

Amity Update: The Academic Debate on Friendship and Politics

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ABSTRACT: From the 1980s there has been a revival of the concept of friendship in the academic literature across a range of disciplines. Increasingly, the academic debate is invoking friendship as a model that might illuminate issues related to communication, citizenship, international relations, ethnic and cultural identity, peace and conflict. This review concentrates on published scholarly texts focusing on friendship (and selected on the basis of having ‘friend’ or ‘friendship’ in their title). After a brief look at the resurrection of friendship as a topic for scholarship, I will focus on books related to friendship and politics, published since 2000. Starting with Sibyl Schwarzenbach’s remarkable examination of the concept of civic friendship, I will examine how some of the main texts on the politics of friendship at the beginning of the 21st century have contributed to the debate about the possibility of a citizenship based on friendship, mutual respect, trust, and reciprocity.

Keywords: civic friendship; politics; philosophical; scholarship; feminist; Schwarzenbach

Introduction

As the literature on friendship and politics has been increasing since the 1980s, it is important to survey the trends in this academic debate. Apart from a 2010 article that I co-wrote with Graham M. Smith for *Political Studies Review*, there is little in the literature that brings this work together in an overview of the scholarship. This article is intended as a follow-up to that review. Here I am concentrating on published books rather than articles to provide a chronological account of the publishing trend in this field and to highlight how the work relates in particular to the concept of civic friendship.

This review should be a useful resource for those interested in friendship and politics scholarship, and ranges from writings that highlight the work of particular philosophers to work from a feminist framework. It includes suggestions of a model for civic relationships that is based on the concept of friendship, where this is regarded as a relationship of equals, who take the interests of others into account in decision-making, who consider it fair for exchanges to be of reciprocal benefit, and who care for those who are in need. The debate about civic friendship also questions whether partial friendship is indeed a relationship appropriate for political interaction where ethical decision-making is considered to be possible only from an objective standpoint.

The idea of basing political relationships on friendship can be traced back to the writings of some of the most well-known Greek and Roman philosophers who considered that the political system should be designed to ensure a 'good life' for its citizens. Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca and Plutarch all wrote treaties on friendship.¹ Aristotle focuses most explicitly on civic friendship that he claims is likely to produce a just society. According to Aristotle, in the *Politica*, the city is a natural way for humans to organize their lives, as humans are by nature social and political animals. As higher order animals their political arrangements are complex and intricate. For humans, with the capacity for cooperation and a general belief in moral, respectable, decent citizenship, a community that is based on friendly relationships is likely to result in a common good. Near the beginning of Aristotle's treatise on friendship, *Nicomachean Ethics*, he states:

Friendship seems to hold cities together, and lawgivers seem to be more concerned about it than about justice. For ... when people are friends, they have no need of justice, but those who are just [to one another] need friendship in addition, and the strictest form of justice is found in friendship.'²

In the 21st century, the most prominent work on civic friendship is Sibyl Schwarzenbach's (2009) *On Civic Friendship: Including Women in the State*. From the perspective of an American feminist experiencing and witnessing the challenges of the modern USA democratic reality, Schwarzenbach suggests that incorporating values of friendship into the political, in the form of civic friendship, 'may aid in determining the limits of legitimate freedom and equality in a genuine democracy' (p.xiii). In addition, Schwarzenbach claims that such an interpretation 'will centrally include women and their traditional characteristic work in democracy's historical realization' (p.xiv).

The article begins with a review of texts published during the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s as friendship as a topic for academic debate was being resurrected. These include texts related to those philosophers who have written on friendship, feminist analyses of friendship and the political, contemporary philosophical writings on friendship, and political sociological analyses. This is followed by a brief review of the 21st century scholarship on friendship and politics.³ I will be using Schwarzenbach's model of civic friendship as the basis for making links to civic friendship within the texts of the last decade. I conclude with a summary of the literature, and what the literature reveals about the nature of civic friendship.

Resurrecting Friendship (1970-2000)

Thirty years ago there was very little being written about political friendship. There were a few scholarly books focused on friendship as a philosophical concept in the 1970s. Hutter (1978) provided a comprehensive survey of the theories of friendship in Ancient Greece and Rome with commentary about the contrast between the high regard for friendship in the society of the ancients, as compared with the modern focus on market exchange rather than friendship. Another contribution, also on classical friendship is Fraisse (1974 in French only) whose introduction refers to studies on friendship as 'research into a lost problem'. Rawson's (1978) work focuses specifically on Roman friendship and in particular on the relationship between Cicero and Pompey the Great. Bolotin (1979) takes the focus even more narrowly to look at one Greek

dialogue, the *Lysis*, Plato's dialogue that is mostly closely related to friendship. In the following two years, more expansive philosophical and theological treatments of friendship were provided by Blum (1980) who links friendship to altruism and morality, and Meilaender (1981) who studies friendship in the context of theological ethics.

From the mid-1980s, there has been a continuing increase in the number of studies on friendship, philosophy, sociology and politics. Between 1985 and 1989 there were at least ten texts on aspects of friendship and politics, five of which were published in 1989 (Barbas 1985; Nestor 1985; Raymond 1986; Herman 1987; McGuire 1988; Blundell 1989; Porter and Tomaselli 1989; Price 1989; Soble 1989; Waddell 1989). By the end of the 20th century, there were at least twenty-eight more texts on this topic (Powell 1990; Auchincloss 1991; Enright and Rawlinson 1991; Hunt 1991; Pakaluk 1991; O'Connor 1992; White 1992; Badhwar (ed.) 1993; Bloom 1993; Friedman 1993; Little 1993; Spielvogel 1993; Derrida 1994 (in French); Hyatte 1994; Rouner 1994; Schollmeier 1994; Stern-Gillet 1995; Coates 1996; Fitzgerald 1996; Leaman 1996; Blosser and Marshall (eds.) 1997; Derrida 1997 (English Translation); Fitzgerald 1997; Konstan 1997; Bell and Coleman (eds.) 1999; Haseldine 1999; Burrell 2000; King and Devere (eds.) 2000; Pahl 2000). Almost all commentators lament the lost place of friendship for civil society, and refer to the lack of scholarship on the topic.⁴ While there is an overlap between categories, the literature can be viewed according to four broad approaches: firstly, the commentaries about the various philosophers who have written on friendship; secondly, those texts with an explicit feminist perspective; thirdly, those with a contemporary focus; and lastly, a text from a political sociological perspective.

Philosophers on Friendship

The silence of philosophers on friendship is observed by Pakaluk (1991) who traces this lacuna back to the writings of Emerson in 1841. Pakaluk explores some of the reasons why friendship 'dropped out of sight' in moral philosophy (p.vii). He argues that the 'great divide' in contemporary ethical thought between deontology and consequentialism was problematic for friendship. Deontology requires moral reasons for action to be based on universalizability and impartiality, both seemingly at odds with a relationship that involves particularistic affection. Consequentialism regards moral actions as those that produce the greatest aggregated benefit for all human beings. The personal values and subjective emotions of friendship have no utility unless greater good is achieved. As friendship does not fit straightforwardly into these accounts of morality, friendship in the modern period 'has something of a dubious moral standing' (p.x). Pakaluk's anthology of 'almost all of the central philosophical writings on friendship produced in the West' (p.vii) is provided as 'a kind of standard' for discussions on friendship that he suggests needs to be met before it can be surpassed (p.xiv).⁵

The collection edited by King and Devere (2000) at the end of the century is promoted as another attempt 'to contribute modestly to the task of re-inspection of friendship as a major philosophical category' (p.13). In his introduction, King, like Pakaluk almost a decade earlier, points to the invisibility of friendship as a major philosophical concept, and he identifies libertarianism grounded in power and liberty, as the 'dominant paradigm' of the modern period where the 'disposition we most commonly encounter with regard to friendship' ranges from

‘indifference to hostility’ (p.12). He suggests that the only modern philosophers to have written about friendship are Bacon, Montaigne and Nietzsche. The works of Kant, Freud, Mary Douglas and Ayn Rand are hostile to friendship, and a whole range of modern western figures, including Machiavelli, Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Berkeley, Hume, Voltaire, Rousseau, Bentham, both the Mills, Hegel and Marx all ignore friendship (p.13).⁶

