Consider some commonplace intuitions about what we love. We commonly suppose that we love persons (intuition 1), and that another person can be love's primary (intuition 2) and highly valued (intuition 3) object of love. Moreover, we suppose that love is capable of being directed to the whole person (intuition 4), and that while that person can be replaced as an object of love, replacement involves loss (intuition 5).

Plato suggests otherwise. He develops a fascinating and influential line of thought in which abstract properties, universals and features of persons are seen as more plausible objects of love. Persons become derivative, comparatively devalued and readily replaceable objects of love.

In what follows I attempt to preserve our intuitions against (yet in terms of) this Platonic line of thought. I begin by observing some general features of Plato's account of love (section I). I then turn to the Lysis and Symposium to trace the evolution of, and variation within, this line of thought. At the same time, I chart its dominance over a competitor --a competitor more congenial to our intuitions (sections II and III). The philosophical basis for the dominant line, the extent to which we can endorse it or its competitor I consider (section IV). Next, I examine a descendant of the dominant line, found in contemporary theorizing (section V). I then argue that ancient and recent arguments get much of their life from a particular orientation to characteristics and their
subjects, and that an Aristotelian orientation is one way to avoid these problems and to
defend our intuitions (section VI). I close by addressing some apparent difficulties with
these proposals (section VII).

I

Central to Plato's account of love (both erōs and philia) is desire (epithumia, Lysis 207E,
221B, Symposium, 200A). Desire is understood on a deficiency model, being a lack
seeking satisfaction, what it needs (endeēs, Symposium 200A-B, Lysis 221D-E). In
seeking satisfaction love's desire has a variety of objects. Love attempts to capture the
beloved (Lysis 206A), to benefit (ibid., 210C-D), to attain virtue ( Symposium (180B),
happiness (ibid., 205D. Lysis, 207D-E), and so on. Yet this is not simply a plurality of
objects. For within this diversity, unity is to be found. According to Plato there is some
description, some ultimate object which underlies and founds love's desire.

Two possibilities intrigue Plato. The dominant line of thought understands this
diversity in terms of the desire for the good. On this view, love is based on our
deficiency; and while our love may manifest itself in a variety of ways, all attempt to
satisfy our desire for the good. Given the placement of the good in his thinking, Plato
thereby infuses his eroticism into his metaphysics, epistemology and value theory.

Its competitor is one which Plato seems to be charmed by, but not sufficiently so

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2 Where the content of that desire is understood as in some way bringing about happiness ( Symposium
205D, Lysis 207E, 210D), and where the good is supposed intimately connected with the fine (cf.
Symposium 200E-201C, Lysis 216D). These features complicate the account, but can be ignored for
present purposes. Moreover, while I shall not here concern myself with the analysis of love presented in the
Phaedrus, I take it that there too Socrates comes to a similar understanding of love's desire.

3 In the Symposium Diotima complicates the picture with her birth on beauty thesis (206B ff). As I
understand that thesis it revises rather than replaces the desire for beauty thesis, and continues to
complement the desire for the good thesis. If so, the desire for the good thesis dominates the Symposium.
If not, if the birth on beauty and the desire for the good thesis are not complementary, then this restricts the
extent to which the desire for the good thesis endures in the Symposium.
to endorse it. According to it love's desire is for a kind of completion, taking the form of what belongs to one (to oikeion) in the Lysis, and the desire for one's lost half in the Symposium. This latter model remains both a deficiency and desire model. But rather than employing explicitly valuational language and thereby infusing his eroticism into his metaphysics, epistemology and value theory, it offers an explanation less bound up with universals and abstractions. The model, then, is more immediate and more personal. It better depicts the way the erotic manifests itself in our lives, and the bonding of kith and kin. But while this model better accords with our intuitions about what we love, Socrates turns to the former.

II
According to the dominant line of thought, various desires culminate in and are to be understood in terms of the desire for the good. In the Lysis's "first friend" argument, the thought is that if you love someone, you do so on some basis, say qua Y. But then the question arises: 'Why are you attached to Y?' Let us say that it is qua Z. The questioning continues until we find the ultimate object of one's love, namely the good. As the argument is offered, the explanation of the basis of attachment reveals a transference of attachment: only the good is the real friend; compared to this first friend, the person, Y and Z are phantoms (eidōla, 219D).

