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Dialogue as the Labor of Care: Welcoming a Unity of Contraries

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty

Of the Department of Communication & Rhetorical Studies

McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts

Duquesne University

In partial fulfillment of

The requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By

Marie Baker-Ohler

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Abstract

Dialogue as the labor of care unfolds a vision of how the philosophy of dialogue can assist us as human beings to enact care in our daily lives. In the end, caring is a unity of contraries; blessing and burden, joy and suffering, necessity and triumph. The invitation of dialogue into the communicative life of caring requires bravery and courage and thus creates strong and rare natures.

The impetus of this vision comes from the work of Martin Buber whose ideas have changed the way we view communication and enrich the way we view caring. The additional metaphor of labor, provided by the work of Hannah Arendt, allows for a deeper understanding of caring. The metaphor of labor reveals and emphasizes that not only is care a necessity for human communicative life, care is at the same time a blessing and a burden. The necessity of labor opens the conversation concerning care through the notion of care as an imperative for everyday communicative life. Joy and suffering, blessing and burden, necessity and triumph emphasize the fact that life is best lived in the unity of contraries.

Chapter 1: The Burden of Care: Calling for Great Deeds in the Struggles of Life

To accomplish the task of this project—making explicit the connection dialogue, labor, and caring—this work begins with an exploration of the communicative problem: the devaluation of care. A communicative ethic such as dialogue as the labor of care is called for because of the current postmodern historical moment which is marked by the loss of narrative background, routine cynicism, extreme individualism and existential mistrust between persons. Furthermore, this work recognizes the ongoing devaluation of caring as exacerbating the problem. The communicative problem of this moment has come to the foreground because in recent years many people, for many different reasons, find themselves in relationships requiring care and are at a loss as to how to enact the caring needed.

Up until this point the communicative relationship between dialogue and care has been implicitly assumed and on occasion made explicit as a suggestion by authors such as Richard Johannessen and Nel Noddings. Through Martin Buber's theory of dialogue and foundational literature related to care specifically in the field of communication, this work points to the necessity of a more textured understanding of the connection between dialogue and care. The purpose of this work, then, is to make explicit this relationship. Through Arendt's concept of labor, dialogue and care are united in a metaphor that frames care as a unity of contraries, blessing and burden, joy and suffering. The nature of caring is both obligatory and relational—caring is an action that yields life-related communicative outcomes in the context of everyday public and private human interaction.

For there are many great deeds done in the small struggles of life. There is a determined though unseen bravery, which defends itself foot to foot in the darkness against the fatal invasions of necessity and of baseness. Noble and mysterious triumphs which no eye sees, which no renown rewards, which no flourish of triumph salutes. Life, misfortunes, isolation, abandonment, poverty, are battlefields which have their heroes; obscure heroes, sometimes greater than the illustrious heroes.

*Strong and rare natures are thus created; misery, almost always a stepmother, is sometimes a mother; privation gives birth to power of soul and mind; distress is the nurse of self-respect; misfortune is a good breast for great souls. (Hugo, *Les Misérables* 588)*

Introduction

In his novel *Les Misérables*, Victor Hugo asserts, “*There are many great deeds done in the small struggles of life.*” It is the contention of this work that caring is one of those deeds. Through the creation of the communication ethic dialogue as the labor of care one finds Hugo’s comment on “illustrious heroes” even more profound. In this passage one sees the metaphor, dialogue as the labor of care, unfold. Through the invitation of dialogue into the communicative life of caring, souls on the battlefields of life find bravery, triumphs, and rewards that allow them to continue to face the invasions of necessity. *Les Misérables* exemplifies the idea that life is not lived in a singular fashion; in fact life is best lived in the unity of contraries. In the case of caring, the unity of contraries, joy and suffering, blessing and burden, necessity and triumph allow the full impact of a meaningful human existence.

This work examines the relationship of dialogue and care through the dialogic philosophy of Martin Buber and the nature of care as constituted in human communication. The unity of dialogue and care is made explicit through Arendt’s

imperative of labor. The metaphor driving this work—dialogue as the labor of care—is the culmination of these perspectives into a communicative philosophy of care that re-engages care as a value central to both public and private life.

Dialogue as the labor of care is a necessary and worthwhile endeavor for a number of reasons. Most important to this work are two associated with the study and practice of communication, articulated by scholars Nel Noddings and Richard Johannesen. While Noddings made the initial link between dialogue and care, Johannesen called for research and conversation in order to involve this subject more intimately in the discipline of communication. Despite the fact that scholarly conversations on dialogue and caring imply a connection between the two, and both Noddings and Johannesen call for greater attentiveness to this relationship, the scholarship remains superficial. Furthermore, the literature does not highlight or explore care as a necessity or imperative in human communicative life—an idea developed later in this work through Arendt’s concept of labor. The call to engage care coupled with the devaluation of care in recent times presents an opportunity to consider its relevance for communicative life.

This work offers dialogue as the labor of care as a communication ethic that will assist in guiding our communicative actions in the current historical moment while re-engaging the imperative of care in human relationships. Constructing the metaphor “dialogue as the labor of care” requires the meeting of the horizon of the projects of Martin Buber and Hannah Arendt. Based in an interpretive question—How do Buber and Arendt suggest a communication ethic that reveals the importance and interdependence of the concepts dialogue, labor, and care?—this work seeks to provide a

guiding metaphor and invitation to further conversation about this undeniable relationship.

The task of dialogue as the labor of care is to unite the underlying metaphors of caring and dialogue emphasizing the necessity of dialogue to the caring relation, thus establishing that care is communicatively constituted. The metaphor of labor serves to underscore the necessity of labor that is both joy and suffering in the communicative lives of human beings living together. This particular historical moment calls for a communicative ethic such as dialogue as the labor of care for two important reasons. First, although care has been continually devalued throughout time, not only do the circumstances of this particular moment illuminate the need for caring, but the current changes demand that we change the way we view caring. Today, more than ever, persons are finding themselves responsible for caring for another and have little idea how to enact that caring communicatively. Second, due to the manifestations of postmodernity, which is marked by loss of narrative background, routine cynicism, extreme individualism and existential mistrust, persons are finding it harder than ever to connect meaningfully with others.

The call of this historical moment, to re-engage care, is made explicit through the unification of Buberian dialogue and care vis-à-vis Arendt's labor imperative. From the work of Martin Buber, one of the greatest philosophers of the twentieth century comes the theory of dialogue that compels an understanding of human communication situated in relation (Cissna and Anderson, *Dialogue* 194). This work is significant because Buber embeds dialogue within the "lived concrete, the everyday reality" of human existence (Friedman, *Life of Dialogue* v). Buber's philosophy is a philosophy of the "interhuman"

life lived in relation. Buber offers ideas that are situated within and responsive to the historical moment. Furthermore, Buber's philosophical anthropology has been hailed as significant to the field of communication. According to Ronald C. Arnett, "emphasizing philosophical anthropology situates Buber's dialogic project and privileges a space for the discipline of communication" ("Dialogic Ethic," 77).

The second pillar supporting the task set forth by this project—to make explicit the connection between Buber's philosophy of dialogue and care in order to enrich our communicative lives—is consideration of care itself. In order to gain a deeper understanding of care and its connection to the human condition, literature is reviewed from across the disciplines. The culmination of this review identifies three significant metaphors for understanding care and its relationship to communicative life: obligation, relation, and significant outcomes. Each of these is drawn from the breadth of the literature; however, they primarily reflect the communicative association with care introduced by Johannesen and Noddings and considered in greater depth by Julia Wood.

To bring the metaphor of dialogue as the labor of care to fruition, this work also employs the theory of the human condition articulated by Hannah Arendt. Arendt, also a Jewish philosopher coming out of WWII, writes from a political theorist's perspective and focuses the majority of her thinking on life—the human condition (Kristeva 4). Therefore, the focus here is primarily on Arendt's writing in *The Human Condition* in which she makes known the intimate relationship between labor and action in human life. This relationship implies care as central to all human relations.

Like Buber, Arendt's ideas are concerned with responding to specific happenings in a historical moment—to specific experiences in people's lives. Arendt's contribution

to this project lies in her ability to connect philosophical thought to everyday life, a valuable perspective when coupled with the textured view of dialogue presented by Buber. Dialogue, labor, and care as seen through the following chapters each independently engage the “mud of everyday life” and come together to offer hope for walking through this “mud” as people living in relation to others. When joined together, they frame a communicative ethic—“a picture of a world that we can try to invite” (Arnett, *Communication and Community* 2). This communicative ethic is “dialogue as the labor of care.”

In this chapter the conversation is initiated two ways: through a discussion of the problems presented by the postmodern moment and an introduction to the problems facing the concept and application of care. First, an examination of metanarrative decline, existential mistrust, individualism, and the demise of the ethical illuminate why we have difficulty communicatively enacting care in what is deemed postmodernity. Second, the discussion moves beyond postmodernity and focuses on the current communicative problems within caring itself, namely the devaluation of caring and the changes that have occurred in recent times that demand us to re-engage the concept of care. The end of this chapter weaves the two together in a forward look at the rest of this work in order to thread the seminal ideas into the larger tapestry that is dialogue as the labor of care. The following section, “Hope for This Hour,” begins the conversation by considering the need for a communicative ethic such as the one proposed at the end of this work. Here, dialogue as the labor of care is rooted in the reality of life, a unity of contraries, as it is lived out in communication.

“Hope for This Hour”

The contemporary postmodern historical moment communicates a need for humankind to find a way to live that will fulfill its humanity. Over fifty years ago Jewish philosopher Martin Buber described such a moment and called for hope. Reading his words today, one sees that the moments are much the same and there is still a need for hope. The purpose of this work is to examine the possibility of hope in moments like the one chronicled by Buber. Through the engagement of dialogue as the labor of care, this project is an endeavor to examine the spheres of dialogue and care and the coming together of the two in the work of Martin Buber and Hannah Arendt. This chapter provides the context for the contemporary conversation by developing in greater depth a sense of the problem and/or need akin to what Buber noted nearly half a century ago. This chapter provides the impetus for exploring the relationship between dialogue and care, as well as a point of entry into the conversation surrounding both philosophical ideas.

In 1952, at Carnegie Hall in New York, Martin Buber delivered his inspired essay, “Hope for this Hour.” In this historic essay Buber asked the question: “What does man need, every man, in order to live as a man? For if the globe is not to burst asunder, every man must be given what he needs for a really human life” (Martin Buber, *Pointing the Way* 228). For Buber the answer is communicatively constituted in dialogue. In the essay, “Hope for This Hour,” Buber describes the historical moment as one of the “heaviest affliction,” a time in which the abysses between human and human threatens to become unbridgeable, and each person is ruled by the demonic power of existential mistrust.

According to Buber, the result of this existential mistrust is that each person suffers from the inability to enter into genuine dialogue with the other. Buber explains the problem:

That we can no longer carry on a genuine dialogue from one camp to the other is the severest symptom of the sickness of present-day man.

Existential mistrust is this sickness itself. But the destruction of trust in human existence is the inner poisoning of the total human organism from which this sickness stems. (*Pointing the Way* 224)

The concern articulated by Buber, that we can no longer enter into genuine relations with the other also forms the core of this work with the anticipation that the invitation of dialogue into the caring relationship can offer the hope for this hour. For in dialogue one turns to the other, begins to see clearly, and learns. In dialogue, one learns the importance of confirmation both to oneself and to the other. In dialogue one overcomes the basic mistrust that plagues the contemporary historical moment. By emphasizing the connection between dialogue and care it is the hope of this work that we can overcome the circumstances that inhibit our ability constitute communicatively the caring relationship.

This chapter explains the current problem as one in which people are finding themselves, more than ever, called into the responsibility of caring for the other. Many are also finding that they are communicatively unequipped to engage in the caring relationship fully. The invitation of dialogue brings hope to the caring relationship.

For Buber, prior to proposing solutions for a particular historical moment, it is necessary first to explore the common need perceptible within that moment. Buber seeks

a textured understanding of origin, one in which it is imperative to understand a problem's origin and depth. To this end, he says, "As important as it is that we suffer in common the human anguish of today, it is still more important to trace in common where it comes from. Only from there, from the source, can the true hope of healing be given us" (*Pointing the Way* 220). This chapter explores what this author believes to be the sources of our current communicative eclipse of caring.

The present study attempts to respond to the question posed by the postmodern contemporary moment does as does Buber. "What does man need, every man, in order to live as a man?" This work offers the possibility of a reply through dialogue as the labor of care as one option available to us as human beings in need. Guided by three major metaphors, dialogue, labor and care, this work looks for the interplay between the three and asks how a metaphor such as this can be helpful for our historical moment.

This project begins from articulating a contemporary interdisciplinary understanding and interpretation of the origin and depth of this current historical moment's needs. The following section expands upon this description by viewing postmodernity as characterized by the loss of guiding narratives and as a major cause of our current inability to connect with our fellow human beings. The manifestations of postmodernity contributing to the need of a guiding metaphor such as dialogue as the labor of care include skepticism, routine cynicism, extreme individualism, and the demise of the ethical. After examining postmodernity and some of the communicative problems it presents, this section links the devaluation of caring and the changes that have occurred that demand us to change to the current problem. This author recognizes the interplay of

these conditions of this historical moment as contributing to the call of dialogue as the labor of care.

This Historical Moment: The Problem and the Opportunity

In examining the current historical moment it quickly becomes evident that there are many reasons for the need of a guiding metaphor such as dialogue as the labor of care. As will be evident through exploring the various elements of the character of postmodernity such as existential mistrust and the condition of extreme individualism, people living in the twenty-first century find it difficult if not impossible to trust their fellow human beings. Additionally, issues surrounding the family and the concept of care illuminate the need for a guiding metaphor that bridges the communicative gap between those in caring relationships.

Manifestations of the Postmodern Moment

Postmodernism has bred many labels. Its defining characteristics include the rejection of grand narratives, disdain for authority, skepticism, antifoundationalism, nihilism, subjectivism, and amorality. The postmodern situation is viewed as an age of virtue confusion and contention, heterogeneity, multiplicity, diversity, difference, incommensurability, unadulterated individualism, and the demise of traditional ethics. These characteristics allude to how postmodernity serves as a dialectic of problem and opportunity, a time that seeks to answer our current need for guiding ethical metaphors that give us common communicative ground upon which to stand.

Loss of Ground Upon Which to Stand

According to most popular and academic research we are currently living in postmodernity. Jean-Francois Lyotard, one of the leading philosophers on postmodernity, describes the postmodern condition as one in which overarching, guiding, metanarratives have become obsolete (xxiv). Using the term metanarrative as a philosophy of history that legitimizes truth, knowledge, and power, Lyotard claims that metanarratives no longer guide the behavior and/or beliefs of those in society. This loss of a socially accepted standard to guide decision-making has arguably led to the attitudes and communicative practices many people engage in today. The skepticism, or loss of faith in guiding stories, has led to the communicative problems of routine cynicism and existential mistrust.

Philosopher Stuart Sim believes that one of the best ways to describe postmodern philosophy is as a form of skepticism. According to Sim, people no longer look to overarching, guiding narratives—metanarratives— because they have lost their faith in those stories. Skepticism is a questioning of or lack of faith in authority, received wisdom, and cultural and political norms (3). This antifoundational view leads to “fragmented social groups, which too often are solipsistic and narcissistic” (Wood, *Dialogic Civility* xi). Skepticism or antifoundationalism is a rejection of the idea that there are foundations to our systems of thought that lie beyond question (Sim 9). In a postmodern moment, skepticism leads to the ultimate rejection of authority and in its place leaves only the individual self. This turning inward to the self begins to divide men from each other. Skepticism leads to routine cynicism, a pervasive communicative problem for the 21st century.

The loss or rejection of a guiding narrative and the tides of cynicism and skepticism that arise in its wake have significant effects on our communicative era. Ronald C. Arnett and Pat Arneson describe this communicative era as one consumed by routine cynicism (1). For Arnett and Arneson, routine or unreflective cynicism is an unceasing negativity, contempt, and general “rejectionist” worldview that is problematic in our current historical moment. “Our era of fragmented and defrocked narratives in which many people feel existentially displaced and unable to agree on what constitutes guiding public virtues turns the soil and makes ready for planting routine cynicism” (19). Arnett and Arneson “deem the routine, banal, and unreflective use of cynical communication to be a significant problem for discourse between persons. A social problem for discourse emerges when routine cynicism is used as a communicative technique” (12). Unreflective cynicism as a communication technique divides men even further by “destroying the human connection- we cease to trust what has been said without evaluating or testing the statement for its public truth value” (Arnett and Arneson 17). Routine cynicism invites and fosters existential mistrust.

The postmodern condition of skepticism or antifoundationalism leads to the communicative problem of unreflective cynicism and breeds existential mistrust. According to Arnett and Arneson, “when cynicism becomes routine- an automatic response before one studies a situation— A philosophical loss of trust in existence and in the possibility of goodness is made manifest” (13). As already mentioned Buber lamented the demonic power of pervasive mistrust. Buber worried that man was losing his togetherness, his ability to see the other as a person due to existential mistrust. As Buber stated, the individual person was losing the ability to connect with the other, the

ability to enter into genuine dialogue with the other. Existential mistrust undermines the possibility for dialogue between persons because it ultimately undermines the foundation of existence between persons:

The other communicates to me the perspective that he has acquired on a certain subject, but I do not really take cognizance of his communication as knowledge. I do not take it seriously as a contribution to the information about this subject, but rather I listen for what drives the other to say what he says, for an unconscious motive, say, or a ‘complex.’ He expresses a thought about a problem of life that concerns me, but I do not ask myself about the truth of what he says. I only pay attention to the question of which interest of his group has clothed itself in this apparently so objective judgment. (Buber, *Pointing the Way* 223)

Existential mistrust destroys person’s ability to communicate genuinely with one another. Then through the associated symptom of routine cynicism that causes one to constantly look for hidden meanings, motives and agendas in communication, existential mistrust is deepened to the point where faith in any aspect of everyday life has been destroyed (Arnett and Arneson 16). With no social, traditional standard available to guide speech, action, and judgment, individualism and subjectivism appears the only available recourse to guide one’s communicative practices.

Individualism: The Guide to Particular Communicative Practices

Within the depths of the postmodern condition the self has chosen to reject the overarching, guiding metanarratives that previously informed how one ought to live in the world. The person has become skeptical about the power and authority of prevailing

ideology (Sim 9). The person's skepticism has led to routine cynicism, an unceasing attitude of negativity, and ultimately to a pervasive existential mistrust that destroys the ability to enter into genuine dialogue with the other. Because of the rejection of metanarrative standards and one's distrust of their fellow human beings, one has only one place to turn for guidance: inward, a turn de Tocqueville warned of during his visit to 1830's America.

Alexis de Tocqueville came to America in 1831 to witness for himself the birth of this new nation and see the development of its democracy. While de Tocqueville discusses a vast variety of topics that affect and/or contribute to democracy, he points out one in particular that possessed the potential to undermine the very essence of democracy, individualism. According to de Tocqueville, individualism is of democratic origin (483). He defines individualism as a "reflective and peaceable sentiment" in which people choose to isolate themselves. They create little societies for their own use; they withdraw from the masses and condense their concern to only family and friends; they willingly abandon society (482). Society becomes a disconnected mass of independent citizens. The result of uninhibited individualism is that devotion to the community and the other become rare. Furthermore, there is a loss of connection, concern and responsibility to the past or the future. Taken to its natural conclusion, unchecked individualism "threatens finally to confine him [the individual] wholly in the solitude of his own heart (de Tocqueville 484). Individualism separates one from everything but oneself; everything leads back to oneself.

As de Tocqueville warned so long ago, unchecked individualism poses serious consequences for democratic society then and today. We are seeing those consequences

in this present historical moment. This work turns to Christopher Lasch and Robert Bellah et al to provide a view of the state of individualism in this present historical moment.

According to Christopher Lasch, author of *The Culture of Narcissism - American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations* and *The Minimal Self: Psychic Survival in Troubled Times*, there is a tendency in western culture for the interests of the self to dominate over that of others. People today are living without a story or narrative to guide them; therefore, people are left simply with themselves to guide their actions. The most detrimental effect of this is that rarely do people find any meaning outside themselves and their individual feelings (Arnett, *Communication and Community* 35). According to Lasch, the “minimal self” relies on him/herself for guidance, is detached from others, and has no real connection with the community. Lasch describes the minimal self as a person with selective apathy and emotional disengagement from others.

Much like the circumstance de Tocqueville described, the minimal self renounces the past and the future and is determined to live one day at a time (Lasch, *Minimal Self* 57-58). Lasch describes the disconnect of minimal self, “To live for the moment is the prevailing passion—to live for yourself, not for your predecessors or posterity. We are fast losing the sense of historical continuity, the sense of belonging to a succession of generations originating in the past and stretching into the future” (*Narcissism* 30). Arnett describes this attitude as an individualized view of community. According to Arnett, the individualized view of “community becomes a lighted path leading back to oneself, not others” (*Communication and Community* 36-37). An individual’s interests dominate

regardless of the needs of the community (35). In this historical moment, Arnett claims, it is unusual for people to give up something for themselves in order to do for others.

In *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* authors Robert Bellah, Richard Madsen, William Sullivan, Ann Swindler, and Steven M. Tipton explore the phenomena of individualism and its effects on society, community, and the self. According to Bellah et al, de Tocqueville's fears have become a reality.

Individualism has conquered most of the commitment people formerly maintained for community and society. "Individualism, the first language in which Americans tend to think about their lives, values independence and self-reliance above all else" (viii).

Although this may sound commendable, there is something missing in an individualistic mindset, the reality that our lives are integrally intertwined with those of others.

Individualism, when it becomes an extreme focus on the self, causes us to pursue our own interests without regard for anyone else. When there is a sole focus on the self, we withdraw from community and society and, as Buber pointed out, an existential mistrust emerges. Bellah et al. argue that in order to trust the society we belong to we must have a stake in that society, we must care about and be actively involved in that community.

With a focus on the self there is no care, concern or trust for the community in which we live. "American individualism resists more adult virtues, such as care and generativity, let alone wisdom, because the struggle for independence is all-consuming" (Bellah xi).

The individualistic self is left caring mostly about oneself, in isolation. One does not and cannot understand how one is integrally connected to others in the community. The individualistic self is defined by its ability to choose its own values and arbitrary preferences (Bellah 75). This being said, the self and its feelings are left as the sole

moral guide. The individualistic self is “separated from family, religion, and calling as sources of authority, duty and moral example” (Bellah 79). This being said, the self and one’s feelings are left as the sole moral guide, as evidenced within many characterizations of the tenets of the postmodern age. According to Sim, postmodernity has led to an “unprincipled emphasis upon personal and individual gratification at the expense of our responsibilities to others” (63). This turning inward to the self not only leaves the individual isolated from society and the community, ethically it leaves one alone to distinguish right from wrong, good from bad and caring only about oneself. This work now turns to philosophers Zygmunt Bauman and Alasdair MacIntyre to explore further the ethical implications of this postmodern tendency to turn inward to the self.

The Good Life: Responsibility-free Living

According to Zygmunt Bauman, the postmodern approach to morality is the celebration of the demise of the ethical and traditional ethics. “Ethics itself is denigrated or derided as one of the typically modern constraints now broken and destined for the dustbin of history; fetters once deemed necessary, now clearly superfluous: another illusion the postmodern men and women can well do without” (Bauman 2). In postmodernity we are free of oppressive duties, free of commandments, free of absolute obligations, free of responsibility. Bauman claims that in a postmodern moment,

The idea of self-sacrifice has been delegitimized; people are not goaded or willing to stretch themselves to attain moral ideals and guide moral values... Ours is an era of unadulterated individualism and the search for the good life, limited solely by the demand for tolerance (when coupled

with self-celebratory and scruple free individualism, tolerance may only express itself as indifference). (3)

The postmodern moment is then viewed as “ethics free.” Persons are concerned only for themselves and have completely rejected any sort of responsibility to community and the world around them. Persons are no longer guided by any “ought,” obligations, or duties.

Alasdair MacIntyre refers to this lack of guiding ethics as living in a time “after virtue.” According to MacIntyre, the language of morality has passed from a state of order to a state of disorder. We are no longer guided by common narratives that clearly define the virtues of our society. Instead we are left with relativism, each person deciding for himself in each situation right from wrong, unable to judge anyone else.

MacIntyre defines this relativistic phenomenon as “emotivism”:

Emotivism is the doctrine that all evaluative judgments and more specifically all moral judgments are nothing but expressions of preference, expressions of attitude or feeling, insofar as they are moral or evaluative in character...being expressions of attitude or feeling, are neither true nor false; and agreement in moral judgment is not to be secured by any rational method, for there is none. (12)

In other words, personal preference rules and traditional ethical judgment is impossible. MacIntyre laments the condition of emotivism and claims that it has become “embodied in our culture” (22). Due mostly to this turn inward, MacIntyre argues, morality has almost disappeared from our culture.

The demise of the ethical is a “grave cultural loss” and problematic for our communicative well-being. If we have no common virtues and no way to agree on

attainment of the good life, we will end up just as de Tocqueville feared, isolated each within our own heart, engaging only in the intrapersonal and without the possibility of genuine interpersonal communication or dialogue with others.

These contemporary symptoms of the postmodern age, metanarrative decline, individualism, and the demise of the ethical, ironically lead us to what Buber described so many years ago as the demonic power of existential mistrust. Existential mistrust destroys our connections to each other, eclipses our interdependence, and finally prevents us from entering into genuine dialogue with each other.

This postmodern historical moment defined by its pervasive existential mistrust holds serious consequences for our communicative practices. Skepticism, cynicism, and individualism all affect the way in which we relate with and communicate with each other. When we are constantly looking for hidden agendas, never trusting the other in what he has to say or his actions, we can become isolated from each other, not knowing how to reach out. The loss of agreed upon virtues and ethics has not only turned us inward toward ourselves, it has left us without a common conception of publicly agreed upon virtues or a common conception of the good life.

Likewise, these manifestations of postmodernity have serious consequences for the caring relationship. Meaningful caring relationships require that we be able to reach out to the other, trust the other, connect with the other, and be concerned for the other as opposed to only ourselves. Skepticism, routine cynicism, and individualism all prevent us from engaging the other in meaningful caring relationships. Existential mistrust robs us of the ability to believe in the relationship with the other. Furthermore, the loss of ground to stand upon, guiding narratives and moral compasses, eclipses the why behind

the act of caring. When the road to the good life is seen as paved by progress and accumulation, the act of caring becomes a burden not worth engaging. The communicative problems derived from the current postmodern moment set us up to be unable to engage in the communicative act of caring. Today more than ever before people are being called into responsibility by the other to care and finding themselves unequipped.

The Problem Beyond Postmodernity: The Need to Re-Engage the Concept of Care

The persistent and defining symptoms of postmodernity are not the only conditions of the present historical moment that call forth dialogue as the labor of care as a communicative ethic that offers a fitting response to the times. The seemingly eternal devaluation of caring and the more contemporaneous issue of the changes that have occurred in our society that demand us to change the way we view caring have recently begun to have serious effects on communication and our lives in general. Both conditions will be shown to be major contributors to the need for a communication ethic such as dialogue as the labor of care to emerge as a guiding ethic well suited to address the contemporary historical moment and its needs and questions.

The Devaluation of Caring

Caring, one of the main metaphors of this project and an impetus for its inception is significantly devalued in Western culture. This significant devaluation of care fosters many related communicative problems associated with our attitudes towards and our enactment of caring practices.

There are many reasons for the devaluation of caring, The first to be addressed is the seemingly eternal notion that caring is considered women's work, associated most often with the private sphere and worth little in terms of material gain. "Caring for others, as defined in the United States, is not valuable or important; thus, it is assigned to individuals and groups whom the culture has designated as subordinate- predominantly women" (Wood, *Who Cares* 112). Women have traditionally cared for the house, the children, a spouse, the elderly, etc. As women have been historically seen as subordinate to men their "work" is by association regarded as inferior. In our society the public sphere is where one gains respect and value through independence, financial success, and self-determination. "Women are defined as nurturers, the people who provide comfort, compassion, and care. Men, meanwhile, go about doing the 'important stuff'" (Wood, *Who Cares* 12). We have constructed a world in which caring is not among the "important stuff."

Julia Wood explains the misguided understanding of the unimportance of caring and offers several indications of its continuing devaluation in contemporary American society. In explicating the devaluation of caring, Wood argues that it is necessary to look at current social and government practices and social structures used when referring to those who serve as care givers.

