OBLIGATION AND INVOLVEMENT

We have obligations to our friends. Our friends can make demands on us which strangers cannot. In refusing these demands and breaching those obligations, we wrong our friends and, at the limit, betray the friendship. My friend Tim is moving house. He calls up and asks for my help. By asking this of me, he obliges me to help him and if I decline without good cause he will rightly hold this against me. It would be quite different were Tim a mere colleague or a casual acquaintance. Then I could simply consult my convenience and decline without wronging him.

Those who write about friendship often emphasize the special concern friends feel for one another and the rich emotional bonds which underlie this concern. This tempts us to classify friendship with more purely affective relationships like admiration or romantic love. Yet setting friendship in this context can make it seem odd that friendship should involve obligation. The mere fact that we love or admire someone however intensely does not put us under any obligation to them, not even if the admiration is mutual and the love requited. You don't understand friendship until you understand the ways in which friends can be bound to one another.[1] Suppose we instead classify friendship with family, social or political relationships. Now obligation takes center stage. Loyalty and fidelity to family, lord or country generate a network of obligations. But this new comparison obscures a crucial feature of the bonds of friendship, namely their choice-dependence. Family, social or political obligations need not be chosen to be binding, whilst one chooses one's friends in a way one need not choose one's parents, lord or country.

Friendship entails choice-dependent obligation. That is what must be explained. And this suggests we classify friendship with relationships that share this feature: being an acquaintance, being a neighbour, being a guest or a host or even being someone's partner in conversation. I shall call these relationships *involvements*. Involvements vary greatly in their emotional character and in what behaviour is expected from those so involved. But they have this in common: all are valued forms of human relationship, all are in some sense chosen and all entail obligation.

[1] Frankfurt correctly distinguishes the demands of love from the demands of obligation but he infers that there are no special obligations of friendship. The right conclusion to draw is that friendship does not generate obligations in virtue of being a loving relationship. See (Frankfurt 1999: 170-1).

17. Friendship as a Form of Involvement

In this section, I introduce the notion of an involvement. In particular I explain and defend the idea that involvement entails obligation. In the next section, I'll expand on the choice-dependence of obligations of involvement. Among involvements, friendship has got most of the attention in the philosophical literature, and I shall follow this custom here but I want to begin by discussing a thinner form of involvement: acquaintanceship.

Goffman distinguishes two elements in acquaintanceship, mutual cognitive recognition and mutual social recognition (Goffman 1963: Chapter 7). To be cognitively acquainted with someone is at least to *know* them – i.e. to be able to recognize them in a range of salient contexts – not just to *know about* them. In that sense I know Tony Blair but he does not know me. Furthermore, neither of us would show any *social* recognition of the other if we passed in the street. I would not greet him and he would not acknowledge my greeting. Nor would he be likely to respond to my conversational overtures. And these behavioural dispositions reflect the normative situation between us. It is inappropriate for us to greet the other and TB need not accede to requests for face time.

Let's suppose we meet at a party and have a long conversation. TB now knows who I am, or at least he ought to know who I am when we bump into each other in the street the very next day. Mutual cognitive recognition is expected and a certain amount of social recognition is now in order. Being well mannered, TB will return my greeting with a look of recognition on his face and he won't feel able to refuse me a brief word. This new willingness to engage reflects a change in the normative situation. Today it is appropriate for each of us to do various things which would have been inappropriate only yesterday and inappropriate for us to do what would have been appropriate only yesterday.

Even in this caricature of acquaintanceship, we have the essential elements of a developing involvement. An involvement is a dynamic syndrome of attitudes, of behaviour which expresses (or purports to express) those attitudes and of norms which govern both attitudes and behaviour. In acquaintanceship the crucial (though not the only) attitude is mutual recognition. One need have no particular affection for one's acquaintances but one should have some grasp of and willingness to acknowledge their unique position in the

social world, given that they have some grasp of yours. Greeting and conversational interaction are expressions of the expected recognition. Of course, TB may not be in a position to give me that sort of recognition, even after our conversation. He may realize that he ought to know me, inferring this either from my vaguely familiar face or my confident manner of approach and in that case it *may* be appropriate for him to feign recognition – i.e. to purport to express the required attitude – or at least to replace the blank look on his face with a more non-committal expression while he works out who I am.

The same dynamic syndrome of attitude, expressive action and norm is at work in other involvements. Appropriate behaviour is valued as an expression of the expected attitude, one sensibly valued by the person so recognised. Guests, hosts, neighbours and conversational partners want to be seen and treated as such. Friendship is perhaps the most difficult case due to its rich emotional underlay and the consequent complexity and variety of the relevant norms. No adequate treatment can be given here but a brief glance reveals similar elements at work.

First, a friend should have certain attitudes. For example, where someone is your friend it is appropriate to hope they get the job they are applying for and wish to have. By contrast it would usually be quite inappropriate to hope that some stranger will get it instead, or to feel indifferent about the prospect. None of this need involve the judgement that it would be better for the job to go to one's friend rather than to some stranger (Scanlon 2008: 132). You might even doubt that getting the job would be good for your friend. But now they have set their heart on it, it is appropriate for you to adopt a supportive attitude.[2]

Second, a friend should express these friendly attitudes in appropriate ways. One way of expressing a friendly attitude here *might* be to offer material assistance but such offers raise delicate issues, even where you are quite confident that the project needing support is a sensible one. Putting in a good word for your friend is one thing, offering to pay their way to the interview is quite another. This offer *may* be insulting, and insulting precisely because it comes from a friend and not an anonymous benefactor. Friendships have been poisoned by gifts that were freely given and accepted and where no reciprocation was expected but where the gift undermined the dignity of the receiver in the eyes of them

[2] Provided it is a good thing that which job they apply for be up them, which it usually is for all the reasons to be outlined in Chapter 7. Having the choice can be a good thing even if the thing chosen is not.

both. Of course, the kinds of help it is appropriate to offer and accept will change over time as the relationship deepens or decays. Attitude, behavioural disposition and applicable norm all evolve in tandem: people who start to keep in touch, begin to want to keep in touch and come to feel they ought to keep in touch, all of a piece.

I've spoken of the norms which govern our involvements as rendering certain attitudes and forms of behaviour *appropriate*. To say these things are appropriate is to say that they are *apt* in the sense laid down in Chapter 1: they are valuable attitudes and actions within a friendship. This value shapes the normative situation in two rather different ways, by generating either reasons or obligations. Where feelings and attitudes are in question, the value of the friendship generates only *reasons*. I have reason to hope that my friend will get the job and reason not to be indifferent. If I feel indifferent then I am, in that respect, not a good friend and I may well be blamed for my indifference, if it is discovered, or I feel guilty if not. When action is at issue, friendship can give us reason to behave in a certain way e.g. to help out when asked to do so. But a friend can also *oblige* us to help, as when Tim asks me to help him to move.