'May the same thing be said of what is a friend as well? All the things we say are our friends for the sake of some other thing that is a friend are clearly friends in name only; whereas what is really (tōi onti) a friend should be that thing in which all those so-called friends terminate.'
'That should be the case,' he said.
'What is really (tōi onti) a friend, then, is not a friend for the sake of a friend.'
'True.'
'Well then, that's settled: it is not for the sake of a friend that what is a friend is a friend. So, is the good a friend?'

'I think so.' (Lysis, 220A-B)⁴

Socrates moves from a plausible articulation of friendship's basis to conclusions about what/who really is the friend. And in so doing, love for an individual, for the person becomes problematic: we move from the concrete particular to depersonalized features in their most abstract form. Moreover, only the attachment to the very abstract and universal property appears to matter: only the good can really be one's friend, one's beloved. Here any suggestion that persons, whole persons are primary, non devalued objects of love, or objects replaceable only with loss is misplaced. Our intuitions about what we love have been discarded.⁵

By arguing as he has Socrates advances an odd position --so odd that some may be tempted to dismiss the considerations outright, and others to call for a different interpretation of the argument. Let us digress to consider whether either reaction is warranted.

The dismissal might be warranted by urging that this use of 'is a friend' is so strained in English that Socrates' analysis fails to say anything to us. In consequence, his analysis provides no basis for concern. The call for a different interpretation might be warranted by observing that while Socrates' argument flows readily enough in Plato's Greek, nonetheless because the point is not restricted to persons, and because relationships of love are between persons, the discussion cannot concern our beloved.⁶

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⁵ This line of thought forms the centrepiece of the dialogue. Its competitor is raised at the end of the dialogue, but seems primarily an afterthought beset with problems.

⁶ Reasons for supposing that the argument will flow more readily in Plato's Greek include the following. Neither 'philos' nor 'erōs' nor their cognates are restricted to persons but can be used concerning properties and things. Moreover, properties and things can be used not only as objects of love but also as its subject. As well, there is an active/passive ambiguity with regard to 'philos', so that in speaking of philos one may
Instead the concern must be understood as something that founds love; in effect, we are dealing with a term of art, one to which the normal concerns of love or friendship do not apply.\(^7\)

Neither reaction is warranted. The impetus for dismissal centres on the idea that the argument as translated strains our notion of 'is a friend.' Although the strain is real enough, it doesn't follow that the argument is to be dismissed nor rendered unintelligible. When we reflect that Plato is not concerned to investigate the nuances of language or to leave the world as conceived undisturbed, but to provide the account of his subject matter, intuitive or not, then the idea that what is truly a friend is the good, and that all other friends are but phantoms seems no less intelligible than assertions that forms exist, are objects of knowledge, etc. These may be theses we find strange and argue ill conceived, but they are ones that we make sense of and ponder.

The impetus for reinterpretation centres on the idea that because persons are not the object of love, ‘philos’ has shifted to a technical sense --and that such a shift should be obvious enough because persons no longer are the object. Yet the argument shows no sign of having shifted from a general discussion to a related issue; and the participants don't acknowledge such a shift. Furthermore, the principle that only persons must be the object of love does not seem established in the dialogue, nor required by the Greek. Thus it is not likely that the passage has shifted to a technical conception rather than the more general concern for one's beloved. Furthermore, when we recall the philosophical methodology of, for example, the Meno or the Protagoras' lampooning of subtle linguistic distinctions, then I think the claims of a shift from one's beloved to a technical, underlying notion become unlikely. Rather the argument takes the love of the person as its starting point, but soon transcends and diminishes that object in favour of the real

\(\text{mean being dear to someone or liking that someone or both (See also note 1).}\)

object of love/friendship, the good.

Thus we should neither dismiss Plato's considerations nor search for a milder interpretation: the argument in the Lysis deserves our scrutiny as understood. We return to our preliminary conclusions: the argument has moved us from a quite plausible articulation of the basis of friendship to conclusions about what is a friend, and, in the process, our intuitions about what we love have been vanquished. 8

III

The considerations of the Symposium are intriguing, both because they take a different and milder tack, and because the alternatives are more fully developed. One is particularly interesting.

