other reasons having to do with a given end's relation to the *telos*. Some pleasures are greater than others on the Epicurean account, and I want ends that, if pursued, will lead me to the greatest pleasure, tranquility, the goal of life *(telos)*. Thus, reason shows me that the final ends I *should* choose to pursue, and the things that I should desire, are those that are necessary for living a tranquil life.

To explain this another way, on the Epicurean view, having sexual intercourse is a final end. When achieved, this end is pleasurable, and thus the end is good and worth pursuing for its own sake (all pleasure is good according to Epicurus). However, pursuing this final end is not advisable on the Epicurean account, as doing so is antithetical to satisfying one's desires, an essential component of *ataraxia*. One should not choose to pursue the final end of sexual love. Lucretius puts this point quite poetically in discussing the plight of lovers who pursue "the bonds of Venus":

> At length, when the accumulated desire has burst from their genitals, there is a brief respite in their raging passion. Then the same madness returns, and they have another fit of frenzy: they seek to attain what they desire, but fail to find an effective antidote to their suffering: in such deep doubt do they pine away with an invisible wound (*DRN* IV 1115-1121).

Sexual love is a very intense pleasure and can serve as a final end for this reason. However, Lucretius urges his reader to refrain from pursuing such an end because this end does not fit well within a set of ends that make living pleasantly a real possibility. Sexual love is an end that

hinders tranquility. All pleasures are good, yet since we all want to live pleasantly (doing so is the goal of life), we should often refrain from pursuing some of these goods, like sexual intercourse, in order to make it possible to live a tranquil life. Tranquility is the measure by which we choose which ends are the ones we should pursue. Thus, Lucretius states that "[t]he

man who avoids love does not deprive himself of the joys of Venus, but rather *chooses those* that involve no penalty" (*DRN* IV 1073-1074, emphasis added).

This picture of choosing which pleasures to pursue is what Epicurus has in mind when he urges us to limit our desires to those that are natural and necessary. Epicurus distinguishes between natural-necessary desires, natural-unnecessary desires, and unnatural-unnecessary desires (*Ep. Men.* 127).[12] He holds that limiting our desires to those that aim at natural-necessary ends, such as the desire for a full stomach in general, is the best way to ensure that we avoid the pain of having unsatisfied desires. One benefits greatly in pursuing the end of not being hungry - it is easily achieved, and it is essential for the continuation of a pleasant life. If all I desire is to achieve ends like having a full stomach, a quenched thirst, and some shelter, then my desires are easy to satisfy because these ends are easily achieved. These are good ends to choose to pursue – they are choiceworthy, because pursuing them will lead me to living a tranquil life. When I desire things that are unobtainable, such as the unnatural-unnecessary ends of immortality and becoming one with my sexual partner,[13] or things that are difficult to obtain, such as the natural-unnecessary ends of owning a mansion (some particular kind of shelter) or eating bluefin tuna (some particular kind of food), I find myself with either an impossible or a difficult task,

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[12] See also *KD* XXVI, XXIX (especially scholiast's note), and XXX for textual support for my exposition here. I am referring to vain and empty desires as unnatural-unnecessary so that the name parallels the others. Annas (1993) puts a great deal of weight on the notion of "empty desires" in antiquity, but even her position is amenable to using "unnatural" in its place. See Annas (1993) chapter 7.

[13] For a more detailed treatment of immortality and sexual love, see *Ep. Men.* 124 and *DRN* 1073-1121, respectively.

respectively, in achieving the ends that I desire. It is rational to pursue ends that have the best chance of resulting in *aponia* and *ataraxia*, and these are the ends that Epicurus calls natural and necessary.

Epicurus acknowledges that, while our final ends are always those *we think* are pleasurable (psychological hedonism), we can seek or desire harmful pleasures if we lack the foresight and understanding that we must sometimes make sacrifices to achieve confidence that we will avoid future dangers. For "those who do not know how to seek pleasure rationally great pains ensue. … [P]leasures are rejected when this results in greater pleasures; pains are selected when this avoids worse pains" (*DF* I 32-33). Since not all pleasures are choiceworthy for Epicurus, one must use reason to determine which ends, if chosen, will best lead to a tranquil life. This rational process of choosing ends leads us to choose to become friends with others because "[s]olitude, and a life without friends, is filled with fear and danger; so reason herself bids us to acquire friends" (*DF* I 66), and "Epicurus' view is that of all the things which wisdom procures to enable us to live happily, there is none greater, richer or sweeter than friendship" (*DF* I 65). Rational friendship, the type of friendship that will *best* free us from fear and danger, is the type of friendship that would be the ideal object of desire for the Epicureans. I characterize the type of friendship that I think is most rational for Epicureans in the next chapter, and a major component of this type of friendship is that it ideally takes place within the confines of a community of like-minded Epicureans.

2.3 Community

A proper understanding of Epicurean friendship should take into account the Epicurean community, as friendship is ideally undertaken within such a community. A significant characteristic of the community is that, since individual friendships are connected in a communal

network of friends, there is significant pressure from all in the community to act properly towards one's friends. This communal pressure to stay in line is buttressed by the Epicurean belief that "[i]t is hard to commit injustice and escape detection, but to be confident of escaping detection is impossible" (*SV* 7). For the Epicurean, betraying a friend would cause long-term pain (worry) that would outweigh any immediate pleasure gained by doing so. Either one will be found out, in which case she must suffer the wrath of the community, or, potentially worse, one will not be found out and will bear the burden of worry for the rest of her days. Thus, there are hedonistic and communal forces at work that require one to be loyal to one's friends when *ataraxia* is the ultimate goal.

A good place to see the extent of the pressure to act properly in an Epicurean community is a discussion in Martha Nussbaum's "Therapeutic Arguments: Epicurus and Aristotle," where she lays out the following scenario:

> It is likely that Epicurus was not averse to 'mixing in' such incentives as the threat of isolation from the *philia* of the community. Take for example the ominous letter written by Epicurus to an anonymous child: 'Know well, that the reason why both I and all the others love you so much is that you are always entirely obedient to them (Us. 176).' ... If the reason for love is obedience, then disobedience will bring about the withdrawal of love.[14]

The pertinent aspect of this passage for my project is the community's expectation that the child will be obedient. If the child fails to obey, then the community will react as a whole in its withdrawal of love. One could argue that Nussbaum reads Epicurus' letter to the child as making a stronger claim than is actually intended, as she moves from the reason for the community's love of the child being his obedience, to the view that this love will be withdrawn if the child becomes disobedient. It is a possibility that, while obedience is the reason for the community's love, the community will continue to love the child even if he disobeys, but Epicurus simply

[14] Nussbaum, 1986, 43.

implies differently for the sake of his letter. Regardless, there is additional support for the view that there is grave consequence for betraying a friendship, and this is the aspect of communal pressure that is important for my current project.

KD XL states, "All those who had the power to acquire the greatest confidence from [the threats posed by] their neighbours also thereby lived together most pleasantly with the surest guarantee." From the fact that fear results from one's betrayal of a friend in an Epicurean community, it follows that one's confidence in the future will be undermined should one fail to hold up his end of the bargain in a friendship, as the community will no longer love a traitor as a friend. The communal pressure to make good on one's commitments provides the confidence that friends are legitimate.

