

Lysis (/ ˈlɪsɪs /; Greek: Ἰλίσσιος) is a dialogue of Plato which discusses the nature of friendship. It is generally classified as an early dialogue. The main characters are Socrates, the boys Lysis and Menexenus who are friends, as well as Hippothales, who is in unrequited love with Lysis and therefore, after the initial.

Socrates, who is the narrator; Menexenus; Hippothales; Lysis; Ctesippus. A newly-erected Palaestra outside the walls of Athens. I was going from the Academy straight to the Lyceum, intending to take the outer road, which is close under the wall. When I came to the postern gate of the city, which is by the fountain of Panops, I fell in with Hippothales, the son of Hieronymus, and Ctesippus the Paeonian, and a company of young men who were standing with them. Hippothales, seeing me approach, asked whence I came and whither I was going. I am going, I replied, from the Academy straight to the Lyceum. Then come straight to us, he said, and put in here; you may as well. Who are you, I said; and where am I to come? He showed me an enclosed space and an open door over against the wall. And there, he said, is the building at which we all meet: And what is this building, I asked; and what sort of entertainment have you? The building, he replied, is a newly erected Palaestra; and the entertainment is generally conversation, to which you are welcome. Thank you, I said; and is there any teacher there? Yes, he said, your old friend and admirer, Miccus. Indeed, I replied; he is a very eminent professor. Are you disposed, he said, to go with me and see them? Yes, I said; but I should like to know first, what is expected of me, and who is the favourite among you? Some persons have one favourite, Socrates, and some another, he said. And who is yours? At this he blushed; and I said to him, O Hippothales, thou son of Hieronymus! Simple and foolish as I am, the Gods have given me the power of understanding affections of this kind. Whereupon he blushed more and more. I like to see you blushing, Hippothales, and hesitating to tell Socrates the name; when, if he were with you but for a very short time, you would have plagued him to death by talking about nothing else. Indeed, Socrates, he has literally deafened us, and stopped our ears with the praises of Lysis; and if he is a little intoxicated, there is every likelihood that we may have our sleep murdered with a cry of Lysis. His performances in prose are bad enough, but nothing at all in comparison with his verse; and when he drenches us with his poems and other compositions, it is really too bad; and worse still is his manner of singing them to his love; he has a voice which is truly appalling, and we cannot help hearing him: I suppose that he must be young; for the name does not recall any one to me. Why, he said, his father being a very well known man, he retains his patronymic, and is not as yet commonly called by his own name; but, although you do not know his name, I am sure that you must know his face, for that is quite enough to distinguish him. But tell me whose son he is, I said. He is the eldest son of Democrates, of the deme of Aexone. Ah, Hippothales, I said; what a noble and really perfect love you have found! I wish that you would favour me with the exhibition which you have been making to the rest of the company, and then I shall be able to judge whether you know what a lover ought to say about his love, either to the youth himself, or to others. Nay, Socrates, he said; you surely do not attach any importance to what he is saying. Do you mean, I said, that you disown the love of the person whom he says that you love? No; but I deny that I make verses or address compositions to him. He is not in his right mind, said Ctesippus; he is talking nonsense, and is stark mad. O Hippothales, I said, if you have ever made any verses or songs in honour of your favourite, I do not want to hear them; but I want to know the purport of them, that I may be able to judge of your mode of approaching your fair one. Ctesippus will be able to tell you, he said; for if, as he avers, the sound of my words is always dinning in his ears, he must have a very accurate knowledge and recollection of them. Yes, indeed, said Ctesippus; I know only too well; and very ridiculous the tale is: Now is not that ridiculous? He can only speak of the wealth of Democrates, which the whole city celebrates, and grandfather Lysis, and the other ancestors of the youth, and their stud of horses, and their victory at the Pythian games, and at the Isthmus, and at Nemea with four horses and single horses-these are the tales which he composes and repeats. And there is greater twaddle still. Only the day before yesterday he made a poem in which he described the entertainment of Heracles, who was a connexion of the family, setting forth how in virtue of this relationship he was hospitably received by an ancestor of Lysis; this ancestor was himself begotten of Zeus by the daughter