Wood begins her argument by pointing out the current ways in which we as a nation communicate to our culture that caring is not valued. Wood highlights the fact that "of all the developed countries in the world, America provides the least support for child care and child rearing" (*Who Cares* 21). In the workplace few companies provide assistance or allowances for those with children or those caring for elderly parents (27).

When it comes to governmental budgetary decisions, educational and social programs (those that provide care) receive the first cuts to their already low allowances (121). In each of these examples there are social or governmental messages that communicate to our culture that caring is not valued.

Caring is not only devalued because it is seen as women's work or because government and the workplace ignore its importance, caring is devalued by prominent elements of the contemporary postmodern condition as well. For example, the postmodern emergence of individualism has negative consequences for how we as a society look at caring. Since independence and self-determination are such highly valued qualities, caring is interpreted as evidence of a sign of weakness and thereby caregivers are posited as being less desirable. Gordon, Benner, and Noddings explain the individualistic aversion to care:

Caregivers are stained with shame because our society rejects any concept of interdependence and fears that even the short-term need for assistance will produce chronic dependence. In a radically individualistic society such dependence is thought to be illegitimate, and those who need care the most are often considered morally defective. (xiv)

The individualistic attitude toward care isolates us in ways that de Tocqueville did not foresee. Through the inward turn to the self we not only separate ourselves from society, we reject the legitimacy of those engaging in caring practices, devaluing those practices in the eyes of our society.

Not only has individualism served as a catalyst that contributes to the devaluation of caring, our technologically oriented culture shifts our focus of attention from

relationships to the advances of technology. A focus of attention on technology serves to continue the devaluation of caring in our society. Many times we create and adopt new technological advances without any regard for how they fit into our interpersonal lives. Benner and Wrubel argue that unless the adoption of technological advancements are considered in the context of human relationships, they become dangerous:

In a highly technical society that values autonomy, individualism, and competitiveness, caring practices have always been fragile, but this societal blindness causes those who value technological advances to overlook the ways these advances are rendered dangerous and unfeasible without a context of skillful, compassionate care. (Benner, Wrubel xv)

In this passage Benner and Wrubel highlight the virtually invisible, fragile position caring holds in a society that values individual autonomy and technological advancement.

Without considering the place of human interaction in the use of technology, technology becomes dangerous. When the focus of a culture's attention is primarily the advancement of the individual and the advancement of technology, caring practices, already banned to the private sphere, seem even less important, less necessary.

The focus of attention in our society tends to be on advancement, advancement of the self. We seek to find a better quality of life. We seek to advance our culture through technology. We seek to find quicker, better ways of doing things. In this quest, we neglect the things that make us human. We neglect and ignore caring relationships because we do not see their value. Value in our society is placed on material goods, individual success, and technological advances, leaving caring and caring practices in a crisis. The seemingly eternal devaluation of caring leaves the significance and the

necessity of caring relationships in the dark, eclipsed. Caring continues to be viewed as a matter for unimportant people in the private sphere. The important people are out “in the world,” making a name for themselves, by themselves. Caring communicates only weakness to a society that believes that in order to be successful one must do it alone. An individualistic society leaves no room for the interdependence of caring. However, in recent times the need for society as a whole to recognize the necessity of caring has come to the foreground.

The Changes that Demand Change

The crisis of caring is not only caused by the devaluation of the importance of caring and caring practices, it is further escalated because of the changes that have occurred in this moment that demand us to change our views towards caring. This moment calls us into the responsibility of care more than ever before for two primary reasons. First, the face of the family no longer looks like the picture drawn by de Tocqueville. The traditional family is hard to find in today’s world. Due to the changes in the family and the fact that more women than ever before are working outside of the home in full time capacities, the roles of men and women have been in some cases blurred and in some cases completely reversed. Second, due to the overwhelming increase of elderly needing care, many people are finding themselves in the unexpected position of taking care of elderly relatives.

In *The Democracy of America* de Tocqueville describes the condition of men and women in the United States as equal; however, he carefully explains that the sexes, being completely different in both physical and moral constitution, are called to different duties. According to de Tocqueville, early Americans took great care in “cleanly separated lines

of action for the two sexes, and where they have wanted them both to march at an equal pace but on different paths” (574). In the delineation of duties, the man is clearly the head of the household and his rightful place is in the public sphere. On the other hand, the woman’s place is in the domestic circle, caring for others and nurturing the mores of her family. According to de Tocqueville, in any free society, it is the women who make the mores and nowhere is the duty of women more needed than in the home, responsible for the moral stability her family and ultimately society (376). The description of the American family provided by de Tocqueville reveals several important facts that are no longer true today. First, the conception of a family was universal; a father, the head of the household, his wife, the mother, and in most cases children constituted the family. The roles for men and women in the family were clearly defined and rarely challenged. The husband, the totalitarian leader of his home, established a presence in the public sphere. The wife, on the other hand, managed the domestic circle. It was her responsibility to care for the children, the house, and any other family members in need of care. De Tocqueville stresses an essential duty of the wife and mother. It was clearly the woman’s responsibility to instill, develop, and maintain the moral sensibilities of her family. This face of the family and these roles were a relative constant for many generations but with the onset of WWII everything changed, especially the face of the family.

The crisis of caring stems from the fact that after WWII and ever since, women have continued to leave the home, and the delicate balance so well designed by early Americans has been disrupted. The roles of men and women are no longer clear and the face of the family has changed completely.

According to a recent study, the percentage of mothers in the labor force rose from 47.4 percent in 1975 to 72.2 percent in 2002 (Steen 1). Traditionally, it was women who were responsible for the majority of the care-giving of children. Today, with the rise of single parent homes and dual income homes the face of the American family has changed. Women are no longer the only ones caring for children and in many cases; they are not the ones doing the care-giving at all. According to Gordon et al, “the fastest growing family category in American society, in relative terms, is that of families headed by single fathers” (ix). Another study shows that the percentage of stay at home dads has increased significantly, 70% since 1990 (Conlin 76). With mothers working outside the home, high divorce rates, and the rise of househusbands the face of the American family has changed significantly. The result of this change has been unprecedented.

Today, there is not a universal conception of a family. Due to the reasons discussed, there are no longer clear delineations for the roles men and women play in the family. The roles described by de Tocqueville have in some cases been blurred, in other cases completely switched, and in some cases have become the responsibility of only one person. Because women are actively taking part in the public sphere men are being called to take a more active role in the private sphere. Today, men and women share the care-giving responsibilities that generations ago were unquestionably the duty of women. As seen by the rise of househusbands in some cases the roles are completely switched—the man has become the sole caregiver in the household. Finally, due to the ever increasing number of single parent homes, many people find themselves responsible for everything related to the needs of the family.

While more and more women enter the workforce and more and more men find themselves taking more and more responsibility with the children, families continue to change and care-giving responsibilities continue to increase with the number of elderly needing care. Today, more than ever before Americans are living longer lives and need more care. An article from the Denver Post reports,

One of the most significant and unprecedented demographic shifts our nation, the state and the region will ever see is coming. It's like a bulge in our radar - a massive blip coming down the pipeline that will, in many ways, alter our society's idea of 'growing old.' Over the next 20 years, the growth of our senior population is expected to skyrocket. In the Denver region alone, according to recent forecasts, the number of people who are 60 and older is predicted to increase by nearly 140 percent between 1996 and 2020. This is primarily attributable to the aging of the baby boomer generation. (Guillermo I1)

With the nationwide, worldwide increase in the elderly population the practices of care seem quintessential. "It's estimated that 22 million households are involved in some aspect of elder care, and that number is going to double in the next 20 years" (Cox F1). Care-giving for the elderly is becoming and will continue to be a central concern for the American population. Currently the focus of attention for this shift in the population is on the need for concrete things such as housing and medical care. There has not been much attention paid to the needed shift in our communication practices with this trend. With this change comes a need for a greater focus of attention on caring and the communication practices that enable caring.

The changes in the family, the changes in the roles of men and women, and the increasingly aging world population demand that we take notice and make changes in our ability and willingness to care for the other. We live in a time that is calling each of us, especially those who have not traditionally filled care-giving roles, to provide more care for our children, the elderly, and our communities. We live in an historical moment that is calling us to responsibility, calling us to action, calling us to care. These changes have brought attention to the need for care and also revealed that in many cases we are communicatively unequipped to enact the caring that this moment demands.

Even though the need for care is more evident than ever, the necessity of care for human existence is eclipsed by the manifestations of postmodernity. As alluded to earlier, the crisis of care is exacerbated by the dominant tenets of the contemporary postmodern situation and the values and ethics it endorses. We live in a time with no guiding narratives to inform our daily practices. We live in a time of virtue confusion and contention, when we cannot agree with our neighbors on public, let alone private, virtues. We live in an emotivistic time in which we look to ourselves for the meaning of right and wrong. This postmodern moment is marked by extreme individualism, a time in which we have turned inward to ourselves leaving us disconnected from our neighbors. This postmodern moment is marked by skepticism that has led to routine cynicism that in turn has led to existential mistrust. These conditions of postmodernity prevent us from realizing the importance of care to human interaction and existence. Emotivism and skepticism have left us without the communicative background to answer the call of care. Existential mistrust has left us unconnected and at a loss as to how to engage the changes

this moment demands. With no ground to stand on even those who recognize the demands to care have trouble trusting the communicative relationship with the other. Dialogue as the labor of care offers “hope for this hour.” Dialogue as the labor of care is a possible communicative ethic offered as a guiding background for our foreground actions to meet the demands and questions of this postmodern historical moment.

Dialogue as the Labor of Care: Exploring the Conceptual Map

Dialogue as the labor of care comes to life in five chapters. After situating the conversation in communication and exploring the communicative habits of the heart, dialogue and caring, this work establishes a possible communicative ethic responsive to this historical moment. To this point the connection between dialogue and caring has not been developed. Furthermore, although noted as important, the labor component of dialogue and caring has not been explored in theoretical work. Through the philosophical foundations of Martin Buber and Hannah Arendt this work examines the interplay of dialogue, labor, and care. Victor Hugo’s epic story, *Les Misérables*, serves as a way to perceive the power of inviting dialogue into the caring relationship and as an exemplar of the unity of contraries that is life, joy and suffering, blessing and burden.

The first section of this work, “Communicative Habits of the Heart,” sets the stage for the remainder of the work. Chapter Two, “Dialogue and Communicative Implications,” briefly reviews the communication scholarship on dialogue and clarifies the reasons for the reliance of this work on Martin Buber’s dialogic theory. Although there are distinct approaches to dialogue (Cissna and Anderson 10), this work focuses on scholarship directly related to the dialogic theory of Martin Buber as explored through communication scholars such as John Stewart, Rob Anderson, Ken Cissna, and John

Pouloukas. This work privileges Buber's conception of dialogue because connecting this understanding of dialogue to caring foregrounds a philosophic anthropologic perspective of dialogue which Buber understood as ideas impacting the human. This effort concurs with and augments the insights of Nel Noddings whose work relies on Martin Buber in its understanding of caring.

Chapter Two outlines Buber's conception of dialogue and reviews how Buber has influenced the understanding of dialogue within the field of communication. Chapter Two divides the communication scholarship on Buberian dialogue into four areas: 1) the foundations of dialogue; 2) defining dialogic communication; 3) the application of dialogic theory: dialogue in action and 4) dialogue as communication ethics in action. This exploration points to several guiding ideas that begin to make the connection between dialogue and caring explicit and concrete. Finally, Chapter Two examines the work of communication scholars such as Julia Wood, Ronald C. Arnett, and Richard Johannesen all of whom have discussed the connection between dialogue and care, but have not fully developed the potential inherent within this relationship.

The literature review of the studies on dialogue paints a picture of how dialogue is perceived generally within the communication discipline. The conversation also reveals that there are few explored connections of dialogue to care in the field excepting those noted above. The limited comment on care and its connections to dialogue within the communication discipline necessitates an interdisciplinary examination of the scholarly conversation regarding care.

Chapter Three: "Caring: Communicatively Constituted" explores the current scholarship on caring. In moving from dialogue to care similar questions are addressed:

What is care? What is the scholarly conversation regarding care? Is there substantive literature that explores the integral connection between dialogue and caring?

Unlike dialogue, caring has not received much attention in the field of communication, which necessitates a broader interdisciplinary approach engaging such areas as philosophy, psychology, and feminist ethics. Chapter Three begins exploring perspectives on care by analyzing the work of philosopher Milton Mayeroff. Second, Willard Gaylin offers a care perspective from the field of psychology. The literature in philosophy and psychology help frame the concept of care and illuminate the importance of caring for this historical moment. However, the most extensive literature on caring is found in area of feminist ethics. Chapter Three looks specifically at important feminist scholars such as Carol Gilligan, Nel Noddings, and Joan Tronto to shape this work's understanding of caring. Finally, Chapter Three focuses on the scholarship on caring in the field of communication, specifically the work of Julia Wood. Wood's work simultaneously begins to establish a link between dialogue and care while showing the need for greater investigation and analysis of the relation between the two ideas.

The concluding section of Chapter Three unites and incorporates the major ideas of the conversation on caring and presents three communicatively constituted metaphors that serve to shape the connection between dialogue and caring. The care metaphors of obligation, relation, and the horizon of significant outcomes are used throughout the rest of this work to guide the connection between dialogue, care, and labor thus creating the communicative ethic based on dialogue as the labor of care.

While limited connections have been made between dialogue and care (i.e. Noddings and Johannesen), these connections are never fully developed or explored. It is

the contention of this author that an invitation into dialogue is necessary for care, and the added labor component brings action and necessity (the idea of necessity also emphasizes the ethical implications of this choice) to the connection. The second section of this work, “Inviting Dialogue and Welcoming Labor into the Communicative Life of Caring,” unites and expands upon the ideas concerning dialogue and caring found in the first two chapters. This unification ultimately creates the communicative ethic of dialogue as the labor of care.

Chapter Four, “The Intertextuality of Care: Dialogue and the Necessity of Labor,” frames the communicative metaphor of dialogue as the labor of care by turning to the work of Martin Buber and Hannah Arendt to provide the underlying philosophical foundations for this work. Chapter Four uses the three foundational metaphors of care, obligation, relation, and horizon of significant outcomes as touchstones for bringing together the work of Buber and Arendt and pointing to the undeniable connection of these metaphors.

Chapter Five, “The Lived Unity: Welcoming the Contraries,” is the concluding chapter. Chapter Five has two distinct purposes. The first is the explication of the metaphor dialogue as the labor of care and the second is the illumination of the power of this metaphor. In the first section of Chapter Five, “Ground Upon Which to Stand,” the metaphors of dialogue, care, and labor are brought together as a particular communicative ethic. Chapter Five explores the undeniable connection between the metaphors found in the work of Buber and Arendt and those found in the work of prominent care authors. Chapter Five situates dialogue as the labor of care as a possible narrative background that guides and informs our foreground actions in this historical moment.

The second part of Chapter Five, “Les Misérables: The Unity of Contraries,” takes the metaphor of dialogue as the labor of care and brings it to life through Victor Hugo’s novel *Les Misérables*. Working in the spirit of narrative theorists such as Paul Ricoeur, Stanley Hauerwas, and Alasdair MacIntyre, this section explores the joys and sorrows of dialogue as the labor of care through this epic story. The first two sections “Dialogue: The Invitation to Life” and “Caring: To Be Caressed” look at the extraordinary ways in which Hugo portrays the both the power of dialogue and the joy found in the caring relationship. “Obligation: Dialogue as the Call of Care” delves into the story of Jean Valjean and illuminates the calling metaphors of responsibility, guilt, and labor. “Relation: Dialogue as the Face of Care” reveals the significance of the interpersonal metaphors of dialogue as the labor of care that point us to fundamental fact of human existence, all life is lived in relation. The final section, “The Horizon of Significant Outcomes: Dialogue as the Reward of Care,” concludes the chapter by looking at the lived unity of life found in the story of *Les Misérables*.

Dialogue as the labor of care is an interpretive work guided by three metaphors: dialogue, labor, and care. The philosophy of dialogue is situated in the work of Martin Buber. The work of Hannah Arendt frames this author’s approach to labor. This chapter has shown that in this current historical moment there is a significant need for communicative guidance in the ways we can enact caring and has explored the manifestations of postmodernity that particularly contribute to our current communicative need. Specifically, the fact of metanarrative decline, existential mistrust, individualism, and finally, the demise of the ethical have all contributed to our current inability to communicatively enact caring. Moving beyond postmodernity, the chapter examined the

current communicative problems found within caring itself, namely the devaluation of caring and the changes that have occurred in recent times that demand us to change our views of caring. The task of the this project is to engage the current historical moment, one which finds people at a communicative loss, and offer a possible communication ethic capable of answering the need of this moment. As seen through the literature of scholars in both dialogue and care, there is no current development of the link between dialogue and care. This work develops that link and suggests that dialogue as the labor of care is important not only to the scholarly conversation but also to the communicative lives of those looking for “hope for this hour.”

Chapter 2: Dialogue: Communicative Implications

Abstract

As part of the overall purpose of this work, dialogue as the labor of care calls for a deeper understanding of dialogue as it relates to human communication. Broadly speaking, human communication understood in terms of dialogue plays an important role in the scholarly conversation in the field of communication, and as such serves as the foundation of this work. In this chapter dialogue is overviewed through the philosophical writings of Martin Buber. Identified by leading contemporary scholars in the area of communication ethics as the preeminent author in the area of dialogue, Buber is the unequivocal choice for expanding any communicative idea concerning dialogue. Following an explication of the importance of dialogue to the communication discipline vis-à-vis Buber, this chapter sets forth a working definition of dialogue that points toward

shifting the relationship between care and dialogue from implicit to explicit in the communication scholarship.

The bishop turned to the man:

“Monsieur, sit down and warm yourself: we are going to take supper presently, and your bed will be made ready while you sup.”

At last the man quite understood; his face, the expression of which till then had been gloomy and hard, now expressed stupefaction, doubt, and joy, and became absolutely wonderful. He began to stutter like a madman.

True? What! You will keep me? You won't drive me away? A convict! You call me monsieur and don't say 'Get out, dog!' as everybody else does...

Every time he said this word monsieur, with his gently solemn and heartily hospitable vice, the man's continence lighted up. Monsieur to a convict is a glass of water to a man dying of thirst at sea. Ignominy thirsts for respect...

“Monsieur Cure,” said the man, “you are good; you don't despise me. You take me into your house; you light candles for me, and I hav'n't hid from you where I come from, and how miserable I am.”

The bishop, who was sitting near him, touched his hand gently and said: “You need not tell me who you are...I tell you, who are a traveler, that you are more at home here than I; whatever is here is yours. What need have I to know your name? Besides, before you told me, I knew it.”

The man opened his eyes in astonishment:

“Really? You knew my name?”

“Yes,” answered the bishop, “your name is my brother.” (Les Misérables 66-67)

There is genuine dialogue- no matter whether spoken or silent- where each of the participants really has in mind the other or others in their present and particular being and turns to them with the intention of establishing a living mutual relation between himself and them...He who is living the life of dialogue receives in the ordinary course of the hours something that is said and feels himself approached for an answer.

Martin Buber

Between Man and Man

Introduction

As part of the overall purpose of this work, dialogue as the labor of care calls for a deeper understanding of dialogue as it relates to human communication. Broadly

speaking, human communication understood in terms of dialogue plays an important role in the scholarly conversation in the field of communication, and as such serves as the foundation of this work. In this chapter dialogue is overviewed through the philosophical writings of Martin Buber. Identified by leading contemporary scholars in the area of communication ethics as the preeminent author in the area of dialogue, Buber is the unequivocal choice for expanding any communicative idea concerning dialogue. Following an explication of the importance of dialogue to the communication discipline vis-à-vis Buber, this chapter sets forth a working definition of dialogue that points toward shifting the relationship between care and dialogue from implicit to explicit in the communication scholarship.

The idea that dialogue is more than simply back and forth conversation has a long and textured lineage. Today, scholars such as Cissna, Anderson, Arnett, Baxter, and Stewart differentiate between various approaches to dialogue. In the article, “Communication and the Ground of Dialogue,” Ken Cissna and Rob Anderson organize dialogic research and philosophies into four distinct yet related traditions: 1) Martin Buber, who conceives of dialogue as a form of human meeting or relationship; 2) conversation analysts, who use dialogue to describe the complexities of conversation; 3) Mikhail Bakhtin, who views dialogue as a cultural form of knowing; and 4) Hans-Georg Gadamer, who uses dialogue to describe textual understanding and interpretation (Cissna and Anderson 10). Although the ideas put forth in these three approaches remain important to ongoing work in the field of communication, attention to Buber’s philosophy informs this chapter and the rest of this work because of his attentiveness to the comprehensive reach and impact of dialogue on human relations.

This work privileges Buber's conception of dialogue because connecting this understanding of dialogue to caring foregrounds a philosophic anthropologic understanding of dialogue which Buber set forth as ideas integral to the human. Out of Buber's most influential works comes an understanding of dialogue as genuine meeting where those involved really have in mind the other in their present and particular being. Genuine meeting such as that invited by the bishop with Jean Valjean exemplifies the invitation of dialogue that is fundamental to the life of caring.

Buber's philosophy of dialogue privileges relation. For Buber, life begins with two. Inviting dialogue into one's relationships requires that each turn to the other with the intention of creating a mutual relation between them. The basic move of dialogue is the turning. The turning is a pragmatic act, an act of learning, learning about the other and oneself. This work relies on Buber's philosophy of dialogue because Buber emphasizes the concept of relation and its integral connection to genuine existence of human life. Buber points to the humanness of lived life—a life that prospers within the unity of contraries. Based in these core ideas, additional authors help frame the current use of dialogue within the field and provide a point of departure for introducing dialogue as the labor of care.

The current communication scholarship that uses Buber's theory as a foundation is grounded in the notion that man can be understood in mutual relation and it is relation that makes him human. The communication scholarship that grounds itself in Buber's dialogic theory begins from the phenomenological standpoint of intentionality and the presupposition that life is lived in relation. The following section highlights Buber's significance to dialogue and briefly outlines his theory of dialogue.

Buber's Dialogue: Life Lived in Relation

To begin, it is important to articulate briefly Martin Buber's approach to dialogue. By providing an outline of the philosophic anthropologic approach of Buberian dialogue, this section points to the basic reasons that dialogue is undeniably connected to and necessary for the realization of meaningful caring relationships.

Most scholars consider Martin Buber, Jewish theologian and philosopher, as the founder of dialogic theory. Floyd W. Matson and Ashley Montagu hail Buber as earliest contemporary spokesman of the theory of dialogue (5). Richard Johanssen claims, "Among contemporary existentialist philosophers, Martin Buber is the primary philosopher who places the concept of dialogue at the heart of his view of human communication and existence" (*Ethics in Human Communication* 56). Likewise, John Stewart points out that much of the scholarly work done in dialogue uses the dialogic theory of Buber as the groundwork for research:

Martin Buber was one of the most influential progenitors of the efforts to rethink the nature of persons and reframe our understanding of the relationship among the individual, the social, and the interhuman...Buber remains the one author who initially did the most to describe dialogue and attempt to place it at the center of the human studies (*Reach of Dialogue* Forward ix).

As evidenced by these assertions, Martin Buber's philosophy is recognized as essential to any conversation concerning dialogic theory.

The concept of dialogue as a form of human communication and understanding has been around since at least the philosophical writings of Plato, but it was Martin Buber

and his I-Thou vs. I-It relationship theory that brought dialogue back into the scholarly conversation (Matson and Montagu 6). Buber conceived of dialogue as a form of human meeting or relationship (Cissna and Anderson 10). Maurice Friedman explains the significance of Buber's approach as twofold: first, that man is "to be understood, in general terms of his relationships rather than taken in himself; [and] second, that he is to be understood specifically in terms of that direct, mutual relation that makes him human" (*Life of Dialogue* 61). Buber offers dialogue as a way for persons to live together with each other and be truly human.

"All real life is meeting," according to the dialogic approach that Martin Buber takes to the concrete reality of everyday life. Buber states, "The basic movement of the life of dialogue is the turning toward the other" (*Between Man and Man* 22). Buber's philosophy of dialogue is dependent on understanding the necessity of the I-Thou relationship and the essential metaphors of otherness and the between. Buber offers dialogue as a way to achieve authentic existence. Buber believes that through dialogue life can achieve a lived unity.

Buber believes "the attitude of man is twofold in accordance with the two basic words he can speak" (*I and Thou* 53). Dialogue emerges in one of those two attitudes that man takes toward the world. According to Buber, man engages the world through I-It relations and I-Thou relations. For Buber, both are necessary; however, life lived solely in the I-It relation is empty and not worth living. On the other hand, if one attempts to live life as all dialogic encounters—I-Thou relations—dialogue is rendered impossible. Buber argues for the necessity of both relationships, the dialogic and the functional.

The I-It relation is one in which the I experiences the other as an object, a means to an end, or an entity that has *something* the I needs or wants. The I--Thou relation, on the other hand, is where persons become fully human. In the I-Thou relation there is genuine encounter because each participant enters the relationship with his whole being. I-Thou relationships are founded on mutuality, trust, and partnership in common situations and take place in genuine encounters. It is in the I-Thou relationship that the invitation for dialogue occurs.

Dialogue, for Buber, emerges in relation. In dialogue each of the participants in communication “really has in mind the other or others in their present and particular being” (*Between Man and Man* 19). There is a turning toward the other in which each recognizes that he/she is being addressed, he/she takes responsibility for the address and responds. The I-Thou relationship of dialogue involves reaching out and responding. Within this address and response genuine dialogue is invited when there is a real meeting between an I and a Thou.

Real meeting can only take place when each realizes and acknowledges that the other is truly other than himself. Otherness is the chief presupposition for the rise of dialogue. In dialogue Buber explains, “I become aware of him, aware he is different, essentially different from myself, in the definite, unique way which is peculiar to him, and I accept whom I thus see...” (*Knowledge of Man* 79). In recognizing and accepting that the other is truly other the I realizes and confirms the value of the Thou in and of him/herself.

There is a recognition in dialogue that each is truly other. In light of this recognition one can turn to the other fully with one’s entire being in response to an

address. Dialogue is, for Buber, a reciprocal relationship of whole and active beings whose focus of attention is not on themselves but on the mutual relationship “between” them (Freidman, *Life of Dialogue* 60). The between is an essential metaphor in understanding the concept of dialogue because, as Buber states, the meaning of the dialogic relationship is not found in those in the relationship but in their interchange (Friedman, *Life of Dialogue* 85).

According to Buber, those who live the life of dialogue know a lived unity and communication becomes communion. The dialogic relationship brings with it a lived unity to life. According to Buber, life finds true unity in dialogue through address and response in genuine encounters “between” persons. Lived unity is part of our inheritance as human beings, because through it “we attain authentic human existence. But this birthright cannot be simply inherited, it must be earned” (Friedman, *Life of Dialogue* 97).

Lived unity is the “hope for this hour” that Martin Buber offers through his philosophy of dialogue. Through exploring the relationship between dialogue and caring it is the hope of this author that as human beings we can find new ways to enact caring and invite dialogue, and ultimately lived unity, into our lives.

Buber had a vision of mutuality for human beings. “His (Buber’s) vision concerns the attitudes we take toward the totality of things and beings that meet us and that we meet in the world...” (Berry, x). The focus of Buber’s philosophy is the “genuine meeting between human beings.” Dialogue, in this sense, is “based in the phenomenological notion of intentionality. The importance of dialogue is rooted in its concern for interpreting or making sense of lived experience...” (Arnett, “Toward a Phenomenological Understanding of Dialogue” 205). Buberian dialogue is a philosophy

of human communication that focuses on mutuality and relationship. Buber's approach to dialogue, the first tradition outlined by Cissna and Anderson, provides communication scholarship with a philosophical approach to dialogue that is applicable to every day life. Through the following exploration of the use of Buberian dialogue in the field of communication, this chapter points to the reasons why dialogue and caring are so intimately connected.

Communication to Communion: Buberian Dialogue in the Field of Communication

In looking at the significant works written by communication scholars on Buberian dialogue, this chapter provides the context out which this work is born. Outlined here is the scholarly work of communication philosophers such as John Stewart, Richard Johannesen, Barnett Pearce, Ronald C. Arnett, Rob Anderson and Ken Cissna all of whom employ the dialogic philosophy of Martin Buber and in so doing change the way the communication discipline approaches such areas as organizational communication, interpersonal communication, and communication ethics.