This facet of Epicureanism plays a significant role in opening the possibility for the friends-are-to-be-valued-instrumentally interpretive position *against* which I will be arguing in the next chapter. The threat of ostracism tips the egoistic utility scales in favor of always helping a friend, even if one only values a friend's ends instrumentally. Being disloyal carries far more painful possible consequences than does making even large sacrifices for a friend. Disloyalty, while perhaps leading to the avoidance of a great deal of short-term pain, is nearly fatal for the prospect of attaining tranquility in the future. Even if one's disloyalty is not found out by others, "until his death it will be uncertain whether he will continue to escape detection" (*KD* XXXV). This uncertainty will lead to serious worry that will undermine one's confidence for the future. Betrayal will thus be more detrimental to *ataraxia* than if one confesses one's shortcomings, accepts punishment, and works to regain the good graces of others. One should "[l]et nothing be done in your life which will cause you to fear if it is discovered by your neighbor" (*SV* 70). Being loyal, on the other hand, makes one an excellent candidate for others to befriend and goes

a long way towards securing future tranquility.

While the communal aspect of Epicureanism does open the door for interpretations of Epicurean friendship that differ from my own, it is vital to the plausibility of my proposal over and against opposing views, and community should play a significant role in any interpretation of the Epicurean position on friendship. In the next chapter, I characterize the debate surrounding Epicurean friendship to which my thesis contributes. Then in chapter four I invoke a thought experiment to show that valuing the well-being of one's friends will better help one achieve tranquility than the alternative. This argument for my position on friendship relies heavily on the communal aspect of Epicureanism.

3 FRIENDSHIP AND VALUING OTHERS

Epicureans held that "[w]e cannot maintain a stable and lasting enjoyment of life without friendship; nor can we maintain friendship itself unless we love our friends no less than we do ourselves" (*DF* I 67). The general consensus among Epicurean scholars is that, if "love" here means that one should value a friend's pleasure in its own right, then there is an inconsistency between Epicurean friendship and hedonism. In *The Morality of Happiness*, Julia Annas claims that Epicurus' notion of friendship, while other-regarding, is inconsistent with his hedonism.[15] This position echoes that of Phillip Mitsis in *Epicurus' Ethical Theory: The Pleasures of Invulnerability*, where he claims that any other-regarding concern "sharply conflicts with Epicurus' much-repeated claim that only one's own pleasure is the *telos* of action and desirable for itself."[16] Tim O'Keefe agrees that ascribing both altruism and hedonism to Epicurus would lead to an inconsistency, but he holds that Epicurean friendship is instead purely self-regarding and that Epicureans must take "love" behaviorally in the above dictum, instead of as requiring

[15] Annas (1993) 242-244.
[16] Mitsis (1988) 101.

one to value another's well-being for its own sake.[17] Variations on O'Keefe's line are put forward by both Matthew Evans and Eric Brown, who also claim that there is no genuine other-regard in Epicurean friendship. Evans argues that instrumentally valued friendship is partially constitutive of tranquility, and thus partially constitutive of the *telos* and to be chosen for its own sake.[18] Brown claims that friendship is not other-regarding, is not constitutive of tranquility, and is not to be chosen as an end in itself. However, he holds that "every action that is required for friendship sustains the greatest pleasure, precisely because it sustains the friendship that supports tranquility."[19] Thus, Brown argues that the Epicureans were right to hold self-regarding friendship as central to their philosophy and that they do so consistently.

My position, in opposition to those just outlined, is that Epicurean friendship is genuinely other-regarding (*contra* O'Keefe, Evans and Brown), in that one should value a friend's painless state (tranquility) for its own sake, or as a means to no further end. I also believe that such a position is consistent with Epicurean hedonism (*contra* Mitsis and Annas) because, while friends' ends are to be valued for their own sakes, friendships are to be sought on purely hedonistic grounds.

A similar position to mine is put forward in Daniel Russell's "Epicurus on Friends and Goals." He provides a picture of Epicurean hedonism that is different from my own, but we both come to the conclusion that this hedonism is consistent with other-regard, for which I argue in chapter five. Another place where Russell and I part company is in the way we justify holding the position that Epicurean friendship is genuinely other-regarding. Russell's argument for this position exclusively relies on *SV* 23, an intensely controversial Epicurean saying, and on *SV* 39, neither of which provides sufficient evidence for the thoroughly other-regarding concern that

[17] O'Keefe (2001) 293.
[18] Evans (2004) 416-418.
[19] Brown (2009) 188.

Russell and I ultimately claim is present in Epicurean friendship.[20]

SV 39 states, "The constant friend is neither he who always searches for utility, nor he who never links [friendship to utility]. For the former makes gratitude a matter for commercial transaction, while the latter kills off good hope for the future." Russell thinks that this first sentence implies that there is genuine other-regarding concern in Epicurean friendship,[21] as one must seek something other than his own pleasure in order to be a good friend. However, this saying does not necessitate that other-regarding concern is a component of friendship. O'Keefe argues, for instance, that one ought to act towards a friend's pleasure in the same way one acts towards one's own. He also denies that a friend's pleasure is valuable except in a strictly self-regarding sense; a friend is valuable only insofar as he brings me pleasure.[22] Yet, O'Keefe's position can consistently maintain that one should not *always* "search for utility" in dealing with a friend, as doing so makes one a lousy friend. Imagine a friend who *only* lends a hand when doing so provides for his own utility. There is no valuing of anyone other than oneself on O'Keefe's view, yet *SV* 39 seems wholly compatible with his position. A self-absorbed friend will not be very popular, and the loss of friendships that result from total selfishness will be detrimental to *ataraxia*. Even if one completely rejects other-regard in friendship, as O'Keefe does, *SV* 39 can be fully understandable and relevant. This saying cannot establish that there is any valuing of a friend for her own sake in Epicurean friendship, as it can be accommodated well on views that completely reject other-regard as a component of friendship.

Russell's other textual support for thinking Epicurean friendship involves other-regarding concern is *SV* 23, which literally reads (without an often accepted emendation), "Every friendship is a virtue for its own sake, though it takes its origin from the benefits [it confers on

[20] See Russell (2003) 169-171.
[21] Russell (2003) 169.
[22] O'Keefe (2001) 289-297.

us].” As stated, this does not imply that other-regarding concern is a component of friendship. However, there is only one surviving source for this saying, and it is plausible that there is a mistake in this manuscript. Most commentators argue that *aretē*, or “virtue,” which appears in our only source for the saying, should be replaced with *hairetē*, which means “worth choosing.” Thus, the emended saying would read, “Every friendship is *worth choosing* for its own sake, though it takes its origin from the benefits [it confers on us].” Inwood and Gerson, in their *Hellenistic Philosophy,* note that they “regard the emendation as virtually certain, though the transmitted text has been defended.”[23]