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What should you say of a hunter who frightened away his prey, and made the capture of the animals which he is hunting more difficult? He would be a bad hunter, undoubtedly. Yes; and if, instead of soothing them, he were to infuriate them with words and songs, that would show a great want of wit: And now reflect, Hippothales, and see whether you are not guilty of all these errors in writing poetry. For I can hardly suppose that you will affirm a man to be a good poet who injures himself by his poetry. Assuredly not, he said; such a poet would be a fool. And this is the reason why I take you into my counsels, Socrates, and I shall be glad of any further advice which you may have to offer. Will you tell me by what words or actions I may become endeared to my love? 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Most of them were in the outer court amusing themselves; but some were in a corner of the Apodyterium playing at odd and even with a number of dice, which they took out of little wicker baskets. There was also a circle of lookers-on; among them was Lysis. He was standing with the other boys and youths, having a crown upon his head, like a fair vision, and not less worthy of praise for his goodness than for his beauty. We left them, and went over to the opposite side of the room, where, finding a quiet place, we sat down; and then we began to talk. This attracted Lysis, who was constantly turning round to look at us -he was evidently wanting to come to us. For a time he hesitated and had not the courage to come alone; but first of all, his friend Menexenus, leaving his play, entered the Palaestra from the court, and when he saw Ctesippus and myself, was going to take a seat by us; and then Lysis, seeing him, followed, and sat down by his side; and the other boys joined. I should observe that Hippothales, when he saw the crowd, got behind them, where he thought that he would be out of sight of Lysis, lest he should anger him; and there he stood and listened. I turned to Menexenus, and said: Son of Demophon, which of you two youths is the elder? That is a matter of dispute between us, he said. And which is the nobler? Is that also a matter of dispute? And another disputed point is, which is the fairer? The two boys laughed. I shall not ask which is the richer of the two, I said; for you are friends, are you not? And friends have all things in common, so that one of you can be no richer than the other, if you say truly that you are friends. I was about to ask which was the juster of the two, and which was the wiser of the two; but at this moment Menexenus was called away by some one who came and said that the gymnastic-master wanted him. I supposed that he had to offer sacrifice. So he went away, and I asked Lysis some more questions. 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WHO IS THE FRIEND? (THE LYSIS) pdf

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2: Search results for `Lysis` - PhilPapers

Friendship, such as that enjoyed between Lysis and Menexenus, is the topic addressed within this context. Socrates considers a number of hypotheses about friendship, shifting a bit from an attempt to describe what person (or role) is the true friend to trying to find the universal cause of desire.

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driving. And do they trust a hireling more than you? But I dare say that you may take the whip and guide the mule-cart if you like;-they will permit that? Then, I said, may no one use the whip to the mules? Yes, he said, the muleteer.

3: German addresses are blocked - www.enganchecubano.com

Inside, Socrates, Lysis, and Lysis's friend Menexenus sit down to talk. Socrates convinces Lysis that he is currently a "slave" to his parents, and that the only way out of this situation is through greater knowledge and understanding.

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4: Lysis (or Friendship) – a Dialogue by Plato | Crisis Chronicles Cyber Litmag ()

Plato's Lysis or Friendship. comprehension questions Plato Lysis Friendship. STUDY. PLAY. For the poor man is compelled to be the friend of the rich, and the weak.

Ctesippus - Cousin of Menexenus. Also appears in the Euthydemus. Hippothales - Of approximately the same age of Ctesippus. Lysis - Eldest son of Democrates I of Aexone, in his early teens. Menexenus - Son of Demophon, of the same age as Lysis. Probable namesake of the Menexenus. Summary Lysis, as portrayed in the lekythos for his son Timokleides 4th century BC. Depiction of simple eros sexual love and philia friendship [a€”d] Hippothales is accused by Ctesippus, that he still presents annoying praises of his beloved person before the others. He is then asked by Socrates to show his usual behavior in this situation. He admits his love for Lysis, but refuses, that he behaves by the manner depicted by the others. According to Ctesippus it is possible only by his absolute madness, because how would the others know about the love otherwise? Hippothales composes verses on his own honor The victory is a real gain of such love, about which Hippothales sings. He is aroused by denied access to such love and encourages only himself in a fear from possible difficulties. The perspective of possible future relationship is spoiled The beloved person, which would otherwise has not lost his self-criticism, can be conquered by his own pride. The lack of wit, surplus of emotions in behavior, does not create reverence and respect and makes impossible to conquer somebody, gaining his sympathy. The one, who should rule in the measure which makes him a part of the relationship, instead of it hurts himself. Lysis is forced to let the others decide about him compare with a rental coachman when he is carrying his family. His abilities are not subject of a blind faith. The conclusion is, that friendship must be the opposite of hypocrisy, which sometimes emerges from the surplus of flattering Knowledge is the source of happiness [d€”e] Another important conclusion from the dialogue with Lysis is, that his parents wish his complete happiness, but on the other hand doing of the things he has not enough knowledge for is forbidden by them to him. He is allowed to do something only when his parents are sure, that given activities are achievable for him. Although, he is able to please his parents, make them to be happy, when he is in some task better than the others. Reciprocal and non-reciprocal friendship [a€”d] The dialogue continues with Lysis only as a listener. Socrates is trying to find out what is friendship. He claims, that friendship is always reciprocal. The friendship of the lover is sufficient to it. But he can obtain back even the hatred. And it is not true, that the one who is hated or who perhaps hates is a friend. That is in contradiction with the mentioned thesis, that friendship is reciprocal. The opposite must be true then. Otherwise the lover cannot be happy. For example, of his child, which does not obey him and even hate him. The conclusion is that people are loved by their enemies parents and hated by their friends children. Then it is not valid every time, that lover has in loved his friend. This is in contradiction with the premise saying, that friendship can be non-reciprocal. Like is friend to like [e€”c] Bad men do not tend neither towards other bad men nor the good ones. The former can be harmful and the latter would probably refuse the disharmony. On the other hand, the good men can have only no differences to be good and have therefore no profit from each other. They are perfect and can be in love only to the extent to which they feel insufficiency, therefore to no extent. Unlike is friend to unlike [c€”b] The opposites attracts one another. For example, the full needs the empty and empty needs the full. But this is not right in the case of human beings. For example, good vs. The presence of bad is the cause of love philia [c€”c] Searching continues in an attempt to determine the first principle of friendship. The friendship must consists only in itself. Perhaps it is the good itself. But it would not be for itself the everything unless the evil is present. The possession of good is the goal of love philia [d€”b] The friendship must not lead us to something else like to the evil. Must be itself only thanks to its own opposite. The opposite is therefore not only bad, but also useful. But there are situations, in which can be viewed the opposite for example of the good a€” like hunger or thirst a€” with disgrace. It is possible that even in not presence of the opposite, the elements of friendship can somewhere exist, which is in contradiction with that, that they consist in their opposite. The possession of the good by definition of friendship is therefore retained along for a while. The first thing that is loved [c€”e] So far it was successful to grasp only a shadow of the real nature of