This chapter tells the story of Buberian dialogue in the field of communication and emphasizes the phenomenological approach Buber takes to the philosophy of dialogue. The conversation is ordered chronologically; each section foregrounds the major conceptual developments in the history of dialogue, which in the end points to the fundamental links between dialogue and caring.

In the initial stages of the link between dialogic theory and communication, most of the scholarship focused on describing the foundations of dialogic communication. Once scholars had an understanding of the components of dialogue and the characteristics

of dialogue, they looked to establish the validity of dialogue. As the concept of communication as dialogue grew in the field there were those who questioned the applicability and substance of dialogue. These critiques spurred the next major development in the conversation, the scholarship that foregrounds the significance of phenomenology to dialogue. As dialogue grew in popularity scholars recognized the confusion that varying approaches to dialogue created. Hence, the next phase of the conversation attempted to articulate specific, working definitions of dialogic communication. Finally, the last phase of the conversation took all previous scholarship and incorporated the knowledge built thus far and put dialogic communication in action, most specifically in the realm of communication ethics.

The concept of human communication as dialogue has been the focus of scholarly attention since the 1960's within the field of communication. The term *dialogue* has philosophical roots back to Plato, according to Martin Buber (*Between Man and Man* 26). Floyd Matson and Ashley Montagu claim the view of human communication as dialogue emerged as the third in a series of communication revolutions, following the first revolution of scientific invention and mechanical engineering (i.e., the telephone, the radio, and the printing press), and a second revolution marked by scientific theory and human engineering (i.e., cybernetics and mass motivation research) (1).

Matson and Montagu argued that the renewed focus on the dialogical theory of communication began as a counterrevolution against cybernetics and mass motivation research in which people are objectified in communication (5). Dialogic theory, as opposed to the focus in the second revolution, the technical strategic theory, offered a renewed focus on a humane theory of communication (Matson and Montagu 6).

By 1964, volumes of scholarly works had been written on the increasingly popular theory of dialogue (Matson and Montagu 6). The concept of dialogue exploded onto the scholarly scene and was addressed by many disciplines. In 1971, communication scholar Richard Johannesen wrote an article that described dialogue as an emerging concept in the communication field. Johannesen claimed that the concept of communication as dialogue was to play an increasing central role in human communication behavior (382). Some twenty years later, in 1994, John Stewart, in the foreword to *The Reach of Dialogue: Confirmation, Voice and Community* edited by Rob Anderson, Kenneth Cissna, and Ronald C. Arnett, claimed that dialogue had become one of the central foci of communication scholars.

Although dialogue as a revolution in communication came to the foreground in the 60's its relevance, significance, and popularity in the communication discipline continues. Since the renewed focus on dialogue, to which Matson and Montagu credit existentialists Martin Buber, Gabriel Marcel, Paul Tillich and Karl Jaspers, numerous theories and approaches have emerged in the field of communication and various other disciplines. The history of Buberian dialogue begins with the foundational work of communication scholars Matson, Montagu, Kaplan, Johannesen, Poulakos and Stewart, who articulated the importance of dialogue to the field, the characteristics and components of dialogue and the validity of dialogue as a significant form of human communication.

The Foundations of Dialogue

Dialogue entered the scholarly conversation in a historical moment when communication studies had become increasingly social scientific, when people needed to be reminded of the important things in life. Dialogue entered the communication conversation to bring connection and communion back to the focus of communication. Martin Buber originally wrote *I and Thou* in 1923. By the 1960's dialogue emerged as an important topic in the field of communication. Floyd Matson and Ashley Montagu edited the first extensive look at human communication as dialogue in 1967. According to Matson and Montagu, the counter-revolution of dialogue began as a response to the scholarly and cultural emphasis on communication as mass motivation research that was monological and manipulative (5). Dialogue came to the foreground of scholarly conversation because dialogue provided for the "felt needs of men and the felt lacks of conventional (mass motivation) research" (Matson and Montagu 5). Matson and Montagu grounded their work in the existential thinkers Martin Buber, Karl Jaspers, Gabriel Marcel, and Paul Tillich. Dialogue from this approach sees the end of communication as communion, knowledge as something to be sought through connection and intersubjectivity (Matson and Montagu 6). By looking at dialogue from an existentialist point of view, Matson and Montagu argue that two important elements are foregrounded, the phenomenological and the normative. Human communication seen as phenomenological or descriptive recognizes and emphasizes the fact that we live *in the world* and that we exist *with others* (Matson and Montagu 7). In claiming that dialogue is normative we recognize "that genuine communication between man and man – like wisdom, love, or self realization- is a task to be achieved" (Matson and Montagu 8).

In 1968 Paul Keller and Charles Brown suggested an ethic for dialogue that emphasized a focus on the needs of the participants in dialogue rather than a rational standard (Keller and Brown 73). Keller and Brown continued to use dialogue as a foundation for their scholarship. In 1979 they published the second edition of their interpersonal textbook, *Monologue to Dialogue: An Exploration of Interpersonal Communication*. Grounded in the dialogic philosophy of Martin Buber, Keller and Brown presented their text on the foundational idea that relationship and human bonding are fundamental to life, and that communication is the means by which they are realized (x). Keller and Brown relied on dialogue as a way to focus interpersonal attention on the relationship. They, however, did not describe dialogue in length or the characteristics necessary for a dialogic relationship.

In 1969, Abraham Kaplan gave a paper at the Nobel Conference in which he directly and explicitly tied Buber's theory of dialogue to communication. In his speech, Kaplan described the two types of communication Buber identified in his famous work *I and Thou*. Kaplan distinctly connected Buber's theory of dialogue to communication by asking: "What happens to human beings when they communicate?" (Kaplan, Reach 35). Using Buber as a basis, Kaplan explained that one of two things happen when we communicate. The first, Buber's conception of the I – THOU relationship, human beings accept each as they are. In the second, Buber's conception of the I- IT relationship, human beings "dehumanize, depersonalize the other in the process also dehumanize, depersonalize" themselves (Kaplan 35). Kaplan asserted that communication can either bring people together or hold them apart and he explained that Buber's philosophy described this phenomenon of communication.

In describing communication in this manner, Kaplan called for a new conception of communication using Buber's philosophy as a foundation. According to Kaplan, in an era of science and technology, there was a need to reclaim communication as Buber saw it: Real life is meeting. Kaplan argued for a new conception of communication that captured the essence of real life as meeting. "There is a certain kind of communication which we all know, very precious to us... let me call it 'communion' instead of communication" (Kaplan 38). Kaplan's communion directly relates to Buber's theory of dialogue. Kaplan describes communion as a direct, unmediated relationship in which human beings are put directly in contact with each other (Kaplan 39). According to Kaplan, "the aim of all communication... is to arrive at communion" (Kaplan 45). At this early stage in the scholarly conversation Kaplan provided a direct link between Buber's existential philosophy and the discipline of communication.

In 1971 Richard Johannesen entered the conversation and provided a detailed description of dialogue in his article "The Emerging Concept of Communication as Dialogue." According to Johannesen, the field of communication had begun to use dialogue as a concept but had not laid the initial groundwork that clarified the characteristics of dialogue. Johannesen claimed there were several issues concerning dialogue that needed to be raised in order to continue communication research on this topic ("Emerging Concept" 373). Johannesen argued the most important task was to identify the characteristics of dialogue which he did based on Buber's theory of dialogue: genuineness, accurate empathetic understanding, unconditional positive regard, presentness, spirit of mutual equality, and supportive psychological equality (376).

Johannesen concluded the article by calling for more research and conversation about the emerging concept of human communication as dialogue.

John Poulakos answered Johannesen's call in 1974 by clarifying that Johannesen described the characteristics of dialogue, but not the necessary components, identification of which was imperative in order to study dialogue as a form of human communication. Poulakos like Johannesen and Matson and Montagu, grounded his understanding of dialogue in the work of Martin Buber. Poulakos looked at dialogue phenomenologically and identified three components of dialogue: the self, the other and the between. Poulakos defined dialogue as "a mode of existence manifested in the intersubjective activity between two partners, who, in their quest for meaning in life, stand before each other prepared to meet the uniqueness of their situation and follow it wherever it may lead" (199). According to Poulakos, dialogue is not possible without all three of these components, the self, the other and the between. Poulakos acknowledged that there had been to this point much scholarly attention given to the self and the other but that "the between" had not yet been explored in length. He claimed that the attention and explanation he gave to the significance of "the between" was this article's major contribution to the current conversation. The significance of the between, as Poulakos emphasized, is a matter of focus of attention. In dialogue the focus of attention is not the self or the other, it is the "actual happenings between men" (212). Furthermore, Poulakos called attention to the conditions necessary for the between to emerge: physical presence, mutual awareness, interaction, and willingness to be influenced on the part of the partners (212). Poulakos concluded the article by suggesting that the phenomenological focus would exert significant influence on future communication research.

By 1978, dialogue had been a part of the scholarly conversation for over ten years. Johannesen had articulated the characteristics of Buberian dialogue. Poulakos had examined the components of dialogue and brought particular attention to the significance of “the between.” The concept of dialogue had entered not only the scholarly conversation but textbooks as well (Keller and Brown, Stewart – *Bridges not walls: A book about interpersonal communication*). However, there were communication scholars who criticized the emphasis on dialogue. These critics “characterized dialogic communication as an ‘academic fad,’ a sell out to cries for ‘relevance,’ a license for the unhealthy overemphasis on the self and thinly veiled excuse for the unqualified to do therapy in the classroom” (Stewart 183). John Stewart addressed these criticisms.

In the article, “Foundations of Dialogic Communication,” John Stewart articulated the foundations of dialogic communication— phenomenology, existentialism and philosophical anthropology—and established the significance of dialogue to the field. Stewart explained in phenomenological terms that dialogic communication is grounded in communication’s experiential focus, pre-reflection, and intuition (Stewart, “Foundations” 191). In existential terms, dialogue is seen as “a subjective philosophy concerned with the impact of intentional consciousness on the subject or person’s concrete world” (Stewart, “Foundations” 192). Finally, according to Stewart, Buber’s essay “What is Man?” best explained the foundation of philosophical anthropology. The difference provided by philosophical anthropology is that instead of breaking human beings down and compartmentalizing them, the goal is to see humans holistically (Buber, *Between Man and Man*, 118). In terms of philosophical anthropology the focus of attention in dialogic communication is to study the whole, which for Buber was persons-in-relation

(Stewart, "Foundations" 196). "The man who knows the world is man with man" (Buber, *Between Man and Man* 155). According to Stewart, an emphasis on dialogic communication was crucial to the discipline at the time. Dialogic communication grounded in classic work on phenomenology, existentialism, and philosophical anthropology could offer the discipline a way to explicate the nature and function of language, which to that point had not been articulated in the field of communication (Stewart, "Foundations" 200).

From 1967 through 1980, communication philosophers laid the foundational work of the concept of human communication as dialogue. Matson and Montagu foregrounded the importance of dialogue as a communication revolution which brought connection and communion back to focus in communication scholarship. Keller and Brown discussed the interplay of dialogue and interpersonal ethics. Kaplan explicitly argued for the significance of dialogue to communication, emphasizing that dialogue is the communication that brings people together. Johanessen and Poulakos outlined both the characteristics and components of dialogue. Finally, Stewart, in replying to critiques against dialogue, highlighted the fact that dialogue is grounded philosophically in phenomenology, existentialism, and philosophical anthropology. The combination of these works continues to serve the communication discipline as the foundation of dialogic scholarship.

As mentioned previously, there are at least four traditions of dialogue: conversation analyst's approach, Gadamer's approach, Bakhtin's approach, and Buber's approach. Although similar, each is distinct in its own right. Therefore, unless one is clear about the tradition from which a conversation stems, the concept of dialogue can be confusing.

Due to this fact, communication scholars found it necessary to distinguish Buberian dialogue from other approaches and to clearly define dialogic communication.

Defining Dialogic Communication

In order to differentiate Buberian dialogue from other conceptions of dialogue scholars such as Arnett and Anderson found it necessary to emphasize the importance of phenomenology to dialogic communication, highlight specific metaphors necessary for the emergence of dialogue and finally to answer the question: “What is dialogic communication?”

Matson and Montagu, Poulakos and Stewart all pointed to the significance of Buber’s theory of dialogue as phenomenological. In 1981 Ronald Arnett entered the conversation and explicitly stated the importance and necessity of foregrounding the phenomenological foundation of Buberian dialogue. In his article, “Toward a Phenomenological Dialogue,” Arnett argued for a distinction between the humanistic psychological dialogue of Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers and the phenomenological dialogue of Martin Buber.

According to Arnett, two different theories of dialogue had emerged in the communication literature that of Martin Buber and that of Carl Rogers. Arnett argued that they were not being recognized as distinct and called for a clear distinction between the two approaches (“Toward” 202). Arnett stated that the humanistic psychological dialogue of Rogers roots communicative meaning inside the person. The Rogerian approach to dialogue, Arnett claimed, leads to psychologism, by which the self becomes the center of communicative meaning (“Toward”203). On the contrary, in the phenomenological dialogue of Buber, the meaning of communication emerges between

persons, which points back to the philosophical importance of intentionality (Arnett, “Toward” 206). Without this distinction, Arnett claimed, the importance of dialogue’s original phenomenological roots would be lost (Arnett, “Toward” 201).

Arnett’s distinction between Rogers’s theory of dialogue and Buber’s theory of dialogue was not accepted by everyone. Shortly after Arnett’s article was published, Rob Anderson entered the conversation on dialogue, in direct opposition to Arnett’s claims. According to Anderson, Arnett overstated his argument. Anderson argued that if accepted, Arnett’s argument would create a division where none existed before (Anderson, “Phenomenological Dialogue” 344). In the end, Anderson claimed that Arnett’s distinction was unnecessary. “The works of Buber, Friedman, Maslow, and Rogers each with its unique emphasis, are conceptually supportive in many more ways than they are divergent. Certainly it is not ‘inappropriate’ to consider them ‘under the same generic term’ of dialogue” (“Phenomenological Dialogue” 357).

The most important contribution of Anderson’s argument to the Buberian focus on dialogue is that he highlighted the fact that there was a “generic term” called dialogue. In arguing that Arnett’s distinction was too stringent, Anderson solidified the fact that when speaking of dialogue one must always clarify exactly what is meant. Matson and Montagu suggested two decades prior that when dialogue came into the foreground of scholarly attention, the popularity would cause distortion and dilution (5). Anderson’s article confirmed and illuminated that claim.

In 1986 Ronald C. Arnett wrote the first of many books in the field of communication to have Buber’s dialogic theory as the foundational metaphor driving the work: *Communication and Community: Implications of Martin Buber’s Dialogue*. Maurice

Friedman, well-known Buberian scholar, wrote the Foreword to Arnett's book. He acknowledged that Buber's philosophy of dialogue as a way to understand human communication had received much attention in recent years. However, there was at least one area that had been thus far overlooked. According to Friedman, the current scholarship had failed to see the defining significance of community in Buber's philosophy. "What is not so well known or adequately understood is the indispensable context of that philosophy of dialogue- Buber's lifelong concern with community" (Friedman, Foreword *Communication and Community* vii). Arnett's work specifically illuminated the significance of community to Buber's theory of dialogue and the communication discipline.

Three metaphors drive Arnett's book: communication, community, and the unity of contraries. Friedman points out that one of the contributions Arnett makes to the study of Buber and his dialogic theory is that Arnett maintains "the essential distinction between taking care of one's own needs and the reality of meeting: 'Real life begins with two'" (Friedman, Foreword *Communication and Community* xiv). As a driving metaphor Arnett uses Buber's unity of contraries to show the relationship between power and responsibility, the self and community, concern for the self and concern for the other, and finally monologue and dialogue.

The unities of contraries are established and play out in communication, Arnett's next driving metaphor. Arnett uses Buber's concepts of monologue, dialogue and technical dialogue to define three distinct modes of communication: "self centered conversation is monologue. Information centered conversation that assumes neutrality is technical dialogue. Relationship centered communication that is sensitive to what happens to both

self and other approaches dialogic communication” (Arnett, *Communication and Community* 7). Arnett points out that each of these forms of communication has a place in modern society. However without dialogue there can be no community, and without community there can be no dialogue.

Community, the third and most essential driving metaphor for this text, highlights an area of Buber’s work that was currently missing from communication scholarship, as noted by Friedman. Community, according to Friedman, is essential to an understanding of Buber’s philosophy. Arnett argues that in the communication crisis of the 1980’s community is something that must go beyond alliance. “Community can happen in groups and organizations when communication and living together go beyond association and begin to permit a sense of commitment to both people and the ideals of the organization” (Arnett, *Communication and Community* 7).

Arnett offered *Communication and Community: Implications of Martin Buber’s Dialogue* not as “a how to” dialogue book. Instead he offered the text as an invitation to readers to see the real possibilities of a community with a dialogic vision.

In times of rapid change and uncertainty, a dialogic community may promote an atmosphere of discussion and openness in the midst of multiple visions and numerous answers. In summary, the interpretive goal for this inquiry and the theme of *Communication and Community* is to keep the discussion going in dialogic interpretation and on the issue of deliberate building and invitation of human community. (Arnett, *Communication and Community* 10)

Arnett's book, the first of many to come on the significance of Buber's philosophy to the field of communication, not only highlighted the importance of community to Buber's dialogic theory, it also gave the field its first book length discussion on how dialogue could be used in areas of communication such as small group communication and organizational communication.

In 1989, Arnett furthered his work on dialogic communication as well as the discipline's understanding of Buberian dialogue by asking and answering the question "What is dialogic communication?" According to Arnett, there was still "conceptual confusion" regarding the constitution of dialogic communication (Arnett, "What is" 43). In this article, "What is Dialogic Communication: The Contributions of Maurice Friedman," Arnett clarified the distinction between dialogic communication as conceived by Martin Buber and contrarily dialogue as it is manifested in the work of Carl Rogers. Specifically, Arnett brought to the foreground four metaphors crucial to Buber's understanding of dialogue: "narrow ridge," "the between," "common center," and "community."

Arnett explained that Buber's "narrow ridge" is an opportunity to find a third alternative between two extremes (Arnett, "What is" 54). Appropriately, then the "narrow ridge is the foundation of community for Buber, because it recognizes the strain between individual and group demands" (54). Because of this tension, the focus of attention for Buber in community, as pointed out by Arnett, is the mission or common center of the group (55). "The 'common center' is the rhetorical vision or collectively accepted mission or task that brings people together in conversation... perhaps we can

call it a narrative that binds people together – a story that is larger than any one of the participants” (55).

The metaphors of the narrow ridge, the community, and the common center all lead, Arnett argued, to Buber’s conception of the “between” or the “interhuman” (“What is” 55). “More than anything else, the notion of the ‘between’ means that one is not the center, but rather a vital participant in a ‘common center’ or narrative” (Arnett, “What is” 55). Although many communication scholars had already explored the significance of the between, Arnett linked the between to narrow ridge, common center, and community, permitting further definition and distinction of dialogic communication.

In defining dialogic communication, Arnett answered ongoing critiques that dialogue could only be useful in situations where there was agreement. Actually, quite the opposite is the case as articulated by Buber and emphasized by Arnett. “It (dialogue) is a story of listening with one’s whole being, confirming the other in the midst of disagreement, and agreeing that keeping the lines of communication open may ultimately be the most important ingredient in our ‘hope for this hour’” (Arnett, “What is” 56). Keeping the conversation going is easy if there is agreement between the participants; the real benefit of dialogue happens when there is disagreement because the focus of attention of participants is on the between rather than on individuals.

In 1994, Rob Anderson, Kenneth N. Cissna and Ronald C. Arnett continued and extended the discipline’s understanding of dialogue by editing *The Reach of Dialogue: Confirmation, Voice and Community*. In this collection of essays the “reach of dialogue” is moved beyond communicative potential in limited scenarios to new contexts and new applications (Stewart, Foreword *Reach of Dialogue* viii). Although the essays do not all

rely on Buber's philosophy as the foundation for their conversations, Anderson, Cissna and Arnett ground the dialogic theory of the text in the work of Buber and indicate that his work is seminal to the endeavor.

In looking at each of the dialogic traditions and using Buber's work as a foundation, Cissna, Arnett, and Anderson developed a synthesis of dialogue's basic characteristics: immediacy of presence, emergent unanticipated consequences, recognition of strange otherness, collaborative orientation, vulnerability, mutual implication, temporal flow, genuineness and authenticity (Anderson, Cissna, Arnett 14-15). With these characteristics in mind Cissna and Anderson describe dialogue:

Dialogue emerges as an issue concerning the quality of relationship between or among two or more people and of the communicative acts that create and sustain that relationship. It reflects the attitude participants bring to an encounter, the ways they talk and act toward one another, the consequences of meeting, and the larger context within which dialogue occurs. (15)

Finally, Cissna and Anderson reiterate the claim made by Stewart in 1979. Dialogue seen through Buber's philosophy changes the approach scholars take to communication. The relationship between self and other is created in and through communication. Anderson and Cissna described this phenomenon as the between (23).

In the foreword to *The Reach of Dialogue* John Stewart provided a close textual analysis of the first thirteen sentences of *I and Thou*, Buber's most influential book on dialogue. In doing this, Stewart made clear connections to Buber's theory and the field of communication and extended our understanding of dialogue's importance to the field.

Specifically, Stewart pointed out that Buber's philosophy should change the way we think about communication. "Buber was one of the earliest thinkers who recognized that the Cartesian-Kantian analyses of humans were incomplete" (Foreword *Reach of Dialogue* xi). Stewart summarized Buber's theory of dialogue and suggested direct implications for the field of communication, an endeavor that began with Matson and Montagu.

According to Stewart, one of Buber's most significant contributions was the recognition that we do not live in subject-object relation to the world, but instead inhabit the world, making it a world of meaning. Meaning is directly connected to and constituted through human speech, "oral-aural lived experience" (Foreword *Reach of Dialogue* xiii). This approach by Buber led Stewart to his first major claim: Buber's philosophy was a philosophy of speech communicating (Foreword *Reach of Dialogue* xiii). After asserting this direct connection between Buber's philosophy and speech communication, Stewart went on to discuss the implications for the discipline of communication in Buber's first paragraph of *I and Thou*.

As already discussed, the notion of the between was highly recognized in the field as significant to communication theory. Stewart revisited the idea of the between, because, first, it is so essential to Buber's thought and second, he felt that many still did not comprehend the between. Stewart likened the between to already discussed phenomena being researched in the field by such scholars as Stewart himself, Thomas, and Shotter: the idea that human understandings are co-created and the idea that human identities are co-constituted. Stewart asserted that Buber's construct, the "between," described "this

collaborative, negotiated, transactional, relational set of realities” (Foreword *Reach of Dialogue* xiii).

Next Stewart called attention to Buber’s assertion that “the dyad is the basic unit of the communicating that constitutes the human world” (Foreword *Reach of Dialogue* xiii).

In other words, speaking implicates an other. Therefore, any study of communication that looks only at discrete parts, i.e. the sender or the receiver, is incomplete.

Furthermore, not only does communication involve at least a dyad, communication is spoken in word pairs, I-It and I-Thou. Up to this point, many scholars had discussed the significance of these word pairs; however, Stewart added to the conversation by emphasizing that through the use of word pairs the speaker is co-implicated in his or her speaking – how one talks affects who one becomes and speaking helps constitute the other (Foreword *Reach of Dialogue* xiv). Stewart stressed the implications of this constitution. According to Stewart, Buber was making a claim about language. Buber’s theory claimed that words are constitutive; they bring something into being; they establish existence. By choosing which word pair to communicate through, one invites either dialogue or monologue.

Finally, Stewart claimed that the most important implication of Buber’s theory is that there is a direct relation between the quality of communication and the quality of life.

“How we speech communicate, in other words, directly affects who we are and who we become. Communication is not just instrumental and expressive; it is also, and most importantly, person building (and can be person destroying)” (Foreword *Reach of Dialogue* xvii).

In the Foreword to *The Reach of Dialogue: Confirmation, Voice and Community*, John Stewart directly linked the discipline of communication to Buber's philosophical theory of dialogue, a conversation that began in the 1960's with Matson and Montagu. Stewart claimed that "Buber's philosophical anthropology was concretely speech communicative," a suggestion originally made by Abraham Kaplan (xvi). Stewart pointed out that through Buber's theory a shift in the focus of attention in the scholarly conversation needed to take place. He asserted that through Buber we come to understand communication differently. We come to understand that our orientation to the world is not only subject-object, it is also subject-subject, we live in relation, and how we communicate directly affects the quality of our lives.

The first phase of dialogic scholarship emphasized the characteristics, components, and validity of dialogue in the field of communication. The second phase as seen in the work of Arnett, Cissna, Anderson, and Stewart focused on answering the question: What is dialogic communication?

Dialogic communication is a phenomenological approach to communication in which the focus of attention is on the relationship. The philosophy of dialogue is a philosophy of speech communication that emphasizes that words bring something/ someone into existence. Meaning is directly connected to and constituted through human speech. Meaning, however, is not found in either one or the other but between them. Understanding is co-created between participants and identity is co-constituted.

Dialogue is human meeting. Dialogue is found on the narrow ridge between the demands of self and community where participants truly have in mind the other. A common center is what brings people together in conversation and builds community.

Community in this sense goes beyond association. Dialogue can be most beneficial when there is disagreement between participants because the focus of attention is on the relationship and keeping the conversation going.

Dialogue concerns relationships. Communication invites dialogue when the quality of communicative acts is such that they create and sustain the relationship. The basic unit of communication in dialogue is (but is not limited to) the dyad. This being so, speaking is always for an other. Speaking implicates an other.

What is dialogic communication? Dialogic communication is a philosophy of human communication that reveals that there is direct relationship between the quality of communication and the quality of life.

Asking, exploring, and answering the question: “What is dialogic communication?” brought clarity and validity to the third revolution of communication, human communication as dialogue. From this point, the conversation could move forward, which it did. Communication philosophers found new and exciting ways to apply Buber’s philosophy of dialogue. This began the final phases of the current conversation on dialogue, dialogic communication in action.

Dialogic Communication in Action

From the 1960’s through 1990’s, Martin Buber’s theory of dialogue played a significant role in the conversation of communication scholars. Up to and through Stewart’s essay in *The Reach of Dialogue: Confirmation, Voice and Community*, scholars laid the foundation and articulated the importance of dialogue to the field. The characteristics and components of dialogue were identified and explained. Dialogue was

acknowledged as grounded in phenomenology, existentialism, and philosophical anthropology.

Throughout the conversation, beginning with Matson and Montagu and continuing through Cissna, Anderson, and Arnett, scholars continually acknowledged that there are differing approaches to dialogue. However, Buber's approach is foundational and the most extensively used especially in the field of communication. During the course of the conversation, communication scholars linked Buber's philosophy of dialogue to interpersonal communication (Brown and Keller, Stewart), communication ethics (Brown and Keller, Stewart, Arnett), and communication theory (Stewart, Arnett). John Stewart's essay in *The Reach of Dialogue* brought the conversation back full circle to Matson, Montagu and Kaplan. From here the conversation did not end. Since the early 1990's scholars have explored new ways in which dialogue can enhance and enrich varying branches of the communication field including interpersonal communication, intercultural communication, public relations, organizational communication, conflict communication, rhetorical theory and, most significantly, communication ethics.

In 1992, Arnett continued his dialogic scholarship by applying Buber's theory of dialogue and the insights he found there to the community of higher education. The undergraduate community is the perfect place to "look for opportunities for conversation about ideas and relationships, and values, both inside and outside the normal classroom setting" (*Dialogic Education* 4). In *Dialogic Education: Conversation about Ideas and Between Persons*, Arnett invited the reader to see dialogue in action.

According to Arnett, "dialogue is an invitation, not a demand" (*Dialogic Education* 4). The three foundational metaphors of dialogic education are ideas,

relationships and values. Arnett used these metaphors to illuminate how undergraduate education can be an invitation to both students and the academic community to participate and nourish a common center. This common center starts with ideas. For Arnett, ideas are the primary force behind dialogic education (*Dialogic Education* 22).

In tying ideas to the common center of a college Arnett furthered the scholarly conversation in reference to Buber's emphasis on community. Previously Arnett pointed out that in order to have community (for Buber) there needs to be a collective mission that brings people together in conversation and binds them. By placing the mission of a college or a university in a commitment to ideas, Arnett highlighted a focus of attention out of which relationships and values can flourish and grow.