Russell agrees with this emendation without providing any argument that it is warranted.[24] This is problematic because some of the opponents of the other-regarding-friendships view see no conclusive reasons for making the emendation. Among those who think the original text *may* be correct are O’Keefe and Brown, neither of whom would accept Russell’s view on account that it relies heavily on *SV* 23 for ascribing other-concern to Epicurean friendships. While neither O’Keefe nor Brown is certain that the text is correct as it is, both propose that *either* SV *23 is correct without the emendation and thus does not support any claims to intrinsically valued friendships, or the emendation is appropriate, in which case the saying should be attributed to a later Epicurean rather than to Epicurus himself* (the latter being a possibility that is wholly overlooked by Russell). I don’t agree with all of their arguments for not emending the text,[25] and there may be good reasons to make the change. However, that the value of friendships is found in the security and confidence they provide (and not in itself) seems right in light of other components of Epicureanism, as I argued at the end of the “Reason and choosing ends” section in the last chapter. Also, in criticizing the Epicurean notion of friendship,

[23] Inwood and Gerson (1997) 37 fn. 22. The emendation first appeared in Wotke and Usener (1888).
[24] Russell (2003) 167 fn. 1.
[25] See O’Keefe (2001) 178-189 and Brown (2002).

Cicero states, "One of your [Torquatus'] claims I seemed to recognize as a dictum of Epicurus himself, namely that friendship cannot be divorced from pleasure, and should be cultivated for the very reason that no life can be pleasant without it, since without it no life can be secure from fear" (*DF* II 82). It seems clear that, unless Cicero is confused, Epicurus held friendship to be instrumentally valuable and could not have held that friendships are worth choosing for their own sake without being inconsistent.

Given this controversy surrounding *SV* 23, accepting the emendation without argument and taking the saying to be indicative of the orthodox Epicurean position seems problematic, especially if *SV* 23 is supposed to serve as the primary foundation for one's view, which it does for Russell. Therefore, I remain agnostic on the correct reading of this text. The best way to deal with *SV* 23, in my opinion, is to characterize the Epicurean position on friendship using other texts, and then see which reading of *SV* 23 fits best with this well-supported position. I will do the former in this paper and leave the latter project to another venue.

While I am not willing to admit that friendships are valuable for their own sakes, as the emended *SV* 23 claims, it is important to recognize the difference between valuing a *friendship* for its own sake and valuing a *friend* for her own sake, or her well-being for its own sake. I believe that the latter is a component of the Epicurean view on friendship. Brown delineates this distinction, and his demonstrative example is decisive: I may value my student's well-being for its own sake, while not valuing the teacher-student relationship in this way at all, just as I can value a friend's well-being for its own sake, while not valuing the relation between us (the friendship itself) for its own sake. So, even if emended to claim that *friendship* is valuable for its own sake, *SV* 23 would still not warrant the attribution of intrinsic value to *a friend*, which both Russell and I hold to be a vital part of Epicureanism.

Even though I think Russell's reasons for admitting that friendships require other-concern are weak, I do believe that Epicurean friendships are best understood as involving other-concern, and I argue as such in the next chapter. Before doing so, however, I should first overcome a potentially devastating roadblock to the plausibility of my thesis that Epicureanism endorses other-regarding friendships.

This obstacle to my position is put forward by Matthew Evans, and in answering it I will hopefully both clarify my view and overcome an objection that my view should be rejected out of hand. Evans claims that "the self-regarding attitudes prescribed by the egoist hedonism are incompatible with the other-regarding attitudes required of genuine friends."[26] These other-regarding attitudes consist in the endorsement of "the valuation condition," which Evans formulates: "If X is a genuine friend of Y, then X values Y's well-being for its own sake, or for Y's own sake."[27] My position is precisely that Epicurus holds to the first of these claims – that "X is a friend of Y" implies that "X values Y's well-being for its own sake, just as one values his own well-being." While there is textual evidence for attributing this valuation condition to Epicurus, which I discuss in the next chapter, Evans charges that such an attribution would lead to an inconsistency with Epicurean hedonism because, "[i]f each friend values the other for the other's own sake, then presumably each would be disturbed by – and hence has grounds for worrying about – the other's suffering, departure, or death."[28] Worrying about such things would indeed undermine the very reason for choosing to make friends in the first place, as having friends is supposed to help to avoid worry about future needs; friends are not supposed to create

[26] Evans (2004) 408. Evans is speaking loosely here, as he later argues that "genuine" friendship does not require other-regarding attitudes.
[27] Evans (2004) 408.
[28] Evans (2004) 408. See also Annas (1993) 242-244 and Mitsis (1988) 117-127 for similar arguments.

new problems that cause additional anxiety. However, Evans' objection to the valuation condition is misguided, as valuing a friend's well-being for its own sake does not necessarily lead to worrisome problems for an Epicurean when one's friend dies, departs, or suffers.

Epicureans present multiple arguments that aim to establish that death is not bad for the person who dies. Lucretius puts forward numerous arguments to this effect (*DRN* III 830-912), and some of these mirror Epicurus' own discussion of death (*Ep. Men.* 124-127). My friend's death is not bad for *her* on the Epicurean account, so valuing her happiness for its own sake will not lead me to worry about her death in this regard.

However, it may be argued that I will worry about my friend's death because her death will be bad for *me,* in that, if my friend dies, I will lose the security provided by her friendship. However, I would likely have other friends whose friendship will allow me to maintain this security. I also have no more reason to worry about losing security with my friend's death because I value her happiness for its own sake than if I did so only as a means to my own ends. Given the Epicurean position on death, the acceptance of the valuation condition provides no reason to worry about my friend's death – it will not be bad for either of us.

My friend's death, it may be charged, will be bad for *me* in a second way if the valuation condition is accepted. I may have some sort of emotional investment in a friend's well-being, and her death may cause me emotional pain. This point is also misguided, as Epicureans believe that "we have within us the capacity to bury past misfortune in a kind of permanent oblivion" (*DF* I 57). When a friend dies, any emotional pain I may feel, if any, should quickly subside upon recognition of the fact that her death is not bad for either of us. Once the emotional pain

subsides, I will be able to contemplate pleasant memories of our friendship,[29] and I can selectively ignore the negative emotions I may have felt at my friend's death. Of course, I may not feel any significant negative emotions at losing a friend on my view, as accepting the valuation condition does not necessitate that I regard a friend as such a unique part of my life that I am terribly upset by his death. A friend's death is not especially worrisome, nor is it problematic within the confines of Epicurean psychology.

Many may feel uncomfortable with such a seemingly cold response to the death of a friend. However, if one believes that neither one's friend nor oneself is harmed by the friend's death, then it would seem that a friend's death is not a proper object for prolonged grieving. Lucretius states, "because you continually crave what is not present and scorn what is, your life has slipped away from you incomplete and unenjoyed" (*DRN* III 958-959). The desire to continue experiencing the emotional pleasures that a dead friend provided in the past is clearly an inappropriate desire for an Epicurean to have. Removal of such a desire "would relieve [mourners'] minds of great anguish and fear" (*DRN* III 901), as one should not desire an end that is impossible to achieve.[30] Thus, while there may be room for some emotional attachment to friends within Epicureanism, it will be of a limited sort that does not lead to an inordinate amount of pain when severed. I can desire some emotional satisfaction from being around my friend, but I can equally recognize that such a desire is inappropriate after my friend's death, and I will simply purge myself of this desire when my friend dies, upon recognizing that the desire has become vain and empty (unnatural and unnecessary).

