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Salve Regina University, marc.levasseur@salve.edu

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Salve Regina University

**Classical-Christian Friendship Operating in Western Literature:
Oral Traditions to the Apex of Print Culture**

A Dissertation Submitted to
The Faculty of the Humanities
In Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
Department of the Humanities

by

Marc G. LeVasseur

Newport, Rhode Island

April 2016

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SALVE REGINA UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE STUDIES

This dissertation of Marc G. LeVasseur entitled *Classical-Christian Friendship Operating in Western Literature: Oral Traditions to the Apex of Print Culture* submitted to the Ph.D. Program in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Salve Regina University has been read and approved by the following individuals:

Reader:


Sean O'Callaghan, Ph.D.

Date:

5/9/16

Reader:


Jennifer Horan, Ph.D.

Date:

5/9/16

Mentor:


Michael A. Budd, Ph.D.

Date:

5/9/16

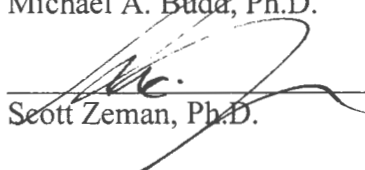
Director,
Ph.D. Program:


Michael A. Budd, Ph.D.

Date:

5/9/16

Provost:


Scott Zeman, Ph.D.

Date:

5/9/16

To Jeanne d'Arc Caouette LeVasseur 1927-2010

To Richard S. LeVasseur 1925-2005

To William E. LeVasseur 1920-2009

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Abstract

The classical-Christian model of friendship has operated for many centuries from oral traditions and through the age of print. However, technological developments in communication and media rearrange mindscapes. Consequently, values, or, those things that give meaning, can change, such as perceptions of friendship. If one accepts that communication is vital to human relationships, the paradigm for the classical-Christian friendship should operate according to the new vocabulary of expanding communication and media possibilities. This work examines literature and philosophical thought within their historical contexts in order to gauge the operation of the classical-Christian friendship model from the beginning of Western literature to Western literature at the apex of print culture.

Introduction

Classical-Christian Friendship Operating in Western Literature: From Oral Traditions to the Apex of Print Culture

This project began as a question about how technological developments in communication had operated upon the essential human relationship that is friendship. To answer such a question is like trying to put the galaxy in a bottle. For one thing, people define friendship differently. For another, people have been writing about friendship and all its aspects for centuries. Therefore, it was decided to use a well-established friendship paradigm that the early theorists fashioned as the best possible, and that the inquiry would be limited to Western civilization. This model is named the classical-Christian friendship. The field of referential possibility is immense; so the spade is driven into the garden of Western fiction literature, for the first thinkers to be curious about friendship often refer to the narratives in their mythology and legends for the grandest friendship examples. An investigation of legendary, mythical or imagined friendships from the beginning to the present should be indicative of the manner in which the classical prototype of the best kind of friendship has operated as it has encountered changing modes of communication and new communication media. An examination of friendships starting with Gilgamesh and Enkidu into the 20th century with particular emphasis on friendship from the days of oral communication to the apex of print culture is the final reduction of this work. The question is formulated as follows: How has communication media operated on the classical-Christian concept of Western friendship both directly through personal communication and indirectly through the societal or cultural changes

agitated by new media? When speaking of friendship, one should again remember that, in answering this question, the classical-Christian paradigm serves as the friendship template that is laid across historical landscapes from the beginning of literature to the early 20th century.

It is necessary, first, to explain the framework of this extraordinary friendship. The discourse begins with Plato (1993) and ends with Montaigne (1965, 1993). Significant additions are made to the model when the early Christian theologians begin handling it. The first chapter, therefore, is a familiar compilation of friendship rhetoric. Brought into the foundational conversations are two other subtopics and an important juxtaposition. The topic of solitude has significance as a counterpoint to friendship. Aelred's ideas (2010) about friendship between men and women receive some attention. The classicists discounted women in their friendship possibilities and most tended to separate marriage from friendship without even a comparison. The other has to do with physical proximity. It is an important quality of the classical friendship, and it rates considerable attention because writing permits friends to communicate at greater distances. Aristotle (1980) thought that one ultimately wanted to always be with or near his friend in the best kind of friendship. The early Celtic Saints were exceptions, and in these early friendships written communication was unlikely. Although great friendships were established, as missionaries and evangelists the friends were often forced to travel great distances and to spend long periods of time away from each other. These special friendships, however, remained intact. The Celtic saint friends tried to be present when one or the other was dying in order to facilitate the transition from the physical to the

spiritual world. These friendships are very briefly discussed although they warrant greater attention.

With something of a rubric for friendship in hand, one must discuss the importance of communication in all human activity and therefore its impact on friendship. The discourse must, necessarily, emphasize language and how it works, for language is the fundamental platform upon which all communication media are based. Chomsky's work, as expressed by Pinker (1994) and others, in language construction and acquisition is comparable to important scientific breakthroughs in other areas by people like Newton and Einstein; however, there are also the more subtle and intangible elements of language, about which philosophers like Rorty (1989), Foucault (1970) and White (2014) can be helpful. Simply, it is emphasized that language is the vehicle by which the human being expresses his or her thoughts most profoundly. The cause and effect relationship between language and thought becomes a point of contention as some writers do not accept its linearity and believe that the connection can instead be dynamic, or circular. Language also represents culture. Cultural and social influence cannot be excluded from the friendship discussion, for to many thinkers they are the walls within which the superior kind of friendship must operate.

The influence of language and the growing ways in which it can be conveyed require reference points as one sails through the centuries analyzing friendship stories. Marshall Poe's Push Theory of Media Effects (2011) is a useful template that is applied to five specific media eras. This theory, however, is not the definitive answer and is only used as one instrument to analyze the potential influence of media on friendship. At this juncture, one should conclude that since media can determine the way that people use

their minds, media might also rearrange and alter the operation of the classical-Christian friendship.

Equipped with the classical-Christian friendship paradigm and to a lesser degree Poe's method of evaluating media effects, the first expedition travels through the relatively well-mapped trails in the park of classical friendship narrative and epic poetry to study how the friends fulfill the criteria as model friends. The context is oral communication, for the earliest tales are born out of oral traditions. Divine intervention, spirituality, solitude, virtue, the deficient friend, the friend as a catalyst for action; reciprocity, sacrifice, and subordination are some of the questions that are framed and examined. The friendship tales range from *Gilgamesh* (1999) to *the Song of Roland* (1999). The friendships within this range are often the original substance of the classical friendship model. Poe's system enables a workable connection to oral culture and tradition. Much emerges from this visit. For one thing, women are largely excluded from the early friendship narrative. For another, solitude is something to be abhorred. Finally, the friends themselves are invariably extraordinary people, mostly heroic; some are demigods, figure in God's or the gods' plans, and hear directly from God or the gods.

Without the manuscript era and the development of written language, this undertaking would be impossible, yet it is essential to review how radically written communication has restructured societies and perceptions of the world and also to be grateful that the marvelous friendships of the past, born from oral tradition, were recorded. The grand invention is, of course, the alphabet, but learning the abstract code is not a process that comes naturally to human beings while oral communication is like learning how to walk. The human brain, according to most language experts, is pre-wired

for speech communication. The human hardware, in other words, comes with preset programming that has hardly been modified through evolution. Stanislas Dehaene in, *Reading in the Brain: the New Science of How We Read* (2009) provides a thorough analysis of how the brain functions in this regard, and he explains the acquisition of literacy in simple neurological terms. This friendship study proposes that if there is hard wiring, or pre-programming, or memory in the organic sense, one could reason that, for instance, ethics and values might also, to a degree, be innately transferable. One could even suggest that there is a friendship instinct. Even if a pattern for abstract thinking or one for values of the heart, as it were, might seem improbable, the human brain and its storage possibilities still contain enigma. It can be claimed, however, that the human being, or the human brain, has a penchant for patterns, and the more times that certain patterns are traced, the more engrained those patterns are likely to become. This hypothesis could hold for the transfer of a friendship template through many generations; maybe a friendship paradigm owes its formation to the primordial need for survival. The lone individual, in a primitive setting, is almost surely doomed. Herein lays one of the reasons that this exploration also probes into the changing perceptions of solitude as part of the friendship discourse.

The deep investigation of reading and the manuscript era are also for the purpose of showing that the brain has to adjust in order to acquire literacy. The learning process is artificial. Reading and writing take years to master. One has to work at it. Thus, the question arises of whether the organic adaptations coincide with changing views about friendship. Certainly, from the print era forward there is a new kind of truth based upon real experience, growing scientific knowledge, and technical progress that can all be

easily documented and widely disseminated. The world has become more cynical and practical although churches and monarchies at first remain elite and powerful entities. Between 1500 and 1700, new friendship narratives and arguments are steadily emerging from a growing educated class, and these new writings are handily multiplied by the use of the printing press. The heroic idealism of the past hero friendship encounters the practical notion of being pragmatic. Alceste, in Molière's *Le Misanthrope* (2006) is made to look the fool for his dogmatism. Although Philinte seems to be well intentioned and regards himself as Alceste's friend, Alceste refuses his friendship. Alemán, a Spanish novelist, in his story *Guzmán de Alfarach* (1987) develops a main character who yearns for a superior friendship but who finds it impossible to attain. Both stories, however, highlight the importance of communication between friends. Women enter the friendship forum as well, leading to a profitable discourse about friendship between women, marriage, and the Platonic friendship. Katherine Philips (Llewellyn 2002) stands in center ring with her poetry and letters.

The possibility of the best kind of friendship with key elements of the classical friendship model is seemingly reintroduced in the eighteenth century as the door is opened to outstanding friendships between people of different origins and classes. Surprising contributors to the friendship narratives are Voltaire (1972) and Diderot (1936). Candide becomes best friends with his valet Cacambo who is of mixed origin. Diderot in “*Les deux amis de Bourbonnes*” reminds the reader that in a material age, the superior friendship as one where the friendship itself is the greatest fortune that each friend can possess. With literacy and the print era, however, comes a new kind of isolation and solitude. Jean-Jacques Rousseau (2012) withdraws from society, and Mary

Shelley (1976) suggests that science and technology can create sentient creatures that are no longer human. She probes into what it is to be utterly and totally friendless. The story of Goethe's *Werther* (1962) is largely told through Werther's writing to his friend, William. A discussion of physical proximity in friendship ensues; and potential difficulties of friendship between the sexes becomes part of the story perhaps without the author's realizing it, when one or the other is drawn to his friend beyond the Platonic sense in a desire for absolute completeness. The question of nature, too, as solace for the lonely and solitary, receives attention as Rousseau presents ideas about the goodness of nature and the natural good in humanity. Although Rousseau is not specific about friendship with God, there is the thought that one through nature can experience God's presence and consequently not feel alone. Labor and action are also part of friendship. The best kinds of friendship occur when friends are engaged together in some labor or activity just as the classical hero friends might be fighting together in war or on a journey to slay some mythical monster.

The 19th and early 20th centuries are extensions of the print era. The 19th century in particular takes firm hold of many of the concepts that sprout from the 18th century. Emerson (1993) and C. S. Lewis (2012) restore and expand the classical-Christian friendship in the belief that such an outstanding relationship between two people can still exist by keeping the principal parts of the original model intact, such as the need for individual integrity and right thinking but without the naivety of an *Alceste* or *Candide*. In the new world, Huck, an adolescent boy, can develop a friendship with an adult slave, Jim (Twain 1993), but it is society that perhaps corrupts this friendship and prevents it from enduring. Ishmael and his "bosom friend" Queequeg, born a cannibal in the South

Seas, exhibit the best kind of friendship devotion (Melville 1993). While Thoreau (1960, 1991) relishes nature and solitude without excluding friendship, Bartleby experiences utter aloneness (Melville 2015). Set in the 19th century but written in the 20th, Willa Cather (1990) writes the story of the missionary priest Father Latour and his boyhood friend Father Vaillant who together are sent to restore the Catholic Church in the New Mexico territory after it is annexed by the United States. Latour is to become the territorial bishop, and Vaillant is indeed Latour's right hand and comfort. There is no less a story of friendship and challenge than that of Ishmael and Queequeg in *Moby Dick* (Melville 1993). In the friendship stories there is a return of the spiritual element. At times, an invisible hand seems to help and guide the characters and allows the friends their opportunities to serve each other. There is a question of whether the capacity for the best kind of friendship can exist without faith and Sartre's solitary Roquentin in *La nausée* (1938) struggles without purpose and meaning. Finally, Carver's short story "Cathedral" (2015) includes friendship communication media without print, in fact, almost without sight. It links this work to the next step, which would be to examine the effects of audiovisual media on friendship. Audiocassette tapes, two-way amateur radio, and television are all part of the friendship experience, and a Platonic friendship between two friends of the opposite sex is portrayed as a long standing, potentially lifelong bond. The sightlessness of one friend is an important consideration in the analysis of this story.

The investigation includes Merton's concise point-by-point enumeration and explanation of the revised classical-Christian friendship model as it has emerged in the 20th century (1955). One discovers that the rules have not fundamentally changed as humanity confronts new communication media. The conclusion introduces possible

avenues in the friendship discourse as they might be reflected in contemporary fiction, particularly in film and contemporary drama. The conversation ends hopefully, for friendship and its possibilities have progressed positively through the print era.

Friendship has become far less discriminatory in the sense that it can develop between the most unlikely pair and without social criticism; yet the essential arches established by the ancients and the early Christian writers are still operating.

Review of Literature

There are many friendship treatises, and several researchers probe the area of the connection between friendship and communication. Few, however, look at how communication technologies could have altered friendship throughout history or used specific devices for studying the effects. Furthermore, there is little attempt to identify friendship as it is depicted in literature in connection to the prevalent media of specific historical periods although Ronald Sharp's *Friendship and Literature: Spirit and Form* (1968) is referenced in the some contemporary works on friendship that regard literature but is not reviewed here. Two of the more recent books that parallel the interests of this investigation are Sandra Lynch's *Philosophy and Friendship* (2005) and A. C. Grayling's *Friendship* (2013). These two works, however, have not and shall not be consulted for the purpose of this research project. The analyses of the philosophical perspectives that are conveyed in this project shall rely heavily on the original works and most of the analysis that attempts to define the nature of friendship is that of this author. Although the reader will quip that the wheel may have been reinvented, it is also hoped that some new insight might emerge from fresh analyses of the original texts without the encumbrances

and prejudices of other scholarly inferences. Nevertheless, these two works, *Philosophy and Friendship* (2005) and Grayling's *Friendship* (2013) appear to be excellent texts and demand review. A third book, Gregory Jusdanis's *A Tremendous Thing: Friendship from the Iliad to the Internet* (2014), must be reviewed, for it is an outstanding work that most closely resembles the friendship examination that follows this review.

One of the first things Lynch (2005) claims in her preface is that, "The mobility, urban dislocation, time constraints, transience and heterogeneity that characterise modern life might be expected to disrupt conceptions of friendship constructed within the context of life in more homogeneous societies" (ix). Lynch will anchor her work upon the Aristotelian view of friendship and how it has been processed by other friendship philosophers both past and modern such as Cicero and Derrida. Lynch, in *Philosophy and Friendship* (2005) attempts to present the changing philosophical viewpoints of friendship and to thus arrive at a more realistic than idealistic definition that better encompasses a contemporary scenario. Essentially, Lynch (2005) strives to convince the reader that the friendship model is not and should not be a fixed one: "If we acknowledge friendship as a dynamic relation between individuals we can apply the force of these comments to friends" (xi). Lynch (2005) includes many of the most important friendship themes which she labels "self-understanding," the "ethical relationship" after she builds an understanding of what she calls "the Aristotelian Taxonomy" and "the Kantian Taxonomy" (v-vi).

Grayling's effort towards defining and understanding friendship entitled, simply, *Friendship* (2013), builds an extensive yet highly accessible summary of early friendship ideas from Plato through the enlightenment. Accordingly, he lays the groundwork for

parts titled “Legends” and “Experiences.” In “Legends” many of the most familiar friendship narratives, such as those of Achilles and Patroclus, and David and Jonathan are contextualized. Grayling (2013) grounds his discussion almost entirely on classical definitions and examples in these first two parts (“Ideas” and “Legends”) of his work. In other words, he stays largely within the parameters of philosophical thought and friendship narratives beginning with Plato’s *Lysis* and *Symposium* and ending with the Enlightenment, which he suggests is a return to the friendship models of the Roman Republic (95). Grayling’s part III, “Experiences,” is briefest and presents much of Grayling’s perspective on friendship. One of the main points that Grayling wishes to emphasize about the nature of friendship is that it knows no boundaries as regards gender, age, or family bond; and people will be happy if they are able to achieve it:

In the end, though, it is a personal friendship which is the central point of this discussion. I repeat what I said at the outset: we regard it as a success if we become friends with our parents when we grow up, our children when they grow up, or lovers, spouses and workmates—for in every case a bond comes to exist, and can be relied on, which transcends the other reasons we entered into association with the people in question. (Grayling 2013, 202)

Grayling’s perspective follows a more classical bent. He is less pragmatic than Lynch and seems to approach the concept of friendship as something more static than dynamic although the idea of with whom one might become a friend is broadened into contemporary terms.

This work and research concurs with Grayling’s in much of his analysis; but this investigation will scrutinize a version of the classical model of friendship through the lenses of technological innovation, particularly in the way that human beings are able to

communicate with each other and in the way that they communicate culture to one another through media.

Jusdanis's *A Tremendous Thing: Friendship from the Iliad to the Internet* (2014), which is not consulted for this work, is remarkably similar, nevertheless, in its use of philosophical references and particularly in its analyses of the great narratives like *Gilgamesh* (1999) *The Song of Roland* (1999) and even *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1993) to name a handful. It is a highly integrated work that does not strictly label friendship, for instance, as classical, although a paradigm emerges thematically according to chapter: "The Politics of Friendship," "Mourning Becomes Friendship," "Duty and Desire," and "Friends and Lovers." In other words, the structure of Jusdanis's book is not so much historical or chronological as it is thematic. One will also find a balanced, reliance on secondary sources for theoretical verification and literary analysis.

Jusdanis ventures past the printing press. For instance, he examines audiovisual friendships in films such as *Zorba the Greek* (1964). He also treads into the arena of erotic love and friendship, confronting classical thinking through an analysis of Plato's and of Aristotle's friendship ideas while touching briefly upon Christian concepts. This author, however, disagrees with some of Jusdanis's speculation, particularly when he suggests that Ishmael and Queequeg may have shared more than an acceptable male intimacy according to classical-Christian standards (Jusdanis 2014, 135-139). Jusdanis also gives less attention to the idea of solitude as juxtaposition to friendship than one shall find in this examination. Finally, Jusdanis broaches "Digital Friendship" in an afterword, which well exceeds the range of this endeavor.

In short, Jusdanis's book is a much better synthesis of friendship from the beginning of Western civilization to the present than this investigator has seen, particularly in regards to a paradigm that compares greatly to the classical-Christian model framed by in this writing. *A Tremendous Thing: Friendship from the Iliad to the Internet* (2014) is not, however, a direct focus on the media element of friendship so much as it is an effort to connect philosophical thinking to the friendship narratives and even to their authors. Jusdanis also shows more interest in the biographies of the friendship authors themselves to make his assertions. Frankly, if Jusdanis's text had come into this author's hands sooner, it would have forced considerable reevaluation and revision of the investigation that follows this review. However, a closer scrutiny of Jusdanis's work might show areas of real disagreement, particularly in places where Jusdanis accepts contemporary historical analysis as factual.

This project must also consider the efforts of other theorists and scientists who wish to discover the extent to which communication technologies and media operate on friendship. Much of the current social and psychological analysis of friendship communication seems to have omitted philosophy and literature or, at minimum, failed to establish an adequate definition of that which is friendship. In this century, there have been several areas of interest in friendship and communication, and this dissertation will make limited use of them, especially the empirical work, which, because of its sheer volume as well as its specialization, does not easily align itself to fiction literature. Although some of these studies are narrow in focus, they might help verify some of the theories on friendship communication that may develop. Some in-depth social research into this question involves the study of adolescents with language impairments referred to

as “significant language impairments” or “SLI” (Wadman, Durkin and Conti-Ramsden 2011, 42). These studies generally acknowledge that, “Children and adolescents without friends, or with poor friendship quality, are at risk of loneliness, stress, and concomitant developmental psychopathologies” (Durkin and Conti-Ramsden 2007, 1441). Although most of the research concerns adolescents, other studies have reported that adults with significant language impairments, or SLI, have issues “in respect to forming and maintaining close relationships” (Wadman, Durkin and Conti-Ramsden 2011, 43).

There have also been studies conducted in the relatively new field of cyberpsychology to measure, “the effects of text, audio, video, and in-person communication on bonding between friends” (Sherman, Michikyan and Greenfield 2013). The particular study in question, however, has a rather limited sample size “of 58 female university students aged 18-21 years” (Ibid.). The findings are, nevertheless, relevant to today and include the use of the latest communication technologies.

A most interesting problem is raised in regards to language and cultural differences, suggesting that those differences can foster a different communication dynamic between friends and in that which might constitute a superior friendship. Again, the sample size of the research is quite small and gender specific, having to do only with Finnish men (Virtanen and Isotalus 2013, 133).

One of the more theoretical works, and one that is closer to this dissertation, is reflected in an attempt to link “the phenomenology of friendship” to a socio-historical analysis (Dreher 2010, 401). Dreher calls his piece a “parallel action” to the friendship phenomena in which “the perspective of social science focuses on concrete socio-historical constructions of friendship in different time periods” (Ibid.). Dreher’s effort

seems particularly relevant, for he is performing an historical study, and he uses the philosophical base in what he describes as “subjective ‘constitution processes’” (2010, 402). The sociological aspect is this “parallel action” is referred to as the “socio-historic ‘construction’ of the phenomenon” (Ibid.). The inquiry into current research has not been an exhaustive one, and further findings that bear significantly on this project are highly probable.

Chapter 1

Fundamentals of the Classical-Christian Friendship

“If they are friends of ours, invite them in,” [Agathon] said, “but if not, say that the drinking is over.”

—Plato, *Symposium*

The earliest recorded friendship in Western Literature, the story of Gilgamesh and Enkidu (1999), predates the early philosophers; however, discussions of friendship theory in Western thought begin with the Greeks and their friendship stories. There is the famous friendship of Achilles and Patroclus in Homer’s *Iliad* (1993, 1999) and later that of Aeschylus’s trilogy, *Oresteia*, between Orestes and Pylades. The Greek philosophers will draw on these stories and others in their mythology and legends to help them make their cases for what friendship is and ought to be, and their theoretical discourse shall undergo little modification despite the infusion of Judeo-Christian doctrine during the Dark Ages. In fact, one might propose that friendship theory comes full circle prior to the printing press as love is always from the beginning a central theme in that which comprises friendship, and the best, truest kind of love, even the capacity for love, is highly dependent on the virtuousness of the lovers. Love and virtue, then, are at the core of the friendship discussion, but these concepts are of themselves two extremely complex things. Aristotle (1980) simplifies through synthesis by calling love a virtue as it regards friendship:

Now since friendship depends more on loving, and it is those who love their friends that are praised, loving seems to be the characteristic virtue of friends, so

that it is only those in whom this is found in due measure that are lasting friends, and only their friendship that endures. (Aristotle 1980, 205-206)

By providing examples of what true friendship is not, one might arrive a bit quicker at how virtue and love are perceived by the ancients and how these qualities are essential to friendship; but a comprehensive discussion of the top friendship qualities along with some of the bolder, more spiritual theories is inescapable.

An interesting aspect of friendship that traverses the centuries is that of the yearning of two souls, or the quest for one's soul-mate. Therefore, this quest-of-souls supposition shall receive some attention. The soul-friendship concept is expressed in Plato's *Symposium* (1993) when Aristophanes speaks of how the original human was a combination of three entities that Zeus thought to divide for fear that the humans would become too powerful and overwhelm the gods. Henceforth, these separate parts never cease to seek each other out. Aristophanes also, in keeping with the idea of love as an integral part of friendship, calls the god, Love, "the best friend of men" (Plato 1993, 157-158). Cicero (1967), too, from the Roman perspective, claims that the friend should be loved as a second self. The seeking and the blending with the second self is something natural (Cicero 1967, 36). Aristotle (1980) has already discussed the need for connection: "The essence of friendship is living together" (246). Celtic beliefs are blended with those of the early Christian monastic communities, and there are obvious links to other Christian writers of The Middle Ages (Sellner 1995, 1). Sellner tells the narratives of the Irish saints and their relationships, referring to their friendships with each other. One narrative examines the relationship between Saint Patrick and Saint Brigit (Sellner 1995, 2). This friendship is outside the norm, for it is a friendship between a man and a woman

and also a distance relationship. Aquinas (1993) writes, “The lover stands in relation to that which he loves as though it were himself or part of himself” (735). Aelred, writing in the early 12th century, asks, rhetorically, “And what is more delightful than so to unite spirit to spirit and so to make one out of two?” (Aelred, quoted in Dutton 2010, 45).

If one is to love this second self in friendship, one has to love oneself, so a prerequisite for friendship is that the individual who loves a friend loves him or herself. It is even suggested that the truest friendship can be, arguably, self-interested because the person hopes that the strength of his or her virtuous actions for the friend would survive immortally among the living. Friendship is action (Cicero 1967, 10). Diotima, in the discourse retold by Socrates, asks him, “Do you imagine that Alcestis would have died to save Admetus, or Achilles to avenge Patroclus...if they had not imagined that the memory of their virtues, which still survives among us, would be immortal?” And, she, Socrates’ teacher, continues, “I am persuaded that all men do all things, and the better they are the more they do them, in the hope of the glorious fame of immortal virtue” (Plato 1993, 166). Aristotle (1980) seems to confirm this idea, writing that “man” still wishes the greatest good for himself, but there are many measurements and senses of this idea. For the good and virtuous man, it is honor that he seeks for himself (205). Aristotle (1980) will oppose this sort of selfishness with the selfless love of a mother for her child. She expects nothing in return: “So long as they [mothers] know their [children’s] fate they love them and do not seek to be loved in return” (205). It is not the same in the love of friendship where reciprocity is a requirement since one loves the friend as he or she would himself. Friendship, nevertheless, has as one basis love of self. Perhaps it is better to use the term self-esteem in this case, as love of self can also be taken as arrogance or

vanity—as *hubris*. Aristotle refers to an intrinsic, intellectual good for which people do things that benefit themselves in terms of being virtuous and good. This good and virtuous man is often defined:

He wishes for himself what is good and what seems so, and does it (for it is characteristic of the good man to work out the good), and does so for his own sake (for he does it for the sake of the intellectual element in him, which is thought to be the man himself). (Aristotle 1980, 227)

The individual is anxious for himself to act justly, temperately, and as virtuously as possible, yet for his own sake (Aristotle 1980, 236). Aelred acknowledges, eight hundred years later, that love of oneself enables one to love one's friend; friendship is ultimately love of self since the friend is the second self (Dutton 2010, 46). For Aelred and his fellow Christians, the love of self is not a negative kind of selfishness since each person is God's child.

First, in consideration of what friendship is not, and the physical aspect of living seems quite important to the ancients generally, love in friendship is split from physical love:

The Love who is the offspring of the common Aphrodite is essentially common...and is of the body rather than the soul—the most foolish beings are the objects of this love which desires only to gain an end, but never thinks of accomplishing the end nobly, and therefore does good and evil quite indiscriminately. (Plato 1993, 153)

Love of the body, in fact, is called evil, and this belief will be fortified within Christian doctrine during The Middle Ages. “Evil is the vulgar lover who loves the body rather than the soul” (Plato 1993, 154). As the prime example, Socrates, when afforded the opportunity to sleep with a young, attractive person, reacts accordingly:

He was so superior to my solicitations, so contemptuous and derisive and disdainful of my beauty...hear, O judges; for judges you shall be of the haughty

virtue of Socrates—nothing more happened, but in the morning when I [Alcibiades] awoke...I arose as from the couch of a father or an elder brother. (Plato 1993, 171)

Aristotle (1980) continues this thread, surmising that friendship based on pleasure, which is in reference to physical or external attributes, is unlikely to survive once the pleasure stops. “Such friendships, then, are easily dissolved...for if one party is no longer pleasant or useful the other ceases to love him” (195).

Physical things are never everlasting; they are perishable. The physical senses themselves are limited in range and perception (Augustine 2002, 55-56). Augustine distances himself conclusively from carnal love and distinguishes it from the purity ascribed to the best kind of friendship:

To love and to be loved was sweet to me, and all the more when I gained the enjoyment of the body of the person I loved. Thus, I polluted the spring of friendship with the filth of concupiscence and I dimmed its luster with the slime of lust. (Augustine 2002, 31)

Even the kiss itself, as a sign of affection, is accompanied by specific rules for the Christian thinkers of The Middle Ages. Aelred of Rievaulx (2010) instructs his readers that a kiss is only to be given for honest reasons such as permitted between husband and wife, as a sign of unity, or as a sign of reconciliation. He rejects other types of physical kisses and believes that the honest person knows the difference (76.24). In his discussion of love and friendship, Aquinas (1993) does not equate love with concupiscence (734.1). Love is not a passion but a relation; it denotes the impetus toward union, but it is not the movement itself (Aquinas 1993, 735.2).

Many of the writers who ponder the friendship questions speak of the loss of a dear friend, and often in these discourses are emphasized the everlasting nature of the

best kind of friendship. Within this everlasting possibility for friendship, Plato again turns away from the carnal possibility regarding the highest form of love; carnal friendship, therefore, strays from the truest friendship. Through his character Pausanias, Plato claims that to love something of a physical nature is to love something that is unsteady. “When the bloom of youth which he was desiring is over, he takes wing and flies away, in spite of all his words and promises; whereas the love of the noble disposition is life-long, for it becomes one with the everlasting” (Plato 1993, 154). Human beings seek the everlasting. Diotima, as has already been noted, tells Socrates that, “All men do all things, and the better they are the more they do them, in hope of the glorious fame of immortal virtue; for they desire the immortal” (Plato 1993, 166). Ultimately, love is “the everlasting possession of the good” (Plato 1993, 165). And, both love and virtue, or the good, are the two most essential elements necessary for the ultimate in friendship.

Cicero’s lecturer, Laelius, at the loss of his friend Scipio, is compelled to discuss the nature of friendship with his young visitors, but rather than speak of a metaphysical possibility, he keeps the everlasting quality of the best kind of friendship earthbound, as something to be cherished that belongs to the memory, and he hopes that the memory of his great friendship will be everlasting. He suggests that when a friendship is strong enough and of the best kind, it will be known to posterity as well (Cicero 1967, 13). “And such a friendship is as, might be expected, permanent” (Aristotle 1980, 197).

The ancient theorists are in accord regarding the essential principles of the best friendship. Along with love and virtue, there is also friendship’s everlasting nature. Love and virtue conducted on an everlasting scale lead Christian thinkers like Aelred to draw friendship into a spiritual alignment on the pathway to God (Dutton 2010, 29). Aelred

suggests that God created friendship in the beginning. Humans have, therefore, a natural “love of companionship” just as insentient creatures do (Aelred 2010, 65-66). Aristotle has acknowledged the need for friendship, and he views it as nothing but a reasonable desire:

For without friends no one would choose to live, though he had a all other goods; even rich men and those in possession of office and of dominating power are thought to need friends most of all; for what is the use of such prosperity without the opportunity of beneficence, which is exercised chiefly and in its most laudable form towards friends? (Aristotle 1980, 192)

Thus, one can understand that, in order to continue living after one’s friends are gone, true friendship would indeed need to have some sort of continuance even after the death of one’s true friends if he or she were the last one remaining. Cicero (1967) indicates that to mourn the loss of a friend is to envy that friend, for that friend has reached heaven (12).

One’s being alone, then, is unnatural and that which is unnatural is often classified as strange, even evil, prior to the technological age. “But it seems strange when one assigns all good things to the happy man, not to assign friends, who are thought the greatest of external goods” (Aristotle 1980, 238). Cicero (1967) adds that, “Nature abhors isolation, and even leans upon something as stay and support; and this is found in its most pleasing form in our closest friend” (38). Aelred (2010, 66.57) refers to Genesis 2:18 when God says, “It is not good that man should be alone.” God has given humanity the genes for friendship and charity, which God enhances: “Nature [from God] impressed on human minds attachment of charity and friendship, which an inner experience of love [God] increased with a delightful sweetness” (Aelred 2010, 66.58). Aelred (2010)

continues, saying that those who reject friendship harm themselves by rejecting their own humanity. People, with no friends or who deny friendship, are beasts (Dutton 2010, 46).

Aelred pushes the envelope as far as he can in his belief that friendship is the beginning of eternal bliss, which necessitates the connection to God:

Thus rising from the holy love with which a friend embraces a friend to that which friend embraces Christ, one may take the spiritual fruit of friendship fully and joyfully into the mouth, while looking forward to all abundance in the life to come. (Aelred 2010, 126.134)

For Augustine (2002), the truest friendship between two people cannot occur without God: “No friends are true friends unless you, my God bind them fast to one another through the love which is sown in our hearts by the Holy Spirit” (4.4.7). For early Christian thinkers like Aelred (2010), God must be a part of friendship in order for it to be good: “The one who remains in friendship remains in God and God in him” (John 4:16). Friendship is a step toward the love and knowledge of God, which might seem logical even to the Greeks and Romans since the truest and best friendships can only be between those who are good, wish to be good, and who seek to practice virtuous behavior to the exclusion of vice, or sin. There is nothing dishonest, nothing feigned, and nothing pretended. Friendship should be unforced and genuine, just as charity should be (Aelred 2010, 74.16-18). Aelred dreams of a great collection of true friends, beginning with the individual friendships, and it is God directed as one seeks to become closer to God:

God himself acts to channel so much friendship and charity between himself and the creatures he sustains and between the classes and order he distinguishes, and between each and every one he elects that in this way each one may love another as himself...Thus the bliss of all individually is the bliss of all collectively, and the sum of all individual beatitudes is the beatitude of all together. (Aelred 2010, 107.79)

The *anamchara*, or soul friendships of the Irish and Celtic Christians also centered on God: “True soul friends do not depend on each other alone, but root their relationship in God” (Sellner 1995, 4).

The most distinct schism between the classical thinkers and the Christian thinkers is perhaps in their view of God’s role in friendship. Again, there is Augustine’s insistence that the true friendship involves the Holy Spirit (Augustine 2002, 4.4.7). For Aristotle, the divinities are too far removed from humanity:

But when one party is removed to a great distance, as God is, the possibility of friendship ceases. This is in fact the origin of the question of whether friends really wish for their friends the greatest goods, e.g. that of being gods; since in that case their friends will not be good things for them (for friends are good things). (Aristotle 1980, 204)

The divinities may not be as involved in friendship for the classical theorists as they are for Christian believers, for whom the coming of Christ seems to have made friendship something divine; Christ becomes human in order to befriend humanity. He breaks Aristotle’s barrier. However, in both cases friendship is everlasting, in more than one sense, and the friendship that is not of an everlasting nature is not the truest kind. Aristotle (1980) establishes a taxonomy that distinguishes two types of transitory friendship apart from the best kind of friendship. There is the utilitarian friendship. This friendship is good for someone because it can lead to things like power, wealth, and influence. Aristotle also suggests that such a friendship can be on fixed terms that are formal and legal. An example might be one of political alliances or business partnerships. The second type of friendship has pleasure as its object. The relationship delivers some kind of gratification, which could be physical, emotional, or even intellectual. For instance, persons may stay together as long as each makes the other laugh, but when one

becomes depressed or discouraged, the other looks for better company (Aristotle 1980, 216). Aelred (2010) calls the pleasure friendship carnal, and he says that it is most common among the young, yet with “its trifles and its falsehoods, and if there is in it nothing dishonorable, we must tolerate this type of friendship in the hope of some more abundant grace” (76.87). Though these friendships are not entirely negative, they are easily terminated, incidental friendships that endure only until the ends in question are reached or cease to exist (Aristotle 1980, 195). Aristotle’s predecessors like Cicero and later Aelred will use Aristotle’s taxonomy in their dialogues and with only the slightest variances. According to Cicero (1967), true friendship should not be a deliberate calculation (18). Furthermore, it should not originate out of want and need (19). He adds that, “True friendship is very difficult to find among those who engage in politics and the contest of office” (30). Aristotle closes his case regarding the inferiority of friendships designed by utility or pleasure as follows:

If these be the objects of friendship, it is dissolved when they do not get the things that formed the motives of their love; for each did not love the other person himself but the qualities he had, and these were not enduring; that is why the friendships also are transient. But the love of characters, as has been said, endures because it is self-dependent. (Aristotle 1980, 220)

One must return, therefore, to the everlasting or permanent nature of true friendship. With whom is such a friendship possible? There are some guidelines. The best kind of friendship can only occur between two people who are good. Cicero (1967) splits goodness from wisdom, as he believes that no mortal has ever attained wisdom (14). Thus, he offers his definition of good people: “Those whose actions and lives leave not question as to their honour, purity, equity, and liberality; who are free from greed, lust, and violence; and who have the courage of their convictions” (Ibid.). In essence,

reciprocity must exist between two good people in order for this rare form of friendship to be conceived. “Now equality and likeness are friendship, and especially the likeness of those who are like in virtue; for being steadfast in themselves they hold fast to each other” (Aristotle 1980, 206).

What makes the ideal friendship union problematic for the medieval monasteries and convents is the rarity of two such people, alike in their love for each other and their virtue, to come together. One does not always find his soul-friendships. For Aristotle in ancient Greece, there is little possibility of having an extended number of real friends, disappointing as his prognosis may be for the Facebook community.

Love is ideally a sort of excess of friendship, and that can only be felt towards one person; therefore, great friendship too can only be felt towards a few people...one cannot have with many people the friendship based on virtue and on the character of our friends themselves, and we must be content if we find even a few such. (Aristotle 1980, 244)

This scarcity of compatible individuals, soul-friendships if one wishes to think of them as such, is perhaps to some people a part of what makes the truest kind of friendship most extraordinary. However, Aelred (2010) is more hopeful that feelings of love and affection can encompass the larger community whose members abide by the same moral codes and in which each member has love for the other. Aelred (2010) makes the monastery sound like a nice place to be: “I marveled as though walking through the pleasures of paradise...I found not one brother I did not love, and by whom I did not think I was loved in turn” (75.82). Yet Aelred will not concede that all members of his monastic community, despite their mutual affection and virtuous qualities, can be admitted into the innermost sanctity of friendship. Even for Aelred, from among the members of his community, the great friend is difficult to obtain. The needed depth is very remote:

“Therefore, how many people do we love to whom it would be unwise to lay open our soul and to pour forth our inmost being—I mean those whose age or sensibility or judgment is not strong enough to bear the weight of such revelations” (Aelred 2010, 76.84). Aquinas (1993) adds reason to the equation. For him true love must obey reason, and it involves the will (734.1). Aquinas refers to Augustine in this regard: “A right will is a good love, and a wrong will is a bad love” (Augustine, quoted in Aquinas 1993, 736). Again, there is the intention of the friendship, for a true friendship cannot be externally motivated. To have true friendship, however, is a difficult thing that takes time: “One must, too, acquire some experience of the other person and become familiar with him, and that is very hard” (Aristotle 1980, 201). Says Cicero (1967), “The older the sweeter, as in wines that keep well” (32). In his quest to reach the ultimate friendship, Aelred describes how friendship must be cultivated over time:

As devotion grows with the support of spiritual interests, and as with age maturity increases and the spiritual senses are illumined, then, with affection purified, such friends may mount to higher realms, just as we said yesterday that because of a kind of likeness the ascent is easier from human friendship to friendship with God himself. (Aelred 2010, 109.87)

One is further reminded by Aristotle (1980) that there is free will: “But mutual love involves choice, and choice springs from a state of character” (200). Aelred (2010) ascribes four aspects to the superior friendship: love, affection, reassurance, and joy. Love involves both service and goodwill. Affection has to do with the increase of one’s inner joy or delight. Reassurance means communication of all things to one’s friend, without anxiety, fear, or suspicion (99). These qualities are nurtured over time. Of course in these things, there must be that reciprocity between friends, which means that the friends must bear goodwill towards one another (Aristotle 1980, 194). Yet, as it has been

shown, the soul friend is not easily to be found, and there are decisions to be made regarding who becomes one's friend.

For the ancients, equality, in many aspects of life and thought, is a prerequisite to friendship. Cicero (1967) makes equality one of his golden rules: "Put yourself on a level with your friend" (32). Physical and material status, age, and social status all, therefore, matter in the possibilities for friendship, especially to the Greeks and Romans, who both lived in stratified societies. Perhaps for thinkers like Cicero and Aristotle, it was difficult to imagine that the depth of love and virtue necessary for the best friendships could transcend class boundaries. Aristotle (1980) talks about the "interval in respect of virtue or vice or wealth or anything else between the parties" (204). First, he points out the great distance that separates people from the gods and therefore the impossibility of friendship between them. Next, he refers to the kings: "For with them, too, men who are much their inferiors do not expect to be friends; nor do men of no account expect to be friends with the best or wisest men" (Ibid.). It is suggested, then, that democracy may provide the best political climate for friendship as there will be less possibility for social division and more possibility for justice (Aristotle 1980, 212). It may seem like stating the obvious, but the contributions of common upbringing and similarity of age such as exist between comrades and brothers are good for friendship (Aristotle 1980, 213). Though Cicero (1967) talks about the superiority of birth, he also suggests that blood lines and rank are not insurmountable since what always matter most are the virtue and affection that two friends share, yet one can elevate his friend: "If any of us have any advantage in personal character, intellect or fortune, we should be ready to make our friends sharers and partners in it with ourselves" (32). Cicero (1967) is magnanimous in his declaration: "For

the advantages of genius and virtue, and in short of every kind of superiority, are never realized to their fullest extent until they are bestowed upon our nearest and dearest” (33). The soul friend relationship of the Celtic saints breaks the mold, to an extent, although a reciprocity exists: “Soul friend relationships are characterized by mutuality: a profound respect for each other’s wisdom, despite any age or gender difference” (Sellner 1995, 2).

Christian thought opens another gate to the possibilities of friendship among the poor, though class distinction is maintained: Often *the friendships of the poor and needy are more reliable than those of the rich*, because poverty may so remove the expectation of gain that it does not diminish friendship but rather increases love” (Aelred 2010, 104.70).

With this idea of true friendship being between two people who are alike, the notion of friendships with the opposite sex hardly figures in the classical discussion. When the friends meet at Agathon’s, after the meal the flute-girl is voted out of the room: “I move, in the next place, that the flute-girl...be made to go away and play to herself, or, if she likes, to the women who are within” (Plato 1993, 151). The men want to have a philosophical conversation, and the women are simply not invited; yet in the “Symposium” Socrates turns, ironically, to the wise woman Diotima for his tutorial on love, and she is not, or is more, than a prostitute: “I will rehearse a tale of love which I heard from Diotima of Mantinea, a woman wise in this and in the many other kinds of knowledge...She was my instructress in the art of love” (Plato 1993, 163). Certainly, as it is told through Socrates’ recollection, Diotima renders the best account of what love is according to Plato. Perhaps, therefore, one should distinguish love and friendship at this juncture.