friendship. We tend to the good to escape the evil, to the health to escape the illness, to the certain friend doctor to escape the enemy. We do not know the first thing, that is loved. Desire is the cause of love [â€”]d] The friendship can have another reason, than a way to the good escaping the evil. It can be desire, longing for a something. By such way is responded to insufficiency, to our limitation in something. Insufficiency is that which makes us to be close each other. The friendship is therefore something inevitable for us. We are loved by something, we cannot be without it, which we ask by our nature. It is therefore impossible to distinguish object of friendship from us. What is akin is friend to what is akin: The evil is insufficiency for everything, the good the sufficiency. For themselves are good and evil alike sufficient; however, they cannot be friends the ones who are akin to themselves. From the point of view of the first principle of friendship the distinguishing the insufficiency from the unlikeness was not successful. British author Mary Renault used the character of Lysis as a major character in her novel *The Last of the Wine* which follows the relationship between two students of Socrates. In this novel, Lysis is also the son of Demokrates. Greek text *Platonis opera*, ed. III, Oxford Translations.

5: Lysis (dialogue) - Infogalactic: the planetary knowledge core

I said, however, a few words to the boys at parting: O Menexenus and Lysis, how ridiculous that you two boys, and I, an old boy, who would fain be one of you, should imagine ourselves to be friends-this is what the by-standers will go away and say-and as yet we have not been able to discover what is a friend!

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6: SparkNotes: Lysis: General Summary

Lysis & Socrates: What is friendship? In this dialogue between Socrates, Lysis, and Lysis' best friend Menexenus, Socrates is trying to show Hippothales that the way to attract attention from someone is NOT by praising them, but by drawing them into a philosophical discussion.