Feminists on Friendship

Feminist scholars noted that women’s friendships, in particular, had not only been given little attention, but ‘there has been a clear tendency to trivialize them and/or to see them as “suspect” (i.e. as lesbian relationships)’ (O’Connor 1992, p.26). Faderman’s (1981) examination of romantic friendship and love is a deliberate attempt to ‘create a usable past for contemporary women who call themselves “lesbian”’ in her historical analysis of women’s relationships with other women (p.20). Raymond (1986) argues that not only have there been enormous pressures on women to exist for men, but female friendship has been subjected to ‘primordial dismembering’ (p.4). While Raymond’s main focus is on female friendship (gyn/affection) she extends her analysis to include other political beings and argues that this ‘freely chosen bond’ that ‘involves certain reciprocal assurances based on honor, loyalty, and affection’ or ‘social trust’, can also be the basis of a political relationship that is ‘continually renewed, revitalized, and entered not only by two or more individual women but by two or more political beings...’ (p.9). Other scholars have made a concerted effort to make visible the political nature of women’s friendships, such as Coates (1996) who claims that women’s conversations with their friends are ‘far from trivial’ and instead ‘provide a focus for discussing and re-evaluating social norms’ as well as a way of constructing and maintaining personal identity (p.1).

Contemporary Philosophers on Friendship

Derrida’s (1994) *Politiques de l’amitié* (translated into English in 1997) is the most comprehensive contemporary analysis. While Derrida is not usually considered feminist, or even a friend of feminism (see Devere 2005), his analysis raises a major concern about the phallogentricity of the history of the philosophy of friendship and the exclusion of women from the political. In a 1997 interview about the publication of the English translation of his book, *The Politics of Friendship*, he refers to the ‘apparent’ marginalization of friendship ‘within the field of politics and of political philosophy for centuries’ (Derrida 1997b). Derrida agrees that friendship is ‘not considered a political concept as government, or sovereignty, or citizenship may be considered political’, but he points to the canonical texts in political theory, starting with Plato and Aristotle, where ‘you discover that friendship plays an organizing role in the definition of justice, of democracy even’. Both the democratic tradition and the canonical model of friendship have involved male participants forming relationships of brotherhood or fraternity, relationships by their labeling indicating maleness. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and ‘fraternity’ appearing as one of the foundations of the republic along with equality and liberty, meant that since the French Revolution there has been for women within the language and rhetoric of

democracy ‘no voice, no discourse, no possibility of acknowledging these excluded possibilities’(Derrida 1997b). Derrida advocates that ‘we must think and be oriented by something which is more than cosmopolitanism, more than citizenship’ and that the call for a new concept of democracy grounded on friendship should not be ‘grounded on this groundless experience of friendship’ and ‘shouldn’t be limited in the way it has been’ (Derrida 1997b).⁷

After a ‘long eclipse’, Badhwar (1993, p.ix) states in her introduction, there has been a ‘remarkable resurgence of philosophical interest in friendship’ in the years since about 1970. Although there is acknowledgement that by the 1990s there were historical anthologies on friendship in existence, this collection is claimed to be one of the first ‘devoted entirely to contemporary writings on friendship.’ (p.ix). The first part includes work by C. S. Lewis, Laurence Thomas, Nathaniel Branden, and Amelie O. Rorty and is built around three philosophical questions: How does friendship differ from other forms of love? What is the psychological value of friendship? What kind of continuity or constancy is desirable in friendship? The second part is on friendship and ethics, particularly with reference to Aristotle and Kant, with chapters by Nancy Sherman, Robert M. Adams, H. J. Paton, Julia Annas, Marcia Brown, Laurence Blum, Peter Railton and Michael Stocker. The last part covers friendship, society and politics with chapters related to women and friendship by Mary Lyndon Shanley (on John Stuart Mill’s *The Subjection of Women*) and Marilyn Friedman (on feminism and modern friendship). John M. Cooper’s chapter on civic friendship completes the collection.

Bloom (1993) suggests that we live in a world where ‘love and friendship are withering away’. He reluctantly uses the word ‘eros’ to stand for ‘love’ as he suggests that ‘the word “love” now applies to almost everything except the overwhelming attraction of one individual for another’. Eros has been reduced to sex and ‘how to get greater bodily satisfaction ... or increasingly how to protect ourselves from one another’ (p.13). He views his book as ‘an attempt to recover the power, the danger, and the beauty of eros’ by examining the ideas of love and friendship in the poetic writers (p.13).⁸ Both friends and lovers recognize their incompleteness and need ‘for exclusive attachment to another human being in order to attain fulfillment’ and he distinguishes friendship as being ‘gentler, soberer and without frenzy’ as well as necessarily reciprocal (p.547).

Political Sociology on Friendship

Little (1993) wants to ‘retrieve friendship from the bad company it keeps’ and from its decline that includes ‘the demi-monde of belles lettres to the world of pop psychology’ (p.7). He reviews the history of friendship through classic, modern and Freudian aspects and then reports on a sociological study based on conversations with a range of people ‘from all walks of life’. He argues that friendship can be a ‘protection from ideology’ and that friendship can flourish anywhere. People become good and informed citizens not just through political action, but also via ‘friendship and conversation’ (p.5). This links into Coates’ claim that women’s conversations are politically relevant. However, Little believes that ‘probably it is best’ that friendship remains ‘on the edge’ of politics and it could be a place to hide from politics (p.247).

21st century scholarship on Friendship and Politics (2001- 2011)

Von Heyking and Avramenko (2008, p.1) maintain that:

It is only in the modern era that friendship has lost its prominence and been relegated to the backbenches of political philosophy. It simply has not been a central concern for political thinkers within the liberal tradition, or any other, in the past five hundred years or so.

However, we can no longer claim that the study of philosophical and political friendship is neglected, although there is still some way to go before this can be regarded as part of mainstream academic discourse. The rate of increase in texts related to friendship and politics slowed slightly in the new century. Nevertheless by the end of 2011, there were at least twenty-nine texts devoted to the topic (Farrell 2001; Scudder and Bishop 2001; Martel 2001; Zanetti 2002; Bray 2003; Pangle 2003; Aronson 2004; Kelly and Roseman (eds.) 2004; Velasquez 2004; Lynch 2005; Small 2005; Vernon, M. 2005; Vernon, R. 2005; Kaplan 2006; Spencer and Pahl 2006; Schwartz 2007a; Smith and King (eds.) 2007; Thomson 2007; von Heyking and Avramenko 2008; Kharkhordin (ed.) in Russian 2009; Nichols 2009; Schwarzenbach 2009; Watson et al. (vol 1) 2009; Watson et al (vol 2) 2009; Leib 2010; Oesterberg 2010; Valen 2010; Descharmes et al (eds.) 2011; Smith 2011).

Writings on particular philosophers range from the ancients that include Socrates and Plato (Nichols 2009) and Aristotle (Pangle 2003), through Aquinas (Schwartz 2007a) to Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and Schmitt (Smith 2011), Nietzsche and Ree (Small 2005), Camus and Sartre (Arnonson 2004) and Derrida (Thomson 2007). In addition, Mark Vernon (2005) and Sandra Lynch (2005) each provide a general philosophy on friendship, and Martel's (2001) text has a more political focus. In his theoretical analysis Bray's (2003) historical analysis is of the move from medieval to modern social attitudes towards friendship in the second half of the 17th century. Sociological studies include Spencer and Pahl (2006) and Farrell (2001). A focus on the law and friendship is provided by Leib (2010).

There are several edited collections, including Descharmes et al (2011) with interdisciplinary perspectives in both English and German on friendship, hospitality and patronage; Smith and King (2007) on friendship within and between states; von Heyking and Avramenko (2008) provide essays on political thought, and the two volumes by Watson et al entitled *Friends and Foes* - one focused on philosophy and the arts, the other on social and political perspectives. A psychological approach to friendship as a style of loving is provided by Kelly and Roseman's (2004) edited collection. Kharkhordin's (2009) edited collection on friendship theory and practice is available in Russian only.