Through relationships, the next major metaphor, Arnett showed how dialogic education focuses on authentic meeting between persons. Arnett argued that not only does it matter what we teach, it matters how we teach. Dialogic education recognizes "the impact of how we teach and learn together, suggesting that the quality of relationships does affect learning" (*Dialogic Education* 15). As stated previously, dialogue is an invitation, and dialogic education is an invitation into relationships, relationships between faculty and students, relationships between faculty and an institution, and relationships between students and an institution. Using Buber's emphasis on relationships in confirmation and imagining the real, Arnett suggested that dialogic education is based on the necessity of inviting relationships.

The relationship comes alive and real life is exemplified between the student and the teacher. However, at this point it is crucial to remember that the relationship grows out of the common center, the conversation about ideas. "The discussion of ideas permits

relationships to mature naturally through common commitments” (Arnett, *Dialogic Education* 122). The relationship is only a by-product of the commitment to a conversation about ideas.

Dialogic education is rooted in three metaphors. The first metaphor, ideas, is the primary driving metaphor that provides a common center (narrative) for the academic community. Dialogue provides an invitation through which a conversation can begin and relationships are formed. Relationships, the second major metaphor, emphasizes that life is lived in relation, especially in the academic arena. The third and final driving metaphor behind this work is values. According to Arnett, it is necessary to recognize “the importance of having a value base or ground from which to meet and interpret history and current events in one’s personal and professional life” (*Dialogic Education* 26). In using values as a basis for dialogic education, Arnett further explained that in order to have genuine dialogue each party must be prepared to participate and share their viewpoint because the sharing and discussing of differing viewpoints in a civil manner is dialogue. According to Arnett, values are tied to both the common center and relationships. If the common center of a college or university is a conversation about ideas and relationships are born from those conversations, then it is necessary to ask value questions about the ideas such as “why” and “should we” and “will this contribute to the common good?”

In order for one to ask value questions about ideas, develop life long relationships, and nurture a continual conversation of ideas Arnett intertwined three supporting metaphors that further link Buber’s philosophy to the idea of dialogic education: home, vision, and caring. Arnett argued that in order for students and faculty

to be able to ask value questions, to be able to inquire why as much as how, each needs a place from which to stand and speak. Dialogic education recognizes and stresses the need for a place, a home that undergirds and supports us (*Dialogic education* 55). Arnett offered the academic place as a home that has the potential for a dialogic vision. “An educational home offers a philosophical support system for the practical task of being open to conversation about ideas and between persons” (*Dialogic Education* 55). The educational home with a dialogic vision offers students and faculty a foundation from which they can reach out to each other, to ideas, and to the community. Furthermore, home is a place from which each of the other supporting metaphors emerges. The educational home is a place where the narrative of a community is born and grows.

In order for the narrative to take root and guide the actions of those in the community there needs to be a good story that “tells [the organization’s] history, value system, purpose, and future direction” (Arnett, *Dialogic Education* 58). A good story provides the seeds for a vision, the next supporting metaphor in dialogic education. According to Arnett, “a vision is a picture of possibilities that shape and guide collective action, played out in the praxis of everyday life” (*Dialogic Education* 58). A vision is necessary for dialogic education to help guide present actions and help make decisions that affect the future of a community. Finally, a vision provides a picture of “what could be” in a community. This vision helps keep the conversation going.

The final supporting metaphor integrally tied to Buber’s theory and necessary for dialogic education to become a reality is caring. Arnett described caring as having two sides, hope and disappointment. Arnett described dialogic education as having two halves. The first half is the foundational common center, a conversation about ideas.

The second half, which completes the process of dialogic education, is relationships. Caring is an act that brings relationships and a conversation about ideas together. Caring is an action that contributes to and enhances the common center of a community—in this case, a commitment to ideas. Caring is foundational to the relationships between persons primarily because caring is integrally tied to the teacher-student relationship. “Dialogic education views caring in educational relationships as the act of reaching out and connecting with another’s experience” (*Dialogic Education* 96).

Arnett saw the role of the educator as crucial for maintaining the vision of the narrative of dialogic education. He highlighted the importance of the educator who brings not only knowledge and expertise to education but also seeks to encourage students and the community to ask value questions such “why” and “should we” and “how will this information contribute to the common good?” Arnett made clear that the role of the educator is to care actively about their students and the teacher-student relationship. In this role the educator is responsible for reaching out to the student on both sides of caring; reaching out to students and providing hope for a better world and reaching out and helping students learn how to cope with disappointment. In sum, dialogic education is an invitation to a conversation about ideas, relationships and values that contributes not only to the character of students, but faculty and the marketplace as well. In *Dialogic Education*, Arnett applied Martin Buber’s theory of dialogue to the mud of everyday life, the academic arena. In doing so, Arnett invited the scholarly community not only to keep the conversation going in terms of Buber’s applicability to the field of communication; he also invited the academic community to apply Buber’s theories to their everyday lives.

Dialogue is also used, at least as a background, in four of the essays in the edited book *Communication Ethics in an Age of Diversity* by Josina Makau and Ronald C.

Arnett. Julia T. Wood, Ronald C. Arnett, Josina M. Makau, and Lea P. Stewart all use Buber's theory of dialogue to help guide their scholarly inquiries into communication and diversity.

In "Diversity in Dialogue: Commonalities and Differences between Friends," Julia T. Wood employs Buber's "unity of contraries" to elaborate on genuine openness in friendship relationships. According to Wood, Buber's "unity of contraries" helps differentiate between being receptive to other's thinking and giving up our own ways for other's. "Buber referred to this as the 'unity of contraries,' which calls on us to appreciate the worth of our own patterns and beliefs and, at the same time, to respect others and their ways of seeing and acting in the world" (Wood, "Communication Ethics" 18). Wood continues by connecting the "unity of contraries" to her "both/and" orientation toward diversity particularly in friendship situations. For Wood, Buber's theory solidifies her argument that our lives can be enriched and our friendships deepened when we are open to difference and diversity.

In "Communication and Community in an Age of Diversity," Ronald C. Arnett returns to the importance of community in Buber's work. In this essay, Arnett highlights the concepts of inclusion and exclusion, arguing that a community needs both. According to Arnett, communities need to be open to a "community of otherness" inviting opportunities for inclusion and influence. However, in order to be true to themselves and others, a community cannot include everything and everyone. "This revisited view of community attempts to be open to diversity, while simultaneously promoting collective

uniqueness and difference, and attempts to be honest about public boundaries of a community that eventuate in exclusion” (Arnett, *Communication and Community* 40). For Arnett, Buber helps lay the background of the importance of community through which Arnett offers a way to embrace diversity and recognize the boundaries of community.

In “Embracing Diversity in the Classroom,” Josina M. Makau likens Buber’s concept of the I-It relationship to traditional communication debate courses, in which the opponent of a debate is seen as an object over which they should gain control (61). Makau argues for a cooperative approach to debate that is based on Buber’s concept of the I-Thou relationship, a more ethical dialogic interaction. “Students are encouraged to work collaboratively, inciting each other to dialogue. They share information with each other and are graded on the basis of their contribution to decision-making” (Makau, “Communication Ethics” 62). Makau uses Buber’s theory as a background to call for dialogic communication in the classroom and as a model for debate education and enactment.

In “Facilitating Connections: Issues of Gender, Culture, and Diversity,” Lea P. Stewart asks the question, “If men and women truly inhabit separate cultures, how can they ethically coexist with one another?” (110). Stewart applies Buber’s philosophy to answer this question: if men and women are to live together and value each others’ cultures, they must first be willing to engage in genuine dialogue. For Stewart, Buber’s theory of dialogue can be used as a background to begin discussion of ethical ways men and women can accept and value the other’s culture.

The major focus for the scholars using Buber's work as a background in *Communication Ethics in an Age of Diversity* is the metaphor of diversity. Wood, Arnett, Makau, and Stewart use the concept of dialogue to inform ethical communication in the areas of friendship, the classroom, debates, male-female relationships, and the community as they engage diversity. Each scholar, in a different way, shows how dialogue can be used as a background communication ethic that informs and guides foreground actions in each of these arenas.

In 1999, Ronald C. Arnett and Pat Arneson wrote the book *Dialogic Civility in a Cynical Age: Community, Hope, and Interpersonal Relationships*. In this work, Arnett and Arneson span the areas of interpersonal communication and communication ethics with the powerful metaphor, "dialogic civility." Arnett and Arneson "provide a compelling basis for a 'public interpersonal model' that is grounded in historicity, respect for multiplicity, a commitment to dialogue, and a willingness to live with dialectical tension between hope and cynicism" (Wood, Forward *Dialogic Civility* xiv). "Dialogic civility" is both a metaphor that responds to the current age of cynicism and a possible narrative background capable of guiding our communicative behavior in the 21st century (Arnett and Arneson 1).

Arnett and Arneson engage Buber's theory of dialogue in many ways. First, dialogue guides their inquiry reminding us of the importance of the historical moment. "Dialogue is invited as we address limits, flaws, and difficulties presented by the nitty-gritty reality of common life together in a situated historical moment. Dialogue begins when we act out of our situatedness..." (Arnett and Arneson 32). Second, dialogue reminds us that in dialogic communication the focus of attention is on the "other,"

person, text, and historical moment (Arnett and Arneson 6). Lastly, Arnett and Arneson focus on Buber's understanding of dialogue as being "rooted in the common center of conversation between persons" (128). Arnett and Arneson offer "dialogic civility" as a public narrative or common ground for interpersonal communication (52).

In 2000, Jeanine Czubaroff entered the conversation on dialogue with her article "Dialogical Rhetoric: An Application of Martin Buber's Philosophy of Dialogue." In the article Czubaroff argues for dialogical rhetoric as an addition to traditional instrumental rhetoric. Czubaroff relies on Buber to inform this approach. To begin Czubaroff employs Buber's thought to see the rhetorical situation as concrete, particular, unforeseen, and biographically-historically bound to particular time, place and society in which a rhetor addresses a particular, concrete other (5). "For the dialogical rhetor, the call [of the situation] is ontological—to acknowledge and respond to the address of the other in the light of her own experienced truth" (Czubaroff 6).

Czubaroff describes the dialogical rhetor's relation to the audience and modes of influence on the audience. Using Buber as a guide the dialogical rhetor prompts a turn towards the other to address the other as an other. "The dialogical rhetor gathers him or herself together as s/he turns toward the other in attention and response (Czubaroff 7). In discussing the influence a rhetor has on an audience Czubaroff describes the modes of influence of the dialogic rhetor. Czubaroff argues that in dialogue the locus of influence is found in the "between." In dialogue, influence can occur when partners communicate unreservedly (Czubaroff 11). "The dialogical rhetor feels personally addressed by the other and makes a perceptual-imaginative effort to experience the other's side of the common situation" (Czubaroff 11). A dialogical rhetor is genuinely present in the

situation. The dialogical rhetor enters the situation “attentively, extending the self to experience the other’s side of the common situation, and finally, responds from the base of his or her own lived truth, to the situation’s unique address” (Czubaroff 11).

Czubaroff offers the communication conversation an alternative way to look at rhetoric and dialogue, sketching a dialogical rhetor who is attentive and responsive to the other and the historical moment. This rhetor recognizes his/her responsibility to the situation and acts in a dialogic manner, addressing the other as an other, fully and completely entering the meeting and responding to the situation.

Dialogic theory has also emerged as a powerful force in organizational theory. Daniel Yankelovich argues that it is necessary for the business community to recognize the need for some type of communication that will help correct widespread subculture isolation and narrow the gap between the elite and the public (18).

W. Barnett Pearce and Stephen W. Littlejohn use Buber’s concept of dialogue to highlight different types of conflict in, *Moral Conflict: When Social Worlds Collide*. According to Pearce and Littlejohn, Buber’s I-It (monologue) and I-Thou (dialogue) describe two differences between types of conflict.

The moral orders in which monologue and dialogue occur are vastly different. In monologue, the moral imperative is that the end justifies the means and that the best way to participate in conflict is to side with friends against enemies. In dialogue the moral order is much more complicated because ends as well as means are subject to negotiation and evolution. (Pearce and Littlejohn 37)

In differentiating between types of conflict Pearce and Littlejohn claim that dialogic theory can help illuminate the quality of the relationship in which the conflict is occurring. Conflict plays out differently in monologue and dialogue. In monologue the focus is on the self and winning the conflict. In dialogue the focus is on invitation to respond and the interpersonal process (Pearce and Littlejohn 37).

Exploring the applicability of dialogic communication has enhanced and enriched such relationships as teacher-student relationships, male-female relationships, intercultural relationships, friendship relationships and community relationships. Dialogue has been employed to bring the focus of the interhuman to such areas as interpersonal communication, organizational communication, public relations, rhetorical theory, gender communication, and conflict management. In each of these scenarios communication philosophers call dialogue into action as a background metaphor that serves to guide our foreground communicative acts. Using dialogue in this way places Buber's philosophy in the position of a communication ethic, an area of the communication discipline that has flourished in recent years.

Communication Ethics

The philosophy of dialogue is a major theoretical orientation in the area of communication ethics. Scholars use Buberian dialogue to inform much of the conversation in this area. As seen previously, dialogue has been used in numerous areas of communication as at least a guiding background metaphor. On the other hand, in the area of communication ethics, dialogue takes a prominent, active foreground role. Throughout the conversation dialogue has always been either explicitly or implicitly tied

to communication ethics. In the most recent phase of the conversation scholars have foregrounded dialogue and its connection and relevance to communication ethics.

In his text *Ethics in Human Communication*, currently in its fifth edition, Richard Johannesen lays out varying kinds of human communication ethics, dialogic perspectives being one of five approaches. In this work, Johannesen clearly places dialogue, specifically Buberian dialogue, among the foremost approaches to communication ethics. Johannesen makes a significant contribution to the conversation by bringing together and explaining much of the communication scholarship on dialogue. In the chapter, he distinguishes dialogue from expressive communication. He reiterates and elaborates the characteristics of dialogue and monologue. He explains the conditions and contexts under which dialogue can occur by reviewing scholarship that links dialogue to many communication areas: interpersonal, mass media, politics, business, public relations, and more. Finally, Johannesen specifically looks at dialogue and its relation to ethics. He outlines, based on previous scholarship, a dialogic ethic for rhetoric and suggests guidelines for applying dialogical standards to communication situations.

In their text *Communication Ethics: Methods of Analysis*, James A. Jaska and Michael S. Pritchard incorporate dialogue, specifically, Buber's I-Thou relationship into the ethical values in intimate, interpersonal relationships. Jaska and Pritchard connect Buber's concept of I-Thou to Fromm's concept of oneness. They suggest, "From an ethical standpoint, an "I-Thou" relationship requires respect for the bond between two people. This includes both respect for the mutual privacy it depends on and acceptance of important responsibilities toward the other" (Jaska and Pritchard 72). Jaska and

Pritchard use Buber's I-Thou relationship as one of many models for ethical reflection in interpersonal contexts of communication.

In 2000, *Southern Communication Journal* published a special issue dedicated to dialogue. The articles important to the conversation on Buberian dialogue and communication ethics are: "Dialogue, Dialectic, and Rhetoric: Exploring Human Dialogue Across the Discipline" by Mari Lee Mifsud and Scott D. Johnson; "Dialogue as Tensional, Ethical Practice" by John Stewart and Karen Zediker; and "Nel Nodding's uses of Martin Buber's Philosophy of Dialogue" by Richard L. Johannesen.

Mifsud and Johnson distinguish between two sides of the communication discipline, the humanistic and the social scientific. Each side approaches, defines, and employs dialogue differently. Mifsud and Johnson situate Buberian dialogue on the humanistic side and classify Buber's approach to dialogue specifically within the realm of communication ethics. Mifsud and Johnson connect dialogue to rhetoric as at least a "handmaiden" if not a counterpart (102).

Like Mifsud and Johnson, John Stewart and Karen Zediker distinguish between differing approaches to dialogue. However, Stewart and Zediker distinguish prescriptive and descriptive approaches to dialogue. Descriptive accounts ground dialogue in the ontological view that the universal human condition is relational (Stewart and Zediker 226). "Dialogue is characterized in these accounts as a prominent, pervasive and consequential feature of the human condition that needs to be acknowledged, articulated, and integrated into understanding" (Stewart and Zediker 226). Prescriptive approaches to dialogue, of which Buber's theory is one, treat dialogue as a goal to be achieved or an ideal to be attained. "In other words, understood as an identifiable and achievable quality

of moments of contact, dialogue can function as an edifying and enhancing communicative ideal” (Stewart and Zideker 228). Stewart and Zediker argue for a prescriptive approach to dialogue, an ideal to be striven for, and an ideal that can have a significant impact on our communication in a variety of relationships.

Richard Johannesen examines Nel Nodding’s ethic of care as it compares to and is informed by Buber’s theory of dialogue. Johannesen identifies Nodding’s concepts of engrossment, motivational displacement and reciprocity as akin to Buber’s concepts of presentness, turning towards the other, and experiencing the other side. He also argues that Noddings’ ethic of care could be enhanced if she looked further at the concept of dialogue, especially in applying an ethic of care to the public arena. According to Johannesen, “Noddings has absorbed and applied significantly Buber’s philosophy of dialogue in developing the key assumptions and dimensions of an ethic of care” (“Nel Noddings”151).

Finally, one of the most recent essays written in communication ethics is found in *Argumentation and Advocacy*, in which Ronald C. Arnett continues his dialogic journey with Buber. In the essay “A Dialogic Ethic ‘Between’ Buber and Levinas: A Responsive Ethical ‘I’” Arnett brings into conversation the work of Martin and Buber and Immanuel Levinas to create a particular communication ethic “the responsive ethical ‘I.’” Unlike previous communication scholarship, Arnett does not use Buber’s ideas as a background. They are in fact foregrounded to show how Buber’s idea of reciprocity and Levinas’ idea of a call to responsibility regardless of reciprocity can work together and inform, rather than contradict, each other. Arnett offers the metaphor the “responsive ethical I” as a “dialogic ethic within a phenomenological focus of attention upon ethics and

responsibility and the dialogic importance of existential invitational reciprocity” (20).

Arnett shows how the “responsive ethical I” informed by Buber and Levinas can operate as a particular communication ethic that emphasizes both responsiveness and responsibility to otherness, the historical moment, and the Other.

The significance of dialogue to communication ethics continues to grow and enrich the discipline. Recent scholarship has foregrounded dialogue as integral to communication ethics. Misfud and Johnson have pointed out that dialogue is a humanistic approach to communication in the realm of communication ethics. Johannessen and Arnett both see dialogue as an ethical philosophy for the public sphere in public and written communication. Furthermore, both Johannessen and Arnett connect the philosophy of dialogue to caring. Arnett explores the idea of a “responsive ethical I” which is informed by the dialogic theory of Buber. Finally, Stewart and Zediker foreground the prescriptive nature of dialogue, an ideal ethical ideal of communication to be strived for.

Conclusion

Dialogue as conceived by Martin Buber has had a significant impact on the field of communication. As Matson and Montagu pointed out at the beginning of the conversation, although there has been criticism dialogue is an important concept to the communication field and others:

The concept of ‘dialogue’ for all its recency as a movement of thought, has already begun to suffer the inevitable fate of fashionable acceptance—that of dilution and distortion. But there is also something to be said on

behalf of this popular currency: The favorable reception that the dialogical theory of communication is receiving, in so many differing circles of thought and influence, is surely an index of its relevance- both to the felt needs of men and to the felt lack of conventional theory. (Matson and Montagu 5)

Scholars have found myriad significant places to employ dialogue because it speaks to human connection and meaning that is irreplaceable in human communication.

Therefore, scholars have endeavored to apply Buberian dialogue to almost every communication arena: organizational communication, interpersonal communication, conflict, public relations, intercultural communication, small group dynamics, rhetorical theory, and, most importantly, communication ethics. The conversation on dialogue has spanned the discipline into both the humanities and the social sciences. Communication scholars have identified and described the characteristics of dialogue, the components of dialogue, and the explicit link of dialogue to the communication field. Scholars such as Stewart and Arnett have argued for the importance of dialogue in terms of its connection to phenomenology, existentialism, and philosophical anthropology.

Many scholars have highlighted specific Buberian concepts crucial to both Buber's concept of dialogue and communication: the between, unity of contraries, community, common center, narrow ridge, and invitation. Scholars have also explored and elaborated on the varying kinds of relationships that can benefit from dialogic communication, including personal and family relationships, superior-subordinate and group relationships in organizations, teacher-student and peer relationships in education,

patient-provider and treatment team relationships in health care, and elected official-constituency and citizen deliberative relationships in politics (Stewart and Zediker 229).

Most specifically, dialogue has been linked to communication ethics. Scholars in the field have suggested that Buber's idea of dialogue can help guide our communication actions in an ethical manner. Arnett employed the work of Buber to create the communication ethics metaphors of a dialogic ethic, the responsive ethical "I," dialogic education and dialogic civility. Johannesen, Jaksa, and Pritchard all recruit Buber's philosophy to inform their explanation of communication ethics. Finally, Stewart and Zediker distinguish Buberian dialogue as a prescriptive form of dialogue, a communication ideal that is a tensional, ethical practice.

Throughout the history of the conversation on dialogue few communication scholars have made the connection between dialogue and caring. In his article "Nel Noddings' uses of Martin Buber's Philosophy of Dialogue," Johannesen points out that Noddings's ethic of care relies heavily on Buber's philosophy of dialogue. He also suggests that an ethic of care can be enhanced by Buber's theory and calls for further explanation of this connection.

In his work on dialogic education and dialogic civility, Arnett articulates the integral connection between dialogue and caring. "The virtue of caring that embraces both hope and disappointment is fundamental to dialogic education...Dialogic education works with a dialectic understanding of caring" (Arnett, *Dialogic Education* 8). As mentioned previously, Arnett uses caring as a supportive metaphor that informs his idea of dialogic education. In *Dialogic Civility*, Arnett and Arneson argue that caring is foundational to dialogue. "Dialogue provides us with a knowledge of the other, which

forms a foundation for caring...Dialogue requires time and caring for trust to develop” (240). Although Arnett directly links dialogue and caring he does not elaborate on the connection.

After reviewing Buber’s approach to dialogue and looking extensively at the communication scholarship that employs Buber’s philosophy, three important ideas are foregrounded and ultimately begin to shape the connection between dialogue, labor, and care: dialogue as important to communication; dialogue as important to relationships; and dialogue as important to care.

First, not only is dialogue an important concept for the field of communication, there are significant implications for the use of dialogue as a form of communication. Buber’s philosophy of dialogue refocuses our attention to the world in which we live with others. In dialogue there is an emphasis on the recognition that we do not live in subject-object relation to the world; rather, we inhabit the world making it a world of meaning. Meaning is directly connected to and constituted through human speech, “oral-aural lived experience” (Stewart, Foreword Reach of Dialogue xiii). With this in mind it becomes apparent that dialogue is a philosophy of speech communicating. Dialogue is a philosophy of human communication—interpersonal communication.

As a philosophy of communication, dialogue makes a significant claim about language. Dialogue highlights the communicative argument that words are constitutive; they bring something into being; they establish existence. By choosing which word pair to communicate through, either I-Thou or I-It, one either invites dialogue or monologue. This choice determines the kind of communication within a relationship and ultimately

the quality of the relationship. If one chooses to invite dialogue into the relation, one can invite genuine meeting with others.

Through the invitation of dialogue into one's life can one hope to realize the lived unity of life, and communication becomes communion. Dialogue is essential to a human understanding of communication because through dialogue communication becomes communion and communion is genuine meeting.

Martin Buber offers dialogue as a way to full realization of being human, the lived unity of life. Highlighting the communicative nature of dialogue establishes that it is through communication that one realizes lived unity. This then points to the idea that there is a direct relation between the quality of communication and the quality of life. As Stewart argued, "How we speech communicate, in other words, directly affects who we are and who we become. Communication is not just instrumental and expressive; it is also, and most importantly, person building (and can be person destroying)" (Foreword *Reach of Dialogue* xvii).

Buber's philosophy of dialogue is important to communication because it shifts communication to communion. Dialogue implicates the choices that one makes in communication as directly affecting the quality of one's life. For Buber, the quality of one's life is found in the quality of one's relationships. Buber's philosophy of dialogue is important to the quality of one's relationships with others.

For Buber life is lived in relation. Relationship and human bonding are fundamental to life, and communication is the means by which they are realized. It is through relation that Buber believes that human beings can be understood. Buber offers dialogue as a way for persons to live together with each other and be truly human.

The I-Thou relation is where persons become fully human. In the I-Thou relation there is genuine encounter because each participant enters the relationship with their whole being. I-Thou relationships are founded on mutuality, trust, and partnership in common situations and take place in genuine encounters. The I-Thou relationship of dialogue involves reaching out and responding. Within this address and response genuine dialogue is invited when there is a real meeting between an I and a Thou.

Real meeting, dialogic relationships, for Buber, are created and given meaning in the between. The between is an essential metaphor in understanding the concept of dialogue and the life of relationships because, as Buber states, the meaning of the dialogic relationship is not found in those in the relationship but in their interchange (Friedman, *Life of Dialogue* 85). Just as the concept of dialogue shifts communication to communion, the concept of the between shifts the focus of a relationship away from the self and to the relationship between them. “More than anything else, the notion of the ‘between’ means that one is not the center, but rather a vital participant in a ‘common center’ or narrative” (Arnett, “What is” 55). Life lived in relation is a fundamental idea for Buber’s philosophy of dialogue. Relation reminds us that we live in the world, with others. The quality of our relations is determined between us.

Relation and communion are important ideas not only for the invitation of dialogue, they are also important to the concept of care. Communication scholar Ronald Arnett makes important connections between dialogue and care. Through Arnett’s connection of care to dialogic education, Buber’s idea of unity of contraries emerges and care’s connection to dialogic relationships is established.

Arnett employs Buber's metaphor of the unity of contraries to highlight two sides of caring, hope and disappointment. Arnett describes caring as an act that brings people together in relationships. Caring is an action that contributes to and enhances the common center of a community. Caring is foundational to the relationships between persons primarily because caring is integrally tied to relationships. For Arnett, caring in is the act of reaching out and connecting with another's experience (*Dialogic Education* 96).

The purpose of this chapter has been twofold. First, this chapter introduced Buber's philosophy of dialogue and explained Buber's conception of dialogue. Second, this chapter explored the importance of Buberian dialogue to the field of communication. Through the explication of Buber's dialogic philosophy and the major ideas this chapter identifies an important connection between dialogue and care. First, dialogue is found and invited into relationships between people. Caring is a relationship necessary to the lived unity of one's life. Life is lived in relation. Genuine meeting in relation can only occur through the invitation of dialogue into those relations. Caring is an act that brings people together in relationships.

Dialogue is a form of human communication that shifts communication to communion. The second connection between dialogue and caring is that as an act, caring is constituted in communication. The way in which one chooses to communicate determines the quality of the caring relationship. Dialogue, a philosophy that invites genuine meeting into relationships, shifts communication to communion. Realizing that care is an act that is communicatively constituted and that the quality of our communication directly impacts the quality of our lives, the communicative choices we

make, invitation of dialogue or monologue, in the caring relationship determine the quality of that relation. When dialogue is invited into the caring relationship, the relationship those in the relationship feel the full impact of human existence. Through dialogue the unity of contraries that is present in all caring relationships is recognized, welcomed and appreciated.

The next chapter, chapter three, “Care: Communicatively Constituted,” continues to build the metaphor dialogue as the labor of care. Chapter three, also seeking explicit connections between dialogue and caring, reviews the major literature covering the conversation on care. Through the review of the literature chapter two seeks to establish a working definition of care and explain how care is communicatively constituted.

Chapter Three: “Caring: Communicatively Constituted”

Abstract

The invitation of dialogue presents an opportunity to examine the communicative texture of human relationships. Specifically, it permits one to consider care in light of a communicative relationship that is, in Buber’s words, “real responding. Responding to What? To what happens to one, to what is to be seen and heard and felt” (Between, 16). With Buber as the theoretical point of departure for understanding the communicative core of human relations, this chapter explores the theoretical foundations of care that point toward it as a communicatively constituted action.