One might doubt that talk of obligation is in place either here or in the case of other involvements. Is TB really *obliged* to return my greeting, is he *wronging* me if he responds with a blank look? As we saw in the last chapter, obligation has two elements. Firstly, Tim and others can blame me if I don't help out: Tim will resent my refusal and others may feel indignant on his behalf. And there is a second element: obligation presents a demand and not mere a recommendation. In the context of our friendship, Tim's request for help in moving house surely places a demand on me; helping Tim would not just be the best thing to do, it is required of me in the circumstances. Both elements of obligation seem clearly present in acquaintanceship also. TB may regard my approach as placing an unwelcome demand on him and if he decides to snub me, he should anticipate resentment.

These are commonplace observations but they may not address the source of the worry. I claimed that friendly actions are valued as expressions of friendly attitudes. Is this plausible claim really consistent with the idea that we are *obliged* to perform certain actions out of friendship? If actions performed out of friendship are valued as the expression of certain feelings, how can we be obliged to perform these actions unless we are also obliged to have the relevant feelings? And can we really be under an obligation to *feel* a certain

way? To return to our example, one has reason to hope that one's friend get the job. To lack this hope is to be a poor friend and one may be blamed for this. As argued in Chapter 1, feelings, beliefs and attitudes are all appropriately blamed. Nevertheless you are not *obliged* to hope that your friend succeeds: this cannot be demanded of you (Scanlon 2008: 132). As argued in Chapter 3, you lack the right sort of control over your hopes and fears to respond to such a demand.

I agree that one is under no obligation to feel a certain way. Nor do I think that TB is obliged to remember who I am. But I do think that TB may be obliged to show recognition of me, to purport to express the knowledge which he ought to have in virtue of having met me. This display of respect for me is an obligation of acquaintanceship. Of course, I value such a display of respect because I also value genuine recognition: it would be perverse not to care whether TB really did recognize me. But it would be equally perverse not to wish TB to save my face by feigning recognition whilst he tries to work out who I am. Realising that he doesn't recognize me, I still appreciate this courtesy, a courtesy he is obliged to display. Similarly for friendship. Tim will expect me to help him move regardless of whether I am able to summon up the right sort of concern for him at that particular moment.

So what is the difference between being under an obligation to do something for a friend and merely have a reason to do it? I may have good reason to buy Tim a very nice birthday present. This would be an appropriate expression of our friendship. But I'm unlikely to feel *obliged* to do this whilst I do feel obliged to accede to his request for help in moving house. One difference here is that I won't be blamed for failing to buy him a nice present but, as we have seen, one can be blamed for things that cannot be the subject of obligations or demands. So what is involved in my being subject to the demand that I help Tim move house?

Suppose I bump into a perfect stranger in the street who is in the process of moving house and who very politely asks for my help moving their sofa. Suppose also that I am under no independent obligation to help: the sofa isn't blocking the street, help will arrive in due course etc. In this situation, helping would still be a nice thing to do but I can quite legitimately consult my own convenience (or recall the risk of injury) and decline. The request doubtless makes a difference but it imposes no obligation on me. I weigh the

reasons in favour of sticking to my plan for the day against those which suggest agreeing to the request and take a view.

What is the difference between Tim's request and the stranger's? One might suppose that Tim's request simply provides a reason which is more weighty and therefore more likely to outweigh my own convenience. That is true of many of Tim's requests but it doesn't really capture what is special about those of his requests that impose obligations. Some of Tim's requests have the special character of a demand and, as I explained in the last chapter, a demand purports to take the decision out of my hands.

The stranger should have no problem with my consulting my own convenience and working out what to do by weighing my interests against his. He should not expect me to defer to his judgement in the matter of whether I ought to help him. I can make my own mind up about that. But Tim would be offended if I treated this particular request of his as one consideration to be weighed against *all* the other relevant considerations, even as a weighty consideration. For example, he'll think it inappropriate for me to take reasons of mere convenience into account when deciding whether to honor his request. In deciding what to do, I shouldn't consider them at all. After all Tim, my friend, has *asked* me to do it (not just expressed a wish that I do it) and he wouldn't have done that if he thought that my convenience in this matter might be more important than his. In asking for help he expects me not to second-guess his own judgement on the point.

Two qualifications. First, Tim wouldn't expect that all considerations counting against the fulfillment of his request be excluded from my deliberations. Only some requests impose obligations and those which do exclude only some of relevant considerations. The scope of this exclusion will vary from request to request, a function of its urgency, who is making is and so forth. For example, the need to study for an important examination is likely not excluded by Tim's request and should be weighed in the balance. Second, the reasons which are excluded by Tim's request remain genuine reasons and should be treated as such except for the purposes of practical deliberation. So, for example, it is perfectly appropriate for me to regret the day at the beach which I must sacrifice in order to help Tim move and to hope that the move will be called off. The friendly attitude on which Tim relies in making his request is not one of perfect benevolence or heedless

self-sacrifice. Rather it is a willingness to discount my personal convenience in my thinking about whether to agree.[3]

Am I making it sound as if Tim is in a position to *order* me to help him? Wouldn't that be rather presumptuous of him? The worry is well founded but we mustn't confuse commands with demands. Tim is in a position to demand help from me: 'You've *got* to show up' he might say. Here he is demanding my compliance with an obligation created by his request. But the way a request creates an obligation is rather different from the way in which a command creates an obligation. A command imposes an obligation on me by communicating the intention of hereby imposing that obligation. For Tim to do that would indeed be an affront. That is not what he is doing. Rather he is making a request, that is communicating the intention of hereby giving me a reason to do something. In making his request, Tim may intend to impose an obligation but communicating *this* intention to me would be mere impudence and would do nothing to bind me. It is the nature of our friendship which turns his request into a demand, which gives the reason it creates the force of an obligation, not Tim's will.

We've established that friendship and other involvements impose obligations in that they render both blame reactions and certain constraints on practical deliberation appropriate. How exactly does the aptness of these patterns of blame and deliberation depend on our choices?

18. Choice and Obligations of Involvement

People choose their friends. They also choose their guests, their acquaintances, their neighbours and their conversational partners. These social roles come with a raft of obligations and the fact that these roles are chosen is crucial to an understanding of the associated obligations. Equally crucial is the fact that these roles are socially defined, that

[3] Other obligations of involvement work in much the same way as those of friendship. You are hosting a party. In many circles it would be impermissible to refuse to serve your guests more alcohol even though it is obvious they have had a bit more to drink than is good for them (Foot 1978: 184). By contrast, it is perfectly permissible to refuse money for drink to a person in the street who would clearly benefit from staying sober. The relevant qualifications are in order. You are entitled to refuse when your guests start menacing the neighbours or just fall over. Furthermore, you won't compromise your name as a good host by hoping that they'll soon stop and by being pleased when they do. But it is impertinent to hesitate to serve them whilst they remain capable of making up their own mind.

people enter into them by selecting from a menu. I'll comment briefly on the social character of obligations of involvement and then turn to their choice-dependence.