As for Evans' claim that I will worry about my friend moving away, it seems that the ability to blot out memories of painful occurrences in my life will allow me to move on from my

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[29] I think that one will have more pleasant memories if the valuation is accepted, and I argue as such in the second section of chapter four.
[30] See Section 2.2 above.

friend's departure rather quickly and, again, recall the positives of our relationship and ignore the negatives. As just discussed in regards to death, it is not clear that there is any good reason to think that accepting the valuation condition will make one overly vulnerable to the loss of a friend in any capacity, whether death or departure causes the loss. A friend's departure should not worry me to any significant degree. Additionally, as in the event of her death, if my friend leaves me, her role in providing me security can be filled by my making new friends or already having a sufficient number of other friends to fulfill my needs. Accepting the valuation condition does not require one to fall apart emotionally when faced with the loss of a friend.

Evans' final charge against the tenability of the valuation condition for Epicurus is that valuing my friend for her own sake will result in me being disturbed at, and thus worried about, my friend's suffering. However, Epicurus recognized that one will be disturbed at a friend's suffering and apparently saw no problems with this fact. Epicureans are *supposed* to be disturbed when they see a friend suffering, as "[t]he wise man feels no more pain when he is tortured [than when his friend is tortured]" (*SV* 56).[31] When faced with a friend in peril, one should assess the situation, recognize that the friend's pain is something in need of remedy, and then help to secure that remedy. There will be some pain associated with seeing a friend in a difficult situation, but this painful disturbance will lead to action. For Epicureans, the primary value of friendships is the confidence that friends are willing to help in the time of need, and that one is disturbed by a friend's suffering is an integral part of how friendship provides this confidence. Additionally, the pain of seeing a friend suffering is significantly overshadowed by the pleasure that results from helping that friend return to a painless state. Epicurus explains that we should "share our friends'

[31] This saying is ambiguous, in that one could read it as proclaiming that the wise Epicurean does not feel pain when tortured and thus being tortured is as painless as watching a friend being tortured, a prospect that likewise causes no pain. I see no good reason to take this as the intended meaning of this saying, as there is no good reason to ascribe to Epicurus the counterintuitive position that wisdom can abolish the feeling of serious physical pain when tortured. Even if tranquility is maintained, the physical pain is still painful.

suffering not with laments but with thoughtful concern" (*SV* 66). Such concern for a friend's well-being is a highly desirable aspect of friendship for the Epicurean, as it is what moves one to help a friend. Since Epicurus recognized and embraced the fact that a friend's suffering is disturbing, and since this aspect of friendship plays a crucial role in providing the benefits of friendship, there is no reason to reject the valuation condition on these grounds.

If, on the other hand, Evans' point is that one's reaction to a friend's suffering should not be one of *grief*, then I see no problem here for friends accepting the valuation condition either. Valuing a friend for her own sake does not necessitate that I will grieve her suffering, anymore than I will grieve her dying or relocating. In fact, I will have the same reaction to her suffering that I do to my own – I will try to do whatever is in my power to remove her pain. After all, "the wise will feel the same way about their friends as they do about themselves. They undertake the same effort to secure their friends' pleasure as to secure their own" (*DF* I 68). There is no room in Epicureanism for me to pine away in grief over my own suffering, so valuing my friend in the same way I do myself does not require me to grieve her sufferings.

Evans states, "Certainly Epicurus cannot concede that the sage will value his friends as ends in themselves, since that would constitute a significant and preventable source of mental disturbance."[32] This claim is false, and having thus removed this obstacle, in the next chapter I argue that Epicurean friendship requires the acceptance of the valuation condition.

4 EPICUREAN FRIENDSHIP AS OTHER-REGARDING

Cicero's *On Moral Ends* discusses Epicurean friendship most extensively of the ancient sources that survive today. In Book I, Torquatus outlines three distinct views of friendship that have been put forward by Epicureans, and in Book II, Cicero argues that Epicurean friendship is problematic in all three forms. In short, the first type of friendship holds that friendship is to be

[32] Evans (2004) 421.

sought because of the pleasure it brings about and friends ought to love each other as they love themselves; the second claims that the initial friendly interaction between two people is motivated by pleasure, but one begins to value a friend for his/her own sake because of having developed an intimate familiarity with the other person; and in the third version, Epicurean sages make a pact to love their friends as much as they do themselves.

Many other sources give a glimpse into the proper way to characterize Epicurean friendship, but Cicero's work gives an in-depth look into the view most likely held by Epicurus. In Book II, Cicero acknowledges that the first view of friendship was held by Epicurus himself (*DF* II 82),[33] so Torquatus' first account is a good place to start when trying to figure out the orthodox Epicurean position on friendship.

In addition to being identified as Epicurus' own view, Torquatus' exposition on the first version of friendship provides the strongest textual support for my position. As I will show in this chapter, it holds that friendships are valuable only insofar as they bring about tranquility and that friendship requires valuing a friend's well-being for its own sake, as one does one's own well-being.

4.1 Argument from Cicero's *On Moral Ends*

In introducing the first version of friendship, Torquatus states that its proponents "deny that the pleasures which our friends experience are to be valued in their own right as highly as those we experience ourselves. This position has been thought to threaten the whole basis of friendship. But its proponents defend it, and acquit themselves comfortably, so it seems to me" (*DF* I 66). If "as highly as" is read as indicating a difference in kind in the values being ascribed to a friend's pleasure and one's own, this passage seems to cut against my position that a friend's

[33] Regarding the first version of friendship, Cicero states, "One of your claims I seemed to recognize as a dictum of Epicurus himself."

pleasure is to be valued in the same way as one's own. However, Woolf's translation is slightly misleading here. The original Latin is "alii, cum eas voluptates quae ad amicos pertinerent negarent esse per se ipsas tam expetendas quam nostras expeteremus, quo loco videtur quibusdam stabilitas amicitiae vacillare, tuentur tamen eum locum seque facile, ut mihi videtur, expediunt."[34] Woolf translates "expetendas" as "to be valued," whereas the most appropriate translation of this word is "to be sought." In fact, a closer translation of the text would be something like the following: adherents to the first kind of friendship "denied that those pleasures that pertain to friends are to be sought in and for themselves to such a degree as we are to seek our own pleasures."[35] Another way this passage has been acceptably translated is that proponents of the first version of friendship "denied that those pleasures which concerned our friends were to be sought with as much eagerness for their own sake, as we display in seeking our own." [36] There is a difference in degree rather than kind being attributed to one's own pleasure and that of a friend. A friend's pleasure *is to be sought* for its own sake, just to a lesser degree than one *seeks* his own. The denial mentioned in this passage operates as a negation of the position that a friend's pleasure is *sought as fervently* as one's own, and this negation does not apply to the pleasures being sought for their own sake. Thus, the best explanation of a friend's pleasures being sought "for their own sake" is that a friend's pleasures are, in fact, valued for their own sake. It is in this way that we love our friends equally as ourselves (*DF* I 67), namely, that we value their pleasure for its own sake, which is the same kind of value we place on our own pleasure. This reading most naturally corresponds with the rest of Torquatus' discussion in which he explains that, on this view, not only do we love our friends as we do ourselves, but we