Aristophanes offers what I have called the completion model, telling a story in which our love arises because Zeus has divided each human in two; our love is our longing (pothoun) for our other half (191A). Given our opening intuitions, the implications of this story are attractive. Aristophanes is not drawn to features and abstract universals such as we see in Lysis, but is concerned with the individual, the concrete particular as the object of love (intuition one). And it seems to be the whole individual rather than certain features of him or her that we crave (intuition four). Further, that individual is the primary and fully valued object of our love (intuitions two and three). Finally, our other half is an irreplaceable object of love (intuition five) in the sense that while we can come to love another like our own half, the initial search is for one's own half. It is only upon the death of one's own half that one takes up the search

8.. Still other reactions to the argument are possible. R. de Sousa's reflections in The Rationality of Emotions, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1990) especially chapter five, lead him to suggest that the argument is guilty of a category mistake, confusing love's target with its motivating aspect. I understand him to hold that only particulars are objects of love, and that Socrates in moving away from the individual treats as love's target what is not and cannot be so. That only particulars are love's targets is controversial, and in this context stipulative (See note 14 and the discussion of Brown and Scruton to follow). Thus I suggest we need to pursue Socrates' proposals further.
for one of the same sort. Thus the later search is a concession in the face of loss (cf. 191A-B). Here, then, there is much that accords with commonplace intuitions about what we love.9

While much is attractive about Aristophanes' proposals, Diotima quickly puts a damper on them when she responds that we will love these others only if they are good (205E). That something is ours isn't enough for love, as we are to see in the case of surgery on a harmful limb.

Aristophanes' completion model proves inadequate because it doesn't provide sufficient grounding for love. Its insufficiency is readily explained because it leaves aside what the Lysis has offered. Thus the appealing Aristophanic attempt, another as the object of love, falters. And in voicing her criticism Diotima raises the obvious alternative, the good as the object of love. She says:

'That's because what everyone (anthrōpoi) loves is really (ye) nothing other than the good. Do you disagree?'
'Zeus! Not I,' I said. (Symposium, 205E-206A)

While raising the Lysis's alternative provides missing grounds for love, so doing also turns towards universals, abstractions and features rather than whole persons. And this, in turn, raises the spectre of the transference of passion and the first friend, once more: what we really love is goodness, not the person.

The milder tack comes when Diotima offers a hierarchy of objects of love, conceived of as steps. Unlike the Lysis, the hierarchy isn't simply the revelation of the ultimate and real object of love: objects on lower steps (persons, customs...) have and

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9... In directing us towards the individual, Aristophanes does not offer the most extreme particularization possible. His is not a matter of loving another full stop, but as one's completion, a return to wholeness, unity, our original nature (cf. 191A-B, D, 192D, E). Perhaps Alcibiades' love for Socrates, in addition to its vanity, reveals attachment to another, full stop.
retain their place as objects of love, perhaps even as irreplaceable objects of love.\textsuperscript{10} Thus the transference of eros is not complete --even though we are to ascend the stairs in the search of the real object of love (205E), the form of the good (208E).

Diotima's legitimization of love at different levels looks to be a concession to Aristophanes' attempt to preserve persons as the objects of love, and revises the \textit{Lysis}' apparent dismissal of the friendship's phantoms. But since Aristophanes' considerations were undercut by Diotima, how is the concession to be explained? On what basis does Diotima legitimize the love of persons?\textsuperscript{11}

\section*{IV}

Consider the differences in approaches that the two dialogues present. In both a teleological understanding of love is offered, in which love is understood in terms of realizing (achieving) an end. In the \textit{Lysis}, stages related to the end seem mere means to the end, and not inherently valued; hence the transference of passion from a concrete particular to an abstract universal. In contrast, the \textit{Symposium} looks to grant attachment and continued attachment on lower steps --albeit valued in an inferior way compared to the love of the good. As a result, the \textit{Symposium} requires a more complex (teleological) model, one that is truer to appearances in the sense that something of our love for persons is validated. By allowing a place and a continued place for persons as proper objects of