It is generally classified as an early dialogue. The main characters are Socrates, the boys Lysis and Menexenus who are friends, as well as Hippothales, who is in unrequited love with Lysis and therefore, after the initial conversation, hides himself behind the surrounding listeners. Socrates proposes four possible notions regarding the true nature of friendship: Friendship between people who are similar, interpreted by Socrates as friendship between good men. Friendship between men who are dissimilar. Friendship between men who are neither good nor bad and good men. Of all those options, Socrates thinks that the only logical possibility is the friendship between men who are good and men who are neither good nor bad. In the end, Socrates seems to discard all these ideas as wrong, although his para-logical refutations have strong hints of irony about them. Characters Ctesippus - Cousin of Menexenus. Also appears in the Euthydemus. Hippothales - Of approximately the same age of Ctesippus. Lysis - Eldest son of Democrates I of Aexone, in his early teens. Menexenus - Son of Demophon, of the same age as Lysis. Probable namesake of the Menexenus. Summary Lysis, as portrayed in the lekythos for his son Timokleides 4th century BC. Depiction of simple eros sexual love and philia friendship [â€”d] Hippothales is accused by Ctesippus, that he still presents annoying praises of his beloved person before the others. He is then asked by Socrates to show his usual behavior in this situation. He admits his love for Lysis, but refuses, that he behaves by the manner depicted by the others. According to Ctesippus it is possible only by his absolute madness, because how would the others know about the love otherwise? Hippothales composes verses on his own honor The victory is a real gain of such love, about which Hippothales sings. He is aroused by denied access to such love and encourages only himself in a fear from possible difficulties. The perspective of possible future relationship is spoiled The beloved person, whom otherwise has not lost his self-criticism, can be conquered by his own pride. The lack of wit, surplus of emotions in behavior, does not create reverence and respect and makes impossible to conquer somebody, gaining his sympathy. The one, who should rule in the measure which makes him a part of the relationship, instead of it hurts himself. Lysis is forced to let the others decide about him compare with a rental coachman when he is carrying his family. His abilities are not subject of a blind faith. The conclusion is, that friendship must be the opposite of hypocrisy, which sometimes emerges from the surplus of flattering Knowledge is the source of happiness [â€”e] Another important conclusion from the dialogue with Lysis is that, although his parents wish his complete happiness, they forbid him to do anything about which he has insufficient knowledge. He is allowed to do something only when his parents are sure that he can do it successfully. He is able to please his parents and make them happy when he is better at doing something than other boys are. Reciprocal and non-reciprocal friendship [â€”d] The dialogue continues with Lysis only as a listener. Socrates is trying to find out what is friendship. He claims, that friendship is always reciprocal. The friendship of the lover is sufficient to it. But he can obtain back even the hatred. And it is not true, that the one who is hated or who perhaps hates is a friend. That is in contradiction with the mentioned thesis, that friendship is reciprocal. The opposite must be true then. Otherwise the lover cannot be happy. For example, of his child, which does not obey him and even hate him. The conclusion is that people are loved by their enemies parents and hated by their friends children. Then it is not valid every time, that lover has in loved his friend. This is in contradiction with the premise saying, that friendship can be non-reciprocal. Like is friend to like [â€”c] Bad men do not tend neither towards other bad men nor the good ones. The former can be harmful and the latter would probably refuse the disharmony. On the other hand, the good men can have only no differences to be good and have therefore no profit from each other. They are perfect and can be in love only to the extent to which they feel insufficiency, therefore to no extent. Unlike is friend to unlike [â€”b] The opposites attracts one another. For example, the full needs the empty and empty needs the full. But this is not right in the case of human beings. For example, good vs. The presence of bad is the cause of love philia [â€”c] Searching

continues in an attempt to determine the first principle of friendship. The friendship must consist only in itself. Perhaps it is the good itself. But it would not be for itself the everything unless the evil is present. The possession of good is the goal of love *philia* [ἀγάπη] The friendship must not lead us to something else like to the evil. Must be itself only thanks to its own opposite. The opposite is therefore not only bad, but also useful. But there are situations, in which can be viewed the opposite for example of the good ἀγαθόν like hunger or thirst ἀνάγκη with disgrace. It is possible that even in not presence of the opposite, the elements of friendship can somewhere exist, which is in contradiction with that, that they consist in their opposite. The possession of the good by definition of friendship is therefore retained along for a while. The first thing that is loved [ἀγαπᾶται] So far it was successful to grasp only a shadow of the real nature of friendship. We tend to the good to escape the evil, to the health to escape the illness, to the certain friend doctor to escape the enemy. We do not know the first thing, that is loved. Desire is the cause of love [ἀγαπᾶται] The friendship can have another reason, than a way to the good escaping the evil. It can be desire, longing for a something. By such way is responded to insufficiency, to our limitation in something. Insufficiency is that which makes us to be close each other. The friendship is therefore something inevitable for us. We are loved by something, we cannot be without it, which we ask by our nature. It is therefore impossible to distinguish object of friendship from us. What is akin is friend to what is akin: The evil is insufficiency for everything, the good the sufficiency. For themselves are good and evil alike sufficient; however, they cannot be friends the ones who are akin to themselves. From the point of view of the first principle of friendship the distinguishing the insufficiency from the unlikeness was not successful. British author Mary Renault used the character of Lysis as a major character in her novel *The Last of the Wine* which follows the relationship between two students of Socrates. In this novel, Lysis is also the son of Demokrates. Greek text *Platonis opera*, ed. III, Oxford Translations.

7: SparkNotes: Lysis: Philosophical Themes, Arguments, Ideas

The problem is unsolved, and the three friends, Socrates, Lysis, and Menexenus, are still unable to find out what a friend is. Thus, as in the Charmides and Laches, and several of the other Dialogues of Plato (compare especially the Protagoras and Theaetetus), no conclusion is arrived at.

