

Claim: It is permissible/obligatory to be more lenient with our friends than with strangers.

- This means that, given the same evidence about a friend and a stranger's character, or goodness/badness, it is permissible/obligatory to see the friend as better than we see the stranger.
- Question: Just how lenient should we be?
- Question: Should we be lenient with our family members?

Leniency and information

- One might argue *for* leniency as follows: We have more information about our friends' goodness than we do strangers' goodness, so it is reasonable to see our friends as better.
 - Is this really an argument for lenience, as I have defined it?
- One might *against* leniency as follows: For any friend we have, we know we could just as easily have been not-friends with that person, and then would not be lenient. So, it makes no sense to be lenient with our friends.
 - Does this argument apply to leniency towards family members?

Leniency, commitment, and special obligations:

- One might argue for lenience by saying that to be friends with someone is to be committed to being lenient towards them.
 - On this view, leniency is partly *constitutive* of friendship. We can't be friends without being lenient.
 - Does this argument apply to leniency towards family members?
- One might argue that we have special obligations to be lenient with our friends.
 - This would explain why we should see them differently than we do strangers.
- One might argue that being friends with someone requires *not* being lenient:
 - We are supposed to love our friends as they are, not love an idealized version of them.
 - We are supposed to help our friends improve as people (tough love), because we care about them.