Obligations of involvement exist where individuals acquire habits of recognizing those obligations but these individuals are tapping into established patterns of feeling and behaviour. Habits of recognition arising between isolated individuals would be quite unlike those which sustain the involvements known to and valued by us. The norms of contemporary friendship are dense and subtle. There are rules determining whether someone would be an appropriate friend, when a friendship with them has begun or ended, what gifts are appropriate, how much social contact is expected, and many other things. Most of us would find it impossible to articulate these rules, though we know well enough when they are violated.

The density and subtlety of the norms of friendship is part of what makes friendship valuable and so part of what gives these norms their authority. Think of the rich variety of expectations that come with the inauguration and development of a friendship. A form of friendship concocted *ex nihilo* by two people even over decades would be thin and unsatisfying by comparison. True, individual friends select from a menu of friendships – close or distant, work or recreational, long-term or short-term etc. – and they may add or remove elements from particular options but these are variations on a social theme. (Raz 1979: 254-5, 1986: 311-13, 1989: 19-20). So, when I speak of an involvement as being underwritten by habits of recognition, the habit of recognising any particular norm of involvement need not be present in a given individual for that individual to fall under that norm.

Contrast the way social habits and expectations fix the character of obligations of involvement with the rather different role they play in determining the content of our promissory obligations. If I promise to deliver a TV set to your house tomorrow and then leave the set disassembled at the bottom of your drive at midnight, I have not fulfilled my promise though neither of us discussed at exactly what place or time or in exactly what state the TV would be delivered. Here the social background against which we both operate fills out the content of my promise by providing a set of shared understandings as to what would be involved in my doing what I say I am going to do. And it does so even though

neither of us invoked it. Nevertheless, this background does not constrain us in the way that it constrains those who wish to form a friendship.

Should I want the option of delivering the TV set disassembled at midnight etc. I can give myself that option by explicit stipulation when I make the promise and you can agree. By promising people can bind themselves to behave in almost any permissible manner towards one another but these bonds would not constitute an involvement as I understand it. Not only would they lack the density and subtlety of the bonds of friendship, the force of these obligations would derive from the communicated intentions of the parties and not from the supposed value of the relationship they helped to constitute. The ambient social background might well elucidate the promissory obligations constitutive of this invented relationship by helping us to interpret the relevant promises but it would not supply those constitutive norms themselves.

As I'll argue in more detail below, one does not establish a friendship (as one makes a promise) by communicating the intention of undertaking the obligations of friendship. So in what sense are those obligations chosen? Obligations of involvement possess what I called (in the Introduction) the second grade of choice-dependence, that is to say these obligations are a foreseen and avoidable consequence of what one chooses to do (Raz 1982: 929). One need not intend to become someone's friend but if one does become their friend, one does so intentionally.[4] For example, I find myself taking the bus home from work with a certain colleague. Perhaps this colleague isn't someone I would have singled out from the others for special intimacy; friendship with him is not something I'm aiming for. Still in the course of our conversations and exchanges of small favours, a friendship grows up between us. We're not soul mates but we get along well enough and the mere fact of having spent this time together changes things between us. With more or less enthusiasm, I become his friend i.e. acquire the feelings, attitudes and vulnerabilities of a friend. This result could have been avoided: I could have taken a less convenient bus or contrived not to meet him at the bus stop and so forth. In deciding not to do these things, I allowed a relationship to develop which imposes various obligations on us both. We are not close but we do now

[4] This is a further point of contrast between both obligations of reciprocation and due care for expectations on the one hand and obligations of involvement on the other. As noted in the Introduction, whilst you can unintentionally incur a debt of gratitude or induce an expectation in someone else that you must now fulfill, you can't unintentionally become someone's friend.

matter to one another and I now owe him various forms of aid and concern that I don't owe the bulk of my colleagues.

I said earlier that involvements such as friendship are dynamic syndromes of norm, attitude and behaviour. These syndromes are socially defined packages whose elements can't be prised apart at will. To behave in a certain way (e.g. have a series of relaxed chats with someone) is to buy into the package, is to make it the case that further attitudes are appropriate or inappropriate and new forms of behaviour permissible or obligatory. The elements of the package are tied together not by contractual commitments or principles of reciprocation but because, as a whole, they constitute a valuable and socially recognised form of human involvement.[5]

Involvements like friendship are chosen in that one can avoid getting into them. One can also choose whether to end a friendship. Again termination is not (like divorce) an exercise of a normative power. One does not end a friendship by communicating the intention of hereby releasing either oneself or the other party from the obligations of friendship. Rather where a friendship is ended this is because one does what one knows will loosen the bonds of friendship. One decides to take a different bus home. Or, having changed jobs, one simply fails to keep in touch.[6]

The choice-dependence of friendship is a matter of degree. You might be only dimly aware that in riding the bus home with a colleague you are creating various bonds. And even when fully aware of this, the cost of avoiding this result, of getting another bus or of declining your colleague's conversational overtures may be rather substantial. Similarly, it may be difficult to end a friendship and a friendship may lapse without either party having decided to end it but they can't both be completely unaware of the fact that their actions and omissions will have this result. The bonds of friendship depend on its being chosen to at least some extent and the closeness of those bonds is a function of how willingly the friendship is created and sustained, amongst other things.

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[5] Take neighbourliness. Perhaps I want to be neighbourly in order to establish a babysitting relationship but the conventions of neighbourliness require that an exchange of babysitting favours brings with it the obligation to listen patiently to your neighbour's troubles over the garden fence. (Raz 1982: 929).

[6] Where my friendship is betrayed I may have a choice between either forgiving my friend or breaking off the friendship but a choice of this sort is available after the violation of many choice-independent obligations and is not what gives friendship its distinctive value.

I am not denying that, in certain circumstances, people can be obliged to become friends and, not infrequently, one finds oneself having to continue a friendship because one can't break it off without wronging one's friend. [7] Nevertheless, friendship is choice dependent in that one *can* always decide not to be someone's friend or to break off a friendship and thereby ensure that one no longer has the obligations *of a friend*. Indeed, one can be obliged to create or sustain a friendship only because one has a choice about whether to do so. This is consistent with the fact that in declining to be someone's friend one may be wronging the other party in so doing and wronging them by violating one of the norms surrounding friendship.

There is more to be said about the choice-dependence of obligations of involvement. In particular, we should ask whether the involvement must be *freely* or *voluntarily* chosen in order to generate obligation. It is a commonplace that a promise extracted by coercion or deception does not bind. Would coercion or deception also sap the bonds of friendship? I shall address this point in Chapter 10. It is the general basis of choice-dependent obligation which concerns us now. Should we assimilate obligations of involvement to forms of choice-dependent obligation already familiar to us (e.g. promissory obligation) or is there a distinctive mechanism which generates obligations of involvement?

19. The Genealogy of Obligations of Involvement

Why do we value friendship? A very common thought is that friends have a special concern for each other's well being, for how well our lives are going. On this view, such benevolent concern plays the role in friendship that recognition plays acquaintanceship: it is the attitude around which the relationship is constructed. Meeting a request for assistance, showing support and approval of the friend's endeavours, keeping in touch, all further our friend's interests in obvious ways. And there is no mystery about why a relationship of mutual benefaction should be valued. But if we view friendship in this light, we need a story about how the obligations of friendship arise from the activity of benefaction.