Summaries of the Platonic dialogues: The question is again raised of the relation of knowledge to virtue and good, which also recurs in the Laches; and Socrates appears again as the elder friend of the two boys, Lysis and Menexenus. In the Charmides, as also in the Laches, he is described as middleaged; in the Lysis he is advanced in years. The Dialogue consists of two scenes or conversations which seem to have no relation to each other. The first is a conversation between Socrates and Lysis, who, like Charmides, is an Athenian youth of noble descent and of great beauty, goodness, and intelligence: Socrates asks Lysis whether his father and mother do not love him very much? And no one will love him, if he does them no good; and he can only do them good by knowledge; and as he is still without knowledge, he can have as yet no conceit of knowledge. In this manner Socrates reads a lesson to Hippothales, the foolish lover of Lysis, respecting the style of conversation which he should address to his beloved. After the return of Menexenus, Socrates, at the request of Lysis, asks him a new question: You, Menexenus, who have a friend already, can tell me, who am always longing to find one, what is the secret of this great blessing. Or are both friends? From the first of these suppositions they are driven to the second; and from the second to the third; and neither the two boys nor Socrates are satisfied with any of the three or with all of them. Socrates turns to the poets, who affirm that God brings like to like Homer, and to philosophers Empedocles, who also assert that like is the friend of like. But the bad are not friends, for they are not even like themselves, and still less are they like one another. And the good have no need of one another, and therefore do not care about one another. But neither can their doctrine be maintained; for then the just would be the friend of the unjust, good of evil. Thus we arrive at the conclusion that like is not the friend of like, nor unlike of unlike; and therefore good is not the friend of good, nor evil of evil, nor good of evil, nor evil of good. But why should the indifferent have this attachment to the beautiful or good? There are circumstances under which such an attachment would be natural. Suppose the indifferent, say the human body, to be desirous of getting rid of some evil, such as disease, which is not essential but only accidental to it for if the evil were essential the body would cease to be indifferent, and would become evil --in such a case the indifferent becomes a friend of the good for the sake of getting rid of the evil. After this explanation has been received with triumphant accord, a fresh dissatisfaction begins to steal over the mind of Socrates: Must not friendship be for the sake of some ulterior end? But the good is desired by us only as the cure of evil; and therefore if there were no evil there would be no friendship. Some other explanation then has to be devised. May not desire be the source of friendship? And desire is of what a man wants and of what is congenial to him. But then the congenial cannot be the same as the like; for like, as has been already shown, cannot be the friend of like. Nor can the congenial be the good; for good is not the friend of good, as has been also shown. The problem is unsolved, and the three friends, Socrates, Lysis, and Menexenus, are still unable to find out what a friend is. Thus, as in the Charmides and Laches, and several of the other Dialogues of Plato compare especially the Protagoras and Theaetetus, no conclusion is arrived at. The dialogue is what would be called in the language of Thrasyllus tentative or inquisitive. The subject is continued in the Phaedrus and Symposium, and treated, with a manifest reference to the Lysis, in the eighth and ninth books of the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle. This, however, is far from being cleared of its perplexity. Two notions appear to be struggling or balancing in the mind of Socrates: That friends are not necessarily either like or unlike, is also a truth confirmed by experience. In the course of the argument he makes a distinction between property and accident which is a real contribution to the science of logic. Some higher truths appear through the mist. The manner in which the field of argument is widened, as in the Charmides and Laches by the introduction of the idea of knowledge, so here by the introduction of the good, is deserving of attention. The sense of the inter-dependence of good and evil, and the allusion to the possibility of the non-existence of evil, are also very remarkable. The dialectical interest is fully sustained by the dramatic

accompaniments. There are likewise several contrasts of character; first of the dry, caustic Ctesippus, of whom Socrates professes a humorous sort of fear, and Hippothales the flighty lover, who murders sleep by bawling out the name of his beloved; there is also a contrast between the false, exaggerated, sentimental love of Hippothales towards Lysis, and the childlike and innocent friendship of the boys with one another. Some difference appears to be intended between the characters of the more talkative Menexenus and the reserved and simple Lysis. Socrates draws out the latter by a new sort of irony, which is sometimes adopted in talking to children, and consists in asking a leading question which can only be answered in a sense contrary to the intention of the question: But Plato has not forgotten dramatic propriety, and Socrates proposes at last to refer the question to some older person.

8: Lysis - The Full Wiki

Lysis, or Friendship. PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE: Socrates, who is the narrator, Menexenus, Hippothales, Lysis, Ctesippus. SCENE: A newly-erected Palaestra outside the.