[34] Cicero (1983) Book I, 66.
[35] This translation has been provided by Gerard Pendrick through personal correspondence.
[36] Yonge (1875).

also feel the same way towards their pleasures as we do our own (*DF* I 67-68).[37]

The way to understand the degree difference mentioned in this passage is that one ought to seek a friend's pleasure for its own sake, just not as eagerly as one seeks one's own pleasure, as Yonge's translation indicates. This degree difference in the eagerness with which we seek something that is valuable in itself is analogous to the way we seek static and kinetic pleasures. Both are valued for their own sakes, as every pleasure is valuable in itself. However, Epicurus claims that we are not to seek kinetic pleasures with as much eagerness as we do static pleasures. So, just as I act towards my own tranquility more fervently than I do sensual stimulation, in friendship I act towards my own pleasure more eagerly than I do my friend's. While I value both our pleasures in the same way, as final ends, I act towards my own more eagerly because my own tranquility is my ultimate goal in life, my *telos*. While my friend's pleasure is to be valued for its own sake, it is not a value around which I should structure all my desires; I should rather desire final ends that are most conducive to *my own* tranquility. My friend's pleasure happens to be one such end.

Tim O'Keefe recognizes the difference in degree rather than kind expressed in Torquatus' exposition of the first kind of Epicurean friendship. He also admits that "[t]his may seem to leave open the possibility that although friendship is justified instrumentally, nonetheless there might be an element of intrinsic other-regardingness psychologically."[38] This is precisely my view, and O'Keefe warns against taking such an interpretive position because he claims that the second

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[37] O'Keefe (2001) claims that the rest of Torquatus' account can be understood as stating the way we *act* towards a friend's pleasure rather than the way we *value* it. This reading seems to be a stretch, and it fails to be able to explain the reference to a friend's pleasure as "to be sought in and for themselves" to a lesser degree than our own. O'Keefe holds that a friend's pleasure is intrinsically valuable to a lesser extent than our own precisely because their pleasure is not valuable intrinsically at all. This is clearly a stretch, and if my position is viable, then stretching the passage in this way is unnecessary.

[38] O'Keefe (2001) 292.

view of friendship is compared to the first in such a way that the first must hold friendship to be merely instrumentally valuable, whereas the second holds friendship to be intrinsically valuable. There is also further evidence that the first version of friendship is instrumentally valuable, which is that it is explicitly said to be on par with the virtues that Epicurus undeniably holds to be valued in this way (*DF* I 67). The second version is introduced by Torquatus explaining that adherents to this theory "fear that if we hold that friendship is to be sought for the sake of our own pleasure, then the whole notion of friendship will look utterly lame" (*DF* I 69). These "later" Epicureans held to a theory of friendship where one aims to become close to others through a utility calculation, but that *this closeness* then breeds "real intimacy," which is the real reason two people embark on a full-blown friendship (*DF* I 69). O'Keefe argues that "[t]he contrast with the first theory is clear: in the first theory, not only is the first approach prompted by a desire for pleasure, but that desire continues to be one's sole motive later on, even though one does love the friend as much as oneself [understood behaviorally]."[39] I do not see this contrast as being nearly as clear as he maintains. While he does argue correctly that the value of friendship is only instrumental in the first version and that this instrumental valuation of friendship is being contrasted with the view that friendship is not instrumentally valuable, he fails to adhere to the distinction I discussed in the last chapter between the value of friendship and the way one values a friend.

On my view, the first kind of friendship (F1) holds that friendship is chosen because of the pleasure it affords us and that the well-being of a friend is to be valued for its own sake. The second version of friendship (F2) holds that friendships are not to be fostered solely because of the pleasure they provide, but that true friendship comes about because of an intimate emotional bond, one that is not rationally referable to one's own pleasure. Cicero claims that the love

[39] O'Keefe (2001) 292.

between friends in F2 comes about "regardless of any expectation of pleasure" (*DF* II 82). F2 clearly contrasts with F1, as F2 holds that friendship is not sought solely because of the pleasure it affords, but rather that it comes about because of a familiarity that has formed between two people, in the same way that one can fall in love with a pet by being around it for a long time. In this regard, F2 does not fit with other ancient sources we have that discuss orthodox Epicurean friendship precisely because it holds that friendships themselves are fostered because of a non-rational affection, rather than because of a utility calculation. This view seems to have been developed as a deviation from Epicurus' own in response to Academic criticisms like that of Cicero, who claims, "Love in turn is not created by a rational calculation of advantage. It arises of its own accord, spontaneously" (*DF* II 78). Such criticisms are aimed at the legitimacy of claiming that friendships form because of an egoistic calculation, and the contrast between F1 and F2 in Torquatus' account is therefore a difference between the causal impetuses of friendship, not between the ways in which friends are valued.

There is no need to hold that his exposition of the first view is a misstatement or "understatement."[40] Nor is there good reason to believe that Torquatus is putting forward the awkward position that a friend's pleasure is valued in itself to a lesser degree than our own because it is not valued in itself at all, as O'Keefe believes.[41] Both F1 and F2 hold that *friends* should be valued for their own sake; the difference is in how one should seek *friendship*. F2 seems to be a clear case of "timid" Epicureans backing off of the instrumental value placed on *friendship* by Epicurus. When taken in context, there is solid textual evidence for thinking that *such instrumental value does not extend to friends as well according to F1*. They are to be valued for their own sakes, just as Torquatus says they are. We are to "love our friends no less than we

[40] O'Keefe (2001) 292.
[41] This view has been expressed through personal correspondence between Tim O'Keefe and myself.

do ourselves," in that we value the pleasure of friends for its own sake, as a final end. There is no indication that a reading like O'Keefe's is acceptable, nor is it necessary in order to explain the contrast between F1 and F2 adequately.

My reading does not require any finagling of the text, ascribing misstatements to people, or the like. That friends should be valued for their own sakes seems to be the view that Cicero ascribes to Epicurus himself in *On Moral Ends*.

4.2 Argument from Epicurean egoism

One thing that seems certain under Epicureanism is that friendship is desirable because it helps one attain tranquility.[42] The next logical question is, what kind of friendship is best at facilitating the attainment of tranquility?

O'Keefe, Evans, and Brown attempt to salvage the Epicureans from consistency concerns by arguing that friendship is simply not as committed a relationship as others take it to be. Essentially, they all sidestep a criticism put forward by Annas that, "If we treated friendship purely instrumentally, we would be allowing not *friendship* into our lives, but something else."[43] Annas' point is cast aside in order to give what they believe is the best case for Epicurus. However, I argue for a view of Epicurean friendship that is consistent with Epicurean hedonism and involves the acceptance of the valuation condition. My view is thus more like traditional understandings of friendship.