In the early part of the 21st century there has been little explicit feminist scholarship on friendship. Schwarzenbach's (2009) book is the only work since Coates (1996) with a feminist focus on women and friendship (and will be discussed in more detail in the next section). Valen's 2010 book, while neither very academic nor very political, takes an opposite view to Schwarzenbach and describes female friendships as 'the twisted sisterhood'. She uses a survey to examine the 'dark legacy' of discord among women. Another work published the same year that covers gender and friendship is Kaplan (2010) whose book looks at male friendship and nationalism in Israeli culture. Relationships between the genders is covered by Scudder and

Bishop (2001) using a self-help approach ‘enriched with philosophical treatments of personal relations’ that include Plato and Aristotle, Solomon, May, Lewis, Emerson, Mill and Taylor, Buber, Macmurray and Schutz.

Civic Friendship in the 21st Century

For an analysis of the 21st century texts on friendship and politics, I will be drawing out aspects related to the concept of civic friendship. **Sibyl Schwarzenbach’s** book (2009) *On Civic Friendship: Including Women in the State* is the only work with a comprehensive model of civic friendship for the 21st century. Aristotle originally advocated civic friendship in 350 B.C.,⁹ and Schwarzenbach provides a current model advocating for friendship as the basis for relationships between citizens. Starting with Schwarzenbach’s proposition, I will look at some of the most recent texts on the politics of friendship to identify where these may contribute to the debate about civic friendship.

Schwarzenbach’s argument is that liberalism, the dominant political paradigm for the last four centuries, has historically concerned itself with issues other than social unity, community and trust (p.1). The result of this is an unjust society that is untenable. As long ago as Aristotle, civic friendship was identified as a necessary condition for genuine justice. As Schwarzenbach points out, there are difficulties under modern liberalism with trying to propose civic friendship as an alternative model for citizenship. Part of this is the focus on the metaphor of the right to property acquired through some form of labour being mixed with the property. Originally proposed by John Locke, this premise ‘profoundly influenced our political vision’ for a few hundred years (p.6). Locke’s metaphor ignored the labour of women who looked after children and family members.

In addition to the domestic work of women, the activity of reproducing friendship, according to Schwarzenbach, has traditionally been performed by women and it is the ethical reproduction of friendship relations as a practice that contributes greatly towards binding the citizens of the state together. This is seldom acknowledged, so, in order to make visible this work of women in maintaining relationships in society, Schwarzenbach extends Locke’s metaphor based on labour to provide a new metaphor of ethical reproductive labour. Using John Rawls’ philosophical method of ‘reflective equilibrium’ (p.15), Schwarzenbach examines the way in which a model of civic friendship might be used as a ‘new window on the world’ to examine the modern problems of lack of trust and social unity (p.22). She calls for the political recognition of women, not only as equals, but as ‘the embodiment of their traditional form of labour and activity in public and state institutions’. This she names ‘ethical reproductive *praxis*’.

Her model of ‘civic friendship’ is a deliberate rejection of ‘fraternity’ as the ‘third critical value of democracy’ and a replacement for fraternity (p. xiii). She also distinguishes her notion of civic friendship from Marxist notions of comradeship and solidarity that she identifies as being primarily associated with males and with no necessary ethical component. In addition, she makes a distinction between public care and friendship ethics, as care is often neither equal nor reciprocal. Schwarzenbach advocates for ‘the necessity of a form of civic friendship between citizens today as a requirement of true justice in the evolving democratic state...’ (p.xiv).

Lorraine Smith Pangle's (2003) scholarly coverage of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* has been referred to as 'the first comprehensive study of the major philosophical works on friendship' (flyleaf) and all the translations of Aristotle are her own. However, the main focus is not on the political, there is little specifically on civic friendship, and gender analysis is limited. There is a chapter on 'Friendships in Politics and the Family' and one on 'Cicero's *Laelius*: Political Friendship at Its Best', and scattered through the book are sections on issues that are relevant for civic friendship. In the introduction, she does refer to the indispensability of friendship for the political community and the relationship between justice and friendship in Aristotle, as well as the 'patriotic affection of citizens toward one another and toward the fatherland' that is essential for preventing civil war in addition to Aristotle's claim that 'where there is friendship there is no need of justice' (p.17).

Other aspects that are relevant for civic friendship include the analysis of the role of goodwill in friendship that is evident even in lesser forms of friendship. Pangle argues that while Aristotle suggests that a minimal degree of goodwill is essential for the smooth functioning of the polis, there is a 'missing element' in his definition of friendship 'as mutual goodwill' (p.47). The issue of similarity between friends has an impact on democracy and citizenship, and Pangle suggests that this is 'a morally ambiguous basis of friendship' and that it makes 'rhetorical sense' for Aristotle to 'minimize this element' (p.48).

In terms of equality, justice and friendship, Pangle suggests that for Aristotle 'justice is served when the honor paid to each is in proportion to what he has done' (p.129). According to Pangle:

Aristotle evidently determined that only a sense of justice grounded in a powerfully felt sense of community is likely to take deep root in the human heart, deep enough to support virtue and a lasting dedication to the greater good that transcends men's narrowest and more immediate concerns (p.81).

And thus, while 'claims of justice are essentially coextensive with those of friendship and the political community' this would work best in a small community (p.81). Another aspect of friendship and justice covered by Pangle is a comparison between Montaigne who claimed that friendship is the most noble thing, as contrasted with Cicero in the *Laelius* who 'makes it clear that friendship must give way to the demands of virtue' (p.105). There is a small section on the role of women in the family, but friendship in political life as fraternity and brotherhood, and male heads of households is presented by Pangle without reference to feminist or Derridean commentary about the gendered nature of the Aristotelian political model (p.99).

Graham M. Smith's book (2011) is firmly focused on politics and he concludes that 'friendship is indispensable to the analysis of the political' (p.vii). This is because 'just as friendship is understood to denote the bonds between person and person, the political is understood to denote a concern with the shared world of order and value'. Thus the bonds of friendship shape and support 'this shared world' (p.vii) and so friendship and the political are aspects of the same concern. Before exploring where friendship can be relocated in the political through the works of philosophers Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and Schmitt, Smith locates the origin of friendship as political in Plato and Aristotle. In Plato's *Lysis*, Smith notes the important link between friendship, education and the good life. Friendship in the *Symposium* 'is seen to be a

universal binding force leading to harmony and justice...’ and in the *Republic*, ‘the role that friendship takes is to bind the polity’. Friendship is connected to the previous dialogues through the notions of “harmony” and “education” and serves as the ‘binding and motivating force for the actions of the citizens who not only attempt to live just lives in a just society, but are also attempting to perpetuate this forever.’ (p.21).

Smith’s chapter on Aristotle picks up on some of the aspects that are missing from Pangle’s largely a-political analysis and that are referred to in Schwarzenbach. Smith argues that the political themes in the *Nicomachean Ethics* make this text ‘the sibling of the *Politics* and the two books should be considered together.’ (p.45-46). According to Smith, Aristotle highlights ‘the extensive role that friendship plays across all relations within the polis ... links friendship and justice as basic features of all community’ and ‘raises the question of the primacy of friendship over justice...’ (p. 46). Friendship is also connected to equality through reciprocity and friendship itself is considered by Aristotle to have an equalizing effect. Finally Aristotle refers specifically to political friendship as the friendship between citizens, where citizenship ‘is a special set of relationships within a community ordered by a constitution’ (p.64).

None of the three modern philosophers that Smith selects for his comprehensive investigation into the relationship between friendship and the political promote friendship as a model for citizenship. However, his analysis demonstrates the importance of understanding the hostility towards friendship in the philosophical and political literature of modernity.