Philosophical Themes, Arguments, Ideas Friendship and Love Friendship *philia* is the central focus of the arguments in the *Lysis*, and love *eros* defines the frame in which these arguments take place. The dialogue begins with Socrates offering to help Hippothales figure out how best to court the boy Lysis, with whom Hippothales is hopelessly in love. The key to understanding how these relationships operated lies in the blending of passionate, occasionally physical love with the inspiration given by the ideal beauty of the youth and with the role of the older lover as a teacher of manly ideals and wisdom see Lover in the terms list for more information. Friendship, such as that enjoyed between Lysis and Menexenus, is the topic addressed within this context. Socrates considers a number of hypotheses about friendship, shifting a bit from an attempt to describe what person or role is the true friend to trying to find the universal cause of desire. Briefly, the possibilities for defining "what is the friend" include: All are rejected, primarily due to the seemingly intractable problem that like has no reason to befriend like. By the end of the dialogue, a rough model for further investigation seems to have been set up: The trick is to explain desire without allowing it to encompass bizarre or unacceptable situations. Thus, friendship and desire end up sharing a common ground in questions of desire. Likeness and Identity Questions about likeness and difference dominate the middle section of the dialogue, and yield a dilemma that ultimately frustrates its whole aim. Socrates, borrowing from poets and philosophers, suggests that friendship might be explained by the fact that "God draws like to like. The problem revolves around the very fundamentals of identity and difference, and is expressed in two ways. First, "like is drawn to like" seems to imply that bad people can be friends to bad people. This seems intuitively wrong to Socrates, since bad people cannot be true friends to anyone in as much as they are bad. Strikingly, however, Socrates frames this objection in terms of a theory of identity: Thus, inter-personal identity is thwarted by the remarkable quality of intra-personal non-identity. The second way the objection to likeness is expressed is through the objection that the extent to which two people are alike is precisely the extent to which they cannot need or desire anything from each other because, by definition, they already have it. Thus, two people that are partially alike could still be useful to each other, but their likeness is precisely where they are not. Thus, it cannot be the cause of friendship. This important point aligns desire with difference, and excludes desire completely from identity as such. Desire As discussed in the entry on "Likeness and Identity" above, desire undergoes some very strict analysis in this dialogue. Most notably, desire is judged to depend on difference rather than on identity. Nonetheless, it is striking that all of the twists, turns, and rejections of the *Lysis* culminate in the one final theory that friendship is simply due to desire. Bound up in this final assertion is the intriguing but underdeveloped quality of the "congenial," which appears to be an attempt to theorize how two things can be different in a harmonious way this would solve the problem of "monstrously" inharmonious friendships. Unfortunately, the congenial is quickly judged to be little different from the like, and to have the same problems. One other property of desire is asserted in the dialogue: It is this property of desire that allows Socrates to throw out evil as the thing that drives people toward the good of friendship; since desire is neutral, it would be around even if all evil disappeared. The *Lysis* is notable for the ways in which it weaves erotic desire and friendship into a complex tapestry. Throughout much of the dialogue, the causes of both *eros* passionate love and *philia* fondness, friendship seem to overlap quite a bit precisely on the issue of desire. But usefulness often comes into play in the dialogues as a mediator between the abstract virtues that Socrates attempts to construct and the worldly, practical virtues assumed by his interlocutors. This is certainly true in the *Lysis*, where Socrates has to convince two energetic young boys that knowledge and friendship should supersede goals like owning dogs and horses or driving the family chariot. Thus, Socrates convinces Lysis to strive for knowledge and understanding because these things will make him useful, and so give him greater control over the practical and fun elements of his life. In the arguments about friendship, however, use-value seems to play a deeper role, functioning at the very root of love and desire. Specifically, the demand that two

friends be "useful" to each other prevents any possibility that likeness can be the cause of friendship since two people can get nothing from each other to the exact extent that they are the same. Although the various possible causes of friendship include a wide range of qualities over the course of the dialogue, most of them depend at some point on this notion of practical use, a notion that friendship is to some extent a profitable exchange as with the sick body "befriending" medicine. Good, Evil, and Neutral The Lysis does not involve any sustained inquiry into the nature of the good as some of the other dialogues do, but good is suggested as an obvious choice for the quality that motivates friendship. Perhaps, proposes Socrates, the friend is simply the good. It has already been concluded at this point, in the discussion of like befriending like, that evil can be the friend of nobody; since evil is not even like itself not in harmony with itself, it cannot be like or in harmony with anything else. Socrates also seems to take it as a given that evil can never be a friend. The problem with the proposition that the good is the friend is similar to the problem with like befriending like: The good cannot be the friend of the good or of the evil, but it could be the friend of that which is neither good nor evil. The solution, then, would be that friendship is caused by the neutral desiring the good because of the presence of evil. Socrates is pleased with this formulation, but it is soon dropped due to an entirely new objection. On this model, it would seem that the neutral loves the good "for the sake of" evil, a situation that would make the cause of friendship contingent on a secondary goal that of escaping evil. This is not a strong enough cause for Socrates, who wants an ultimate and self-sufficient cause. Thus, he argues that, even if evil completely disappeared, desire, which is itself neither good nor evil, would remain. This means that love and friendship would probably occur regardless of the presence of evil. The Lysis never addresses the lingering question in this area:

9: Lysis (dialogue)

Plato's Lysis, his only dialogue that explicitly discusses what a friend is, might be read as confirmation of the difficulty.
David Bolotin, author of.