In light of Epicurus' claim that we should pursue our own tranquility, I will now show that reason requires the Epicurean to accept the valuation condition, rather than merely to behave

[42] The only text we have that may, but need not, run counter to this claim is *SV* 23 with the emendation I argued against in chapter 2.
[43] Annas (1993) 240. Evans explicitly acknowledges this objection and explicitly ignores it. See Evans (2004) 409.

well towards friends. A community where the valuation condition is accepted will allow for its members to attain tranquility more effectively than a community where the valuation condition is rejected.[44] Thus, for the Epicurean, a community that accepts the valuation condition is ideal, and other-regarding friendships should be sought.

My general argument is as follows:

1. Epicurean egoism holds that one should do whatever will result in one's living a tranquil life.
2. Accepting the valuation condition provides the best opportunity for living a tranquil life.
3. Therefore, Epicurean egoism holds that one should accept the valuation condition.

Premise 1 is uncontroversial. Premise 2 can be shown to be true through the following thought experiment, wherein I argue that attributing other-regard to Epicureans makes them better at attaining their primary goal – tranquility.

Suppose there are two similar communities comprised of Epicurean sympathizers. Friendship plays a prominent role in each community, but in Selfopolis, everyone embraces the understanding that friendship requires only that a person *treat* her friends as well as she *treats* herself, and the valuation condition is rejected. In Valuationville, on the other hand, everyone values the well-being of friends in addition to, and in the same way as, one's own well-being, thus accepting the valuation condition.

Further suppose that Laura is an Epicurean, and she is deliberating about which community would be the most rational one to join. As a good Epicurean, what Laura prizes above all else is her own *aponia* and *ataraxia*. Her deliberation primarily consists in determining which community will provide the greatest opportunity for her to attain these states. Laura should weigh her two options in regards to which one will be most effective at alleviating her fears of future danger and suffering.

[44] Also, if one lived in such a community, she would be better off accepting the valuation condition than free-riding.

In all cases of bodily need, such as the need for drink or food or the need to repel a lion attack, people in both communities would act similarly towards their friends. In Selfopolis, I help a friend because doing so gives me security. Onlookers see me as worthy of trust, and, if I didn't help, I would either suffer ostracism or be on edge about the possibility of being found out and then ostracized.[45] In Valuationville, I help because my friend's well-being is among my set of final ends, even though it is also the case that I am furthering my own interests as well. If Laura considers extraordinary situations where one's *aponia* will be threatened, similar actions will be undertaken in the communities to remedy a friend being in bodily need. However, these outwardly identical actions will be motivated differently in the two communities. These motivational differences will be found in almost all dealings with *aponia* disruption, as the relevant differences between Selfopolis and Valuationville are ones of general motivation for helping a friend in need. Importantly different motivations for action follow from accepting or rejecting the valuation condition.

If a lion enters Selfopolis and begins to maul John, who is one of Laura's friends, Laura will come to his aid. While it may not be in her short-term best interest to do so, as she may be harmed herself, Laura will realize that failure to help in this situation will show both onlookers and John that she is not trustworthy or loyal. Thus, any security provided by her friends could be wholly undermined. So, Laura would help John escape the lion's clutches because doing so will be in her own long-term best interest. Undertaking the unfortunately required action of helping her friend would be a necessary pain for Laura, as it would show others in the community that she is worthy of their trust and would allow her to avoid ostracism. This will bring a good deal of security that her future needs will be met.[46]

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[45] This is supposed to mirror the views put forward by O'Keefe, Evans, and Brown.
[46] That Laura may die to help her friend is not an important factor in her decision. See O'Keefe (2001) 302-303 for

If a lion enters Valuationville and begins to maul Chris, another of Laura's friends, she will likewise come to his aid. However, she will do so not merely because she feels pressure from the community to maintain her loyalty to a friend, but because she actually cares about Chris' well-being and values his happiness in the same way she does her own. Chris' *aponia* is being interrupted by this lion attack, so Laura will jump in to try to stop the mauling because doing so will help *her friend* return to a less troubled bodily state, a state that Laura holds to be valuable as a final end that she desires for its own sake. Also, since the kinetic mental pleasure "joy" occurs when one contemplates experiencing pleasure, Laura can experience joyful pleasure in helping her friend return to a tranquil state. The helping of a friend, even when it involves self-sacrifice, is pleasurable when the valuation condition is accepted, as one is achieving a final end by helping a friend back to a painless state. If the valuation condition is rejected, then Laura is merely undertaking a necessary pain by sacrificing for the sake of a friend, and necessary pains, while they lead to tranquility, are not pleasurable themselves.[47]

Thus the following question arises in Laura's deliberations about which community she should join: Which kinds of motivations for action are going to be most effective at furthering Laura's end of attaining her own *aponia* and *ataraxia*? If she joins Valuationville, she must be motivated by other-regard in many instances, and the question is whether or not this is more desirable than always being motivated by self-regard. The different motivations that drive people to help their friends in both communities are not going to impact Laura's confidence that, were a lion to attack *her*, her friends would do everything they could to help, as the different

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reasons an Epicurean would not fear dying for a friend.

[47] Contemplating one's own tranquility that results by undertaking necessary pains can be joyful, but a single act of self-sacrifice does not contribute to achieving tranquility to the same extent as helping a valued friend fight off a lion contributes to that friend's ability to achieve *aponia*. Also, in Selfopolis, one is mostly avoiding great pains by helping a friend, rather than directly achieving a pleasure. In Valuationville, on the other hand, one directly achieves her own final end (a friend's painless state). In both cases, Laura will be able to contemplate the tranquility she secures by helping a friend and can experience joy in doing so. However, in Valuationville, Laura has an additional pleasure to contemplate – her own final end's achievement as her friend returns to a painless state.

motivations will lead to the same actions in most, if not all cases.[48] There is no relevant difference between the communities in this respect. However, *were Laura to have to help one of her friends who is being attacked by a lion*, a significant difference arises between the motivations for doing so in Selfopolis and Valuationville. This difference has serious implications for Laura's *ataraxia*, as the different motivations are going to carry with them differing amounts of worry about the future – in Selfopolis, Laura will be faced with worrying about having to undertake necessary pains for a friend's well-being without having additional kinetic mental pleasures to cancel them out and make the self-sacrificing pleasurable.

Recall that the purpose of entering into friendships on the Epicurean account is that doing so will lead to being confident about attaining *aponia* in the future. This confidence of one's future painlessness is a major constituent of *ataraxia*. In Selfopolis, Laura's helping her friend who is being mauled is motivated solely by her interest in her own well-being. Because of this, Laura has good reason to worry about having to help her friends in the future – helping may interrupt her own *aponia* without providing the opportunity for joy to outweigh the pain. Scenarios like this are what led J. M. Rist to conclude that Epicureans should only foster a few friendships because they require too much of oneself in creating the possibility of new instances where one must sacrifice her own well-being for a friend's.[49] The more friends Laura has, the higher the chance that she will have to experience pain in the future to help them. Every friendship Laura forms will significantly increase the chance that she will have to sacrifice her *aponia* to aid a friend in need. Thus, each friendship carries with it a reason for Laura to worry about her ability to maintain her own future *aponia*. However, in Valuationville, Laura's worry, which stems from the chance that her own future *aponia* may be interrupted in helping a friend,

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[48] One may do a better job of helping a friend if one truly cares for the friend's well-being. However, for the current purposes, I will overlook this point even though it may add additional support for my position.
[49] Rist (1972) 134.

is counterbalanced by the increased chance that her friend will be able to maintain *aponia* in the future, as she values her friend's future *aponia* as one of her final ends. This reciprocity is not present in Selfopolis. Thus, Laura's worry about her own future *aponia* will be greater in Selfopolis than in Valuationville. This worry will detract from Laura's *ataraxia* (freedom from mental disturbances), and so Laura has a very good hedonistic reason to prefer Valuationville over Selfopolis.