For Kierkegaard, the personal and the political are ‘conjoined’ according to Smith, but friendship, so important to the Ancients, Kierkegaard argues, will be doomed to fail unless it is subjected to the command of the Christian God to ‘love the neighbour’ (p.81) which is to ‘love all others as spiritual equals’ (p.93). Friendship that is exclusionary, selfish and based on the fickleness of ‘the passions’ needs a spiritual transformation to ensure that ‘true equality is practiced and the friends love each other in the right way’ (p.81). Smith questions Kierkegaard’s opposition to reciprocation and attempts to reconcile Kierkegaard’s notions of friendship and neighbourliness, asking whether there has to be a choice between the two (p.128).

Nietzsche’s thought related to friendship needs to be discovered via a ‘trail’ through his numerous books. Smith traces this trail, basing much of his search in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* as the pivotal text. Early Nietzsche sees an important role for friendship as a ‘mechanism for the central philosophical task of self-discovery’, but increasingly it is ‘seen as inadequate and perhaps even dangerous to the philosopher’ (p.130). Enmity and the *Urbemensch* eventually displace friendship, although Smith points to Nietzsche’s later thought on friendship that is ‘attached to the ideas of aristocracy and nobility’ and is no longer a ‘positive and productive human bonding’ (p.130). Smith notes that Nietzsche’s ideal of friendship ‘is so demanding that it is unlikely that anyone could ever meet its challenge’ (p.186).

Carl Schmitt makes the link between friendship and the political very clearly in *The Concept of the Political* where he claims that all political actions and motives can be reduced to the distinction between friend and enemy. Smith points out that most of the commentary has been on the concept of enmity and in fact Schmitt himself says little of substance on friendship. This is not a mere omission on Schmitt’s part, according to Smith, but by keeping the category of friend ‘empty’, Schmitt is able to use ‘friend as a structuring device for his argument as a whole’

(p.192). Smith tries to avoid getting drawn in to Schmitt's rhetorical game by exploring the role of it in the structure of Schmitt's political thought (p.194). Smith argues that Schmitt's explicit treatment of friendship should not be accepted on face-value, but it should be treated as a polemic, intended to 'both crystallise and divide' (p.209). Schmitt's theoretical analysis is useful in reconnecting friendship with the political, however, Smith concludes that 'Schmitt himself must be considered no friend of friendship' (p.223).

Unlike Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Schmitt, Graham M. Smith is a friend of friendship which he views as 'coterminous with the political' and he claims in fact that 'friendship and the political *become* politics' (p.225). His last chapter takes four philosophical concepts – tyranny, identity, holding and possibility – and relates these to friendship and the political. He argues that tyranny limits both the political and friendship, but that friendship can overcome tyranny (p.229). Identity of self and the other is not 'merely the identification *of*, but an identification *with*' which is the beginning of friendship and politics (p.234). Smith uses 'holding', the 'theorisation of the dynamics of structure' (p.234) to show that the best form of politics 'is a shared and mutual enterprise that builds and rebuilds a complex structure of relations and possibilities that is shared-in by all' and that this is the 'image and work of friendship' (p.237). Friendship and the political thus represent 'a domain of possibility' and a politics of hope that is concerned with value, relational and social condition, recognizes the shared world of self and other, 'and focuses on the possibilities for mutuality' (p.239).

Mary Nichols (2009) also regards Kierkegaard and Nietzsche as opponents of friendship. The purpose of her book is to revisit their 'alienated' view of Socrates 'and to recover the place of friendship and community in Socratic philosophizing as an antidote to the alienating aspects of modern thought' (p.2). She advocates that we need to look 'beyond the visions bequeathed to us by Kierkegaard and Nietzsche' and presents Plato's understanding of friendship and the community that she believes is 'essential to human fulfillment' as viewed in three of his dialogues: *Symposium*, *Phaedrus* and *Lysis* (p.2). Nichols suggests that the focus on friendship in her study fills a 'lacuna' in the literature related to Plato's Socrates and she argues that this offers 'an alternative to both Kierkegaard and Nietzsche' (p.3).

Her major philosophical focus is not overtly political, but is about love, happiness, trust, joy and identity. However, the political context of Socrates' Greece frames Nichols' analysis of the dialogues which are also related to contemporary commentary. She provides a very thorough, comprehensive analysis of the three Platonic dialogues: for the *Symposium* she focuses on love, generation and the political community (including nobility, law, art, comedy, tragedy, virtue); the *Phaedrus* is related to self-knowledge, love and rhetoric (including lovers and non-lovers, souls and rhetoric and writing); and the *Lysis* chapter she entitles 'Who is a Friend' and includes the group, like and unlike friends, good and bad friends, kindred friends and friendly communities.

She argues that 'Plato uses the *Symposium* as an occasion to revisit the issues surrounding Socrates' indictment, trial, and execution' and to demonstrate Socrates' 'piety, his philosophic life, and his connection to and even his love for other human beings' that encourage 'noble political action' (p.30). Nichols points out that Socrates is the sole speaker at the gathering who uses the word for friendship (*philia*) rather than love (*eros*) (p.87) and she claims that 'in its presentation of reciprocity between lover and beloved, the dialogue points us towards friendship, which is missing from the relationships between the various couples in the *Symposium*' (p.88).

Nichols is aware of some of the gender issues related to Socrates. She argues that it is 'fitting' for Socrates to invent a female character in the prophetess, Diotima, 'in order to answer the previous speakers, whose downplaying of generation, offspring, and children is consistent with their homosexuality' (p.65). This introduction of a foreign female prophetess allows a dramatic speech that points out what is missing from previous conversations. Nichols also refers to the criticism of Plato in some of the literature 'for appropriating pregnancy for the male'. However she claims that Diotima's statement that pregnant lovers give birth to the beautiful is an acknowledgement of 'the complexity necessary for generation' (footnote 59, p. 65) and the interdependence of all human beings. In addition to the theme of human dependence on others, Diotima also highlights the 'satisfaction possible within political communities' (p.68) and the generation by lovers not only of children 'but also inventions of arts or crafts, works of poetry, laws of political communities, speeches about virtue, and even virtue itself in the souls of others' (p.69).

The theme of generation in Diotima's speech is linked to rhetoric and the political life in the *Phaedrus* where Nichols suggests that the 'genuine rhetorician ... generates only what is appropriate to others. His offspring therefore are not wholly his own, but he plays a part in different ways in the education of different types of human beings' (p.95). The connection to the political is made when the power and art of rhetoric are covered. Nichols suggests that 'Socratic rhetoric is ... antithetical to any politics of empire based on power' and she quotes Griswold's conclusion that the main message of the *Phaedrus* is that philosophy is "essentially nobler and higher than the political concerns and the public rhetoric of the polis." (p.141). The role of friendship in the *Phaedrus*, however, is not made clear, but is used to lead on to Nichols' discussion of the *Lysis* where Socrates raises the question 'what is the friend?' (p.151).

The *Lysis* is the dialogue most associated with friendship, but it is not obviously very politically inclined. However, Nichols claims that her analysis of the *Lysis* 'provides a model for a political community that answers Aristotle's criticism of the *Republic*' (p.155). She finds it of note that the *Lysis* is the only one of the dialogues on love and friendship for which Plato has Socrates as narrator. Nichols represents Plato as positive about the 'possibilities and benefits of human association' and argues that 'we must understand philosophy as an experience analogous to friendship' (p.154). According to Nichols:

In relation to his readers, Plato demonstrates how friendship can be translated into a larger community, one that transcends any given pair of friends and therewith the limits of any particular time and place. The community formed by Plato and his readers through his writing, mediated by Socrates, gives readers through their activity of interpreting the experience of another as their own and of their own as other that is essential to friendship. Such a community therefore serves not as an alternative or substitute for political communities, but as their standard (p. 194).

Plato's Socrates engages in conversations with others, including his friends. The Socratic method is indirect and Nichols sees Socrates' pursuit of friends as 'an image of a good life that reflects a richer understanding of human experience', experiencing goodness in another (p.215).