The question is again raised of the relation of knowledge to virtue and good, which also recurs in the Laches; and Socrates appears again as the elder friend of the two boys, Lysis and Menexenus. In the Charmides, as also in the Laches, he is described as middle-aged; in the Lysis he is advanced in years. The Dialogue consists of two scenes or conversations which seem to have no relation to each other. The first is a conversation between Socrates and Lysis, who, like Charmides, is an Athenian youth of noble descent and of great beauty, goodness, and intelligence: Socrates asks Lysis whether his father and mother do not love him very much? And no one will love him, if he does them no good; and he can only do them good by knowledge; and as he is still without knowledge, he can have as yet no conceit of knowledge. In this manner Socrates reads a lesson to Hippothales, the foolish lover of Lysis, respecting the style of conversation which he should address to his beloved. After the return of Menexenus, Socrates, at the request of Lysis, asks him a new question: You, Menexenus, who have a friend already, can tell me, who am always longing to find one, what is the secret of this great blessing. Or are both friends? From the first of these suppositions they are driven to the second; and from the second to the third; and neither the two boys nor Socrates are satisfied with any of the three or with all of them. Socrates turns to the poets, who affirm that God brings like to like Homer, and to philosophers Empedocles, who also assert that like is the friend of like. But the bad are not friends, for they are not even like themselves, and still less are they like one another. And the good have no need of one another, and therefore do not care about one another. But neither can their doctrine be maintained; for then the just would be the friend of the unjust, good of evil. Thus we arrive at the conclusion that like is not the friend of like, nor unlike of unlike; and therefore good is not the friend of good, nor evil of evil, nor good of evil, nor evil of good. But why should the indifferent have this attachment to the beautiful or good? There are circumstances under which such an attachment would be natural. Suppose the indifferent, say the human body, to be desirous of getting rid of some evil, such as disease, which is not essential but only accidental to it for if the evil were essential the body would cease to be indifferent, and would become evil – in such a case the indifferent becomes a friend of the good for the sake of getting rid of the evil. After this explanation has been received with triumphant accord, a fresh dissatisfaction begins to steal over the mind of Socrates: Must not friendship be for the sake of some ulterior end? But the good is desired by us only as the cure of evil; and therefore if there were no evil there would be no friendship. Some other explanation then has to be devised. May not desire be the source of friendship? And desire is of what a man wants and of what is congenial to him. But then the congenial cannot be the same as the like; for like, as has been already shown, cannot be the friend of like. Nor can the congenial be the good; for good is not the friend of good, as has been also shown. The problem is unsolved, and the three friends, Socrates, Lysis, and Menexenus, are still unable to find out what a friend is. Thus, as in the Charmides and Laches, and several of the other Dialogues of Plato compare especially the Protagoras and Theaetetus, no conclusion is arrived at. The dialogue is what would be called in the language of Thrasylus tentative or inquisitive. The subject is continued in the Phaedrus and Symposium, and treated, with a manifest reference to the Lysis, in the eighth and ninth books of the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle. This, however, is far from being cleared of its perplexity. Two notions appear to be struggling or balancing in the mind of Socrates: That friends are not necessarily either like or unlike, is also a truth confirmed by experience. In the course of the argument he makes a distinction between property and accident which is a real contribution to the science of logic. Some higher truths appear through the mist. The manner in which the field of argument is widened, as in the Charmides and Laches by the introduction of the idea of knowledge, so here by the introduction of the good, is deserving of attention. The sense of the inter-dependence of good and evil, and the allusion to the possibility of the non-existence of evil, are also very remarkable. The dialectical interest is fully sustained by the dramatic accompaniments. There are likewise several contrasts of character; first of the dry, caustic Ctesippus, of whom Socrates professes a humorous sort