In order to reclaim care as an essential value underlying human communication it is helpful to understand the conversation surrounding it to date. Care has been discussed in a number ways, in a number of different disciplines. Caring currently enjoys a rich

and varied scholarly conversation in areas such as philosophy, psychology, ethics, and communication. The chapter begins with Milton Mayeroff who approaches caring from a philosophical perspective and views caring as a growth process not only for the one being cared for but also for the one caring. Willard Gaylin, a psychologist, defines care from a developmental perspective. Most notable for this work are theorists who position care as a communicative act, including Nel Noddings and Julia Wood. This chapter overviews the literature on care, culminating in a definition of care made possible through the work of the combined perspectives of the foremost philosophers of care. In addition this definition suggests the metaphors of obligation, relation, and significant outcomes as touchstones for understanding the nature of care as communicatively constituted.

*Let us say by the way, to be blind and to be loved, is in fact in this earth where nothing is complete, one of the most strangely exquisite forms of happiness. To have continually at your side a woman, a girl, a sister, a charming being, who is there because you have need of her, and because she cannot do without you, to know you are indispensable to her who is necessary to you, to be able at all times to measure her affection by the amount of her company that she gives you, and to say to yourself; she consecrates to me all her time, because I possess her whole heart; to see the thought instead of the face; to be sure of the fidelity of one being in the eclipse of the world; to imagine the rustling of her dress the rustling of wings; to hear her moving to and fro, going out, coming in, talking, singing, and to think that you are the centre of those steps, of those words, of that song; to manifest at every minute your personal attraction; to feel yourself powerful by so much the more as you are the more infirm; to become in darkness, and by reason of darkness, the star around which this angel gravitates; few happy lots can equal that. The supreme happiness of life is the conviction that we are loved; loved for ourselves—say rather, loved in spite of ourselves, this conviction the blind have. In their calamity, to be served, is to be caressed. (Hugo, *Les Misérables* 145)*

Caring and loving we are, and caring and loving we must be—caring and loving we will be as long as we so perceive ourselves. In other ways we are free to change, modify, adapt, and move. We are changing the rules of our existence. We should change the rules of existence. We have a right to do so. Our natures will evolve in yet unanticipated ways, and that is as it should be. But to caring we must cling. (Gaylin)

One loses both the “human” and the “being” when one is severed from all relation. The aim of life, then, is not primarily happiness in either the sense of fulfilling pleasure or avoiding pain and trouble; nor is it perfection in the sense of preparation for another life or of perfecting a separate entity such as the soul. The primary aim is, rather, caring and being cared for in the human domain and full receptivity and engagement in the nonhuman world. A life meeting this aim is--despite pain, deprivation, and trouble—filled at least occasionally with joy, wonder, engagement, and tenderness. (Noddings Caring 174)

Introduction

The devaluation of care and the recent changes that are demanding our attention have implications that are directly connected to people’s everyday communicative life. As discussed in the previous chapter, dialogue invites us to consider the dynamic nature of human relationships as authentic meeting which involves turning toward the other, genuine response, and the lived unity of life found in the sphere of the between. Through the work of Buber the importance of an attentiveness to the interchange “between” participants in the dialogic exchange is explicit. In this chapter, the action of this attentiveness—care—is explored.

Care defined by Joan Tronto and Bearnice Fisher is “a species of activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our ‘world’ so that we can live in it as well as possible.” Care defined by Benner and Wrubel is an action that connects people to the world (1). Through the action of care people determine and constitute what matters to them. Care is defined in many ways across many different disciplines. But the two preceding definitions are helpful in beginning the conversation on care because they establish, first, that caring is an action and second, that caring is important to the quality and maintenance of not only individual lives but to the welfare of civilization itself.

As discussed in chapter one care is currently in crisis. Life is different than it was prior to WWII. The changes in our circumstances, including the changing face of the family, the increase in the elderly population, the changing roles of men and women, demand us to re-evaluate our attitudes towards care. Many people are finding themselves in positions requiring them to enter into caring relationships and finding that they are communicatively unequipped to answer the call of caring. These changing circumstances and the manifestations of postmodernity, such as individualism, skepticism, and existential mistrust, have combined to leave care in crisis. This crisis has brought the necessity and importance of care into the foreground of people's communicative lives.

It is the contention of this work that care is an action that is communicatively constituted. As seen in the passage by Victor Hugo, care not only requires one's presence, but care requires one to act, to caress the other through communicating one's willingness to take on the burden of caring. In order to bring care out of its current crisis we must find new ways to enact the care through communicative action that is embodied in Hugo's representation of the Bishop's sister. In order to accomplish this goal it is necessary to understand the concept of care and its communicative implications. To this end, this chapter explores the various definitions and metaphors in the scholarly literature associated with care. This chapter looks specifically at the concept of care, how it is conceived through differing disciplines, and seeks to discover existing connections between Buberian dialogue and caring. Finally, through the care metaphors of obligation, relation, and significant outcomes care is situated in the action of human relations as they are built and expressed in communication.

The goal of this chapter is to establish the importance of caring to our lives. The chapter will explore the major voices defining and describing care and then turn to the metaphors described by scholars within various disciplines used to explain caring. This work makes assumption that caring is an action and an essential part of human existence and is therefore a part of everyone's life. Due to limited scholarly work on care the field of communication, this chapter looks to work from other areas, appropriating as necessary to enrich the scope of the conversation on care within the domain of communication scholarship through this project.

The scholarship on caring is varied. Many elements of the conversation are not relevant to dialogue as the labor of care. Currently there are numerous scholars discussing the gender issues associated with caring: for instance, is caring specifically a female oriented action or a moral sentiment? This conversation is not necessary to the work of dialogue as the labor of care. Furthermore, this work will not address the controversy between care and justice. This author assumes that care is not the only form of moral ideal but is in fact an action that can, if conceived so, be a contributor to the good life.

The conversation begins with the philosophical work of Milton Mayeroff. Mayeroff establishes eight essential ingredients necessary for the caring relationship: knowing, alternating rhythms, patience, honesty, trust, humility, hope and courage (19). Mayeroff also describes what he sees as the illuminating aspects of caring: the ability to care, the ability to be cared for, the constancy of the other, guilt, and reciprocation (39).

The next major voice in the caring literature is the work of Willard Gaylin in the field of psychology. Gaylin defines caring from a developmental perspective (35).

According to Gaylin, in order to develop into a fully functioning person, a person that can communicate and relate to others, it is necessary first to be loved in order to learn to love (36). In his exploration of the developing caring person, Gaylin identifies the stages necessary to becoming a caring adult: attachment, identification, conscience, and, finally, feeling. Gaylin asserts that the development of these stages is necessary not only for the caring adult but the caring adult is necessary for the survival of mankind.

Moving out of philosophy and psychology, the next major and probably the richest area of scholarly work done on care is from feminist ethics. Carol Gilligan's landmark work addresses care as it pertains to women and their moral development. Gilligan describes three levels of moral development and the transitions that occur between those levels in developing an ethic of care. Many feminist scholars have joined the care conversation in direct response to Gilligan's work. The most important feminist voices for purposes of this work are Nel Noddings and Joan Tronto.

Nel Noddings provides one of the most detailed outlines of a feminist perspective on caring, building on the work of Carol Gilligan. Noddings constructs an ethic of care rooted in receptivity, relatedness, and responsiveness. In her work Noddings differentiates between caring for and caring about. Furthermore, she explains in detail the roles of both the one caring and the one being cared for. Finally, Noddings is the only care scholar that begins to develop an extended connection between caring and dialogue (121).

Joan Tronto's feminist perspective emphasizes the political angle and builds on the work of Gilligan and Noddings. Tronto explores the practice of care, describing the elements or phases of an ethic of care: caring about, noticing the need to care in the first

place; taking care of, assuming responsibility for care; care-giving, the actual work of care; and care-receiving. Tronto ties each phase of caring to a correlating moral element of caring: attentiveness, responsibility, competence, and responsiveness (127).

The final voice in the scholarly conversation on caring is Julia Wood. The only communication scholar to do extensive work on care, Wood also describes care as a practice. Wood defines the practice of care by looking at three qualities closely associated with caring for others: partiality, empathy, and a willingness to serve or nurture others. Wood then identifies five concrete practice of caring: responsiveness to others, sensitivity to others, acceptance of others, patience, and dynamic autonomy. Finally, Wood describes the potential costs of caring.

The last section of this chapter, “Pointing to the Communicative Nature of Caring”, looks at the scholarly conversation as a whole and derives three major metaphors that will drive the communicative connection between dialogue, labor, and caring. Through the scholarly conversation on care three essential metaphors emerge: obligation, relation, and horizon of significant outcomes. These metaphors begin to establish the communicative nature of caring and point to the necessity of inviting dialogue into the caring relationship.

The purpose of this chapter is twofold. The first is to re-establish through the scholarly conversation on care, as opposed to the conversation on dialogue, that there is an undeniable connection between dialogue and caring and that this connection has not been fully explored or developed. The second goal of this chapter is to establish that while care is an action, caring relationships are communicatively constituted. This goal is accomplished through the exploration of the current multidisciplinary conversation

regarding care. The exploration begins by looking at why care is important not only to our communicative lives, but in the end to the survival of humankind.

The Importance of Caring

Care has been noted as one of the most important aspects of human life. Care is currently in a state of crisis because of the many changes we have seen in our culture since the nineteenth century. These changes demand that we change the way we engage the other. This section explores some of the reasons caring is seen as an essential part of human existence. The major voices in the conversation on care have asserted that care is important from many perspectives: caring as a moral ideal; learning to care and be cared for as essential for development into a fully functioning adult; the ability to care as necessary for the building of strong interpersonal relationships; and caring as the component that connects us as human beings and is thus necessary for human survival.

As already discussed in chapter one, we are living in a historical moment where care has come into crisis. We live in a time of narrative contention, a time when we cannot agree on the virtues necessary for us to go forward. Tronto describes our current historical moment as drastically different from that of the nineteenth century when there seemed to be a clear distinction between public and private life:

The separation of household and economic life no longer describes reality, and much of the household activity that was previously ‘private,’ such as caring for small children, tending to the ill, preparing meals and clothing, etc., have now been absorbed into social and market spheres. With these changed circumstances, the political and moral underpinnings that

accompanied the gendered division of labor have also been eroded. The rise of universal education and some opportunity for class mobility, combined with recognitions that religious, racial, and gendered preferences are wrong, have made a mixed and heterogeneous society into a moral norm. (151)

Tronto emphasizes that life today is much different than life in the nineteenth century. The line between public and private has been blurred. The caretaking that used to be practiced solely in the private sphere, mostly by women, has now found itself in the social sphere. Today we have the need for extensive daycare of our children and assisted living communities for our ever aging population. Today, the face of the family is dramatically different. The majority of two parent families have both parents working full time outside the home. Many other families find themselves as single parent families. With all these changes, the practice of care has been thrown into crisis. Millions of people who previously were not assigned caring roles by our culture have found themselves in the position of caring. Wood expresses this condition aptly:

Caring has become at once a more urgent and more controversial issue in our social contract. It has become more pressing because our needs for caregivers are growing more rapidly; it has become more controversial and difficult to address because many who traditionally have engaged in both normal and extraordinary caring for others are beginning to challenge the expectation that they will or should be more responsible for providing care than other members of the culture. (Wood 16)

The twenty-first century has made the crisis of care more visible than in previous moments. In this passage, Wood emphasizes the circumstances of this moment. Today, more than ever before, the need for the ability to engage in caring relationships is growing.

Part of the crisis of care is communicatively constituted. Because of the postmodern tendencies of skepticism, individualism, and existential mistrust, we look for hidden meanings in all communication; we tend to think first and only of ourselves and the benefits we can attain from engaging in any acts for the other; and finally, we fail to connect with others because we do not trust them. For these reasons many people do not know how to communicate care to those who need them.

The postmodern tendencies of skepticism, individualism, and existential mistrust leave people at a loss as to how to respond to those calling them into responsibility. But this is not the only problem. Even though care has been eternally devalued by most societies, the continued failure to recognize the importance of care eclipses the already critical need of care. We fail to see that care is part of the moral fabric of society. Care is necessary for our development and ultimately necessary for our survival.

Being a necessary part of physical, emotional, and moral development care is not only necessary for our survival, care is an essential factor in attaining the good life or as Buber indicated, attaining the lived unity of life. Wood makes the connection between care and the attainment of the good life, “Although care is not the only principle for modern moral life, it is a crucial concept for an adequate theory of how we might make human societies more moral...Care serves as a critical standard” (154). Care has been identified by Tronto among others (Mayeroff, Gaylin, Noddings) as an integral part of the

good life. Care, a central concept for morality, is a virtue that can indicate, according to Tronto, how well a society adheres to other virtues. Care is the moral ideal which, when put into action, sustains life. Infants cannot survive without the love and care of their parents. The sick cannot get better without adequate care. As Gaylin suggests, technology can take us into the future but it is love and care that are essential to the good life. “Care is a state in which something does matter...the good life comes from what we care about” (May 22).

Care identified as a moral ideal and part of the good life is important to each of us and to society because it determines what matters to people. “It is through our caring for and being cared for by others that we are able to live, to know, and to allow things to show up, to matter in the world” (Benner and Gordon 50). Caring directs people to focus on something other than themselves. Caring is essential because it “sets up a world and creates meaningful distinction, and it is these concerns that provide meaning and direction for people” outside the self (Benner and Wrubel 1). If one cares about something other than oneself, one cannot be completely autonomous or claim to be the source of all meaning. Caring, according to Mayeroff, provides stability and one’s place in the world. “Through caring for certain others, by serving them through caring, a man lives the meaning of his own life (Mayeroff 2). Caring is not only essential to the good life because it defines what matters to people, it provides meaning beyond the self and thus orders how individuals live their lives. Caring is essential to society because in being part of the good life, caring connects each of us to the other, thus creating a better society.

Caring is also essential because it is necessary in the development of an infant into a mature adult. Not only do helpless infants require care for their growth, they need to experience care in order to learn how to become caring adults. Gaylin argues that the care of a primary caretaker is essential to a growing child:

To be treated kindly by someone who is not a primary caretaker is like a stroke or a caress. It is unnecessary, but a delight. To be neglected by someone who should be in a caring position has the potential for real damage. We feel pleasure and contact in the former, but we feel injury in the latter. Approval from a stranger is a luxury; care from a loved one may be a matter of survival. Being touched, then, is the awareness of an unexpected identification with us— a sign that someone cares who need not. Hurt is the absence of such caring and identification from one who ought to be displaying them. (Gaylin 152)

From infancy into childhood, love and care are necessary for our development into functioning adults. Caring or the lack of it helps determine who we become as adults. Caring is necessary for the ability to develop healthy relationships. “Being able and willing to care for others is essential for building strong interpersonal relationships and for creating a social fabric that allows us all to live with a modicum of comfort, security, and grace” (Wood 3). The ability to care is the essential part of our humanity that must be developed in order for us to become truly human. Caring is the component that connects us to each other, and without that connection the human community may well destroy itself.

Caring is ultimately necessary for human survival. Benner and Wrubel argue that instead of valuing autonomy, caring and interdependence are the ultimate goals of human development, as they explain: “To care and feel cared for promotes personal and societal health” (368). According to Benner and Wrubel, “a culture that emphasizes independence and individualism cannot survive without a safety net of care and caring practices” (399). Madeleine Leininger argues that unless we recognize the value of caring and begin to preserve and maintain the practice of caring we could destroy ourselves. “We need to buttress a caring lifeway to ourselves and others to preserve and maintain human societies” (Leininger 8). Without caring, mankind loses sight of relation and its ultimate interdependence. Caring not only makes life worth living, caring is what focuses our attention on something other than ourselves. Without caring life becomes every person for him/herself.

As humans we learn how to care from caring relationships, particularly from our parents. Caring is essential to our ability to develop strong interpersonal relationships. Caring defines what matters in one’s life, thus arranging one’s priorities. Caring connects one to the world and accounts for *why* we are the *way* we are in the world. Through this connection, caring becomes both an ethical ideal, part of the good life, and essential to the survival of humanity. We not only need to recognize the importance of care, we need to find ways to enact care. “Simply positing a moral ideal of caring will not suffice to make the world more caring; we need as well to be able to translate that moral ideal into practice” (Tronto 152). We need to find ways to help people recognize the importance of care and how to communicate that care. Because care is communicatively constituted, dialogue as the labor of care offers philosophical insight

and illumination into bringing care to the foreground of communication. In the end dialogue as the labor of care offers a way to talk about care that has not been explored before. The following sections review the current scholarly conversation on care in an attempt to determine the underlying metaphors that point to care as communicatively constituted.

Milton Mayeroff: Caring—The Meaning of Life Found in Helping Another Grow

Milton Mayeroff was one of the first scholars to explore the philosophical conception of caring. In his seminal work *On Caring*, Mayeroff defines caring; describes the relationship of the self to the particular other cared for; identifies eight essential ingredients he finds necessary for the caring relationship; explains five specific aspects of caring; and finally describes the benefit of caring to the one doing the caring. For Mayeroff, caring is essential human in helping the other and in turn, helping oneself grow. Through caring one finds the true meaning of life.

According to Mayeroff, caring is helping another grow and at the same time actualizing oneself. It is a process of relating to someone that involves development in time through mutual trust and a deepening and qualitative transformation of the relationship (Mayeroff 1-2). In defining caring Mayeroff describes the relationship of the self to the particular other cared for.

The relationship of the self to the particular other

In a caring relationship, the other is both an extension of oneself and recognized as something completely other than the self (Mayeroff 8). The other has worth, potential, and the need to grow. The point of the caring is to allow and help the other grow. Being completely other, the self recognizes that the growth of the other is dependent on the

other's particular needs. In caring for the other, the self responds to the other with respect, devotion, and mutuality.

The self respects the particular needs of the other and responds to those needs accordingly. In caring for the other, the self is devoted to the other now and in the unforeseeable future. "It is through devotion that caring for *this* other acquires substance and its own particular character; caring develops in the process of overcoming obstacles and difficulties" (Mayeroff 10). The self demonstrates devotion through "being there," consistency, persistence under unfavorable conditions, and a willingness to overcome difficulties. According to Mayeroff, devotion then leads to a sense of obligation to the other. However, this obligation is not a burden, but is welcomed and part of the growth of the self. Hence both the self and the other grow in the caring relationship and ultimately, through caring for the other, the self helps the other grow by learning to care for another.

In caring, the one caring is both *for* and *with* this particular other in his/her world. The one caring is for the other in the sense that he/she wants the other to grow and be him/herself (Mayeroff 54). In being *with* the other, Mayeroff describes the one caring as being able to understand what the other is experiencing in his/her world. "In the broad sense, "being with" characterizes the process of caring itself; in caring for another person we can be said to be basically with him in his world, in contrast to simply knowing about him from outside" (55). In stressing being *with* and being *for* the other in a caring relationship, Mayeroff highlights the importance of recognizing that the other is totally other. Therefore, in order to care the one caring must see the other as totally unique from him/herself.

The Essential Elements Necessary for the Caring Relationship

Mayeroff describes caring as a process by which the self and the other grow through their mutual relationship. Mayeroff identifies eight essential ingredients he finds necessary for this growth to take place in the caring relationship: knowing, alternating rhythms, patience, honesty, trust, humility, hope and courage.

The first essential ingredient of caring is knowing. The self must not only want to care, he/she must “know” many things. The self must know how to respond to the other by knowing “who the other is, what his powers and limitations are, what his needs are, and what is conducive to his growth” (Mayeroff 19). Furthermore, the self must know himself / herself. The self must understand his/her abilities and limitations in caring for the other.

The next ingredient, alternating rhythms, involves the ability to learn from the past. According to Mayeroff, in order to grow, it is necessary for the self to learn from the past. Each caring relationship consists of successes and failures on the part of the one caring and the one being cared for. The ability to learn from the actions taken is necessary in the growth and success of all involved in the caring relationship.

Not only does the one caring need to understand the alternating rhythms of caring and the process of learning from the past, the self must also trust that the other will learn from his/her mistakes. According to Mayeroff, trust is another important ingredient in the caring relationship. “Trusting the other is to let go; it includes an element of risk and a leap into the unknown, both of which take courage” (27). The self must trust the other to grow and to learn from his/her mistakes.

Patience involves the necessity of allowing the other to grow on his/her own time in his/her own way. However, patience is not passive. “The man who cares is patient because he believes in the growth of the other” (7). The self gives fully to the other by allowing time and space for other’s growth. Furthermore, the patient self gives the other room to live and has a tolerance for a certain amount of confusion and floundering on the part of the other.

Honesty, for Mayeroff, is being honest with oneself. This honesty involves seeing the other and the self as each truly is. Furthermore, this honesty consists of the self being true in the caring relationship and not simply acting as if he/she cares.

In the caring relationship, Mayeroff explains, the self must know and understand his/her own limitations and abilities. He/she must be able to learn from each caring experience and new relationship. In this process the self builds a certain amount of experience in caring, yet one of the crucial ingredients in caring is the need for humility on the part of the one caring. “There is a sense in which the man who cares basically begins anew regardless of how extensive his previous experience has been...” (30). Every caring relationship is new and particular to *this* situation. While prior experience assists the self in knowing, caring is not a technique and what has worked in one situation cannot be applied blindly to another. Humility not only permits the self to learn from each new situation, but also allows the self to learn something else about the other. In being truly other, there is always something more to learn about the other (29).

Hope and courage are the final two ingredients Mayeroff identifies for the caring relationship. Mayeroff sees hope and courage as working hand in hand:

Hope, as an expression of a present alive with possibilities, rallies energies and activates our powers...it is hope for the realization of the other through my caring; and therefore an important aspect of hope is courage. Such courage is found in standing by the other in trying circumstances, and in taking risks that go beyond safety and security. (33)

An essential ingredient of caring is hope for the future that provides energy in the present. Courage, hope's confidant, allows the caring to flourish into the unknown future.

The caring relationship involves eight essential ingredients that Mayeroff describes, which focus primarily on the one caring for the other. According to Mayeroff, knowing requires the self in the caring relationship to understand his/her abilities and limitations in a situation and a real understanding that the one cared for is truly other. The self must also have the ability to learn from past experiences. The recognition that caring involves alternating rhythms, successes and failures, is part of that learning. The one caring must have patience with the other and the process of caring. The one caring needs to allow time for the other to grow in his/her care. Honesty, another essential ingredient of caring for Mayeroff, is twofold. The one caring needs to be honest about who the other really is, not who he/she would want them to be. Honesty also requires the one caring to truly care, not just seem as if he/she cares. From the ingredients of caring Mayeroff looks at specific aspects of caring: the ability to care, the ability to be cared for, the constancy of the other, guilt, and reciprocation.

The Aspects of Caring

To begin, the one caring must not only have the desire to care for the other, they also must have the ability to care for the other. However, wanting to care and being able

to care about the other are not enough for the caring actually to take place. The other must be able to be cared for. The other must in some way accept the caring, respond to the caring. If the self is capable of caring and the other is capable of being cared for, there then must be a level of consistency in the relationship. "Caring assumes continuity, and is impossible if the other is continually being replaced. The other must remain constant, for caring is a developmental process" (Mayeroff 44). Caring, then, is a relationship that grows and develops over time between specific parties.

Along with the constancy of the one cared for comes the continued call to responsibility of the one caring. This call to responsibility of the one caring is identified by Mayeroff as guilt. "Like pain, guilt tells me that something is wrong; if it is felt deeply, understood, accepted, it provides me the opportunity to return to my responsibility for the other" (Mayeroff 45). Guilt is the aspect of caring that calls the one caring back to the relationship in the event that one caring loses his/her focus of attention on the other. Finally, Mayeroff claims that caring may or may not be reciprocated.

Mayeroff takes particular care in emphasizing that in the caring relationship the growth of the other is the primary focus of attention (39). When looking at the ingredients he describes as necessary for the caring relationship one sees the emphasis on the capacity of the one caring to be able to know, to learn, to trust, to be patient, to be honest, to have humility, and finally to have hope and courage. The caring relationship is marked by a selflessness on the part of the one caring. The goal of the one caring is to help the other grow. But the benefit of caring is not only realized in the one cared for. Through a focus of attention on the other and a heightened awareness of the other's

needs, the self is actualized. The self grows in unexpected ways and thus benefits, as a byproduct, from the caring relationship.

Mayeroff points out that the end result is not the only or even the primary focus in the caring relationship. The future goal is not the only important part of the relationship.

In caring the present is not cut off from vital connections with the past and future, for it is informed by meanings and insights from the past and enriched by anticipations of the future, such as the promise of new growth. But at the same time that past and future make us more sensitive to opportunities for growth in the present, the interests and needs of the present help determine the general character of this past and future. (41)

According to Mayeroff, the past, the present and the future are all of equal importance to both the self and the other in the relationship. The process in the caring relationship is of vital importance, the product, the growth of both the self and other, is an outgrowth of the process (42).

Milton Mayeroff defines caring as helping another grow and at the same time, as a by product, actualizing oneself. He emphasizes the importance of the one caring and his/her responsibilities in the caring relationship. Mayeroff point out that caring is important because there is always a focus on helping the other grow. But he also stresses that it is caring that gives life meaning. For Mayeroff, caring orders a person's values and activities, provides stability in life, and ultimately provides a place or home in the world (2).

Willard Gaylin: Caring—From Birth to Death is an Essential Element of Human Development

Willard Gaylin, writing out of a psychological tradition, defines caring from a developmental perspective. As opposed to Mayeroff, who explored the philosophical aspects of care, Gaylin examines how care is developed in human beings as a part of maturing as a person. According to Gaylin, in order to develop into a fully functioning person, a person that can communicate and relate to others it is necessary first to be loved in order to learn to love. “Caring—that is, the protective, parental, tender aspects of loving- is a part of relationship among peers, child to parent, friend to friend, lover to lover, person to animal, and multiple other patterns” (Gaylin 68). Gaylin argues that human beings are such because of their capacity for love and care. “If there is one fact founded in his biology, essential to his survival and uniquely his own, it is that *Homo sapiens* is supremely a loving animal and a caring one” (Gaylin 17-18). Gaylin sees caring as an essential part of human development that begins with birth and is necessary for one’s survival.

According to Gaylin, from infancy human beings depend on care from others to survive. Gaylin argues that the capacity to care begins with our state of helplessness. No other animal exists in such a prolonged period of helplessness as human beings. But, while helpless, the human infant is aware and learning lessons in caring that will stay with him/her for rest of his/her lives (Gaylin 33). Dependency, in the infant, is treated merely as a vehicle for exploring, substantiating, and elucidating the caring nature of the human being (36).

A loving nature in the adult must be built early in infancy; it is in the crucial relationships of the first years of life that our self-image is forged, and it is here that our capacities to relate are either nurtured or destroyed.

The nature of the influences from mother to child are therefore essential...Proper nurture will guarantee the development not just of an adult, but of a caring adult. (51)

Beginning from a developmental standpoint Gaylin describes caring as part of man's nature but points out that it is the nurture given to infants and small children that either encourages or destroys the child's capacity to care. In his work Gaylin explores the human capacity to love and care beginning with attachment and ending with the kind of caring that gives pleasure through empathy.

The Development of Caring in the Person

The first step in becoming a caring person begins in the helpless stage of the infant. Attachment, according to Gaylin, is the first bond an infant forms with his/her (usually) mother. This bond is the most important in terms of the child's later capacity and quality of all other significant caring relationships. "The attachment relationship is in many ways the foundation of all later affectionate or loving relationships, and is considered essential to form the more sophisticated, less instinctually bound, relationships of mature life" (79).

The next step begins the child's move toward independence, identification. Identification occurs most successfully from a secure base of attachment. "Identification whereby through an incorporation of another human being and his values, we are influenced in our behavior by that person and act as though we were directed by that other person with his entire sense of experience" (98). In the identification stage the child can begin to explore and experience his/her environment. Gaylin explains,

All those figures whom we love and admire, we carry with us. They become the mortar and cement of the stable person: they serve our conscience, our capacity to love, and our potential for aspiration and achievement... We are not and never can be 'individual.' The paradoxical lesson of identification is that we achieve our unique selves via a fusion with others. Whatever individualism means, it is something we can only gain through early attachments to, later identifications with, and, finally, loving of other people. To find ourselves we must embrace others. It is a peculiar creature that is so constructed. (114-115)

Through identification the child learns what is good and how to connect to others in his/her environment. Gaylin argues that identification gives the child a sense of adequacy and personal resources that are necessary for the next stage of development, conscience.