Simply because Diotima is wise and mentors Socrates, it does not mean that she loves Socrates or that she is his friend. The teacher and student relationship does not necessarily meet the requirements for the truest friendship. Although goodwill is required for friendship, it must be reciprocal (Aristotle 1980, 192). One can wish goodwill toward someone and that wish can be reciprocal, but the desire for companionship must also exist (Aristotle 1980, 207). The teacher wishes goodwill toward his students, but he or she does not seek out their company after class, nor do the students seek out the teacher, although some students may feel goodwill towards the teacher. Goodwill must include affection in friendship, says Cicero (1967, 15). Aelred distinguishes charity from goodwill. Goodwill is God's gift and should always be practiced (Dutton 2010, 27-29). And, goodwill awakens the emotion of love (Aelred 2010, 64). Charity is goodwill, but it is a quality or affection that should be practiced towards all persons, even towards one's enemies (Dutton 2010, 43). Therefore, goodwill and charity alone are not quite enough to cement the best kind of friendship. There is a mother's love and self-sacrifice for her children, too, to which some allusion has already been made, so it is possible to want the best for someone and to sacrifice for someone but not to attain what is defined as the truest friendship (Aristotle 1980, 205). Relationships with women, then, though they possess many qualities, do not appear to fully encompass the total friendship paradigm of the ancients. It should also be recalled that mothers and mentors are dissimilar to their children and their students; thus, it can be that the equality aspect of friendship is somewhat untenable although Augustine raises his mother high: "My mother was also with us—in a woman's garb, but with a man's faith, with the peacefulness of age and the fullness of motherly love and Christian piety" (Augustine 2002, 153).

The carnal element of any relationship consternates Augustine (2002), and it is for this reason, with the exception of the mother, that men and women could miss out on being true friends (102). As previously discussed, friendship cannot be for the sake of pleasure. Augustine talks about losing the mistress with whom he fathered his son, for she is seen as an impediment to his marriage, one which it can be inferred is not based on love, as he has intended to marry a young girl who cannot be ready for two years. He then, by his own admission, mires himself further in vice:

But I, as unhappy as I was, and weaker than a woman, could not bear the delay of two years that should elapse before I could obtain the bride I sought. And so, since I was not a lover of wedlock so much as a slave of lust, I procured another mistress—not a wife, of course. Thus in bondage to a lasting habit, the disease of my soul might be nursed and kept in its vigor. (Augustine 2002, 102)

Augustine (2002) holds out little hope for the wife of becoming a friend, even when referring to his mother, whom he venerates: “She arrived at a marriageable age, and she was given to a husband whom she served as her lord” (160). Her role was clear, that of wife and mother, and so she possessed many of the necessary qualities for friendship: “For she had ‘been the good wife of one man’ [I Tim. 5:9], had honored her parents, had guided her house in piety, was highly reputed for good works, and brought up her children” (Augustine 2002, 162). Augustine (2002) and his friends, at one point, wish to set up a common household, a place for the pursuit of wisdom, but the thought of wives and women make the idea unmanageable: “But when we began to reflect whether this would be permitted by our wives...the whole plan, so excellently framed, collapsed in our hands and was utterly wrecked and cast aside” (101). Augustine is speaking of women as obstacles in his path to God; he shows that women, or even a wife, are encumbrances. In order to overcome his being “tightly bound by the love of women,” Augustine (2002)

feels compelled to “a married life which bound me hand and foot” (128). Augustine never did marry.

Total celibacy is affixed as the best way to know God for Augustine (2002), but marriage is the next best option: “Thou commandest me to abstain from fornication, and as for marriage itself, thou has counseled something better than what thou dost allow” (196). One should realize, however, that Augustine is not discussing friendship on earth. Aelred’s *Spiritual Friendship* (2010) instead, has been described as a rewrite of Cicero’s treatment of friendship and as an attempt to unite both classical and Judeo-Christian thought on friendship as he seeks a pure and holy love (Dutton 2010, 34). Aelred breaks most interestingly from his predecessors and deviates from his peers in his inferences regarding marriage and the possibilities for equality between men and women. Aelred interprets the bible, particularly passages in Genesis, to affirm the equality of Adam and Eve (Mayeski 2009, 100). According to Aelred, all humans are equal, so there is no hierarchy. A man and a woman, therefore, can be on the same footing (Mayeski 2009, 100). Aelred, Mayeski (2009) believes, does not exclude the possibility of the marriage friendship. If, then, the husband and wife are equal, and according to Augustine and Aelred the kiss is pardonable between the spouses, the physical aspect of friendship might be allowed to exist as long as all the other qualities are in place. Aristotle, though he may not believe in the equality of men and women, leaves room for the possibility of true friendship in marriage in his belief that the number of persons one can love as friends is limited: “Love is ideally a sort of excess of friendship, and that can only be felt towards one person; therefore, great friendship, too, can only be felt towards a few people” (Aristotle 1980, 244). He even adds that “friendship is a partnership” (Aristotle 1980,

246). The idea of equality between men and women, however, is rather unique to Aelred and a small group of medieval theologians:

Marriage is friendship of the highest order, and everything that Aelred affirms about friendship can be attributed to the divinely ordained institution of marriage. This is a personalist understanding of marriage, significantly different from the thought of other theologians, both prior to and contemporaneous with Aelred. (Mayeski, 2009, 99)

Other Christians simply cannot get past the carnal element, the potential concupiscence, which marriage might encourage.

As it is with friendship, marriage is expected to endure: “*For friendship should be steadfast, and by being unwearied in affection, it should present an image of eternity*” (Aelred 2010, 89.6). With this permanence comes reciprocity in the summits of love and of goodness. Each friend wishes goodwill toward the other as if to him or herself. And, it may be true that one wishes more for his friend than for oneself. Cicero wishes to elevate this general idea as he takes issue with a certain set of rules:

The first, which hold that our regard for ourselves is to be the measure of our regard for our friend, is not true; for how many things there are which we would never have done for our own sakes, but do for the sake of a friend! (Cicero 1967, 28)

Such friendships are also almost indissoluble, for the best kinds of friend are carefully chosen, the decision mutual, and henceforth the relationship is nurtured over time.

Friendships of the best kind, furthermore, are tested although “this testing can only be made during the actual existence of the friendship” (Cicero 1967, 31). Thus, one enters upon the selection of these ultimate friends very carefully, but there is still the possibility for rupture. The friendship criteria are understood, and another thought on the matter is added: “The true rule is to take care in the selection of our friends as never to enter upon

a friendship with a man whom we could under any circumstances come to hate” (Cicero 1967, 29). There is also a special tolerance for the true friend:

Where nothing shameful was involved, no confidence betrayed, no virtue blemish had to yield to a friend, so I not only tolerated what seemed his transgression but also, where his peace of mind was threatened, preferred his will to my own. (Aelred 2010, 92.20)

So under what circumstances, then, could a friendship of such strong character be dissolved, especially if one has a friend “to whom you can say everything with absolute confidence as to yourself?” (Cicero 1967, 15). Thus, trust and tolerance are two principle qualities of the good friend; one trusts his friend and is never suspicious of him, and one should add above the two, loyalty: “Nothing that lacks loyalty can be stable” (Cicero 1967, 31). Loyalty, to Aelred (2010), means that, “Indeed a loyal friend contemplates in a friend nothing but his soul” (102.62). Therefore, if the trust is broken and if there is disloyalty, there could be just cause to end a true friendship. If one friend, furthermore, were to compromise his virtue and also the character of his friend, there might also be grounds for termination: “For, seeing that a belief in a man’s virtue is the original cause of friendship, friendship can hardly remain if virtue be abandoned” (Cicero 1967, 22). Cicero (1967), in relating a story about a man who pleads that he has acted in the interests of a friend in committing a treasonable act, arrives at the following rule regarding friendship: “*Neither ask nor consent to do what is wrong*. For the plea ‘for friendship’s sake’ is a discreditable one” (22). Aelred (2010) is somewhat more explicit in his reasons, through heavy reliance on biblical passages, for the rupture of friendship as he identifies “*slander, reproach, and pride, the betrayal of secrets, and a treacherous blow*” (93.23). Friends, then, of the best kind, will break up only because of a friend’s outrageous

conduct and offense (Cicero 1967, 34). Simply put, true friends do not wish to cause each other pain (Aristotle 1980, 245). It is not to say that good friends will not test each other. Patience and tolerance are essential in the best kind of friendship, and friends are willing to accept each other's criticism: "When corrected, the friend may not fret or despise or hate the one who corrects him, and he himself may not be ashamed to bear any hardship for his friend" (Aelred 2010, 102.61). In his investigation of the Celtic soul friendships, Sellner writes:

Soul friendships...include the ability of each to challenge the other when necessary...sometimes the most difficult aspect of any intimate relationship, but without it friendship can soon become superficial, stunted, and eventually lost. (Sellner 1995, 3)

Even in dissolution, however, it should not be possible for one to turn against the person who had been a true friend. No enmity should be allowed in dissolution. It is discreditable. One can be offended, but he or she should be without rancor (Cicero 1967, 35). One can never withdraw his love and respect for a former friend despite the offenses though one may deny that person the special confidence of friendship:

You may never withdraw your love from him, refuse him help, or deny him counsel. But if in his folly he should burst out even in blasphemies and curses, still show such respect for your bond, such respect for charity, that the blame falls on the one who inflicts the disgrace and not on the one who suffers it. (Aelred 2010, 101.57)

Reconciliation is also a possibility among true friends though such a possibility is perhaps voiced most explicitly among those people writing after the birth of Christ: "But if in anything we should chance to violate the law of friendship, let us avoid pride and seek the pardon of our friend through the blessing of humility" (Aelred 2010, 94.26).

A final aspect of this discussion to be broached in the interest of the over all purpose of this sally into friendship is that of proximity. It is staunchly affirmed that proximity is necessary for the best kind of friendship. Friends must remain in contact with each other, and for centuries, the only possibilities for such contact were physical proximity. Aristotle is steadfast in his claim because being good and having what is good are sought after; therefore, being with a friend is a most desirable thing:

He needs, therefore, to be conscious of the existence of his friend as well, and this will be realized in their living together and sharing in discussion and thought; for this is what living together would seem to mean in the case of man. (Aristotle 1980, 241)

In the same token, it is hardly possible for people to spend all their time together without being friends. Aristotle (1980), here, refers to the fixed number of friends that are possible, which, as previously stated, he believes is a very limited number: “Further, they too must be friends of one another, if they are all to spend their days together” (243).

Laelius calls such togetherness “the true secret of friendship” (Cicero 1967, 13). He and Scipio served, worked and traveled together. They experienced harmony in their pursuits, tastes, and sentiments (Cicero 1967, 13). To distance oneself from a true friend, therefore, can be problematic: “Distance does not break off the friendship absolutely, but only the activity of it. But if the absence is lasting, it seems actually to make men forget their friendship” (Aristotle 1980, 199-200). This distance, as previously discussed, can be perceived both literally and figuratively: “But when one party is removed to a great distance, as God is, the possibility of friendship ceases” (Aristotle 1980, 204). Yet, Christians will affirm that the resurrection of Jesus was not a withdrawal from humanity. In fact, one should feel closer to God. In this idea, there are the fascinating stories of the

Celtic saints who were often separated from their spiritual friends for great lengths of time, and it is a sixth characteristic of the soul-friendship: “It survives geographical separation” (Sellner 1995, 4). In his description of the Celtic soul-friendships, there is great emphasis placed on their everlasting nature as regards the eventuality of death, and there is allowance for solitude as these soul-friends are seeking intimate relationships with God. As death approaches, the spiritual friend is sought out so that he can assist with the transition from the temporal to the fully spiritual existence:

Anamcharas, like the desert Christians, appreciate both friendship and solitude as resources ultimately for “soulmaking”: the lifelong process of reconciliation, of making peace with oneself, with others, and with all of creation in preparation for one’s own death. As the stories of Kevin and Ciaran, and of Maedoc and Columcille, have already intimated, soul friends help each other make this transition, through death, to God. (Sellner 1995, 5)

It is evident that friends need each other; in fact, one could say that the separation of friends, were it to be permanent, would not make for much of a friendship unless the friendship is purely one of memory or of a metaphysical nature, such as in the separation that occurs after the death of one friend. One must ask the question, then, of whether in the contemporary world he or she is able to maintain the requisite geographical or spiritual proximity to another in order to maintain the truest and best friendship.

This discussion of what friendship is to the classical and early Christian thinkers can be disconcerting. It might seem impossible to establish and maintain such a friendship, let alone any sort of loving and virtuous relationship as described by people like Aristotle and Aelred. It certainly leads one to further examine whether with time the theories about friendship will change, particularly with the advent of new communication and transportation technologies that enable friends to sustain the necessary proximity. It

should be discovered, too, whether concepts of virtue and character have undergone transformations that would render the classical and medieval definitions of friendship obsolete.

Into the Renaissance

One might have hoped for some reprieve from the perfection of the best and truest kind of friendship as described by the ancients and the Medieval Christians, but in the age of exploration, when it has become clear to many people that the world is round and revolves around the sun, Renaissance thinker Michel de Montaigne (1965, 1993) embraces antiquity and strives to bring friendship to its ultimate perfection, which he himself will claim to have known with his friend LaBoétie.

But knowing how far from common usage and how rare such a friendship is, I do not expect to find any good judge of it. For the very discourses that antiquity has left us on the subject seem to me weak compared with the feeling I have.
(Montaigne 1993, 139)

It should be remembered, however, that Montaigne is inarguably synchronized with the classical philosophers and poets upon whom he feasts, which include Plato (1993), Aristotle (1980), and Cicero (1967). It should be noted that the medieval writers who preceded Montaigne, people like Augustine (2002), Aquinas (1993) and Aelred (2010), also find their roots in the friendship principles of the ancients. Montaigne, therefore, having accumulated plenty of material to go with his own experience, is able to deliver a succinct summation of the ancient theory as it refers to the best and truest friendship:

All associations that are forged and nourished by pleasure or profit, by public or private needs, are the less beautiful and noble, and the less friendships, in so far as they mix into friendship another cause and object and reward than friendship itself. Nor do the four ancient types—natural, social, hospitable, erotic—come up to real friendship, either separately or together. (Montaigne 1993, 135)

In rendering his perception of the superior friendship, Montaigne (1965, 1993) ends the review of the earliest Western discourses.

In Montaigne's description of friendship, he continuously cites the Greeks and Romans, rehashing their most important principles regarding true friendship, but he makes a critical concession to the early Christian philosophers in his idea that the coincidence of such a friendship as his with LaBoétie is highly improbable. Montaigne, one will find, is reluctant to credit God with any special intervention or interest in most things. As a Renaissance man, he looks to other explanations and wonders about probability: "So many coincidences are needed to build up such a friendship that it is a lot if fortune can do it once in three centuries" (Montaigne 1993, 135). The Christians who write about friendship, Augustine (2002), Aelred (2010), and Aquinas (1993), assign zero possibility for the best and truest kind of friendship without God's hand being laid upon it and the knowledge of God being a part of it, for to these thinkers if friendship is to be such a grand exercise of virtue, this infusion of superior virtue is only possible through God. "No friends are true friends unless you, my God bind them fast to one another through the love which is sown in our hearts by the Holy Spirit" (Augustine 2002, 4.4.7). Montaigne (1993) capitulates. The best kind of friendship is too much for chance alone: "Beyond all my understanding, beyond what I can say about this in particular, there was I know not what inexplicable and fateful force that was the mediator of this union...I think it was some ordinance from heaven" (137).

Since Montaigne (1965, 1993) falls in step with his predecessors in their assessments of friendship, one should look at when Montaigne chooses to develop a new thought, to comment on an old one and to expand the scope of an idea. For instance,

Montaigne opens a discussion of communication in friendship, and he neatly separates other synonymous relationships, such as marriage and brotherhood, from friendship. He also explores, staying close to Aristotle (1980) and Aquinas (1993), the idea of free will and choice as they pertain to friendship. And, Montaigne seems convinced, perhaps beyond even Aristotle and Cicero's convictions, that there can only be, and not for everyone, one so perfect a friend as Montaigne has encountered.

Though Montaigne (1965, 1993) suggests that there is reason to believe in divine intervention and divine qualities where the truest friendship is concerned, he acknowledges the idea of will and willpower as they pertain to friendship. Montaigne (1993) defines such a friendship as a "harmony of wills" (135). But, as with the ancients, such a thing must be complete in the sense that two become one: "I have no doubt at all about my will, and just as little about that of such a friend" (Montaigne 1993, 137). He also agrees with his predecessors that friendship, as with all virtue and virtuous behavior, "is bred, nourished, and increased only in enjoyment, since it is spiritual, and the soul grows refined by practice" (Montaigne 1993, 135-136). It is in splitting friendship from brotherhood and marriage that Montaigne (1993) points out that free will is an essential quality of friendship: "And our free will has no product more properly its own than affection and friendship" (135). Montaigne (1993) reasons that brotherhood and marriage are not choices or do either one involve the same kind of choice. The conditions of brotherhood and marriage can be circumstantial, forced, driven by duty and obligation. When friendship is not a choice, it ceases to be as true and perfect as it can be when it is a pure choice: "The more they are friendships which law and natural obligation impose on us, the less of our choice and freewill there is in them" (135). Montaigne (1993) reminds

people that, “Father and son may be of completely different dispositions, and brothers also” (135). He turns to Plutarch, who apparently said, when referring to his brother that it didn’t matter whether they had issued from the same mother (Ibid.).

Montaigne’s claim is not that brotherhood is an impossible synonym for friendship. It is that the best kind of friendship is not automatic because two people happen to be in the same circumstances. Aelred (2010), too, in his treatise on friendship, separates friendly feelings, charity, and brotherhood from that special kind of friendship which is closer to perfection, though as a Christian, one should love all people. Even in the monastery where all are Christians and of the same community, not all persons qualify as best friends: “Therefore, how many people do we love to whom it would be unwise to lay open our soul and to pour forth our inmost being—I mean those whose age or sensibility or judgment is not strong enough to bear the weight of such revelations?” (Aelred 2010, 76.84).

Aelred, as a Christian monk of his time period, is highly liberal and progressive when it comes to the possibilities of true friendship in marriage. In fact, he posits that Eve is created to be Adam’s friend and companion more than for any other reason. According to Aelred, there is nothing that distinguishes one human being from another (Mayeski 2009, 100). Montaigne (1965, 1993) takes a backseat to Aelred when it comes to gender equality, as advanced as Montaigne seems to be in much of his reckoning about many social, political and philosophical matters. To contemporary critics, however, his views on women and marriage are almost unpalatably chauvinistic, and like his favorite philosophers, Montaigne seems to judge the carnal element of any relationship

detrimental to superior friendship. He compares the nature of brotherhood and the love of a woman to make his point.

To compare the brotherly affection [as in friendship] with affection for women, even though it is the result of our choice—it cannot be done; nor can we put in the same category. Its ardor, I confess—[quotes Catullus, “Of us that goddess is not unaware[,] Who blends a bitter sweetness with her care”]—is more active, more scorching, and more intense. But it is an impetuous and fickle flame, undulating and variable, a fever flame, subject to fits and lulls, that holds us only by one corner. (Montaigne 1993, 135)

For Montaigne (1993), true friendship is “constant and settled warmth, all gentleness and smoothness, with nothing bitter or stinging about it” (135). He claims that, “Enjoyment destroys it, as having a fleshy end, subject to satiety” (Ibid.).

One might argue that the love one feels for one’s spouse is not so transitory and that there is more than one corner to marriage, but Montaigne (1965, 1993) is very misogynous in his analysis of the marriage bond and concedes nothing to women as to their friendship capacities as compared to those of men. Perhaps Montaigne’s remarks are only a reflection of the times in which he lived and encompass only his reading of the ancients and his experiences: “It [marriage] is a bargain to which only the entrance is free—its continuance being constrained and forced, depending otherwise than on our will—and a bargain ordinarily made for other ends” (Montaigne 1993, 136). For Montaigne and many of his philosophical forerunners, equality is a prime requisite for the ideal friendship, and Montaigne sees no possibility for such a sharing between men and women because, he believes, it is not in the nature of women:

Besides, to tell the truth, the ordinary capacity of women is inadequate for the communion and fellowship which is the nurse of this sacred bond; nor does their soul seem firm enough to endure the strain of so tight and durable a knot...But this sex in no instance has yet succeeded in attaining it, and by the common agreement of ancient schools is excluded from it. (Montaigne 1993, 136)

In Montaigne's declaration about marriage, women, and the impossibility of friendship, he opens an intriguing door nevertheless. If women did possess the necessary capacity, he posits, the friendship between a man and a woman in such relationship might attain the lofty pinnacle of the best kind of friendship with an added dimension:

If such a relationship, free and voluntary, could be built up, in which not only would the souls have this complete enjoyment, but the bodies would also share in the alliance, so that the entire man would be engaged, it is certain that the resulting friendship would be fuller and more complete. (Montaigne 1993, 136)

The irony of this statement infers that a homosexual male relationship has the full potential for the best kind of friendship since men have the capacity for such a "communion and fellowship" that women lack. Montaigne, however, would probably disapprove of a homosexual relationship, seeing it as a perversion, though it might fit his criteria for the excellent kind of friendship he defines.

Communication is the prime motive of this entire discourse regarding friendship as humanity exploits technology to expand communication options, and Montaigne (1965, 1993) contributes further to the friendship discussion as he pinpoints the communication aspect. For Montaigne (1965), nothing in the course of human interaction can be pleasing without communication: "*Nul plaisir a gout pour moi sans communication*" (91).

Montaigne (1993) links communication directly to friendship, stating flatly that, "Friendship feeds on communication" (135). Equality is a principle of friendship for Montaigne and his predecessors. Montaigne does not believe that those who are unequal can achieve sufficient communication to foster superior friendship. Equality makes possible the communication necessary for friendship. It should be of special interest that Montaigne reads his best friend's work before meeting the man and that it is through the

expression of La Boétie's ideas in writing that Motaigne is first intrigued by the person.

Here Montaigne refers to La Boétie's essay "*La Servitude Voluntaire*":

For it was shown to me long before I had seen him, and gave me my first knowledge of his name, thus starting on its way this friendship which together we fostered, as long as God willed, so entire and so perfect that certainly you will hardly read of the like, and among men of today you see no trace of it in practice. (Montaigne 1993, 134-135)

Montaigne (1965, 1993) is indeed a man of letters, writing in an age of paper and printing presses. Such possibilities for reading and writing expand his possibilities for knowing. He is not at the point of analyzing how writing might change humanity and relationships, but he claims that when speaking of himself his discourse should parallel his actions: "*Il faut que j'aïlle de la plume comme des pieds*" (Montaigne 1965, 100). This expression goes something like, "I must write as I walk."

Montaigne (1965, 1993) says some interesting things about writing, and he recognizes writing as a signal of the times, claiming that he lives in a time of information overload, or simply in a time when a lot is happening: "*L'écrivainerie semble être quelque symptôme d'un siècle débordé*" (Montaigne 1965, 9). He adds that a society produces more writing when it is in trouble, saying that the Romans wrote more when the empire was at the point of collapse (Montaigne 1965, 9-10). By trouble he is referring to the lack of virtue and the propagation of vice, for which he blames everyone, including himself. The written word factors into the discussion, but the question of how or whether it can affect friendship is never directly assaulted by Montaigne though it might be inferred from Montaigne's comments that writing can undermine rather than enhance personal relations. Nevertheless, he admires his friend La Boétie first through that which

his friend has written. Montaigne is still not quite of a time when friendships arise or are maintained by continual written correspondence; yet, accelerated by the printing press, writing does become an essential medium of communication during the Renaissance. The effects of writing on friendship, therefore, merit discussion as literacy and paper production increase and transportation technologies shrink the world. Letters are, by the 17th Century, being delivered around the globe.

Chapter 2

Communication and Friendship

The whole world spoke the same language, using the same words.

—Gen. 11:1

The Lord came down to see the city and the tower that the men had built. Then the Lord said: “If now, while they are one people, all speaking the same language, they have started to do this, nothing will later stop them from doing whatever they presume to do.”

—Gen. 11:5-6

After reading Genesis, one might ponder whether the internet has become the proverbial Tower of Babel. It allows people to connect with each other in almost every corner of the planet through handheld devices. It is not a linear tower but a seemingly organic entity; and though the comparison may sound pejorative, the internet’s growth is almost cancerous. It spreads uncontrollably with no effort to stop its progression as the world, generally, appears to regard it as beneficial to humanity. How then, as a communication network, might the internet affect the most important and essential human relationships? How have other communication systems impacted human intercourse?

This discourse has tried to establish that friendship is a most important relationship. When people become friends, it is reasonable to infer that good communication exists, and over the centuries the media of communication have expanded. Friendship is different, however, from other close relationships, for friends have freely chosen whether to become friends. Friendship may or may not be something

into which one is born. Friends experience or perceive things in their friends that can, in many ways, surpass that which might be manifested in other human relations. Friendship is not obligatory between siblings, comrades, colleagues, teammates, and parents though many qualities of friendship are present. A person can love another without being a friend and without lots of dialogue. For a mother, complex communication may be unnecessary. She needs only know that her children are well: “So long as they [mothers] know their [children’s] fate they love them and do not seek to be loved in return” (Aristotle 1980, 205). In Aelred’s case, not every fellow brother or priest is regarded as a friend. Though he feels love and affection for all, he asks, “How many people do we love to whom it would be unwise to lay open our soul and to pour forth our inmost being—I mean those whose age or sensibility or judgment is not strong enough to bear the weight of such revelations?” (Aelred 2010, 76.84). Montaigne refers to Plutarch’s statement: “I don’t think anymore of him for having come out of the same hole” (Montaigne 1993, 135). In other words, siblings do not all become friends nor is it obligatory.

In other relationship possibilities similar to friendship, there might be less need for complex communication. It may be enough for a mother to show love and affection through action alone. Colleagues and co-workers have a job to do and communicate according to their common purpose and, perhaps, following a professional jargon. A sibling has a familial obligation or duty, but communication might not be required beyond the scope of those commitments. Many relationships can function happily enough with little conversation. The shortstop relays the ball to the second baseman who then pivots and throws quickly to first base in order to complete the double play. It is a team effort with each player knowing and doing his or her job. The players do not have to be

friends to turn a double play. They must simply have a common goal in order to work efficiently together.

One should, however, closely investigate the role of communication in the most dynamic forms of friendship, for it shall be posited that language and communication are among the core elements of complex friendships and that communication media can operate indirectly upon friendship through its influence on societal perception. The highest forms of communication begin with spoken language.

The Power of Language

Most creatures communicate in some way, and it is generally understood that communication is essential to survival: “Communication is defined as the process of understanding and sharing meaning” (Pearson and Nelson 1997, 5). Even for the simplest animals to reproduce, some communication, or sign, must occur. Communication at the human level is more complex and can be cause for radical changes in the ways that people live:

In a broad sense the history of man is the history of communications. Harold A. Innis, the Canadian scholar, goes so far as to insist that every major change in the methods of communication has been followed by a major change in the structure of society. (Fabre 1963, 6)

Communication and changes in the modes of communication, therefore, hold the possibility of being shapers of human relationships and, consequently, of friendships: “To communicate is to be alive, to be active, in relations with others” (Fabre 1963, 9).

Language serves, ultimately, as the essential vehicle.

Discussions about language and its impact on the human condition are highly argumentative, particularly as these arguments have to do with the force of language on

people's lives. Certainly, language is inescapable, and it plays a part in almost everything that human beings do.

Language is so built into the way people live that it has become an axiom of being human... It is what makes possible much of what we do, and perhaps even what we think... And through writing systems or word of mouth we are in touch with distant places we will never visit, people we will never meet, a past and a future of which we can have no direct experience. Without language we would live in isolation from our ancestors and our descendants, condemned to learn only from our own experiences and to take our knowledge to the grave.
(Bolton 1985, 3)

Today, the major debates about language have to do with the connection between language and thought. Richard Rorty is wrapped up in this debate; and he has chosen his side with his answer about language, which boils down, analogously, to the famous question of whether a tree makes noise when it falls if no one is there to hear it:

Truth cannot be out there—cannot exist independently of the human mind—because sentences cannot so exist, or be out there. The world is out there, but descriptions of the world are not. Only descriptions of the world can be true or false. The world on its own—unaided by the describing activities of human beings—cannot. (Rorty 1989, 5)

Although a world without language and communication might exist, for anyone who has language and is able to communicate, such a condition is almost impossible to imagine. Still, one's thinking of language as simply a biological adaptation would seem to diminish its power.

Once you begin to look at language not as the ineffable essence of human uniqueness but as a biological adaptation to communicate information, it is no longer as tempting to see language as an insidious shaper of thought, and, we shall see, it is not. (Pinker 1994, 19)

Despite Pinker's reduction of language, he admits that, "Language is so tightly woven into human experience that it is scarcely possible to imagine life without it (Pinker 1994, 17). Today, thinkers like Pinker and Rorty wish to pull away from the idea that

something might be fixed metaphysically or even that language can determine thought as Aldous Huxley (1940) suggests:

The old idea that words possess magical powers is false; but its falsity is the distortion of a very important truth. Words do have a magical effect—but not in the way that the magicians supposed, and not on the objects they were trying to influence. Words are magical in the way they affect the minds of those who use them. (Huxley, quoted in Hayakawa 1972, 4)

Pinker (1994) is convinced of the physical aspects of language and appears to take a utilitarian view. He is fascinated by the neurological mechanism that enables language.

Rorty speaks less about the physical apparatus necessary for language. He is more concerned with showing that language is in a perpetual state of flux: “Truth is a property of sentences, since sentences are dependent for their existence upon vocabularies, and since vocabularies are made by human beings, so are truths” (Rorty 1989, 21). As vocabularies might change or be different, then, so it seems might truth itself become dependent on language. Hayden White (2014) in *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, analyzes the ways in which historians have used written language to convey their truth impressions:

Historiography was first, necessarily, and most obviously *writing*, which is to say, inscription, of words or signs incised or laid upon a medium and which, by that process of inscription, are endowed with a power both material and spiritual, a power to at once “fix” things in time and seemingly reveal their meaning for their own time and for our own. (White 2014, xxvi)

Truth’s dependence on language is an important consideration when studying the link between friendship and communication. In the discussion of language and its importance, it is difficult to dismiss, as Pinker might, language’s power to persuade people and to influence their beliefs, and consequently, their decisions:

This emphasis that Georgias and other Sophists placed on rhetoric was not just related to swaying political opinion. It came from a realization that the relationship between speech and “truth” is far from simple. Speech is not just a matter of presenting the facts, since considerable reorganization of the “facts” is involved in the way they are selected and sequenced. (Burke and Ornstein 1997, 77)

One must return to the question, therefore, of friendship itself, since in this work is presented the possibility of the friendship concept being a constant thing in human existence, a long-enduring, perpetuated human attribute. Whether the outstanding friendship is something metaphysical or created by humanity remains and may forever remain arguable, but it might be a bit easier to make a stand on whether an identifiable friendship paradigm is something that operates through time, though it might undergo some modification, depending on other aspects of human existence, such as the way in which people transmit language. Specifically, do changes in people’s vocabulary and in their use of communication technologies, which are intertwined, operate significantly on people’s understanding of friendship? Language, thus, must be discussed in terms of how it relates to friendship. One might suggest that, within this preliminary discussion, in contemporary Western societies the language of friendship and the communication technologies by which people communicate do more to affect the possibilities of who may become friends than they do to rattle the perceptions of the rules governing the great classical-Christian friendship.

There seem to be a few things about language, particularly the physiological aspects, upon which most people today will not debate strenuously. One should begin by looking at language physically. Burke and Ornstein (1997) try to explain the reason for language and offer an evolutionary perspective on language development. For Burke and

Ornstein, increased use of tools and technology necessitate more complex forms of communication; thus, the beings who must cooperate will evolve in order to be able to benefit from the new technologies since more complex technologies may require increased communication. The discovery and control of fire, they posit, created more room for the brain and allowed speech to develop: “As fire made cooking possible, softer food meant that molar teeth gradually became smaller, and the shape of the mouth and larynx changed” (Burke and Ornstein 1997, 12). People possess the physical parts to make the sounds that produce language, and spoken language comes before written language: “The majority of the world’s languages have never been reduced to writing (though only laboriously and with much instruction). This is hardly surprising, since compared with speech writing is a very recent invention—within the past 5,000 years” (Bolton 1985, 4). From here one might take the slippery slope and propose that new communication technologies bring about physical, evolutionary changes; thus, both the anatomy and the vocabulary of the human being will change. If these two things change, it is reasonable to expect human ideas to change; and this case concerns whether the friendship concept has changed. “Revolutionary achievements in the arts, in the sciences, and in moral and political thought typically occur when somebody realizes that two or more of our vocabularies are interfering with each other, and proceeds to invent a new vocabulary to replace both” (Rorty 1989, 12). When people change their vocabularies, it should hold that people could change their belief systems, as Rorty (1989) suggests (21). Have such changes occurred in people’s perception of what constitutes qualitative friendship? How does the complexity of the language itself affect friendship?

Although not everyone will accept the evolutionary argument, linguists can point out the speech organs and demonstrate how the sounds are made which produce language, and few if any speech experts would oppose those who claim that, “Children learn their native language swiftly, efficiently, and largely without instruction” (Daniels 1985, 19). The arguments, then, will form around whether a child’s brain is simply pre-programmed for language acquisition. Language learning, for whatever reason, seems to come, many will say, naturally. Steven Pinker, relying heavily on the work of Noam Chomsky, expounds upon what he calls, “The language instinct”:

Children develop these complex grammars rapidly and without formal instruction and grow up to give consistent interpretations to novel sentence constructions that they have never before encountered. Therefore, he [Chomsky] argued children must be innately equipped with a plan common to the grammar of all languages, a Universal Grammar, that tells them how to distill the syntactic patterns of the speech of their parents. (Pinker 1994, 22)

Many language enthusiasts today refer to Noah Chomsky’s in their work. “Chomsky believes that language, along with most other human abilities, depends upon genetically programmed mental structures. In other words, language learning during childhood is part of the body’s preprogramming pattern of growth” (Gliedman 1985, 367). As clinical as language acquisition may sound, one of the most amazing things is that:

Virtually every sentence that a person utters or understands is a brand new combination of words, appearing for the first time in the history of the universe. Therefore, a language cannot be a repertoire of responses; the brain must contain a recipe program that can build an unlimited set of sentences out of a finite list of words. (Pinker 1994, 22)

The language of each individual, then, is somewhat unique and fosters a creative process rather than the existence of an intrinsic nature relating to intellectual and moral progress beneath or independent of the neurological functions (Rorty 1989, 9). Children may not

learn language through formal instruction, but they still do learn the language of their environment although the language or acquired languages can be manipulated individually: “In spite of the underlying similarities of all languages, though, it is important to remember that children will acquire the language which they hear around them” (Daniels 1985, 19).

The artists, the science fiction writers, however, if these folks are to be accepted as soothsayers, might argue otherwise and claim that one’s responses can be both programmed and predicted. People and machines tend to follow patterns. They are both creatures of habit. In the realms of science and technology, machines are made to be continually more efficient. It could be that the bio-neural machine might also be steered to that kind of efficiency. Humanity, some claim, are naturally inclined to patterns and pattern recognition (Johnson 2009, 1222-1234). One might suggest, then, that there is, naturally, a friendship pattern.

The Language of Friendship

Language binds people to their society and to their community, especially in times when mobility is limited and one does not experience other cultures or languages. If the ability to learn language is hard-wired into the human mind, the language that one learns is wrapped up in the culture that produces it, and the influence of that culture or society is undeniable in the shaping of the individual:

Indeed, it is the Word, which is closer to him than any world of natural objects and touches his weal and woe more directly than physical nature. For it is language that makes his existence in a *community* possible; and only in society, in relation to a “Thee,” can his subjectivity assert itself as a “Me.” (Cassirer 1953, 61)

With the knowledge that people learn the languages of their milieus and that they arrange and use language individually, to claim that all persons speak dialects and that language is adjusted to the needs of its speakers makes sense. The obvious examples of dialect are present in regional vocabulary and accents (Daniels 1985, 23-31). Within the groups of people who speak the same languages and similar dialects, people adjust language even further to: “Employ a range of styles and a set of sub-dialects or jargons” (Daniels 1985, 24). The shifting of language to accommodate the situation is related to social context: “We learn, in other words, not just to say things, but also how and when and to whom” (Daniels 1985, 25). According to Daniels, there are registers within the language spectrum that have for bookends formal and informal language (Ibid.).

As the spectrum gets narrower on the informal end, Daniels, referring to the work of Martin Joos (1962), describes the *intimate* style:

A husband and wife, for example, may sometimes speak to each other in what sounds like a very fragmentary and clipped code that they alone understand. Such utterances are characterized by their “extraction”—the use of extracts of potentially complete sentences, made possible by an intricate, personal, shared system of private symbols. (Daniels 1985, 26)

Although Daniels uses husband and wife for his description of the intimate style, it might be compared to the communication style of close, personal friends.

It is important to realize that a language is not just an asset of a culture or group, but of individual human beings. Our native language is the speech of our parents, siblings, friends, and community. It is the code we use to communicate in the most powerful and intimate expressions of our lives. (Daniels 1985, 32)

Good friends are, one could say, very interdependent. Friends, therefore, evolve “consistent patterns of interaction” (Pearson and Nelson 1997, 104). Friends communicate with each other in ways that sometimes only they can understand.

One might be able to see some modification in this position with a new technological scenario, a situation that allows for practically instantaneous and accurate translation. It is not so far-fetched to envision one's speaking in French into a cell phone and the message's being received in English by an English speaking friend. Two people might be able to carry out an intimate conversation in this manner. The devices of speech recognition and instant translation already exist. One even has a selection of voices from which he or she might choose, and so one might give him or herself a different voice, or assign a voice to the other speaker as the two people converse digitally. The message is received in the desired language, desired voice, and desired vocabulary though the speaker might have a different voice and be speaking a different language. Another variable could be added: that of appearance. An individual can create an avatar to represent him or herself. With the rest of the message, the receiver could also have a different picture of the sender. In such a conversation, the physical or sensory realities of the individuals involved in the hypothetical scenario might not be present at all to either participant. It can even be wondered whether a superior friendship can be formed with any true physical or cultural knowledge on the part of the friends at all. Could a qualitative, intimate friendship exist this way? Again, it should be stressed that language and communication are significant aspects of friendship, and many empiricists will assert this claim. With time, however, the speaker's language might become less important, but it can still be inferred that two special friends would establish their own vocabulary.

Some in-depth social research into the importance of communication and language in friendship involves the study of adolescents with language impairments referred to as "significant language impairments" or "SLI" (Wadman, Durkin and Conti-

Ramsden 2011, 42). These studies generally acknowledge that, “Children and adolescents without friends, or with poor friendship quality, are at risk of loneliness, stress, and concomitant developmental psychopathologies” (Durkin and Conti-Ramsden 2007, 1441). Although most of the research concerns adolescents, other studies have reported that adults with significant language impairments, or SLI, have issues “in respect to forming and maintaining close relationships” (Wadman, Durkin and Conti-Ramsden 2011, 43). Using other studies to establish a basis for their own research, Durkin and Conti-Ramsden discuss reciprocity, a concept that has been presented already as a defining quality of friendship, one which is linked to the ability to communicate: “To achieve reciprocal relationships, it is essential to communicate. For typically developing children, a natural means of communication is readily available: talking to each other” (Durkin and Conti-Ramsden 2007, 1442). These researchers also emphasize the different type of communication that occurs between friends: “Language use in friendships is qualitatively different from that in other social contexts. For example, talk between friends involves more frequent repetition of each others’ assertions and more mutually oriented utterances than does talk with non-friends” (Ibid.).

The results of the research into the connection between language ability and friendship quality are fairly conclusive. It is inferred from the Durkin and Conti-Ramsden study that the expression of empathy requires reciprocal communication:

It is certainly plausible that language difficulties that include problems with language understanding would give rise to general difficulties in “tuning in” to others’ verbally expressed interests, needs and expectations...but the present findings suggest that those with impairments that include receptive skills are at greatest risk of losing out in the dynamics of friendship formation and maintenance. (Durkin and Conti-Ramsden 2007, 1453)

Language Resilience and Reinvention

It is hoped that Michel Foucault's work has been cornered securely enough for use in the discussion of friendship and language, for his perspective is not so singularly methodological as that of most social and physical investigators: "Discourse in general, and scientific discourse in particular, is so complex a reality that we not only can, but should, approach it at different levels and with different methods" (Foucault 1970, xiv).

Foucault openly bucks causality and takes what he calls an "archaeological" approach to human discourse, particularly scientific discourse, in terms of responses to questions regarding its evolution (Foucault 1970, xi-xiii). Language, however, retains a highly prominent role within Foucault's line of reasoning as he looks at "a whole series of scientific 'representations'" (Foucault 1970, xi). Language operates within a site or place for things. The site is based on an intricate set of changing paradigms produced by the many interrelationships between human systems and their parts. Human existence, for Foucault, must be understood holistically and relationally. Language appears to enable a manifestation and also to be a part of its emergence. Foucault uses the analogy for such a manifestation:

And also a table, a *tabula*, that enables thought to operate upon the entities of our world, to put them in order, to divide them into classes, to group them according to names that designate their similarities and their differences—the table upon which, since the beginning of time, language has intersected space. (Foucault 1970, xvii)

Despite Foucault's allusion to these sites or tables as being in a state of constant fluctuation, and even destruction, it must nevertheless be suggested that language can, as such a place where the absurd and the paradox can occur, be a major instrument in the operation of human concepts such as friendship. The question of whether the classical-

Christian friendship ideal can operate as a definable thing through changing social and scientific realities, shifting vocabularies, and differing sites has yet to be answered. White (2014) might agree with Foucault that the prevalent linguistic bent towards a certain trope or “mode of emplotment” might dictate perception (26). Communication technologies will emerge from and as a result of new vocabularies, and they will help to create new sites for “thoughts to operate upon the entities of our world” (Foucault 1970, xvii). One question for the contemporary friend might be that of whether the new vocabularies used in text-messaging and e-mail are advantageous to maintaining friendship, for the use of these technologies would seem to emphasize quantity over quality in terms of the frequency of communication. Certainly, there is a rapidly changing vocabulary relative to the varied modes of communication that continue to be practiced through evolving technologies.

Communication, hence language, must be regarded as a significant factor in the establishment and maintenance of quality friendships. Eudora Welty suggests that friendship and language are inextricably tied together. One creates the other, but as the chicken and the egg, it is unclear which one comes first:

When we learned to speak to, and listen to, rather than strike or be struck by, our fellow human beings, we found something worth keeping alive, worth possessing for the rest of time...Friendship might have been the first, as well as the best, teacher of communication. (Welty and Sharp 1991, 40)

If one thinks of language as the first technology people use to communicate, one for which, many will argue, people’s brains are already wired to learn, asking how the quality of friendship is affected when new technologies are developed to communicate between friends has validity. One might suspect that the language itself would undergo

some type of modification. As Rorty (1989) suggests, the vocabulary would change; thus, the truth of friendship, of what friendship is, would also change (1989). Some time has been invested in showing the importance of language, hence, communication in friendship. Henry David Thoreau (1960, 1991), nevertheless, is not entirely convinced about the linguistic part, and suggests that the communication occurs on a more profound, intangible level among the truest friends, and in one line dismisses most of the arguments that have hitherto been posited: “The language of Friendship is not words but meanings. It is an intelligence above language” (Thoreau 1991, 517).