\textsuperscript{10}. I understand the love of souls (φιλίασώματος) to be the love of persons. I suggest that things on the lower steps retain their place as objects of love, perhaps even irreplaceable ones, because it seems that however highly Socrates has ascended, something of his love for youths remains. And one expects the same for his love of virtue, customs --especially given the requirements for the birthing of true virtue (211A). Continued attachment to a beautiful body and bodies is more controversial. But even here, though the love of such things seems small by comparison once one has ascended (210B-C), it doesn't thereby seem totally extinguished. And even if the claim of retained attachment and the suggestion of irreplaceability is wrong for every lower step, there will remain an important contrast between the views here and those of the \textit{Lysis}. In the \textit{Lysis}, certain things we thought were friends proved phantoms. Here even if ascension extinguishes our love for the ascended, the objects ascended attained the status of proper objects of love, and were not simply phantoms.

\textsuperscript{11}. Since our concern has been to account for the love of persons, my argument will continue to focus on this --though much that follows will apply to other objects and other lower steps as well.
love, the extent of the transference is diminished.\textsuperscript{12}

Clearly one consequence of this change in approach is that the model of explanation required for continued attachment to persons involves more than the teleological in order to realize (achieve) love's end. The love for persons must itself either be the realization of a certain goodness, or, possibly, a return to Aristophanic attachment. But since Aristophanic attachment was discredited, the explanation that allows for the love of persons would seem to have to be some version of the former. If so, how is this possible and to be explained within the Platonic framework? Why and how are particular persons inherently valued, loved as goods?

To answer we seem to have to choose between some brute intuition, or return to a discussion of the person's attributes. The former does no underwriting, no explaining, but rests with claims such as: `I value Fred; he is good, full stop.' Such a response is not unreasonable. But it is had at a high price, namely certain features of rational discussion. For here justification seems to have ended and been replaced by an intuition about what is valuable.

That price is too high for Plato. For while he might be content with some such claim regarding the good itself, he can hardly be content with it regarding imperfect particulars. Similarly, we too we want to offer explanations rather than intuitions, where possible.\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{12} Our concerns about the teleological model and its implications are not the only factors contributing to the ease with which Plato reaches the conclusions he does. His assumption (in both the \textit{Lysis} and \textit{Symposium}) that the goal to be realized is a) some one homogeneous notion, in terms of which b) all other matters of value are comparable and exchangeable greatly facilitate the teleological account. I shall not here attempt trace that aspect of the diagnosis. M. C. Nussbaum reflections on this regarding the \textit{Symposium} in \textit{The Fragility of Goodness} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) are most useful; R.E. Allen suggests otherwise \textit{The Dialogues of Plato}, volume 2 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991) pp. 99-102.

\textsuperscript{13} I do not mean to suggest that this appeal to intuition is an appeal outside of rationality or that such intuitions are implausible, but only that by so appealing matters of justification and explanation have ended. Thus I speak of the loss of certain features of rational discussion.
Thus for philosophical and interpretive reasons we should explain our love for Fred in terms of attributes. But to do so seems to look for good making qualities, to talk about abstractions and universals which characterize persons we love, not the persons any longer. To do this looks to embrace the teleology and transference of the Lysis, once more. The attachment to whole persons seems to be lost for certain of their features. No longer is the person the primary object of attachment and replaceable without loss, but only the locus for abstract features.

What we need is a way, plausible within the present framework, in which we can understand loving someone on some basis, qua Y, without thinking that what we really love and are attempting to realize is the basis, Y. Rather the love for that person is itself in some way that realization. Thus within the Platonic framework of citing attributes, one would account for the Symposium's attachment to individuals as proper objects of love, not simply the Lysis' love of abstract universals. Regrettably, Plato's dialogues don't seem to offer further guidance in this matter. Happily, a descendant approach struggles with similar matters.

Robert Brown examines the question of what we love, and offers a view that falls within the Platonic attribute project. He distinguishes love of persons and love of qualities, claiming that the two are different, making out this claim by adapting Roger Scruton's distinction between an emotional reaction to universals versus one to particulars. Brown suggests the explanation of love for individuals can be understood in terms of the love of characteristics. Love is love of particular persons in part because of love for the unique,

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14. I do not wish to deny that we can and do love qualities. Truth, freedom... seem objects of love, though the explanation of this, as we shall see, is controversial. Rather I am trying to make sense of love of persons, dogs... without turning it in to a concern for abstractions.

historical, and non repeatable concatenation of characteristics (potential and fully realized, relationships, etc.), and often because of an open-ended commitment to future undetermined characteristics.

