



Love and Friendship

PHIL 299
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MWF 1–1:50



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We will engage in a sustained & philosophical consideration of love & friendship, topics we often assume to be too obscure or even sub-rational to allow for such discussion. What exactly is love? What are its kinds? What causes love, and what does love cause? Do opposites attract? Why do we incline more toward one person than another? Is it wrong to love some persons more than others? Is love a divine and life-giving influence or a dangerous illness whose remedies we should know? Where is love found, and what are its signs and symptoms? What of love among animals? Does love extend even beyond the realm of human and animal life? How are love and friendship related? What are the kinds of friendship? Do we need friends? If so, how many do we need? Are there aspects of love and friendship which resist rational analysis? Is love stronger than hatred? To stimulate our reflection, we will read selected fragments of Empedocles, Plato's *Lysis* and *Symposium*, books 8 & 9 of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, and the questions on love & hatred from the treatise on the passions in St. Thomas Aquinas' *Summa theologiae*. Time permitting, we may also ponder such texts as Ibn Sīnā's *Treatise on Love*, Sir Francis Bacon's essays, and Immanuel Kant's *Lecture on Friendship*.



TEXTS

- Plato. *Symposium*. Trans. Avi Sharon. Focus Philosophical Library. Newbury Port, Mass.: Focus Publishing (R. Pullins), 1998.

All other texts are in the public domain and will be available on Blackboard.