Evaluation Tools

Thoreau (1960, 1991) may have been suggesting a metaphysical bond between friends, but there have since Thoreau’s writing been many physical extensions beyond face-to-face communication. Although it is proposed to examine the different ways that friends have been communicating, particularly from oral traditions through the print era, this work will principally examine the effects that changing media have had on the operation of the classical-Christian friendship through the age of print in both literature and thought. If one agrees that communication is an essential part of human existence and of friendship, one should also agree with McLuhan’s assessment that communication media influences human life:

The personal and social consequences of any medium—that is, of any extension of ourselves—result from the new scale that is introduced into our affairs by each extension of ourselves or by any new technology. (McLuhan 1964, 23)

Postman (1998) would agree that new technologies can change the nature of things and consequently the way that people perceive the world. Changes are “ecological.” “A new

medium does not add something; it changes everything” (5). Friendship, therefore, or one’s concept of friendship must undergo some change if McLuhan and Postman are correct. Therefore, friendship literature should change.

In order to gauge the effects of media on friendship, one can adapt an apparatus designed by Marshall T. Poe for media evaluation. Poe breaks down “five successive historical media: speech, writing, print, audiovisual media, and the Internet” (Poe 2011, 25). He rates each medium according to several criteria. These criteria Poe (2011) calls “medium attributes” (23). Depending on whether the medium attribute is high or low, there will be an effect on various areas of human activity. For each medium attribute, Poe identifies a human need. For instance, if the medium attribute is accessibility, Poe attaches it to a human need for power. The communication network, then, controls the persons who have access to the medium. Medium access in turn determines the amount of power individuals have. With this result, Poe reaches conclusions about social practices and cultural values (Ibid.). Along with accessibility, Poe’s other medium attributes are privacy, fidelity, volume, velocity, range, persistence, and search-ability (Ibid.). Although Poe might deny McLuhan’s influence, his system is, perhaps, an extension of McLuhan’s concept of hot and cold media. A hot medium is in “high definition,” according to McLuhan (1964, 36). In other words, it is crammed with information and usually floods one of the senses: “A photograph is, visually, ‘high definition’” (Ibid.). Cold media do not provide so much data. The “audience,” who in some form is typically a viewer or a listener, has less information with which to work and must complete the picture for him or herself. McLuhan (1964) posits, therefore, that cold media require more “participation” and hot media less (36). One might extract from

McLuhan's assertion that cold media are more dependent on imagination, experience and intellect than hot media are. People, in other words, must think differently depending upon the communication media involved. Therefore, the way that people communicate and use their minds should influence their ideas about friendship.

Chapter 3

Oral Tradition: Creating Friendship Legends and Myths

The first great era of friendship shall be designated according to the principal mode of personal communication in existence: speech, or speaking. Poe (2011), in his book, *A History of Communication*, labels this chapter, “Humanity in the Age of Speech” (16). Plato believed that face-to-face communication, or dialectic, was the surest path to understanding. “Yes indeed, dear Phaedrus. But far more excellent [than writing], I think, is...the art of dialectic” (Plato, quoted in Poe 2011, 16). The classical-Christian friendship is endowed with the qualities that spell out what it is to live virtuously. To live virtuously means to strive for excellence, or for that which promotes human flourishing (Hinman 1998, 323). The virtuous person is a seeker of truth. Truth is always more important than to be pleasing (Cicero 1967, 39). It could be suggested that when two good friends are in direct communication, there is frankness and that each wishes the other to prosper, or to be excellent. Poe (2011) is helpful in establishing several areas for the evaluation of communication methods through his “Push Theory of Media Effects” (13). He concludes some things about the social practices and cultural values by truing them with the communication medium and resulting network. Speech communication seems to create and nurture friendships typical of what has been defined as the classical friendship model.

While Poe (2011) is more concerned with the group dynamic, one can make inferences about friendship attributes based on Poe’s method. First, Poe (2011) calls speech accessible. It means that speaking is difficult for an authority to control without

resorting to draconian methods (15-19). Speaking creates a diffuse network. Poe (2011) forwards that speaking necessarily causes a more egalitarian environment (38). “Put yourself on a level with your friend” (Cicero 1967, 32). Reciprocity and equality are important principles of the classical friendship model.

A communication network that relies heavily on speaking is, furthermore, an open one. In other words, it is more public than private (Poe 2011, 38). A speech network is a small network; therefore, information tends to be shared rather than concealed (Poe 2011, 20). In the classical friendship model, friendships exist openly. In fact, the quality of a friendship is based on its endurance. Great and virtuous friendships are not to be forgotten. Socrates, in Plato’s *Symposium*, recalls the words of his mentor, Diotima:

Do you imagine that Alcestis would have died to save Admetus, or Achilles to avenge Patroclus...all men do all things, and the better they are the more they do them, in hope of the glorious fame of immortal virtue; for they desire the immortal. (Plato 1993, 166)

Cicero, too, parrots the same thought through his speaker Laelius:

There are scarcely three or four pairs of friends on record; and it is classed with them that I cherish a hope of the friendship of Scipio and Laelius [the speaker] being known to posterity. (Cicero, 1967, 13)

A further aspect of speech-reliant networks is their tendency to foster idealism. “Idealism is rooted in the idea that the unseen world is more enriching than the seen world” (Poe 2011, 20). Speech leans heavily on abstraction, and it is dependent upon symbols. The physical realities, the five senses generally, are limited to the language and expression of the speaker. Images must occur within the mind. “Speech represents data from all five senses (vision, sound, smell, taste and feeling) through one encoded sensory channel (sound). Speech is a five-to-one code” (Poe 2011, 42). Time and space are also

put into code: “To speak is to abstract, to remove perception from its concrete time and place and put it in conceptual buckets” (Poe 2011, 43). To encode something among a group of people through the speech medium means to engrain definitions within the minds of a population. A distinct and unwritten code of conduct, a friendship ethic, thus, might arise within the minds of those people who share the same speech network. This inquiry suggests that the classical-Christian friendship model is born from speech communication networks and that the model will be, generally, the same within any Western speech-centered society from Gilgamesh in Mesopotamia to Thorstein in Iceland—a period of over two-thousand years.

Hayden White (2014) notes shifting narrative patterns depending upon the prevalent thinking of an era. Thus, a certain principle, or major premise, prevails by which historians and storytellers might institute a conclusion, or truth about the human condition. In the age of speech, the storyteller is both bard and historian. When referring to the recounting of history, White writes:

And this coherence and consistency give to his work its distinctive stylistic attributes. The problem here is to determine the grounds of this coherence and consistency. In my view, these grounds are poetic, and specifically linguistic, in nature. (White 2014, 29)

Speech communication and speaking networks lend themselves to well-traveled patterns that one might define as ritual. Poe (2011) calls this type of cultural value “eternalism” (58). Without the ability or desire to record externally, an understanding of friendship might become fixed and permanent internally. For the ancients, the best kind of friendship was an eternal one. Aelred (2010), who follows Aristotle and Cicero closely, claims that, “A friend loves always” (59). “He who is a friend is always a friend,

and a brother is born for the time of stress” (Proverbs 17:17). Cicero’s entire friendship discourse (1967) is based on his Socratic character Laelius’s definition of friendship resulting from Laelius’s loss of his great friend, Scipio.

In choosing the term “eternalism,” Poe (2011) may have failed, however, to differentiate it sufficiently from the concept of immortality. Hannah Arendt (1998) distinguishes helpfully between immortality and eternity. While immortality remains human in context, many of the ancients view eternity as the great metaphysical center (20). To call something eternal is to imbue it with divine qualities. The interesting irony, when examining the nature of friendship, is the solitary character of the eternal, for the eternal or metaphysical, according to the ancients, is accessible principally in the contemplative state. Friends then, one could posit, help each other strive for immortality; but to reach eternity, if one can reach it, is an individual quest. As Merton (1955) claims, one must indeed allow for the individual in friendship (244). In the great friendship narratives, one will find that, when one friend dies, the other begins an important individual question. Gilgamesh, in fact, after Enkindu’s death, seeks immortality while Achilles hurls himself towards his personal destiny upon the death of Patroclus. David fulfills God’s will by becoming king of the Israelites after Jonathan is killed.

Speech communication lends itself to individualism as well as plurality, and the final element of speech communication to be discussed is its penchant towards individualism within the network (Poe 2011, 58). Poe, looking at speech communication as it relates to groups of people who relied almost entirely on speech communication, makes what may seem to be a contrary inference about these small groups. He suggests that they possessed high degrees of individualism. In regards to communication and the

transfer of information within a speech network, one has little but his or her own resources and those of the small number of individuals surrounding him or her (Poe 2011, 56-57). The person's memory and mind, the individual's knowledge and abilities, are often his or her only resource. Theoretically, then, he or she must be able to function autonomously though within a relatively small, interdependent group of people. In regards to the communication networks of small groups reliant on speech communication, one can assert that all the existing information was available to all the group members. "In early human communities, then, knowledge and status did not clump. Rather, they spread out among the members of the band, all of whom had some claim on them" (Poe 2011, 56-57).

One friendship aspect that comes to mind when examining individuality is the freewill necessary to choose friends in the classical friendship model. Montaigne's reference to Plutarch is easy to remember. Montaigne (1965, 1993) concurs that blood relations are no substitute for true friendship (1993, 135). Montaigne, in sticking with his predecessors on the topic of friendship, does not believe that the best kind of friendship is based on duty or kinship although the ancients highly regard both. One should call it loyalty. It follows, however, that, in order for someone to possess freewill, he or she needs to be an individual first before friendship can occur. As Merton writes:

If I cannot distinguish myself from the mass of other men, I will never be able to love and respect other men as I ought. If I do not separate myself from them enough to know what is mine and what is theirs, I will never discover what I have to give them, and never allow them the opportunity to give me what they ought. (Merton 1955, 247)

McLuhan's concept of hot and cold media should be introduced into this discussion. Briefly, a hot medium is in "high definition," according to McLuhan (1964,

36). In other words, it is crammed with information and usually floods one of the senses: “A photograph is, visually, ‘high definition’” (McLuhan 1964, 36). Cold media do not provide so much external data. The “audience,” who in some form is typically a viewer or a listener, has less information with which to work and must complete the picture for him or herself internally. McLuhan (1964) proposes, therefore, that cold media require more “participation” and hot media less (36). One might draw from McLuhan’s assertion that cold media are more dependent on an individual’s imagination, experience and intellect than hot media are. One must, if working with cold media, rifle his or her internal library to find answers. People, in other words, must compute differently depending upon the communication media in play. Consequently, the way that people communicate and use their minds should influence their ideas about friendship. Speech communication, based on McLuhan’s definition, is a cold medium, for it requires intense participation and is channeled through only one of the senses: sound. The participants in spoken communication are necessarily reliant on their imaginations, experiences and learning in order to understand each other. In-depth speech communication requires the participants to be heavily engaged.

This chapter introduction is hardly exhaustive, but as the chapter unfolds, frequent references will be made to the qualities of speech communication and to the criteria established for the classical friendship model as they relate to each other. In summary, Poe (2011) associates the following social practices and cultural values to a network of speech communication:

Social Practice

Equalized

Cultural Value

Egalitarianism

Opened	Publican
Conceptualized	Idealism
Economized	Asceticism
Democratized	Deliberatism
Simplified	Monism
Ritualized	Eternalism
Amateurized	Individualism (Poe 2011, 58)

The above list would seem to correspond with five essential aspects of the classical-Christian friendship model as outlined earlier. First, friendship is a matter of free will, not of obligation. Second, friendship is mutual, freely reciprocated. There is no yoke. The reciprocity is circular and becomes one. Third, friendship is virtuous in an Aristotelian manner. By Christian standards, the virtuous person is wise, strong, just, and temperate. Friends must be virtuous and must possess the love of truth. Fourth, there must be allowance for individuality. It is selfish and unfriendly to refuse a friend's autonomy. Fifth, finding the best kind of friend is limited. The two friends must possess those things in common that allow them to love each other in the special way of friendship. Last, being solitary in the wrong way is an impediment to human flourishing. A negative solitude, or alone-ness, is undesirable and the opposite of friendship. People who rely on a speech communication network are unlikely to experience isolation unless it is a form of punishment. Great friendships, as well, are often visible to the public eye.

Gilgamesh and Enkidu

In Western literature, some great friendships are depicted. What may be the first friendship ever written about in the West is between Gilgamesh and Enkidu, and it is contained in what is regarded as “the first great heroic narrative of world literature” (Lawall et al. 1999, 16). Gilgamesh is the mighty Sumerian king of Uruk. He is part god

and, “He met with no one who could withstand his arms” (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 19). But Gilgamesh’s subjects lament their king’s arrogance and tyranny. The Sumerian gods hear the people and decide to, “Create his equal; let it be as like him as his own reflection, his second self, stormy heart for stormy heart. Let them contend together and leave Uruk in quiet” (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 19). Once this equal, Enkidu, is created and before he meets Gilgamesh, he comes to know people; yet, he desires more than the sexual and gastronomic pleasures that he has experienced: “He longed for a comrade, one that could understand his heart” (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 21).

This aspect of Enkidu, his inability to return to the animal world though he at first pursues his animal life, represents a key principle for distinguishing the human being from the animal in ancient civilization. His movement towards the world of men and towards Gilgamesh suggests that what it means to be human must exceed the biological and therefore, the tangible. The great friendship, then, between Enkidu and Gilgamesh should be thought of as transcendent. It is not physically bound. Arendt summons Heraclitus to help with this distinction:

The distinction between man and animal runs right through the human species itself. Only the best (*aristoi*), who constantly prove themselves to be the best (*aristeuein*, a verb for which there is no equivalent in any other language) and who “prefer immortal fame to mortal things,” are really man; the others, content with whatever pleasures nature will yield them, live and die like animals. (Arendt 1998, 19)

But, it begins as a competition to find out which of the two heroes is the best and to establish the role of each one. Enkidu vows to challenge Gilgamesh, for he wishes to be known as the strongest; and he feels that Gilgamesh may be less than virtuous. Gilgamesh hears of Enkidu’s coming in a dream and tells it to his mother, the goddess

Ninsun. In his dream a meteor sent by the god Anu, symbolizing Enkidu, has fallen, and Gilgamesh tries to lift it.

I tried to lift it but it proved too heavy. All the people of Uruk came round to see it, the common people jostled and the nobles thronged to kiss its feet; and to me its attraction was like that of a woman. They helped me, I braced my forehead and I raised it with thongs and brought it to you, and you yourself pronounced it my brother. (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 21)

Gilgamesh's mother interprets the dream, telling Gilgamesh: "When you see him you will be glad; you will love him as a woman and he will never forsake you" (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 21). In a second dream, an ax represents Enkidu, and Gilgamesh's mother reaffirms the first dream: "He is the brave companion who rescues his friend in necessity" (*Ibid.*). When the two finally meet, they grapple, Enkidu is thrown, and Gilgamesh is pacified: "Then immediately his fury died" (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 22). Gilgamesh experiences a catharsis; Enkidu, an epiphany. Enkidu says that there is no one like Gilgamesh. Enkidu and Gilgamesh embrace, and, "Their friendship was sealed" (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 22-23).

Although they are great friends and nearly physical equals, Enkidu's role is to support Gilgamesh, and this supporting role is proved later in the story. Enkidu accompanies Gilgamesh in Gilgamesh's quest for glory although he counsels Gilgamesh against the mission known as the forest journey. The two friends kill Humbaba, the forest guardian; and later Enkidu dies in Uruk for helping Gilgamesh against the vengeance of a goddess whose advances Gilgamesh has rejected. Gilgamesh is ambitious and restless; Enkidu might be happier with simpler pleasures, but he backs Gilgamesh no matter the consequences. The Bull of Heaven is loosed on Uruk, and the two friends together are able to slay it; but for opposing the gods, for their *hubris*, one of the two friends must die,

and the gods choose Enkidu; for, the point is to punish Gilgamesh (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 26). The loss of his best friend will wound and humble Gilgamesh.

Gilgamesh will achieve glory and his name a place in word processing software dictionaries; however, only a close reading of *Gilgamesh* will reveal Enkidu's role. Enkidu has his bitter moments once he senses that his death is imminent, and he curses the woman who led him to Gilgamesh without, nevertheless, renouncing his friendship for Gilgamesh. In fact, the Sumerian god Shamash speaks to Enkidu who then overcomes his anger and retracts his curse (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 27). Whatever Enkidu suffers, it is bearable for the sake of Gilgamesh and for having known Gilgamesh. In the end, the two have shared some great adventures together, and both have known friendship, something that Gilgamesh would have never known; and Gilgamesh is said to have experienced all things that human beings can know: "I will proclaim to the world the deeds of Gilgamesh. This was the man to whom all things were known" (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 18).

Gilgamesh is devastated by the loss of his friend. He compels the citizens of Uruk to weep and mourn. Gilgamesh orders that a statue be erected to honor Enkidu: "He summoned them all, the coppersmiths, the goldsmiths, the stone-workers, and commanded them, 'Make a statue for my friend'" (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 36). In effect, Gilgamesh has already set out to immortalize his friendship. Gilgamesh then leaves Uruk, driven to begin his quest for immortality:

Bitterly Gilgamesh wept for his friend Enkidu; he wandered over the wilderness as a hunter, he roamed over the plains; in his bitterness he cried, "How can I rest, how can I be at peace? Despair is in my heart. What my brother is now, that shall I be when I am dead. Because I am afraid of death, I will go as best I can to find Utnapishtim whom they call the Faraway, for he has entered the assembly of the gods." (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 36)

How closely does this first tale of friendship correspond to the classical model of what friendship ought to be? First, there is choice. Gilgamesh and Enkidu choose to be friends rather than enemies. And, they are equals. Their bond is an almost sacred one as they leave on their first heroic adventure together. The gods created Enkidu to be a match for Gilgamesh. Gilgamesh's mother, the goddess Ninsun, also formally entrusts Enkidu to guide her son, his friend: "Strong Enkidu, you are not the child of my body, but I will receive you like my adopted son...I entrust my son to you; bring him back to me safely" (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 25). Both men are virtuous, and their heroic actions express their drive for excellence. They are courageous and overcome their fears together as they set out on their adventures: "Today, give me your aid and you shall have mine: what then can go amiss with us two?" (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 28). When Enkidu dies, Gilgamesh is alone. There is no one to fill the void. His alone-ness drives him away from Uruk into the wilderness, and he seeks immortality: "For Enkidu; I loved him dearly, together we endured all kinds of hardships; on his account I have come, for the common lot of man has taken him" (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 37).

The classical-Christian friendship model, as projected most explicitly among the early Christian thinkers, makes of the most excellent friendship something requiring supernatural intervention. The friendship of the archetypes Gilgamesh and Enkidu also involves the gods. Gilgamesh is a demigod. The great Sumerian god Shamesh takes a fatherly interest in Gilgamesh, and his mother, Ninsun, is identified as a goddess. Enkidu is formed in heaven and descends, in Gilgamesh's dream, as a meteor (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 21). The excellence of the friendship between Gilgamesh and Enkidu, thus, has divine impetus, which adds energy to the transcendent, eternal quality of the friendship.

Though Enkidu is not classified as a demigod, he is created very much like Adam, a creature formed from clay made specifically to balance Gilgamesh, and he is not born of human parents (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 19). At first Enkidu lives among the animals, but then he acquires wisdom and becomes a man (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 20). To distinguish the human being from the animal is important, for it separates action from behavior, action being a human attribute while instinct and behavior are in the nature of the beast. To be human suggests that one behaves not solely from necessity. Action is a conscious thing involving a decision that can go against the survival instinct. Herein lays the idea of heroic endeavor, which Gilgamesh and Enkidu undertake. This concept is carried forward by the Greeks.

It is not that Plato or Aristotle was ignorant of, or unconcerned with, the fact that man cannot live outside the company of men, but they did not count this condition among the specifically human characteristics; on the contrary, it was something human life had in common with animal life, and for this reason alone it could not be fundamentally human. The natural, merely social companionship of the human species was considered to be a limitation imposed upon us by the needs of biological life, which are the same for the human animal as for other forms of animal life. (Arendt 1998, 24)

Rather than suggest by this statement that friendship is an animal state, it affirms that friendship must exceed physical boundaries in order to be specifically human. It helps, of course, when friendship receives a push from the gods.

Another interesting element that emerges from the friendship story of Gilgamesh and Enkidu is the public nature of the friendship. Their friendship is something of which to be proud. Gilgamesh is with his friend Enkidu in the great market of Uruk, offering a sacrifice to the god Shamash and telling of his deed to come. The counselors fear that Gilgamesh and Enkidu will be destroyed by Humbaba, and Gilgamesh responds:

When he heard these words of the counsellors Gilgamesh looked at his friend and laughed, “How shall I answer them; shall I say I am afraid of Humbaba, I will sit at home all the rest of my days?” Then Gilgamesh opened his mouth again and said to Enkidu, “My friend, let us go to the Great Palace, to Egalmah, and stand before Ninsun the queen... They took each other by the hand as they went to Egalmah. (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 25)

The friendship saga of Gilgamesh and Enkidu is born from a time when speech communication and its corresponding networks are the primary systems for human connectedness in this first great friendship story known to Western Literature.

David and Jonathan

The Israelites follow the Sumerians closely with their friendship story, and one should note the similarities. Again, one of the friends must play the supporting role, and the friendship between David and Jonathan resembles the bond that exists between Gilgamesh and Enkidu. Jonathan’s conundrum between his obligation to his father and his friendship for David helps highlight their friendship and makes it both more complex and political. It is also an expression of the divine standard that elevates the friendship above some of the most important human laws. In the case of Jonathan, it is a friendship that surpasses his duty to his earthbound father. Jonathan loves David as himself, which is to say that he sees God’s will being worked through David: “And Jonathan entered into a bond with David, because he loved David as himself” (Samuel 18, 3 [NAB]). Although David is the chosen one and it is David’s story, Jonathan is most amazing as a friend, and like Enkidu, Jonathan will die while the other friend carries on.

Although David is God’s choice to rule over Israel and Jonathan aids David, both men take heroic action separately in order to establish themselves as courageous and

virtuous in the eyes of the Israelites. Both men trust in God and with His help triumph against superior force.

It is in Jonathan's victory that he shows himself not to be aligned with his father, and it can be interpreted symbolically as Jonathan's choosing God's will over his father, Saul's will. It is symbolic to say that Saul does not know that Jonathan has left the camp when Jonathan achieves his victory. Afterwards, Jonathan unwittingly defies his father's oath and is nearly put to death for it (Samuel 14, 5-28). It is reaffirmed that the friendship between Jonathan and David is divinely inspired. Such a friendship is greater than familial obligation, and it is also worth dying for. Jonathan tries, however, to fulfill his filial duties but not at the expense of his friendship with David.

David is nobody. He has no claim to the throne of Israel. However, Jonathan, who the Israelites would have as the rightful successor, becomes David's friend. By Jonathan's death, he abdicates, leaving the way open for his friend David. When one is acting for himself, perhaps it is easier: "Jonathan had become as fond of David as if his life depended on him; as he loved himself" (Samuel 18, 1-3). Jonathan in fact gives David everything he has, including his armor, his weapons, and even his military privileges. Jonathan defends and protects David from Saul. He speaks to his father on David's behalf (Samuel 19, 4-7). Saul, aware of the friendship between David and Jonathan, intends to act against his son's wishes. David mistrusts Saul and believes that Saul is plotting David's destruction. David informs Jonathan, who responds: "Heaven forbid that you should die!" And, "I will do whatever you wish" (Samuel 20, 2-4). Jonathan discovers his father's plan and reports it to David, and the two must part

company. Jonathan asks only that David treat his household with kindness, as if Jonathan already senses that his own death is imminent.

They kissed each other and wept aloud together. At length Jonathan said to David, “Go in peace, in keeping with what we two have sworn by the name of the Lord: “The Lord shall be between you and me, and between your posterity and mine forever.” (Samuel 20, 42)

When Jonathan dies, David, like Gilgamesh, acknowledges his friend. He chants the elegy of Saul and of Jonathan:

“I grieve for you, Jonathan my brother!
 most dear have you been to me;
 More precious have I held love for you
 than love for women.” (Second Samuel 1, 26 [NAB])

One can see the similarity to the story of Gilgamesh. The goddess Ninsun, Gilgamesh’s mother, also claims that Gilgamesh will love Enkidu as a woman (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 21). The friendship between David and Jonathan is again between two heroes, or warriors, and God has a hand in this relationship. One can also claim that Jonathan must die in order for David to realize his destiny, which is true of Gilgamesh who might not seek immortality or continue his life’s adventure had Enkidu not died. Gilgamesh and Enkidu, however, appear to be punished for their *hubris*, or defiance of the gods. Enkidu dies as a way of punishing Gilgamesh for their slaying of the bull of heaven. Jonathan, on the other hand, dies simply to clear the way for David. Jonathan’s death is not a punishment but instead a sacrifice as Jonathan fulfills God’s will.

Job and Friends

Another friendship tale in the Old Testament is found in Job. The friendship experience depicted in Job is less inspiring than that of David and Jonathan. Job and his

friends are not heroic figures in the sense of being great warriors or kings although Job is a hero in another way and rates a personal visit from God; for despite his hardships and his incomprehension of the reasons for them, Job is able to remain faithful to God and to himself. Job's friends come to console him in his hours of misery, and from their visit one might learn something about friendship.

A first question that arises, regarding friendship, in the reading of Job is the man's relationship to his wife. One can make comparisons between the wife's and the friends' significance in Job's life. Both, for instance, are allowed to criticize Job, but Job throws his wife's gender in her face when she chastises him. Job's wife both questions and commands him: "Are you still holding to your innocence? Curse God and die" (Job 2, 8 [NAB]). Job responds: "Are even you going to speak as senseless women do?" (Ibid.). Job draws a line in the sand between men and women, suggesting that, if equality is necessary for the best kind of friendship, women may have a lower capacity than men for such a thing or that it is not possible between husband and wife.

Although Job's friends travel far to see Job, and they sit with him as a way to share in his suffering, they do so from pity. They, like Job's wife, cannot believe that he is innocent. The difference between Job's wife and friends is in their patience. Job's friends seem more willing to endure with Job though they doubt him as well. Job seems to be somewhat more tolerant of them and rebukes them in ways different from the way that he dismisses his wife. From a purely practical perspective, however, one could argue that the wife has truly lost everything, for her life depends very much on Job's economical situation. Everything that Job has lost is also her loss, which includes their children. Her loss and suffering are real while the friends, who have lost nothing, make

only token gestures. Job's friends doubt Job. They are, however, expected to provide evidence that they are unable to produce in support of their belief in Job's impiety. Their evidence is circumstantial, based upon all that has happened to Job. Job, therefore, because they have no proof, scolds his friends and questions their friendship:

Have I no helper,
 And has advice deserted me?
 A friend owes kindness to one in despair,
 though he have forsaken the fear of the
 Almighty. (Job 6, 13-17)

Job further suggests that his friends are cowardly and that they treat him unjustly.

How agreeable are honest words;
 yet how unconvincing is your
 argument!
 You would even cast lots for the orphan,
 and would barter away your friend!
 Come, now, give me your attention;
 surely I will not lie to your face.
 Think it over; let there be no injustice.
 Think it over; I still am right.
 Is there insincerity on my tongue,
 or cannot my taste discern falsehood? (Job 6, 25-30)

The disbelief of Job's friends is unceasing and Job continues to berate them for their ongoing request that he prostrate himself before God and beg for God's mercy. The friends advocate for an admission of guilt in the hope of a lesser punishment, but Job believes himself to be innocent and will not plea-bargain:

Even now, behold, my witness' is in
 heaven,
 and my spokesman is on high.
 My friends it is who wrong me; (Job 16, 19-20)

Job feels attacked and criticized by his friends, as if it is part of the suffering that he has been made to undergo, and for no apparent reason:

These ten times you have reviled me,
 have assailed me without shame!
 Be it indeed that I am at fault
 and that my fault remains with me.
 Even so, if you would vaunt yourselves
 against me
 and cast up to me my reproach,
 Know then that God has dealt unfairly
 with me,
 and compassed me round with his net.
 If I cry out “Injustice!” I am not heard. (Job 19, 3-7)

In the friends’ defense, one can contend that they did not abandon Job. They only try to persuade him of the possibility that he has erred in some way. They do, however, fail to trust and help Job (Job 32, 1-3). The Lord is displeased with Job’s friends and leaves it up to Job whether to intercede on their behalf, which, as a good friend, Job does; and it is observed that only after Job’s intercession for his friends does the Lord compensate Job for all that Job has had to suffer (Job 42, 7-11).

A most fascinating aspect from the angle of speech communication itself is the vitality of the language. While the stories of Gilgamesh and David compare in their heroic content, Job and Gilgamesh come together in the manner of their telling. The stories are narrated poetically. They are wrought with images. In this vein, one should recall that *Gilgamesh* probably traveled the path of the oral tradition: “The earliest written stories date from roughly 2000 B.C. E., but oral versions of the story both preceded them and continued on, parallel with the written tradition” (Lawall et al. 16, 1999). The monologues of Job and his friends are rich with metaphor and simile, and they are referred to as “poetic dialogues” (Bergant 2006, 237). Hebrew poetry differs from classical and contemporary poetry in that there is generally no rhyme. Instead, the rhythm depends upon tonal patterns that are lost when the original Hebrew is translated

(Bergant 2006, 238). Stories like Job and *Gilgamesh* are intended to be heard. Gilgamesh, when he recounts his dreams, looks for interpretation from both Enkidu and his mother.

Gilgamesh recounts one of his dreams:

We stood in a deep gorge of the mountain, and beside it we were the smallest of swamp flies; and suddenly the mountain fell, it struck me and caught my feet from under me. Then came an intolerable light blazing out, and in it was on whose grace and whose beauty were greater than the beauty of the world. He pulled me out from under the mountain, he gave me water to drink and my heart was comforted, and he set my feet on the ground. (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 27)

Gilgamesh's dream is allegorical, and Enkidu interprets it as a victory over the forest guardian, Humbaba who the mountain in Gilgamesh's dream symbolizes (Ibid.). Job and his friends almost seem to take pride in their eloquence. It is as if the most eloquent speaker is the possessor of truth. White (2014) might suggest that such use of metaphor and allegory is necessary since the storyteller-historian lacks "conceptual precision," and, "such historians usually make up for the vacuity of their generalizations by the vividness of their reconstructions of particular agents, agencies, and acts represented in their narratives" (14). Job is not easily outdone. One should note the extraordinary use of analogy:

For a tree, there is hope,
 If it be cut down, that it will sprout
 again
 and that its tender shoots will not cease.
 Even though its root grow old in the
 earth,
 and its stump die in the dust,
 Yet at the first whiff of water it may
 flourish again
 and put forth branches like a young
 plant. (Job 14, 7-9)

In these examples, the references are usually to nature, emphasizing that human experience is heavily based on nature's processes. Such comparisons make them easy to remember within an oral tradition, so that such stories and lessons can be retold. Stories of friendship, therefore, and what friendship should be become rooted in the memories of the storytellers and audience.

Achilles and Patroclus

Homer's immortal *Iliad* is surely born from an oral tradition, and it defines the epic poem: "It is certain that they [*The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*] were intended not for reading but for oral recitation....The poems exhibit the unmistakable characteristics of oral composition" (Lawall et al. 1999, 98). One is reminded in Lawall's introduction to Homer's two great epics of both the memory and the inventiveness of the oral poet:

The oral poet had at his disposal not reading and writing but a vast and intricate system of metrical formulas—phrases that would fit in at different places in the line and a repertoire of standard scenes...as well as the known outline of the story. Of course he could and did invent new phrases as he recited—but his base was the immense poetic reserve created by many generations of singers who lived before him. (Lawall et al. 1999, 98)

The friendship, then, between Patroclus and Achilles has itself become a rich and immortal one, for the death of Patroclus serves as a most powerful catapult within *The Iliad*. Their frequently retold friendship must have become engrained within the thought libraries of those generations of people who were so long exposed to the poem, and it becomes, perhaps, an essential part of one's beliefs and education. Finally, a poet like Homer, possessing the necessary skill, sculpts a definitive version in written form. Though the world is grateful to Homer for harnessing *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, one might wonder whether the power of the story, and, consequently, the friendship, has not

somehow been diluted through the translation of the written work although *The Iliad* (and *The Odyssey*) remains a great and wonderful story.

The grand friendship of Achilles and Patroclus is referred to frequently in the earliest philosophical discourses about both love and friendship. Their friendship is most comparable to that of Gilgamesh and Enkidu.

What one finds exists in almost all of the classical friendship stories is a divine or metaphysical element. Enkidu is created by the gods and simply deposited, fully grown, near Uruk for the sake of becoming Gilgamesh's friend. Gilgamesh's mother is a goddess, and the gods intervene constantly, one might even say detrimentally, in the lives of the two friends. The Sumarian gods sentence Enkidu to death: "Anu, Enlil, Ea and Heavenly Shamash took counsel together, and Anu said to Enlil, 'Because they have killed the Bull of Heaven, and because they have killed Humbaba who guarded the Cedar Mountain one of the two must die'" (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 32). Jonathan is guided to a great military victory, establishing his heroic credentials, and he seems to understand the importance of God's wishes for David who the Lord has chosen to succeed Saul. God speaks to Job directly, calling upon him to intervene for his friends, and the Lord chastises Job's friends specifically. Achilles is another demigod, and the gods are constantly mixing into and shaping the outcomes at Troy. In fact, Apollo is most responsible for the death of Patroclus.

Then at the fourth assault Patroclus like something superhuman—
then, Patroclus, the end of life came blazing up before you,
yes, the lord Apollo met you there in the heart of battle,
the god, the terror! Patroclus never saw him coming,
moving across the deadly rout, shrouded in thick mist
and on he came against him and looming up behind him now—
slammed his broad shoulders and back with the god's flat hand

and his eyes spun as Apollo knocked the helmet off his head
(Homer *The Iliad* 1999, 159)

Patroclus's death spurs Achilles to his destiny and the eventual fall of Troy. Except Job, in fact, the death of a friend serves as the catalyst for some extraordinary endeavor on the survivor's part. Gilgamesh seeks immortality; David becomes the king of the Israelites. Achilles slays Hector, which leads to the fall of Troy and to his own death. All three men, it could be claimed, become more human. The great pain caused by the loss of each one's friend unleashes something within them:

Patroclus . . . I will never forget him,
not as long as I'm still among the living
and my springing knees will lift and drive me on.
Though the dead forget their dead in the House of Death,
I will remember, even there, my dear companion.
(Homer *The Iliad* 1999, 186)

No one has been able to convince Achilles to fight, but Patroclus's tears finally move Achilles to give up his armor to Patroclus so that he might fight to stalemate the unrushing Trojans:

Meanwhile Patroklos came to the shepherd of the people, Achilleus,
and stood by him and wept warm tears, like a spring dark-running
that down the face of a rock impassable drips its dim water;
and swift-footed brilliant Achilleus looked on him in pity,
(Homer *The Iliad* 1993, 189)

And later, after Achilles kills Hector and as he continues to grieve for Patroclus, he is once again stirred with pity, this time for Priam, and he allows the old king to give Hector a proper burial:

He [Achilles] rose from his seat, raised the old man by the hand
and filled with pity now for his gray head and gray beard,
he spoke out winged words, flying straight to the heart:
"Poor man, how much you've borne—pain to break the spirit!"
(Homer *The Iliad* 1999, 202)

Heroes like Gilgamesh and Achilles seem to soften and become fuller human beings after their friends die. Achilles accepts his mortality and no longer fears his fate:

But now I'll go and meet that murderer head on,
that Hector who destroyed the dearest life I know.
For my own death, I'll meet it freely—whenever Zeus
and the other deathless gods would like to bring it on!
(Homer *The Iliad* 1999, 164)

Again, with the exception of Job, what emerges from these early friendships is the idea of the equality of the friends in each friendship pair. Gilgamesh and Enkidu are near to being physical equals, and Jonathan is a warrior in his own right. Patroclus, too, shall rival the Trojan hero Hector as, wearing Achilles' armor, he drives the Trojans back; however, there is a paradox to this equality. One of the friends is always playing second fiddle to the other, and this subordinate friend inevitably dies before the more important hero does, and that friend's death ignites the hero and triggers important events. It is one thing if each friend alternately serves the other, but one friend in the couple stands out as being distinctly superior, and that superior being shall be the one to mourn the loss of his companion. Yet, each of the supporting friends assumes his role willingly and is, perhaps, the better friend. Jonathan agrees to aid David against Jonathan's father, Saul. Enkidu follows Gilgamesh into the wilderness to aid in dispatching the menacing Humbaba, the forest guardian; but it is the depiction of Patroclus's performing menial services for Achilles that best illustrates subservience:

So Prince Achilles hailed and led them in,
sat them down on settles with purple carpets
and quickly told Patroclus standing by, "Come,
a bigger winebowl, son of Menoetius, set it here...
he paused. Patroclus obeyed his great friend.
(Homer *The Iliad* 1999, 136)

The friends Achilles and Patroclus know each other well, and Patroclus knows his role:

With that,
he gave Patroclus a sharp glance, a quiet nod
to pile the bedding deep for Phoenix now,
(Homer *The Iliad* 1999, 147)

Patroclus, in fact, is given specific instructions by Achilles, and as consequence of being caught up in his own glory and forgetting his subordinate role, he suffers the intervention of Apollo, which leads to his death. Like Enkidu and Jonathan, Patroclus is innocent.

Roland and Oliver

A similar heroic friendship in epic literature is that of Roland and Oliver in *The Song of Roland*. Roland is Gilgamesh while Oliver is Enkidu. Roland and Oliver also compare to the friendships of David and Jonathan and Achilles and Patroclus. The name Oliver represents his position in the epic. The olive branch symbolizes peace and submission, and the name Oliver derives from the olive tree. Roland and Oliver are part of the French rearguard that protects Charlemagne's army from the Saracens. They have been deceived by the traitor Ganelon and are about to face an insurmountable number of hostiles. Oliver tells Roland to blow his horn in order to bring back the main army, but Roland refuses (*The Song of Roland* 1999, 1130-1131). Oliver tries three times to convince Roland, but Roland sees calling for help as both disloyal and dishonorable; he is determined to fight. Oliver stands by Roland, much as Enkidu stands by Gilgamesh, despite Enkidu's pragmatic counseling against the expedition into the forest to kill the forest guardian Humbaba. In the stanza after Oliver's final request to Roland that Roland should blow the horn, the two friends are labeled:

Roland is good, and Oliver is wise,
 both these vassals men of amazing courage:
 once they are armed and mounted on their horses,
 they will not run, though they die for it, from battle.
 Good men, these Counts, and their words full of spirit.
 (*The Song of Roland* 1999, 1131)

Throughout the epic, it will often be repeated that Roland is good and Oliver is wise. Subsequently, both Oliver and Roland will die, and Roland will witness the death of his friend. Like Enkidu, Oliver will be unhappy with his own fate and will direct some of his displeasure at his friend Roland for allowing their destruction. Though apparently blinded in combat and swinging his sword wildly, he accidentally strikes Roland. Oliver also intends to withhold a woman in his family from Roland should they survive the battle. Still, when Oliver dies, he and Roland are reconciled, and Roland forgives his friend for any transgression. Ultimately, angels from heaven will bear Roland's body away, and it is Roland who will be glorified for his blind loyalty, or faith, despite his seemingly irrational decision to fight and the subsequent massacre of his troops. Like Enkidu, Oliver is known only to the literature student. Still, Gilgamesh asks to take Enkidu's place as Enkidu dies; and Roland, upon seeing his friend about to die, finally complies with Oliver's wishes and blows the horn to alert Charlemagne. As in the tale of Gilgamesh and Enkidu, it is understood that Roland and Oliver have shared many battles together before the ultimate battle with the Saracens. Both pairs of friends have, literally, fought for their lives together and shared their lives in a heroic sense. The mission of one becomes the mission of the other, and both Enkidu and Oliver have given their lives for their friends.

Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for

everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. (John 15:13-15)

What differentiates *The Song of Roland* from *Gilgamesh* and *The Iliad* is the character of the main hero, Roland, and his reasons for fighting. His reasons better approximate the biblical tale of David and Jonathan. Unlike Achilles and Gilgamesh, Roland seems less concerned with his own edification than with fighting for Charlemagne and their appointed mission of unifying the Christian world and of spreading Christianity:

It describes the process by which France left behind its Germanic past as a loose confederation of powerful families and accepted its future as a Christian nation united by loyalties to king and country.... The central protagonist is the great warrior Roland, who embodies in an especially pure form the spirit of feudal loyalty to one's overlord. [And, subsequently, to God in this instance] (Lawall et al. 1999, 1104)

Roland is stubborn, but it is less about *hubris* than about duty. Achilles and Gilgamesh are very much about themselves. In all cases, their friends support their heroes, regardless of their motivations.

Another critical aspect of *The Song of Roland* to the friendship discussion is in the nature of its construction. Like *The Iliad*, *Gilgamesh*, and of Job, *The Song of Roland* is born from an oral tradition. It is a poem, a song, and it is meant to be heard:

The poem shows unmistakable signs of having emerged from a period of oral composition. As in the Homeric poems and Beowulf, many of its phrases are metrical formulas originally combined by an oral poet into complete lines and then into larger passages as he re-created the poem anew at each performance. (Lawall et al. 1999, 1104)

In *The Song of Roland* and *Gilgamesh*, although the friendships are critical, certain things emerge in the epics that appear more vital, and someone must pay the price. For both Roland and Gilgamesh, honor and following one's destiny are most

important. Subsequently, both witness the deaths of their friends, for which they are indirectly responsible. While Roland and Gilgamesh seem to serve their own glory or a greater will first, it is for Enkidu and Oliver to serve their friends. Gilgamesh and Roland are appreciative of their friends and mourn their deaths deeply. The deaths of their friends lead to important action, as does the death of Patroclus in *The Iliad*.

Thorstein and Bjarni

The gulf between an oral tradition and literacy has closed slightly by the time “Thorstein the Staff-Struck” is penned in Iceland some time during the thirteenth century. Certainly, the story is less of a poem and more of a yarn. Nevertheless, the story or most of its elements are likely carried over from an oral tradition: “Oral tradition bridged the interval between the tenth century and the thirteenth” (Lawall et al. 2006, 1374). The tale presents two brave, strong men who discover that they are equals when they are goaded into combating each other. Both men are reluctant to clash but must fight for honor’s sake. One of the men, Thorstein, subordinates himself to the other, Bjarni, and Thorstein does so willingly once each man recognizes the merits of the other; for Thorstein’s surrender solves the problem of honor for both men in relation to their social positions. The relationship between the two men meets much of the criteria for a classical friendship as the two men cope with the problem of maintaining honor through a virtuous solution, and, in this case, neither friend has to die wherein in all the other friendship stories, with the exception of Job, one of the two friends perishes.

In *Gilgamesh*, there’s only one way to settle the question of merit. A fierce fight ensues, Enkidu is thrown, and he becomes Gilgamesh’s great companion. No one before

had ever matched Gilgamesh. Thorstein and Bjarni fight to a draw although Thorstein gives Bjarni restorative opportunities. Each man, in fact, gives the other a chance to kill the other—ignobly. Twice Thorstein could have killed Bjarni, and each time Bjarni trusts him not to.