Furthermore, in Valuationville, Laura would not have a negative attitude towards sacrificing her own *aponia* to help her friend, as the opportunity to help a friend will bring her joy. By helping to further her friend's ends, Laura will also be furthering her own ends in a way that is not available to her in Selfopolis. Laura's joy will be able to balance out the bodily pain experienced at the claws of the lion, in the same way that Epicurus' joy overshadowed his excruciating pain as he was dying. However, in Selfopolis, this joy will not be experienced, as one would feel something closer to extreme dread at the prospect of having to help fight off a lion. Joy can only arise from self-sacrifice for a friend when the valuation condition is accepted – helping a friend achieve *aponia* is only joyful insofar as the friend's *aponia* is valued for its own sake.

According to Plutarch, the Epicureans hold that "benefiting [others] is pleasanter than receiving benefit."[50] When the valuation condition is accepted, as in Valuationville, benefiting a friend furthers an end that one values, brings one joy, and helps secure future *aponia*. When the valuation condition is rejected, as in Selfopolis, the need to sacrifice for a friend's benefit is an unpleasant prospect that may be necessary to maintain future *aponia*. Laura thus has significant hedonistic reasons for choosing to live in Valuationville, and in light of Plutarch's statement on Epicurean friendship, Valuationville better exhibits the true Epicurean attitude towards

[50] Plutarch, "A Pleasant Life," 1097a, 544U, in *Hellenistic Philosophy: Introductory Readings,* p. 102.

friendship. A community that embraces the valuation condition best allows for living tranquilly; therefore, Epicurean egoism demands that the valuation be accepted among friends.

5 EPICUREAN FRIENDSHIP AS CONSISTENT WITH HEDONISM

In the last chapter I argued that my interpretation of Epicurean friendship is textually supported and that such a friendship is more effective than other conceptions at helping achieve *ataraxia*, making other-regarding friendship a desirable end under Epicurean egoism. Now I will explain how coming to have such friendships works in practice – how Epicureans make friends.

5.1 Making Friends

Torquatus does not discuss the practicality of fostering F1 friendships, as he only explains that one does so *because* it will result in great pleasure and that friendship requires a mutual valuation of each other's well-being. He states, "Epicurus' view is that of all the things which wisdom procures to enable us to live happily, there is none greater, richer or sweeter than friendship" (*DF* I 65). Such rational reflection, however, can only bring one so far towards making friends. I am proposing that recognition of the benefits one will attain in accepting the valuation condition should lead the Epicurean to seek out other-regarding friendships, but how does one go from such a cost/benefit analysis to fostering real friendships?

Friendships do not usually begin as mutually loving, but often mature into such relationships. After all, one must make sure that a potential friend has a suitable character to justify the huge commitment one takes on in fostering a friendship. What I think happens when an Epicurean like Laura makes a friend is that, once she has decided that she should make friends, Laura begins acting towards the ends of other people in her community, even though

they are not yet friends. She does things that make other people happy, as long as doing so is not seriously detrimental to her own happiness. She tries to become disposed to helping others. In describing Epicurus' view on the matter, Diogenes Laertius states that "friendship comes to be because of its utility; but one must nevertheless make a preliminary sacrifice [for a friend] (for one must also sow the ground), and it is [then] formed by a sharing among those who are fulfilled by their pleasures" (DL X 120b). Laura should start helping other people she views as strong candidates for being good friends. As *SV* 44 states, "When the wise man is brought face to face with the necessities of life, he knows how to give rather than receive," and when Laura is attempting to make friends, she must give of herself in order to secure the love of another that is necessary and so beneficial for her own happiness.

In order for friendships to be able to happen, one must begin by approaching others in the proper way. After two people meet who are open to helping each other achieve happiness and they strike up good conversation, acquaintance can turn into friendship as they begin to seek each other's ends for their own sake. This occurs not out of familiarity, as in the second type of friendship proposed by Torquatus, but from a mutual sharing in each other's happiness (DL X 120b). Friendships become possible when the following criteria are met:

1. I am disposed to helping others, even though we are not friends yet (but we will be like-minded Epicureans, as we will be living in a community like Epicurus' Garden),
2. I meet a person who is likewise disposed to helping others because he finds it rational to do so,
3. Both of us are amenable to fostering a friendship (i.e. there aren't any deal breakers such as the inability to tolerate the other's voice, and both are interested in caring for the well-being of another for its own sake), and,
4. We are in a situation where we could become friends (this condition would include that neither

of us plan to leave the community any time soon, commit suicide, or the like).

In seeking friends, one should avoid being "excessively eager for friendship" yet be ready and open to making reasonable (i.e. not too self-damaging) sacrifices to foster new friendships (*SV* 28). If two people begin to have a relationship where each desires to treasure the other's well-being, then that is when a friendship is made. Each partner can begin to revel in her friend's tranquility in the same way she does her own.

5.2 Hedonistically Motivated Friendship

While giving an overview of Epicurean friendship, O'Keefe argues that the following problem faces the conception of Epicurean friendship for which I am arguing:

> Either (i) the theory is inconsistent in how it describes the final ends of the Epicurean sage, asserting that the sage values only his own pleasure for its own sake and also that he values his friends and his friends' pleasures as much as his own. Or, consistently within itself, (ii) the theory ascribes an inconsistent set of motives to the wise person, making him suffer from a serious case of doublethink: the sage values his friends' pleasures as much as his own, while recognizing that he does so for the sake of his own pleasure, the only thing he regards as valuable in itself.[51]

However, my reading avoids O'Keefe's dichotomy. Both (i) and (ii) above are only problematic because they take the end of fostering friendships to be an instrumental end to achieving pleasure. On my view, however, fostering a friendship functions as what David Schmidtz terms a maieutic end, not an instrumental one.[52]

A maieutic end is one that is "achieved through a process of coming to have other ends."[53] When deliberating about which ends to choose, Laura does an egoistic utility calculation and finds that she should foster mutually caring friendships, a calculation like the one above regarding the most beneficial community for her to enter. Such a friendship requires Laura to adopt her friend's well-being as one of her final ends. Once she has made a friend, she no longer

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[51] O'Keefe (2010) 149-150.
[52] This is not to be confused with the view that friendship is *instrumentally valuable* for my own well-being.
[53] Schmidtz (1995) 61.

continues to pursue the maieutic end of fostering this friendship, as Laura has, in fact, already achieved this end. Once she has fostered a friendship with Chris, fostering a friendship with him no longer structures her desires or guides her actions. Instead, Laura's desires are structured and her actions guided by the new set of ends she has adopted, which includes assuring Chris' tranquility. Thus, O'Keefe's doublethink charge is no longer relevant, as it is a mischaracterization to say that Laura values Chris' pleasure for the sake of her own pleasure.