[7] See Chapter 2 on the similarity on this point between friendship and forgiveness. One can be obliged to make someone a promise even though promissory obligation is has an even higher grade of choice-dependence than do obligations of involvement.

What I'll call the *benefactor-plus model* sets out to provide it.[8] There are two elements to the story. First, the special concern you have for your friend is assumed to be a concern for things whose value is independent of the value of the friendship. On this view, what makes friendship valuable is one friend's concern for the other friend's friendship-independent interests. It does not follow that our interest in friendship is purely instrumental. We might well value being in a relationship of mutual concern for it own sake. The point is rather that the *content* of the concern we have for one another is independent of the friendship between us.[9]

Rousseau tells us 'benevolence and even friendship are, properly understood, the products of a constant pity fixed on a particular object' (1987: 54). Anyone sympathetic to Rousseau will be inclined to endorse our first assumption. The benevolent person's attention is focused on meeting the needs of the object of their benevolence. Whether or not benevolence is valuable for its own sake, the idea that a given deed would be benevolent is not required to move the benevolent person to perform it (Hume 1978: 478). So if friendship is a form of benevolence (so understood), the friend's attention should also be fixed on the needs of their friend. The idea that this deed would be an expression of friendship should not be necessary to move the friend to perform it.

Where does obligation come in here? A second element of the benefactor-plus model explains how the obligations of friendship are grafted onto the activity of benefaction.[10] The bonds of friendship are explained by invoking mechanisms of obligation generation that can be understood quite independently of friendship (or other forms of

[8] Something like the benefactor-plus model informs Rawls's discussion of friendship. Rawls hypothesizes that friendship arises when we come across people who manifest a concern for our 'well being'. Such good will tends to generate 'fellow feeling' and a 'desire to reciprocate' (Rawls 1999: 433). In Rawls's view, these feelings and desires are 'natural' sentiments but once we begin to trust others to act upon such feelings, this gives rise to what Rawls calls a 'morality of association'. We start to feel obliged to further the interests of others as they further our own and at this point our sentiments acquire a 'moral' character (Rawls 1999: 425).

[9] The benefactor plus model is a member of a class of views 'which treat friendship as a higher-level intrinsic good, one which involves appropriate attitudes to other previously given goods and evils, or more generally to other previously given normative considerations' (2006: 233-4). Hurka gives the example of Moore who thought that the good of friendship consists in admiration of the fine qualities of one's friend (Moore 1959: 203?). My arguments against the benefactor plus model are meant to suggest that the obligations of friendship can't be derived from considerations 'previously given' whether normative or evaluative.

[10] Sidgwick treats duties of politeness, neighbourliness and friendship as modifications of a general duty of benevolence (Sidgwick 1981: Book III, Chapter 4). On the other hand, someone like Rousseau would be suspicious of the whole idea that friendship binds, that friends can make demands on one another (Rousseau 2004: 103-4). For Rousseau, the value of friendly action depends on it being the sincere expression of friendly feeling, feeling which cannot be demanded of us.

involvement). We are thereby led to treat obligations of involvement as either promissory obligations or as obligations of reciprocation or as obligations of due care for expectations. Such obligations are a normal by-product of the creation and development of a friendship and are, to that extent, part of the typical friendship. In this section I shall concentrate on this second element of the benefactor-plus model, on its attempt to reduce obligations of involvement to these other forms of chosen obligation. I'll return to the issue of whether the concerns of a friend are friendship-independent later on.

Any plausible model of how obligations of friendship arise must acknowledge the crucial importance of what people have already done in generating obligations of friendship. As we have seen, history and practice operate at two levels: the social and the individual. Social practice determines the available forms of friendship, the menu from which individual friends must choose. But particular friendships evolve out of the choices people make and the habits they fall into. Can the benefactor-plus model explain how this happens?

On the benefactor-plus model, the essence of friendship is a special concern for the well being of one's friend. Acts of friendship are valued as expressions of that concern. That concern may be rooted in further attitudes like shared tastes and values, mutual admiration or even love but, on the benefactor-plus model, these are relevant to the value of friendship only in so far as they generate this special concern. Normally this concern does not arise at once, nor are we born with it. Tim and I must get to know one another and it is in the process of getting to know one another that the attitudes and feelings characteristic of friendship arise between us. Though this is the usual case, the benefactor-plus model seems to allow for the possibility of friendship without history, of people who possess the required attitudes without having got to know one another. Are such people really subject to the obligations of friendship?

Suppose Tim and I, after consulting the database of 'Make Friends Inc.', have taken a 'friendship pill' which generates a battery of friendly feelings and attitudes towards one another. When we meet for the first time Tim immediately asks me to help him move house next weekend. Given the efficacy of the pill, I might well be inclined to agree out of concern for Tim. Furthermore, I might well think it appropriate for me to agree. Because Tim and I know that, from now on, we can rely on one another for help and support it may

be appropriate for me to offer and for him to accept forms of help which are otherwise inappropriate. If so, the friendship pill has changed the normative situation between us by giving us reasons to act and to feel which we did not have before. But why would I think of myself as *obliged* to help Tim? Given that I have never met Tim before I could feel no obligation of *loyalty* to help him out. That requires a certain history. Tim is in no position to *demand* that I help out of loyalty to our friendship, though he may expect me to be moved to help by knowledge of our shared feelings.

Obligations of friendship arise once people have *formed the habit* of recognizing such obligations.[11] I am obliged to call Tim on his birthday because we are both in the habit of recognizing such an obligation, that is we have on a sufficient number of occasions manifested a disposition to call one another, or at least to give making such a call a priority, or at least to feel guilt and accept blame if we don't. Or else we have acquired other habits of recognition which imply this obligation given the social context in which we are both operating. A pill might facilitate our friendship by disposing us to do what is necessary to create the obligations of friendship but no pill can make Tim and I friends. We need time to become friends. The same is true of obligations of involvement quite generally: Tony Blair must already have acknowledged me before he becomes obliged to acknowledge me. Obligations of involvement involve habits of recognition.[12]

An advocate of the benefactor-plus model must agree that obligations of friendship cannot arise from benevolent attitudes alone; history matters. He may still resist the proposal I just made, arguing that such obligations can arise from the activity of benefaction by means of obligation-generating mechanisms which are not specific to friendship and whose existence does not depend on the relevant individual's habits of recognizing those obligations but which are nevertheless sensitive to the history of the interactions between those they bind. For example, one might hope to reduce obligations of involvement to either (a) promissory obligations or (b) obligations of reciprocation or (c)

[11] I examine the notion of a habit further in Chapter 6. It is worth noting that the habits of recognition constitutive of friendship need not be of longstanding to generate obligations. Beyond that I'm very uncertain about the role of time in friendship. Does time alone deepen the obligations of friendship? We often invoke the fact that someone is an 'old friend' to explain why we go out of our way for them but it might not be the sheer passage of time that we have in mind here.