Bjarni said to Thorstein, “I’m getting thirsty now, I’m not as used to hard work as you are.”

“Go down to the stream and drink,” said Thorstein.

Bjarni did so, and laid the sword down beside him. Thorstein picked it up, examined it and said, “You can’t have been using this sword at Bodvardsdale.” (“Thorstein the Staff-Struck” 2006, 1378)

Bjarni does not answer. It could be suggested that the sword in question is not the type of sword used to cut down an honorable man. In the second instance, “‘Everything seems to go wrong for me today,’ he (Bjarni) said. ‘Now my shoe thong’s loose.’ ‘Tie it up then,’ said Thorstein” (“Thorstein the Staff-Struck” 2006, 1379). Bjarni, in effect, bows to Thorstein, acknowledging him as an equal. Finally, as the two take turns swinging their swords, it is Bjarni’s turn to strike a shield-less Thorstein, and, as in *Gilgamesh*, one could say that their friendship is sealed.

It was Bjarni’s turn to strike. Both men had lost their shields. Bjarni said, “It would be a great mistake in one stroke both to throw away good fortune and do wrong. In my opinion I’d be fully paid for my three servants if you took their place and served me faithfully.”

Thorstein said, “I’ve had plenty of opportunity today to take advantage of you, if my bad luck had been stronger than your good luck. I’ll never deceive you.” (“Thorstein the Staff-Struck” 2006, 1379).

A notable theme in “Thorstein the Staff-Struck” (2006) is the obligation an honorable man has to his family and kinsmen. In the story of David and Jonathan, Jonathan manages to remain faithful to his father while making his friendship to David a priority. It is suggested that the most virtuous kind of friendship might supersede kinship

in “Thorstein the Staff-Struck.” One learns that Bjarni has slain some of his own kinsmen, showing no quarter, in the often-referenced fight at Bodvarsdale. Bjarni’s two half-brothers, though regarded as servants, have big mouths and Bjarni overhears them accuse him of cowardice for not avenging the death of his stable hand, Thord, whom Thorstein was forced to kill in order to restore his own honor before the eyes of his father. Bjarni, then, sends the two brothers to avenge the alleged wrong. These two attempt, treacherously, to kill Thorstein who dispatches them both. Even at that point, Bjarni does not seem intent on pursuing the matter, for the men who died, though kinsmen, apparently lacked Bjarni’s respect; and he, it could be inferred, views Thorstein’s actions as justified. While Bjarni is feeling pressure, Thorstein’s father is urging his son forward. The father insists that Thorstein is a coward if Thorstein does not take action to right a wrong done to Thorstein. Ultimately, when Bjarni and Thorstein reach their understanding, Thorarin loses his son to Bjarni, but not in death. Thorstein goes off to serve Bjarni, and Bjarni provides slaves to care for Thorarin and his horses, thus liberating Thorstein of the responsibility of caring for his blind father, who, symbolically, has been blind to the great discernment and virtue of his son.

In Job’s test, another question is posed, that of the wife’s role as a friend. Job’s wife is most straightforward in her criticism of the steadfast Job, and he rebukes her summarily as being a foolish woman. Bjarni’s wife receives similar treatment: “‘You’re a typical woman,’ said Bjarni, “‘arguing against the very thing you were urging just a few hours ago! There’s a limit to my patience, I can only stand so much taunting from you and others’” (“Thorstein the Staff-Struck” 2006 1378). In both cases, the women are

reduced and seem to act more as instigators and gossipers. Certainly, they are not presented as their husbands' friends or equals.

Both men in "Thorstein the Staff-Struck" try to avoid fighting as they both seem to have recognized the integrity of the other. Bjarni says to his wife, "No one seems willing to learn from another man's lesson. Thorstein has never killed anyone without a good reason" ("Thorstein the Staff-Struck" 2006, 1378). Like the allusion in the beginning of the yarn, a horse fight leading to the entire conflict, both men are forced to fight like two stallions. Because of his position in the community, the chieftain, Bjarni, is spurred by his wife and the equivalent of civic obligation. For Thorstein's it is his father who cracks the whip behind him. In the traditional Icelandic society, a man had to uphold his personal honor and good standing: "Each man considers the respect of the community essential to his self-respect; hence they act as the code requires, regardless of their personal inclination or of the merits of the case" (Lawall et al. 2006, 1375).

In the end, it boils down to loyalty and service so that each might save face. Their union benefits both Thorstein and Bjarni:

Thorstein went with Bjarni over to Hof, and stayed in his service for the rest of his life. He was considered a man of great courage and integrity. Bjarni kept his standing and became better-liked and more self-controlled the older he grew. He was a very trustworthy man. ("Thorstein the Staff-Struck" 2006, 1380)

So, too, in *the Song of Roland* one encounters the idea of service: Oliver to Roland and Roland to Charlemagne. Charlemagne's service, meanwhile, is specifically to God since there is no one else over him. God lengthens a day for Charlemagne, and He sends Charlemagne messages in dreams.

Unlike all the previous friendship narratives, or threads, divine intervention seems to be withheld, at least explicitly, in “Thorstein the Staff-Struck.” Neither Bjarni nor Thorstein is a demigod. God or gods do not appear to anyone or take any recorded action. However, Bjarni and Thorstein continue to be outstanding men, and Bjarni, almost as a footnote, sets out to become a Christian. He dies on a pilgrimage to Rome, which one could speculate, symbolizes the road to paradise after having lived a virtuous life, one of wisdom, fortitude, justice and temperance.

The Question of Subordination

They are mythologized friendships in *Gilgamesh*, *The Iliad*, “Thorstein the Staff-Struck,” *The Song of Roland*, and, some might argue, that of David and Jonathan. The relationships may not have existed at all, and the nature of these relationships, if they did exist, is part of the myth. Nevertheless, qualities of friendship are evident. The friendship bond becomes something almost supernatural. Friendship bonds between the elderly and their dogs are not about relationships between humans; however, one should recall that many of the elderly in Peter Peretti’s study claim that their pets are their only friends and that the qualities for friendship are identified: companionship, usefulness, and loyalty being among them (Peretti 1990, 154). In these examples, friendships, between both mythical characters and elderly dog owners and their pets, show that loyalty is highly valued and that friends enhance the lives of their friends. The other variables that Peretti identifies—companionship, usefulness, and emotional bond—are also heavily embodied in the epic friendships. Enkidu, for whom Gilgamesh has feelings as if for a woman, accompanies Gilgamesh on his forest journey (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 21). He is useful both in

interpreting Gilgamesh's dreams and in the fighting with Hambaba (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 27). Achilles "longed for Patroclus' manhood, his gallant heart" (Homer *The Iliad* 1999, 189). Achilles yearns for the friend who knows his heart. Oliver, meanwhile, battles alongside Roland and is allowed to question Roland's judgment (*The Song of Roland* 1999, 1140-1142). There is argument, and the bishop who is with the company must remind Roland and Oliver of their friendship (*Ibid.*). Still, Oliver does as Roland wishes, Enkidu does as Gilgamesh wishes, and a good dog usually does as its master commands. These relationships, therefore, are somewhat hierarchical despite their unconditional natures and the affection that the friends have for each other. Thorstein, too, though Bjarni's equal, willingly "went with Bjarni over to Hof, and stayed in his service for the rest of his life" ("Thorstein the Staff-Struck" 2006, 1380).

McSwite (2002), in an analysis of Kafka's insight and Lacan's idea, explores the benefit of mutual relationships in public administration, and his/her evaluation might apply to ideas about friendship as well. McSwite agrees with Lacan's theory of the burden of desire and explains how it is established.

The movement through life is toward *thanatos* and away from *eros*. The lust for life becomes a lust for death. In this view, then, the central issue of life is assuming and bearing one's desire, a desire that can never be fulfilled in life because of its involvement with death. (McSwite 2002, 33)

If one accepts this idea, "No one can die for us and no one can live for us...we are each located in what I prefer to call a sacred space that is our own" (McSwite 2002, 34).

Authority, as in a hierarchical relationship, can violate that space, and here one must separate the men from the dogs. Roland exercises authority over Oliver because he is appointed by Charlemagne to lead the king's rearguard. Roland is also Charlemagne's

nephew. Enkidu, when brought to meet Ninsun, Gilgamesh's mother, is told that she adopts him as her child, thus making him the brother of Gilgamesh, and she asks Enkidu to look out for Gilgamesh (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 25). Enkidu is not only honor bound because of friendship but also duty bound to protect Gilgamesh as Oliver must comply with Roland's commands because Oliver is the vassal of Charlemagne. Patroclus serves Achilles even in a menial capacity when Achilles asks for more wine: "Come, a bigger winebowl, son of Menoetius, set it here..."he paused. Patroclus obeyed his great friend (Homer *The Iliad* 1999, 136).

According to McSwite, there is a possibility, then, that a relationship is violated when one friend has authority over another:

Role designs can prescribe the use of authority in ways that violate relationships. Some role designs do not allow for genuine relationship at all; others require the breaking of mutual relationship in only specific circumstances. In any case, the person exercising authority, even with the best conscious intentions, is likely to violate the sacred space of the other. (McSwite 2002, 34)

It is true that both Oliver and Enkidu will experience some bitter moments before their deaths mostly because their counsel has gone unheeded although they do remain faithful to their friends. Could one contend that both Gilgamesh and Roland took advantage of the unconditional devotion of their friends? Is unconditional commitment to one's friend necessary in order to achieve an ultimate form of friendship?

Beowulf, Grendel and Solitude

This final poem is presented out of its chronological position in relation to the others, for it probably predates *The Song of Roland* and "Thorstein the Staff-Struck." *Beowulf* is a song that distinguishes between solitudes, meaning that both the right kind

and the wrong kind are exemplified. To reiterate, one's being alone, especially in the wrong way or in the sense that it is called loneliness, is being posited as an antithesis of friendship.

Between the characters of Beowulf and Grendel, one is able to distinguish two types of solitude. While independent Beowulf strives to behave virtuously and for acceptance, the spiteful Grendel is the loathsome, isolated destroyer. Grendel is identified as one of Cain's descendents:

He had dwelt for a time
in misery among the banished monsters,
Cain's clan, whom the Creator had outlawed
and condemned as outcasts. (*Beowulf* 2006, 1182)

To someone of an early Germanic culture like the Danes or the Geats, one's roots and family ties are most important. The killing of one's brother, or any kinsman, leads almost assuredly to hell's gates. Beowulf, when engaged in a verbal combat with another warrior, attacks his opponent with the following:

You killed your own kith and kin,
so for all your cleverness and quick tongue,
you will suffer damnation in the depths of hell. (*Beowulf* 2006, 1192)

The killing of one's kinsman suggests no allegiances. Grendel claims no allegiance to God or to humanity. Grendel is referred to as "a fiend out of hell" (*Beowulf* 2006, 1182). Grendel is, "Malignant by nature, he never showed remorse" (*Beowulf* 2006, 1183).

When one is against God and against humanity, such as Grendel, "he ruled in defiance of right" (*Ibid.*). The poem reports that Grendel will not make any sort of bargain:

Nothing but war; how he would never
parley or make peace with any Dane
nor stop his death-dealing nor pay the death price. (*Beowulf* 2006, 1183)

It is said that, “Grendel waged his lonely war... he was the Lord’s outcast” (Ibid.).

Grendel has no real home, and again, for the Germanic peoples of Beowulf’s day, “the worst condition into which a man can fall is to be an outlaw or wanderer, someone who has no home” (Lawall et al. 2006, 1174).

In the age of speech, to be alone is both not human and unnatural. Cicero (1967) writes, “Nature abhors isolation, and even leans upon something as stay and support; and this is found in its most pleasing form in our closest friend” (38). Aelred (2010) refers to Genesis 2:18 when God says, “It is not good that man should be alone” (2010, 66.57).

The story of Frankenstein’s creature is very similar. The creature remarks, “Yet even that enemy of God and man had friends and associates in his desolation; I am quite alone” (Shelley 1976, 271). He is loathed by humanity and God is not his creator.

Grendel has, at least, his mother, but even this relationship has an unhealthy odor because she, too, is a loathsome creature for whom the laws of God and of humanity have no bearing. Thomas Merton (1955) might say that Grendel lives in a false solitude, or at least that he displays the same symptoms. Grendel “has been denied the right to become a person;” therefore, Grendel, like the creature in Frankenstein, “takes revenge on society by turning his individuality into a destructive weapon” (247-248).

Beowulf’s inclusion as a piece in the classical friendship puzzle requires further explanation, for the hero Beowulf, though accepted and a king of his people, remains a solitary figure. In his final battle against a powerful dragon, only one man steps forward to assist the elderly Beowulf, and not because he and Beowulf are great friends, but more in the way of Beowulf stepping up to help the aging Danish king. Nevertheless, the poem begins with an allusion to friendship. It is an old bond, a former friendship, which brings

Beowulf to the Danes and to the Danish king, Hrothgar, who is seemingly helpless against Grendel's nightly attacks. Grendel prowls the kingdom and attacks the men in their banquet hall while they sleep. Grendel literally kills and eats the men. Beowulf arrives on Danish soil to repay Hrothgar for helping his father when the father was in trouble. Beowulf is introduced to the king: "This man is their son, here to follow up an old friendship" (*Beowulf* 2006, 1187).

Hrothgar and Beowulf, one could claim, become friends. In fact, Hrothgar, upon close examination, is a most honorable character, and in that regard Beowulf's equal. His weakness is his age. Hrothgar should be likened to a responsible godfather or a wise and loving uncle. It is his acceptance and acknowledgement of Beowulf's great deeds that establish Beowulf's position among both the Danes and Beowulf's own people, the Geats. The poem does not have as a principal theme friendship; however, Beowulf possesses the prerequisite friendship qualities in abundance. Perhaps it is that Beowulf, like Charlemagne in *The Song of Roland*, simply has no equal. There is no second self, one whom Beowulf can love as himself or above himself, as, for instance, Jonathan loves David: "And Jonathan entered into a bond with David, because he loved David as himself" (Samuel 18, 3 [NAB]). It does not appear, furthermore, that Beowulf has a wife; or if he does she is not a significant presence in his life, for Beowulf, as far as the listener knows, has no direct heirs. The one physical match that Beowulf does have, Breca, is more of a rival than a friend, although this person does seem to have helped shape Beowulf's character. Their intense competition has perhaps prepared Beowulf for his heroic achievements:

The truth is this:

when the going was heavy in those high waves,
 I was the strongest swimmer of all.
 We'd been children together and we grew up
 daring ourselves to outdo the other,
 boasting and urging each other to risk
 our lives in the sea.... (*Beowulf* 2006, 1191)

In keeping with the other hero friendships, the friends push each other to their destinies or to some great achievement; or they assist each other in their adventures. Gilgamesh and Enkidu slay Humbaba, the forest guardian, and the bull of heaven together. Enkidu's death drives Gilgamesh to seek immortality. Job's friends, though not regarded as heroic friends or the best of friends, test his resolve. Jonathan makes it possible for David to survive and to become the King of the Israelites. Patroclus's death propels Achilles to kill Hector and thus fulfill his destiny. Oliver, though he represents reason and is allowed to criticize Roland, stands by Roland as together they confront the Saracen hordes. Oliver's death finally prompts Roland to blow his horn and alert Charlemagne. Bjarni's challenge of Thorstein establishes Thorstein as a courageous man and as a great fighter. The two are united in a relationship of mutual respect. In many ways, Beowulf surpasses them all in his noble comportment, exhibiting the qualities necessary to become the best kind of friend. Beowulf, in fact, is renowned for these virtues:

Thus Beowulf bore himself with valor;
 he was formidable in battle yet behaved with honor
 and took no advantage; never cut down
 a comrade who was drunk, kept his temper
 and, warrior that he was, watched and controlled
 his God-sent strength and his outstanding
 natural powers. (*Beowulf* 2006, 1226)

Beowulf even goes so far as to give Grendel a fair fight. Knowing that Grendel disdains the use of weapons, Beowulf will defeat Grendel in hand-to-hand combat. Beowulf has

the faith to match his raw strength, used for good, against Grendel's raw strength, used for evil.

Although Beowulf must boast, for it is expected of warriors in the violent, Germanic world from which the poem emerges, he does so with less *hubris* than either Gilgamesh or Achilles. He seems to have heeded Hrothgar's advice:

“O flower of warriors, beware of that trap.
Choose, dear Beowulf, the better part,
eternal rewards. Do not give way to pride.” (*Beowulf* 2006, 1218)

Beowulf's courage and resolve more closely resemble Roland's determination. Beowulf, though aware of his own reputation, has come to the Danes pledging to perform a service. In this sense, he is loyal to Hrothgar and his people. Roland, too, is fulfilling a mission for his lord, Charlemagne. Both heroes are unflinching in their missions. Roland, in fact, dies, and Beowulf is willing to accept death if it should come. Beowulf and Roland both, furthermore, recognize God's power and seem to have a sense of fulfilling His will but through the intermediaries of their kings. Beowulf is particularly careful to credit God with enabling his accomplishments. After his battle with Grendel's avenging mother, in which he is finally victorious, Beowulf tells Hrothgar and the other warriors what happened in the monster's underwater lair.

I barely survived the battle under water.
It was hard-fought, a desperate affair
that could have gone badly; if God had not helped me,
the outcome would have been quick and fatal.
Although Hrunting [a sword] is hard-edged,
I could never bring it to bear in battle.
But the Lord of Men allowed me to behold—
for he often helps the unbefriended—
an ancient sword shining on the wall,
a weapon made for giants, there for the wielding. (*Beowulf* 2006, 1216)

Perhaps having a great friend is like possessing a great sword. Beowulf's words prompt one to recall Aelred's speculations about friendship with God. Aelred proposes that the need for friendship is something natural and that it is a God given desire within every human being (Aelred 2010, 65-66). According to Aelred (2010), if one rejects friendship, it is damaging because one at the same time is distancing him or herself from God. That person becomes a beast like Grendel (46). Aelred drives this point heavenward:

Thus rising from the holy love with which a friend embraces a friend to that which a friend embraces Christ, one may take the spiritual fruit of friendship fully and joyfully into the mouth, while looking forward to all abundance in the life to come. (Aelred 2010, 126.134)

Perhaps Beowulf represents the next generation of friend, the one closer to God; for his father initially forged the friendship bond with Hrothgar whom Beowulf comes to defend. Or, it could be submitted, according to Beowulf's words, that God will befriend the one who is in need and who is striving for the good.

What should one, however, make of Beowulf's lack of a companion in the same way as Gilgamesh, David, Achilles, Roland, and even Thorstein? One can refer again to the need for proper self-love, a love that does not become grotesque. Self-love is not vanity or *hubris*. It cannot, furthermore, be a self-loathing as both Grendel and Frankenstein's creature seem to experience. As proposed in the beginning of this chapter, Beowulf sprints past his fellow heroes in achieving a proper balance between pride and vanity. He also shows self-control and humility. Of all the friends and heroes thus presented, one might conclude that Beowulf would make the best of friends though it would be difficult for a friend to approach Beowulf's level of honor and integrity. It is

logical that such a man would become a venerated king, for he is above others but at the same time serves his people nobly. Yet, he remains without that special friend. Merton is summoned again to describe the proper self-love and the need for individuality. Without either, one is incapable of the best kind of friendship. The person cannot be approached, nor can he or she approach others:

If I cannot distinguish myself from the mass of other men, I will never be able to love and respect other men as I ought. If I do not separate myself from them enough to know what is mine and what is theirs, I will never discover what I have to give them, and never allow them the opportunity to give me what they ought. (Merton 1955, 247)

Beowulf seems to have made the right kind of separation, and his ultimate greatness is acknowledged in the poem, beginning with Hrothgar's praise and recognition through to Beowulf's final battle and his funeral. Beowulf sets a high precedent. The poet may be suggesting that Beowulf stands somewhere between God and man without the possibility of an earthly equivalent. Only one warrior, Wiglaf, who has been justly treated by Beowulf and who remembers Beowulf's deeds, stands by Beowulf in the last battle; thus, there is hope that the qualities that make for friendship in Beowulf's violent age will endure. Everyone else has fled, and Beowulf is surrounded by the dragon's flames.

Wiglaf makes his way to him:

“Go on, dear Beowulf, do everything
you said you would when you were still young
and vowed you would never let your name and fame
be dimmed while you lived. Your deeds are famous,
so stay resolute, my lord, defend your life now
with the whole of your strength. I shall stand by you.” (*Beowulf* 2006, 1237)

And:

They had killed the enemy, courage quelled his life;
that pair of kinsmen, partners in nobility,

had destroyed the foe. So every man should act,
 be at hand when needed; but now, for the king,
 this would be the last of his many labors
 and triumphs in the world. (*Beowulf* 2006, 1237-1238)

The poem *Beowulf*, like the other stories, is evolved from a world of speech communication. Speech is even revered in Beowulf's warrior culture. Reference in the poem is made to his "word hoard" (*Beowulf* 2006, 1185) as if it is a weapon's locker, and eventually Beowulf will be compelled to grapple verbally with the warrior Unferth who, envious, attempts to discredit Beowulf (*Beowulf* 2006, 1190-1191). Beowulf proves to be a good storyteller, and his actions later will confirm his words. The poem *Beowulf* is composed in a specific Anglo-Saxon pattern called alliterative verse, which is a carryover from the oral tradition. Many would have heard and learned the story before the single surviving manuscript was written around 1000 AD (Lawall et al. 2006, 1177). Thus, the same communication attributes that exist in the other classical friendship stories are present in *Beowulf*. One can reason, then, that such a story would become rooted in the minds of the population that heard the story over several centuries. *Beowulf* and the stories discussed in this chapter are internalized by their listeners and one could argue eternalized by those listeners. Certainly, these epic tales have been immortalized.

Summation and Connection

At first glance, what is most similar about these friendship tales, all created somewhere between 2500 B.C.E. and the thirteenth century? For one thing, the friends and heroes live in violent worlds where one survives by the sword. Even in Job, who is the one exception to the warrior, his sons and daughters are murdered. The first friendship story begins with combat between the friends, Gilgamesh and Enkidu. They

set out on a dangerous mission together to kill an entity that appears to have done no real harm. Allegorically, one could claim that the slaying of Humbaba is a taming of nature, with nature being something to overcome in those times, if only to give the killing a moral foothold. David and Jonathan are heavily engaged in combat with other peoples. God, in fact, enables both to kill others. Both David and Jonathan are capable warriors and achieve success in warfare. Achilles is the fiercest man alive, the most feared fighter of all the Greeks and the Trojans, and his friend, Patroclus, is stopped only by Apollo's blow delivered from behind. As in *Gilgamesh*, the gods have a hand in killing one of the hero friends. Roland and Oliver, too, are committed to battle and are incredible fighters, carving through legions of enemy troops. Thorstein kills a man who has humiliated him; and then he fights his equal, Bjarni, wielding swords and shields. Beowulf rips off the flesh-eating Grendel's arm and shoulder. Essentially, the most skilled and courageous fighting men establish the greatest friendships and are the most respected within their societies. They are leaders, kings, and role models.

Along with their prowess in combat, most of these men also rate divine qualities or divine interventions of sorts. Gilgamesh and Achilles are demigods. Enkidu is formed specifically by a god to be a companion. David and Jonathan are directed by God, God speaks to Job, Roland is carried away by angels, Bjarni becomes a Christian, and it is suggested that Beowulf is performing the will of God as Beowulf pits himself against superhuman evil: "But now a man, with the Lord's assistance, has accomplished something none of us could manage before now for all our efforts" (*Beowulf* 2006, 1199).

All of these friends and heroes are men of action. They must usually perform some extraordinary feat or withstand incredible hardship, undertakings that would be

beyond anything but a contemporary superhero's challenges. Although they often act for their own edification, their trials are regarded as noble and virtuous. The Christian friends and heroes tend to be a bit more selfless in their loyalty and in their rendering of service to their leaders and to their people. They also humble themselves before God and behave courteously toward those people who are deserving of their admiration. All these men earn their human rewards and sometimes receive earthly compensation from the heavens. Job is certainly compensated with rewards that far exceed his losses: "Also, the Lord restored the prosperity of Job, after he had prayed for his friends; the Lord even gave to Job twice as much as he had before" ([NAB] Job 42, 10). God recognizes Roland by sending angels to recover his body. Roland's salvation is secure.

The friends and heroes, finally, are all men, and the women that do appear in these friendship sagas have little or no real impact unless they are goddesses. The human female, however, has very limited power and hardly appears in any of the stories. If anything, she is an instigator of conflict, like Helen of Troy. Women are almost fully dependent upon the men in the stories. The women are important possessions but never equals. Simply put, women are oppressed. Simone de Beauvoir (1949), with reference to Engel's *The Origin of the Family*, supplies plausible reasons for this fact. First, there is the need for weapons and their manipulation. If the weapon is more than a woman can handle, she becomes immediately inferior: "*Il suffit que l'instrument réclame une force légèrement supérieure à celle dont la femme dispose pour qu'elle apparaisse comme radicalement impuissante*" (Beauvoir 1949, 96). Only Job does not handle a sword in any of the stories so far reviewed. Beauvoir also connects women to their economic roles as agriculture and husbandry become increasingly important in early societies. Before

mechanization, fields are cleared and trees are felled by hand. She claims that in societies where there is a need for physical strength, such as in sustained warfare or heavy farming, the woman's role will always be subservient, and that, in these times, societies became patriarchal as private property was transferred from father to son (Beauvoir 1949, 96-97). Only the invention of technological equalizers and economic restructuring can redefine the roles of women in society: "*Le problème de la femme se réduit à celui de sa capacité de travail. Puissante au temps où les techniques étaient adaptées à ses possibilités, détrônée quand elle est devenue incapable de les exploiter*" (Beauvoir 1949, 98).

The problem in the times of these friendships is one of inequality without the possibility of achieving it according to the terms that two men might achieve friendship. One returns to the idea of subservience. Especially in the ancient world where war and combat are frequent occurrences, the more powerful and respected man is the one who dominates the others and basically possesses more property and wealth. His deeds, in fact, net him great gifts and high esteem. He is a good friend to have in the most utilitarian sense. Beauvoir claims that if people regarded each other exclusively in friendship, and she would seem to be referring to a better kind of friendship, there would be no enslavement or subordination:

Si le rapport originel de l'homme avec ses semblables était exclusivement un rapport d'amitié, on ne saurait rendre compte d'aucun type d'asservissement: ce phénomène est une conséquence de l'impérialisme de la conscience humaine qui cherche à accomplir objectivement sa souveraineté. (Beauvoir 1949, 101)

That which makes women different from slaves and vassals, according to Beauvoir (1949), is their complicity with men. They are not seeking to revolt in the same way that

a slave or an unhappy laborer might be, for her life is indissolubly linked to the male in terms of the human race itself and the perpetuation of humanity (Beauvoir 1949, 101). The female condition is not considered in the earliest friendship stories, all of which occur in male-centered societies.

The entire point of rehashing these great stories of friendship has been to prove that speech communication, principally as poetry and song, has been an essential factor in preserving models for the best kinds of friendship. It is arguably true that most of the friendship stories existed through many generations before they were committed to writing. One might postulate from White's (2014) explanation of poetic form or, "Mode of Emplotment," in historical writing that the early bard-historians also relied on particular modes of emplotment to express important qualities and values. For White (2014), the mode of emplotment (linguistic means) reflects the historian's, or the storyteller's, preloaded form of argument and ideology:

Once the world of phenomena is separated into two orders of being (agents and causes on the one hand, acts and effects on the other), the primitive consciousness is endowed, *by purely linguistic means alone*, with the conceptual categories (agents, causes, spirits, essences) necessary for the theology, science, and philosophy of civilized reflection. (White 2014, 34)

The highly metaphorical modes used by the ancient bards, who are also the historians, express the essential characters and characteristics of the hero friends. The oral tradition, as a metaphor, arrives as synecdoche, which is an integration of qualities and essences that have emerged to the storyteller-historians or always existed and that are prefigured into the friendship tales by them:

Rather, it is to be construed as a symbol of quality that is characteristic of the whole individual, considered as a combination of physical and spiritual elements,

all of which participate in this quality in the modality of a microcosmic-macrocosmic relationship. (White 2014, 35)

Consequently, through repetition, the qualities that make for virtue and friendship might become deeply fixed in the listener's mind and ready for transfer. The classical heroes and friends are all endowed with similar characteristics that enable them to be outstanding friends in keeping with the criteria as outlined by Poe (2011) in his "push theory of media effects" and Merton (1955) in his identification of the requisite virtues. Rather than carve a friendship ideal in stone, in the age of speech, it is carved within the mind and some might say the soul of humanity. Minds are pliable, however; even today's neuroscientist will agree that the human brain possesses a certain degree of plasticity and that it evolves, and it shall be shown that changes in media could bring about modifications in the way that people perceive friendship. For instance, the friendship model that is born from the oral tradition is flawed in two discernable ways that would not have been regarded as weaknesses when the friendship stories were created. One problem is that of woman and friendship. Women are seemingly excluded from the noblest kind of friendship. Furthermore, friendship is restricted to gender. Men are friends with men, and little is shown of friendships between women. A second problem is that of subordination. Although both friends are virtuous, one of the two friends generally takes precedence over the other.

Certainly, the hero friends display the qualities that comprise the classical friendship model. All the friends have free will and make choices. No one forces the friends to become each other's companion. Yet, each friend is quite unique as an individual. The friends are not twins. Each friend, furthermore, makes allowances for the

individuality of his friend. No friend makes any attempt to change the character of the other. Each friend struggles internally with some problem, and though the friends can lend assistance and help with understanding, no friend can rid the other of the burden that each one bears. Each friend has his flaws and is virtuous in his own right. Only Job and Beowulf do not have pairs; in fact, Beowulf has a direct opposite in Grendel, and in Job one is provided with examples of friendship that are less than exemplary and not to be emulated. God is angry with Job's friends. Beowulf is worthy of friendship, Grendel is the embodiment of the wrong kind of solitude; and in his last battle, the most virtuous among Beowulf's followers steps forward selflessly to stand by his king, come what may.

These legendary friendships are surely greatly mythologized if not pure myth. The heroes and friends seem almost superhuman. Some are. Their behavior is to be admired and emulated in order to achieve the greatest kind of friendship. Like the best examples and role models in any society, the friendships depicted in the earliest friendship stories seem all but unattainable. A final, common characteristic of these friendship narratives is the grand connection between speech and action in the age of speech: "For action and speech...are indeed the two activities whose end result will always be a story with enough coherence to be told, no matter how accidental or haphazard the single events and their causation may appear to be" (Arendt 1998, 97). Certainly, the stories here reviewed have endured the test of time, and these friendship stories are almost exclusively about men taking action. These poems survived long enough, centuries in some cases, before being committed to paper. This classical-Christian paradigm, furthermore, has continued to operate.

Chapter 4

Bridging Oral Tradition and Print: The Manuscript

Your religion was written on tables of stone by the iron finger of an angry God, lest you might forget it. The red man could never remember or comprehend it. Our religion is the traditions of our ancestors, the dreams of our old men, given them by the great Spirit, and the visions of our sachems, and is written in the hearts of our people.

—Chief Seattle

Chief Seattle, in his 1854 speech, says, “and is written in the hearts of our people” (“Chief Seattle Speech” 2014, 708). He is a spokesperson for societies that relied upon verbal communication. The people Chief Seattle represents governed themselves according to oral traditions. Their principles, then, had to reside somewhere, not on clay or parchment, but “in the hearts of our people” (Ibid.). Can such values and beliefs, in other words, be as deeply rooted and understood when such guidelines for living do not have to be committed to the heart, or, as the expression goes, by heart? Plato believes that what constitutes wisdom, for instance, is lost as humanity steers towards the exhaustive documentation of all things:

It [writing] will produce forgetfulness in the souls of those who have learned it, through lack of practice at using their memory, as through reliance on writing they are reminded from outside by alien marks, not from inside, themselves by themselves: you have discovered an elixir not of memory but of reminding. To your students you give an appearance of wisdom, not the reality of it; having heard much, in the absence of teaching, they will appear to know much when for the most part they know nothing, and they will be difficult to get along with, because they have acquired the appearance of wisdom instead of wisdom itself. (Plato quoted in Burke and Ornstein, 1997, 87)

“Your religion was written on tables of stone by the iron finger of an angry God, lest you might forget it. The red man could never remember it” (“Chief Seattle Speech” 2014, 708).

Others support the idea that with writing occur changes in the way that people think and view the world: “The alphabet converted traditional knowledge into an external object easily available for inspection, no longer dependent on memory. The result of this was that new ways of talking and thinking about the world became possible” (Burke and Ornstein 1997, 68). Stanislas Dehaene (2009), a renowned neuroscientist who has studied the way the human brain recycles itself as a human being learns to read, adds to the discussion of memory, suggesting that more is gained than lost and that what might be lost is ambiguous with the acquisition of literacy. As one learns how to read, there is “a selective pruning process” (Dehaene 2009, 206). Written language does not necessarily stimulate the same regions of the brain as spoken language does. Dehaene (2009, 208) presents considerable physical and scientific evidence to support his submission that, “Literacy drastically changes the brain—literally!” “The literate brain engages many more left-hemisphere resources than the illiterate brain even when we only listen to speech” (Dehaene 2009, 208-209). Dehaene (2009) posits further that there is an increase in verbal memory space in the literate (208). Memory, then, according to neuroscientists like Dehaene, runs contrary to Plato’s idea that, “Writing will produce forgetfulness in the souls of those who have learned it” (Plato quoted in Burke and Ornstein 1997, 68). Brain imaging technologies in well documented studies would seem to confirm the scientific hypothesis: “Illiterates can remember the gist of stories and poems, but their verbal working memory—the temporary buffer that stores instructions, recipes, names or

phone numbers over short periods of time—is vastly inferior to ours [those who are literate]” (Dehaene 2009, 210). Perhaps one, however, should not be so dismissive of the idea of gist in memory, for to understand the gist of something suggests a reduction or an integration of information to its essentials: “Typically, the mind reduces complex quantitative information to simple categories like one, two, and many. Keeping accounts in terms of one, two, and many is an invitation to disaster” (Poe 2011, 67). The metaphorical approach, or synecdoche, can be perceived as positive, for it suggests an integration of parts into a comprehensible whole: “The expression suggests a relationship among the parts of the individual, considered as a combination of physical and spiritual attributes, which is qualitative in nature and in which all of the parts participate” (White 2014, 35). For the intangible things, or, perhaps, to be more human, gist is important, especially in reference to myth and its importance in human activity: “For myth is the instant vision of a complex process that ordinarily extends over a long period” (McLuhan 1964, 8).

Dehaene (2009) and Poe (2011), in reference to memory, are apparently discussing the quantity of things that come to be remembered. Perhaps the grasping of the essential “gist,” or intrinsic quality, is precisely the ability that Plato fears humanity might lose as a consequence of writing. It’s “the hearts of our people” (“Chief Seattle Speech” 2014, 708), and “It [writing] will produce forgetfulness in the souls of the people who have learned it.... [It will give] the appearance of wisdom rather than the wisdom itself” (Plato quoted in Burke and Ornstein 1997, 68). Dehaene (2009), furthermore, specifically points to short term and not long term memory (210). The religious reference that Seattle makes has possibly to do with some form of long term memory, one that can

be passed down through the ages, or as something latent that can be recalled with the proper education. Seattle (“Chief Seattle Speech” 2014) is talking about rules of human conduct and intrinsic values. Seattle (Ibid.) and Plato (quoted in Burke and Ornstein 1997, 68) could be speaking of both wisdom and ethics as they guide human understanding and interaction. These men may not be arguing against documentation and quantification since that type of record keeping has to do with the pragmatic, extrinsic rigors of daily living such as might occur in commerce and government, especially as civilizations grow into complex infrastructures that are consequences of increased production and population.

Ironically, it is a matter of record that, though the classical-Christian friendship models apparently flourished and were born from an age before literacy, without writing one can only speculate as to whether these models and stories might still be known. What was once in the hearts and souls of the people was, both metaphorically and literally, “written on tables of stone” (“Chief Seattle Speech” 2014, 708).

Seattle (“Chief Seattle Speech” 2014) makes a valid connection to religion. As already proposed as part of the classical friendship model, the best kind of friendship is usually associated with the gods. In Plato (1993), Aristophanes calls the god, Love, “the best friend of men” (157-158). Love is thought of as a god. Aelred suggests that God created friendship. Eve was created for the sake of companionship (Dutton 2010, 29). Friendship, for Aelred, is as close as one can be to comprehending the eternal bliss of knowing Jesus Christ:

Thus rising from the holy love with which a friend embraces a friend to that which a friend embraces Christ, one may take the spiritual fruit of friendship fully

and joyfully into the mouth, while looking forward to all abundance in the life to come. (Aelred 2010, 126.134)

Enkidu is specifically created by the Sumerian gods to be a match for Gilgamesh (*Gilgamesh* 1999, 19). For Augustine (2002), true friendship is not possible without God's intervention (4.4.7). There is almost always a metaphysical quality associated in the earliest definitions of friendship. Once Bjarni meets his match in Thorstein, his final mission is to seek God as he becomes "a devote Christian and went to Rome on a pilgrimage" ("Thorstein the Staff Struck" 2006, 1380). The concept of friendship is not, for the ancients, something that needed to be spelled out or carved in stone "lest you might forget it" ("Chief Seattle Speech" 2014, 708). To Seattle, one can infer that the understanding of friendship is an intrinsic value generated within the heart. The understanding is subliminal. The true friend is able to grasp the gist of it. The concept of friendship is not something voluminous and limited to short term memory.

Writing, however, is also believed to have divine properties among the early civilizations that practiced it. Hermes is "the deity of writing, who taught writing to men" (Poe 2011, 81). The Greeks are not the only ones to connect the gods with invention: "The Sumerians believed that writing was brought from heaven by the deity Enki...the Egyptians considered the goddess Seshat the inventor of writing" (Ibid.). These beliefs are nurtured by religious authorities and rulers in order to retain their power and status: "This notion of divinely sponsored rule—or even the divine rule itself—is enshrined in nearly every major political and religious doctrine that comes down to us from the 4,000-year period in which Manuscript Cultures dominated the earth" (Poe 2011, 76). The rules for divinely appointed leadership are the words of the gods, in

writing, and only an elite handful of people are able to read the text. Therefore, it is logical that the readers themselves would possess divine properties and that the illiterate would submit to those people who were able to deliver and interpret the message:

Moses, Jesus, and Mohamed received the Word of the Lord (or, in the case of Jesus, *was* the Lord). You weren't. Their rightful successors—rabbis, priests, and imams—know what the Word means. You don't. So all in all it's best to leave the Word where it is, firmly in the private hands of princes and priests. (Poe 2011, 79)

Interestingly, when one considers some of Jesus' statements about friendship, one should also remember that Jesus himself, as far as scholars can gather, never wrote anything down. One could surmise that literacy is not requisite for knowing and believing in God. Humanity is indebted to Christ's disciples for their memories and their delving into the memories of others in order to be able to record Christ's teachings with, one might speculate, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit guiding them in their recollections: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

Friendship, the classical version, seems, during the time before literacy to expand beyond the elite, to be something possible only among the elite. The elite friends in the great epics of the past are almost always princes, warriors and demigods. Gilgamesh is a half-god king. His friend Enkidu is created in heaven and sent to earth. Achilles is a demigod and prince. Roland and Oliver are among the ruling elite, the Franks; and they are the most renowned and holy of Charlemagne's twelve pairs. Jonathan is a prince, and David becomes king of the Israelites. Ultimately, both friendship and writing are regarded as divine or divinely inspired. Neither of them appears to be purely the invention of human ingenuity or experience.

If friendship is transcendent and the concept is a divine quality that resides in the hearts and souls of human beings, is it something that already exists but that simply needs to be encouraged? Is it natural? Such qualities as friendship, if they are transcendent and natural, appear to be selective until mass literacy gives fuller access to the wisdom that unlocks them, a special knowledge or wisdom that had once been the sacred turf of holy men and monarchs. To what extent, then, is such a concept as friendship divinely inspired or even natural? Whether one believes that nature is God's creation or not, he or she might find it hard to dispute that the desire for companionship, at least, is natural. Creatures seek out their likenesses for the sake of survival and perpetuation. Among most species, the act of communication seems to come naturally, just as the desire for others of its kind is probably innate.

Certainly, the ability to speak and listen is learned without formal education. Dehaene (2009) is convinced that babies have already begun processing the sounds of language while in the womb: "In the first few months of life, infants demonstrate surprising language competencies...Furthermore, they pay special attention to the rhythm of their native language, heard in utero during the last months of pregnancy" (197). By the time young children begin learning to read, they have extensive knowledge of their native language and are fully capable of back and forth communication, and this linguistic ability simply happens:

At the age of five or six, when children are exposed to their first reading lessons, they already have expert knowledge of phonology. They also possess a vocabulary of several thousand words, and have mastered the basic grammatical structures of their languages. These "rules and representations" are implicit. The child is not aware of his expertise and cannot account for it. (Dehaene 2009, 198)

Writing and reading, however, do not come naturally. The human brain must be programmed to read. “Years of hard work are needed before the clockwork-like brain machinery that supports reading runs so smoothly that we forget it exists” (Dehaene 2009, 2). Dehaene is obstinate in his assertion that reading forces a “recycling” of “the neuronal networks” and that “literacy changes the brain” (Ibid.). Still, reading is not entirely unnatural. The strokes and shapes most commonly used in most alphabets are commonly seen in nature: “The arrangements or configurations of individual strokes tend to be the same. Their frequency follows a universal distribution that closely parallels natural scenes” (Dehaene 2009, 178). Thus the symbols that are part of writing are not entirely, as Plato (quoted in Burke and Ornstein 1997, 87) calls them, “alien marks.” Based on this information, Dehaene (2009) insists that “all learning rests on rigid innate machinery” (142). One is born with specific hardware for learning, but at the same time the human brain “cannot be fully pre-wired” (Ibid.). If there were not some plasticity, the brain could not be re-wired for the various tasks that human beings encounter. What is critical for learning, according to Dehaene, is the human brain’s ability to connect to something that resembles the physical world:

Our genome, which is the product of millions of years of evolutionary history, specifies a constrained, if partially modifiable, cerebral architecture that imposes severe limits on what we can learn. New cultural inventions can only be acquired insofar as they fit the constraints of our brain architecture. (Dehaene 2009, 146)

One might suggest that the human brain either comes equipped for friendship or that it is malleable enough to acquire it culturally based upon that already existent architecture, and one should be interested in how reading might play into the way people regard friendship.

To reiterate, the quest of this exploration is for the knowledge of whether a different form of communication or media for human transmission can affect that which is written in the souls and hearts of men and women in terms of human qualities such as friendship. One should continue to pursue those qualities and whether that type of friendship has survived the transitions brought about by changing and varied communication media. The question remains of whether the re-arrangement of the human mind based on media infusion can shape the way people think about friendship. “The new gift would eventually make us think in a new way” (Burke and Ornstein 1997, 40). Writing is language externalized and visualized. It allows for “an unparalleled way of manipulating information external to the mind” (Burke and Ornstein 1997, 41).