Here there seems to be a combining of a subject-attribute contrast with a particular-universal contrast in the sense that the subject is seen as a particular and the attribute as a universal. Love of a person, then, is explained in terms of our love for an open-ended, historically determined set of features (universals) of the subject. In so suggesting, he offers a version of the attribute project, one that does not rely on a brute intuition that the individual is good, and one which may allow for loving individuals without transferring the love to the basis.

Moreover, it is clear that these proposals can resolve at least one of our concerns with the Platonic line of thought. Brown's account of the love for persons in terms of a prior attachment to properties, neither suggests nor requires a comparative devaluation in love for individuals (intuition 3). Furthermore, the open-ended, historical, unique concatenation of properties seems to direct us towards the particular as the object of love (intuition 1), rather than remaining with the abstract universal. Again, either by countenancing particular attributes or by appealing, as Brown does (p. 42), to the manner of instantiation, these proposals can capture two important feature's of love's justification: (i) its growth through history ('We have been through and shared so much together.'); (ii) the uniqueness of properties ('Only she can smile quite that smile.'). And these features or the claim of non repeatable and unique concatenations might be used to show why persons can be replaceable objects of love, but a replacement that involves loss (intuition 5). Thus the love for the person is not meant to be the Platonic attachment to the good, is not thought to transfer away, can be explained --and all this can be worked within the Platonic attribute project.

Yet there are problems. While both persons and characteristics are seen to be loved and an explanation of the former in terms of the latter is offered, the love of the
person rests upon, because derived from, a logically prior attachment of the characteristics (contra intuition 2). Like Diotima's proposals, intelligibility and explanation is thereby offered, but one cost of so doing is to make the love for the individual derivative, derivative upon the attachment to the characteristic. And thus one similarity with Plato reemerges.

Moreover, while the unique concatenation of properties plausibly identifies the relevant individual, there still is no explanation for the love of the whole person beyond the love for present and potential features of that person (contra intuitions 1 & 4). Further, Brown's appeal to characteristics does not escape Diotima's response to Aristophanes: that smile, that unique concatenation of characteristics can found love only if they are good. Reference to the ultimate object of love seems necessary, yet again. And while transference has not been endorsed, neither is it blocked. Thus the commitment to the abstract universal as the ultimate object of love, through which other attachments are to be explained remains undeterred or, at least, how it is deterred is unclear. And if this is so, then we have nothing here that adequately explains the possibility of another whose replacement as an object of love involves loss (contra intuition 5).

Our progress proves to be minimal. For while Brown's thoughts have removed one difficulty in Platonic theorizing, and broached others, most remain.

16... Here Brown's proposals are in a more difficult position than Plato's. Plato's abandonment of the person is problematic. Brown's proposals, in effect, attempt to rectify this problem, but in so doing the difficulty becomes one of ever getting to persons. In this regard, the starting point of Plato's argument, persons, is more plausible.

17- Some sense of irreplaceability can be defend through: a) the attributes concatenated being unique, b) the set concatenated being unique, whether or not the members are, c) their temporal placement with reference to a subject being no repeatable. But while these plausibly can be part of an explanation of irreplaceability, they do not go far enough. First, these collectively would have to halt transference, but that seems problematic (above). Second, I suggest that were we to discover two persons identical in these respects as far as we can determine, or, per impossible, identical in these respects, nevertheless we might still crave our beloved – and love the twin only with loss. Thus I conclude that the above explanation is not
I think that there is an underlying reason for this.

VI

The Platonic commitment to features over subjects, universals over particulars, abstractions over the concrete (and thereby attempts to explain love of individuals by unique collections of characteristics) remains only so long as we think of the characteristics of persons as independent realities, identifiable and universalizable in a very atomic way. The underlying model is akin to a Lockean view of substance and attribute: characteristics are understood as independent and accessible realities, ones that attach to and are knowable independently of their subjects; their subjects, persons, come to take the role of "I know not what's" that underlie.

