

My lecture slide about special obligations was a bit confusing. This was made worse by the fact that Millum uses the term 'natural duty' in a particular sense that departs from the way the term is commonly used in the literature about special obligation. I'm going to stick with Millum's usage because it is what's in the reading. Here is some clarification:

**Special Duties:** Duties that are owed only to a particular person or group of persons. We might accrue such duties as a result of wrongdoing (eg. a duty of reparation), a promise (a duty of fidelity), or as a result of an established relationship (eg. duty to prioritize one's partner over a stranger).

Special duties can be contrasted with what I will call general duties, which are duties we owe to everyone just because they are people.

Millum introduces a distinction between natural duties and artificial duties. A natural duty is a duty that is not dependent on convention. Artificial duties are dependent on conventions.

The central problem he wants to address is how parents *initially* acquire special obligations towards children (his view is compatible with individuals acquiring special obligations through adoption, establishing deep bonds etc. as well). This is a difficult question because the established methods of acquiring special obligations (promising, harm, the existence of that has persisted over time, etc.) do not obtain in one-night-stand cases).

Millum's solution is to argue that in these cases special obligations arise as a result of an established social convention in which those engage in sexual intercourse acquire special obligations for whatever children result.