Gaylin believes that identification is the means by which a child incorporates the values of a group. The child's conscience grows from that incorporation. "The identified-with people will be used to help build an internalized sense of conscience, which will then be visualized... as an abstract system of standards and values" (129). Conscience, set up by civilization, learned by identification, tells the developing person what he ought to do and not to do. The "ought" of conscience leads to caring and acts of kindness. "To give and give up, to do for others, is testament to ourselves of our worth and our strength" (134). To develop into caring members of society is to ensure the continuation of our species.

Conscience, the internalization of group "ought" while it leads to acts of caring is not the final stage of the caring member of society. According to Gaylin, the feeling of empathy is the next and final stage of caring that serves to perpetuate group survival,

There is a kind of giving that is not self sacrificing, but that produces pleasure and joy. And such giving is served by a different form of identification, where we identify or empathize with the small and helpless rather than the strong and capable; it is a basic mechanism in the structure of group survival. This represents an expansion of empathy beyond its usual transiency or momentary character into a steadily maintained, ongoing state of feeling. (138)

The final stage, an ongoing state of feeling, is the caring literally born out of becoming a protective parent. However, Gaylin argues that even those mature adults who never have children still have the capacity and tendency towards caring for the helpless because of the caring they learned as infants. This caring grows from their first caring relationship and helpless state and in most comes full circle in caring for their own child. Gaylin labels this final stage of feeling for the helpless, identification. “It (identification of the adult with the infant) represents a fusion of interests and identity, so that the boundaries between self and other become, as it were, symbolically blurred” (Gaylin 143).

Gaylin argues that caring beginning with the helpless stage of a dependent infant is not only part of our human nature, it is essential for our species survival. From dependency to attachment the child learns through caring the confidence he/she needs to grow and identify with those around him/her. In the process of identification the child develops a self-image necessary for the ability to learn to how to care and love. “This caring nature is a fact of design. But social living is also a fact of design. We must trust ourselves and love ourselves for the primary purpose of loving others and caring for

them” (171). Ultimately, caring is tied to both realization of the good life and the life of man.

Carol Gilligan: Caring—A Different Voice

Both Mayeroff and Gaylin label caring as part of the good life. Although they come from different disciplines, philosophy and psychology, they also both recognize the importance of caring to a life well lived. In 1982, Carol Gilligan wrote her now famous *In a Different Voice*. Gilligan’s work is the first feminist exploration of caring, its relation to women and their moral development and ultimately, the good life. *In a Different Voice* argues for a moral development “different” than the one that was currently accepted. Gilligan argues for the “different voice” of women and their moral development as it pertains to caring. Gilligan coins the term an ethic of care which she ties to the lives, identities and moral development of women. Gilligan’s “different voice” is one of care and responsibility, of concern and connection with other people (Larrabee 15). An ethic of care is a theory of moral concern grounded in responsiveness to others that dictates providing care, preventing harm, and maintaining relationships.

According to Gilligan, women define themselves in a context of human relationship and judge themselves in terms of their ability to care (17). Gilligan describes an ethic of care as a language of responsibility in which moral dilemmas are seen as an obligation to exercise care and avoid hurt. “The inflicting of hurt is considered selfish and immoral in its reflection of unconcern, while the expression of care is seen as the fulfillment of moral responsibility” (73). Gilligan describes an ethic of care as primarily feminine, a world dominated by interconnection, where violence is rare and relationships are safe (62). In this world everyone is responded to.

Gilligan argues that the ethic of care is informed by an understanding of human relationships that is marked by an increasing differentiation of self and other and a growing comprehension of the dynamics of social interaction (74). The central insight of an ethic of care is that the self and other interdependent. This insight is realized through a cumulative knowledge of human relationships. Gilligan identifies three levels of moral development in an ethic of care and describes the transitions that occur between each level.

Gilligan's ethic of care: the levels and transitions

According to Gilligan, women develop a principle of moral responsibility that proceeds through stages that are sequential and hierarchically arranged. The first level of an ethic of care is orientation to individual survival. In this level the self and the protection of the self from more powerful others is the major object of concern. "Morality is a matter of imposed sanctions on the self" (Brabeck 35). The first transition associated with the first level is the transition from selfishness to responsibility. This transition is marked by the self recognizing attachments and connections to others. In this transition moral conflict develops in terms of what one would do as opposed to what one should do. Gilligan clarifies:

The transition from the first to the second perspective, the shift from selfishness to responsibility, is a move toward social participation.

Whereas from the first perspective, morality is a matter of sanctions imposed by a society of which one is more subject than citizen, from the second perspective, moral judgment relies on shared norms and expectations. The woman at this point validates her claim to social

membership through adoption of societal values...survival is now seen to depend on acceptance by others. (79)

From the transition from selfishness to responsibility Gilligan argues that women then move to the second level: goodness as self sacrifice or “service orientation” (Puka 62). In this level the self is seen as caretaker and protector. The focus in this level is on conventional social views of goodness. In the second level the caring is marked by “exercising tact, not hurting others, and winning approval of others by identifying and serving their needs and desires” (Wood 48). There is a desire to care for others. “Concern for others, particularly the feelings of others and the possibility of inflicting hurt, is of major concern” (Brabeck 36). The second transition is then from goodness to truth. In this transition the self recognizes the importance of care of both the other and the self. The situation, the intentions, and the consequences are of primary importance to moral decisions.

The third and final level is the morality of nonviolence. In this level care becomes a universal obligation, “A moral equality between self and other is achieved by equally applying and injunction against hurting” (Brabeck 36).

According to Gilligan, in an ethic of care, moral action develops through these stages and transitions. Ultimately in an ethic of care the self realizes irreducible particularity- a particularity of the agent, the other, and the situation (Blum 51). The moral self also realizes that both the self and the other are radically situated and particularized. “Understanding the needs, interests, and welfare of another person, and understanding the relationship between oneself and that other, requires a stance towards that person informed by care, love, empathy, compassion, and emotional sensitivity”

(Blum 51). The self is encumbered meaning, the self is connected to the world by ties and relationships and acts in terms of those ties. These encumbrances are concrete, particular others and relationships. Connection and response are the basis for morality in an ethic of care. Connection then exists prior to moral beliefs and principles and guides women's sense of right and wrong and their moral actions.

Nel Noddings: Caring—The responses “I am Here for You” and “I Must”

Building on the work of Carol Gilligan, Nel Noddings constructs an ethic of care rooted in receptivity, relatedness, and responsiveness. Noddings provides one of the most detailed outlines of caring through her extensive contemplation of caring and its impact of society. Writing from a feminist perspective, Noddings follows Gilligan's lead and argues for caring as an alternative moral ethic to a more traditional, masculine moral ethic driven by principles and propositions. She defines caring as “relation in its most basic form, a connection or encounter between two human beings--- a carer and a recipient of care, or cared—for” (Noddings, *Schools* 15). Noddings describes an ethic of care as an “I must” in response to the plight of the other (*Caring* 79). According to Noddings, the inclination to be moral derives from caring. “In caring, we accept the natural impulse to act on behalf of the present other” (Noddings, *Caring* 83). For Noddings hers is an endeavor in practical ethics from the feminine view. Noddings explains in length the relational nature of caring, its importance in the world and the role of those in caring: the one-caring, the one-cared for, and caring about.

The Relational Nature of Caring

Noddings begins from the fundamental assumption that relation is taken as ontologically basic and the caring relation is ethically basic (*Caring* 3). “Taking *relation*

as ontologically basic simply means that we recognize human encounter and affective response as a basic fact of human existence” (4). An ethic of care assumes relation and therefore, according to Noddings, ultimately identifies joy as its basic affect. “It is the recognition of and longing for relatedness that form the foundation of our ethic, and the joy that accompanies fulfillment of our caring enhances our commitment to the ethical ideal that sustains us as one-caring” (*Caring* 6). Ultimately joy is the reason we continue to care. Noddings believes that the joy found in relation reflects our basic reality. The joy that occurs in the caring relation maintains the caring and our desire to preserve the ethical ideal of caring (Noddings, *Caring* 147).

The Responses of Caring: The Natural (I am here for you) – The Ethical (I must)

From the assumption that relation is ontologically basic Noddings moves to the caring relation. For Noddings, there is a difference between natural caring and ethical caring. Natural caring is the relation in which we respond as one-caring out of love or natural inclination. Natural caring, a fact of the human condition, is what we see as ultimately “good.” Noddings describes natural caring from the ideal home in which “I am here for you” is communicated to the cared-for. “It is that condition toward which we long and strive, it is our longing for caring—to be in that special relation—that provides the motivation for us to be moral” (*Caring* 5). Examples of natural caring are parent child relations, friendship relations, etc. Response in natural caring is easy, almost automatic, in other words, natural.

Ethical caring arises out of the ideal of natural caring. Instead of caring as a response to a loved one and an “I am here for you” stance, the response of ethical caring

is “I ought” or “I must.” Ethical caring is a dutiful form of caring. We can either respond or reject the call of the other’s need. But because relatedness is ultimately linked to our quality of life and we value ourselves as carers we can and often do evoke a caring response beyond the natural (*Home* 30). “This goodness is felt and it guides our thinking implicitly. Our picture of ourselves as ethical inevitably involves a consideration of this goodness” (*Caring* 49). In other words, we answer the “I must” even when we do not necessarily want to or have the energy. We care because we see caring as ultimately good. Ethical caring, according to Noddings, is evoked in the instance when the other is calling and we would rather not respond but we recognize a sense of the “I must.” “In doing this, we draw upon an ethical ideal—a set of memories of caring and being cared for that we regard as manifestations of our best selves and relations. We summon what we need to maintain the original ‘I must’” (Nodding, *Educating* 13).

After distinguishing between ethical and natural caring Noddings describes the roles of those involved in the caring relation. According to Noddings, “a caring relation is, in its most basic form, a connection or encounter between two human beings—a carer and a recipient of care, or cared—for” (*Schools* 15). For Noddings, each of these participants must contribute to the relation in characteristic ways.

The Relationship to Caring—Caring-for, The One Caring

The caring relation begins with the one-caring “receiving” the other. For Noddings, the essential fundamental aspect of caring is the receiving or apprehension of the other’s reality. “When we see the other’s reality as a possibility for us, we must act to eliminate the intolerable, to reduce the pain, to fill the need, to actualize the dream. When I am in this sort of relationship with another, when the other’s reality becomes a

possibility for me, I care” (*Caring* 14). It is important to note that in receiving, the self does not get lost in the other. Noddings argues that receiving is thoroughly relational, a duality. “I see through two pairs of eyes, hear with two sets of ears, feel the pain of the other self in addition to my own” (Noddings, *Home* 15). From the starting point of receiving, Noddings describes the enactment of genuine caring.

When one is prepared to receive the other, the one –caring makes a conscious choice to pay particular attention to the other. Noddings describes paying attention to the other as engrossment. Noddings argues that caring for another always involves engrossment. Engrossment is a regard or desire for the other’s well-being. In engrossment the one caring is always *present* in his/her acts of caring (*Caring* 19). Presence is not necessarily physical presence but is marked by reactive, responsive, and receptive behavior by the one-caring toward the cared-for. Engrossment requires the one-caring to be embedded in a relationship with the other (Noddings, *Caring* 19). In the midst of engrossment, the one-caring sees and accepts the other as they really are and also sees what the other has the potential to become. Noddings likens this characteristic of caring to that of Martin Buber’s confirmation. “The one—caring sees the best self in the cared—for and works with him to actualize that self” (Noddings, *Caring* 64). When one is engrossed with another they are turned toward a particular other in a particular circumstance. The act of caring is essentially a turning away from the self toward the other.

Noddings argues that to be truly human, to live fully, we must embrace relation. Part of being in a world of relation is caring. In order to care we begin by being receptive to the other. According to Noddings, once we have seen the other, we decide whether or

not to care. “It is in this subjective—receptive mode that I see clearly what I have received from the other, and then I must decide whether to proceed” (Noddings, *Caring* 35). Therefore, the one-caring potentially faces guilt and the need for courage in the caring relation.

Guilt occurs in several instances in caring. First, the one-caring faces guilt when the course of caring has not produced the desired results. The one-caring has tried but something has gone wrong. In this instance guilt is felt by the one caring and requires courage to continue to care and keep trying. “I must have the courage to accept that which I have had a hand in, and I must have the courage to go on caring” (Noddings, *Caring* 39). On the other hand, there is always a choice in ethical caring. We hear the address of the other and can choose to ignore the “I must.” If there is a lapse in caring on the part of the one-caring, he/she feels guilty for not responding to the call of the other.

The relationship to caring— The Cared for

Noddings claims caring is a genuine response to the perceived needs of the other (*Caring* 47). Noddings defines the caring relation as an encounter between two human beings. In her opinion the caring relation is not and cannot be complete unless the one cared—for contributes in some way to the relationship. In the next stage of her exploration of caring, Noddings identifies who the cared for can be. According to Noddings, the cared—for can range from one who is dear to us to a complete stranger. We care for those who are close to us because we love them. Those closest to us are at the center of our circle of caring (Noddings, *Caring* 50). Moving out from those we love, we are linked through relations and roles to others we may be eventually called to care for. For the most part, we are aware of the inevitability of the call to care for those

individuals and are prepared to respond. Finally, Noddings discusses the call we are not prepared for, the call of the stranger:

In an important sense, the stranger has an enormous claim on me, because I do not know where he fits, what requests he has a formal right to make, or what personal needs he will pass on to me. I can meet him only in a state of wary anticipation and rusty grace, for my original innocent grace if gone, and, aware of my finiteness, I fear a request I cannot meet without hardship. Indeed the caring person, one who in this way is prepared to care, dreads the proximate stranger, for she cannot easily reject the claim he has on her. (*Caring* 47)

According to Noddings, the call of the stranger that needs care is the ultimate “I must.” The call of the stranger is also the ultimate unknown. We can expect to be called by those we love. We are mostly aware of the demands of the various roles we fill. But the stranger who needs care can call at any time, for anything. The call of the stranger is the true test of the ethical self.

The one—caring bears the responsibility of answering the call to care. It is in receiving the other and responding to the “I must” that genuine caring begins; however, Noddings argues that caring cannot be complete without the contribution of the cared—for in the relationship. In order for the caring relationship to flourish and continue the cared—for must receive the caring and respond in some manner.

Noddings claims that the reception of caring by the cared—for is an important part of what the one—caring receives from the other. Noddings likens this aspect of an ethic of care to Martin Buber’s conception of reciprocity. “What the cared—for gives to

the relationship either in direct response to the one—caring or in personal delight or in happy growth before her eyes is genuine reciprocity” (*Caring* 74). The one—caring cannot demand that the other respond or how the other will respond. But the response from the cared—for contributes to the maintenance of the relationship, completes the caring. The growth of the one cared—for is what allows the one—caring to continue to turn toward the other and away from the self. Caring is completed in the cared—for and the completion brings joy to the one—caring. “It (joy) is the special affect that arises out of the receptivity of caring, and it represents a major reward for the one—caring... We want to remain in direct contact with that which brings us joy and, somehow, with that joy itself” (Noddings, *Caring* 132). In other words, the joy the one-caring receives from the growth of the cared—for is what motivates and maintains the one-caring. The joy is, for Noddings, relation. It is relation that brings us joy, relation that keeps us caring, relation that makes us human.

Standing Outside the Relationship—Caring about

In the one cared-for Noddings’ theory of care comes full circle. Caring begins and ends in the fact that relation is ontologically basic. However, we cannot care-for everyone in the world...we cannot truly care-for everyone we know. Therefore, Noddings makes a distinction between caring as a part of relation and “caring about.” According to Noddings, if we care about someone we are not in direct relation with a particular other. But there is a feeling for the other in need. “Caring about always involves a certain benign neglect. One is attentive just so far. One assents with just so much enthusiasm. One acknowledges. One affirms. One contributes five dollars and

goes on to other things” (Noddings, *Caring* 112). Noddings explains that caring about is an important link between the private sphere of caring-for and the public realm,

Caring-about moves us from the face-to-face world into the wider public realm. If we have been well cared for and have learned to care for a few intimate others, we move into the public world with fellow-feelings for others. We are moved by compassion for their suffering, we regret it when they do not experience the fruits of care, and we feel outrage when they are exploited. Often we wish that we could care directly, but because that is impossible, we express our care...(Noddings, *Home* 22).

While Noddings labels caring about as the poor second cousin of caring, she argues that caring about is essential in the caring process. Caring about is, according to Noddings, “instrumental in establishing the conditions under which caring-for can flourish... caring about can help in establishing, maintaining, and enhancing it (caring-for)...Caring about is empty if it does not culminate in caring relations” (*Home* 24).

The Relationship of Caring to Martin Buber’s Philosophy of Dialogue

Nel Noddings develops an ethic of care claiming that it is basic to moral life. She describes the role of both the one-caring and the cared-for. She claims that in order for caring to be a part of moral life one must learn first to be cared-for, then must learn to care about and finally how to care for others. In describing caring as basic to moral life, Noddings insists that caring is and must be part of moral education. In both her description of caring and linking caring to moral education Noddings relies on the work of Martin Buber. Noddings is one of the few philosophers to explicitly tie Martin Buber’s philosophy of dialogue to the concept of caring. It is with her initial connection

that this work builds dialogue as a labor of care. Specifically, Noddings looks to Buber's concepts of relation, confirmation, reciprocity, responsibility, and inclusion.

Noddings begins her philosophy of caring with the idea that human beings live in relation, which she appropriates from Buber's philosophy. She identifies the one-caring as the "I" in Buber's I-THOU relationship and the one cared-for with the THOU.

According to Noddings, caring is relation, relation is reciprocity. Reciprocity is another concept Noddings appropriates from Buber. Reciprocity for both Buber and Noddings completes the relationship. If there is no response from the one cared—for, meaning reciprocity, the caring cannot be considered a caring relation.

Noddings uses Buber's concepts of confirmation, responsibility and inclusion, to describe the role of the one caring in the caring relationship. According to Noddings, the one-caring has a responsibility to the one-cared for, responsibility to answer the call of the other; and after acknowledging the call, responsibility to pay particular attention to the other which Noddings labels engrossment. Once the one-caring has accepted the responsibility to care, they must confirm the other as they currently are and as they can be. "The one-caring sees the best self in the cared-for and works with him to actualize that self" (*Caring* 64). The one-caring not only confirms the other he/she sees the world through two pairs of eyes. "The one-caring receives the child and views his world through both sets of eyes...The one-caring assumes a dual perspective and can see things from both her own pole and that of the cared-for" (Noddings, *Caring* 63). This dual perspective is what Buber views as inclusion.

Nel Noddings extends the work on caring and its relation to ethics in many ways. She distinguishes between a natural form of caring marked by an "I am here for"

response of the one caring to the cared for and ethical caring marked by an “I must” or “I ought” response by the one caring toward the cared for. She further extends the literature by describing in detail the roles of both the one caring and the cared for. Finally, Noddings begins to develop the intimate connection between caring and dialogue. Although Noddings specifically uses and references Martin Buber’s philosophy of dialogue to develop her theory of an ethic of care, she does not follow the idea through and explore the foundational connection dialogue has to caring.

Joan Tronto: Caring—A Practice that Demands Attention

Joan Tronto, also writing from feminist ethics position, emphasizes the political importance of an ethic of care. Tronto argues for the necessity and value of care in both the public and private spheres. “The world will look different if we move care from its current peripheral location to a place near the center of human life” (Tronto 101). Tronto points out that care, something most people spend their lives doing, is not currently valued in our society. Tronto claims “care can serve as both a moral value and as a basis for the political achievement of a good society” (19). According to Tronto, caring is devalued in our society, and those who do the caring work, i.e. women and minorities, are seen as unequal and degraded. Tronto conceives of a shift from a focus on the self and autonomy to “a more sophisticated sense of human interdependence,” with care at the center (101). Tronto conceives of care as a fundamental human practice that demands our attention to its significance.

Tronto claims that those who do care work have the proper reflection of value in human life. She believes that while care work is difficult, it is the work that sustains life (117). All human beings need care at some point.

Care is nonetheless a universal aspect of human life. All humans need to be cared for, though the degree of care that others must provide depends not only upon culturally constructed differences, but also on biological differences that human infants are not capable of caring for themselves, and that sick, infirm, and dead humans need to be taken care of...all humans have needs that others must help them meet. (110)

Tronto believes that this basic recognition, that all human beings need care and that care work sustains life has the power to change both political and moral boundaries. If we recognize the importance of care and those doing the care work our political and social institutions will change. Tronto argues for the recognition of the value of care. “Because care forces us to think concretely about people’s real needs, and about evaluating how these needs will be met, it introduces questions about what we value into everyday life...In order to think about care differently, we need to situate it differently as an integral moral and political concept” (124). In exploring the practice of care, Tronto attempts to situate care differently.

Caring— A Universal Burden, Practice and Action

Tronto defines care on a basic level as some type of engagement. She expands by claiming that care also involves reaching out to someone other than the self, the acceptance of some kind of burden, and will typically lead to some form of action. “Caring requires that one start from the standpoint of the one needing care or attention. It

requires that we meet the other morally, adopt that person's or group's perspective and look at the world in those terms" (Tronto 19). Tronto argues that in no way is care self absorbing or self referring (102). Tronto asserts care is a universal practice but is defined culturally and is an ongoing process. In previous work, Bearnice Fisher and Joan Tronto define care as "a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, our selves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life sustaining web" (Fisher and Tronto 40).

Care, for Tronto, is a practice and can be recognized as such when one witnesses a practice that is aimed at maintaining, continuing, and repairing the world (104).

Labeling care as a practice has significant implications:

The notion of a practice is complex; it is an alternative to conceiving of care as a principle or as an emotion. To call care a practice implies that it involves both thought and action, that thought and action are interrelated, and that they are directed toward some end. The activity, and its end, set the boundaries as to what appears reasonable within the framework of the practice. (108)

Identifying care as a practice, according to Tronto, implies that care concerns the interrelation of thought and action. Identifying care as an action suggests that one must "do something" to enact the care needed by another. Finally, identifying care as a burden points out that even though one recognizes the necessity of engaging in the combined thought and action of caring— the practice— it is sometimes more than one wants to bear.

The Phases of an Ethic of Care

Tronto describes the elements or phases of an ethic of care that she believes correlate with thought and action: caring about, noticing the need to care in the first place; taking care of, assuming responsibility for care; care-giving, the actual work of care; care—receiving, the response of that which is cared for to the care. From these four elements of care, Tronto argues that four ethical elements of care arise: attentiveness, responsibility, competence, and responsiveness (127). Tronto ties each phase of caring to a correlating moral element of caring.

The first phase of caring is caring about. The first step in any caring action is the recognition that care is needed in the first place. The correlating moral element of care is attentiveness. Attentiveness is simply recognizing the needs of those around us. In order to be attentive Tronto claims that one must suspend one's own needs to see the needs of the other (128).

Taking care of is the second phase of caring. After recognizing that care is needed, we choose to either accept the responsibility to act or we ignore it. In order to take care of the other we must assume some sort of responsibility. Responsibility, the second moral element of care, is a term that is embedded in a set of implicit cultural practices as opposed to formal rules (132). Tronto sees responsibility as falling in between two extremes. On the one extreme we are responsible for everyone in every way. On the other extreme, we see ourselves as only responsible for those we are related to. Tronto argues that in order for care to become a central political concept we must find a flexible notion of responsibility that falls in between the two extremes.

Care giving, the third phase of care, is actually meeting of the needs of the other. “It (care-giving) involves physical work, and almost always requires that care-givers come in contact with the objects of care” (107). In order to truly be able to care the one-caring must have the ability, skills, and resources to be able to follow through with the act of caring. Therefore, Tronto identifies, competence as the moral element tied to care giving. The care giver must be able to meet the needs of those who need care.

The fourth and final phase of caring is care receiving. In order for care to be received the one receiving must respond in some manner to the care. Responsiveness is the moral element of care in this phase. It is the responsibility of the one-caring to be attentive enough to assess if the care given has met the needs of the other by their response.

According to Tronto, the four phases of care and the four moral elements of care fit together and integrate into a whole. In order for this integration to take place, care must consist of more than good intentions. In order for care to be able to overcome inevitable conflict, Tronto argues that the one caring must have a real understanding of the situation and an understanding of the competencies of those involved, both those caring and the ones cared for.

Julia Wood: Caring—The Essential Element for Building Strong Interpersonal Relationships

Julia Wood, writing from a communication perspective, argues as does Tronto for the necessity of reevaluating the importance of care in our society. Like Tronto, Wood describes the crisis of care in our culture but argues from a different perspective. Wood’s

argument “focuses on discursive practices that structure culture and, thus, our understandings of women and care” (Wood, *Who Cares* xi). Wood argues that in order to understand how certain people—mostly women in the case of western civilization-- in a culture become the caretakers while others do not it is necessary to examine the discursive activities of both the institutions and practices of that culture. “I am inquiring into how our culture defines caring for others and women’s roles in that activity and whether this understanding is enhancing for individuals and the social order or whether it can be re-formed to meet more adequately the growing needs for care in contemporary America” (Wood, *Who Cares* 17). Wood, by exploring from a communicative perspective, argues that we can “renovate social policies and practices so that we may care for those who need it and may need comforted in knowing that we, too, will be cared for in our times of need” (Wood, *Who Cares* xi).

According to Wood, the ability and willingness to care is essential for building strong interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, caring and being cared for are what allow “us all to live with a modicum of comfort, security, and grace” (Wood, *Who Cares* 3). Wood argues that currently there is a crisis of care in our society. She explains that for the most part women and people of lesser status are those assigned to caring in our culture. Her work is an endeavor to understand the discursive practices that have lead to the devaluation and crisis of care we are currently experiencing. “Discourse comprises the principal means whereby we as individuals and a culture define values, roles, activities, goals, and status, to name but a few of the phenomena whose meaning arises out of communication carried on throughout a society” (Wood, *Who Cares* 17). While exploring the discursive practices that have lead to our current situation Wood defines the

practice of care by looking at three qualities closely associated with caring for others: partiality, empathy, a willingness to serve or nurture others. After defining caring through these three metaphors Wood looks at the concrete practice of caring. According to Wood, there are at least five activities or mental proclivities that comprise caring: responsiveness to others, sensitivity to others, acceptance of others, patience, and dynamic autonomy. Finally, Wood describes the potential costs of caring.

Defining Caring

In defining caring Wood argues that caring includes both particular practices or activities and the kinds of thinking, attitudes, and moral stances that motivate one to care (*Who Cares* 40). Wood endeavors to describe the qualities our culture designates to be a good caregiver. Wood uses three metaphors, partiality, empathy and the willingness to serve or nurture others as the most essential elements of caring that can occur when caring is devalued.

Partiality is the element of care that focuses the caregiver on the particular other. “To be partial is to focus quite directly on the concrete perspectives, needs, concerns, and the like of particular others” (Wood, *Who Cares* 42). The one-caring must recognize his/her embeddedness in relationships and contexts because in order to care the one-caring must see a particular other in a particular circumstance. Furthermore, the one-caring must be connected to the other emotionally. Partiality requires that “one be affected by feelings, especially those toward others for whom one cares...we expect caregivers to regard others in very particularistic ways and act toward them with feeling for their unique nature, needs, and circumstances” (Wood, *Who Cares* 43). The connection of partiality to feelings leads Wood to her next element of caring, empathy.

Wood argues that in order to be considered caring in our culture one must have empathy for the one cared-for. Empathy is “insight into others’ perspectives, feelings, and needs” (Wood, *Who Cares* 44). The one-caring must have a real understanding and “empathy” for the one cared-for. Empathy and understanding allow the one-caring the ability to discern what is needed in a particular situation.

Finally, Wood explains that the willingness to serve or nurture others is an essential element of caring. “A tendency to nurture others emanates naturally out of inclinations to see others in unique, individual ways and to experience their thoughts and feelings in a manner somewhere between experience that is direct and that which is entirely removed from oneself (Wood, *Who Cares* 47). Nurturance, according to Wood, is connected to both partiality and empathy. In order to be nurturing the one-caring must be able to recognize the other’s particular needs (partiality) and be able to understand their feelings (empathy). Nurturance is ultimately aimed at the effort by the one-caring to enhance the other’s growth or comfort.

The Practices of Caring

Wood defines caring through three elements, partiality, empathy, and a desire to nurture or serve others. From here she offers five concrete practices and the particular abilities associated with each that comprise caring: responsiveness to others, sensitivity to others, acceptance of others, patience, and dynamic autonomy.