Of this kind of explanation, we rightly wonder: 'What is the love for persons but a love for these attributes?,' and, 'How could our love ever get beyond a person's features to the person?,' and 'Aren't subjects of identical collections substitutable without loss?' The answers seem to be that either there is nothing to get to (the individual is nothing but the collection of characteristics) or that the collection of attributes is the best we shall ever reach. Given this, substitution of subjects with identical collections of characteristics involves no discernible loss.

The commitment to attributes and abstractions over individuals as objects of love, and the loss of our opening intuitions, then, seems to rely on a particular conception of attributes, their independency of and relation to their subjects --presumptions that Plato seems content with and that Brown's argument seems victim of. For it is this independency presumption that makes plausible the kind of commitment to the feature that we find. And it is only by thinking about features in this way that transference of passion becomes plausible. Again, it is by thinking in this fashion that one supposes that adequate.
from the love for a set of features the love of the person can be derived and explained.\textsuperscript{18} Hereby the person has become a derivative, not a primary, object of love; substitution is had without loss; features seem to be the best we can reach.

But if we step back from these presumptions, and think of the connection between attributes and their subjects in a more Aristotelian fashion, then I think that many of these commitments can be dispelled.

The stage of Aristotle's thought that I have in mind is articulated in his \textit{Categories}. Here subjects, in particular primary substances, are understood as things that we can point to, 'thises' --things Martha and Fred, this tree and that dog. They are the subjects for all else, what exists in the most fundamental sense, and the primary points of reference. Attributes are attributes of their subject; their reality and reference is dependent on inhering in their subject. Rather than being independent of their subjects, attributes are not identifiable as what they are or knowable independently of inhering in their subjects. The white that inheres in Socrates, for example, cannot exist or be known independently from Socrates; it cannot be abstracted from the particular in which it inheres and retain identity or reference.

Now in raising this as an approach to deal with our problem, I do not mean to suggest that the position outlined in the \textit{Categories} is unambiguous or uncontroversial. Whether an attribute's dependence is meant to be on its subject (above) or some subject or other, whether what inheres is itself individual or universal, what precise sense is to be given to inherence, etc., continue to be interpretive and philosophical puzzles. Nonetheless, I suggest that the general strategy and the interpretation adopted here better succeeds in preserving our commonplace intuitions about what we love, and helps resolve

\textsuperscript{18} Without the presumption of independency, I do not see that Brown's explanation through concatenation could be thought to explain what it is meant to explain. As I have put it, the independence of attributes from subjects is both ontological and epistemological. For that seems to be the upshot of the views being considered. The problem implicated, however, remains even if the independency is epistemological only.
the puzzles generated by the Platonic approach.

For example, Brown suggests that the love of persons is to be explained by the unique and historical concatenation of attributes. But even when the features are seen as independent realities, we have seen that their concatenation can not really explain a move from attributes to its subject. With the Aristotelian view of the relationship between subject and attribute, however, the love of persons need not rest on (though surely includes) concatenation. Since an attribute does not have its reality, is not separable, identifiable or knowable as what it is independently of its being a characteristic of the particular substance in which it inheres, the love of the person can rest on the inherence of the characteristic in its subject. Since reference to an attribute brings its subject with it, getting back to the subject is no longer an issue. Concatenation is not necessary.

Again, on the Aristotelian analysis of subject and attribute, the Platonic transference such as seen in the Lysis with its elimination of the individual for the abstract and universal (where the most abstract universal is the real object of love) is not necessary, nor straightforwardly possible. That is to say, both moves within the Platonic transference to the real object of love are blocked by the ontological and epistemological dependence of attribute upon its subject: the initial move from the subject to its attribute; the move(s) from the more concrete attribute to the most abstract. For characteristics cannot be abstracted from the particular and retain identity or reference. Thus the Platonic thought that what we really love is the feature, the abstraction rather than its subject, is seen to misunderstand the connection between an attribute and its subject. To love Socrates for his charm, then, cannot be abstracted or transferred to a love of charm, and is not here a concern for charm wheresoever instantiated. Much less is it a love of the good.