We are absurdly accustomed to the miracle of a few written signs being able to contain immortal imagery, involutions of thought, new worlds with live people, speaking, weeping, laughing.... What if we awake one day, all of us, and find ourselves utterly unable to read? (Nabokov, *Pale Fire*, quoted in Dehaene 2009, 54)

While it is postulated that language is obtained naturally, beginning prior to birth, “Nothing in our evolution could have prepared us to absorb language through vision” (Dehaene 2009, 4). Reading and writing are human constructs that human beings, with instruction, eventually take to; yet Dehaene (2009) will not accept one particular theory: “Neither the hypothesis of an intelligent creator nor that of slow emergence through natural selection seems to provide a plausible explanation for the origins of reading” (5).

To get some idea of how reading could change one’s perception of friendship, one should note that writing and reading can physically distance friends from each other and that different parts of the brain are used for facial and voice recognition from those parts that function for reading. Dehaene refers to one of the earliest case studies of a man who

loses the ability to read. This man, however, is still fully able to function and communicate:

This is the paradox of ‘verbal blindness’: the patient is only blind to letters and words. Visual acuity remains excellent, objects and faces are easily recognized, and the patient can still find his way around in a new environment or even appreciate painting. (Dehaene 2009, 55)

The question remains of whether utilizing different parts of the brain can affect an individual’s paradigms. There is little doubt that the ability to read and write changes the structure of societies.

It is important to remember that the manuscript era repeated much of what had already been established within the earliest civilizations and that it both preserved and retained key cultural elements from a time before written communication became integral to those civilizations. What came from the discovery, or the gift, of writing was a more efficient way to communicate thoughts and information: “A written text is not a high-fidelity recording. Its goal is not to reproduce speech as we pronounce it, but rather to code it at a level abstract enough to allow the reader to quickly retrieve its meaning” (Dehaene 2009, 33). Dehaene (2009) goes on: “Any servile transcription of sound would detract from this aim.” (34).

However, this power rests, during the manuscript era especially, in the hands of a ruling class: “It would make possible higher levels of organization required to keep the community viable and to help it survive. But organized survival would also require new levels of obedience, new constraints on behavior, new layers of social authority” (Burke and Ornstein 1997, 40).

Poe's "Push Theory of Media Effects" (2011) permits a comparison of the manuscript era with the age of speech in terms of the way the media might function in society and the way it might impact those people using them. During the manuscript era, accessibility to the medium is low, thus the network of those using this form of communication is limited. The need or desire for power can be concentrated to a specific few. Hierarchies can develop, and there is a sense that one is part of an elite group. Privacy is high since few people have access. Such a network can become secretive and closed. These characteristics contrast with those of speech-based communities where everyone has access. Fidelity is low in both oral and manuscript cultures. Social practices and cultural values are abstract and idealized. Volume is low since so few people use the system. The tendency of these people is towards asceticism. There is economy of use because the materials necessary for writing are expensive, their availability is restricted, and they require training and knowledge to use. The cost of entering such a network is prohibitive. The velocity is low. Generally, written communication travels in one direction. It is a monologue so tends to be authoritarian in tone such as the Ten Commandments or the Code of Hammurabi. It is the voice of the gods and of their intermediaries, the rulers and priests. The range of this communication is high, for it can be transported, repeated exactly and preserved to the extent that the times permitted. Written communication can reach many, but in the manuscript era, it is selective. Writing is persistent for it is linear and historical. The manuscript allows for temporality. Time can be more neatly packaged than it can be when external documentation is not possible. Such a communication's network is difficult to search, for it is unmapped and again, only the low percentage of people who are literate can forage within the network for

information (Poe 2011, 23, 98). The manuscript era is one of specialization and hierarchy.

These factors are important to the concepts of friendship because writing helped to create conformity (Burke and Ornstein 1997, 52). Myths, legends and teachings became permanent and unchanging. The early philosophizing about friendship and the first documented friendship myths could be taught and perpetuated even by those people who did not, as Plato claims, truly possess wisdom. Little before the printing press can fundamentally change in how the best kind of friendship is perceived. The friendships born of oral traditions simply become fixed. Although they are debated and discussed, few new friendship models emerged directly from the manuscript era. As literacy grows, however, new possibilities sprout. Where literacy is more prevalent in Greek and Hebrew cultures, concepts can expand beyond the narrow confines of royal families and religious intermediaries; but as individuals, how does reading affect the possibilities for friendship, especially as it concerns cultural influences? And, how does “the use of literacy” in society affect friendship? Written laws and new forms of governance with evolving bureaucracies must alter the way individuals interact with each other: “In Mesopotamia, the extension of social control through the use of literacy radically altered the relationship between individuals” (Burke and Ornstein 1997, 53).

The Random House College Dictionary (1980) provides ten definitions for the word culture. For the purpose of inquiring about friendship, the best, general definition is probably “the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings and transmitted from one generation to another.” Dehaene (2009) defines culture as “the shared mental representations that define a group of human beings” (148). Reading

changes culture; therefore, all those things that are associated with culture also have the potential for change. Dehaene (2009) believes that, “the learning brain acts as a filter that selects and constrains the cultural representations that will be propagated” (148). He asserts that children, practically from birth, quickly learn to identify faces, voices, and their native languages. He also contends that within the first few months of being, children develop “a sense of empathy for others” even when children experience “sensory deprivation” (Ibid.). For Dehaene, one comes to understand that he believes all existence of things human belong to the brain, as a good neuroscientist should; yet he dismisses the monkey see, monkey do idea as well as the *tabula rosa* or blank slate theories of the 17th and 18th centuries:

The neuronal recycling hypothesis leads us quite logically to postulate the existence of “cultural attractors,” universal foci of competence that are shared by all humans, explain the stability of the major features of human cultures and prevent the drifting that would inevitably take place if children were merely attempting to imitate their peers. (Dehaene 2009, 148)

Literacy, the acts of reading and writing, to Dehaene (2009), are humanity’s attempt to “transmit the cultural objects we find most useful, but—as is particularly apparent with writing—we intentionally attempt to perfect them.” (149). If friendship is an important cultural and human quality, based upon Dehaene’s hypothesis, it could be semi-intrinsically transferred from one generation to the next. As long as it remains desirable, or “useful” to the culture, it will not be filtered out. Even if something were not useful or desirable, because of its intrinsic-ness, or hard-wired character, it might take several generations of brain recycling before such a thing was no longer carried forward or accepted. One must ask the question, at this point, of whether one’s beliefs and values are to an extent pre-programmed and whether one is simply following a long established

pattern in the brain and that over time there is a recycling process—if Dehaene’s reasoning is correct. Reading helps reinforce such transmissions because reading enables greater precision, complexity, permanence and review than the instructions received through ritual and storytelling when the listener is highly dependent on the memory and interpretation of the presenter. With reading there is, perhaps, less need for gist in comprehension:

We actively and intentionally transmit these cultural inventions to others, at a speed made possible by efficient instruction. Ultimately, the stable cultural representation that define the core of a human group are thus those that can be rapidly incorporated into the architecture of the human brain, because they find an echo in preexisting circuits capable of efficient neurological recycling. (Dehaene 2009, 149)

Classical-Christian friendship theory and its accompanying epics, mythologies and narratives that provide the models were immortalized during the manuscript era, and, if one can apply Dehaene’s reasoning to friendship, specific friendship components were wired into the human brain’s cultural machinery thousands of years ago. The power to read the classics and the classical discourse may have, arguably, fused some core principles for friendship within the human mind because they have been continually reinforced. Has there been much filtering and recycling of the friendship model since the beginning? There is little doubt that the principles espoused in the classical models of friendship run deep, whether they are of the heart, of the soul, of the mind, or of all three. How the model operates through print culture might be impacted by the way in which it historians and storytellers transfer it. White (2014) believes that, “a historiographical style represents a particular *combination* of modes of emplotment, argument, and ideological implications” (28). How the classical-Christian friendship model operates in

fiction, then, might depend on the prefigured mode of argument and the ideological implications that determine the mode of emplotment:

This gives to the individual thinker's conception of the field the aspect of self-consistent totality. And this coherence and consistency give to his work its distinctive stylistic attributes. The problem here is to determine the grounds of this coherence and consistency. In my view, these grounds are poetic, and specifically linguistic, in nature. (White 2014, 29)

The modes of emplotment, according to White (2014, 30), derive from their “tropological” characteristics. Metaphor, for instance, is “literally ‘transfer’.” The type of metaphor, or trope, then, can also act upon the model as it operates within a new historical domain. All the factors that White (2014) explains undergo change as Western civilization progresses through the age of print.

It is important to leave this discussion with a strong reminder that reading does change the way human beings think, literally. Reading re-wires the brain, and it does not happen automatically. Reading and writing must be taught in order to be mastered, a process that takes many years of practice. It also eliminates the need for face-to-face communication or sound, two essential elements of those friendships that emerged from speech cultures. Reading, furthermore, is usually an activity carried out by the individual, privately:

Withdrawn into the peace of this desert,
 along with some books, few but wise,
 I live in conversation with the deceased,
 and listen to the dead with my eyes
 (Francisco de Quevedo quoted in Dehaene 2009, 1)

The question remains of whether literacy has the potential to create a withdrawal from the classical-Christian friendship model and to, generally, alienate people from each other. It is easy to guess that literacy assists cultural shifts and that literacy may both create new

friendship paradigms and modify the classical-Christian model; but an investigation must encompass a time when literacy was escalating after the invention of the printing press and before other communication media became widespread.

When a new cultural invention finds its neuronal niche, it can multiply rapidly and invade an entire human group. A new period of cultural stability then ensues, until yet another invention arrives on the scene to disrupt the equilibrium. In a nutshell, this is how cultures appear, proliferate, and ultimately die off. (Dehaene 2009, 149)

Chapter 5

The Classical-Christian Friendship Operating in the Age of Print: 1500-1700

The invention and subsequent widespread use of the printing press unquestioningly aided those people who understood and controlled the technology to construct the social, economic and political infrastructures of the larger Western nations that still exist. In the West, furthermore, the printing press changed the way that people understood Christianity: “The effect of Gutenberg’s letters would be to change the map of Europe, considerably reduce the power of the Catholic church, and alter the very nature of knowledge on which political and religious control was based” (Burke and Ornstein 1997, 123). The task remains to discover whether this new communication media directly or indirectly altered perceptions of friendship models and therefore depictions of friendship in works of fiction. All of the areas mentioned (religion, politics, and “the very nature of knowledge”) designate factors that might operate from the outside upon individuals, and many people believe that individuals can be conditioned by those circumstances. As cultural and social paradigms change, so might ideas about friendship. The printing press allowed a greater number of people to present friendship hypotheses and to create friendship narratives as populations became more literate and better educated. More folks could read and write, and there was more printed matter on hand. The accessibility of knowledge in print rose quickly: “In 1455, there were no printed texts in Europe, but by 1500 there were twenty million books in 35,000 editions, one book for every five members of the population” (Burke and Ornstein 1997, 123).

The classical-Christian friendship model continues to operate in the print era, but it undergoes several modifications, and these changes are evident within the philosophical discourses on friendship and the fictional friendships that emerge. In the late Renaissance there is a wish to embrace the classical-Christian friendship ideal, but those who concern themselves with friendship and who are able to observe friends in their daily living have a greater wish to depict friendship as it applies to the general population. White (2014) would call this form of narrative “contextualist.” The early print era friendship narratives are explained “by being set within the ‘context’ of their occurrence” (White 2014, 17). In these historical instances, or settings, the writer (a contextualist) “insists that ‘what happened’ in the field can be accounted for by the specification of the functional interrelationships existing among the agents and agencies occupying the field at a given time” (Ibid.). The social field and human interrelationships have changed. Friends among the growing population of literate entrepreneurs and merchants are not portrayed as demigods and warriors. They are not kings nor are they enlightened by the gods. Perhaps this occurrence is due to an expanding readership. More people are reading, particularly the growing bourgeoisie or merchant class: “The cheap, popular books flooding the presses quickly created a new reading public, not least among them merchants, who typically knew little or no Latin. Political and religious printed propaganda could be used to mobilize this growing, more literature middle class” (Burke and Ornstein 1997, 130). Books marketed to this new group of readers were perhaps more practical, or “contextualist,” and less romantic than the poetry of The Middle Ages. One can speculate that the new readers were interested in reading about people who were more like themselves though they might still, politically, support a monarchy and have

strong religious convictions. The nobility, the Catholic Church and Christian reformers remained powerful entities for a couple centuries after the launch of the printing press, for they retained some control over the technology.

And, there was more elbow rubbing because of the volume of written material and the growing literacy. For one thing, printing became an important industry, and many different kinds of people were needed in order to make that which was being printed marketable. The new printing houses exemplified this blending of knowledge and skill:

Platin's new printing press epitomized the new entities springing up all over Europe, bringing together an entirely new mix of intellectual and commercial disciplines. This in itself was revolutionary, since before printing these separate areas of specialist knowledge had no reason to interact. (Burke and Ornstein 1997, 134)

The days of knowledge belonging solely to the nobility, to the scribes, and to theologians were coming to an end. The new domain of knowledge would at first and for a long time belong to the wealthiest and best educated. Religion also remained an important variable in literacy because Catholics and Protestants wished to educate their followers into their belief systems: "Luther and Loyola had, in different ways, established the education system as a principal agent of the different belief systems" (Burke and Ornstein 1997, 141). The bottom line, however, for educators, was to fulfill "the need, in a time of rapidly growing trade and commerce, to use education as a tool for inculcating 'useful' knowledge" (Ibid.). Friendship, then, that classical model of it, might be reevaluated in terms of its feasibility, or utility, and this reassessment appears within the earliest fiction literature emerging from the print era.

The Picaresque Novel

The Spanish picaresque novels indicate a new and growing readership that is increasingly caught up in the social character, or zeitgeist, of the first decades of the printing press era. The globe has been circumnavigated and great fortunes are to be made through ruse, cunning, brute force, and recognized—often powerful—authority. Discoverers, merchants, kings and even the church are able to enrich themselves on the treasures in the new territories. There are pirates at sea and there are lesser pirates on land, for by today's illusory marketplace morality these lesser or secondary capitalists are criminals because they have not the least regard for their fellow human beings. In the cynical picaresque novel, it is another kind of jungle, not entirely dissimilar in its degradation of humanity as Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* (1905) was over three hundred years later. Yet, the writers of fiction were not insensitive to or uneducated in the topic of friendship; and the picaresque novelist was one of the first to question some of the transcendent ideas about it.

The novel *Guzmán de Alfarache* puts the classical-Christian friendship under scrutiny, particularly as it concerns the “other self” concept, the belief that the greatest friend is another self. Gilbert-Santamaría (2011) here refers to the beginning of the friendship between Guzmán de Alfarache and Sayavedra: “The entire episode is framed as a meditation on the nature of friendship in the picaresque, first through an extensive theoretical discussion of the topic, and then with the appearance of Sayavedra himself, through a kind of practical case study” (83).

Like so many of the great mythical or classical friendships, one of the friends will die while the other forges ahead in a continuing saga, either to achieve his greatness or to

make some edifying discovery. Sayavedra, too, dies in Alemán's novel, and the story continues; but Guzmán and Sayavedra are not demigods or concerned for their people. These picaresque friends are not looking to posterity unless their reputations or accomplishments can profit them in some way. In comparison to the model friends, Guzmán and Sayavedra's friendship is an irony:

The trope of Irony, then, provides a linguistic paradigm of a mode of thought which is radically self-critical with respect not only to a given characterization of the world of experience but also to the very effort to capture adequately the truth of things in language. It is, in short, a model of the linguistic protocol in which skepticism in thought and relativism in ethics are conventionally expressed. (White 2014, 37)

Guzmán and Sayavedra are not virtuous men, and one of the important criteria for the possibility of the best kind of friendship is that both people be, though flawed, perceived as good, heroic or at least redeemable. Alemán's novel is about another kind of person: "Guzmán's contemplation of his own experiences leads to the pessimistic recognition of the difficulties of this kind of friendship [other self] in a world populated by tricksters, thieves, and charlatans" (Gilbert-Santamaria 2011, 84).

The friendship narrative in *Guzmán de Alfarache* describes the failure of friendship in the classical sense and shows instead that friendship is more a matter of alliance, utility and maybe some admiration, as well as subordination, although it has already been pointed out that there is almost never total equality between the model friends with one always in some way being superior to the other and served by the other. Jonathan serves David and helps him elude Saul. Jonathan's death facilitates David's ascendance as king of the Israelites. Achilles, in his rage over the killing of his friend by Hector, kills the Trojan hero and actively engages in the destruction of Troy. Oliver

serves Roland, despite Oliver's better judgment, which leads to Oliver's death. Enkidu dies because he is an accessory to Gilgamesh's *hubris* as Gilgamesh insults a Sumerian goddess and the two friends together slay the bull of heaven. Thorstein, willingly, becomes the servant of Bjarni. Friends wish to serve each other.

Sayavedra, too, becomes the servant of Guzmán, but his devotion is indeed something of an honor among thieves as Sayavedra admires Guzmán's cunning after Sayavedra is outfoxed by him. It is a bit different from Gilgamesh's throwing Enkidu and ultimately both these first classical demigod friends find their other selves. The principal thing to glean, however, from Guzmán and Syavedra's friendship is that of pessimism: "Gone is the classical optimism that might allow one to suffer false friendships born of necessity, here replaced with despair in the face of the realization that one's 'other self' may not, in fact, exist" (Gilbert-Santamaria 2011, 85).

Of interest about the friendship that does form between Guzmán and Sayavedra, are the opportunity and subsequently the ability to share their personal narratives. The similarity of their stories enables empathy between the friends. Their understanding leads to something beyond the purely utilitarian union. It is a sort of purgatory, above self-serving utility but not quite heavenly in its virtue. These people in the picaresque model have only this chance to comprehend and identify themselves in more introspective and psychological ways. The sharing of stories and the discourse it enables allow a middle-of-the-road kind of friendship, which one might claim to be more plausible in the picaresque setting and within the timeframe of early modernity:

The more purely discursive model for personal intimacy on display in the *Guzmán* gives new life to the Aristotelian notion of the friend as 'another self,' replacing the categorical ideal with a dynamic, inherently modern vision of friendship as a

complex emotional relationship subject to continuous renegotiation and at constant risk of dissolution. (Gilbert-Santamaria 2011, 86)

Gilbert-Santamaria (2011) explains that the friendship of Guzmán and Sayavedra is one of “inherent fragility” because one finds, in the picaresque novel that, “the ruthless deceptiveness of life in the public sphere relentlessly threatens to undermine the benevolent impulses that make stories of private friendship possible” (86).

In Alemán’s novel, the friendship inevitably fails, and Guzmán, though he is emotionally moved by Sayavedra, befriends without total trust. Guzmán has exposed the possibility of betrayal and, in a sense, defeated Sayavedra, who asks to be Guzmán’s servant. Sayavedra serves, and Guzmán commands. Although Guzmán listens to Sayavedra’s ideas and advice, he makes his decisions and assigns tasks to Sayavedra. Gilbert-Santamaria (2011) translates from the novel: “It seemed to me that if someone wanted to serve me, there being so few good young men, that this one would be the least bad...for I already knew that I needed to protect myself from him, and with someone else, seeming to be faithful, I might not take care” (88) The friendship evolves accordingly: “The two develop a relationship that defies the static categories of classical models for friendship in favor of a fluid, evolving partnership that creates a provisional space for intimacy and trust in a world otherwise defined by trickery and deception” (Ibid.).

There seems to be a new kind of isolation, unlike Grendel’s, that partitions the individual into a persona for the public eye and another, private person while the heroes and friends held up as the examples of the best kinds of friendship in classical models suffer no such crises and are always the same persons both publicly and privately. There

is no act of deception, or separation, thus making the possibility of “another self” more reasonable to believe since nothing is hidden. There will not be, in the friendship of Guzmán and Sayavedra, any public display of loss or mourning when Sayavedra dies although publicly, it is expected. Perhaps the dualism in personality is a reflection of the possibilities of the new print media that make available worlds, people and ideas with which one might interact privately and where discourse is not required. There is a unidirectional quality to print (Poe 2011, 136). The reading, or telling of stories, or even the reading of books, which at one time had been a public practice, became privatized as more literature was printed in the vernaculars and as more people become literate (Poe 2011, 124). One was able to conceal something: “the privacy of print allowed people to enter the public sphere and do as they liked in the private sphere” (Poe 2011, 125). People could entertain themselves in what publicly might be regarded as inappropriate ways without anyone knowing. The possibility for vice, it would seem, could be greater, and one can appear to the public as virtuous while indulging privately in deviant practices. Furthermore, there is growing specialization. Although “print made the world a much more varied, information-rich place” (Poe 2011, 141), there is the paradox that specialization increases because so many more areas of knowledge are being born: “As the professions established themselves in print, their members increasingly used printed books to communicate with each other in language that became more and more incomprehensible to all but members of the profession” (Burke and Ornstein 1997, 142).

Friendship, however, even in the picaresque model, seems to bring out the best in the two people, especially as they treat and relate to each other: “The ideal of the friend as ‘another self’ is thus reanimated as an act of goodwill between two very imperfect

individuals” (Gilbert-Santamaria 2011, 89). Guzmán is able to grow past his social image and pragmatic considerations: “Constructed in direct opposition to the larger social context, Guzmán’s new friendship with Sayavedra provides him ‘with the opportunity as well as the necessary to demonstrate his own uniqueness’” (Gilbert-Santamaria 2011, 90). The private friendship allows for discourse, something that is absent in the world of the picaresque in which no one in public life is to be trusted and individuals practice wrong purposes both publicly and privately. It breaks the picaresque mold, which is described as “alienation” with little opportunity for individual expression (Gilbert-Santamaria 2011, 95). This type of friendship might be possible for even a monster like Grendel and another like him. Neither Guzmán nor Sayavedra are exactly the most savory of human beings. One might postulate that should such a friendship emerge, the friends would become, generally, more virtuous; but these friends instead continue to be unremorseful criminals together.

Guzmán and Sayavedra’s bond does not reach the classical level although it represents a fragile friendship and the best possibility within the picaresque novel, which is always a relative one. Sayavedra becomes mad with fever as the two are aboard ship, sailing to escape Genoa. The madness causes Sayavedra to throw himself overboard, which is how he dies, but before he dies he recounts all he knows of Guzmán’s life as if it were his own. Although Sayavedra is delirious, one might call his retelling a betrayal of confidence. Guzmán can feel no sympathy: “He laughs at Sayavedra’s mad ravings, but then, realizing that he is retelling Guzmán’s own life story, fears the public disclosure of his shady dealings” (Gilbert-Santamaria 2011, 97). It is ironic that Sayavedra shall become “the other self” in such a way. Again, perhaps Alemán is being sarcastic in this

representation of “the other self.” Guzmán is the proverbial cat, landing back on his feet. There is no epiphany: “Confronted with the death of his ‘other self,’ Guzman retreats into the *Picaro*’s habit of deception while simultaneously negating to his reader any trace of his former friendship” (Ibid.).

The impact of the printing press, one could claim, is to separate the public and private realms, which also creates a duality in the human being. The classical model of friendship is carefully scrutinized in the picaresque novel *Guzmán de Alfarache* of Mateo Alemán. The story aptly shows the difficulty of such a paradigm although it does offer a friendship model that is not purely pragmatic: “Perhaps more than any other literary mode of the period, the picaresque affirms the essential deceptiveness of public life against which any expression of sincere personal intimacy must constantly struggle to gain even merely transient recognition” (Gilbert-Santamaria 2011, 98).

Defense and Adjustment

Milton comes to mind first though some of his friendship rhetoric is part of a political agenda. He uses the ideal friendship as an analogy for the type of relationship that should exist between the government and the people, and he questions the manner of servitude that a monarchy has the possibility of engendering if the ruler becomes despotic. In the early, classical friendships, one can argue that a hierarchy exists, but the friends serve willingly. Bjarni suggests that Thorstein’s service would right matters between the two, a proposition that Thorstein gladly accepts though the two prove to be equals. Thorstein’s agreement is political. The two understand that they are on the same level physically, intellectually, and virtuously; but Bjarni’s reputation is at stake, and he

holds a position of some authority in the community. Thorstein's voluntary submission allows Bjarni to save face and improves Thorstein's condition. Sayavedra also wishes to serve Guzmán in Alemán's picaresque novel, but it is not in menial service. The two are partners in the confidence game. Sayavedra becomes Paul Drake to Guzmán's Perry Mason (*Perry Mason*, CBS, 1957-1966) except that the picaresque friends are criminals. It is a working relationship but also one of friendship. Milton, with reference to the best kind of friendship, suggests that it cannot be based on servitude, or at least, involuntary servitude. Milton, in equating friendship with the voluntary service one might render to a monarch, makes considerable use of Etienne de La Boétie's *Discours de la servitude volontaire*. La Boétie was Montaigne's great friend. Milton forwards "La Boétie's contention that, 'each one should be able to look into the other as into a mirror and recognize himself'" (Chaplin 2011, 213). Montaigne asserts that "friendship feeds on communication" (Ibid.), and claims that his friendship with La Boétie is "a complete blending of their wills" (Ibid.). In other words, Milton recalls the flag-bearers of the classical friendship model while making considerable allusion to Aristotle and Cicero. He further embraces the Christian idea that the best kind of friendship could be as near as one might get to God. For Milton, "all men are 'born free, being the image and resemblance of God himself'" (Chaplin 2011, 215).

Milton, however, working his way around the potential for *hubris* and without radically diverging from the classical friendship model, even suggests the reasons for the formation of friendships such as Guzmán and Sayavedra's. He also opens the door to the possibility of a superior friendship between men and women. Adam is questioned about his wish for companionship since God needs none. Adam wisely responds that perfection

needs no companion and that in his imperfection he requires “conversation with his like to help/Or Solace his defects” (Chaplin 2011, 220). In other words, the human being needs empathy, and perhaps some human sympathy, too. For Milton’s Adam, mere propagation of his image, because Adam is imperfect, is uncertain and what he describes as “unity defective” (Chaplin 2011, 221). Therefore, the Adam needs “Collateral love, and dearest amity” (Ibid.). This love and amity are brought about through conversation, or communication.

Communication, not unlike that necessity in the friendship of Guzmán and Sayavedra, is vital, yet Milton sticks with the virtuous, best kind of friendship that remains under God’s scrutiny. The novelty, however, is one of inclusion. Adam’s first companion and that person with which he will form the first friendship of “Collateral love, and Dearest amity” (Chaplin 2011, 221) is a woman. One’s understanding of the abhorrence of solitude is also apparent in Milton, for voluntary solitude is a form of *hubris*. Suddenly, the one who shuns and loathes society is more of a monster than the outcast who seeks, because of his involuntary exclusion, to destroy it. Nevertheless, Milton holds to the classical paradigm, that friendship “is fashioned from rational creatures who have demonstrated their virtue and chosen to participate out of their own free will” (Chaplin 2011, 223). Choice, then, is an important player in the friendship paradigm, which would suggest, as in the picaresque novel, a concern for whether the soul-mate, or one’s likeness, might indeed exist and whether even the best kind of friendship is rather a work of willpower and communication. The best kind of friendship, to be sure, is not always identifiable without some action.

Women in the Discourse

Katherine Philips is an important 17th century voice that speaks about friendship in her poetry and letters. She walked directly through the slowly opening friendship portal, one that had remained mostly closed to women. Even today, some contemporary critics in examining Philips's poetry have erroneously sought to depict her as a stifled homosexual; yet in her correspondence and poetry she seems bound towards the purest Christian form of friendship without any gender partiality. In a response to a Philips letter, Jeremy Taylor wrote "A Discourse of the Nature, Offices and Measures of Friendship" by which he tries to answer each of Philips's major points, her first question being that of "how far a Dear and perfect friendship is authoriz'd by the principles of Christianity" (Llewellyn 2002, 2). Based upon Taylor's review of Philips's letter to him, he provides the following useful summary of how he believes Philips might define "Dear and Perfect friendship":

By friendships, I suppose you mean, the greatest love, and the greatest usefulness, and the most open communication, and the noblest sufferings and the most exemplar faithfulness, and the severest truth, and the heartiest counsel, and the greatest union of mindes, of which brave men and women are capable. (Taylor quoted in Llewellyn 2002, 2)

Philips and her pen pals continue to engage in the important comparison of friendship with marriage, and they also, perhaps less as a matter of discourse and more as a matter of practice, raise the question of a public and private schism as to where the best kind of friendship might occur; but one should first take a moment to defend Philips as a champion of the classical friendship model infused with the Christian ideal of purity. Llewellyn (2002) writes, in reference to Philips poem entitled "Friendship": "Philips is

directly concerned with matters relating to the soul and the process of enlightenment which friendship allows it to attain” (3).

In the same poem, “Friendship,” Philips makes an interesting comparison between marriage and friendship and the potential difficulty of reaching the superior friendship within marriage. For Philips it would seem that friendship is a matter of the soul and that the material or physical life can be problematic:

For when two soules are chang'd and mixed soe, it is what they and not but they can doe; And this is friendship, that abstracted flame, Which creeping mortals know not how to name. All Love is sacred, and the marriage thy Hath much of Honour and divinity; But Lust, design, or some unworthy ends May mingle there, which are despis'd by friends. (Philips quoted in Llewellyn 2002, 3)

As much as Philips seems to espouse the idea of a friendship of souls, one free of gender, marriage has its built-in physical barrier to the best friendship experience. Philips would probably claim that any physical intimacy between friends, homosexual or heterosexual, prevents the ultimate friendship.

How does the printing press fit into Philips’s friendship philosophy and her choice to uphold the classical friendship model and to enter upon the marriage question? Philips, first, is a highly literate woman. Llewellyn (2002) reminds his readers that, “Philips’s separation of the degrees of love appears to be informed by both her reading of Donne and her understanding of Platonic love” (4). Printing allows for the multiplication of copies. It is easy enough for Philips to put her hands on past and present writing that has gone to the presses: “Philips’s concerns centre on the spiritual configurations of friendship can certainly be informed by an understanding of Platonic treaties of the period” (Ibid.). Llewellyn (2002) states further: “Although she was a woman she was by no means unique in having access to the work of male philosophers” (6).

What becomes increasingly interesting with the print era is the conscious acknowledgement of communication as essential element in human relations. Philips, like La Boétie, spotlights the communication that exists between the best of friends. Following in the classical tradition, Philips believes that the best kind of friendship enables a communication of souls. She sees friendship as a means by which one can explore and discover his or her soul and her friend's soul. Friendship, then, leads to a greater self-awareness as well as an awareness of one's friend (Llewellyn 2002, 5). In all of her friendship poetry, as a consequence of her belief of a soul connection, she grants friendship a metaphysical power that is in keeping with the classical model of friendship. Friendship, for Philips, is a way of understanding immortality:

This is in essence what she refers to in "Friendship in Emblem," too, when she speaks of "Friendship's exalted interest" (26) and of the belief that "friendship from good=angels springs,/To teach the world heroique things." (39-40) (Llewellyn 2002, 5)

Philips's concept of friendship closely follows Aelred and other Christian writers of the middle ages:

Thus rising from the holy love with which a friend embraces a friend to that which a friend embraces Christ, one may take the spiritual fruit of friendship fully and joyfully into the mouth, while looking forward to all abundance in the life to come. (Aelred 2010, 126.134)

Philips crosses the gender gap in friendship, and there is earlier evidence in Christian narrative the escape from physicality in the soul friendship: The soul friend relationship of the Celtic saints breaks the mold, to an extent, although a reciprocity exists: "Soul friend relationships are characterized by mutuality: a profound respect for each other's wisdom, despite any age or gender difference" (Sellner 1995, 2). In short, Philips sees friendship in its classical form as non-sexual, and she ponders the question of whether

marriage, because of its physical component, as distinct from the best kind of friendship because, “The friendship poems under this reading attest to and are meant to be read as enactments of a spiritual engagement by two souls which transcends the physical world” (Llewellyn 2002, 6). Philips makes it clear that women are just as capable as men of the superior kind of spiritual friendship she extols: “Soules no sexes have” (Philips quoted in Llewellyn 2002, 12).

A final thought regarding Philips’s friendship poetry is that the soul friendship she defines, particularly in reference to two women, is a private matter, since women do not participate in the “dull, angry world” (Llewellyn 2002, 10). In the poem, “To my Lucasia,” Orinda speaks to Lucasia saying:

...sit down and view How sweet the mixture is! How full! How true! By what soft touches spirits greet and kiss, And in each other can compleat their bliss: A wonder so sublime it will admit No rude spectatour to contemplate it. The object will refine, and he that can Friendship revere must be a noble man. (Philips quoted in Llewellyn 2002, 10)

While Gilgamesh and Enkidu stride hand in hand through the city of Uruk in the first friendship narrative, declarations of friendship, especially between two women, are by private correspondence in 17th century England that might make possible a spiritual, soul connection. The picaresque novel, too, suggests that a friendship seeking a higher plane cannot exist publicly. In fact, the friends in the picaresque world must retain the ability to dissolve or repudiate such friendships depending on the circumstances.

Molière and the Picaresque Mindset

Perhaps Alemán and other Spanish novelists of the 1500s had become more existential in their thinking than their Renaissance contemporaries. Certainly, the

protagonists seem to dismiss the possibility of reaching something as beyond the worldly as the soul friendship. Guzmán and Sayavedra plot incessantly to enrich themselves as they coldly play the deception game. Friendship, for Sayavedra, the type that is developing between him and Guzmán, is something mysterious. Sayavedra does not seem to have the necessary intellectual or spiritual tools for such a friendship. Guzmán, on the other hand, forms a philosophical premise. He seems to better understand the friendship that is evolving with Sayavedra, but he cannot reconcile that friendship with his pragmatic concerns of material well-being. His world, one in which he survives by his wits, trumps friendship. He can never let his guard down fully or trust entirely in his friend. The Guzmán and Sayavedra friendship, Alemán seems to suggest, although it can never match the classical-Christian friendships in sincerity and completeness, might be the best that two friends can realistically achieve when the friends are battling for survival and success in the post Gutenberg world and the age of discovery.

Molière, in *Le Misanthrope*, written in 1666, would seem to be of the same opinion as Alemán, for Molière's main character, Alceste, who is *le misanthrope*, continually denies his friend Philinte because in Alceste's view Philinte is not the model friend; yet Philinte behaves as a genuine friend and, without any personal motive, counsels Alceste correctly. Philinte, however, the pragmatist, blends into a world that Alceste refuses to either understand or to accept: "*Le siècle [17th century] appartient tout entier à la duplicité souriante et au prudent cynisme des Philinte, hommes parfaitement conscients de la folie des hommes, mais aussi de la folie qu'il y aurait à refuser d'être fous avec eux*" (Barbureau and Christensen, eds. 2006, 13). The 17th century, at least, belongs to a smiling duplicity and a prudent cynicism of people like Philinte. These men

are perfectly conscious of the foolishness of men but also understand that it is foolish not to sit at the table and play cards. Philinte, although not the main character, is Guzmán's descendant. He will not stand beside Alceste for the sake of their friendship and Alceste's misanthropy. One difference between the *Guzmán de Alfarache* novel and *Le Misanthrope* is in the choice of milieu. While the Alemán characters are outside the nobility and privileged class, Molière's belong to the upper strata of French society. Nevertheless, it is a society whose characters are poker players who shuffle and deal for their reputations. There is the public self, and this persona, in order to be well regarded, simply needs "*se montrer complaisant, agréable, enjoué et naturel pour mériter le titre d'honnête homme*" (Barbereau and Christensen 2006, 14). It is often a game of bluff. It is a matter of looking and sounding good. If one looks and sounds like an honest man, he must be one. Alceste simply refuses to take a hand. As a consequence, he becomes isolated and the gap between man and monster, between Grendel and Beowulf, becomes a narrow one though Alceste is, metaphorically, trying to follow Beowulf's lead. For Molière and Alemán, such virtue, and such extraordinary friendships as might exist according to the classical examples and models, are indeed mythical and fictitious; and therefore, impossible. Guzmán's and Philinte's approaches to friendship are possibilities while Sayavedra, sick and insane because of his illness, commits suicide by throwing himself overboard. Alceste, in *le Misanthrope*, declares that he will leave what he perceives as a world of treason, injustice, and vice to seek a place apart from the rest of the world where one is free to be an honorable man:

*Trahi de toutes parts, accablé d'injustices,
Je vais sortir d'un gouffre où triomphent les vices,
Et chercher sur la terre un endroit écarté*

Où d'être homme d'honneur on ait la liberté. (Molière 2006, 133)

Like Sayavedra, Alceste is throwing himself overboard, but illness is not the cause of Alceste's lunacy, which Philinte and the woman Alceste desires, Célimène, both recognize. Alceste would like Célimène to go away with him, and she responds:

*La solitude effraye une âme de vingt ans;
Je ne sens point la mienne assez grande, assez forte,
Pour me résoudre à serer de tells noeuds,* (Molière 2006, 132)

To translate rather literally, Célimène says that solitude frightens a 20-year-old soul, and that she does not believe that hers is great enough or strong enough to marry Alceste. Living with Alceste, in other words, would mean a life of isolation for her. As a comedy, then, *Le Misanthrope* is ironic, for the reconciliation that normally occurs, for comedy is “a plot form that has as its central theme the notion of *reconciliation*” (White 2014, 27). Alceste intends to isolate himself without apology.

Alceste's refusal, his misanthropy, is *hubris*; his unwillingness to conform is unheroic. Friendship, furthermore, in *le Misanthrope*, is presented in the same way as the alliances in *Guzmán de Alfarache* are depicted: “*Les amitiés sont intéressées et tenues pour un marchandage ou un 'commerce' comme un autre*” (Barbereau and Christensen 2006, 15). Friendships are merchandise to be bartered and sold.

As the first scene of the play begins, Philinte is critical of Alceste's mood or attitude, which Alceste makes no effort to conceal. When he uses the word *amis*, or friends, Alceste attacks Philinte:

*Moi, votre ami? Rayez cela de vos papiers.
J'ai fait jusques ici profession de l'être;
Mais, après ce qu'en vous je viens de voir paraître,
Je vous déclare net que je ne le suis plus,
Et ne veux nulle place en des coeurs corrompus.* (Molière 2006, 23)

Alceste tells Philinte to forget about their friendship and proclaims himself no longer Philinte's friend, saying that he does not want a place in corrupt hearts. Philinte argues his case. Apparently, he has spoken well of someone whom Alceste despises. In their argument, Philinte makes a claim for being civil. Alceste retorts that any man who cannot speak sincerely and from the heart is a dishonorable person: "*Je veux qu'on soit sincère, et qu'en homme d'honneur/ on ne lâche aucun mot qui ne parte du coeur*" (Molière 2006, 25). Philinte makes a further claim for civility. He tries to point out the usefulness of maintaining good relations with the people in their social milieu: "*Mais quand on est du monde, il faut bien que l'on rende/ Quelques dehors civils que l'usage demande*" (Molière 2006, 26). Philinte is trying to remind Alceste that in their society, a certain behavior, a kind of civility, is expected. Alceste cannot be moved; regarding friendship, there can be no compromise: "*Non, vous dis-je; on devrait châtier sans pitié /ce commerce honteux de semblants d'amitié*" (Ibid.). One should, in effect, condemn such false friendliness. Philinte and Alceste debate the whole idea of the false person, and Alceste is relentless. Philinte, who admits to recognizing the insincerity around him, asks that Alceste give some latitude to people because of the times and because of human nature. Philinte believes it is insane to try to correct the world. One should not scrutinize others and their morality too closely:

*Mon Dieu, des moeurs du temps mettons-nous moins en peine,
Et faisons un peu grâce à la nature humaine;
Ne l'examinons point dans la grande rigueur,
...Et c'est une folie à nulle autre seconde
De vouloir se mêler de corriger le monde.* (Molière 2006, 30-31)

Alceste retorts that Philinte's philosophical bent, his recourse to reason, leads to an inuring and to one's never becoming appalled or angry by a human interaction that is a ruse and a trap set for personal gain or recognition.

*Que pour avoir vos biens on dresse un artifice,
Ou qu'on tâche à semer de méchants bruits de vous,
Verrez-vous tout cela sans vous mettre en courroux?* (Molière 2006, 31)

Alceste is, in effect, denouncing the heroes of the picaresque novels, the Guzmáns who profit by their falsity and the Philintes who will engage such characters and are subsequently willing to wear masks of their own. Philinte cannot, ultimately, convince Alceste that Alceste's position is untenable despite his argument that it is human nature to deceive and that he will not allow himself to become incensed by it just as he is not surprised, though he lacks today's understanding of the animal kingdom, by what he believes to be the normal behavior of vultures, monkeys and wolves:

*Comme vice unis à l'humaine nature,
Et mon esprit enfin n'est pas plus offensé
De voir un homme fourbe, injuste, intéressé,
Que de voir des vautours affamé de carnage,
Des singes malfaisants et des loups pleins de rage.* (Molière 2006, 32)

Philinte also makes the argument that one's public presence is what matters. It is a world of appearances, not of morality or force of conviction. Alceste remains a man of principle, claiming that it is better to lose, in this case, his legal claim, than to become an actor. He is a man of principle: *Je voudrais, m'en coutât-il grand'chose, [p]our la beauté du fait, avoir perdu ma cause* (Molière 2006, 34).

In act 1, scene 2 of *le Misanthrope*, Alceste's position is tested by the character Oronte who wishes to befriend Alceste. He showers Alceste with compliments. In essence, he wishes to form a friendship quickly and to be liked. He wants others to

admire him, so he scratches Alceste's back while claiming to be sincere. Alceste will not accept to form a friendship pact with Oronte. Alceste's retort evokes the classical model of friendship:

*Monsieur, c'est trop d'honneur que me voulez faire;
Mais l'amitié demande un peu plus de mystère,
Et c'est assurément en profaner le nom
Que de vouloir le mettre à toute occasion.
Avec lumière et choix cette union veut naître;
Avant que nous lier, il faut nous mieux connaître,
Et nous pourrions avoir telles complexions
Que tous deux du marché nous nous repentirions.* (Molière 2006, 40)

In this response, Alceste explains that friendship is more mysterious, that it is about enlightenment and choice. Anything less would be to profane the nature of friendship. The two friends must better know each other and be of similar temperaments or they will regret such an accord.

The irony lies in the question of whether in his misanthropy Alceste himself is creating a persona for the public eye. Alceste's claim to sincerity and truth ceases, in a sense, to be a virtue when it becomes excessive, or uncompromising. Even in the greatest friendships among the classical-Christian archetypes, there are moments of humility or concession among the heroes. For instance, Roland does blow his horn, after Oliver's death, to summon Charlemagne. Achilles allows Priam to take the body of Hector. The heroes recognize their errors and weaknesses. Still, Alceste's breaking of his friendship with Philinte and his unwillingness to befriend Oronte suggest the difficulty of forming the classical-Christian kind of friendship in the modern age. Alceste, unless he concedes to shift his paradigm, appears to be heading in the direction of Grendel towards becoming a monster. He has forgotten that even the best people are imperfect and also that

forgiveness can be a Christian virtue. To place oneself in the judgmental position of Alceste is a kind of *hubris* although Alceste, based upon the classical-Christian paradigm of friendship, is correct to say, “*Mais l’amitié demande un peu plus de mystère,/ Et c’est assurément en profaner le nom/ Que de vouloir le mettre à toute occasion*” (Molière 2006, 40).