Responsiveness to others is the first concrete practice of caring. According to Wood, responsiveness is grounded in communication and entails specific abilities: focus of attention by the one—caring on the other; confirming the presence and value of the

other; and listening and observing the other in order to understand their behavior (Wood, *Who Cares* 107).

Closely associated with responsiveness is the second practice of caring, sensitivity to others. Once the one-caring has focused their attention on the other it is necessary to be able to identify and attend to their needs. “Sensitivity can be broken down into very particular activities such as paying attention to others, learning to recognize and interpret patterns in their thoughts, feelings and activities, and figuring out what their ways of indicating various things are” (Wood, *Who Cares* 107). Being sensitive to others is in itself a way of confirming the value of the other.

The third practice of caring, acceptance of others, is also an important way of confirming the other’s importance. Acceptance of others or an openness to others is a way of demonstrating a nonjudgmental regard for the other that allows them to feel safe to express their feelings, needs, wants, and beliefs (Wood, *Who Cares* 107). Wood argues that acceptance of others is essential for establishing trust in the caring relationship.

Patience, the fourth practice of caring, requires the ability and willingness on the part of the one-caring to wait or to go at the other’s speed without making the other feel burdensome or slow (Wood, *Who Cares* 108). Wood describes those with patience as interruptable. “They are able to put aside what they are doing in order to respond to or take care of other’s needs” (Wood, *Who Cares* 108).

The fifth and final concrete practice of caring is the ability to have an interdependent sense of self which Wood labels as dynamic autonomy. According to Wood, dynamic autonomy is an integrative element of all of the others. In order to be

able to be responsive, sensitive, accepting, and patient the one-caring must be able to let go temporarily of his/her own needs and self preoccupation in order to focus attention on the needs of the other. Wood identifies this practice as the selflessness of caring but offers a caution. Dynamic autonomy is not completely letting go of oneself: it requires the ability to be aware of and comfortable with both one's own needs and the needs of the other. "The capacity to let go of self can only arise out of both security in one's own identity and a profound recognition of the interdependence of all forms of life and the ways in which each of us affects and is affected by others" (Wood, *Who Cares* 109).

The Potential Costs of Caring

Partiality, empathy and a willingness to serve others are the metaphors Wood uses to define caring. Responsiveness to others, sensitivity to others, acceptance of others, patience, and dynamic autonomy are, according to Wood, the concrete practices of caring. Each of these is essential to caring and constituted communicatively. Wood argues that while caring is essential to our well being and a part of the good life, there are potential costs to caring. According to Wood, all cultures determine what kind of care is needed, who will provide the care and what status the caregiver will hold in the society (*Who Cares* 17). Caring can be a wonderful, fulfilling part of life. It can also be oppressive and dangerous to the one caring.

Caring can be healthy and enriching when it is informed, freely chosen, and practiced within a context that recognizes and values caring and those who do it...caring can (also) be quite damaging to caregivers if they are unaware of dangers to their identities, if they have unrealistic expectations

of themselves, and/or if caring occurs within contexts that fail to recognize its importance and value. (Wood, *Who Cares* 3)

Currently in our culture, caring is devalued and has been relegated to the private sphere of women and those of lower status. Wood argues that because of the devaluation of caring there are particular potential costs of caring: motivational displacement, comprised or undeveloped autonomy, and the devaluation of the ones caring.

Motivational displacement involves displacing one's own interests and motives for those of the person for whom one cares... The caregiver comes not just to be defined by others but to define herself in their terms, according to their motives, from their perspectives (*Who Cares* 51-52). Motivational displacement can lead to the next potential cost of caring, comprised or undeveloped autonomy. Undeveloped autonomy implies "that a person does not see or think of self apart from others... loss of autonomy involves not being able to see ways in which one is not related to others, in relationship to others, as defined by others..." (*Who Cares* 54). An extreme loss of autonomy leads to relying completely on others for self worth and one's identity.

Finally, as mentioned previously, Wood argues that caring is devalued in our society. Therefore, a potential cost of caring in our society is the devaluation or the low status of those caring. "Western culture does not routinely acknowledge, much less value, caregiving. Instead, it regards caring for others as something that certain people are expected or required to do but for which they will not be recognized or rewarded in substantial ways" (*Who Cares* 56). Thus, if one is assigned or chooses a caregiving role, one could potentially find oneself undervalued.

Caring— The Guiding Communicative Metaphors

The concept of care is informed through the contribution of many different disciplines. Scholars in fields such as philosophy, psychology, communication, and feminist ethics have given care a rich foundation by which we can enter the conversation on care. Wood argues that caring includes both particular practices or activities and the kinds of thinking, attitudes, and moral stances that motivate one to care (*Who Cares* 40). We have thus far established that care is at the same time part of our psychological, moral, and relational development. First, in order to develop into a fully functioning person, a person that can communicate and relate to others it is necessary first to be loved in order to learn to love (Gaylin 68). The ability to care and be cared for are, furthermore, necessary for the building and maintaining of strong interpersonal relationships. Finally, according to Gilligan, moral development, particularly women's, is the evolution of the capacity to care. Building on the work of Gilligan, Noddings, claims the inclination to be moral derives from caring. Noddings claims caring is a form of practical ethics. Furthermore, Tronto claims "care can serve as both a moral value and as a basis for the political achievement of a good society" (117).

Caring is not only important to our psychological, moral and relational development. Scholars in the conversation on care have emphasized the importance of care as an ethical ideal tied not only to the good life but to our survival as well. Tronto claims that those who do care work have the proper reflection of value in human life and while care work is difficult, it is the care work that sustains life (117). The scholarly conversation reveals three major metaphors that encompass and illuminate the bulk of the care literature. These metaphors point to the communicative nature of caring and at the same time serve to begin to shape the communicative ethic dialogue as the labor of care.

This work sees caring as an *obligation* to the other grounded in *relation* with a *particular other*. (Particular other is not necessarily one person. Particular other may in fact be a group, or more than one person). Caring requires both the *ability to care* and the ability to be cared for. The focus of attention in the caring relationship is always on the other. However, through caring we find that there is a *horizon of significant outcomes* of the caring relationship that sustain the cared for, the one caring, and ultimately mankind. Three guiding metaphors emerge from this definition: obligation, relation, and the horizon of significant outcomes of caring. These metaphors point the idea that care is communicatively constituted and serve to begin to shape the communicative metaphor dialogue as the labor of care.

(A full account of the how the work of Mayeroff, Gaylin, Gilligan, Noddings, Tronto and Wood fits into each of the metaphors is included in appendix 1)

Obligation: The Burden of Responsibility

To begin, caring is an obligation to the other. Obligation is found most prevalent in the work of Mayeroff, Gaylin, Gilligan, Noddings and Tronto. Obligation is best discussed in terms of responsibility, guilt, conscience and duty. Mayeroff claims that the obligation to the other is not seen as a burden but welcomed on the part of the one caring. Furthermore, in the caring relationship the one caring is continually called to the obligation through responsibility. When/if the one caring loses his/her focus of attention on the other, guilt calls the one caring back to the relationship. Similarly, Gaylin identifies conscience as the mechanism that calls one to the obligation of caring. Conscience not only tells one what they ought to do, conscience ensures the continuation of caring and thus our society because our conscience is literally a product of society.

Tronto also sees responsibility or obligation as necessary to the caring relation. Like Gaylin, Tronto believes responsibility is tied to cultural practices and social norms.

Gilligan and Noddings also use responsibility as a major metaphor to describe the obligation of the one caring for the other. Gilligan's ethic of care is grounded in responsibility. It is the moral responsibility of women, in Gilligan's description, to become the caretakers and protector, first of those close to them. Eventually, caring becomes a universal obligation. Noddings probably spends the most time exploring the metaphor of obligation as it pertains to caring. In Noddings distinction between natural and ethical caring we find the most illuminating aspects of obligation. The "I am here for you" response of natural caring and the "I must" or "I ought" of ethical caring provide the clear call to responsibility of caring. Noddings argues that it is the ultimate responsibility of the one called to care to respond in order for the caring process to begin. Guilt, as we saw in the work of Mayeroff, calls the one caring back to the relationship. But Noddings explains further that guilt is even more important because it is what calls the one caring to respond to the relationship even when the one called may not be inclined to respond in the first place

Relation: The Why of Caring

The second major metaphor found in the care conversation is that of relation. Encompassed within the metaphor of relation are two supporting metaphors: the particular other, and the ability to care. These supporting metaphors are housed under the guiding metaphor of relation because the communicative implications of each serve to determine the quality of caring relationship.

Relation begins, Gaylin argues, in the helplessness of infants. It is in this stage of our psychological development that we learn the importance of relation. In the first stage of attachment we develop our capacities to relate to others. Tronto and Wood both assert that human interdependence is a fact of society and that we fail to recognize the importance of caring and its relation to our existence. According to Tronto, care is the aspect of our humanness that allows us to focus on something other than ourselves. Noddings provides the most powerful assertion that because relation is ontologically basic and caring is ethically basic we see human encounter and response as part of our existence. According to Noddings, we long for connection and relatedness and it is caring and being cared for that fulfills that longing. As opposed to others in the conversation though, Noddings views caring as only a relationship between two individuals.

Gilligan also emphasizes relation and interdependence but she stresses that the transitional phases of caring that she identifies are part of a woman's realization of the dynamics of social interaction and connection. According to Gilligan, the central insight of an ethic of care is that the self and other are interdependent. Caring is the mechanism used to create connections between human beings and the mechanism used to maintain relationships.

Relation, viewed as a guiding metaphor for caring, points to the fact that as human beings we are interconnected and interdependent. Relation is a fact of caring. However, the quality of the caring relationship is determined partially through the supporting metaphors of particular other, the ability to care and the ability to be cared for.

Caring: The Particular other

The quality of the caring relationship is partially determined through the recognition on the part of the one-caring that the other is a particular other, radically different from oneself. This recognition or lack thereof contributes to determining the quality of the relationship because if one recognizes the other as unique one's caring for will be fashioned to this "particular" individual. If one does not recognize the otherness of the one being cared-for the caring is superficial and formulaic.

Caring for, according to Noddings, is direct relation to a particular other. Caring for is turning toward a particular other. This work assumes that a particular other may or may not be only one individual. But particular other does imply, as Noddings asserts, direct connection between the one caring and the particular other/others. In describing the metaphor particular other it is most beneficial to look back at the works of Mayeroff, Gilligan, and Noddings. In describing the role of the one caring Mayeroff emphasizes the necessity of being with and being for a particular other. He argues that in order to "be with" the one caring has to truly understand the other's world. The one caring knows the particular other's world from the inside. Being with and being for allow the one caring to see the particular other as totally other than himself.

The metaphor of particular other begins with a turning towards the other and the recognition that the other is totally other. Particular other also indicates the situatedness and embeddedness of both the one caring and the one being cared for. Both Noddings and Gilligan argue that in a caring relationship the one caring is truly embedded in the life of the cared for. It is also important to note the particular other is constant. Caring cannot develop if the one being cared for is continually being replaced. Finally, the metaphor of particular other illuminates the fact that caring is not and cannot be a

technique. Each particular other is radically unique; therefore, each caring relation will be and must be different.

Ability to Care

The recognition of the particular other in the caring relationship allows the one caring to see the other in his/her unique circumstances and thus engage the relationship in a unique and meaningful way. However, the recognition of otherness is not the sole determinant of the quality of the caring relation. While one may see the other and the need to care, one must to be able to enact the care that is needed. One must have the ability to enact the care.

As we have seen, the attitudes, dispositions, practices, and capacities of the one caring are the most focused on in the work of Mayeroff, Gaylin, Gilligan, Wood and Tronto. The ability to care can be broken down into three further metaphors: response, gifts, and focus.

Caring begins with the one called to care turning toward the other. Both Wood and Tronto pointed out that at this point the one called to care has to make the decision to care. The one caring has to actually choose to take on the responsibility of caring for the other. Once the one caring has chosen to accept the call they must in some way respond to the one who needs care. Mayeroff, Gaylin, Gilligan, Noddings, Tronto and Wood indicate that the response may come in many forms they include but are not limited to: respect, devotion, mutuality, trust, patience, honesty, humility, love, empathy, and compassion. These forms of response can occur not only at the beginning of the caring relationship they occur throughout the relationship.

The abilities of the one caring not only include the forms of response to the cared for, they also include the gifts that one caring brings to the relationship. Through the conversation on caring we have seen that the one caring must be gifted in many ways. To begin, the one caring must know oneself and then have the capability of knowing the other. The one caring must have the ability to actually “be there” for the other. The one caring must be consistent, persistent and attentive. While the one caring must have a desire for the other’s well being, desire cannot carry out the work of care. In order to be able to care, the one caring must be competent, able to build strong interpersonal relationships, and able to learn from the past and must be able to identify with the other. Identifying with the other must then lead to the ability to have an interdependent sense of self. Wood labels the interdependent sense of self as dynamic autonomy. She explains that in order for caring not to damage the one caring, they must be able to enter the other’s world, completely understand the other and at the same time be able to hold onto their own sense of self. In learning about the other the one caring must have emotional sensitivity, a sensitivity to others, and acceptance of others. Furthermore, the one caring must bring a willingness to serve others and a willingness to overcome difficulties to the caring relationship. Finally, the one caring must have the courage to enter into and remain in the caring relationship and have hope that the caring will answer the call of the other.

The third aspect of the ability to care is closely related to the metaphor of the particular other. In discussing the particular other, caring emphasizes that both the one caring and the cared for are situated and embedded. From this embeddedness there are specific abilities of the one caring that focus specifically on the other. First the one

caring must be able to notice that this particular other is in need of care. Then the one caring must be able to be continually present in the relationship to carry out the work of caring. Finally the one caring must be partial to this particular other, receive them as totally other, be completely engrossed in the other and confirm the other in the relationship.

The Horizon of Significance of Caring

The ultimate goal of caring is the fulfillment of the need of the one who needs care and their growth. But as these scholars have emphasized there is more to caring than the growth of the other. There is a horizon of significant outcomes that occur as byproducts to caring. First, the one caring receives several benefits from the caring relationship, self actualization, moral development, and joy. Mayeroff asserts that the self is actualized in the process of caring. Gilligan sees the moral development of the one caring as part of the process of caring. Finally, according to Gaylin and Noddings, ultimately joy is the reason we continue to care.

Caring not only provides growth for the cared for and joy to the one caring, there are significant rewards to society and mankind. From Mayeroff to Wood, each of the voices in the care conversation agrees that caring contributes to mankind's conception of the good life. Caring is a universal practice that is carried out differently among cultures. But no matter how it is enacted in a culture it is the element that allows us all to live with a modicum of comfort, security, and grace (Wood 3). Caring is the valuable work that sustains our lives and enables mankind to survive.

Caring—Communicatively Constituted

Through the scholarly conversation of Milton Mayeroff, Willard Gaylin, Carol Gilligan, Nel Noddings, Joan Tronto and Julia Wood we have been able to define caring as an obligation to the other grounded in relation with a particular other. Caring requires both the ability to care and the ability to be cared for. The focus of attention in caring is always on the other but there is a horizon of significant outcomes that emerges from the caring relationship. From this definition three guiding metaphors come to light and point to the idea that care is communicatively constituted: obligation, relation, and horizon of significance.

As an obligation to the other, caring involves responsibility, guilt and burden. Communicatively constituted, responsibility requires response, response of the one-caring to the needs of the other and response by the one-being cared for to acknowledge the caring is received. The caring relationship calls one into responsibility and holds him/her accountable to their obligation to the other. The call into responsibility requires a response. In responding, one can choose to answer either by saying “I am here for you” or “I must.” Or one can choose to ignore the call and thus fail in their obligation to the other. By responding either “I am here for you” or “I must” the one called into responsibility accepts and welcomes the burden that is inevitable in the caring relationship. When one chooses to ignore the need for care in another, guilt calls him/her back into responsibility, back into the caring relationship.

Obligation is the element of caring that calls one into responsibility. Relation is the element of caring that gives one the reason why to accept the burden of caring. Human encounter, interdependence, is a fact of our existence. The caring relationship requires that the one caring be connected to the one being cared for. Relation is the

aspect of caring that points one away from the self and toward the other in connection. Connection is essential to the quality of the caring relationship. Communication is the mechanism used to establish and maintain caring relationships. The quality of caring relationship, like all other human relationships, is ascertained by the type of communication one uses to engage the relationship.

The caring relationship takes on meaning for the lives of those involved when each one in the relationship invites certain communicative habits into the relationship. The first and probably most important for the realization of a meaningful relationship is the recognition that the other is radically different from oneself. The quality of the caring relationship is partially determined through the recognition on the part of the one-caring that the other is a particular other, radically different from oneself. By recognizing that the other is radically other than oneself, one responds to that other in a unique fashion. The recognition of otherness requires the one caring to truly understand the other and their embedded circumstance. The recognition of otherness invites a meaningful caring relationship because if one recognizes the other as unique one's communication of caring for will be fashioned to this "particular" individual.

The caring relationship begins to become meaningful when the one caring recognizes that the one being cared for is totally other than him/herself. The caring relationship has the opportunity to reach fruition when the one caring brings certain communicative abilities with them to the relationship. As discussed previously, the one caring must first choose to assume the burden of caring. By accepting the responsibility to care the one caring turns to the other in relation. The one caring may be called to enact a variety of communicative gifts: respect, devotion, mutuality, trust, patience, honesty,

humility, love, empathy, and compassion. These are only some of the gifts that may be required in the caring relationship.

One of the most important communicative gifts the one-caring brings to the caring relationship is the gift of a willingness to learn. Because no two circumstances are the same and no two people need cared for in the same way, caring requires that the one caring be able to continually learn in and from the caring relation.

A willingness to learn is not only a gift the one caring brings to the caring relationship, a willingness to learn is a gift the one caring gives him/herself. Caring is act in which one answers the need of another. Caring is an act in which one helps another. Because of the components of obligation, burden, and relation, the other is not the only recipient of rewards in the caring relation. There is a horizon of significant outcomes that enable and encourage the one caring to continue to care. Through the response of caring one learns about the other, about relationships, about communication and about oneself. Through the acceptance of burden one realizes a lived unity. In accepting burden and toiling through the caring relationship one realizes not only the suffering of caring and human relationships, one finds the joy of true engagement.

Caring is an act that is communicatively constituted through the response to obligation. Caring is enacted in human relationships in which those involved are truly connected and recognize the uniqueness of the other and the circumstance. Caring is the valuable work that sustains our lives and enables mankind to survive.

The first chapter of this work described the current crisis of caring and highlighted the opportunity for the metaphor of dialogue as the labor of care. The second chapter, "Dialogue and the Communicative Implications," described the dialogic theory

of Martin Buber and suggested that as a philosophy of human communication, the invitation of dialogue into the caring relation permits the possibility of a meaningful experience for those in the relationship. This chapter, “Caring: Communicatively Constituted,” described the current conversation regarding care and from this conversation derived three guiding metaphors that point to the communicative nature of caring. The next chapter, “The Intertextuality of Care: Dialogue and the Necessity of Labor,” employs the metaphors of obligation, relation, and significant outcomes to further make explicit the connection between dialogue and care. This chapter has served to establish a working definition of care and the driving metaphors that point to the communicative constitution of care.

Chapter Four: The Intertextuality of Care: Dialogue and the Necessity of Labor

Abstract

Dialogue as the labor of care is situated within Buber’s understanding of the between which naturally calls forth concern for the self and the other, caring for the self and the other. Arendt reminds us of the natural necessity of labor. When dialogue and care are joined together they are energized by the natural necessity of labor. Thus far this work has examined Buber’s understanding of dialogue as the foundation for dynamic communicative life, and care as an action constituted in communication. In this chapter, the relationship between dialogue and care is bridged through the work of Martin Buber and Hannah Arendt. The direct connection between Buber’s theory of dialogue and the concept of care is seen primarily through the metaphors of responsibility (obligation), the interhuman (relation), and unity of life (significant outcome). Furthermore, Arendt

illuminates this relationship through her conception of labor as a necessity of private life, and action as a necessity of public life. Through her distinction between the public and private spheres of existence and the way in which this work views dialogue as the labor of care it becomes clear that the labor of caring occurs both in the public and private spheres. However, this work is careful to recognize the danger of the “social” and understands the importance of not blurring the lines between public and private life. Furthermore, the invitation of dialogue into the caring relationship is necessary for the communicative life of caring and ultimately the lived unity of life. Dialogue, the communicative action of care, and the necessity of labor to all human interaction converge in this chapter to begin weaving the metaphorical web that this work presents as dialogue as the labor of care.

Monseigneur Bienvenu had been formerly, according to the accounts of his early manhood, a passionate, perhaps a violent, man. His universal tenderness was less an instinct of nature than the result of a strong conviction filtered through life into his heart, slowly dropping in upon him, thought by thought; for a character as well as a rock, may be worn into by drops of water. Such marks are ineffaceable; such formations are indestructible” (Les Misérables 48).

Introduction

The call of responsibility to care has been a call heard throughout time. Care, as previously discussed, has typically been relegated to the private sphere and continually devalued. However, this particular historical moment calls us to re-examine not only the importance of care but the necessity of care to our daily communicative lives.

Due to the changing face of the family and the changing circumstances that demand people to reengage caring, people are finding themselves in the position of

caring, communicatively unequipped. Living in a postmodern moment, where existential mistrust, routine cynicism and an extreme focus on the self are pervasive, and the communicative life of caring finds itself in crisis. For these reasons, dialogue as the labor of care is especially relevant to this particular historical moment. Dialogue as the labor of care calls for a re-engagement of care as a value central to human relations. The communicative importance of care is realized through the connection of dialogue to care.

Just as Monseigneur Bienvenu invites dialogue into his relationship with Jean Valjean from their initial encounter, Buber argues that if we invite dialogue into our daily lives we can overcome the massive mistrust that pervades our communicative life. Buber's theory of dialogue is the foundation of this work because dialogue is intimately connected to care. Arendt's ideas concerning labor emphasize the necessity of dialogue in the communicative life of caring which is both a blessing and a burden. Moreover, Arendt's ideas regarding action illuminate the fact that caring occurs in webs of human relationships and stresses the imperative of differentiation within the communicative life of caring for others.

This chapter unifies the guiding ideas central to care, dialogue, and labor. Through the touchstones of care—obligation, relation, and significant outcomes—the work of Buber and Arendt frame a deeper examination of these guiding ideas in order to engage the metaphor of dialogue as the labor of care in the final chapter. Here, the intertextuality (Schrag 16) of this metaphor is made explicit, enhancing understanding and making possible its application and engagement in everyday life.

In previous chapters this work examined Buber's theory of dialogue and how it has been utilized to enhance our understanding of human communication. Furthermore,

this work has also looked at the leading scholars contributing to the conversation on care, thus producing a working definition of care that points to the communicative necessity of dialogue in the caring relationship. Through these examinations this work has begun to weave the metaphorical web that is dialogue as the labor of care. Using the foundational metaphors of care—obligation, relation, and significant outcomes—this chapter makes explicit the intertextuality of dialogue as the labor of care. It does not yet complete this metaphorical picture; it extends an understanding of care into related ideas found in both Buber and Arendt. Here, the work of these two scholars add communicative depth to the conversation by foregrounding the value of dialogue and the imperative of labor as they pertain to the already conceived concepts associated with care. In so doing, the foundation for a communicative ethic—dialogue as a labor of care—is established.

In order to make this intertextuality sound, the central use of Buber's theory of dialogue is coupled here with the imperative of labor as necessity found in Arendt. The metaphor of labor as necessity moves the idea dialogue out of an advocacy of consumption and into productivity. The connection between dialogue and care takes on more significance to human communicative life with the addition of Arendt into the conversation because Arendt's conception of labor within the private sphere points to the desire to escape from care and the obligations of "life", a sentiment echoed in the devaluation of care today. What Arendt brings to the conversation is an imperative—care as an inescapable communicative action that is a blessing and a burden.

This chapter explores Buber's dialogic theory and Arendt's conceptions of labor and action and their undeniable connection to caring by looking at how these ideas correlate to the metaphors established through the care literature. The chapter begins with

the care metaphor of obligation and moves through the second and third metaphors of relation and significant outcomes, developing each in terms of Buber's conception of dialogue and Arendt's understanding of the human condition. The culmination of this explication is realized in the concluding chapter where the metaphorical web that is dialogue as a labor of care is woven together.

Obligation: A Binding Promise to the Other

As human beings we have an obligation to labor that is necessary for our continued existence. As human beings living in the world with others, we have an obligation to care for one another not only for our survival, but also for the realization of becoming truly human. Webster defines obligation as: "Something by which a person is bound or obliged to do certain things and which arises out of a sense of duty or results from custom, law, etc.; a binding promise, contract, sense of duty, etc; indebtedness; a debt of gratitude" (1336). The metaphors of responsibility, guilt, and labor are the significant metaphors that emerge in one's engagement with an obligation. From the call of responsibility one finds oneself bound to the other through a sense of promise and/or duty. When one fails to accept the call, guilt is the mechanism that calls one back to responsibility. As an obligation, a binding promise or duty, the action of caring requires labor on the part of the one caring and one cared for.

Dialogue as the labor of care is rooted in the essential ideas found within the philosophical writings of Buber and Arendt; the first, and one of the most foundational, is obligation. Dialogue and care both require that one recognize his/her obligation to the other, to themselves, and the world. In both dialogue and care there is a call to responsibility that requires a recognition of and engagement in the labor necessary on the

part of those involved. Through the necessity of labor one finds joy and suffering, blessing and burden.

To open a conversation that unites the theories of Buber and Arendt in order to appreciate fully the connection between dialogue and care, this work begins by exploring the metaphor of obligation. As discussed in chapter three, obligation is fundamental to the current conception of caring. Scholars Mayeroff, Gaylin, Gilligan, Noddings and Tronto all incorporate obligation within their explanation of caring. According to these care scholars, caring begins as an obligation to the other. Communicatively constituted, responsibility requires response, response of the one-caring to the needs of the other and response by the one-being cared for to acknowledge the receipt of caring. The caring relationship calls one into responsibility and holds one accountable to one's obligation to the other. Obligation presupposes responsibility for the other.

The work of Buber and Arendt are likewise philosophically rooted in obligation. The richness of a connection between dialogue and care opens up through Buber's understanding of responsibility and guilt and through Arendt's conception of labor. For Buber, responsibility is response; response to a call from the other, and for Arendt, labor is the necessity of answering the call of the other. Following is a more developed look into each of these metaphors as pointing to the need for a unified understanding of dialogue and labor in relation to a communicative ethic of care.

Responsibility: The Response to the Other

Martin Buber's philosophical anthropology begins with the presupposition that life is lived in relation. Authentic existence can only occur through the invitation of dialogue into relationship. Responsibility and guilt are essential metaphors in the life of

dialogue and caring relationships. Buber indicates three important elements of responsibility, first, the one that is called into responsibility, second, the situation itself, and third, the one who addresses the other and calls him/her into responsibility.

Buber explicitly describes the role of those called into responsibility. According to Buber, the one called must respond in order to fulfill his/her obligation to the other, to the world, and to himself. His/her response depends primarily on his/her attentiveness and whether or not he/she responds with his/her whole being.

For Buber, responsibility means response, response on the part of the one called by the concrete moment. It is the obligation, or in other words, responsibility, of each particular person called to respond. This is how Buber explains responsibility:

Genuine responsibility exists only where there is real responding...Responding to what? To what happens to one, to what is to be seen and heard and felt. Each concrete hour allotted to the person, with its content drawn from the world and from its destiny, is speech for the man who is attentive. (*Between Man and Man* 16)

In this passage Buber stresses that responsibility as response means that one is attentive to a concrete situation and responds in a unique and authentic way. According to Buber, there are concrete hours that address one, but each person must first see the signs of address, hear what calls, and feel the address of the other. Seeing, hearing, feeling these are the ways in which one can be attentive to the moment. When one is attentive, they are then able to understand and respond. It is response, responsibility for Buber that brings authentic life into existence. When there is address and response, Buber states, there is life:

... [I]f the word comes to us and the answer proceeds from us then human life exists, though brokenly, in the world. The kindling of the response in that ‘spark’ of the soul, the blazing up of the response, which occurs time and again, to the unexpectedly approaching speech, we term responsibility. We practice responsibility for that realm of life allotted and entrusted to us for which we are able to respond, that is, for which we have a relation of deeds which may count—in all our inadequacy—as a proper response. (*Between Man and Man* 92)

Our responsibility to the other, to the world, to the moment, to ourselves comes in the actual responding. Each concrete moment speaks; it is the person who responds to the call of the situation who is attentive.