A clear example of how this works can be taken from my own life. When contemplating in college whether to choose to pursue the end of loving my wife, or as I thought of it at the time, of allowing myself to fall in love with her, I determined that doing so would lead to the happiest life I could foresee having. Now, I love my wife and enjoy making sacrifices for her well-being. I chose to make her well-being one of my final ends. If asked "Why do you sacrifice your pleasure for your wife's well-being?" my response is "because I love her, part of which involves valuing her well-being for its own sake." If asked why I chose to love my wife, I may respond by acknowledging that I foresaw loving my wife as making me happier than competing scenarios in which I chose not to love my wife. Thus, I pursued the maieutic end of falling in love with my wife because it was rational to do so, just as Laura will pursue the maieutic end of fostering a loving friendship with Chris because it is rational to do so. Once I did fall in love with my wife, my desires were no longer structured by the maieutic end of falling in love with her, just as, once Laura fosters a friendship with Chris, her desires will no longer be structured by the maieutic end of fostering such a friendship. My maieutic end had been achieved by my taking my wife's well-being to be my own final end, just as Laura's maieutic end has been achieved by taking Chris' well-being to be her own final end. So, the problematic statement of doublethink expressed above must be amended to the less dubious "Laura cares about her friend for his own sake, *and*

doing so is in Laura's best interest." While Laura can correctly describe her friendship as being in her best interest and even though she was motivated to seek out friends because doing so was foreseen to be in her best interest, she is not motivated by her own interests *in the pursuit* of her friend's tranquility.

5.3 Objections and Replies

One may object to my position on Epicurean friendship by claiming that entering such a community may require Laura to enter into a type of friendship that, given Epicurus' psychological hedonism, requires giving more of herself than is actually possible. This objection is similar to O'Keefe's (i.) quoted above. In other words, it may be the case that, as Annas claims, "Epicurus can generate other-concern, but not *enough* other-concern for the agent to be prepared to accept great losses for the sake of other people."[54] Perhaps Laura cannot bring herself to take another's ends as her own solely because she recognizes the benefits of doing so. However, Epicureans hold that ends are choose-able, such that one can limit her ends to include only those that are natural and necessary.[55] This is reason to grant that the Epicurean sage can adopt another's pleasure as her own final end. Laura finds that valuing her friend's ends as she does her own is rational, as doing so will help Laura attain *ataraxia*. This fact should be able to motivate her to sacrifice her own immediate pleasure out of genuine care for her friend's pleasant state, if doing so would help a friend attain greater pleasure.

Further evidence that such an adoption of ends is possible under Epicureanism is that Epicurus held that one can cease fearing death and the wrath of the gods in the afterlife upon reason's revelation that death is annihilation (*DRN* III 830-912). If finding out death is not bad for Laura can stop her from fearing death, then reason's revelation that fostering other-regarding

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[54] Annas (1993) 243.
[55] See chapter 2.2.

friendships is in her best interest should be able to motivate her to do so on the Epicurean view. Such a position is consistent within Epicurean psychology.

Perhaps the most serious problem with my reply to this objection is that it may be seen to run counter to *KD* XXV: "If you do not, on every occasion, refer each of your actions to the goal of nature, but instead turn prematurely to some other [criterion] in avoiding or pursuing [things], your actions will not be consistent with your reasoning."[56] However, this saying should not be understood to require that each and every action must be *referred to*, as in motivated by, one's own pleasure.[57] Such an interpretation, which would pose problems for my position on Epicurean friendship, results in an utterly unworkable and naive principle. One cannot possibly perform a cost-benefit analysis to determine whether every individual action one takes is in one's own best interest – this would be too time consuming and impractical, making it a chore to figure out whether or not one should brush one's teeth each morning, among innumerable other mundane, yet beneficial actions. If nothing else, such a requirement would bring a ton of anxiety into one's life that would severely undermine one's tranquility. Also, the Greek word "*Kairos*," translated here as "on every *occasion*," is amenable to meaning "at every point of decision that would require rational deliberation," which fits with a reading that allows one to foster habits that are not *always* referred to one's own pleasure.

KD XXV should be taken to require that every action should be *referable* to the goal of nature – a given action *must be able to be shown* to be in one's own best interest. Or to put this another way, the following conditional must hold: if I were to query whether a given action is in my best interest, then I must be able to answer the query in the affirmative. As Russell correctly argues, referring every action to one's pleasure does not imply that every action is motivated for

[56] See also *Ep. Men*. 127-128.
[57] See Russell (2003) for an in-depth argument that this saying does not imply that all actions must be motivated by one's own pleasure.

the sake of one's own pleasure.[58] The above conditional can be met without my being motivated by my own self-interest in everything I do. I have argued earlier that accepting the valuation condition is in one's best interest, so this *Principal Doctrine* poses no problem for my position.

One final objection to my position is that Epicurus generally recommends limiting the ends one should pursue to only those that are natural and necessary, and perhaps my view requires one to desire too many ends. However, I do not think that accepting the valuation condition expands the number of one's ends in any detrimental way. In fact, while each person in an Epicurean community, taken individually, will have more final ends on my view than if the valuation condition is rejected, there will be multiple people aiming to achieve each person's ends. All of my friends will be aiming for *my* painless state, in addition to their own. This is highly desirable for me, and the community as a whole will not see an increase in the ends that are being pursued within it, but rather in the number of people pursuing each end. Each person's tranquility will count as a final end within the community whether or not the valuation condition is accepted, and there is no net increase in the number of ends in a community that accepts the valuation condition over one that rejects it. On my view, there are multiple people pursuing each person's tranquility. This is a highly desirable consequence of living in a community like Valuationville.

6 CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I have made the case that Epicurean friendship requires friends to value each other's pleasure in the same way that they do their own. This understanding of Epicurean friendship has many benefits when compared to the views espoused by other Epicurean scholars. Furthermore, when the ends of fostering friendships are properly characterized as maieutic, the acceptance of the valuation condition has been shown to be consistent with Epicurean hedonism.

[58] Russell (2003) 173.

While this thesis provides support for thinking that Epicurus held friends to be valued for their own sakes and that this view is consistent with his version of egoistic hedonism, it is yet to be seen whether an account similar to his is a viable solution for egoistically motivating genuine other-regarding concern. My depiction of Epicurean friendship relies on contentious psychological claims, including that one can manipulate her desires to make them accord with reason and that people are said to have the ability to consign negative memories into oblivion. However, these psychological positions were held by Epicurus, and so his view on friendship can and should be expounded with their acceptance granted. It is yet to be seen whether other-regarding friendships are plausible on more contemporary views of egoism and hedonism, but the success of Epicurus in providing a coherent account of how this can work does at least provide some hope that such an endeavor is possible.

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