Further, because any attempt to target the attribute as the object of love involves its subject and because of the (ontological and epistemological) priority of the subject, the
(ontological and epistemological) priority of the attribute over the particular is not possible. If so, an explanation of our love by reference to the attributes (someone qua Y) --which we have seen to provide a basis for love in a way that Aristophanes’ explanation does not-- does so in a way that cannot be a commitment to attributes rather than their subjects, or, even, and then their subjects. Hence when we explain the basis of our love and Diotima remarks `only if such qualities are good', we can agree, but with no implication that what really we love is the good. What we love is the person, the person who is charming, the person who is good. The reality and identity of the characteristic depends on its inherence in its subject --where 'inherence in its subject' is understood in Aristotle’s way as inhering in Socrates, rather than Locke's inherence in some I know not what.

And now we are in a position to recapture our opening intuitions.

Since the first move within the Platonic transference has been blocked (above), the Platonic move to eliminate the person in favour of the basis as what we love is without support. Thus what we love remains the person (intuition 1).19 Moreover, because reference to the attribute involves its subject, because of the dependence of the former upon the latter, the person is a primary object of attachment (intuition 2). Necessarily, he or she remains a highly valued object of love (intuition 3). On this understanding, there cannot be Brown's issue of how to get from features to the person. For that issue requires a priority, a separation and independence of the feature from its subject, and a knowability of the former independently of the latter that has been rejected. Thus concerns whether we are restricted to features and whether love can be directed to whole persons are dispelled (intuition 4). Irreplaceability is addressed also (intuition 5). For

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19. The above argument maintains persons as the object of love in view of the Platonic onslaught. A related and somewhat more ambitious argument runs as follows: simple reference to attribute is incomplete. Because the explanation of love by reference to attributes brings with it and is not separate from concern for the subject in question, and because of the priority of the latter, the person is required as the object of love (intuition
two apparently identical sets of attributes remain differentiated, differentiated because the identity of the attributes rests in part on their subject. Hence apparently identical sets of attributes are not substitutable without loss.

An Aristotelian approach has helped to preserve our opening intuitions about what we love. We rid ourselves of the Lysis’s problem of only being concerned for the most abstract, universal characteristics. Similarly, the Lysis’ and Symposium’s supposition that the most abstract characteristics are the real object of love fails, as does Brown's Platonism of the priority of the abstract, universal. We see how we love someone on the basis of his or her charm or, more abstractly, his or her goodness, where that can provide us with the desirable features of explanation but does not remove us from individuals to really loving the charm or the good, or being said to love them because of our love for a certain open-ended collection of characteristics that the individual has. Thereby we have remained within the Platonic attribute tradition that offers explanation rather than simple intuition, but have done so in a way that preserves Aristophanes' insight by allowing our fundamental attachment to particular persons.

VII

I close by addressing some apparent difficulties if what I propose is reasonably appealing.

First, the Aristotelian view of subject and attribute may render peculiarly mysterious what the real basis for love is, as can be seen most clearly in cases where change in attributes occurs. On the present view change within a subject involves the loss or gain of attributes. Quite possibly an attribute lost may be the one that had served as basis of the love. Now what is the basis for the love?

I think the proposals permit saying the sorts of things we normally say; and I take that to be a strength. For example, suppose the love disappears as a result of the loss of

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the attribute upon which the love has been based. Here we can contend that the love for the person was initially and continued to be based --for as long as the love did continue-- on the attribute, now lost. Apparently, nothing has replaced that attribute in its role as basis for the love; the lack of a basis here means that the love of the person is lost. Suppose instead that the love remains. One thing we can contend is that, while initially based on the now lost attribute, the love came to find a further basis (known or unknown) which can continue to support the love of the person. More contentiously, one might urge that no new attribute need found the love. For while some basis for love may be required to instigate love, love of the person may remain without its instigating cause or support.

Throughout, our limited epistemic position may leave us unsure whether the love of the person is based on that which it is professed or appears to be based (before or after change). Self reports and surmisals about others are notoriously unreliable. Nevertheless, these professed or apparent bases remain possible bases for the love of the person. Thus we answer the question of what we love; identify bases for that love; and see that while our epistemic position may bar us from knowing what the basis is in any given case, it does not bar us from seeing what are the bases of love. The Aristotelian analysis of the relationship between attribute and subject, then, remains neutral about how we should analyze particular cases after (and before) change, respects our normal explanations and epistemic limitations. Thus the attributes which are the basis for love are not rendered peculiarly mysterious.