Daniel Schwartz (2007a) contributes to the historical trajectory of friendship in his book *Aquinas on Friendship* that looks at the influence of Aristotle on Aquinas and issues of concord and justice. Schwartz describes his study not as an attempt ‘to provide an exhaustive description of Aquinas’s theory of friendship’ and a ‘reconnaissance flight’ but rather a ‘territorial expedition’ that explores ‘the possible roles performed by friendship within the realms of ethics and politics’ (p.viii). He demonstrates that Aquinas’s thoughts were a reworking of Aristotelian writings that included ‘treatments of friendship and love such as those found in pagan and Christian Stoicism and Neoplatonism, biblical and patristic sources, and in the works of his contemporaries’. He claims that Aquinas has helped to ‘discredit romanticized images of European medieval society which pictures these societies as cohesive and close-knit’ (p.viii). Aquinas provides a model of friendship that Schwartz argues is ‘more suited to present-day societies’ (p.ix). The discussion is situated with a context of friendship as *philia*, *amicitia*, or *caritas* (charity); the importance of friends; and acts of friendship; and then discusses concord, conformity of wills and uncertainty.

The two chapters most relevant for our discussion about civic friendship are devoted to justice and friendship where Schwartz explains some of the complex arguments made by Aquinas. Schwartz claims that for Aquinas, ‘there is a sense in which friendship ... is a necessary feature of ... the circumstances in which it makes sense to invoke justice.’ (p.133). Friendship with God is also an element of Aquinian thought. Aquinas acknowledges that conflict will occur between friends, not necessarily with moral fault on either side. Aquinas recommends ‘fraternal correction’ before resort to formal justice related to disagreements between friends, but acknowledges that there may be circumstances where ‘it is a work of charity to defend and restore the property of the poor if it is under threat or stolen’ (p.131). God or one of the partners in a friendship can introduce ‘proportional equivalence’ for some kind of equality into the relationship, and it is this action that demonstrates the way in which friendship can establish just relations. Injustice can also upset friendship bonds, including friendship with God. Schwartz also argues that Aquinas can be seen to be taking a reconciliation approach to justice and to the restoration of friendship. The value of Aquinas’s version of friendship is that it ‘allows for conflict and misunderstanding’ and sees justice considerations as ‘necessary and useful between friends’ (p.164).

While **Mark Vernon’s** (2005) book is entitled *The Philosophy of Friendship*, there are two chapters explicitly on the politics of friendship and civic friendship. Having looked at the perils to and pressures exerted on friendship by utility, sexuality, dissimulation and post-Christian ethics, Vernon turns to consider ‘times and places in which friendship was not sentimentalised, marginalised or thwarted, but rather assessed, valued and supported at the wider social level.’ (p.94).

In the chapter on civic friendship, Vernon reviews the classical and medieval eras to find what they reveal ‘about the best social conditions for friendship’, demonstrating the place of friendship at the heart of politics (p.96). Vernon claims that in Athenian and Roman society friendship ‘of various sorts ... assumed a prominent role in public life simply because friends inevitably found themselves engaged in it together’ (p.98) and explains the theories of civic friendship by Aristotle, Cicero and Seneca. However, not all philosophers in the classical period agreed that friendship and politics should mix and Vernon points to Epicurus’s belief that politics

was ‘antithetical to friendship’ and to Plato’s exclusion of friendship as a political force in the *Republic*. By the Middle Ages, Vernon claims that a strain of religious piety placed a high value on friendship at the same time as communal activities around eating and sleeping ‘lent a corresponding degree of social importance to the friendships that could accrue around doing these things together’ (p.107). Sworn brotherhoods that often existed alongside marriage, and spiritual friendships in monastic orders, found in the writings of Aelred of Rievaulx, for example, were common until the 17th century. Vernon cites Bray (2003) for an explanation of the changes in social attitudes towards friendship that occurred during the enlightenment, as well as the ‘Lockean move’ that he sees as ‘doubly detrimental to friendship.’ (p.112.)

First, it makes a binary notion of family the basis of Society. And second, that Society is conceived of as an ominously bureaucratic entity that has few means of understanding, let alone nurturing friendship. (p.112).

Vernon’s book is one of only a few published this century to refer explicitly to women’s friendships and to give a feminist analysis, and this is what he emphasizes in his chapter on ‘the politics of friendship’. He demonstrates how women’s groups, such as the suffragettes in the 19th and 20th centuries ‘provide a focus for the first turning point, from personal resistance to public protest’ (p.120) using friendship as ‘an important source of solidarity and succour’ (p. 121). Vernon also cites Faderman’s study on romantic friendships between women, which he refers to as not only historical, but also explicitly political ‘when in a provocative move (and no doubt with a wry smile on her face) she classifies them as lesbian’ (p.124). For another feminist analysis of political friendship, Vernon includes Marilyn Friedman who focuses on friendship ‘to outline a way of engaging with society’, by promoting networks of support and expressing political solidarity (p.127). He also refers to Mary E. Hunt who argues that for women ‘friendship is the context within which the political imperatives of mutuality, equality and reciprocity are best experienced’, and this is both empowering at the personal level and gives women, as ‘relational experts’ something to teach to the world around them (p.128). Vernon’s gender analysis continues with a discussion of gay men, lads, blokes and metrosexuals and their various relationships.

Vernon, like some of the other commentators, returns to the idea of trust and civic friendship that he identifies as ‘making an impact at the socio-political level’, although he points out that ‘a high doctrine of civic friendship does not enjoy much purchase today.’ (p.143). He warns that ‘while good civic friendship embraces political reflection and social diversity, bad civic friendship rests mostly on hostility to common enemies’ (p.144). Vernon follows up on his explicitly political analysis of friendship by looking at the spirituality of friendship and ideas of ‘soul friendship’ as espoused by Montaigne and Emerson, and in his conclusion he considers the integral connection between friendship and philosophy with the words that ‘to seek friendship is to seek wisdom’. (p.164).

The edited collection of **John von Heyking** and **Richard Avramenco** (2008) is very explicitly about friendship and politics. Essays on political thinkers and theory are brought together and divided into four epochs or paradigms of friendship: ancient perspectives (Plato, Aristotle and Cicero); Christian perspectives (Augustine, Aquinas, Luther and Calvin); modern perspectives (Montaigne, Hobbes, de Tocqueville and the Anti-Federalists); and contemporary perspectives (Nietzsche, Rawls, Arendt and Schmidt). The editors see as ‘promising’ for

friendship the ‘recent attention political theorists have given “civil society,”’ the institutions that ‘mediate between the individuals and the state, and that enable its members to enjoy each other’s company while cultivating the virtues and habits necessary for democratic self-government.’ (p. 4-5).

Each individual essay makes connections between friendship and the political, and many have particular relevance for civic friendship. For example, Rhodes makes reference to Plato’s diagnosis for society as an ethical failure and his prescription of the ‘practice of a *philia* (friendship) that inspires virtue’ that would ‘first produce small friendship circles and ultimately a just polity essentially constituted by *philia*.’ (p.22). Salkever claims that Arendt ‘connects virtue friendship with civic friendship more completely than Aristotle would’, although she places more importance on friendship than citizenship (p.74). Both Arendt and Cicero emphasise the importance of dialogue for both friendship and citizenship. Cicero, like Arendt, sees friendship as a good in itself, but as Nicgorski points out, friendship in the Ciceronian context was also ‘the most important instrument in the micropolitics of Roman life where constitutional development and leadership turn on political alliances and the give-and-take of personal interactions and relationships.’ (p.105).

Cicero’s influence on Augustine is referred to by von Heyking who examines the ‘analogy-analogue relationship between Augustine’s views on political community and friendship’ and argues that ‘political friendship is impossible without the prior experience of the fullness of friendship’ (p.116). Schindler’s chapter, also looking at a Christian perspective on friendship and politics, makes a connection between ‘the natural good of civic friendship’ and ‘the supernatural virtue of charity’ or *caritas*. He argues that ‘the bonds of civic friendship are assimilated for Aquinas into the love of charity’ because Aquinas views life in a political community not only as natural, but also as ‘an out-growth of man’s God-given sociability’ (p.153). While Calvin and Luther would have been familiar to Augustine and Aquinas, neither of these reformation theologians contributed very much to the debate on friendship. However, Heilke’s examination of this absence of friendship does add to this debate as it is situated within a discussion of pre-Socratic and non-Greek sources on civic friendship.