Changes to the Classical-Christian Friendship: 1500-1700

Print appears to make friendship more sterile and utilitarian, according to the pessimistic literary artists of the first centuries after Gutenberg. There is more specialization and also alienation as groups of people and individuals are able to isolate themselves without the prior vilification of solitude that appears to have existed during the oral and manuscript eras. Grendel can exist and even be accepted as long as he remains to himself or among those like him. In fact, it would seem that the isolated individual can either escape the feeling of isolation by entering the print world as an alternative to the physical one outside; or, better still, he can correspond with his group or society without physically encountering its members. McLuhan (1964) says it best: “That most potent gift bestowed on Western man by literacy and typography: his power to act without reaction or involvement” (162).

The classical-Christian model of friendship, with some modification, operates in the early print era but is seen more, perhaps, as a thing for which the would-be friends must labor. The notion that it is destined, transcendent, or even serendipitous is replaced by a diminished possibility that it can happen by chance or that the gods take a hand. There is an element of chance, but both friends must want the friendship and must have the will to work at its maintenance. Otherwise, the friendship cannot bloom into the

exemplary kind of friendship depicted in the classical models. The good news, also, is that the best kinds of friendship are not exclusive. Friends need not be heroes, demigods, or god-generated to experience the greatest kind of friendship; they need only to make a mutual effort and to develop an awareness of their friendship. Some friendships, on the other hand, particularly female friendships, Philips suggests through her poetry, can become the spiritual relationships as experienced by the early Celtic saints. However, close friendships are increasingly private affairs. Writers will often depict those friendships as personal interactions removed from the public eye. Certainly, the world of print literacy is one of enhanced possibilities for introspection and privacy.

Chapter 6

Eighteenth Century Classical-Christian Friendship in Print

Poe (2011) states that “print culture” reigned for 450 years (151). Postman (1998), in “Five Things We Need to Know about Technological Change,” sums up what has been posited from the beginning of this discourse:

That every technology has a philosophy which is given expression in how the technology makes people use their minds, in what it makes us do with our bodies, in how it codifies the world, in which of our senses it amplifies, in which of our emotional and intellectual tendencies it disregards. (Postman 1998, 5)

It can be claimed that the expansion of print media has impacted perceptions of friendship. The classical notion of friendship begins running the gauntlet of print culture in the 16th century as printing accelerates until most of the Western World is literate by the 20th century. Today, “The leaders of all modern societies agree that literacy is a necessity and reading a virtuous act” (Poe 2011, 150).

L’Âge de Raison, or the Enlightenment, is a time period when many thinkers seek to disconnect from religion and political tradition as they are pulled toward science. Although literacy in the 18th century is still limited to the aristocracy and to the bourgeoisie, there is a burgeoning availability of news and of published work in many different areas of learning and knowledge, fueling new interests. *L’Encyclopédie*, a twenty-eight volume collection of knowledge, is under construction for a period of roughly 15 years. It includes essays on many subjects and it responds to the aspirations of a bourgeoisie eager for progress: “*L’Encyclopédie répond bien aux aspirations d’une bourgeoisie de progrès qui a le goût des ‘arts utiles’*” (Kerautret 2002, 60). In order to

appeal to the new readership, works on engineering, or the applied sciences, are included alongside articles about science and the liberal arts. In short, print allows for the documentation of everything. *L'Encyclopédie* is an attempt to catalogue knowledge that, in one collection, “*l’honnête homme*” of the 18th century could ever wish to know about “*les sciences et de tous les arts—mathématiques et médecine, histoire et grammaire, théologie et droit [law] musique et littérature*” (Kerautret 2002, 61). Interests have become more physical and social than spiritual. In literature, this movement fosters a gritty kind of fiction and philosophical discourse as writers grope with human behavior as they observe it, and they look for the answers in the external, or natural, forces operating upon humanity. It becomes questionable, therefore, whether the classical friendship has any sort of innate or spiritual component to it and whether, as it has previously been defined, is even possible. The novelists and short story writers of the 18th century, following those of the 17th century, take irony to new levels. White (2014) calls irony the negation of the metaphorical tropes (32). White (2014) refers to the metaphorical tropes as “naïve” (36). “They can be deployed only in the belief in language’s capacity to grasp the nature of things in figurative terms” (White 2014, 36). Irony, then, plants doubt in the truth of such interpretation:

The basic figurative tactic of Irony is catachresis (literally “misuse”), the manifestly absurd Metaphor designed to inspire Ironic second thoughts about the nature of the thing [friendship] characterized by the inadequacy of the characterization itself. (White 2014, 36)

Many of the writers and philosophers of the 18th century are not transcendental thinkers in the metaphysical sense. They do not take the “formist” or “organicist” positions as White (2014, 14-15) defines them. The organicist, for instance, would run with the idea

of a constant, such as a friendship paradigm: “The Organicist is inclined to take about the ‘principles’ or ‘ideas’ that inform the individual processes discerned in the field and all the process taken as a whole” (White 2014, 16). The ironist, then, is calling into question any supernatural or metaphysical notion about a principle, or in this case, a paradigm.

One often finds that the important writers of novels and short fiction depict friendship as philosophical discourse between two people without the emotional or spiritual factor. Although one is concerned with nature and the physical sciences and how they shape humanity, there is also a reduction of the sensual when it becomes confined to print, which some see as detrimental to humanity: “Literature man undergoes much separation of his imaginative, emotional and sense life, as Rousseau (and later the Romantic poets and philosophers) proclaimed long ago” (McLuhan 1964, 90). In fiction, there is a continuation of friendships akin to those found in the picaresque novels in which friends use each other for personal gain; utility is more important than the relationship itself although such friendships must include some elements of the classical friendship paradigm. One could accuse the 18th century writers of staging the realism movement based upon what they observe as natural in human relationships. The idea of human nature would seem to come into being as a debatable topic during this time period. Those who claim to be honorable or virtuous are often made out to be hypocrites, fools or con artists while the confidence man and opportunist become heroes. Certainly, the flaws and vices are not the same as they are in the classical friendships.

Improved literacy and infrastructure have also allowed for more written communication. Since it takes so long for letters and documents to reach destinations, the writing process is an ongoing one. Correspondents write in the form of diaries and

journals as if their messages could be delivered that day. Although in philosophical discourse, there is still a preference for the Socratic method of dialogue in the way that ideas are presented and in the interaction of friends, there are also instances of friends in literature corresponding through written communication. Goethe's *Sorrows of Young Werther* (1962) illustrates the importance of letters in friendships. Werther shares his thoughts and feelings through correspondence with his friend William. In fact, the narrator leans heavily on the first person evidence in Werther's letters.

With print and correspondence, hence, literacy, friendship has become a much more complex matter. The idealist, if one may use the label, finds it difficult to pinpoint friendship as Aristotle (1980), Cicero (1967) and Aelred (2010) define it. This individual, then, shows a penchant for turning within himself since humanity can offer nothing out of its own genius. The universe, thus, the natural, can be most helpful as Rousseau (2012) believes that the answers are planted within one's soul and that one must seek inwardly to rediscover a primordial sort of understanding that is the true nature of humanity and brings one closer to the creator: "*La contemplation de l'univers, forcent un solitaire à s'élaner incessamment vers l'auteur des choses*" (61). The solitary person's contemplation of the universe forces this individual incessantly towards the creator. Society and the human intellect for invention obscure truth and right. The classical paradigm for friendship might seem impossible for someone like Jean-Jacques Rousseau because of human contrivance. He, for instance, gives up the hope of finding a worthy soul: "*Cet espoir, qui que éloigné, tenait mon âme dans la même agitation que quand je cherchais encore dans le siècle un coeur juste, et mes espérances que j'avais beau jeter au loin me rendaient également le jouet des hommes d'aujourd'hui*" (Rousseau 2012,

39). He goes further to suggest that his hope, which he could not easily reject, of finding a true heart made him the play thing of his contemporaries. Rousseau (2012) compares himself to Molière's Alceste in *Le Misanthrope*, and friends like Philinte are insufficient. Rousseau (2012) writes a letter to D'Alembert in which he depicts Alceste as the sincere moralist, true to himself and his beliefs, while Philinte is likened to Rousseau's contemporaries, worldly philosophers who ridicule those who would cling to a moral imperative despite hearing the best well-reasoned arguments illuminating human potentialities:

Jean-Jacques s'identifie avec Alceste jusqu'à le façonner à sa propre image. Quant à Philinte, il lui prête les défauts de Grimm, son ennemi intime. Aussi plaide-t-il sa propre cause quand il accuse Molière de ridiculiser la vertu et d'opposer à l'honnête homme (Alceste, c'est-à-dire Rousseau), l'homme de société, idéal de Voltaire et des philosophes. (Lagarde and Michard, eds. 1985, 278)

Alceste in *Le Misanthrope* decides to leave the society and the company that he declares are corrupt, and he intends to seek some hidden place where people live virtuously:

*Je vais sortir d'un gouffre où triomphent les vices,
et chercher sur la terre un endroit écarté
Où d'être homme d'honneur on ait la liberté. (Molière 2006, 133)*

Rousseau must also withdraw from society in order to preserve his moral standard. Instead of El Dorado, Rousseau wishes to seek the depths of his natural human self for truth, and he believes that union with all that the universe has created can facilitate the journey although human intellect and invention, of itself, cannot. There can be no union with humanity for Rousseau, but there is salvation in feeling the universe's creator, who must be good and true and who can be known.

Although Rousseau's solitude is voluntary, and some of his detractors regard it as beastly, Rousseau sees it also as a way to combat his enmity: "*J'aime mieux les fuir que les haïr*" (Rousseau 2012, 116). He prefers to flee his enemies rather than to hate them. However, separation and solitude are not so simple. In this sense, Rousseau (2012) regards himself as an exception, claiming that any other person would be horrified at the prospect of breaking from society: "*Je me vais presque avec indifférence dans un état dont nul autre homme peut-être ne supporterait l'aspect sans effroi*" (142). He contends that it is preferable to be alone than among nasty, treasonable people who feed on hatred: "*Je suis devenu solitaire, ou, comme ils disent, insociable et misanthrope, parce que la plus sauvage solitude me paraît préférable à la société des méchants, qui ne se nourrit que de trahisons et de haine*" (129).

Mary Shelley (1976), like her protagonist Dr. Victor Frankenstein, conducts a remarkable experiment in her novel *Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus*. Shelley's work caps the 18th century and begins the 19th as humanity's scientific knowledge and technical prowess grow. The story itself, first published in 1818, Shelley chooses to set in the 1700s. In *Frankenstein*, Shelley effectively removes God as creator, thus, if one follows Rousseau's line of reasoning, removing the possibility of finding truth and right. Humanity's creation, the being that Victor Frankenstein assembles, is soul-less; and the creature itself becomes incredibly conscious of his place in the universe, which is no place; it is utterly alone and bereft of guidance. Nothing can be gotten from either humanity or from God, by the creature's reckoning. Humans, in fact, including Frankenstein, are horrified by the creation, which is humanity's own, and specifically Frankenstein's. The creature cannot even claim as much as Satan has: "Yet even the

enemy of God and man had friends and associates in his desolation; I am quite alone” (Shelley 1976, 271). The creature is a godless sentient organic machine, but he reacts in a very human way to his isolation for he is in fact constructed of human parts and therefore an extension of humanity: “I asked, it is true, for greater treasures than a little food or rest; I required kindness and sympathy” (Shelley 1976, 156). Only through the creation of another like itself can the creature tolerate its wretchedness, for a companion could void the aloneness that the creature is otherwise doomed to experience. Frankenstein’s creature, denied entry to society and shunned by his creator, demands that Dr. Frankenstein make him a companion. The creature warns his maker: “If I have not ties and no affections, hatred and vice must be my portion” (Shelley 1976, 175).

Frankenstein makes a pact with the creature, consenting to deliver a companion, for the creature has promised to withdraw into the wilderness with his mate and to never again make contact with humanity. Frankenstein, however, breaks the compact, refusing to produce another creature of which he cannot be certain since a new entity would have a will of its own. The creature is enraged. He destroys all the individuals who matter to Frankenstein. In effect, it’s Dante’s *Inferno* for Frankenstein. The creature must live without affection; therefore, Frankenstein shall experience *contrapasso*, or, retribution as he, too, who has known love and companionship, also learns the misery of seeing those possibilities annihilated. The creature becomes Frankenstein’s demonic tormentor:

Your hours will pass in dread in misery, and soon the bolt will fall which must ravish from you your happiness for ever. Are you to be happy in the intensity of my wretchedness? You can blast my other passions; but revenge remains—revenge, henceforth dearer than light and food! I may die; but first you, my tyrant and tormentor, shall curse the sun that gazes on your misery. Beware; for I am fearless, and therefore powerful. (Shelley 1976, 204)

Frankenstein's creature and Grendel have much in common, yet Grendel is not man-made. He is, instead, a representation of mysterious nature's dark side. He is a "natural" freak and deformity, a loathsome aberration but with a mother who is an anomaly like himself. To Beowulf and his contemporaries, Grendel is an abomination, aligned with evil and the devil, yet he is a thing that has also, somehow, been fashioned by God. One could jest that Grendel is like Frankenstein's creature in that he is something of a prototype or first attempt gone sour. Frankenstein's creature is different. Though a living thing, he is man-made and therefore nameless. Adam named all the creatures of the earth, and Frankenstein's monster did not yet exist. The monster's artificial life isolates him more profoundly than Grendel can claim to be, but the results are similar: murder and hatred of mankind. Violence, revenge, suicide, insanity—these things are common occurrences when living beings reach the point of total aloneness. After Frankenstein is dead, the creature vows: "I shall collect my funeral pile, and consume to ashes this miserable frame, that its remains may afford no light to any curious and unhallowed wretch, who would create such another as I have been" (Shelley 1976, 272).

In Beowulf's time, before literacy and the printing press, the clan and family were of uppermost significance. One needed to be capable of tracing his or her origins. By the 18th century, it has become much easier for one to be separated from his or her clan: "If Western literate man undergoes dissociation of inner sensibility from his use of the alphabet, he also wins his personal freedom to disassociate himself from clan and family" (McLuhan 1964, 90). This dissociation opens the door wider to the forming of close

relationships outside family, but it also enables another type of solitude that, though not quite as loathsome as Grendel's or Frankenstein's creature, can be negative.

Voltaire: Optimistic about Friendship

Although the 18th century is known as a philosophical age, literature, the arts and the sciences drive much of the philosophical discourse of the time. Philosophers are first writers, or men and women of letters: "*Pourtant, les grands écrivains du temps sont des littérateurs avant d'être des philosophes et le souci de l'art accompagne toujours la réflexion*" (Kerautret 1983, 14). The writers of the time, in other words, are writing to hold the reader's interest and to entertain and not simply for the purpose of presenting philosophical points. Writers like Voltaire and Diderot are able to project their thinking through their fictional works, and their audience remains people largely like themselves. The readers have become the successful merchants, businessmen and their literate families. There is a zest for the future and a taste for luxury. There is talk of moral conscience as society progresses. Voltaire is the ambassador of this optimistic group (Kerautret 1983, 6). The problem lies with those who oppose the forward thinkers, and the enemy of progress includes the church and superstitious belief, which Voltaire attacks with irony. Students of literature, philosophy and history are expected to understand Voltaire, but like Voltaire's writing, the obvious can sometimes be deceptively elusive. Certainly, Voltaire writes about friendship mostly as a secondary theme. His fictional works emulate the picaresque novel in its depiction of human injustice and opportunism. Voltaire and his contemporaries, through the use of satire and irony, take calculated swipes at those people whom they consider responsible for the worst of human

conditions. In *Candide ou L'Optimisme*, Voltaire (1972) devotes several pages, during Candide's visit to Paris, to a discussion about books and plays, and in this discourse Voltaire expresses his view of writing and what the writer and playwright must accomplish, highlighting how writers and publications have become very important in people's lives by the 18th century (Voltaire 1972, 333-335). "*Si l'on écrit plus seulement pour amuser et pour distraire, il n'est pire crime que d'ennuyer*" (Kerautret 1983, 14). In other words, if one writes only to amuse and to distract, the only worse crime is to bore the reader; but the idea, too, is to dispel that idea any sort of transcendent, supernatural law.

For the purpose of examining friendship, *Candide ou L'Optimisme* is one choice because the naïve main character encounters many people and with them forms relationships. At the end of the novel, Candide emerges with several friends although their relationships were not always called friendships. For instance, at story's end, the man who tutors Candide, Pangloss, becomes a member of Candide's loose association of friends to which each member contributes something, but throughout the novel Pangloss is most deeply admired, and Candide tries, whenever confronted with adversity, to ponder the course of action that Pangloss might take as Pangloss is the ultimate optimist. There is always something of a student to teacher relationship between the two. Candide's relationship to the woman he loves and has been pursuing throughout the novel becomes a marriage devoid of romance. In fact, Candide, in the end, no longer wishes to marry beloved Cunégonde, the woman he is pursuing throughout the novel. She is never, also, the friend who accompanies Candide or who discourses with him. Her

relationship to Candide is symbolic, and one point to the use of allegory in *Candide ou L'Optimisme*.

Martin and Cacambo are the friends acquired in the journey. Martin is forever the pessimist, who insists that there is nothing for which to hope. He believes that it is best to accept the worst in order not to be surprised. Martin is the eternal cynic, and he provides the polemic to Pangloss's blind optimism. Interestingly, Martin worked in Paris at a print shop during his first visit to Paris, and it is while with Martin in Paris that there ensues a discussion about books, plays and writing (Voltaire 1972, 327, 333-335). When Candide asks Martin to accompany him to Venice, Martin responds that he will because he has no money and Candide does: "*On y reçoit très bien les étrangers quand ils ont beaucoup d'argent; j'en ai point, vous en avez, je vous suivrai partout*" (Voltaire 1972, 328). Martin seems bound to Candide by necessity. Candide makes provisions for Martin. He has become attached to him and does not wish to part with him (Voltaire 1972, 329). Martin, however, shows his gratitude as he becomes, to an extent, Candide's protector when Candide falls ill in Paris. Martin blocks those who would profit from Candide's illness to the point of throwing out a solicitor who asks Candide to pay in advance for someone to make sure that he is properly buried as Martin realizes that Candide's illness is not serious and that those around him who know of Candide's wealth are only seeking to profit from it by keeping Candide sick. Martin exhibits the important friendship trait of honesty. He is always frank with Candide, arguing against optimism. Its being an honest argument, one might see it as a positive element of friendship. Martin recommends that Candide forget about his friend Cacambo and reuniting with his love Cunégonde. "*La mélancholie de Candide augmenta et Martin ne cessait de lui prouver qu'il y avait peu de*

vertu et peu de bonheur sur la terre” (Voltaire 1972, 342). Martin is always pointing at examples in their world of vice and unhappiness.

Although Martin’s observations are discouraging to Candide, perhaps Martin’s arguments also compel Candide to keep searching for the positive outcome. Martin cannot protect Candide from all Candide’s naivety as the people he and Martin meet in Paris are able to dupe Candide and steal much of Candide’s wealth. Martin, however, extracts Candide from precarious situations. The question remains of the extent of Martin’s affection for Candide. Martin also, although he is practical in regards to money, makes clear that he does not see wealth as the way to alleviate the human suffering. In fact, he regards charity as a bad idea when Candide gives money to a former servant girl and her friend, and Candide declares that they will be happy: “*Je n’en crois rien du tout, dit Martin; vous les rendez peut-être avec ces piastres beaucoup plus malheureux encore*” (Voltaire 1972, 345). Martin doesn’t believe that the couple will be any happier with Candide’s gift and that in fact they might become unhappier, and he is proved correct later in the story. Furthermore, the recipients never recognize Candide’s generosity. From their discourse about wealth and charity, one can guess that Martin is not staying with Candide only because of Candide’s jewelry. Martin also wishes Candide the happiness that Candide desires in being reunited with his sweetheart, but Martin doubts the reunion’s occurrence (Voltaire 1972, 345).

Cacambo (a rather uncomplimentary name) is probably the nearer possibility to the true friend in the classical sense, and he passes through several adventures with Candide before Candide meets Martin. As with the classical models, however, there is never quite the sense of full equality. There is the hero, and there is his friend. There is

Gilgamesh, and there is Enkidu. Although Enkidu's back story is well developed, it is Gilgamesh's story. In fact, the reader is first introduced to Cacambo as Candide's valet. Despite Cacambo's supporting role, Voltaire (1972) takes a moment to remind the reader of Pangloss's teaching, as Candide remembers it, that men are equal: "*Pangloss m'a toujours dit que les hommes sont égaux*" (304). Candide always treats Cacambo as a friend and partner. An element of reciprocity exists though Cacambo behaves as someone serving his master. The narrator offers the following reason for Cacambo's devotion: "*Il s'appelait Cacambo, et aimait fort son maître, parce que son maître était un fort bon homme*" (Voltaire 1972, 299). Simply, Cacambo loves Candide because Candide is a good man. The two friends' both being virtuous is a prerequisite of the classical friendship model although ideas of what constitute virtue are in flux. Candide, especially, and Cacambo are probably as clean as Voltaire will allow characters to become without taking a romantic turn. Cacambo's virtue resides in his loyalty to Candide. It is fortunate for Candide that he relies on Cacambo who gets them out of jams because Cacambo keeps his cool ("*Cacambo ne perdait jamais la tête*"), takes action, and gives good advice (Voltaire 1972, 307, 309), which Candide always follows, showing Candide's complete trust.

Cacambo, in some ways, is representative, too, of the times in which he lives. There is a willingness to take calculated risks and the thought of learning or experiencing something new is better than the alternative of doing nothing and of trusting to fate. Together, Cacambo and Candide are adventurous, ambitious, and hopeful. Cacambo encourages Candide to move ahead: "*Si nous ne trouvons pas des choses agréables, nous trouverons du moins des choses nouvelles*" (Voltaire 1972, 310). Cacambo's many

abilities, including that of speaking the native dialect in El Dorado, puts Candide in the backseat as Candide follows Cacambo in something of a role reversal: “*Candide ne jouait plus que le second personnage, et accompagnait son valet*” (Voltaire 1972, 313). And, the two even behave like questing heroes, though with a twist. Like many of the great classical-Christian hero friends, they have a desire for great accomplishments and wealth for the sake of being special and above the ordinary crowd. They decide that they cannot flaunt themselves if they remain in El Dorado where nothing particular distinguishes one person from the other. Furthermore, Candide remains steadfast in his desire to rescue his beloved Cunégonde. Cacambo is delighted at the prospect of leaving: “*Ce discours plus à Cacambo*” (Voltaire 1972, 317). As hero friends, Voltaire (1972), ironically, refers to Candide and Cacambo, the fellow travelers, as two vagabonds. The two men are not warrior heroes like Achilles and Patroclus. Candide and Cacambo become great friends, but without the supernatural element. For Voltaire, it would seem that virtuous men can become almost archetypal friends but without divine intervention. Of special interest, too, is the change in narrative tone. References to actions and activities appear in the plural rather than the singular. The reader, furthermore, has access to Cacambo’s thoughts. Most other characters in *Candide ou l’opimisme* are only known by their actions and words. As they are about to leave El Dorado, the king embraces “*les deux vagabonds*” tenderly (Voltaire 1972, 318). The two characters are indistinguishable. The friends are equals in El Dorado.

Candide, of course, continues to be romantically hopeful while Cacambo is hopeful but in a more practical way. When Candide and Cacambo lose most of the treasures that they were able to haul out of El Dorado, Candide tells Cacambo that all the

material wealth of the world is perishable. All that matters to him is the virtue and the happiness of being reunited with the one he loves, Cunégonde. While Cacambo agrees with Candide, he takes stock of what they still have in terms of resources. Cacambo is optimistic that they will be able to pursue Candide's goal with what they have remaining: *“Mon ami, vous voyez comme la richesse de ce monde sont périssables. Il n'y a rien de solide que la vertu et le bonheur de revoir Mlle Cunégonde. – Je l'avoue, dit Cacambo; mais il nous reste encore deux moutons avec plus de trésors que n'en aura jamais le roi d'Espagne”* (Voltaire 1972, 319). Although the people one cares about are the most important thing, one still needs earthly resources to move ahead.

Ultimately, Candide and Cacambo decide to separate. Cacambo is charged with taking some of their diamonds and with arranging Cunégonde's freedom from the Argentine governor while Candide makes his way with the remaining jewels to Venice, which Candide thinks is a free country (Voltaire, 1972, 321). Candide cannot return to Argentina where he is a fugitive, and he claims that Cacambo is more capable than he is: *“Tu es plus habile que moi”* (Ibid.). Candide, in tasking Cacambo, addresses him as his dear friend: *“Voici, mon cher ami, lui dit il, ce qu'il faut que tu fasses”* (Ibid.). Cacambo is reluctant to leave Candide, not only because he is a good master, but because he has become a close friend. His pleasure in rendering a service to his friend, however, outweighs his distress at separating from him: *“Il était au désespoir de se séparer d'un bon maître, devenu son ami intime; mais le plaisir de lui être utile l'importa sur la douleur de le quitter”* (Ibid.).

The way things have gone for Candide, he has mostly been used by the people whom he has trusted, for Candide always begins by believing the good. Martin will be

one exception, but Cacambo is by far the greater one. Cacambo's willingness to undertake such a difficult task and the hardships he suffers with Candide as Cacambo tries to complete his mission are in keeping with the hero friend tradition. Cacambo is faithful to Candide from start to finish. Candide, too, never loses faith in his friend: "*Je compte sur Cacambo comme sur moi même*" (Voltaire 1972, 341). Candide relies on Cacambo as he relies on himself. Although it is beginning to look hopeless, and Candide begins to fear the worst, Cacambo reappears: "*Il se retourne et voit Cacambo. Il n'y avait que la vue de Cunégonde qui put l'étonner et lui plaire d'avantage. Il fut sur le point de devenir fou de joie. Il embrasse son cher ami*" (Voltaire 1972, 352). Candide turns and sees Cacambo. There was only the sight of Cunégonde that could astound and please him more. He was on the verge of being crazy with joy. He embraces his dear friend.

If the friendship between Candide and Cacambo meets much of the criteria of the classical-Christian friendship as expressed in the earliest friendship fiction, how is this 18th century friendship different as a consequence of print culture?

The slave states still exist in Voltaire's time, but some are beginning to question the notion of slavery. According to Poe (2011), print culture, from the increased availability of documentation and written works and the subsequent growing literacy of the population, leans toward egalitarianism. "Accessible media engender diffuse networks, and diffuse networks tend to equalize the social practices and values that grow with them" (Poe 2011, 117). The master and slave relationship becomes superficial as the friendship between Candide and Cacambo matures. Cacambo, too, is of mixed race, but part Spanish (Voltaire 1972, 299). Candide, though German and reared in a noble's household, is a bastard. It is unlikely that two such people, though they might be regarded

as misfits, could meet each other and a friendship form in the classical world, but technology makes such a union possible in the 18th century. The proposal has been to make the connection to communication technology, but one must acknowledge the importance of transportation and navigation technologies that have enabled the exploration of the planet and the subsequent encounter with new and different human beings. Although Voltaire never traveled overseas, he was familiar with geography and colonization had invaded other cultures. Much of his knowledge had to be obtained through print media.

Another important aspect of the Candide/Cacambo friendship is in Voltaire's distancing it from the classical model in ways that can be attributed to Voltaire's penchant for progress. Modern man is moving away from the veneration of the re-discovered classics. One could say that Voltaire wishes to distance himself from Renaissance thinking. Progress is not a rebirth but a new birth. In other words, one should keep only what is useful from the past and move forward. The remainder can be discarded; and so it would seem, might certain imperatives of the classical friendship model. When Candide and Martin visit an Italian noble, Pococuranté, the senator is disdainful of nearly everything that is generally appreciated, including the classics. Pococuranté keeps Homer in his library because it is expected, and he compares the *Iliad* to a rusty medal that doesn't serve any purpose but that one possesses as a keepsake or as a tribute to antiquity: "*Tout les gens sincères m'ont avoué que le livre leur tombait des mains, mais qu'il fallait toujours avoir un dans sa bibliothèque, comme un monument de l'antiquité, et comme ces médailles rouillées qui ne peuvent être de commerce*" (Voltaire 1972, 348). Pococuranté explains that he reads only for himself and likes only that which

is useful to him. Only fools admire everything esteemed authors say: “*Les sots admirent tout dans un auteur estimé, je ne lis que pour moi; je n’aime que ce qui est à mon usage*” (Voltaire 1972, 349). Candide, the reader learns, has been taught never to judge anything for himself, and he is taken aback. Pococuranté is critical of classical literature and possibly literature in general unless there is something useful within: “*Il n’y a dans tous ces livres que de vains systèmes et pas une seule chose utile*” (Ibid.). Pococuranté values practical inventions and the rest is rubbish (Ibid.). However, Pococuranté demonstrates another important quality of the times: the freedom of expression. One has the right to write what he thinks: “*Oui, il est beau d’écrire ce qu’on pense; c’est le privilège de l’homme*” (Voltaire 1972, 350). The rules, then, for friendship, are not so rigid, and the utilitarian possibilities of friendship are not so unpalatable.

Candide’s optimism does, however, gradually change. Cunégonde has always represented Candide’s hope, and she has always been more of an illusion than a reality. To him, she is pure beauty and can only be the ultimate happiness. When Candide and Cunégonde are finally reunited, she has transformed, which is representative of Candide’s perception of the world, into something less savory. Cunégonde has lost her beauty, and her personality is almost insupportable; but Candide marries her regardless, thus hanging onto hope though the world itself may seem as lusterless as Cunégonde has become. One must cultivate one’s own garden, as Candide learns, remaining hopeful, yet seeing things as they really are and with the understanding that one must work in order to attain something. Certainly, Candide gets plenty of help from his friends, Cacambo and Martin, throughout his adventures, and he cultivates those friendships. In the end, Candide’s circle of friends and acquaintances has begun to work together. They are

engaged and are becoming more satisfied people. One might see friendship in a similar light as something that can grow over time and is not preordained. The picaresque novel *Guzmán de Alfarache* also infers that friendship is a work in progress. Friends are engaged together in some sort of action, which is also true in the great hero friendships.

Voltaire (1972) wishes to show, too, that the nobility and the clergy are excluded from the working association, and therefore, perhaps, from the possibility genuine human connectedness. Voltaire may be suggesting that their minds are corrupted beyond recovery. Cunégonde's brother has fallen in with Candide's band, but he still sees himself as apart and superior to the other group members despite having much for which to thank Candide. After everything, including Candide's rescue of the baron brother, Cunégonde's brother can still not condone his sister's marriage to Candide. It would be beneath his sister to marry someone who is not of noble ancestry. Candide asks the advice of all the group members. The baron is turned over to certain authorities who are in pursuit of him. The baron, who represents the nobility, is in this way discarded by the group because he cannot become a cooperative, useful member.

One should also note the connection to Molière's *Le Misanthrope* (2006) in *Candide*. Candide is Alceste but without Alceste's sense of moral righteousness and superiority. Simply put, Candide is likeable and Alceste is not. Candide is Dudley Do-Right of the Canadian Mounties (ABC, NBC, CBS 1961-1970) while Alceste is Oedipus, or Creon in *Antigone*—perhaps someone to be pitied. Alceste's *hubris* is what corrupts him. Candide is something of an innocent. Candide trusts everyone. He does not pass judgment on anyone while he tries to live honorably. Candide simply reacts rightly, as it were, because he believes that there is a reason for everything and that everything will

turn out for the best. Fortunately, his friends are like Philinte although never critical of Candide, and Candide heeds their wisdom. Cacambo and Martin are devoted friends who live by code of common sense. Candide has faith in them while Philinte's sensible advice and approach are disdainful to Alceste. While Cacambo and Martin help Candide through his trials, Alceste will not compromise according to Philinte's counsel. The land of El Dorado, too, could be a reference to *Le Misanthrope* and Alceste's declaration that he is going to seek a hidden place away from vice where one is free to be an honorable man:

*Je vais sortir d'un gouffre où triomphent les vices,
et chercher sur la terre un endroit écarté
Où d'être homme d'honneur on ait la liberté.* (Molière 2006, 133)

This place, an El Dorado, is a mythical one. In the end, Candide and his friends must integrate themselves into society. Alceste is like the baron, Cunégonde's brother. He is too good for the others and therefore cannot integrate.

Jeannot et Colin

Voltaire (1972) touches on friendship in another of his short works, "Jeannot et Colin," which is a story about two friends and how Jeannot's sudden acquisition of wealth and position cause a schism of the friendship. The compiler of the collection in which the story is found refers to it as a tribute to sincere friendship (Van Den Heuvel, ed. 1972, 461). The story's narrator describes the friendship of Jeannot and Colin as something private and familiar that one always recollects with pleasure later on: "*Ils s'amaient beaucoup, et ils avaient ensemble de petites privautés, de petites familiarités, dont on se ressouvient toujours avec agrément quand on se rencontre ensuite dans le monde*" (Voltaire 1972, 462).

Once fortunes change for Jeannot and he is suddenly the son of a rich man, he becomes a pompous ass. Colin is happy for his friend and the narrator tells the reader that Colin is never jealous though he admires his friend's new clothes: "*Colin admira l'habit mais ne fut point jaloux*" (Voltaire 1972, 463). Jeannot, however, assumes an air of superiority over his friend. When Jeannot is called to Paris to join his parents, he looks down from his carriage at Colin in the manner of a sympathetic lord. Jeannot makes Colin feel like nothing, and Colin cries: "*Colin sentit son néant et pleura*" (1972, 463). Colin is deeply hurt that Jeannot has forgotten their friendship.

Jeannot and his parents are easily ensnared and fleeced while living in Paris. A neighboring widow fastens onto Jeannot and his family in a wish to secure their wealth for herself. She seduces Jeannot and befriends his parents. Plans for marriage ensue. The wedding, however, is never realized when Jeannot and his family find themselves bankrupt. In desperation Jeannot turns to his former tutor who is unsympathetic, and Jeannot understands that he has learned nothing from him. Jeannot then turns to his mother's confessor who is at first pleased to see Jeannot and inquires about his mother. Once the priest learns of the family's plight, he grows indifferent and claims that it is by God's grace Jeannot's mother has been reduced to beggary, thus assuring her salvation. When Jeannot asks whether there's any possibility of earthly aid, the priest bids him farewell, for a rich woman is waiting to be confessed. His new friends, furthermore, have nothing to offer him. He is treated the same by his friends as he is by everyone else. The marquis Jeannot is on the verge of passing out. The narrator tells us that Jeannot has learned more in half a day than for the rest of his life: "*Le marquis fut prêt à s'évanouir;*

il fut traité à peu pres de même par ses amis, et appris mieux à connaître le monde dans une demi-journée que dans tout le reste de sa vie” (Voltaire 1972, 470).

Blind with despair, Jeannot does not notice a heavily loaded wagon approaching with two rustic types, a man and woman, driving it. It is Colin and his wife. Colin recognizes Jeannot and calls out his name. When Colin sees Jeannot, he is overcome with joy and leaps from the wagon, embracing his old friend. Remembering his treatment of Colin, Jeannot is ashamed; but Colin immediately forgives him: *“Tu m’as abandonné, dit Colin; mais tu as beau être grand seigneur, je t’aimerais toujours”* (Voltaire 1972, 471). One might say that like the prodigal son, the prodigal friend has returned. Although Jeannot abandoned Colin and is a great lord, Colin will love Jeannot always. The reader learns that Colin has worked hard and started up a good business. He married a rich merchant’s daughter, and they are happy. Once he learns of Jeannot’s misfortune, he immediately offers to teach Jeannot the trade and bring him into the business back where they grew up. *“Nous travaillons beaucoup; Dieu nous bénit; nous n’avons point changé d’état; nous sommes heureux, nous aiderons notre ami Jeannot”* (Ibid.). In short, Colin says that they work a lot, that God blesses them, that they haven’t changed, that they are happy, and that they will help their friend Jeannot. Colin adds that all the world’s splendors are not worth a good friend: *“Toutes les grandeurs de ce monde ne valent pas un bon ami”* (Ibid.). Jeannot, deeply moved, whispers to himself, *“Tous mes amis du bel air m’ont trahi, et Colin, que j’ai méprisé, vient seul à mon secours”* (Voltaire 1972, 472). Colin is muttering that all his fancy friends betrayed him, and the one he was contemptuous of, Colin, is the only one who comes to his aid.

Voltaire (1972) goes a bit beyond himself to end the story, and one might think it were Rousseau saying it. The reader learns that the bounty of Colin's soul cultivates the heart of Jeannot who regains his natural goodness that the world had not yet totally extinguished (Voltaire 1972, 472). "*Le bonté de l'âme de Colin développa dans le coeur de Jeannot le germe du bon naturel, que le monde n'avait pas encore étouffé.*" Voltaire gives way here to the intangible, the possibility of a transcendent good, and his short tale of Jeannot and Colin suggests that the true friend can revive the goodness in the other, as that goodness was there in the first place. The story of Jeannot and Colin is an argument for the transcendent nature of the best kind of friendship. Only the corrupting influences of humanity itself can drive out the spirit of a great friendship once forged.

As in *Candide ou L'Optimism*, however, there is a new kind of friendship. The best of friends are not heroes or demigods. They are regular people, in the case of Jeannot and Colin, two small town boys who grew up together. It is the beginning of a middle class, a hardworking bourgeoisie who are skilled laborers and who live by common sense. They are engaged. The life of leisure, one might say, is detrimental to the right and virtuous attitudes necessary for friendship. There are not so many heroic deeds to be done as practical ones to be accomplished. The church and the nobility are corrupt. For Voltaire, the goodness and the virtue cannot emerge from those quarters; but again let it be said that, "*Toutes les grandeurs de ce monde ne valent pas un bon ami*" (Voltaire 1972, 471).

Diderot and the Fortune of Friendship

Diderot (1936) may have read Voltaire's "Jeannot *et* Colin," for his "*Les Deux Amis de Bourbonne*" is also about two friends who grow up together and who are not much more than simple peasants. In this story, Diderot includes many classic elements in his depiction of friendship while continuing Voltaire's criticism of the ruling class and its apparatus that includes clergy and government officials among whom, for Voltaire and Diderot, there can be few sincere friendship bonds of the everlasting kind.

The staging of Olivier and Félix's friendship is in keeping with the classical tradition of an almost preordained or divinely arranged friendship. The two friends are in fact two cousins who are born in the same house on the same day and at the same hour. They are the offspring of two sisters, one of whom dies in childbirth so that the two friends are nursed by the surviving sister and reared as brothers. They are always together. Each saves the life of the other. They are always looking out for each other. Destiny would have it that they are conscripted together, and in battle each is willing to sacrifice his life for his friend. One of the friends, Félix, takes a blow to the face meant for Olivier and remains scarred. Never does either friend brag of what he has done for the other. Instead, each friend sings the praises of the other. When one of the two boasts, it is always of the other's deeds (Diderot 1936, 371-372).

When both friends wish to be with the same woman, the friend who first realizes their mutual desire, Félix, withdraws and leaves the field open to his friend, Olivier, who, unaware of his friend's feelings and action, marries the woman. Félix is unconsciously distressed and unhappy with life at this occurrence (Diderot 1936, 372). At first, one might think he is resentful and that Diderot's story is about a great friendship gone sour

for the love of a woman; however, Félix is likely pained most because Olivier's marriage has separated the two friends. The depressed Félix immerses himself in dangerous activities and becomes an arms smuggler. When Félix is captured, he is sentenced to hang. Olivier, learning of Félix's plight, rushes to the magistrate. He wishes to see and speak to Félix before the execution. The magistrate intentionally delays Olivier so that he only has time to reach Félix as his neck is about to be placed in the noose. Olivier goes berserk. In violent combat he is able to free Félix, who escapes, but Olivier is mortally wounded and dumped on his own doorstep. Olivier's last words to his wife are about Félix. Olivier seems satisfied to die knowing that Félix lives. Meanwhile, Félix is unaware of his friend's death (Diderot 1936, 372-373).

When Olivier dies, the story becomes Félix's. Upon learning of Olivier's death, Félix also wants to die, but then he understands that Olivier's wife and children along with the widow of another faithful friend and their children need Félix. Even after his friends have died, Félix tries to ensure the wellbeing of the two families, and his relationship to the widows remains Platonic. He becomes St. Joseph, carrying out the duties of both father and husband without reaping any benefits. In this way, too, it can be said that Félix gives up his life for his friend, and even for another lesser but loyal friend whom Félix met while smuggling goods (Diderot 1936, 377-378).

One of the principal qualities of the two friends is loyalty. This virtue operates when Félix becomes the game warden of a rich man's estate. His employer is benevolent, and the two might be regarded as friends. When the owner is threatened in a property dispute, Félix defends him. In the scuffle Félix, who always carries his sword, cuts off part of the antagonist's arm. He is eventually forced to flee to Prussia where he serves in

le régiment de gardes, which is like a king's personal troop, and where he is well liked by his comrades although he goes by the nickname, *le Triste*, or The Sad. Perhaps Diderot is reminding the reader that Félix's other half, his friend Olivier, is dead. Félix continues, however, to help Olivier's widow from a distance (Diderot 1936, 379-380).

Diderot allows his narrator to close the tale, and after Diderot steps in to add a brief critical discourse defining types of stories, he follows up with a final word on friendship. He posits that only people who have nothing can know true friendship because they have nothing but their friendship upon which to depend; such friendships are reliable and sure. Each friend is the fortune of the other, and hardships faced together, which are the truth of experience, bind the friends even more closely together. "*Il ne peut y avoir d'amitiés entières et solides qu'entre des hommes qui n'ont rien. Un homme alors est toute la fortune de son ami, et son ami est toute la sienne. De là vérité d'expèrience, que le malheur resserre les liens*" (Diderot 1936, 385). The hero friends in "*Les Deux Amis de Bourbonne*" fight and live with the same courage as Achilles and Patroclus, but they are not princes or leaders or demigods. They do not, furthermore, engage in the noblest endeavors. Félix is a smuggler, a criminal. Olivier becomes a criminal when he kills to save his criminal friend. Still, Olivier and Félix fit the classical friendship paradigm. Their loyalty to each other and Félix's continued support of Olivier's family speak for their virtue.

In terms of communication and the effects of communication technology on friendship, one should register Diderot's narrative style in "*Les Deux Amis de Bourbonne*." The story is told entirely by letter from sister to brother, and it includes other letters from other persons who add to the story.

One of the letters, in fact, argues against venerating the friendship. It is a letter from the local pastor, who makes a somewhat ironic claim. Because neither friend expresses any religious sentiment or intent, according to him, the friendship is ignominious. The irony exists because of the incredible circumstances that unite the two friends from birth as if the friendship were intended. The two are one from the beginning, born the same day at the same hour, always together, and nursed by the same mother they are not brothers. Augustine (2002), Aelred (2010) and even Montaigne (1965, 1993) submit that there must be some divine intervention. Félix and Olivier are inseparable friends who depend upon each other from beginning to end. When Olivier is killed saving Félix from the gallows, Félix continues to serve his friend loyally by caring for his wife and family. Both friends give their lives for each other because they are each other's life.

A faithful friend is a strong defence: and he that hath found such as one hath found a treasure. Nothing doth countervail a faithful friend, and his excellency is invaluable. A faithful friend is the medicine of life; and they that fear the Lord shall find him. ([NAB] Ecclesiastics VI, 14-16)

Félix and Olivier, the friends seem to have been created for each other and placed together.