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20... I speak of 'the' attribute for the sake of simplicity only.
21... For further thoughts on the last case, see S. Leighton, 'A New View of Emotions,' American Philosophical Quarterly, 22, (1985) pp. 133-142. Whether or not we endorse such cases will not effect the point of the present argument.
22... I speak of 'peculiarly mysterious' because at some level there is mystery. For while we are relatively comfortable in identifying what we might call the ultimate formal objects for many emotions, e.g. fear has to do with danger, pity has to do with the misfortune of others, etc., it seems we aren't in a similar position with regard to love (See J.C. Gosling, 'Emotion and Object', Philosophical Review, 74 (1965) especially pp. 499-500). 'The lovable' or 'the good' seem unhelpful. Yet it is hard to see what to put in their place. Hence mystery. This problem, however, is one that bedevils all accounts and so doesn't tell against present
Second, the interplay between basis and object of love may be more involved than so far suggested. The argument has allowed us to preserve the person as our object of love by the priority given to substance. In consequence, the Platonic transference to features as the object of love, and the most abstract as the real object has been denied. And while subjects as objects of love will maintain their primacy, nothing said so far seems to deny the possibility that the subject qualified may itself come to be an object of love. Love, then, may be for the subject on the basis of the attribute (Socrates for his charm) or possibly a substance-attribute complex (charming Socrates) --presumably on some basis. But if this is possible, have not some of the apparent advantages of an Aristotelian approach been lost?

With respect to our opening intuitions, the raised possibility creates no difficulty. For this possibility does not deny or undercut any of these intuitions, but adds a further possible object of love. With respect to the Aristotelian defense of those intuitions, the raised possibility likewise creates no difficulty. Subjects remain primary; attributes, dependent. Because our commonplace intuitions and their explanations stand, the argument to preserve our intuitions about what we love has no real investment in whether or not the raised possibility proves actual.

Still, what of the suggestion itself and the present proposal's ability to accommodate it? Are we to insist that only subjects (e.g. Socrates) are objects of love on the basis of their features, and that, strictly speaking, subjects qualified (e.g. charming Socrates) cannot be objects of love?

I am not persuaded that we should exclude this possibility with respect to objects of love, or any other emotion for that matter. For the possibility seems itself to be a common enough intuition about what we love, and nothing raised seems to require its abandonment. Thus I suggest that we allow for it. If so, then while the qualified subject is not required as an object of love, it is a possible one (intuition 6). The Aristotelian proposals.
approach as understood does not require such objects of love, but neither does it exclude their possibility --though it will understand such cases in light of established dependencies. If allowing for this possibility is a liability, if there are good reasons to exclude such objects, if Aristotelian flexibility is unwarranted, then we must say that the Aristotelian approach advances from the Platonic position, makes plausible our opening intuitions, but leaves open one undesirable consequence. I suggest, however, that it is a further success of the view.

Finally, since the argument offered has attempted to render possible and to explain some features of love that seem taken for granted in every day thinking about what we love (and has done so within Plato's framework of offering the basis for the love), then it will be a difficulty for this position if it renders impossible or inexplicable other features of love that we commonly presume. The present explanation seems to make more difficult the account of love for something universal. For on the model proposed the identity of the universal should be seen to require reference to its subject. But reference to a subject is just what love for a universal seems not to involve, e.g. Jacob loves truth. Moreover, it renders puzzling an explanation of those cases where we do love someone but substitution without loss is common enough.

An explanation of the love we have for a universal that coheres with these proposals is the following. Because, other things being equal and in the relevant contexts, you love when those features are instantiated, or because you typically do so -- be it Fred, Frank, Ruth or Martha-- you can be said to love the attribute, the universal. Love for the universal will be dependant and derivative, but that seems not implausible. Similarly, in those cases where we want to allow substitution with no loss we say that in the relevant contexts either one loves when these features are instantiated or that one typically does so. Thus it matters not whether it be in Fred or Frank, Martha or Ruth.  

23... I should like to thank R. Bosley, L. Judson, F. Schroeder and the anonymous readers for the Australasian Journal of Philosophy for their comments on earlier versions of this paper, and for the comments of the audience when versions were presented at Trinity College, Dublin, and Queen's
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