Attempts to fill the friendship ‘lacuna’ continues through the chapters on the modern period. Fuller’s comparison of Plato and Montaigne refers only briefly to friendship in relation to the political towards the end of his chapter where he concentrates on the concept of ‘community’ rather than citizenship. T. D. Smith questions whether ‘the apparent discontinuity between Hobbes’s political teaching regarding friendship and his own experience of friendship’ is rhetorical rather than ideological (p.215). The debate between federalists and anti-federalists is framed by Carey as differences over ‘social friendship’, and Mitchell uses the idea of ‘gathering-together’ as a way of exploring the role for friendship in Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America*.

Avramenko portrays the whole of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* as ‘Zarathustra’s quest for a type of friendship that can grow out of this groundless ground ... the wandering teacher of postmodern friendship’ (p.304). Avramenko traces Nietzsche’s change of heart regarding friendship to the ‘great rupture in his thought that stands directly in the middle of these two positions on friendship: the discovery of the “eternal recurrence of the same” and the introduction of the Zarathustra’ (p.290). Avramenko’s argument is that in repudiating Christianity and rejecting universal rationalism, Nietzsche also found himself a stateless man who ‘begins to think

of the nation-state as a moribund entity breeding the wrong sort of relationships between people.’ (p.301). With none of these paradigms providing grounds for friendship, the ‘secret wisdom’ of Nietzsche as found in the *Gay Science* is ‘a declaration of a new [groundless] ground for friendship’ (p.303). The analysis, however, ends up a long way from civic friendship with Zarathustra’s ‘asinine friends’ who are incapable of appreciating the ‘possibility of a higher form of friendship’ (p.310).

The last chapter, a critical overview by Gebhardt, discusses civic friendship most explicitly. He sees the ‘reflexive politics of friendship [as] a case study of human nature’s potential for creatively ordering its existence in societal form’ (p.343). In a brief intellectual history of friendship, trust and the political order, Gebhardt identifies the Western form of political order as a limitation for theoretical reflections on political friendship. He makes a clear distinction between personal and political friendship, and gives a comprehensive analysis of what is included as political friendship in the Western tradition. He argues that there has been a global spread of this model, but that it has foundered ‘on the lack of community-creating substance because no ordering experience has materialized and become socially effective in the process of societal and political “Westernization.”’ (p.343).

Graham M. Smith and Preston King’s (2007) collection is focused on political philosophical discussions on friendship with relation to the state. The chapters are divided into four parts. The first is on theorizing friendship and politics by King, van der Zweerde and Schwartz; part two concerns thinkers on friendship with Smith on Kierkegaard and Slomp on Schmitt; part three is on friendship within states with Witoszek on friendship and revolution in Poland, and Schwarzenbach on civic friendship and care theory; and the last section on international friendship features Oelsner on trust and peace in the international system, and Vion on the institutionalization of international friendship.

King’s chapter provides a useful ‘grid’ of ten aspects of friendship for modernity to ‘enable us to plot a logical progression from the intimacy of the private circle to the public disclosure involved in open forums’ (p.130). These include:

1. Friendship is a relationship, mostly commonly constructed as interactive.
2. Affection is a key initial component, one dimension of which is care.
3. Reciprocal affection in friendship is a circular engagement; unilateral affection can be described as ‘friendliness’ or care.
4. Friendship as a circle of reciprocal affection involves intimacy but is bounded by numerical limits.
5. Reciprocal friendship is in some senses an equal relationship.
6. But even reciprocal friendship involves asymmetrical sharing.
7. Both reciprocal and unilateral friendships are not just abstractly psychological, but have a moral component.
8. The moral character of the relationship between friends is both voluntary and contractual.
9. The most important moral element in the context of friendship is ‘tolerance of divergent judgement’ (p.140).
10. ‘The practice of friendship can have a beneficial impact on society at large’ (p. 142).

Van der Zweerde's analysis includes Aristotle, Schmitt, Derrida and Mouffe, and he argues that it is possible 'to use the notion of friendship in politics to point out the tension between friendship in politics, potentially leading to a "rule by friends", and the necessary striving for political friendship as a means to transform antagonistic into agonistic conflict' (p.147). He, like King, gives a progression of friendship and identifies five notions of friendship. The first two, described as 'true friendship' (an exclusive personal relationship between a limited number of individuals) and 'friendship with larger numbers' or spontaneous friendships 'arising out of a free desire to become friends with particular people' (p. 149). The next two are socially conditioned forms of friendship 'that can imply being friendly to people you do not like' (p.149). 'Friendliness' is maintaining friendship relations with a whole group that can create a good atmosphere and could include 'citizens of a polity' (p.149). 'Friendly networks' are instrumentally aimed at achieving a particular end. The last notion of friendship is an 'alliance' that is even more strategic or tactical, and could be individual or group, political, military, economic or private, usually comprising a 'block' that might oppose another 'block' and is formed for the means of realizing a specific goal. While van der Zweerde believes, like Mouffe, that true political friendship among perfectly virtuous citizens is both inconceivable, and would lead to the end of politics, he argues that it should remain a project as striving for 'political friendship is crucial for the agonistic articulation of the political' (p.164).

Other philosophical arguments for friendship in politics are posed by Schwartz, Smith, Slomp and Schwarzenbach. Schwartz discusses the consequences of inequality on friendship. He argues instead that friendship should be encouraged as it can serve 'as a replacement for less egalitarian forms of relationship' (p.167). He is generally in support of the Aristotelian view that friendship 'is not merely supervening on some sort of equality, but a type of equality in itself' (p.168). Smith, whose 2011 book includes an analysis of Kierkegaard on friendship, in this chapter rehearses Kierkegaard's account of the deficiencies of friendship. Smith argues that the failure in Kierkegaard's thought opens up a space for looking at the responsibility for others, and 'sets the task for any future theorization of friendship as a centre for responsibility towards self and others.' (p.181). Slomp refers to the 'strangely overlooked' concept of friendship in Schmitt's theory and tries to 'disentangle the polemics from the diagnosis' in Schmitt's discourse on friendship' (p.199). She claims that Schmitt would have preferred what she calls 'true or existential friendship' (p.210). Polemically he suggests that this 'true friendship ought to be about dying and killing', but diagnostically, he sees friendship as 'an indicator of the status of the political in that society'. (p.211). Schwarzenbach's chapter is a precursor to her 2009 book on civic friendship. Here she makes the argument in favour of an 'intimate connection between the women's movement of the last half century, and the growing realization of the necessity of civic friendship as a condition for genuine justice.' (p.233). She claims that the ideal of civic friendship can provide the element missing from the recent care theory that provides a normative account of political care.

The other three chapters examine different states as case studies on politics and friendship. Witoszek examines the precursor to the Solidarity movement in Poland, the Committee for Workers Defense (KOR) that she claims used 'friendship as a weapon against the fear imposed by the communist state' and the KOR 'supplies perhaps the most vibrant and

important contemporary example of the role and power of friendship in social movements which are committed to the democratic project.’ (p.215). Oelsner uses the Argentine-Brazilian détente of the late 1970s to demonstrate how ‘some regions have overcome the security dilemma’ by constructing relationships resembling friendship at the interstate level that are based on mutual trust and confidence’. (p.257). Vion provides examples of city ‘twinings’ and cultural institutes in French-German and French-American socially constructed ‘friendships’ and raises the paradox of Tocqueville that ‘achieving friendship might not favour a broad and open community but, on the contrary, favour a dense network of closed communities.’ (p.281).

Bernadette Descharmes, Eric Heuser, Caroline Krueger and Thomas Loy, the editors of the interdisciplinary collection on *Varieties of Friendship* were all doctoral students in the Research Training Group (*Graduiertenkolleg*) project entitled ‘Friends, Patrons, Followers: The Practice and Semantics of Friendship and Patronage in Comparative Historical and Anthropological Perspective,’ founded in 2006 at the University of Freiberg. The chapters in the collection come out of a 2009 conference funded by the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* (German Research Council) featuring both graduates and senior academics from a range of disciplines. Most chapters are in English, but there are also six chapters with the abstract in English, but the text in German only.