Two differences from the classical friendships in literature stand out as friendship narratives emerge from the print era. First, one can become friends with someone outside his or her social milieu, Candide and Cacambo's friendship being the best example. Friendship is also something for the common folk. It is no longer the thing of demigods and mythological heroes. Jeannot and Colin grow up together and are products of an emerging merchant class. Félix and Olivier are plain poor. Extraordinary friendship is not confined, thus, to those who are practically superhuman.

Print Culture: Access to Paper, Pen and Ink

Letter writing and corresponding is an attribute of print culture, for it is during the print era that written communication flourishes, and this form of communication is often explicit in fiction literature. “*Les deux amis de Bourbonnes*” is a story told by letter, and there is also Goethe’s *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774) that is told through correspondence from Werther to his friend William. Rousseau (1755) does much to encourage this sort of narrative with his novel *Julie ou La Nouvelle Heloïse*, which he calls “*lettres de deux amants habitants d’une petite ville au pied des Alpes*,” or letters of two lovers, inhabitants of a small town at the foot of the Alps. Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818) is a letter from brother to sister and begins as the brother describes his expedition towards the North Pole. The brother is aboard ship and cannot, ironically, send his letters, so one might consider his writing almost journalistic in nature, his having a recipient, his sister, making it easier for him to recount events in narrative form. As the ship sails north, they are caught up in ice. The captain and his crew are astounded to encounter the lone traveler, Victor Frankenstein, on the ice. It is here that the story truly begins as Frankenstein tells all to the captain, the captain brother records it for his sister. In the end, after Frankenstein’s death, the brother has a direct discourse with the creature, which is where the story finally ends upon the creature’s leaving the vessel.

The Sorrows of Young Werther (1774) is also an expression of communication between two friends in the sense of sharing one’s innermost thoughts and feelings. Werther and Lotte participate together in poetry and literature. In effect, one could say that they cultivate their full sensibilities together but paradoxically sensual without the sexual. There is, nevertheless, proximity, despite the high state of literacy and intellectual

examination. Werther, in many ways, could be compared to Lotte's canary. Werther's letter to William describes sensuality without full consummation:

“My new friend,” she said, and coaxed him onto her hand... “He is such a darling. Look, when I give him bread, he flutters and picks it up so neatly. And he kisses me. Look!”

She held the little creature to her mouth, and it touched her beloved lips so sweetly, as if it could feel the bliss it was being granted.

“Let him kiss you, too,” she said, stretching out her hand to me, with the bird on it. His little beak found its way from her mouth to mine, and the little peck it gave me was like a breath, a premonition of the delights of love.” (Goethe 1962, 90)

Werther responds: “‘I wouldn't say that his kiss was entirely without desire,’ I said, ‘He seeks food, and the kiss leaves him unsatisfied’” (Ibid.). One wonders whether Lotte understands the symbolism and that it is too much for Werther.

The Confusion of Marriage and Gender in Friendship

The saddest friendship conclusion, much of it via letter, is that of Werther, and Goethe's story is a response to Rousseau's *Julie* (1952) and also to some of Rousseau's philosophical discourse as everything falls apart for Werther. It raises several questions, one of which has to do with whether written correspondence can fulfill the need for friendship. It also takes on the difficult question of friendship possibilities between a man and a woman when one is unable to subdue his or her desire for total union. Finally, nature enters into the discourse and whether it can substitute somehow for the absence of companionship.

Although Werther is in the midst of correspondence with his friend, he does not feel the sense of the friend's presence, and Werther bemoans his solitude; for it gives play to the imagination. Werther writes:

Nothing is therefore more dangerous than solitude. Our imagination, forced by its very nature to unfold, nourished by the fantastic visions of poetry, gives shape to a whole order of creatures of which we are the lowliest, and everything around us seems to be more glorious, everyone else more perfect. (Goethe 1962, 72)

This passage suggests that writing cannot substitute for proximity. The ability to interact with others in an active interchange can thwart negative imaginings. The heavy ponderings of Werther, upon which he can deliberate while writing to William, cannot be answered quickly enough by his friend. Werther's correspondence is more akin to an internal reflection than to an exchange of ideas, and his writing leads him unchecked down a murky corridor to eventual self-destruction, the preparation for which he documents. Writing proves to be negative therapy for Werther, and it would seem to allow Werther to defer the intervention of his friend, William. Werther's letters have alarmed William to the point of taking action, and Werther acknowledges the friendship: "I can thank your love for me, William, for the fact that you understand me as you did. You are right, it is best for me to leave...but it suits me very well that you want to come and fetch me, only please let a fortnight pass and wait for one more letter from me" (Goethe 1962, 109).

However, one should not infer that Werther's ability to write down his thoughts drove him to suicide. One should enter, instead, into the problem of an unrequited love and the potential for difficulty in the friendship between opposite sexes, at least so far as Goethe and others of his time might perceive it. When Lotte marries Albert, their mutual friend, the friendship undergoes a challenge. Werther and Albert become more uncomfortable with each other as Werther wishes to be near his friend Lotte as he always has. Werther's friendship crosses a boundary when he realizes that he cannot be separated

from her. In effect, the relationship of Werther and Lotte could be defined as something of a soul-mate friendship, and Werther is unnerved knowing that he can never enter into the fullest kind of relationship with Lotte because of her husband. Lotte tries to reason with Werther when she recognizes his yearning for total fulfillment and that his friendship for her is no longer a virtue but perhaps an excess: “I implore you,” she went on, taking him by the hand, “practice moderation! Your mind—all your knowledge and talents...think of the happiness they can give you! Be more manly! Divert this tragic devotion from a human creature who can only pity you” (Goethe 1962, 111). She suggests that the friendship has degenerated into a wish to possess the object of affection: “Why me, Werther? Why me of all people, who belongs to another? Why? I fear...I fear that it is just the impossibility of possessing me that makes your desire for me so fascinating” (Ibid.).

Lotte, however, is not without guilt, as she reflects upon her own wish to possess Werther although her desire is not that of a woman for a man: “After her last talk with Werther, she had begun to realize how hard it would be for her to part with him and how much he would suffer if forced to leave her” (Goethe 1962, 114). Furthermore, she knows that her relationship with her husband is something different, not the kind of bond that she shares with Werther: “She was accustomed to sharing everything that interested her with him, and his loss threatened to tear a gap into her life that she feared could never again be closed. If only she could have turned him into a brother at this point, how happy it would have made her!” (Goethe 1962, 114-115). The connection between Werther and Lotte is powerful, special, but wedlock disrupts it. Lotte’s husband, Albert, cannot replace what Werther gives her, but Werther cannot replace the husband:

As a result of these reflections she began to realize, without admitting to herself too clearly, that it was her secret but sincere desire to keep him for herself. At the same time she told herself that she couldn't keep him, she had no right to. Her lovely spirit, usually so light and so easily able to help itself, suddenly felt the pressure of a melancholy to which all prospects of happiness were closed. (Goethe 1962, 115)

One is left with the question of whether or not the consummation of the friendship as a marriage between man and woman could have alleviated all suffering and made both the lives of Werther and Lotte blissful, but Lotte was never able to envision Werther in that way while Werther seems uncontrollably propelled in that direction, against his will.

Werther, in a final letter to Lotte before his suicide, allows himself full freedom of expression:

And what difference does it make that Albert is your husband? Husband—that's a word for this world, and in this world it's a sin that I love you and would wrench you out of his arms into mine. A sin? Very well then, and I punish myself for it. I have tasted this sin in all its divine rapture. I have sucked its balm and strength into my heart. From now on you are mine—mine, Lotte! I go on ahead to my Father. To Him I will complain, and He will comfort me until you come, and I fly to meet you and enfold you and remain at your side in the sight of Infinite God in one eternal embrace. (Goethe 1962, 124)

The dilemma becomes entirely Lotte's. She must be frank and true to her husband, but it means losing Werther: "Again and again her thoughts reverted to Werther, who was lost to her, whom she could not abandon, yet, alas, had to abandon, to whom—once he had lost her—nothing was left" (Goethe 1962, 125).

The fictional Alceste in *Le Misanthrope* (2006) breaks ranks with his contemporaries and claims to be leaving to find his El Dorado. Rousseau (2012), in *Les Rêveries du promeneur solitaire*, also gives up on society in a real experiment, but instead of El Dorado, he finds solace in nature as a lone traveler, free of human encumbrances. Neither the fictional Alceste nor Rousseau commits suicide. Alceste still

has hope, although El Dorado is mythical, and Rousseau, alone in nature, finds forgetfulness:

Les jours où je ne vois personne, je ne pense plus à ma destinée, je ne la sens plus, je ne souffre plus, je suis heureux et content sans diversion, sans obstacle....Le trouble de mon coeur disparaît avec l'objet qui l'a causé et je rentre dans le calme aussitôt que je suis seul....Et sitôt que je me vois sous les arbres, au milieu de la verdure, je crois me voir dans le paradis terrestre.
(Rousseau 2012, 150-151)

[The days when I see no one, I do not think of my destiny, I don't feel it anymore, I suffer no more, I am happy and content without diversion, without obstacle...the troubles of my heart disappear with its cause [society] and I enter into a calmness as soon as I am alone...and as soon as I am under the trees, in the middle of the greenery, I believe myself to be in earthly paradise.]

Werther is incapable of such a retreat. In his despair he talks in one of his letters to his friend William about human powerlessness and nature's personality:

Who can say, 'That's how it is!' when all things are transient and roll away with the passing storm, and one's powers so rarely suffice to one's span of life but are carried off in the torrent to sink and to be dashed against the rocks? There is not a moment in which one is not a destroyer and has to be a destroyer (Goethe 1962, 65).

Furthermore, referring to nature, he writes: "My heart is undermined by the consuming power that lies hidden in the Allness of nature....I can see nothing but an eternally devouring, eternally regurgitating monster" (Goethe 1962, 65). Nature's beauty and serenity instead give way, and nature's images contribute "*aux idées de suicide*" (Erik Leborgne 2012, 191). Nature cannot substitute for the embrace of another human being. The jilted lover is the person alone, and his or her suicide is a familiar theme. The irony remains, however, of Werther's general disenchantment with society and his disgust at the need to compromise with its rules: "*Le désespoir amoureux va de pair avec le*

désenchantement du monde et le dégoût profond des compromis imposé par la société” (Ibid.).

The separateness of friendship and marriage are hardly questioned by the ancients. The early moderns often seem to raise the question without realizing it. The tenability of solitude has become a debatable topic where once it was loathsome for a person to be alone. Nature was once a mysterious place where dragons might be disturbed. Rousseau (2012) calls it paradise on earth and human science views it as a great though still dangerous playground by the end of the 18th century. It is no longer something to be wondered at for the entrepreneur. It is something to be overcome and exploited.

Samuel Johnson (2006) can serve as another spokesperson for the 18th century as he responds to the question of solitude and to a lesser degree to that of nature. For Johnson, such questions have to do more with belief than with truth. In his philosophical fiction, *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia* the protagonists visit a hermit’s cave and the hermit, who has “lived fifteen years in solitude” shares his thoughts on living alone, and he begins with his reasons for choosing separation as a relatively young military officer: “I resolved to close my life in peace, having found the world full of snares, discord and misery” (Johnson 2006, 460). The hermit, at first, delights in: “the sudden change of the noise and hurry of war, to stillness and repose” (Ibid.). When the “novelty” dissipates, he turns to the study of the plants and minerals around him, but that activity he says “has now grown tasteless and irksome” (Ibid.). Like Werther, the hermit has grown susceptible, in his solitude, to his imagination, and he is, perhaps, at same time an Alceste grown old:

My mind is disturbed with a thousand perplexities of doubt, and vanities of imagination, which hourly prevail upon me...I am sometimes ashamed to think that I could not secure myself from vice, but by retiring from the exercise of virtue, and begin to suspect that I was rather impelled by resentment, than led by devotion, into solitude...In solitude, if I escape the example of bad men, I want likewise the counsel and conversation of the good. I have been comparing the evils with the advantages of society, and resolve to return into the world tomorrow. The life of a solitary man will be certainly miserable, but not certainly devout. (Johnson 2006, 460)

When Resselas returns from his visit with the hermit, he visits an assembly of “learned men” and shares the hermit’s reasoning. One of the philosophers, perhaps Rousseau, latches onto the topic of nature:

The way to be happy is to live is to live according to nature, in obedience to that universal and unalterable law with which every heart is originally impressed; which is not written on it by precept, but engraven by destiny, not instilled by education, but infused at our nativity. He that lives according to nature will suffer nothing from the delusions of hope, or importunities of desire: he will receive and reject with equability of temper; and act or suffer as the reason of things shall alternately prescribe. (Johnson 2006, 463)

When Prince Resselas asks to “know what it is to live with nature,” the response becomes almost incoherent, and the prince finds that: “this was one of the sages whom he should understand less as he heard him longer” (Johnson 2006, 463). Had the prince been able to visit Thoreau at Walden Pond, perhaps he would have been able to continue the discussion about solitude, nature and friendship.

Print culture has decidedly expanded the borders of friendship and created new discourse. Nineteenth century writers and thinkers will refine the discourse and add considerably to the friendship discussion, but the 19th century is principally the solid body of the print era, which extends into the 20th century. The classical-Christian friendship paradigm survives although it undergoes considerable refinement. In fiction literature, great friendships continue to showcase the best human qualities.

Chapter 7

The Classical-Christian Friendship at the Apex of Print Culture

The 19th century into the early 20th century is arguably the time range between which the fullest influence of print media occurs as most of Western civilization becomes a mature print culture; for the incursion of other media, or new media, remains nominal. The telegraph and the telephone are still comparative toddlers although the telegraph accelerates print culture. Film is still in incubation as the world enters the 20th century. The most discernable alteration to print culture might derive from the medium of photography. As the telegraph and telephone heat up print media by allowing news to travel faster, so does the printed picture put one sense, sight, in higher definition, thus raising the temperature: “A hot medium is one that extends one single sense in ‘high definition.’ High definition is the state of being well filled with data. A photograph, visually, is high definition” (McLuhan 1964, 36). Print media becomes more concretely visual by the infusion of photographs, especially in periodicals. Photographs might seem to be more factual than the images that can be generated by the artist, draftsman, or even the engineer. For instance, McLuhan (1964) calls cartoons “low definition simply because very little visual information is provided” (1964, 36). In other words, the receiver is left with more to infer and interpret than he or she might be if viewing a photograph, and obviously much more to infer without any visual imagery and the sometimes challenging task of decoding only language symbols. Readers of newspapers and magazines find images added to the code as the 19th century progresses. Friendship, however, in the classical style, with all its requirements, holds the road admirably across

another media bridge and into the 20th century. Its survival, furthermore, continues to prompt increasingly important discussions about solitude and gender.

A good laboratory for discussions of friendship is North America, for it is a place where European theories are forcefully applied and where, paradoxically, there is a powerful striving to break from European thinking and to build something unique: “The persons are such as we; the Europe an old faded garment of dead persons; the books their ghosts” (Emerson 1993, 49). Emerson’s tone, by White’s analysis, might seem both romantic and, subsequently, anarchist (2014, 29). It is a “repudiation of the Ironic attitude” (White 2014, 38). White does well to express Emerson’s thinking and the romantic position as it counters the rationalist, ironic view. It is the song of the self-reliant posture of an individual living honorably and making his or her proper decisions:

There was a sense in which one could legitimately maintain that man [the individual] was both in nature and outside it, that he participated in the natural process, but that he could also transcend that process in consciousness in, assume a position outside it [as Rousseau had done (2012)] and view the process as manifested in those levels of natural integration which were demonstrably non- or prehuman. (White 2014, 45-46)

The transcendentalist position is integrating and metaphorically the concept is that of synecdoche, when the metaphor represents essences rather than parts. Therefore, “claims to an essential ‘realism’ were at once epistemological and ethical (White 2014, 46). The individual, by living rightly, has great power to “know ‘reality’” (Ibid.). The Classical-Christian friendship model crosses the Atlantic with the first Europeans, and Emerson’s poem, “Friendship,” records its arrival:

A ruddy drop of manly blood
The surging sea outweighs,
The world uncertain comes and goes,
The lover rooted stays.

I fancied he was fled,
 And, after many a year,
 Glowed unexhausted kindness
 Like daily sunrise there.
 My carefree heart was free again,--
 O friend, my bosom said,
 Through thee alone the sky is arched,
 Through thee the rose is red,
 All things through thee take nobler form,
 And look beyond the earth,
 And is the mill-round of our fate
 A sun path in thy worth.
 Me too thy nobleness has taught
 To master my despair;
 The fountain of my hidden life
 Are through thy friendship fair. (Emerson 1993, 39)

Emerson's poem would seem to suggest the turbulence of the new world when with the vast distances it might be difficult to stay near to one's friend. As in Goethe (1962) and Shelley (1976), one's life may be shared through letter writing, and with print culture comes a growing literacy that can enable written communication: "The scholar sits down to write, and all his years of meditation do not furnish him with one good thought or happy expression; but it is necessary to write a letter to a friend,--and, forthwith, troops of gentle thoughts invest themselves on every hand, with chosen words" (Emerson 1993, 39-40).

While distance and literacy factor into friendship possibilities, some of the essential criteria are unchanged in Emerson's adaptation, and he does not question whether the eternal characteristics of the best kind of friendship are transcendent: "The laws of friendship are austere and eternal" (Emerson 1993, 43). In fact, Emerson explicitly revives the notion that the true friendship is a metaphysically orchestrated virtuosity:

My friends have come to me unsought. The great God gave them to me. By oldest right, by the divine affinity of virtue with itself, I find them, or rather not I, but the Deity within me and in them cancels the thick walls of individual character, religion, age, sex, circumstance at which he usually connives, and now make many one. High thanks I owe you, excellent lovers, who carry out the world for me to new and noble depths, and enlarge the meaning of all my thoughts. (Emerson 1993, 41)

The law of reciprocity and oneness persists, “I must feel pride in my friend’s accomplishments as if they were mine,--and a property in his virtues” (Emerson 1993, 41). However, there is an important breaking of ranks with the early friendship scholars. Emerson (1993) opens up the possibility of friendship with many rather than few, as he refers to these friends in the plural, and he also “cancels the thick walls of individual character, religion, age, sex, circumstance” (41). One might find the classical friendship paradigm as difficult to sustain with a greater number of friends, yet Emerson seemingly refuses to lower standards and suggests, instead, that the individual is at fault if he is not able to treat all his friends equally and see them as equals. Emerson is, perhaps, the idealistic new American voice. He is cognizant of the origins of friendship, yet he may also sense that the new nation is a conglomeration of many different people whose roots could be many and varied:

I ought to be equal to every relation. It makes no difference how many friends I have, and what content I can find in conversing with each, if there be one to whom I am not equal. If I have shrunk unequal to one contest, the joy I find in all the rest becomes mean and cowardly. (Emerson 1993, 43).

Emerson (1993) regards the failure to treat all his friends equally as vice, for his pleasant interaction with “the rest becomes mean and cowardly” (43).

Although Emerson (1993) opens the door to all in friendship and seems to expand the possibility of having a number of great friends, he also makes it clear that each

friendship is particular. Emerson emphasizes the need for one-to-one communication between best friends in an age of print media and letter writing:

I please my imagination more with a circle of godlike men and women variously related to each other, and between whom subsists a lofty intelligence. But I find this law of *one to one* peremptory for conversation, which is the practice and consummation of friendship. (Emerson 1993, 46)

The discourse can take the form of both oral and written communication between friends, and for its depth of possibility, Emerson (1993) credits writing in friendship: “The hues of the opal, the light of the diamond, are not to be seen, if the eye is too near. To my friend, I write a letter, and from him I receive a letter...It is a spiritual gift worthy of him to give, and of me to receive” (48). The letter is a gift of the mind in a different way. Emerson (1993), though he may be in the good company of several, finds the social conventions to be limiting when two friends have communion: “Now this convention, which good sense demands, destroys the high freedom of conversation, which requires an absolute running of two souls into one” (46).

Emerson (1993) views the best kind of friendship as more than an intellectual endeavor: “It is foolish to be afraid of making our ties too spiritual, as if so we could lose any genuine love” (49). There is a friendship ethic and a spiritual necessity for the superior friendship. It is a tough order, but with God’s help, for, “Love...is the essence of God (Emerson 1993, 43)” it is possible to recognize the true friend: “Let us approach our friend with an audacious trust in the truth of his heart, in the breadth, impossible to be overturned, of his foundations” (Ibid.). “Friendship,” therefore, for Emerson (1993), “requires a religious treatment. We talk of choosing our friends, but friends are self-elected. Reverence is a great part of it” (47).

To the classical friendship paradigm, Emerson adheres almost religiously in that one must be virtuous and true to oneself in order for friendship to be possible. Like Rousseau (2012), Emerson (1993) believes that society can become a wrecking ball, and within the social context he views solitude as a necessity in order for the individual to ground himself properly: “We must be our own before we can be another’s... Yet the least defect of self-possession vitiates, in my judgment, the entire relation” (48).

Thomas Merton (1955) sets some interesting parameters for solitude, and he is more explicit, or perhaps more accessible to the 21st century reader, than is Rousseau or Emerson. First, he believes that everyone should realize the need for solitude and to accept its necessity. Merton’s point of view is a metaphysical one. He believes in a creator and that this creator is the ultimate good. There is, therefore, a spiritual component to one’s life, and he or she finds that element within the self. Solitude is a key component of the individual person: “A person is a person insofar as he has the secret and is a solitude of his own that cannot be communicated to anyone else” (Merton 1955, 244). Solitude, for Merton, is necessary.

The danger is in what Merton (1955) calls “false solitude” (247). Society is a player for it contributes to such a possibility. The false solitude emerges with the person “who has been denied the right to become a person,” and this person “takes revenge on society by turning his individuality into a destructive weapon” (Merton 1955, 247-248). Frankenstein’s creature is literally refused the opportunity to become a person. He thus becomes a menace to society. He destroys the life of his creator, Victor Frankenstein: “Maddened by his own insufficiency, the proud man shamelessly seizes upon satisfactions and possessions that are not due him, that can never satisfy him, and that he

will never really need” (Merton 1955, 248-249). One should recall that, though the creature is hideous to behold, he is otherwise superior to the human being, and he knows it.

In a more realistic sense, one could even suggest that Rousseau (2012) succumbs somewhat to a form of prideful false solitude as he uncouples from society, especially if one concludes that Rousseau remains melancholic. Rousseau, believing that he is under continual personal attack and relentless critical scrutiny, no longer attempts to contribute anything back to society and is not receptive to, is even paranoid of, any sort of outreach from his peers. In Rousseau’s “*Neuvième promenade*,” When “M. P.” arrives at Rousseau’s to share the eulogy of someone who is apparently a mutual friend or acquaintance, Rousseau takes a part of the eulogy as an insinuation against him by the author of the eulogy. Thus interpreted, Rousseau defends his prior actions and attempts to prove what he has perceived as the accusation within the eulogy false (Rousseau 2012, 155-156). One should keep in mind that Rousseau isn’t even present at the funeral.

Merton finds this attitude dangerous:

False solitude separates a man from his brothers in such a way that he can no longer effectively give them anything or receive anything from them in his own spirit. It establishes him in a state of indigence, misery, blindness, torment, and despair. (Merton 1955, 248)

Rousseau (2012) devotes full *promenades* or walks to defending his ability to love his fellow human being and to being charitable, in his *Rêveries du promeneur solitaire*, particularly in the “*Sixième promenade*.” Merton might interpret Rousseau’s attitude as the problem of one’s having the proper love of self: “These, then, are the ones who isolate themselves above the mass of men because they have never learned to love either

themselves or other men” (Merton 1955, 249). In Rousseau’s defense, however, he will attack this problem and seems conscious of his weakness; he believes his heart guides him towards Merton’s right, or true solitude:

One of the secrets of spiritual perfection is to realize that we have this mixture [hatred with love] in ourselves, and to be able to distinguish one from the other....Therefore, as long as our solitude is imperfect it will be tainted with bitterness and disgust, because it will exhaust us in continual conflict. (Merton 1955, 250-251)

One could claim here that Thoreau (1960), who follows Rousseau very closely, has been more successful in reaching the garden of the right kind of solitude of which Merton (1955) speaks. Thoreau, however, does not sever human companionship in the same way that Rousseau does. While Rousseau feels driven to solitude, Thoreau’s disconnect is not resignation: “I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practise resignation, unless it was quite necessary” (Thoreau 1960, 96). The true solitude of which Merton speaks suggests a clarity of thought and action that is not against humanity and other living human beings but that allows one to achieve an outside observer’s assessment and a better understanding of one’s relationship to the social whole. The person who reaches such an ultimate end in solitude must be rare indeed, for he or she is highly objective yet a highly independent individual:

If I cannot distinguish myself from the mass of other men, I will never be able to love and respect other men as I ought. If I do not separate myself from them enough to know what is mine and what is theirs, I will never discover what I have to give them, and never allow them the opportunity to give me what they ought. (Merton 1955, 247)

It would seem that when people are genuinely lonely but not necessarily prideful, they lose their sense of meaning in life. Aside, then, from their survival instincts, or if one is not driven entirely by worldly or material considerations, what motivates a person to

live life or to participate in human activities? What is, in a person's life, his or her best reason for being? Merton (1955) says that it is love and that it is hope, and he is always critical of those who choose the wrong kind of solitude, which is the wrong kind of love:

Because it [love] is an inescapable sin, it is also hell. But this too is only a disguised form of Eros—Eros in solitude. It is the love that is mortally wounded by its own incapacity to love another, and flies from others in order not to have to give itself to them. Even in its solitude this Eros is most tortured by its inescapable need of another, not for the other's sake but for its own fulfillment! (Merton 1955, xix)

When in despair, one wants to believe that things can improve, and in order for some improvement to occur, the person must assign him or herself some value. In fact, an individual needs to be able to love oneself properly. In the enterprise of finding worth within oneself, or self-love, Rousseau (2012) distinguishes between self-esteem and conceit:

L'estime de soi-même est le plus grand mobile des âmes fières; l'amour propre, fertile en illusions, se déguise et se fait prendre pour cette estime; mais quand la fraude enfin se découvre et que l'amour-propre ne peut plus se cacher, dès lors il n'est plus à craindre et quoiqu'on l'étouffe avec peine on le subjugué au moins aisément. (Rousseau 2012, 146)

The individual must get past his or her vanity, which, to Rousseau, has more to do with external criteria than internal ones. Self-esteem, for Rousseau, is the best self-love, and it cannot be gotten artificially or superficially. Society, the external, cannot provide one with the proper sense of self-worth necessary for the best kind of friendship. For Merton, too, there is a right way and a wrong way to love oneself. Merton (1955) goes one step farther than Rousseau: "We cannot love ourselves unless we love others, and we cannot love others unless we love ourselves. But a selfish love of ourselves makes us incapable of loving others" (xx). The suicidal danger for Merton (1955) is in a frustrated or

misguided self-love “that has turned into self-hatred and which, in adoring itself, adores the monster by which it is consumed” (xxi).

Thoreau (1960, 1991) is the lover of solitude and her principal standard bearer, yet Thoreau extols friendship similarly to Emerson (1993); in fact, he perhaps trumpets more loudly the notes of one’s seeking an immortal truth in friendship: “All men are dreaming of it, and its drama, which is always a tragedy, is acted out daily. It is the secret of the universe” (Thoreau 1991, 513). Aelred, one recalls, believes that friendship, the best kind, is the closest facsimile to what it is for a human being to perceive God:

Thus rising from the holy love with which a friend embraces a friend to that which friend embraces Christ, one may take the spiritual fruit of friendship fully and joyfully into the mouth, while looking forward to all abundance in the life to come. (Aelred 2010, 126.134)

Thoreau writes, in “A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers”:

Between whom there is a hearty truth, there is love; and in proportion to our truthfulness and confidence in one another, our lives are divine and miraculous, and answer to our ideal. There are passages of affection in our intercourse with mortal men and women, such as no prophecy had taught us to expect, which transcend our earthly life, and anticipate Heaven for us. (Thoreau 1991, 515)

While experiencing each as another self, Thoreau reminds the friendship seeker, too, that friends are individuals and that they should inspire each other to be the best that they can:

The dull distinguish only races or nations, or at most classes, but the wise man, individuals. To his Friend a man’s peculiar character appears in every feature and in every action, and it is thus drawn out and improved by him... (Thoreau 1991, 515)

The spirit of solitude, thus, is folded into the paradigm for the 19th and 20th century thinkers as well as it is clear from the beginning that each friend must be an individual, a virtuous truth seeker and exceptional human being in his or her own right. Solitude

emerges, beginning with Rousseau (2012), as a way for the individual to detoxify oneself from society's metaphorical drugging. Friendship can be at the core of one's humanity, naturally, whether one thinks of nature in the spiritual or the physical, though not necessarily carnal, sense. The transcendentalists like Emerson and Thoreau believe that the natural is good, and society can taint the individual. Solitude, therefore, is a way to seek the good and true internally, and Thoreau is the epitome of Emerson's self-reliant person seeking and perhaps successfully finding such purgation. The purified person Thoreau writes:

I have never felt lonesome, or in the least oppressed by a sense of solitude, but once, and that was a few weeks after I came to the woods, when, for an hour, I doubted whether the near neighborhood of man was not essential to a serene and healthy life. To be alone was something unpleasant. But I was at the same time conscious of a slight insanity in my mood, and seemed to foresee my recovery. (Thoreau 1960, 92)

Although Thoreau may have found solitude companionable, most could argue that he is in the minority and that, consequently, friends are necessary, and that absolute solitude is death-like. In fact in regards to solitude, Thoreau himself writes:

Sometimes, when I compare myself with other men, it seems as if I were more favored by the gods, beyond any deserts that I am conscious of; as if I had a warrant at their hands that my fellows have not, and were especially guided and guarded. (Thoreau 1960, 92)

With the proper dose of solitude, then, one is ready for the best kind of friendship.

Thoreau (1960, 1991) may have been an exception in his need for sustained human contact, but in this assertion one should make an important distinction between solitude and loneliness. Thoreau has an inkling of the kind of isolation possible within large print cultures. One's close relationships and friendship bonds, consequently, ought to become more precious; but Thoreau also suggests that too much contact with others,

the people for whom one may care deeply, can cause a loss of respect for them, so some distancing can be beneficial:

Society is commonly too cheap. We meet at very short intervals, not having had time to acquire any new value for each other. We meet at meals three times a day, and give each other a new taste of that old musty cheese that we are. (Thoreau 1960, 95)

Thoreau (1960, 1991), however, surely perceives solitude and loneliness differently. When Thoreau makes his Cape Cod journeys, he is accompanied on one of those by a friend. Furthermore, Thoreau isn't so alone at Walden Pond: "When I return to my house I find that visitors have been there and left their cards, either a bunch of flowers, or a wreath of evergreen, or a name in pencil on a yellow walnut leaf or chip" (1960, 91). Thoreau, the minimalist, also extends his furnishings to others: "I have three chairs in my house; one for solitude, two for friendship, three for society" (Thoreau 1960, 97). Solitude and friendship would seem to be preferable, but society is not excluded.

Nineteenth Century American Tales

Mark Twain (1993, 1999) develops an important friendship in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* between Huck and Jim, an escaped slave. This friendship represents the possibility for friendship outside the boundaries of race and age as Huck and Jim face many adventures together. It is clear, however, from Huck's narration that the relationship evolves from being one of mutual aid or sympathy into a synthesis of being (Davis Wood 2012, 83). Both characters are trying to escape, each from a different kind of slavery, and the empathy that develops leads to a sense of equality: "Huck's experience of "pseudoenslavement" puts him on as close to equal footing with Jim as he is ever likely to be and thus prepares the ground on which his synthesis with Jim

develops” (Davis Wood 2012, 84). This synthesis is expressed through Huck’s gradual pronoun shift from the first person singular to the first person plural. The equality grows as Huck “*allows* Jim to speak; more important, he allows Jim to speak at greater length than himself and without interruption or correction, even though Jim’s words amount to a rebuke of Huck” (David Wood 2012, 84). Once the I is fully replaced by the we in Huck’s narrative, “Huck and Jim now are one, as Huck has assumed that Jim sees what he himself sees and that he can accurately detail what Jim sees simply by detailing what he too has just seen” (Davis Wood 2012, 85).

One is reminded of Candide and Cacambo in Voltaire’s *Candide* (1972). Candide and Cacambo although two men, are master and servant and of different ethnicity, but during their travels, particularly to El Dorado, it is Cacambo who takes the lead because he speaks the language, and the narrator begins to refer to the two as one. Likewise, as Huck and Jim persist through their adventures, they regard themselves as being one unit:

Huck says, “We all got home safe” ([1999] 62). By “safe,” he does not simply mean “uninjured”; he means safe in a way that encompasses the particularities of Jim’s situation as well as his own...Not having any accidents is Huck’s own individual criterion for safety, but not seeing anybody—and not being seen in turn—is Jim’s criterion, since he can remain free only as long as he remains unseen by others who would reenslave him. Huck...recognizes the mutual dependency that exists between Jim and himself despite their individual differences: if either one is endangered, both of them are. (Davis Wood 2012, 85-86)

For Huck, however, the friendship does not quite reach the sanctity of permanence, and one could suggest that Huck’s youth, the possibility that Huck is not quite mature enough for the fullest kind of friendship, makes it possible for society to undo the bond that formed between Huck and Jim. Surely, Huck feels a deep affection for Jim and tries to rescue him when the two confidence men who are accompanying them manage to have

Jim captured and collect a reward. Huck reacts: “Jim was gone! I set up a shout—and then another—and then another one, and run this way and that in the woods, whooping and screeching, but it wasn’t no use—old Jim was gone. Then I set down and cried: I couldn’t help it” (Twain 1993, 360). Their friendship would seem to be reciprocal, as Huck sums up their adventures and things each has done for the other (Twain 1993, 361-362). Davis Wood (2012) notes that, “The differences between Huck’s enslavement and Jim’s enslavement are of course irresolvable insofar as Huck and Jim occupy different and unalterable positions within a system of institutionalized race slavery” (86).

Although Huck does not wish to see Jim captured, he sees his helping Jim as something criminal; he has been educated to see it even as a crime against heaven. To save Jim from his capturers, he decides it is best to write Jim’s slave owner so that she might reclaim him, and Huck is temporarily assuaged:

I felt good and all washed clean of sin for the first time I had ever felt so in my life, and I knowed I could pray now. But I didn’t do it straight off, but laid the paper down and set there thinking—thinking how good it was all this happened so, and how near I come to being lost and going to hell. (Twain 1993, 361)

Huck, however, chooses not to send the letter, and he vows to steal Jim back, deciding to become a sinner instead: “‘All right, then, I’ll *go* to hell’—and tore it up...And for a starter, I would go to work and steal Jim out of slavery again” (Twain 1993, 362). In other words, Huck is still struggling with the concept of Jim as a full human being totally equal to him. Emerson (1993) alludes to Huck’s dilemma: “But to most of us society shows not its face and eye, but its side and back. To stand in true relations with men in a false age is worth a fit of insanity, is it not?” (45). Certainly, Huck and Jim have built a friendship that “is essentially between individuals; the moment two men are friends they

have in some degree drawn apart together from the herd” (Lewis 2012, 58). Huck is still a boy, so to a lesser degree is it possible for him to withdraw in such a way. Finally, Huck has to give up on Jim, and he moves forward in his new friendship with someone his own age and race as he seems to fall in step with the white of society of which he is a part:

Huck once again narrates the story in the second-person [first person] plural—“We stopped talking,” he says, “and got to thinking” (241)—but this time, the other person implicated in the “we” is not Jim but Tom. The synthesis of old has irrevocably collapsed, and a new one has emerged in its place. (Davis Wood 2012, 86)

The law, human law, once it is widely available and comprehensible, both in print and in manuscript form, has become something extraordinarily powerful. People’s lives and their moral judgment are largely determined by it. Furthermore, memories are preserved in the documents that people have generated, either as personal, private writing, in public writing, or in letterform. *Bartleby*, Melville’s scrivener (2015), and Gogol’s *Akaky Akakievitch* (2007), a copyist, in “*The Overcoat*” would seem to be products of the new world in the way that print society can desolate its isolated members. Both *Bartleby* and *Akaky* are human copying machines in an age before typewriters and photocopiers, and these two men find themselves devastatingly alone. The two men would seem to be misfits; and without companionship, they are destroyed or in some way destroy themselves. In the case of *Bartleby*, perhaps it is the “fit of insanity” in order “to stand in true relations with men in a false age” (Emerson 1993, 45).

There are many ways to study Melville’s “*Bartleby, the Scrivener*.” There is a heavy penchant toward an allegorical reading. As an example of friendship and communication, however, the story’s literal aspects shall be examined, for *Bartleby*’s story is set within the age of print. Certainly, his livelihood is the written word and his

job depends on literacy. The issue is not so much one of substance, however; it is, rather, one of production. The print era is an age of duplication, and one might ponder whether some element of humanity is lost in the process. In many cases, the more copies there are of something, the less value that thing would seem to have. Copying means that there is less chance of losing something completely. There is some connection to this circumstance in Bartleby's case although Bartleby is working with originals within a complex written system within an era of additive networks. Data are retained. Bartleby, the reader is told, may have worked in the postal service's "dead letter" department. Letters were written but never received because the recipients had either disappeared or died; these letters would be the ones with no return or forwarding addresses. Bartleby may have been confronted with letters that undermined historical context. According to Marshall Poe (2011), "People in additive networks are constantly confronted with the human past, and especially in writing. Because of this fact, time horizons begin to recede and the past, present, and future become separate, alterable entities" (143). Bartleby's past is unavailable as the narrator cannot ascertain anything about him: "I believe that no materials exist for a full and satisfactory biography of this man... What my own astonished eyes saw of Bartleby, *that* is all I know of him, except, indeed, one vague report" (Melville 2015, 512). Bartleby exists without a past, he takes no interest in the present, and he does not appear to contemplate the future. When Bartleby speaks, the narrator tells the reader, "he never spoke but to answer" (Melville 2015, 523). The narrator continues, "I had never seen him reading—no, not even a newspaper" (Melville 2015, 523-524). Bartleby is like a dead letter that no longer has a destination but that

emerged somewhere from the past without the possibility of returning. The printing press can create such a system:

Print, then, is a low velocity medium. Low-velocity media give rise to monologic networks, which is to say that traffic over them tends to move in one direction... This is to say they blunt the natural impulse of humans to exchange information rapidly and, in its place, impose a unidirectional structure on communications. (Poe 2011, 136)

Bartleby would seem to be conditioned to this type of system. One-to-one oral communication is both restrained and formal with a clear pattern of exchange expected depending on social circumstances. Bartleby's employer, the lawyer and storyteller, struggles to communicate with Bartleby.

Bartleby's solitude is in some ways similar to Grendel's and also to that of Frankenstein's creature. At least Grendel has a mother, and a purpose, though a beastly one. Although the creature in Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1976) is totally isolated, without parents or a past, he is still driven forward; first, by the possibility that he might receive a companion; then, by his need for revenge when he is not granted one. Bartleby, unlike the other two, is not forced to live apart from society. He is, instead, a part of the machine that manufactures business and legal documents. In fact, Bartleby works in a machine-like fashion: "At first Bartleby did an extraordinary quantity of writing... He ran a day and night line, copying by sunlight and by candle-light... But he wrote on silently, palely, mechanically" (Melville 2015, 516-517). Bartleby apparently feels his remoteness among men. Again, there is the idea of substance and quality over quantity. Thoreau (1960) seems to have an understanding of Bartleby's condition: "We are for the most part more lonely when we go abroad among men than when we stay in our chambers... Solitude is not measured by the miles of space that intervene between a man and his fellows" (95).

Grendel and Frankenstein's creature resist their isolation violently. Bartleby, on the other hand, as a working member of society, resists his aloneness passively, to the consternation of the narrator, his employer: "Nothing so aggravates an earnest person as a passive resistance" (Melville 2015, 519). Like Frankenstein toward his creature, however, the narrator finds pity and compassion for Bartleby difficult. As Grendel and the creature would be abhorrent, so would be Bartleby:

My first emotions had been those of pure melancholy and pity; but just in proportion as the forlornness of Bartleby grew and grew to my imagination, did that same melancholy merge into fear, that pity into repulsion. So true it is, and so terrible too, that up to a certain point the thought or sight of misery enlists our best affections; but, in certain special cases, beyond that point it does not. (Melville 2015, 524)

Bartleby is an outcast and largely ignored until his eccentricities begin to interfere with the social norms and economic structure where he is immersed. Compassion for Bartleby cannot run deep enough, and his former employer feels compelled to move, since Bartleby will not leave, when Bartleby begins to negatively impact his affairs. He bids farewell to Bartleby in his former lodgings and then is asked to answer for Bartleby's presence in that building. Society, it would appear, holds Bartleby's boss in some way responsible for Bartleby. The reader, however, may be torn as to what extent the lawyer is Bartleby's keeper. Certainly, there is metaphor and perhaps some allegory, but one can also handle the characters literally. The lawyer has tried to be reasonable and charitable, and herein one can perceive a distinction between charity and friendship and ask the question of whether it is friendship that Bartleby needs above charity and whether friendship is beyond the point of feasibility, particularly for Bartleby. If one believes that the lawyer might be remiss, one can also claim that Bartleby is unable to reach out or to

meet the lawyer halfway and that there is no possibility for the reciprocity that friendship requires; thus, only charity is possible, and charity would seem to be unacceptable to Bartleby, yet Bartleby persists:

“Why,” I added, unaffectedly starting, “you have not even touched that money yet,” pointing to it, just where I had left it the evening previous.

He answered nothing.

“Will you, or will you not, quit me?” I now demanded in a sudden passion, advancing close to him.

“I would prefer *not* to quit you,” he replied, gently emphasizing the *not*. (Melville 2015, 529)

This point is emphasized: “Bribes he leaves under your own paper-weight on your table; in short, it is quite plain that he prefers to cling to you” (Melville 2015, 531).

Perhaps it is that Bartleby is asking for something that the lawyer cannot give. C. S. Lewis (2012) calls friendship “the least *natural* of loves; the least instinctive, organic, biological, gregarious and necessary... It is essentially between individuals; the moment two men are friends they have in some degree drawn apart together from the herd” (58). Bartleby correctly perceives his employer’s attempts at both charity and friendship as self-serving. The lawyer feels that his reputation may be at stake. Bartleby has become a public problem. He makes a final attempt, that one might call charitable, before Bartleby is removed to “the Tombs,” or prison, as a vagrant:

“Bartleby,” said I, in the kindest tone I could assume under such exciting circumstances, “will you go home with me now—not to my office, but my dwelling—and remain there till we can conclude upon some convenient arrangement for you at hour leisure? Come, let us start now, right away.”

“No: at present I would prefer not to make any change at all.” (Melville 2015, 534)

Neither Bartleby nor the lawyer comes near to bridging the gap of “that luminous, tranquil, rational world of relationships freely chosen” (Lewis 2012, 59). Lewis (2012)

further suggests that even true charity is not adequately covered. The lawyer never quite reaches the point of Lewis's idea of love: "Just so, our 'decency and common sense' show grey and deathlike beside the geniality of love" (117).