[12] Note the formation of habits of recognition is necessary rather than sufficient for the creation of a valuable, obligation-generating social form (Raz 1986: 310). Oppressive or unhealthy forms of involvement may generate no obligations even if they are widely recognised.

obligations of due care for expectations. I shall spend the rest of the section exploring these three possibilities.

Might obligations implicit in a particular friendship be promissory obligations, be obligations that the friends took on by communicating the intention to undertake these obligations? This suggestion gains purchase from the fact that friends, neighbours, hosts and guests do make each other promises, some of which are appropriately offered and accepted only within the context of the relevant relationship. Promises between friends can both express the friendship and also deepen it by binding the friends more closely together. So, it might seem, at least some and perhaps all of the obligations constitutive of a particular involvement could be promissory obligations.

To retain its plausibility, this suggestion must be modified to take account of the fact that not everyone can take on obligations of *friendship* simply by communicating the intention so to do (Raz 1979: 257): 'Let's be friends' signals the start, not the end of a process. Suppose that promissory obligations count as obligations of friendship only when the promise was given as an expression of a friendly concern, one which has probably evolved over time. Imagine that I am obliged to phone Tim on his birthday because Tim and I have promised to make such calls and since this promise was an expression of our friendly feelings, it is now a part of our particular friendship. Here we have one way in which obligations of friendship might be grafted onto benevolent activity. We see also how obligations of friendship might be extinguished as well as created, how a betrayal of friendship can destroy the relationship it betrays. A friendship might involve an exchange of conditional promises to behave a certain way provided the other party does so too. If so, the effect of my breach of obligation is not just to wrong one's friend but also to release them from their obligations. Given that our friendship is, in part, constituted by such obligations, my wrongdoing tends to destroy the very relationship which makes what I am doing wrong.

There is some truth to the promissory model of obligations of friendship. A promise can be an important way of expressing friendship and at least some obligations of friendship do start life as promissory obligations. Nevertheless I doubt that any obligation of friendship *is* a promissory obligation. Take my obligation to call Tim on his birthday. If this is something I owe him as a friend then it is not something I owe him in virtue of the

fact that I once undertook to call him on his birthday. Perhaps I did, perhaps I didn't but if this obligation is now part of our friendship then it no longer depends on whether such an event occurred, rather it depends on the particular character and value of our friendship. I should be calling Tim out of loyalty to our friendship, not because of some past undertaking and if the past undertaking were completely forgotten, I would still be obliged to call for just this reason.

It is the same with the related phenomenon of consent, at least where consent is understood as involving the communication of an intention hereby to permit someone to do something.[13] The existence of a close friendship between A and B may consist partly in the following fact, that A can ask B personal questions which a mere stranger could not. It might also be true that, at some less intimate stage in the relationship, B consented to A's asking him personal questions, though this is unusual. In any case what now entitles A to ask such questions is the value of their having the intimate relationship that they do, not the fact of any past consent. Contrast the relationship between B and his divorce lawyer. If B objects to the lawyer asking him personal questions, the lawyer can simply point out that B agreed to have him play a certain role which includes being permitted to ask such questions. The crucial fact here is that B did something – signed a contract or walked into his office – and thereby communicated the intention of giving the lawyer that role.

Let's now turn to the second proposal. Anyone who thinks of friendship as a form of benevolence might hope to graft the obligations of friendship onto the activity of benefaction by treating them as obligations of reciprocation. Clearly such obligations exist and exist between friends. The giving and receiving of gifts and other forms of aid are standard ways of expressing friendship. Since many gifts are appropriate only in the context of friendship, there are obligations of reciprocation which can arise only in that context. To a lesser degree this is true of neighbourliness and even acquaintanceship. Nevertheless, I think we should distinguish obligations of reciprocation arising within an involvement from obligations constitutive of the involvement itself. One worry might be that the value of many of the gifts which oil the wheels of friendship is largely or even entirely relationship-dependent (memorabilia, confidences etc.) but I'll focus on a different point.

[13] (Raz 1986: 87-8) says that consents are a 'constitutive element' in personal relations and such consents are validated by the value of those relationships but Raz's notion of consent may well be different from my own. See Chapter 7.

I now feel obliged to call Tim on his birthday because Tim has begun to call me on my birthday. Is this an obligation of reciprocation like the obligation I owe to a stranger who finds my wallet and goes to some trouble to return it? When I send the stranger a nice present, I might well think of myself as discharging a debt, a debt of gratitude. Whether or not my gift suffices, there is such a thing as discharging a debt of gratitude and once this is done, this particular relationship is at an end. Indeed, the gift may be given on the understanding that there will be no further contact. By contrast, when I ask myself whether I should call Tim on his birthday, I probably won't be thinking of myself as having incurred a debt when I took Tim's call on my birthday, a debt which I can now discharge by calling him. Rather I ought to call Tim because Tim and I have cultivated a friendship which involves calling each other on our birthdays and I should call him out of loyalty to that friendship.[14]

I don't deny that requirements of friendship can begin as obligations of reciprocation. If Tim buys me an especially nice birthday present, one above and beyond the call of duty (but not so much so that I can't accept it) I may feel obliged to reciprocate. But, at least on the first occasion, I am likely to think of this reciprocation as having re-established the *status quo*. Neither of us is obliged to persist. However, if Tim goes on doing things above and beyond the call of duty I shall begin to think of reciprocation less as a matter of discharging debts and more as a matter of accepting a deepening of our involvement. The demands of this relationship get their normative force from the value of the relationship they constitute, not from the friendship-independent value of the benefits received within it.

Similar points can be made about the decay of friendship. If I don't call Tim on his birthday, Tim may think that he no longer needs to call me on mine but he will think this only if he thinks of my failure (perhaps together with other lapses) as having changed the nature of our relationship. Several missed birthday calls on my part might have precisely this effect but, on the first occasion, it is more likely Tim will think we are still obliged to call the other out of loyalty to our friendship just as we were before, my failure to call notwithstanding.

[14] A related point is made by (Kolodny forthcoming).

The idea that obligations of involvement are obligations of reciprocation owes its plausibility to the fact that they share a reciprocal structure. In each case, I should behave in a certain way towards you because you have behaved in a certain way towards me. But this similarity conceals an important difference. In the case of obligations of reciprocation the focus is on responding to a particular action or series of actions whereas with obligations of involvement, the significance of these past actions is that they have created a valuable relationship, a relationship in part constituted by the existence of certain obligations.

Finally, let's examine the idea that obligations of involvement are rooted in our obligation to take due care when we cause others to form expectations about how we are going to behave in the future (Mill 1991: 197), (Sidgwick 1981: 258). Where obligations of friendship exist, so do expectations of performance. Once Tim and I have made a few birthday calls, or honored several request for help we tend to expect each other to do this sort of thing. And if either of us ceases to call or to help out, these expectations decay and so do the obligations associated with them. But this does not establish that when one has an obligation of friendship to do these things, this obligation has its source in expectations of performance. Rather, I suggest, obligations of friendship are generated by certain patterns of past behaviour, behaviour which may *also* induce expectations which one is obliged to take due care not to disappoint.