Although none of the contributions are explicitly about civic friendship, there are several chapters that have a political emphasis. The connection between friendship or fraternity and democracy is explored by Devere, who argues in the introduction to the collection that a climate has emerged that allows for the resurrection of friendship as a topic relevant for academic consideration in relation to the political. This is at the ‘intersection of the political and social movements and philosophies of feminism, post-colonialism, indigeneity, communitarianism and post-modernism ... as well as developments in modern psychology which focus on the importance of relationships’ (p.18). Leuschner looks at personal networks in professional politics and specific dyadic political relationships are analysed by Gurr (Thatcher-Regan and Blair-Brown) and Polaxe (Karl Kautsky and Pavel Aksel’rod). Different political friendship contexts are examined by Kaplan (contemporary Israeli culture and Zionism) and Gencheva-Mikami (early and late antiquity Japan).

Michael Farrell (2001) tackles the dynamics of friendship in a sociological study using the concept of ‘collaborative circles.’ His work is not overtly political, but his analysis of the influence of different creative collaborative circles could equally be applied to political groups that begin as ‘a casual association among acquaintances working in the same discipline ... and develops into a “circle” that becomes the centre of their creative lives’ (p. 2).

Under some conditions, as the circle develops, the dynamics of the group transform the work of the members. Those who are merely good at their discipline become masters, and, working together, very ordinary people make extraordinary advance in their field (p.2)

The creative circles that form the basis of Farrell’s study are mostly of artists (French Impressionists) and writers (Fugitive Poets and the Rye Circle). He also examines the Early Psychoanalytic Circle. Most relevant for this paper is his chapter on ‘The Circle of Ultras’, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony who made up:

the circle of women who formed the core of the women's rights movement in the nineteenth century, at times known as the "ultras" because they advocated positions that went far beyond accepted conventions, even within their own network of social reformers (p.205).

In terms of Schwazenbach's model of civic friendship, it is of interest to note that the most overtly political of Farrell's collaborative circles or 'friendship groups' is politically active women. Just as with civic relationships, these circles take time to develop 'the trust, commitment, and instrumental intimacy necessary for collaboration' (p.266). There are certain conditions that Farrell identifies as conducive to circle formation that include 'the right external and internal conditions' and effective leadership. He finds that the innovation flourishes 'in turbulent cultural environments' (p.268) that might include confrontation, polarization and then increased commitment, with some leaving the group. He claims that it is 'the dialogue at the centre [that] empowers those on the periphery to synthesize elements of the old perspectives and to conceive an alternative vision of their own' (p.268). Open debate and lack of domination by a 'defensive mentor' can lead to the percolating of a new vision (p.269). The friendship circles can act as a 'buffer against pressures to conform' as well as 'encouraging experimentation.' (p.271).

Farrell compares the development of circles of collaboration to the formation of delinquent gangs. However, he distinguishes them from delinquents by their stake in the system; the formation at a later point in the life course; as well as their aspirations to make valued contributions; and their aim of mastery of a discipline and wide recognition, accompanied by campaigns to try and win converts and 'to institutionalize their views' (p.272). These collaborative circles are also different from patronage relationships as there is a relative equality in resources, with no member 'overtly dependent on any other'. This allows for open disagreement or 'even insult ... with humour, as friends can, without fear of retaliation' (p.275). It is balanced, egalitarian relationships that provide 'the trust and intimacy necessary for instrumental intimacy and creative work...' (p.275).

Farrell also notes gender differences between the women-only Ultras as compared to the male groups and states that 'the Ultras achieved greater intimacy in their collaborative pairs, and they developed and sustained more intricate interdependence over a longer period of time than any group I have found' (p.291).

Summary

From the 1970s there has been a renewed interest in the academic study of friendship and the political, as evidenced by both authored and edited books. The five early scholarly works identified all referred back to Greek and Roman political and philosophical writings on friendship. The real resurgence of studies that link friendship and politics began in the mid-1980s with ten more texts published between 1985 and 1989. The 1990s was the decade in which the largest number of books on the topic was published, and by the end of the century, there were forty-six authored or edited studies. Scholars pointed to the gap that had developed in the academic literature where friendship as a topic for scholarly debate had been ignored for the previous one hundred years.

The resurgence coincided with another resurgence – that of feminist analyses generally. Several studies centre on women’s friendships, which, it is argued, have been even less visible than friendship generally, and where there has been a reference to women and friendship this has been to disparage, trivialize or diminish those relationships. One of the authors not usually identified as feminist who also addresses the marginalization of female friendships in the political discourse is Derrida whose translated book *The Politics of Friendship* has generated debate on the topic across the divide between modern and postmodern approaches.

Work on philosophical and political friendship at the end of the 20th century lamented the lacuna, while accounting for the disappearance of friendship in terms of developments in ethics, public culture, philosophical interest, ideological focus, popular psychology, political power and economic dominance.

From 2001, interest in this debate continues, with still some regret expressed about the loss of continuity in the literature on friendship and the political. To date, the 21st century has witnessed twenty-nine books that fit our category. All have relevance for politics, but the emphasis ranges across philosophy, history, sociology and psychology, as well as being interdisciplinary. An interesting trend, though, is that there has been very little written specifically on women and friendship, and little evidence of any overtly feminist flavor.¹⁰

The main exception to this is Schwarzenbach’s work *On Civic Friendship: Including Women in the State*. Not only is Schwarzenbach exceptional in terms of her explicitly feminist focus, but her book is also the only work that provides a very comprehensive and radical model for incorporating friendship into relationships between citizens. She argues for ethical reproductive *praxis*, incorporates ‘a reciprocal awareness and liking of the other as moral equal, a reciprocal wishing that other well for their sake ... and a reciprocal practical “doing” for that other.’¹¹ I have used this book as a basis for reviewing the 21st century texts on politics and friendship to look for other contributions to a model of civic friendship.

In linking back to the writings on classical friendship, Aristotle is held up as the philosopher who most clearly explicated the type of friendship that was appropriate for citizens. However, the work that focuses most closely on Aristotle by Pangle scatters references to civic friendship throughout, rather than providing a comprehensive analysis of this aspect of Aristotelian friendship ethics. While she considers justice and friendship to be important, she does not explore how this might occur in anything other than small political communities.

Smith’s book concentrates on the works of specific modern philosophers with an analysis that both relates back to the classical writers and also adds more specifically to the connections between friendship and the political relevant for contemporary society. He points to the value of friendship for the political as strong enough to overcome tyranny, appropriately a shared and mutual relationship of respect, hope and possibility.

Some other authors whose books published in the 21st century contribute to the civic friendship debate are Nichols, Schwartz, Vernon and Farrell. Nichols uses Socratic teaching to argue that friendship can serve as the standard for larger political communities based on positive human association. Schwartz’s example is Aquinas who he claims gives a model of friendship that would be suitable for contemporary society, with its reconciliatory capacity to enable harmonious, equal, non-romanticised interactions between community members. Both Vernon

and Farrell are aware of the unacknowledged contribution of women towards harmonious relationships. Vernon also identifies the empowering role of friendship for women in political activity as providing solidarity and support through mutual, equal, reciprocal, trusting and wise friends. It is a women's circle of friendship where Farrell finds one of processes whereby these relationships are strengthened, and that is through open and non-hierarchical discussions.

Edited collections, published over the last twelve years, have made links between friendship and the political. Descharmes et al include exploration of the current climate that encourages these connections as well as personal networks and dyadic relationships, but there is little explicitly on civic friendship. On the other hand, von Heyking and Avramenko's collection include discussions about friendship's contribution to citizenship by helping the cultivation of some of the virtues needed for democratic government, including care, wisdom, self-reflection in a community that includes both social and political 'gatherings together.' Smith and King's collection also includes analysis of friendship as care, but adds in affection, reciprocity, equality, morality, tolerance, mutual trust and confidence. Friendship can involve individual relationships as well as friendly networks, alliances or solidarity groupings. However, there is still a reservation that these sorts of communities could be exclusive rather than open and inclusive.