of fear, and Hippothales the flighty lover, who murders sleep by bawling out the name of his beloved; there is also a contrast between the false, exaggerated, sentimental love of Hippothales towards Lysis, and the childlike and innocent friendship of the boys with one another. Some difference appears to be intended between the characters of the more talkative Menexenus and the reserved and simple Lysis. Socrates draws out the latter by a new sort of irony, which is sometimes adopted in talking to children, and consists in asking a leading question which can only be answered in a sense contrary to the intention of the question: But Plato has not forgotten dramatic propriety, and Socrates proposes at last to refer the question to some older person. The subject of friendship has a lower place in the modern than in the ancient world, partly because a higher place is assigned by us to love and marriage. The very meaning of the word has become slighter and more superficial; it seems almost to be borrowed from the ancients, and has nearly disappeared in modern treatises on Moral Philosophy. The received examples of friendship are to be found chiefly among the Greeks and Romans. Hence the casuistical or other questions which arise out of the relations of friends have not often been considered seriously in modern times. Many of them will be found to be the same which are discussed in the Lysis. This question, which, like many others, is only one of a laxer or stricter use of words, seems to have greatly exercised the minds both of Aristotle and Plato. Is not friendship, even more than love, liable to be swayed by the caprices of fancy? The person who pleased us most at first sight or upon a slight acquaintance, when we have seen him again, and under different circumstances, may make a much less favourable impression on our minds. No one forms a friendship with the intention of renouncing it; yet in the course of a varied life it is practically certain that many changes will occur of feeling, opinion, locality, occupation, fortune, which will divide us from some persons and unite us to others. But is not some less exclusive form of friendship better suited to the condition and nature of man? And in those especially who have no family ties, may not the feeling pass beyond one or a few, and embrace all with whom we come into contact, and, perhaps in a few passionate and exalted natures, all men everywhere? The subject was puzzling to them: They had another perplexity: Leaving the Greek or ancient point of view, we may regard the question in a more general way. Friendship is the union of two persons in mutual affection and remembrance of one another. The friend can do for his friend what he cannot do for himself. He will discover ways of helping him without creating a sense of his own superiority; he will find out his mental trials, but only that he may minister to them. Among true friends jealousy has no place: They may live apart and have little intercourse, but when they meet, the old tie is as strong as ever—according to the common saying, they find one another always the same. The greatest good of friendship is not daily intercourse, for circumstances rarely admit of this; but on the great occasions of life, when the advice of a friend is needed, then the word spoken in season about conduct, about health, about marriage, about business,—the letter written from a distance by a disinterested person who sees with clearer eyes may be of inestimable value. When the heart is failing and despair is setting in, then to hear the voice or grasp the hand of a friend, in a shipwreck, in a defeat, in some other failure or misfortune, may restore the necessary courage and composure to the paralysed and disordered mind, and convert the feeble person into a hero; compare Symposium. It is true that friendships are apt to be disappointing: Friendships may be too violent; and they may be too sensitive. The egotism of one of the parties may be too much for the other. The word of counsel or sympathy has been uttered too obtrusively, at the wrong time, or in the wrong manner; or the need of it has not been perceived until too late. And some things have to be indicated rather than spoken, because the very mention of them tends to disturb the equability of friendship. The alienation of friends, like many other human evils, is commonly due to a want of tact and insight. There is not enough of the Scimus et hanc veniam petimusque damusque vicissim. The sweet draught of sympathy is not inexhaustible; and it tends to weaken the person who too freely partakes of it. Thus we see that there are many causes which impair the happiness of friends. We may expect a friendship almost divine, such as philosophers have sometimes dreamed of: The good of it is necessarily limited; it does not take the place of marriage; it affords rather a solace than an arm of support. It had better not be based on pecuniary obligations; these more often mar than make a friendship. It is most likely to be permanent when the two friends are equal and independent, or when they are engaged together in some common work or have some public interest in common. The essence of it is loyalty, without which it would cease to be friendship. Another question 9 may

be raised, whether friendship can safely exist between young persons of different sexes, not connected by ties of relationship, and without the thought of love or marriage; whether, again, a wife or a husband should have any intimate friend, besides his or her partner in marriage. The answer to this latter question is rather perplexing, and would probably be different in different countries compare Sympos. While we do not deny that great good may result from such attachments, for the mind may be drawn out and the character enlarged by them; yet we feel also that they are attended with many dangers, and that this Romance of Heavenly Love requires a strength, a freedom from passion, a self-control, which, in youth especially, are rarely to be found. The propriety of such friendships must be estimated a good deal by the manner in which public opinion regards them; they must be reconciled with the ordinary duties of life; and they must be justified by the result. Yet another question, Admitting that friendships cannot be always permanent, we may ask when and upon what conditions should they be dissolved. It would be futile to retain the name when the reality has ceased to be. That two friends should part company whenever the relation between them begins to drag may be better for both of them. But then arises the consideration, how should these friends in youth or friends of the past regard or be regarded by one another? They are parted, but there still remain duties mutually owing by them. They will not admit the world to share in their difference any more than in their friendship; the memory of an old attachment, like the memory of the dead, has a kind of sacredness for them on which they will not allow others to intrude. Neither, if they were ever worthy to bear the name of friends, will either of them entertain any enmity or dislike of the other who was once so much to him. He who is of a noble mind will dwell upon his own faults rather than those of another, and will be ready to take upon himself the blame of their separation. He will feel pain at the loss of a friend; and he will remember with gratitude his ancient kindness. But he will not lightly renew a tie which has not been lightly brokenâ€”These are a few of the Problems of Friendship, some of them suggested by the Lysis, others by modern life, which he who wishes to make or keep a friend may profitably study. Compare Bacon, Essay on Friendship; Cic.

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