Bartleby remains insistent upon something greater than a surface offering. When the narrator, the lawyer, converses with Bartleby for the last time at "the Tombs," Bartleby says to him, "I know you," he said, without looking around,--"and I want nothing to say to you" (Melville 2015, 535). Yet, upon leaving, when asked, "Is that a friend of yours?" (Ibid.), the lawyer answers, "Yes" (Ibid.). Lewis (2012) would claim, and perhaps Bartleby might realize (as something other than an allegorical figure) that the lawyer keeps the wall up, and that to love truly is to allow an opening in the wall: "To love at all is to be vulnerable" (121). Bartleby, as his condition worsens, in the office on Wall Street, and Bartleby has only a wall to look at through his window, simply stands at the window and stares at the wall: "The next day I noticed that Bartleby did nothing but stand at his window in his dead-wall revery" (Melville 2015, 526).

Again departing from the allegorical, one can find in Melville's Bartleby the same condition that Sartre's Roquentin experiences in *La Nausée* (1938). Bartleby's condition would seem to be one of an absence; friendship and charity are denied him, or those things he denies himself, for the knowledge that what he seems to desire for his own salvation, an extraordinary love, is either unattainable or non-existent—a wall of sorts. Bartleby does not turn to God, and the lawyer, as humanity's representative, fails him. Sartre's character comes to the same realization, although he is not a seeker in the same sense as Bartleby might be. Roquentin is more self-aware and not allegorical like Bartleby. While Melville never allows entry to Bartleby's thoughts, Sartre provides the

entirety of his character's thought processes. Roquentin, in *La Nausée*, steadily detaches himself from society. "*Moi, je vis seul, entièrement seul. Je ne parle à personne, jamais; je ne reçois rien, je ne donne rien*" (Sartre 1938, 19). Roquentin lives completely alone, he speaks to no one, ever; he receives nothing and he gives nothing. When one is thus isolated, according to Sartre's Roquentin, he loses the ability to tell a story, and what he calls life's verisimilitude disappears along with one's friends (Sartre 1938, 20). The inability to tell a story is similar to Bartleby's possible connection to work in the dead letter department of the postal service. There is no story to tell once the story has ended. Nevertheless, Roquentin is not prepared for such aloneness and hunts for refuge in the company of other people (Sartre 1938, 21). He, however, gradually concludes that others cannot help him and that he has no sanctuary. He begins to slip away: "*Je glisse tout doucement au fond de l'eau, vers la peur*" (Ibid.). Roquentin is becoming afraid because no one can rescue him and he cannot find any reason to exist beyond his biological needs. Roquentin realizes that his solitude has contributed to his confusion. Being alone disturbs him: "*Pour la première fois cela m'ennuie d'être seul. Je voudrais parler à quelqu'un de ce qui m'arrive avant qu'il soit trop tard*" (Sartre 1938, 22). Roquentin will begin to dissociate himself with what is specifically human and will eventually begin to blend himself into any material object. He does not distinguish one object or being as having any ascendancy over another. Roquentin fails to choose meaning or for himself to create meaning. The figure of Roquentin, the individual Roquentin, begins to vanish. Bartleby simply dies.

Does one become less human as he or she sinks deeper into solitude? Peter Berger in *The Sacred Canopy* (1967) claims that human beings cannot function outside society

and that absolute isolation is all but impossible, for there can be no sense of meaning in such circumstances. Berger does well to explain Roquentin's condition as Roquentin loses his belief in any sort of social reality. Roquentin begins to view society as a human attempt to construct meaning. As an artificial construct, society seems absurd to him.

Roquentin's belief in this absurdity leads to his unraveling:

Men are congenitally compelled to impose a meaningful order upon reality...To be separated from society exposes the individual to a multiplicity of dangers with which he is unable to cope by himself, in the extreme case to the danger of imminent extinction. Separating from society also inflicts unbearable psychological tensions upon the individual, tensions that are grounded in the root anthropological fact of sociality. The ultimate danger of such separation, however, is the danger of meaninglessness...in which the individual is submerged in a world of disorder, senselessness and madness. (Berger 1967, 22)

Melville (2015), in "Bartleby, the Scrivener," finds this lamentable. To conclude the story, upon finding that Bartleby has died from starving himself, the lawyer exclaims, "Ah Bartleby! Ah humanity!" (537). Friendship is one of the great possibilities, and neither Bartleby nor Roquentin experience it. Bartleby dies in a fetal position.

We are born helpless. As soon as we are fully conscious we discovery loneliness. We need others physically, emotionally, intellectually; we need them if we are to know anything, even ourselves. (Lewis 2012, 2)

The literature of the 19th and 20th centuries is not bereft of great friendships. In fact, the creator of Bartleby also, masterfully, assembles one of the greatest classical friendships in American literature. It is the friendship of Ishmael and Queequeg in *Moby Dick* (1993), published a couple years before "Bartleby, the Scrivener." Wrought within an American context, the two men are brave adventurers who stand together apart from the other sailors and whalers. Each is an independent and intriguing individual, yet the

friendship expresses Emerson's Americanism and the possibilities for friendship between people of different races, cultures and religions.

When two men are virtuous, they are able to overcome ignorance, and the will becomes the pick that opens the lock. While Queequeg already seems willing, Ishmael must reason things out. At first, he is afraid of Queequeg: "I am no coward, but what to make of this head-peddling purple rascal altogether passed my comprehension." Ishmael continues, "Ignorance is the parent of fear" (Melville 1993, 10). It begins with empathy the acknowledgement of equality:

"What's all this fuss I have been making about," I thought to myself—"the man's a human being just as I am: he has just as much reason to fear me as I have to be afraid of him. Better sleep with a sober cannibal than a drunken Christian."
(Melville 1993, 11)

Queequeg, having the right kind of self love, already seems to hold an intrinsic understanding that the two men will become bosom friends: "For though I tried to move his arm—unlock his clasp—yet, sleeping as he was, he still hugged me tightly, as though naught but death should part us twain" (Melville 1993, 12). Death it is that will indeed part the two. Ishmael cannot quite find such a natural comfort so quickly: "At length, by dint of much wriggling, and loud and incessant expostulations upon the unbecomingness of his hugging a fellow male in that sort of style, I succeeded [in being released]" (Melville 1993, 12). One should be careful to note, furthermore, that there is no question of homosexuality in the relationship. Although the men show affection for each other, it is not Eros.

Ishmael recognizes Queequeg when he finds him alone after attending a chapel service, at which Queequeg was present but did not stay for the benediction: "You cannot

hide the soul. Through all his unearthly tattooings, I thought I saw the traces of a simple honest heart” (Melville 1993, 23).” Melville, through his narrator Ishmael, paints a vivid picture of the noble savage, and these qualities, Ishmael admires:

There was something almost sublime in it. Here was a man some twenty thousand miles from home, by the way of Cape Horn that is—which was the only way he could get there—thrown among people as strange to him as Jupiter; and yet he seemed entirely at his ease; preserving the utmost serenity; content with his own companionship; always equal to himself. (Melville 1993, 23)

Queequeg seems to be the opposite of Bartleby; Queequeg is completely untainted by civilized society, confident in himself, and fully capable of experiencing and evaluating life and the people he encounters directly. He is something like the Emile that Jean-Jacques Rousseau may have imagined. Bartleby cannot look at life directly and stares into a wall. Bartleby cannot open his heart, even monetarily, to the lawyer’s offer of pseudo-charity. Queequeg is self-reliant because his own sense of self is secure.

Ishmael’s clear perception of Queequeg will make the extraordinary friendship possible:

I felt a melting in me. No more my splintered heart and maddened hand were turned against the wolfish world. The soothing savage had redeemed it. There he sat, his very indifference speaking a nature in which there lurked no civilised hypocrisies and bland deceits. (Melville 1993, 24)

Queequeg also recognizes Ishmael but much more easily and completely:

He seemed to take to me quite as naturally and unbiddenly as I to him; and when our smoke was over, he pressed his forehead against mine, clasped me round the waist, and said that henceforth we were married; meaning, in his country’s phrase, that we were bosom friends; he would gladly die for me, if need should be. In a countryman, this sudden flame of friendship would have seemed far too premature, a thing to be much distrusted; but in this simple savage those old rules would not apply. (Melville 1993, 24)

What Bartleby lacks, Queequeg and Ishmael have: faith, hope and friendship. Both

Ishmael and Queequeg, although of different belief systems, believe in the supernatural,

and Ishmael is able to justify his acceptance of Queequeg's religious beliefs and to assist in his form of worship, just as Queequeg had been present at the chapel ceremony: "But what is worship?—to do the will of God—that is worship. And what is the will of God?—to do to my fellowman what I would have my fellowman to do to me—that is the will of God" (Melville 1993, 24). It might be suggested from this passage that the friendship is divinely inspired in some way and that both friends have a feeling about it. The friendship is ultimately sealed: "I was only alive to the condensed confidential comfortableness of sharing a pipe and a blanket with a real friend" (Melville 1993, 25). Ishmael and Queequeg arrive at a blending of the souls, for each can see the truth within himself. Unlike Huck, Ishmael has reached the point of maturity necessary to engage in such a friendship, and the friendship holds true until the death of Queequeg: "'I'm not green'" (Melville 1993, 8).

Like the classical friendship heroes, the two men express their friendship openly, as two proud and virtuous men are able to do, but unlike the less virtuous pair in the picaresque novel *Guzmán de Alfarache* (1987). It is, perhaps, something of a new precedent in literature, for Ishmael tells the reader that onlookers find the friendship unusual. They are not accustomed to two people of completely different backgrounds becoming such fast friends: "As we were going along the people stared; not at Queequeg so much—for they were used to seeing cannibals like him in their streets,—but at seeing him and me upon such confidential terms" (Melville 1993, 27).

Melville (1993, 2015), in his depictions of aloneness and of friendship, could be suggesting that the urban man, the person living in the city, is less capable of experiencing the best kind of friendship, and the reader witnesses Bartleby's despair; but

it is not a new lesson. Voltaire's Jeannot, too, is corrupted by worldly influences, and he leaves the countryside and his friend Colin. In Paris, he finds no true friends, only the fair weather kind or those who would cheat him out of his sudden wealth. The best kind of friendship, to this point, would seem to take place in the open air as men try to accomplish noble tasks together and share a force of conviction. Or they are industrious. Voltaire would seem a bit more progressive and realistic in the idea of a wholesome life and friendship founded on sound principles and hard work. The friends are nearer to lifelong business partners. Candide and his friends come down to earth at the end of *Candide ou l'Optimisme* (1972).

Operating into the 20th Century

Willa Cather's *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1990) defines the best kind of friendship possible according to almost every principle of the classical model, touching on practically every aspect of friendship so far contemplated in this exposition. Significantly, one should note that the author is a woman. She pens a near perfect yet plausible friendship between men in all its beauty and complexity. This friendship story also exposes the modes of communication mastered and used in the middle 19th century by which friends communicated. Cather relates the value and importance of language in discovering new friends. *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, furthermore, highlights friendship's flourishing free of the worldly factors associated with the industrial revolution and the apparatus necessary to support it within growing population centers. Latour and Vaillant, the two great friends, are never found staring blankly through windows at brick walls like the poor scrivener, Bartleby.

Nature, in fact, is revered in Cather's novel, and it is a constant presence. She succeeds in capturing both Chief Seattle's understanding of the differences between Native-American and European cultures and the nature's possibilities as an aid to humanity understanding itself. Father Latour reflects upon the canyon that divides the two cultures as he observes his Native-American guide and friend: "There was no way in which he could transfer his own memories of European civilization into the Indian mind, and he was quite willing to believe that behind Jacinto there was a long tradition, a story of experience, which no language could transfer to him" (Cather 1990, 92). The mindset is based on an oral tradition. Another friend of the French priests is the American hero Kit Carson, and Cather comments interestingly about this man's education:

That he was illiterate was an accident; he had got ahead of books, gone where the printing press could not follow him...often in the service of brutal and desperate characters—he had preserved a clean sense of honour and a compassionate heart. (Cather 1990, 76-77)

The French missionary Father Latour learns much from Eusebio, his Native-American friend:

Travelling with Eusebio was like travelling with the landscape made human... When he left the rock or tree or sand dune that had sheltered them for the night, the Navajo was careful to obliterate every trace of their temporary occupation... Father Latour judged that, just as it was the white man's way to assert himself in any landscape, to change it... it was the Indian's way to pass through a country without disturbing anything; to pass and leave no trace, like a fish through the water. (Cather 1990, 232-233)

The friendship between Latour and Eusebio is much more silent and understood. When Latour learns that Eusebio's son has died, he journeys to be with his friend:

At first he [Eusebio] did not open his lips, merely stood holding Father Latour's very fine white hand in his fine dark one, and looked into his face with a message of sorrow and resignation in his deep-set, eagle eyes. A wave of feeling passed over his bronze features as he said slowly:

“My friend has come.”
 That was all, but it was everything; welcome, confidence, appreciation.
 (Cather 1990, 220)

Cather draws another picture of the noble savage as a dear friend that the European has difficulty comprehending and therefore, perhaps, accepting:

They [Native-Americans] seemed to have none of the European’s desire to “master” nature, to arrange and re-create. They spend their ingenuity in the other direction; in accommodating themselves to the scene in which they found themselves. This was not so much from indolence, the Bishop thought, as from an inherited caution and respect. (Cather 1990, 233).

One might conclude that the Native-American would treat friendship in the same way, and that friendship in the classical sense can begin when two good people meet. Bishop Latour experiences such a thing when he meets Kit Carson for the first time: “As he stood there in his buckskin clothes one felt in him standards, loyalties, a code which is not easily put into words but which is instantly felt when two men who live by it come together by chance” (Cather 1990, 75).

The Bishop, too, forms a friendship with a kind Spanish-American, who is described as “a man who cherishes his friends” (Cather 1990, 178). Knowing of the Bishop’s wish to build a cathedral, he pledges that it shall be accomplished, for “Olivares was the sort of man who liked to help a friend accomplish the desire of his heart” (Cather 1990, 179).

However, the New Mexico friendships are secondary to the ongoing story of the two French missionary priests. The two priests are not unlike another great French pair, Charlemagne’s vassals Roland and Oliver. While Roland and Oliver cut down the so-called enemies of Christ, Latour and Vaillant set out to collect souls for salvation. Both

pairs have a purpose and determination, a sense of mission, that their friendships help them to accomplish. In all cases, the friends flourish to the greatest extent possible.

Beside him [Latour] rode Father Joseph Vaillant, his boyhood friend, who had made this long pilgrimage with him and shared his dangers. The two rode into Sante Fé together, claiming it for the glory of God. (Cather 1990, 22)

Father Jean Marie Latour and Father Joseph Vaillant are together for most of their lives beginning with their meeting in the seminary. The two are quickly drawn to each other, yet they are the opposites that each one needs in order to fulfill their destinies. One wonders whether a divine hand steers the two together, harkening back to St. Augustine's belief that the superb friendship is God's intention.

“Doctrine is well enough for the wise, Jean; but the miracle is something we can hold in our hands and love.”

It was just this in his friend that was so dear to him. “Where there is great love there are always miracles,” he said at length. “One might almost say that an apparition is human vision corrected by divine love. I do not see you as you really are, Joseph; I see you through my affection for you.” (Cather 1990, 50)

There is no doubt that both the priests and the new friends that they make are honorable men. Each friend exhibits nothing less than heroic qualities yet they are not demigods. The reader is early introduced to Father Latour's attributes as he is recommended for service in the New Mexico territory: “The new vicar must be a young man, of strong constitution, full of zeal, and above all, intelligent... He must be a man to whom order is necessary—as dear as life” (Cather 1990, 8).

While Latour, in physical appearance, is more typical of the imagined hero, Vaillant is his opposite; yet Vaillant is quickly identified by his internal fortitude: “If the Bishop returned to find Santa Fé friendly to him, it was because everybody believed in

Father Vaillant—homely, real, persistent, with the driving power of a dozen men in his poorly built body” (Cather 1990, 38).

Death Comes for the Archbishop is a novel replete with things symbolic of the great friendship between Latour and Vaillant. Beyond their being priests and on what both regard as a lifelong spiritual mission, it is clear that Latour and Vaillant are priests whose vows are sacred to them. Cather symbolizes their devotion and celibacy through the two white mules that a good Catholic Mexican rancher gives Vaillant as gifts:

With his own hand he led them out of the stable, in order to display to advantage their handsome coats,—not bluish white, as with white horses, but a rich, deep ivory, that in shadow changed to fawn-colour. Their tails were clipped at the end into the shape of bells.

“Their names,” said Lujon, “are Contento and Angelica, and they are as good as their names. It seems that God has given them intelligence. When I talk to them, they look up to me like Christians; they are companionable. They are always ridden together and have a great affection for each other.” (Cather 1990, 59-60)

The friends trust each other unquestioningly. Latour has the vision, and Vaillant follows blindly:

Father Latour rode first, sitting straight upon his mule, with his chin lowered just enough to keep the drive of the rain out of his eyes. Father Vaillant followed, unable to see much,—in weather like this his glasses were of no use, and he had taken them off. He crouched down in the saddle, his shoulders well over Contento’s neck. (Cather 1990, 64)

The friends, furthermore, inspire and push each other:

“The mules are certainly very tired, Joseph. They ought to be fed.”
“Push on,” said Father Vaillant. “We will come to shelter of some kind before night sets in.” (Cather 1990, 66)

The friends always trust and have faith in each other. In one of his letters, Latour writes freely, when speaking of Vaillant: “But he has never failed me in anything yet” (Cather 1990, 36). And, he never does. Vaillant is just as sure of Latour. He never

questions him: “The Bishop did not disclose his objective and the Vicar asked no questions” (Cather 1990, 238).

In the best kinds of friendship, each friend can know the other’s heart, and they share their visions with each other. When Latour reveals his intentions for a cathedral, Vaillant holds back, as he glimpses a stain of *hubris* in Latour’s desire. Vaillant, whose nickname is *Blanchet* (Whitey...white as in pure), acts in this instance as Latour’s conscience without uttering a word; and Latour does not conceal anything from his friend: “The Cathedral is near my heart, for many reasons” (Cather 1990, 242-243). Latour continues: “I hope that you do not think me very worldly” (1990, 243).

Father Vaillant, in his absorption in their mission, is not so discerning when it comes to the deep need and affection that Father Latour has for him. Latour is stung by his friend’s eagerness to begin a new evangelization that will part to the two friends:

As a Bishop, he could only approve Father Vaillant’s eagerness to be gone, and the enthusiasm with which he turned to hardships of a new kind. But as a man, he was a little hurt that his old comrade should leave him without one regret. (Cather 1990, 249)

Vaillant thinks that his friend is simply a strong and sure agent of Providence, and that his being present and ready to be sent on the new mission has a divine reason: “I often think, Jean, how you were an unconscious agent in the hands of Providence when you recalled me from Tucson” (Cather 1990, 250). Father Vaillant seems never to have doubted the strength of his friend. Latour, of course, cannot withhold the truth: “I sent for you because I felt the need for your companionship,” he tells Vaillant. “I used my authority as Bishop to gratify my personal wish.” And: “That was selfish, if you will, but surely natural enough” (Cather 1990, 251). Latour suddenly understands: “Now it came

over him in a flash, how the Bishop had held himself aloof from his activities; it was a very hard thing for Father Latour to let him go; the loneliness of his position had begun to weigh on him” (Ibid.). The symbolic mules further sustain Latour’s pain at his friend’s departure:

“But if you take Contento, I will ask you to take Angelica as well. They have a great affection for each other; why separate them indefinitely? One could not explain to them. They have worked long together.” (Cather 1990, 252)

When the Bishop tells Vaillant to take both mules, Vaillant, who has been writing a letter, and although devoted to their mission above all, feels for his friend:

The Bishop saw a drop of water splash down upon the violet script and spread. He turned quickly and went out through the arched doorway. (Cather 1990, 252-253)

The two friends, during what shall be their final reunion, are able to verbalize the completeness of their lives as they have striven to accomplish their mission:

“We have done the things we used to plan to do, long ago, when we were Seminarians,--at least some of them. To fulfill the dreams of one’s youth; that is the best that can happen to a man. No worldly success can take the place of that.” (Cather 1990, 259)

The story *Death Comes for the Archbishop* also includes the communication possibilities of the 19th century as the story is set in an age before the widespread availability of electronic or visual media, yet language and writing play a significant part in the lives of the two priests. Both men speak several languages, French being their native language; but having been missionaries in Ohio, they are able to speak English; and to revive the church in New Mexico, Latour and Vaillant learn Spanish: “For years they had made it a practice to speak English together, except upon very special occasions, and of late they conversed in Spanish, in which they both needed to gain fluency” (Cather 1990, 39).

Written correspondence is also critical to the friends although they are not necessarily writing to each other. Father Vaillant is able to stay close with his family through letter writing, particularly with his sister Philomène, who is a nun still in France. When Father Latour returns to France temporarily, he is able to visit Philomène, and one of the young sisters shares how precious Father Vaillant's letters are to all the sisters:

She told him also how precious to them were Father Vaillant's long letters, letters in which he told his sister of the country, the Indians, the pious Mexican women, the Spanish martyrs of old. These letters, she said, Mother Philomène read aloud in the evening. (Cather 1990, 181)

It is with a letter that Bishop Latour calls back his Vicar, Father Vaillant, when he is in need of him, and it is during his times of reflection and solitude that one finds Bishop Latour writing, "long letters to his brothers and to old friends in France" (Cather 1990, 228).

The story of Jean Marie Latour and Joseph Vaillant is a fit ending for one who is seeking a classical-Christian friendship in 20th century literature that meets or exceeds all the requirements of the classical-Christian model as it traverses the manuscript and print eras. To this point, friendship remains a rock similar to how the narrator, from Father Latour's point of view in *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, explains the home of the Ácoma Native-Americans:

The Ácomas, who must share the universal human yearning for something permanent, enduring, without shadow of change,--they had their idea in substance. They actually lived upon their Rock; were born upon it and died upon it. (Cather 1990, 98)

The cathedral that the Archbishop succeeds in having built in Santa Fé is indeed symbolic of the friendship he has experienced with his great friend Joseph Vaillant. When the

Archbishop dies, he returns to the moment when he was encouraging his friend to make their lifelong journey together:

But in reality the Bishop was not there at all; he was standing in a tip-tilted green field among his native mountains, and he was trying to give consolation to a young man who was being torn in two before his eyes by the desire to go and the necessity to stay. He was trying to forge a new Will in that devout and exhausted priest. (Cather 1990, 297)

It would seem that extraordinary people are purposeful and virtuous. They have missions to accomplish and build their castles, or cathedrals, as it were. It is clear that many great thinkers and poets believe that these missions are best accomplished when one has a great friend.

Conclusion

The Ongoing Operation of the Classical-Christian Friendship

Father Latour's (Father Tower's) cathedral stands as another turret along a long line of great friendship narratives and epic poems that bring the classical-Christian friendship paradigm alive. Twentieth century theorists like C. S. Lewis (2012) and Thomas Merton (1955) apply mortar and paint to reinforce and restore such fortifications as electricity powered new media fusillade friendship notions with accelerated visual imagery and surround sound that exceed natural sensory perception. Although numerous adjustments have been made to the friendship ideal, one of the most fundamental adaptations incorporated into the structure with the rise of Christianity was the belief that great friendships are divinely inspired; and the 20th century defenders hold to the near supernatural quality of the superior friendship.

The mission objectives were to discover whether there is a transcendent understanding of the best kind of friendship, whether such an outstanding idea of friendship undergoes any sort of transformation as it confronts changing communication technologies that enable friends to discourse with each other via the new media, and whether the best kind of friendship might be influenced by changing media, either directly or indirectly, as social intercourse is jostled by the new communication technologies; thus, the creators of friendship narrative experience the changing mindscapes and respond accordingly. This exploration concerned itself with the characters, the creators, and the thinkers who exemplified, invented, and explained the great friendship. Certainly, one must conclude that there has been a transfer of the myths,

legends and paradigms regarding the best kind of friendship despite evidence that media can physically change the human brain (Dehaene 2009). In other words, the classical-Christian paradigm of friendship continues to operate. This expedition has followed the well-traveled path from what is known of the oral tradition and through the age of print into the 20th century arriving at the foot of the age of audiovisual media if one were to continue chronologically to examine media impact.

What was found to be a good gauge of friendship and its connection to communication media is the measure of whether an opposite of friendship is more prevalent than it was in previous ages, and such a measurement was taken; for one of the opposites is isolation, the consequence being that of loneliness rather than friendship. There are many possible hypotheses. For instance, it could be that both isolation and the best kind of friendship have increased with the introduction of new communication technologies. Marshall McLuhan (1964) claims that, "It is the medium that shapes and controls the scale and form of human association and action" (24). Solitude itself, however, has become far more acceptable. The loner is no longer a monster as he was before the rise of print media.

Thomas Merton (1955) oversees a tidy courtyard within the walls of the friendship fortress as he carefully prunes friendship principles into the highly recognizable virtues of his predecessors. This mission ends, therefore, where Thomas Merton redefines the friendship paradigm in 1955, and one finds that he has made few changes to the flora since the beginning. First, he does not accept total hermitage as an option and resumes the need for love and companionship, which he regards as the major reason that one's life has meaning. It is when one is able to achieve such a love that a

person finds life most fulfilling: “True happiness is found in unselfish love, a love which increases in proportion as it is shared” (Merton 1955, 3). The more such a love is shared, the better it gets. There are people who one esteems, values, and loves more than he or she might cherish the rest of the world’s human inhabitants. Among that special group of people is the true friend.

The first step, then, is to reassess what friendship is in order to evaluate the changes. The first visible track is the love trail, and Thomas Merton (1955) shall act as the principal guide. The trail he discloses is an arduous one. The dilemma is the idea that love itself can be enigmatic, and Merton seems to rely heavily upon celestial navigation:

Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous; it is not inflated, it is not rude; it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. (First Corinthians 13, 4-7 NAB)

Love is usually identified by its unselfish nature to be good to others, but to be so the proper self-love is necessary. With the idea of an unselfish love comes the idea that it should be shared freely (Merton 1955, 3). Jean-Jacques Rousseau (2012) would likely agree that once something becomes a duty and is not given of one’s free will, it lacks the best kind of intensity:

Tant que j’agis librement je suis bon et je fais que du bien; mais sitôt que je sens le joug, soit de la nécessité soit des hommes, je deviens rebelle ou plutôt rétif, alors je suis nul [incapable of action, of doing good]. (Rousseau 2012, 119)

Thoreau (1960, 1991), too, bucks at trying to do good for one’s fellow human being out of a sense of duty: “His goodness must be a partial and transitory act, but a constant superfluity, which costs him nothing and of which he is unconscious” (Thoreau 1960, 57). And, Thoreau (1960) rejects the idea of commitment: “As long as possible, live free

and uncommitted” (61). One, therefore, should choose his or her friends freely.

Friendship should not be a matter of strict obligation for it to be the superior kind. The individual should always keep the right to choose.

Another requirement of friendship is that it should be reciprocated, as love should be: “Hence the paradox that unselfish love cannot rest perfectly except in a love that is perfectly reciprocated” (Merton 1955, 4). Thus two friends must love each other unselfishly and freely, and each gives to the other reciprocal affection and understanding. Friendship is a two way street. Friendship must be reciprocal, and the best kind is a circular reciprocity, without a clear starting point or ending point. Although the human circle may be flawed, there is still the attempt. There is no differentiation in the good between the friends. The love that they have for each other is one love: “Love shares the good with another not by dividing it with him, but by identifying itself with him so that his good becomes my own” (Ibid.).

Those people who lack virtue, however, cannot achieve the best kind of friendship. One of the principal qualities of virtue is truth:

To love others well we must first love the truth....The truth I love in loving my brother cannot be something merely philosophical and abstract. It must be at the same time supernatural and concrete, practical and alive. (Merton 1955, 6-7)

Merton hoists love and friendship to a supernatural level. Since such rules might seem difficult for the atheist, the attainment of such a friendship as Merton describes is all but impossible for that person since supernatural concepts must be made into tangible possibilities. The terms “concrete,” “practical” and “alive,” however, do make sense even for the most dogmatic positivist; and one could easily submit that the atheist who follows the principles is simply unaware of the supernatural presence.

The traveler must successfully navigate the idea of individuality in friendship. Merton (1955) is consistent in creating room for the necessary solitude that makes each person unique: “A selfish love seldom respects the rights of the beloved to be an autonomous person” (9). The love of friendship needs to be unselfish. Today one might call it respecting another’s space, even if that person is a beloved friend. Such an unselfish friendship cannot be about control. The selfish friend needs his friend for his or her own pleasure and purposes. The reciprocity is lost, and the truth is only important insofar as it benefits the selfish friend. Merton (1955) calls it taming a friend, or keeping him prisoner (10). The selfish friend does not want his or her friend to be autonomous. He will, in fact, make “unlimited concessions” (Ibid.) in order to retain control. Truth must supersede other considerations. If both friends are virtuous and truthful, the ideal of true friendship can stand: “If I love my brothers according to the truth, my love for them will be true not only to them but to myself” (Ibid). Father Latour in *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1990) lets his great friend Father Vaillant go, demonstrating his consciousness of the need for Father Vaillant’s own self affirmation. The friends realize their best in each other, but they are also able to realize their personal best.

A final obstacle along the tangled path of love has to do with quantity. Although it might appear that some people have a greater capacity to love than others, the high principles of friendship love demand extraordinary effort and energy. Merton (1955) will argue that the number the individual can include among the truest and best kind of friend must necessarily be a small group: “But certain ones, very few, are our close friends. Because we have more in common with them, we are able to love them with a special selfless perfection, since we have more to share” (12). It should be added that one might

be able to love many, but for the ultimate friendship to exist, the special love of friends must be at two-way street and the same kind of love, making it that much more difficult to attain.

It should now be understood that human companionship is for most of humanity quite necessary. In order to be most content and happy, one needs to love, to be loved and to have good friends. The paradigm so far established for such outstanding friendships is challenging and requires great dedication and moral integrity. The fictional friends depicted in this examination, for the most part, are in possession of the paradigm, and the classical-Christian friendship operates through history and as it confronts changing media dynamics. The goal remains, however, to uncover whether such a paradigm will continue to operate as it encounters the changing mindscape of friendship communication possibilities brought about by evolving technologies and whether fictionalized depictions of friendship have, consequently, changed.

Probably the most significant modification to the classical-Christian friendship narrative is in its departure from the hero friendships and from friendships between people who come from the same cultures or social classes. As long as all the qualities for friendship reside within the individuals, it does not matter from where they come. Friendship possibilities are thus expanded. Candide and his servant Cacambo become best friends, equals, although they have little in common. They are not of the same race or culture. Ishmael and Queequeg, too, come from completely different places. Even Father Latour and Father Vaillant are in many ways different from each other. They differ greatly from the first hero friends whose raw physical might is compared. The thing that all the friends seem to retain, however, aside from their virtuous qualities, is

their sense of a common mission, and the friends typically strive to accomplish their mission together. Friends are together in action.

What might be lacking, however, is the possibility of a close, platonic friendship between the sexes, at least in the literature examined during this expedition, and the theorists would seem to make little room for it as well; yet women like Katherine Philips, writing in the 17th century, and Willa Cather in the early 20th century show a complete understanding of the classical paradigm as reflected in Philips' correspondence and poetry, and certainly in Cather's case with the publication of *Death Comes for the Archbishop*. Simone de Beauvoir (1949) well explains the reasons for the lack of equality that has existed between the sexes for such a long time and that may have prevented friendship. When Merton and Lewis write about love and friendship, their texts are published even before the Civil Rights Movement occurs in the United States. It would seem that friendship between a man and a woman becomes complicated as the potential for physical intimacy increases; and the purest, best kind of friendship, though affectionate, excludes erotica, according to the classicists, although Montaigne (1965, 1993) ponders the idea of that sort of completeness:

If such a relationship, free and voluntary, could be built up, in which not only would the souls have this complete enjoyment, but the bodies would also share in the alliance, so that the entire man would be engaged, it is certain that the resulting friendship would be fuller and more complete. (Montaigne 1993, 136)

Marriage and friendship, therefore, are separate things for the classicists although marriage and friendship will contain many elements of each other. If one wishes to continue the trek into contemporary friendship fiction, especially in writing that makes a strong case for mundane realism in what constitutes friendship action, it would seem that

friends are often engaged in entertainment as their mission, while marriage, it could be argued, is a much more serious goal in terms of creating a life together and perhaps rearing children.

The short story, "Cathedral," by Raymond Carver (2015), is a fine expression of the new difficulties that friendship might encounter in a contemporary era when new media stimulate the mind and the senses in new ways. Carver offers a friend character who, in an audiovisual age, is compelled to communicate orally; yet this persona is able to extend his network range and maintain his friendship through other than print technologies, relying upon telephone, amateur radio and audiocassette tapes. He remains, however, connected to the visual era in which he lives, and he is also subject to print media, but he must ingest their information through someone else's eyes, and the best lenses he might have are those of a friend.

Robert is the friend of the storyteller's wife whom Robert met when she answered his advertisement for a reader before her marriage to the narrator but while she was immersed in her first marriage. It can be inferred that the friendship between the man and the woman stayed platonic as the woman had to leave the job when her first husband, a military man, was transferred. Robert winds up marrying his new reader, but the two friends continue their relationship via audiocassette tape. The woman has divorced her first husband and married the narrator when Robert comes to pay a personal visit to his friend soon after the death of his wife.

Aside from the manner by which the two friends have communicated and kept the friendship alive through the exchange of audiocassette tapes as a way of sharing their individual narratives, there is the dilemma of how the male-female friendship, though

platonic, might conflict with marriage. How, for instance, should the narrator, the woman's husband, perceive his wife's friendship with the other man? Ultimately, the story becomes a lesson in communication, but there shall remain some gray area.

Carver (2015) does not expand greatly on the friendship between Robert and the storyteller's wife. One knows, however, that the friends have shared highly personal experiences, though remotely, by telephone and by audiocassette. For the wife, it is her attempted suicide and ultimate divorce from her first husband, her childhood sweetheart. Her suicide attempt, she claims, is the result of loneliness: "She sent tapes from Moody AFB, McGuire, McConnell, and finally Travis, near Sacramento, where one night she got to feeling lonely and cut off from people she kept losing in the moving-around life" (Carver 2015, 103). She is a married woman feeling isolated. Neither the marriage nor the distance friend is quite enough. It is similar to Goethe's Werther whose friend William is only present through written correspondence. For the sense of closeness and the need to feel a foundation, the woman has apparently been quick to remarry someone who offers physical proximity and perhaps a greater sense of a common mission than her military officer could give.

The narrator, however, remains a tough nut to crack. Robert, the male friend, seems to want to eliminate the barrier that exists between the husband and him. He is motivated, and one can only speculate, by the wish to retain the wife's friendship, and to do so he must forge one with her husband. In the process, Robert succeeds in unlocking something within the husband storyteller. When the narrator's wife asks him to be kind to her friend, he responds that he has no blind friends, and she retorts:

“You don’t have any friends,” she said. “Period. Besides,” she said, “goddamn it, his wife’s just died! Don’t you understand that? The man’s lost his wife!” (Carver 2015, 104)

It is inferred that to the wife, marriage and friendship are different. The second inference, however, is that the husband does not know what friendship is. Robert moves the storyteller towards a friendship experience.

Carver provides some insight into the way media alter perspectives when he seats his narrator and Robert in front of a television. The storyteller does not know what to do with a blind man. The two wind up smoking marijuana, a first time occurrence for Robert, while the wife is upstairs changing into her robe. Robert wishes to please. When the wife falls asleep, it is up to the bard to entertain Robert. He is disappointed that his wife has fallen asleep, but Robert takes the communication initiative when the narrator asks whether Robert would like to go to his room and go to sleep:

“Not yet,” he said. “No, I’ll stay up with you, bub. If that’s all right. I’ll stay up until you’re ready to turn in. We haven’t had a chance to talk. Know what I mean? I feel like me and her monopolized the evening.” (Carver 2015, 109)

The narrator then admits to being glad for the company, for he normally smokes marijuana and stays up as late as he can after his wife has gone to bed. It is here that the narrator expresses his loneliness. He is a man with a wife but no friends. He has fearful dreams. Perhaps he is a character like Sartre’s Roquentin (1939), one who cannot easily find meaning or purpose.

Things get a bit awkward as the two men listen and the narrator watches a program about The Middle Ages and the cathedrals. The narrator feels obliged to explain what he is seeing to Robert but cannot find the words to describe the cathedrals and finally arrives at a conclusion:

“In those olden days, when they built cathedrals, men wanted to be close to God. In those olden days, God was an important part of everyone’s life. You could tell this from their cathedral-building. I’m sorry, I said, “but it looks like that’s the best I can do for you.” (Carver 2015, 110)

From the narrator’s attempt to describe what he is seeing on television, one can glean that ordinarily the narrator does not pay such close attention to what he is seeing and does not retain much unless there can be some active participation. Poe (2011) writes that it is simply easier to watch television:

We listen and watch more often, for longer, and more pleasurably than we talk and read. Further proof is of this native preference is the fact that the choice is largely independent of content. When faced with reading a good book or watching an awful TV show, most people will watch an awful TV show. (Poe 2011, 199)

However, the two men are not experiencing an awful TV show, and Robert has a way to get more out of the viewing. A drawbridge is lowered, as the two men begin working on a cathedral together, taking action as friends, when Robert asks the narrator to draw a cathedral for him while he rests his hand on the narrator’s hand. It enables him to imagine the cathedral, but it is also a new communication for the storyteller. One might be reminded of Gilgamesh and Enkidu holding hands and strolling through Uruk. The contact between the storyteller and Robert is both tactile and oral. Robert is encouraging. The narrator keeps drawing even after the TV station goes off the air. When the wife wakes up and asks what they are doing, sitting on the floor, Robert answers: “We’re drawing a cathedral.” He continues, “Me and him are working on it” (Carver 2015, 112). It is working on a friendship and knowledge of each other. Eventually, the narrator closes his eyes to draw, but only after he has put people in the cathedral: “What’s a cathedral without people?” asks Robert (Ibid.). It is, perhaps, symbolic of someone joining together with someone else to reach into one’s humanity and maybe into one’s

soul as the two men draw together. The narrator does not open his eyes, for he would prefer to keep the image in his mind. He has discovered, with the help of Robert, something within himself. From the standpoint of communication, it is the type of exchange that might occur before print media, when two friends had to express their visions by recounting the story and by drawing the story in the sand in such a way that the other person could create the image in his or her mind.

The action of friendship is an important piece to the story, but there is also some important symbolism in regards to marriage and friendship. When the wife falls asleep, she is sitting between the two men on the couch, the friend on one side and the husband on the other. The husband notices that his wife's robe is open, and he can see her "juicy thigh" (Carver 2015, 108). The friend, however, cannot see it. He is blind to the woman's sexuality. The classical-Christian friendship excludes any carnal possibilities. The husband is quite conscious of his wife's body. The message could be that a person cannot be both friend and spouse at the same time, or that the ideal relationship would be that the spouse be both friend and lover.

Carver presents some of the questions that one should examine if he or she were to pursue the media-friendship connection. One does wonder whether audiovisual media poses a threat to the classical friendship cathedral:

Plato feared that if people were afforded the opportunity to see whatever they wanted, then they, like Leontius, would lose control of themselves...by the mid-twentieth century, audiovisual media made it possible for anyone to see almost anything. The consequences were just as Plato predicted, for people did after a fashion lose control of themselves. (Poe 2011, 153)

"The mosaic form of the TV image...commands immediate participation in *depth* and admits of no delays" (McLuhan 1964, 283). Filmmakers and screen writers, nevertheless,

continue to provide fictional friendships that embrace the classical paradigm. Television viewers can watch reruns of *Star Trek* (NBC 1966-1969) and find the famous friends Kirk and his alien friend Spock successfully traversing the universe. Before them rode the Lone Ranger and his faithful Cacambo, Tonto in *The Lone Ranger* (ABC 1949-1957). Luke Skywalker and Hans Solo of the film *Star Wars* become great friends (1977). There is a seemingly endless parade of super friends based on the classical-Christian model. One can only conclude that such a friendship is still wanted, for the film and television industry are geared to giving people what they want:

According to one estimate, in excess of 9.6 billion movie tickets are sold each year... According to an estimate in the *CIA World Factbook*, there were over 2.5 billion radios and 1.4 billion televisions in the world in 1997, the last date for which data are available. (Poe 2011, 158-159)

The contemporary era of the internet coupled with artificial intelligence and robotics might be the scariest age yet and the greatest threat to the superior friendship. There are already films about falling in love with artificial beings. Dekard, in the film *Blade Runner* (1982), falls in love with the “replicant” Rachel. In *Ex Machina* (2015), the sentient “female” robot the protagonist has been selected to test fascinates him. Data, the android in *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (CBS 1987-1994), has and is a great friend. In the episode “The Measure of a Man” (Season 2, Episode 9), Data is on trial, and Captain Picard defends Data’s rights as a sentient being who should be entitled to choose for himself and with full human rights. Data’s friend, Goerdi, is, interestingly enough, blind like Carver’s Robert in “Cathedral,” and he is deeply affected at the prospect of that his friend might be classified as property, like a slave, and lost to him. Is friendship possible

with a machine? How, as they evolve, will technology, particular communication media, make people think about friendship?

What we are considering here...are the psychic and social consequences of the design or patterns as they amplify or accelerate existing processes. For the “message” of any medium or technology is the change of scale or pace or pattern that it introduces into human affairs. (McLuhan 1964, 24)

When this project began, it was hoped that it would be an organic contribution to the friendship discourse and that it might yield something new to the discussion. It should instead be regarded as additive, for all of the explored territories in this expedition had good cartographers who designed useful maps. This attempt at synthesis reads, unfortunately, somewhat like a summary of outstanding friendships that follow a trail map. This explorer may have spent too much time admiring the classical-Christian friendship, its inventors and its facilitators. It is hoped, however, that it can serve as a resource for those who wish to see how well the old friendship paradigm can operate within the tsunami that is the internet and its evolving artificial intelligence.

One should remember that the wonderful friendships spotlighted in this work are all fictional and rooted deeply in legend and mythology. These stories and poems represent friendship ideals, and it is debatable whether they are attainable. Many readers might wonder whether they have experienced such extraordinary friendships. Perhaps, however, these friendship narratives exist to serve as beacons for excellent friendships, and elements of these friendships are within reach. Tolstoy (1938) helpfully explains the pursuit of such ideals:

Or, un idéal n'en est vraiment un que lorsque sa réalisation n'est possible à atteindre que dans l'infini et que, par suite, la possibilité de s'en approcher est infinie. Si un idéal pouvait être atteint et si, de plus, nous pouvions nous

représenter sa réalisation, il cesserait d'être un idéal... Tout le sens de la vie humaine est enfermé qui tend vers cet [an] idéal. (Tolstoy 1938, 152)

To paraphrase somewhat, if one can reach an ideal, it is no longer an ideal, yet it can always be something approachable and one is always striving to get as close as possible to it. The best kind of friendship, according to Aelred (2010), is the closest thing human that there is to a concept of God (126.134).

It is not unwise, furthermore, to turn to the creators of fiction, the artists, for answers: “The artist is always engaged in writing a detailed history of the future because he is the only person aware of the nature of the present” (Lewis, Wyndham; qtd. in McLuhan 1964, 70). The classical-Christian friendship still operates. It has transcended time and weathered the media challenges. It might be useful to read and watch what the makers of science fiction today have to say about friendship’s future.

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