It is obvious that our past behaviour affects what people expect us to do in the future and it is equally clear that we do sometimes wrong them by carelessly inducing false expectations on which they come to rely. Still, I can often exercise due care for another's expectations simply by giving them a timely warning before their expectations are disappointed whilst I can't discharge an obligation of friendship simply by warning my friend that things are not going to be as he has come to expect. For example, were my obligation to call Tim based solely on expectations induced by my past behaviour, I could often discharge this obligation simply by letting Tim know that I won't call. But if I am obliged to call out of friendship, merely informing Tim that I'm not going to will hardly get me off the hook. Thus my obligation to call is clearly distinct from my obligation to take due care of Tim's expectation that I will call.

I have allowed that obligations are very often accompanied by expectations of performance but 'often' is not 'always' and where the connection fails, we have obligations

of friendship without any expectation of performance. Suppose Tim has little faith that I will remember his birthday this year since I am currently so distracted. Still, he may rightly resent my not calling even though he had no expectation that I would. What he resents here is my failure to respect our friendship, not my failure to respect his need for correct information about how I shall behave in the future.

In this section, I've argued that obligations of friendship (and of involvement more generally) derive their binding force from the distinctive value of the underlying relationship. What grounds an obligation of involvement is the choice-dependent value of that involvement. The choice in question is obligation-generating not in virtue of some relationship-independent principle (like that requiring us to keep faith or reciprocate) but because it creates a relationship with a distinctive sort of value. So what sort of value must a relationship have for it to generate obligations of involvement? In the next section, I reject one answer to that question before presenting my own in the final section.

20. Obligation and the Value of Involvement

By rooting the obligations of involvement in the value of involvement we are starting from a relatively secure base. Few would deny that a normal friendship is a valuable relationship, one that enriches the lives of the friends and it would be surprising if the bonds of friendship derived no support from this fact. Some might imagine that the value of friendship comes from its instrumental benefits – the provision of advice, help and amusement – but one can get all of this by paying for it. Getting it from a friend out of friendship has a value all of its own. No one would wish to discover that the people they thought were their friends were helping or keeping in touch for some other reason (even if that reason were disinterested benevolence).

What about those other involvements which give rise to such obligations like acquaintanceship and conversational interaction? Is each conversation in which we participate or each acquaintance we make something of value, something which enriches our lives? Qualifications are needed. 'The more the better' does not apply. People vary greatly in how many acquaintances or conversations they need and the same is true of friendship. Furthermore, just as there are bad friends whom we would be better off without

so there are annoying acquaintances and boring conversations. Some may regard all acquaintanceship and conversation for its own sake as a mere distraction but such people are in this respect limited, like those who don't see the point of music (Raz 1986: 352-3). Still, it might sound a bit portentous to describe a brief conversational interaction with a complete stranger a relationship valuable for its own sake, generating obligations in the same manner as friendship. I agree that the value of any individual conversation or acquaintanceship is likely to be much less than that of any particular friendship, which is why their demands are so much lighter. But I do maintain that the normal acquaintanceship or conversation is a positive contribution to one's life. And such involvements, taken as a whole, rival friendship in importance.[15]

It is good for us if there are people who acknowledge us and whom we acknowledge; we are usually doing someone a small favour by becoming their acquaintance and are similarly favoured by their acquaintanceship. We may deny this favour to those who don't deserve it. It is also good to have conversational partners, not just because of information or amusement value – you can often get that more effectively by overhearing someone else's conversation – but because one values the recognition involved in being part of a conversation.

Given all this, how might the value of an involvement generate obligations of involvement? Here is one way of forging a connection. First, assume that having value is a matter of being rightly valued. Second, assume that to value something for its own sake is to treat it as giving you reasons to think, feel and act in various ways. Third, argue that at least some of these reasons amount to obligations.

Several writers maintain that to value a relationship of yours is to treat it as giving you *reasons* to feel and act in certain ways, reasons which those not so involved lack. Suppose I value my friendship with Tim. Then I must think of it as giving me certain reasons I would otherwise lack. Among these will be reasons to cultivate and preserve our

[15] Friendship tends to hog the limelight but, as Goffman says of conversation, 'It is this spark, not the more obvious kinds of love, that lights up the world' (1963: 113). (Gilbert 2008: 101-15) identifies a source of chosen obligation distinct from any discussed so far. She argues that those who participate in joint activities like walking together, conversing or even quarreling acquire an obligation to play their assigned role in the joint activity and wrong their fellow participants should they fail. I can't assess Gilbert's interesting proposal here but it is worth noting that the normative significance of Gilbert's activities is supposed to depend on their involving a joint commitment and not on their having any value, whilst my obligations of involvement stem from the value of the involvement.

friendship, to protect it against threats and to ensure that it flourishes. But, in Scanlon's view, reasons focused on the involved rather than the involvement are more central to the case:

> A person who values friendship will take herself to have reasons, first and foremost, to do things that are involved in being a good friend: to be loyal, to be concerned with her friend's interests, to try to stay in touch, to spend time with her friends, and so on. (Scanlon 1998: 88)

I can't be your friend unless you are my friend too. One enjoys the benefits of friendship not only by having a friend but also by being a friend i.e. by seeing your friend's needs as a reason to help and so forth (Scanlon 1998: 123-4, 161-2), (Scanlon 2008: 132-3), (Raz: 1989: 18-21).

Scheffler generalises Scanlon's point:

> to value one's relationship to another person non-instrumentally just is, in part, to be disposed to treat that person's needs, interests and desires as providing one with reasons for action, reasons that one would not have had in the absence of the relationship. (Scheffler 2004: 247; Scheffler 1997: 196)

And Scheffler goes further, arguing that relationships valuable for their own sake generate obligations. Recall that an obligation has two features that distinguish it from a run of the mill reason. First, obligations have a special role to play in practical deliberation. Second, breach of an obligation makes you vulnerable to blame reactions. Scheffler claims that the sort of reasons generated by a non-instrumentally valuable relationship impose 'special responsibilities' which have both features. First, they generate 'presumptively decisive reasons' for action (Scheffler 1997: 196) and second breach of them makes one 'an appropriate object of reactive attitudes like resentment' (2004: 267):

> to value our relationship *is*, in part, to see myself as having such responsibilities … the existence of a relationship that one has reason to value is itself the source of special responsibilities (Scheffler 1997: 201)

So what it is about such relationships which generates 'special responsibilities'?

Scheffler does not pretend to offer us a full answer but he does suggest that relationship-dependent reasons constitute obligations because such reasons are shared reasons. "Valued human relationships" generate "structures of interlocking reasons" (Scheffler 2004: 269). Friends co-create a valuable relationship and what makes reasons of friendship special is their reciprocal structure. The requirement of reciprocity here may be motivated by contrasting friendship with fanship (Scanlon 1998: 89-90, and Scheffler 1997: 198). To follow a diva's career, to attend all her concerts and strive to purchase all her merchandise and obtain her autograph is a project of a sort many people value. They might regard their fanship as a non-instrumentally valuable human connection, one which enriches their lives. Nevertheless their inflexible custom of attending their diva's concerts does not mean that they would be wronging her if they failed to show up, for the diva hasn't the slightest idea who they are.