Throughout the texts on friendship and politics the following aspects of civic friendship have been revealed. Friendship is indispensable for a political community in that friendship incorporates goodwill towards one's fellow citizens and can bind the people of a polity together, serving also as a motivating force to ensure harmony and justice. The cooperation that friendly relationships engender leads to the possibility of shared enterprises for the good of the whole. The reciprocity inherent in the concept of friendship can have an equalizing effect and friendship is a more egalitarian relationship than most others. Friendship can be a protection against forces ranging from tyranny and power, to pressures to conform and the alienating forces of modern society. For women in particular, friendship can be empowering at the personal and political levels by providing networks of support. Ethical friendships can replace formal systems of justice as civic friendship is naturally connected to the virtues of charity and care for others. Trust and commitment that are necessary for collaborative work are encouraged by good friendships.

In practical terms, friendships within civil society can be the mediating mechanism between individual and the state. Dialogue between citizens, just as conversation between friends, is important for the resolution of conflict, or changing antagonism into agonism. Friendly relationships can create a good and inclusive atmosphere for these discussions, and friendship can allow open disagreement without fear of retaliation. The *praxis* of civic friendship can provide practical possibilities for implementing the ethics of care. It is friendship networks that can provide impetus and connections for social movements, and the work of the group can use ordinary people for creative, innovative and extraordinary outcomes.

Civic friendship is not without its dangers or limitations. The similarity and bonds between friends might create in-groups and out-groups, not compatible with democratic concerns. Bonds are often formed in opposition to another group, who may become the 'enemy.' Friendship can be seen as exclusionary and selfish rather than egalitarian and caring. Friendships are not always virtuous and justice is not necessarily the outcome of friendships. Friendship is not the exclusive domain of the powerless and downtrodden, but elite friendships can concentrate

power and expand power to an already powerful group, who might well be tyrannical. Groups of friends might not necessarily work for the good of the whole, but merely for the good of the group.

There are distinctions drawn between 'good' civic friendship and 'bad' civic friendship and between virtuous and non-virtuous friendship that need to be applied to this debate. But the debate about civic friendship is one that needs to continue as a friendly dialogue to assess its worth as a model for politics.

Conclusion

The concept of friendship and politics has been resurrected as a topic for scholarly and academic debate. There is now a range of published books that cover the politics of friendships. There are a number of books that re-examine the classical and medieval writings on friendship, from political, philosophical and theological perspectives. There are sociological, anthropological, psychological and interdisciplinary studies.

Schwarzenbach's ground-breaking model for civic friendship offers us the opportunity to explore this in more detail. The more explicit inclusion of women's friendship experiences and the emphasis in these friendships on building up trust, solidarity and support, primarily through talk, conversation, dialogue, discussion, debate is supported by other literature on developing trust, identity, empathy and resolving and transforming conflict. There is room here for much more politically directed research on friendship. The evidence is building for the claim that the relationship that is the most important for politics has been inadequately explored.

Appendix 1

Chronology of Main Works on Friendship and Politics

1900-1960	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
<p>1915 Carpenter</p> <p>1958 Wilms</p>	<p>1972 Fraisse (in French)</p> <p>1978 Hutter Rawson Bolotin</p>	<p>1980 Blum</p> <p>1981 Meilaender Faderman</p> <p>1985 Barbas Nestor</p> <p>1986 Raymond</p> <p>1987 Herman</p> <p>1988 McGuire</p> <p>1989 Blundell Porter and Tomaselli Price Soble Waddell</p>	<p>1990 Powell</p> <p>1991 Auchincloss Enright & Rawlinson Hunt Pakaluk O'Connor</p> <p>1992 White</p> <p>1993 Badhwar (ed.) Bloom Friedman Little Spielvogel</p> <p>1994 Derrida Hyatte Rouner Schollmeier</p> <p>1995 Stern-Gillet</p> <p>1996 Coates Fitzgerald (ed.) Leaman (ed.)</p> <p>1997 Blosser & Marshall (eds.) Derrida (English Translation by George Collins) Fitzgerald (ed.) Konstan</p> <p>1998 Faderman (2nd edn.)</p> <p>1999 Bell and Coleman (eds.) Haseldine</p>	<p>2000 Burrell King & Devere (eds.) Pahl</p> <p>2001 Farrell Martel Scudder & Bishop</p> <p>2002 Zanetti</p> <p>2003 Bray Pangle Velasquez</p> <p>2004 Aronson Kelly & Roseman (eds.)</p> <p>2005 Lynch Small Vernon, M. Vernon, R.</p> <p>2006 Kaplan Spencer & Pahl</p> <p>2007 Schwartz Smith & King (eds.) Thomson</p> <p>2008 von Heyking & Avramenko (eds.)</p> <p>2009 Kharkhordin (ed.) (in Russian) Nichols Schwarzenbach Watson et al (v1) Watson et al (v2)</p> <p>2010 Leib Oesterberg Valen</p> <p>2011 Descharmes et al (eds.) Smith</p>

Notes

- ¹ For a review of the Greco-Roman writings on friendship, see Devere in King and Devere (2000).
- ² Translation and commentary on civic friendship, see John Cooper (1993) in Badhwar (ed.) (1993), p.321.
- ³ A chart tracing the chronology of main works on friendship and politics is found in Appendix 1 in this article.
- ⁴ For a review of the body of research that makes substantial ties between friendship and politics and points to a growing body of scholarship that encompasses political ideas, national and international politics, feminism and gender politics, see Devere and Smith (2010).
- ⁵ Pakaluk includes excerpts from Plato (370 B.C.) *Lysis*; Aristotle (330 B.C.) *Nicomachean Ethics*; (335 B.C.) *Rhetoric*; Cicero (44 B.C.) *De Amicitia (On Friendship)*; Seneca (A.D. 63-65) *On Philosophy and Friendship* and *On Grief for Lost Friends*; Aelred of Rievaulx (A.D. 1148) *De Spirituali Amicitia (Spiritual Friendship)*; Thomas Aquinas (A.D. 1269-72) *Questions on Love and Charity*; Montaigne (A.D. 1572-76; 1578-80) *Of Friendship*; Francis Bacon (A.D. 1610-25) *Of Friendship*; Immanuel Kant (A.D. 1775-80) *Lecture on Friendship*; Ralph Waldo Emerson (A.D. 1840-41) *Friendship*; Soren Kierkegaard (A.D. 1846-47) *You Shall Love Your Neighbour*; Elizabeth Telfer (A.D. 1970) *Friendship*.
- ⁶ The topics in the King and Devere (2000) collection are: Aristotle (Mulgan); Hume, Smith and Ferguson (Hill and McCarthy); Nietzsche (Abbey); Buber (Rustin); Derrida (Dallmayr); the modern self and friendship (Hutter); and reviving the Greco-Roman friendship (Devere).
- ⁷ Derrida's 1997 book, *Politics of Friendship*, is an analysis that questions and deconstructs the canon of friendship, and incorporates chapters on naming, enumerating and counting love, truth, justice, democracy, hostility, enmity, gender, and equality. Woven throughout are references to philosophers of the ancient canon, and also Carl Schmitt, Florian, Kant, Nietzsche, Blanchot, Deguy, Heidegger, Marx, Foucault, Hegal and Bergson. The interview with Derrida also refers to a section on Heidegger in the original 1994 French version that was left out of the 1997 English version.
- ⁸ Bloom's analysis includes Rousseau, Stendhal, Jane Austen, Flaubert, Tolstoy, Shakespeare and Montaigne.
- ⁹ For discussions on Aristotle and civic friendship see for example, Bickford (1996); Cooper (1977; 1980; 1993); Derrida (1997); MacIntyre (1985); Mulgan (2000); Price (1989); Schollmeier (1994); Scorza (2004); Smith (2011); Stern-Gillett (1995).
- ¹⁰ One of the reasons for women's friendships remaining invisible might be a result of gender mainstreaming, the concept that everything should be analysed to include a gender perspective, with no specific focus on women. See for example Bennion (2003) and Carney (2003).

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