But can we really explain why a relationship generates *obligations* simply by observing that it is interpersonal, reciprocal and has non-instrumental value?[16] Scheffler's proposal looks like the benefactor-plus model without its second stage. He endorses the idea that a friend is primarily focused on serving the needs and interests of their friends and then claims that friendship so understood brings obligation in tow without the need for any intervening mechanism. Rather obligation arises directly from the non-instrumental value of a reciprocal, inter-personal relationship. But this would be satisfactory only if *all* the reasons generated by the value of such relationships constituted obligations and this seems not to be so. I have reason to buy Tim an extra nice birthday present – I would be a better friend if I did – but I am not obliged to buy him such a present. I also have reason to accede to any reasonable request Tim makes of me but only some of those requests impose

[16] These are similar to Scheffler's conditions for a valuable relationship to generate obligations or requirements (Scheffler 1997: 197-9).

obligations. How are we to explain why some of these relationship-dependent reasons constitute obligations and others do not?

Furthermore, once it is allowed that some of these relationship-dependent reasons do not constitute obligations, one might wonder why it *must* be the case that any of the reasons generated by a non-instrumentally valuable, reciprocal relationship constitute obligations. Why couldn't two people be in a relationship which gave each of them reasons to behave in certain ways towards the other but where a failure to act on these reasons never amounts to their *wronging* the other person. Why couldn't it be good for them to behave in those ways in virtue of their relationship without the other party being able to *demand* this of them and *blame* them if they don't get it? Mutual benefaction might constitute such a relationship but to vary the case, consider instead an example I introduced in Chapter 1.

Rivalry is a reciprocal, non-instrumentally valuable and indeed voluntary interpersonal relationship. If I am X's rival, they are my rival. You can't have a rival who doesn't know of or care about your doings. Furthermore, rivalry has non-instrumental value. Having a good rival is often a great thing e.g. in competitive sport and not just because it makes you try harder. Healthy rivalry enriches the sport; it would be more boring and so less worthwhile without the rivalry even if people ended up running just as fast or jumping just as high. It makes life for you and the spectators more colourful and enjoyable. Rivalry is the kind of thing one *ought* to enjoy. [17] Finally, you choose your rivals in just the way you choose your friends: you can fall unwillingly into rivalry as you fall unwillingly into friendship but someone can't be your rival against your will any more than they can be your friend against your will.

Rivals have reasons which others lack: the fact that X is your rival is a special reason to defeat him. Nevertheless, the practical reasons which are central to and distinctive of rivalry do not amount to obligations. Rivals disappoint when they don't train hard, when they lack daring, when they make stupid, unworthy mistakes etc. Rivals who do this may well manifest attitudes (sloth, cowardice) which impair the relationship of rivalry. (This is different from case where rivalry ends because one of the parties ceases to value the sport,

[17] Moralists like Rousseau doubt the value of rivalry (Rousseau 1987: 68, 78) but, as we have seen, Rousseau's reformation of our mores goes well beyond the devaluation of rivalry.

like friends drifting apart). But to do this is not to *betray* the rivalry: it is not to wrong your rival by breaching some obligation of rivalry (though it may be to breach other obligations). And the apt reaction here (from both you and the spectators) is something like contempt on your part or humiliation on theirs – the counterpart to the respect you have for the good rival. You are expected to feel exasperation at rather than animosity for an unworthy rival.[18]

We noted that the requests of friends can impose obligations. In rivalry there is the challenge. A challenge is a speech act meant to give the rival a reason to take up the challenge simply by communicating the intention to do so. In this respect a challenge is just like a request. When questions of honor are at stake, challenges can be felt to impose obligations (dueling etc.) but in an ordinary relationship of rivalry, you are not wronging your rival if you fail to take up their challenge, though you may well incur their contempt or else show your own lack of regard for them as a rival.[19]

I conclude that we can't hope to explain why involvements generate obligations by reference to relatively abstract or formal features of involvements (like reciprocity or possession of non-instrumental value). We must instead tie the value of involvement to specific human interests. That is just what the benefactor plus model tried to do. We shall have more success if we drop not just one but both of the defining assumptions of that model.

21. Involvements and Deontic Interests

According to the benefactor plus model, friendship involves a concern for the friend's friendship-independent interests, interests which generate obligations of friendship via. generic obligation-generating mechanisms. I shall suggest that friendship entails obligation because the value of friendship (and of other involvements) derives in part from the value of those obligations that constitute the friendship.

[18] Perhaps a good rival is at least obliged to honor his rival, not to run him down etc. I'm not sure but, in any case, this supposed obligation and others like it seems both generic and peripheral to rivalry. I am grateful to Scheffler for discussion of this point.

[19] The case of rivalry also throws doubt on the idea that joint activities generate obligations, even where these activities are valuable for their own sake. Much rivalry consists in valuable joint activity but if I walk away from our rivalry, I need not wrong you simply in virtue of the fact that we are rivals.

Friends think about their friends, about how to help, advise or amuse them. Friends also think about their friendship, about how to become someone's friend, about how to cultivate, express and deepen a friendship they already have and about how to preserve it from various threats. In this friendship is quite unlike both benevolence and pity, the two things with which Rousseau compares it. The benevolent person has their attention fixed on the interests and well being of the object of their benevolence. They are trying to work out how to help, not how to be benevolent. Indeed a benevolent person might never think of themselves as benevolent at all, whilst a friend thinks of themselves as a friend and tries to be a good friend. Similarly someone motivated by pity is not acting out of a sense of obligation whilst, as I noted earlier, friends are often moved to help (or visit or call) by the thought of such duties. Furthermore friends don't just think about how to fulfill their obligations, they also think about how to create, maintain and preserve the reciprocal bonds of friendship. Our lives are enriched by the existence of such bonds and impoverished when they disappear. We aim to keep such bonds in existence, to have people whom we are obliged to help (etc.) just as they are obliged to help (etc.) us.

This all suggests that human beings have deontic interests: interests in being able to bind themselves and others. Among the things that are good for human beings are obligations. We like to be bound to one another and we aim to create and maintain such bonds. Raz agrees that human goods like friendship involve obligations essentially and he regards this fact as justifying the imposition of the relevant duty:

> Friendships ought to be cultivated for their own sake. They are intrinsically valuable. At the same time the relations between friends, the relationship which constitutes friendship, cannot be specified except by reference to the duties of friendship. When this is the case the justifying good is internally related to the duty. The duty is (an element of) a good in itself (Raz 1989: 19).

Nevertheless, he appears to deny that friends aim to create and maintain these obligations:

> While promises and other voluntary obligations are undertaken by acts performed in order to undertake an obligation, friendships are not. Their practical consequences,

> the obligations they give rise to, are by-products of the relationship rather than its point and purpose. People may create a friendship in order to have someone to care for, but not, normally, in order to have an obligation to care for someone. (Raz 1979: 257-8)

Yet there seems nothing odd about wanting to have a friend in order to ensure that there is at least one person in the world whom you *must* stay in touch with, take an interest in etc. and who *must* stay in touch with you. As argued above, Raz is right that (unlike promissory obligations) obligations of friendship can be created whether or not we act with the intention of creating them but there is nothing abnormal about acting with the intention of creating such bonds. Indeed, it *would* be abnormal to regard *all* such bonds as undesirable by-products of friendship.

I agree that obligation tends to be recessive within friendship. When attention shifts to the *demands* of friendship, this is often a sign that something has gone wrong between us. Some may infer that a perfect friendship is unclouded by thoughts about obligation and so that being bound to one's friend is no part of the point of friendship, only an inevitable concomitant. But such an ideal verges on the sentimental. Obligations do become salient when there is a chance that they will be breached and breach is sometimes a real possibility even in the best of friendships, for the best of friends have other demands upon them. Should they resolve these conflicts, resist the temptations, and remain loyal we'll think what a good friend they are and not that they fall sort of some obligation-free ideal. Obligations are also salient when the friendship becomes closer or more distant: 'we're too involved for me to abandon him now', 'he no longer feels he has to share his plans with me' and so forth. Reflection on such normative changes is a normal part of any living friendship.

My hypothesis is that friendship and other involvements generate obligations because they are here (in part) to serve our deontic interests. It may be that friends have a special concern for each other's well being but the characteristic concerns of a friend are not all friendship-independent. Rather they include an interest in friendship itself and in the obligations constitutive of the friendship. Involvements like friendship generate obligations because they serve the deontic interests both of oneself and of others. Conversational

partners are obliged not to terminate the conversation or change the subject abruptly, not to interrupt or hog the limelight and so on. A good conversational partner serves your non-normative interest in correct information, amusement value etc. but they also serve your normative interest in having the standing and the duties of a partner in conversation. People seek out such standing and often resent being deprived of it, being treated as if they were 'not present'. (Similar things are true of acquaintanceship.)

The deontic interests that animate our friendship are irreducible to our non-normative interests without being independent of them. Involvements generate obligations because involvements serve a package of interests both normative and non-normative. You wouldn't be interested in having someone who was obliged to help you unless such help were of some value to you, nor in having the standing of a partner in conversation unless the information or amusement the conversation provides were worth having. But we should not infer that these obligations are of purely instrumental value, that we value their imposition only in so far as they make aid, information, amusement more likely. On the contrary, they are valuable for their own sake, even though we would not value them for their own sake unless we also valued the aid, information etc, which they require.

The connection between the normative and non-normative interests involved in friendship is another instance of a phenomenon I identified in the Introduction: one thing's value can be conditional on the value of another without being valuable as a mere means to the other. True the content of our non-normative interests explains the content of our deontic interests: it matters to us whether certain things constitute wrongings within friendship because it matters to us whether they actually occur (rather than *vice versa*). But this explanation does not reduce one interest to the other. Similarly, beautiful things are not valuable merely as devices for the generation of pleasure even though the fact that a beautiful thing is a source of pleasure explains why we have an interest in its beauty.

It might be suggested (to use language I introduced in Chapter 2) that friendship generates bare wrongings and not just interested wrongings. There are possibilities of insult or disloyalty that exist specifically within friendship which, one might think, need involve no action against the interests of the friend:

> the fitting action is sometimes required regardless of whether or not the friend will learn of it or be affected by it (I shouldn't confirm Dick's innuendoes even though Dick knows the truth and my confirmation will make no difference to anyone, and even though Tom will never hear of this). (Raz 1979: 255)

I agree that to confirm the innuendo would wrong Tom but I doubt this is a case of bare wronging. We have interest in the attitudes of our friends toward us regardless of whether we become aware of or are otherwise affected by those attitudes. Our life goes worse if our friends are hostile or heedless even though we may never learn of this. And we also have an interest in how these attitudes are expressed to others, again regardless of whether we learn of this. Gratuitously confirming Dick's innuendoes has an expressive significance: it signifies a lack of concern for Tom's reputation even though what Dick says is correct and even though my confirming it will not spread the rumour any further. Thus this is a case of acting against Tom's interest, namely his non-normative interest in having a good reputation. The acts of bare wronging we shall consider in Part 2 have no such expressive significance.

In the last section, we saw that many of the reasons generated by valuable relationships do not constitute obligations. Can the notion of a deontic interest help to explain which do and which don't? Compare the reasons I have to want John to give me an extra-nice birthday present with the reasons I have for wanting him to accede to my urgent request for help in moving house. The value of the present (in the context of friendship) depends on its being given spontaneously: I have no interest in John's feeling obliged here. If there were other things John would have preferred to buy for himself, if he bought such a nice present only reluctantly and regretted the expenditure, this deprives his gift of its value. But with the request for help moving house, it is different. Though I'd be charmed by spontaneous self-sacrifice here, I don't expect John to abandon his plans for a day on the beach without regret. True I'm not just interested in getting the help, I'm also interested in how John thinks about whether to help. For example, I'd be annoyed if John seriously considered sticking to his plan to spend a day on the beach rather than helping me move house. He shouldn't comply with my request simply because he decides that it is on the whole better to take this opportunity to express his friendship for me than to spend the day

on the beach. I want him to feel *obliged* to comply and that means excluding such considerations from his deliberations. Obligations of friendship are generated when our non-normative concerns engage our deontic interests in this way.

Another point noted in the last section is that obligation plays little role in many relationships with a non-instrumental and choice-dependent value. We don't engage in rivalry in order to serve a deontic interest, in order to ensure that our rivals are appropriately blamed if they don't deliberate in a certain fashion. A more complicated case is a relationship of mutual benefaction. The value of this relationship derives from the benefactors' direct concern with each other's non-normative interests. Rousseau's benefactor who gives out of pity aims to serve neither his own nor anyone else's deontic interests. Though such a relationship might generate obligations of reciprocation, these obligations stem from the value of the goods and services exchanged rather than from any further value possessed by the relationship of benefaction. Those involved in such a relationship don't value these obligations for their own sake: they are a by-product of what is valued, namely the help given and received. That is why friendship is something other than mutual benefaction.

In this chapter, I have not attempted to provide a general account of relationship obligations, of obligations that exist because they are constitutive of valuable relationships. Rather I have focused on relationships whose value depends on their having been chosen and have asked which of *them* generate obligations. My answer has been that relationships with choice-dependent value constitutively involve obligations when they are here to serve our deontic interests. It may be that other types of relationship constitutively involve obligations because they serve rather different normative interests (namely interests in the existence of rather than in the ability to choose obligations). Some familial and political obligations might exist because it is good for people to be so obliged regardless of their choices. That is a question for another day.[20]

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