The person who is attentive has an obligation in each situation that calls his/her presence into responsibility. For Buber, this can only happen when the one called into responsibility responds with his/her whole being in a unique way. Responding with one’s whole being implies that one enters the situation and acts with the whole of one’s substance. The one called into responsibility is called to respond. One can rise to that occasion by being attentive and honestly taking part in the life of another. Real response requires a unique, authentic response of the whole being. When responding, the one called not only responds to the other they respond to the particular hour, the unique situation.

Buber not only talks about the role of the one being called into responsibility, he also emphasizes the importance of the situation. Buber argues, “.... Every living situation has, like a newborn child, a new face, that has never been seen before and will never come again. It demands of you a reaction which cannot be prepared beforehand. It

demands nothing of what is past. It demands presence, responsibility, it demands you” (*Between Man and Man* 114). Here Buber is reminding us that each situation, each moment, each person is unlike any other and cannot be answered with a formula or a technique. Response to the situation, as Buber sees it, is equally as important as response to the person when one is called into responsibility. Each situation is new and demands a unique answer, despite any similarity the situation has to those of the past. It is the responsibility of the attentive person to recognize the uniqueness of the situation and answer for it.

Responsibility is response, response by someone, the one called, response to a unique situation, the concrete moment, and response to someone. The final element of Buber’s conception of responsibility is responsibility to someone. As mentioned previously, responsibility involves the one called taking an active part in the life of the other. “To take part in the life of another involves responsibility” (Kristiansen 221). Dialogue requires one to turn toward another and respond; response requires one to take part in their lives. The other is the one who makes the address, reaches out, the one to whom there must be a response. The other in his/her particular situation makes a claim in responsibility. Buber believes that one is answerable to the other:

Responsibility presupposes one who addresses me primarily, that is, from a realm independent of myself, and to whom I am answerable. He addresses me about something that he has entrusted to me and that I am bound to take care of loyally. He addresses me from his trust and I respond in my loyalty or refuse to respond in my disloyalty, or I have fallen into disloyalty and wrestle free of it by the loyalty of the response.

To be so answerable to a trusting person about an entrusted matter that loyalty and disloyalty step into the light of day (but both are not of the same right, for now loyalty, born again, is permitted to conquer disloyalty)—this is the reality of responsibility. (*Between Man and Man* 45)

In the address or the call of the other there is a claim put on the one for whom it is intended. There is an obligation on the part of the one called to respond. In making this call there is a leap of faith by the other that the one called will hear the call and respond. This leap of faith implies trust on the part of the one calling. The one making the claim offers the other a sacred trust, and the response of the one called determines the continuation or dissolution of that trust. Obligation and responsibility require the one called to answer. When that person fails to respond, Buber says, that trust is lost, responsibility becomes a “phantom,” and life’s character of mutuality is dissipated (*Between Man and Man* 45). When one fails to respond, genuine meeting cannot occur. In order for there ever to be a possibility for dialogue to exist, something must call persons back into relation. Both obligation and responsibility are enacted in relation. We are called, ever reminded of our obligation and responsibility by authentic guilt.

Guilt: Relationships Reborn

Buber describes responsibility as response. Within responsibility Buber emphasizes that the one called is obligated to the moment and to the other. The one is called to respond. Response on behalf of the one called asks the one called to be attentive and respond with his/her whole being. Response means answering not only the particular other but also the concrete moment. Response, for Buber, is necessary to build trust

between persons and invite dialogue into life. Response is necessary for human beings to build a world worth living in. But, as Buber points out, people ignore the call to responsibility every day. When this happens trust is lost, and the opportunity for dialogue dies. However, according to Buber, all is not lost. Sometimes even when someone ignores a call to responsibility, the moment seizes the one who ignored his/her responsibility and he/she is called back to responsibility through guilt. When the one called returns, responsibility can be reborn.

Guilt is the human condition that gives rebirth to trust, to responsibility, to man. Guilt, for Buber, is existentially tied to responsibility. For it is in failing to respond to a legitimate claim that we are guilty. As in his treatment of responsibility, Buber describes three important and similar elements of guilt. However, prior to exploring these elements this section first clarifies Buber's conception of existential guilt. Once clarified, this section looks at Buber's emphasis on the elements of guilt. Similar to his description of responsibility wherein one sees the importance of the one called, the situation, and the one calling the other into responsibility, in describing guilt Buber emphasizes the locus of guilt, the one who is guilty, and finally the other to whom one is guilty.

True guilt, which Buber distinguishes from neurotic guilt, is existential guilt and has to do with one's engagement with the world. Existential guilt is ignited when one fails in how one relates to other people. Existential guilt is dialogic. Friedman further clarifies Buber's idea:

It [existential guilt] is dialogical—the inseparable corollary of one's personal responsibility, one's answerability for authenticating one's own

existence and by the same token, for responding to the partners of one's existence, the other persons with whom one lives. (*Knowledge of Man* 48)

Through guilt one recognizes one's failure to respond, one's failure to oneself, and one's failure to the other. The existence of responsibility requires and demands the existence of guilt. For it is guilt that brings one back to responsibility when one fails to respond or responds inadequately. Existential guilt is what ties human beings to the world and to each other. Existential guilt reminds one of one's responsibility to the other.

Just as one is responsible to the other, to the moment, to the world, to God, to oneself, when one fails to respond one is guilty toward the other, the world, the moment, God, and oneself. This point is crucial for understanding Buber's conception of guilt and its relationship to responsibility. Guilt is the condition that reminds one that that one is related to something other than oneself (Friedman, *Life of Dialogue* 104). Therefore, according to Buber, guilt is not located in the guilty party. Guilt is not located in the other. Guilt, for Buber, is located in the bond between them. "One is not answerable for it [guilt] either to oneself alone or to society apart from oneself, but to that very bond between oneself and others through which one again and again discovers the direction in which one can authenticate one's existence" (Friedman, *Knowledge of Man* 48). When one fails to respond, one fails in one's responsibility, and it is guilt that brings one back and points one in the direction of responsibility. It is guilt that points the person back to relation, back to the other, back to authentic existence.

Guilt is the mechanism that points one back to the other. Guilt is the element that pushes one to seek atonement. It is in seeking atonement that responsibility, trust, and authentic existence can be reborn. Authentic existence can only be found in turning

toward the other in relation; therefore, guilt is inextricably tied to relations with others. Through the invocation of guilt persons recognize their responsibility and seek to set their relationships right (Friedman, *Knowledge of Man* 48). Through the self illumination of guilt, the guilty party realizes failure to respond and thus seeks reconciliation from the other. Buber makes clear what he means by reconciliation:

By reconciliation is understood here that action from the height of conscience that corresponds on the plane of the law to the customary act of reparation. In the realm of existential guilt one cannot, of course, make reparations in the strict sense—as if the guilt with its consequences could thereby be recalled, as it were. Reconciliation means here, first of all, that I approach the man toward whom I am guilty in the light of my self—illumination (in so far as I can still reach him on earth) acknowledge to his face my existential guilt and help him, in so far as possible, to overcome the consequences of my guilty action. (*Knowledge of Man* 147)

Through guilt, the guilty person recognizes responsibility to other and seeks atonement. Reconciliation turns the guilty party back toward the other, seeking to help the other as far as possible. At times, Buber argues that it is impossible to make reparations to the one to whom one has failed to respond. But reconciliation can still be found in responding to the next address.

Obligation, from Buber's perspective, finds richness and texture in the metaphors of responsibility and guilt. Life lived in relation becomes fulfilled in response to the address of the other. Buber's dialogic theory asserts that responsibility is response. Each

person is responsible for the moment, responsible to the other who addresses that person. In answering / responding to the address relation comes alive.

In attempting to answer one's whole being is required. Responsibility calls one to be attentive and respond in a unique manner. It is also one's responsibility to recognize that each address is unique. Therefore, it requires a unique response. Responsibility requires one to take part in another's life. This other is the one who calls one into responsibility. In reaching out the other is offering trust and demanding loyalty. It is one's response that dictates how the relationship proceeds. If one fails to respond or responds inadequately and recognizes this failure, one is thrown into the condition of existential guilt.

Guilt is essential to the life of responsibility and relationships. Guilt is found not in the one called or the one calling, but in the bond between them. This bond is what initiates guilt, points one toward the other, encourages one to seek reconciliation and eventually has the power to restore the relationship. It is through guilt that one recognizes one's failure and is encouraged to attempt to make reparations. It is in seeking reconciliation that trust, relation, and dialogue can be reborn. Buber emphasizes the connection of responsibility to life: "I know no fullness but each mortal hour's fullness of claim and responsibility. Though far from being equal to it, yet I know that in the claim I am claimed and may respond in responsibility, and know who speaks and demands a response" (*Between Man and Man* 14). This passage reveals the essence of obligation as Buber envisions it. This guilt pulls one back into relationship through the central coordinates of obligation and responsibility. Arendt outlines the way in which these coordinates, responsibility and guilt, are enacted in labor between persons.

Inviting Hannah Arendt into the Conversation: Distinguishing the Metaphors

The work of Hannah Arendt is imperative to the connection between dialogue and caring because of Arendt's distinctions between and ideas concerning the public and private spheres, labor and action. Before inviting Arendt's work into the intertextuality of dialogue, labor, and care, it will be helpful to distinguish between and briefly explain her conception of public, private, and social and labor, work, and action.

Arendt draws distinct lines between the public and private spheres of human existence, arguing that these realms have been distinct entities since at least the rise of the city-state (28). According to Arendt, the private sphere is the realm of the household and the family. The purpose of the private sphere is the maintenance of life itself. According to Arendt, "the distinctive trait of the household was that in it men lived together because they were driven by their wants and needs" (30). Necessity is the driving force behind all activities in the private realm.

The public sphere, on the other hand, is, for Arendt, the political realm. Freedom and equality are found in the public sphere. One is able to enter the public realm when one has mastered the necessities of the private realm. The public realm is the where "men" come together to be seen and heard and achieve not only freedom and equality, but individuality as well. In the public realm, "men could show who they really and inexchangeably were" (41).

The blurring of public and private spheres of existence has, Arendt argues, given rise to the social realm of existence. The lines are blurred because "we see the body of peoples and political communities in the image of a family whose everyday affairs have

to be taken care of by a gigantic, nation-wide administration of housekeeping” (28). Arendt describes the social sphere as one that is neither public nor private but that destroys both the public and the private. The social realm, in Arendt’s eyes, denies people of both a place in the home and a place in the world. Arnett explains the problematic nature of the social:

The power and constraint of the social is that it denies uniqueness, calling for a parvenu, an adopter of social conventions void of uniqueness. The sphere of the social goes undisturbed, unchanged by the presence of a newcomer—one must simply fit in. The social sphere demands consensus, eradicating uniqueness of the Other. (“Hannah Arendt” 4).

According to Arnett, the most dangerous aspect of the social is that one loses one’s uniqueness. In order to be accepted into the social realm one must conform to the opinions and interests of the social. In the social sphere there is no differentiation.

It is of vital importance for this work to recognize the danger of Arendt’s conception of the social, a demand for conformity and an absence of uniqueness. Because caring can occur in both the public and private realms and because this work employs Arendt’s metaphors of labor and action, there is the dangerous possibility of blurring the lines between the public and private in articulating a call for care. This work recognizes the differences and will carefully explain how the engagement of care involves both action and labor in both the public and private spheres of human interaction.

In the distinction between public, private, and social, the additional metaphors of labor, work, and action emerge. In her work, *The Human Condition*, Arendt

distinguishes between the activities fundamental to the public and private spheres and the human condition: labor, work, and action. Labor, the necessary activity that corresponds to the biological life cycle, assures not only the life of the individual, but the life of the species (Arendt 8). Labor is an activity engaged in the private sphere. Labor is a major driving metaphor for this work. The following section describes Arendt's conception of labor in detail.

Work is the activity directed toward the production of durable human artifacts for use and enjoyment. "Work provides an 'artificial' world of things, distinctly different from all natural surroundings...The human condition of work is worldliness" (7). In the activity of work, one makes something — for example, a table— that has the possibility to remain in the world long after its creator is gone. Work produces something tangible. The metaphor of work is not employed in the metaphorical web of this work.

Action is the third and final activity Arendt describes as given to the human condition. "Action, the only activity that goes on directly between men without the intermediary of things or matter, corresponds to human condition of plurality" (7). Action occurs in the public realm in the company of equals. Those in the public realm are equal because they are all human beings and because they are participating in the public realm, unique. Action is employed in this work's connection to the care metaphor of relation.

This work employs the use of labor and action as driving metaphors behind the connection between dialogue and care. The following section connects Arendt's imperative of labor to the care metaphor of obligation and Buber's metaphors of responsibility and guilt.

Labor: The Necessity of Life that Bears Blessing and Burden

Buber's ideas of responsibility and guilt are encompassed in the work of Hannah Arendt through her concept of labor. Like responsibility and guilt, labor is integrally tied to the obligatory call of the other. Arendt's conception of labor reminds us that obligation binds one to a duty, and that these duties are part of the necessity of life. As a necessary part of everyday living, labor illuminates the truth of life: our responsibility to the other is both a blessing and a burden. This unity of contraries configures how we live and interact. It is the foundation of who we are as individuals and as a community. Labor is the call of the other on each person—an imperative to act out of responsibility in the interest of someone other than oneself.

Labor as Futile: The Unending Burden

In describing the human condition Hannah Arendt defines labor as “the activity which corresponds to the biological process of the human body, whose spontaneous growth, metabolism, and eventual decay are bound to the vital necessities, produced and fed into the life process by labor. The human condition of labor is life itself...” (7). Through this initial definition and her expanded explanation, it becomes obvious that while labor is a necessary part of human existence, it is the exhausting activity of the human condition that most people try to escape. As mentioned previously, labor is the activity bound to the private sphere. In her description of labor Arendt points out that labor is repetitive (with no beginning and no end); labor leaves no trace, nothing worthy

of remembrance; and labor is the activity in which there is no distinction between persons. For these reasons, Arendt says that labor is a burden that man views as futile. According to Arendt, “Life becomes a burden to man because of his innate repugnance to futility (pointlessness). This burden is all the heavier because labor is urgent and actually forced upon man by necessity, as the elementary need of life” (118-119).

Arendt’s conception of labor begins with the fact that labor is part of the unending life cycle to which one is bound and cannot escape. Because labor is a necessity and part of the unending lifecycle, labor has no beginning and no end. Labor, for Arendt, is unending for both individuals and the human race (105). Arendt states:

By laboring, men produce the vital necessities that must be fed into the life process...And since this life process is in itself circular, the laboring activity itself must follow the cycle of life, the circular movement of our bodily functions, which means that the laboring activity never comes to an end as long as life lasts; it is endlessly repetitive. (Baehr 171)

Arendt points out the circular nature as part of the unending life process. Labor is a cyclical movement with no beginning and no end. The cyclical, unending nature of labor is one of the first reasons persons view labor as futile.

As part of the unending necessity of human existence, labor is endlessly repetitive and according to Arendt, never produces anything but life itself. “It is indeed the mark of all laboring that it leaves nothing behind, that the result of its effort is almost as quickly consumed as the effort is spent. And yet this effort, despite its futility, is born of a great urgency and motivated by a more powerful drive than anything else, because life itself depends on it” (87). Labor leaves no trace, no monument, and no great work worthy of

remembrance. Labor, for Arendt, never produces anything but life. This is the second reason persons view labor as futile.

Labor, the human activity bound to the necessities of life, has no beginning and no end. Labor leaves nothing behind but life itself, never producing anything of quality or character (93). Because labor is bound to the necessities of life, it is subject to the private sphere, where, according to Arendt, “man is neither together with the world nor with other people, but alone with his body, facing the naked necessity to keep himself alive” (212). Subject to the private sphere and alone with oneself, labor makes persons incapable of distinction and therefore, incapable of action and speech (215). The inability of distinction is the third and final reason persons view labor as futile.

Labor is bound to the recurring cycle of nature and has no beginning and no end, and is thus endlessly repetitive. Labor never produces anything but itself, nothing worthy of remembrance. Labor, bound to the private sphere, makes distinction between persons impossible. For these reasons, human beings since at least the rise of the city-state have continually tried to escape the necessity of labor. For these reasons, human beings have viewed labor as a futile activity. This work recognizes these conditions of labor as important contributors to the devaluation of activities such as care. However, through the intertextuality of care, the imperative of labor, this work points to Arendt’s more powerful argument regarding labor. Labor is, for Arendt, an inescapable necessity addressed in daily life through which human beings can engage the intensity of life. Through the necessity of labor human beings can experience the unity of contraries in joy and suffering, blessing and burden that make life meaningful.

Labor as Necessity: The Inescapable Burden

In describing the human condition, Hannah Arendt defines labor as “the activity which corresponds to the biological process of the human body, whose spontaneous growth, metabolism, and eventual decay are bound to the vital necessities, produced and fed into the life process by labor. The human condition of labor is life itself...” (7). According to Arendt, “labor assures not only the life of the individual but the life of the species” (8). Being a vital necessity to both individuals and the human race, labor can be seen as both an obligation and responsibility in the communicative lives of people. Arendt’s conception of labor—a vital necessity of life—viewed in the light of human relations binds the responsibility of inviting dialogue into communicative life. According to Arendt, “Labor, unlike all other human activities, stands under the sign of necessity, the necessity of subsisting” (Baehr 171). As such, the obligation of labor is necessary for existence of oneself and of others. As understood by Buber, this kind of investment is enacted through a call to responsibility that is part of everyone’s existence. Each person is answerable to concrete moments that call him/her to respond. The imperative of labor is, then, the innate reminder of one’s obligation to respond to the other. The labor of responding requires one to turn to other with one’s whole being and to respond to the particular situation. This labor—necessity—points to the communicative obligation of at the core of human life. Pragmatically, one needs to understand that the unity of contraries of burden and essential meaningfulness rest within labor—to toil and to take something seriously.

Labor as the Unity of Contraries: Blessing and Burden

Labor as a necessity is an obligation borne in the midst of contradiction. While necessary for life, it is hallmarked by the tension of blessing and burden, joy and suffering, labor itself and action. Arendt's conception of labor as part of human communicative life underscores the reality that we live amidst contradictions in search of unity and coherence. Life is shaped in the between of a unity of contraries.

Labor is, according to Arendt, part of the human condition. Life requires pain ("toil and trouble") (Baehr 172) and effort but in return gives back liveliness and vitality. Arendt believes that the "life of the gods"—a life without the experience wrought in the midst of contradictions—would not fulfill the life of human beings. Our condition as humans "is such that pain and effort are not just symptoms which can be removed without changing life itself; they are rather the modes in which life itself, together with the necessity to which it is bound, makes itself felt" (120). Labor, for Arendt, is the part of the human condition that allows life to be trusted—to know that life is real. Labor is the element that gives life its force and intensity, and though it is a burden, without its presence, believes Arendt, human beings would lose the vitality of life itself (121).

For Arendt, this vitality of life as lived within the obligation of labor allows a person one of the only true forms of happiness through one's fulfillment of one's responsibility to the necessity of life. Trusting life and knowing its "realness" is borne out of labor. Happiness is living in this reality. As people respond to the imperative of labor, their rewards are received in "nature's fertility,"—in one's confidence that they have done their part (Baehr 172). Herein lies labor's unity of contraries. Labor is a burden of life—an obligation one cannot escape, and a blessing—a source of happiness in

living out what is real. According to Arendt, the blessing of life as a whole is inherent in labor:

The blessing of labor is that effort and gratification follow each other as closely as producing and consuming, so that happiness is a concomitant of the process itself. There is no lasting happiness and contentment for human beings outside the prescribed cycle of painful exhaustion and pleasurable regeneration... An element of laboring is present in all human activities, even the highest as they are as 'routine' jobs by which we make our living and keep ourselves alive. Their very repetitiveness, which more often than not we feel to be a burden that exhausts us, is what provides that minimum of animal contentment for which the great and meaningful spells of joy that are rare and never last, can never be a substitute, and without which the longer lasting though equally rare spells of real grief and sorrow could hardly be borne. (Baehr 172-173)

Labor is a necessity of life that requires effort, toil and trouble, and painful exhaustion but at the same time gives back pleasurable regeneration, contentment, and joy. The meaningful happiness found in labor allows human beings to bear the grief and sorrow of life with full joy at the truth of what they have come to know.

Labor is a burden of life—an obligation one cannot escape, and a blessing—a source of happiness in living out what is real. According to Arendt, the blessing of life as a whole is inherent in labor. This work recognizes Arendt's use of labor as necessity—a necessity to the communicative lives of those involved in relationships. Labor is the

necessary human activity that brings life's unity of contraries together, blessing and burden, joy and suffering.

This section began with the care metaphor of obligation. Obligation is seen as a binding promise made to the other, a duty in which one is obliged to *do* something for another. Through the metaphors of responsibility, guilt, and labor obligation takes on a communicative nature. For Buber, responsibility means response. In order to fulfill one's responsibility to the other one must respond with one's whole being in a unique and authentic fashion. Response requires the one called into responsibility to be attentive to call of the other, the uniqueness of the other, and the uniqueness of the situation. Guilt calls one back to responsibility when one fails in one's obligation, thus permitting the rebirth of trust and human relationships. Labor is human activity that emphasizes the necessity of obligation to human communicative lives. The labor of responding requires one to engage in the toil and trouble of obligation, thus permitting those involved to feel the full impact of human existence. Labor not only emphasizes necessity, labor permits one to engage in the unity of contraries that is life, joy and suffering, blessing and burden.

The next section, "Relation: The Anchor for Obligation," looks at Buber's and Arendt's conceptions of relation. Relation is the metaphor that gives legs to obligation. Responsibility is always response to someone. Guilt is always found in the relationship between oneself and another. The necessity of labor is always engaged because of one's relationship with another. Burden is always endured for the sake of someone. Joy can only be experienced with someone else. The metaphor of obligation becomes meaningless without relation. Caring unites blessing and burden, dialogue and labor respectively; blessing and burden, dialogic labor live in community, in relation.

Relation: The Anchor for Obligation

Through the theories of Martin Buber and Hannah Arendt a powerful picture of obligation comes to life in the metaphors of responsibility, guilt, and labor. However, these metaphors become meaningless when they are not anchored in the “real.” Relation anchors obligation to someone. Relation is the metaphor that gives obligation and ultimately dialogue and caring meaning.

Caring as action that is communicatively constituted is always directed at someone or something. As evidenced in the work of care philosophers Noddings, Tronto, and Wood, it is in the relationship that both the one caring and the one cared for find meaning. As a metaphor fundamental to dialogue as the labor of care, relation encompasses the care metaphors of the ability to care and the particular other. Relation encompasses these metaphors because it is within the relation that the one caring finds the ability to care. Furthermore, it is in relation that the one caring recognizes and acknowledges the need of a particular other. Relation is foundational to this work because it is in relation that caring is born and dialogue given the chance to exist. This section again turns to the work of Buber and Arendt and looks specifically at how each philosopher conceives of relation.

This section considers Hannah Arendt’s political perspective regarding relation and how her ideas add a different dimension to the conception of relation. Arendt grounds relation in human activity or action. This work examines Arendt’s conception of action and the supporting metaphors of speech, webs of relationships, remembrance, and forgiveness in order to develop a richer connection between dialogue and caring.

The next section examines Buber's ontological reliance on relation and what that means to the life of dialogue. Buber's conception of relation is propelled by the metaphors of otherness and the turning or the interhuman. Within the concept of otherness are Buber's ideas of setting at a distance, the address, and becoming aware. Within Buber's conception of the interhuman are the ideas of the between, spokenness, mutuality, reciprocity, and confirmation.

"The Fabric of Human Relationships"

The invitation of dialogue into any relationship requires the recognition and confirmation of otherness by those in relation. For Arendt, otherness, the complete uniqueness of an individual, is revealed through action, and action only takes place in the presence of others. "Action," Arendt stated, "is never possible in isolation" (188). Action corresponds to the human condition of plurality and is the only activity that goes on between persons (7). "Action and speech are surrounded by and in constant contact with the web of the acts and words of other men" (188). For Arendt, action can only be recognized in concert with others. Plurality, or the fact that we live among other people, is the condition that allows us as humans to act and start something new. Action is dependent upon the constant presence of others and therefore is present only in the public sphere (23). As mentioned previously, the public sphere is the place reserved for individuality. The public sphere is where one inserts oneself into the world through word and deed and thus, distinguishes oneself from all others.

This section introduces Arendt's concepts of action and speech as they correspond to her philosophy of the fabric of human relations. In Arendt's opinion, action occurs only with others in the public sphere. Action is inextricably tied to speech and the

condition of human plurality. Through the supporting metaphors who-ness of the doer, web of human relationships, forgiveness and promises, Arendt's thoughts on action come together and reveal the significance of relation to her philosophy of the human condition. Arendt's perspective on relation is slightly different from that of Buber. Coming from a political theorist's standpoint, Arendt grounds relation in the human activity of action.

Action and Speech: Revealing the Who-ness of the Doer

Arendt attaches plurality—relation— and action to communication. “Men in the plural, that is, men in so far as they live and move and act in this world, can experience meaningfulness only because they can talk with and make sense to each other and themselves” (4). Communication—speech— is the conduit through which relation becomes real and relation only becomes real through communication. Arendt argues it is action and speech that “constitute the fabric of human relationships and affairs. “Their reality—action and speech— depends entirely upon human plurality, upon the constant presence of others who can see and hear and therefore testify to their existence” (95). Action and speech, word and deed, are essentially interaction—relation.

Through word and deed one inserts oneself into the public sphere, into relation, in order to reveal one's unique distinctness. Human togetherness, where people are really *with* others, is where speech and action reveal the who-ness of an actor. Arendt believes that “because of its inherent tendency to disclose the agent together with the act, action needs for its full appearance the shining brightness we once called glory, and which is possible only in the public realm” (180). For Arendt, the connection between the public sphere, relation, action, and speech are absolutely necessary and undeniable.

One needs word and deed, action and speech, because they are intimately connected in revealing otherness. Speech and action are intimately connected because, according to Arendt, in each action the question is asked of each actor, “Who are you?” “This disclosure of who somebody is, is implicit in both his words and deeds” (178). Without speech, action loses its revelatory character and its subject. “In action and speech men show who they are, reveal actively their unique personal identities and thus make their appearance in the human world...” (179). Action and speech are the human activities that allow one to reveal oneself in the world, and this revelation of otherness allows human beings to interact and form meaningful relationships.

Action and Speech: Entering the Web of Human Relationships

Relation is, for Arendt, constituted through the human activities of action and speech. Relation, plurality, exists wherever men live together (184). Through action, human beings have the unique ability to start something new. Through speech, human beings have the unique ability to disclose their individuality. Action and speech create an in-between-ness for persons. All action and speech are about something that Arendt identifies as that which “inter-est” persons. For Arendt, action and speech not only reveal the who-ness of a doer but also bring people together. This in-between-ness that action and speech creates is the web of human relationships (Arendt 182). As action and speech are subjects of and dependent on relation, they fall into the web of human relationships. The web of human relationships is present long before one inserts oneself into the world through word and deed. The web of human relationships always affects and is affected

by the speech and action of those living in relation. According to Arendt, when one inserts oneself into this web, one's unique life story begins:

Together they (action and speech) start a new process which eventually emerges as the unique life story of newcomer, affecting uniquely the life stories of all those with whom he comes into contact. It is because of this already existing web of human relationships, with its innumerable, conflicting wills and intentions, that action almost never achieves its purpose; but it is also because of this medium, in which action alone is real, that it 'produces' stories with or without intention as naturally as fabrication produces tangible things. (184)

Through action and speech, Arendt states, one enters the web of human relationships and begins one's unique life story. However, Arendt is adamant in pointing out, as subject to and continually affected by the web of relationships, one is not the author of one's story and because one's story is embedded within the web the actions one engages in never fulfill their original intended purpose (233).

The web of human relationships is an important factor in the consequences of human action and speech and their affect on human relationships. According to Arendt, one can never count on one's actions to achieve one's desired purpose because action is irreversible and unpredictable (233). Irreversible and unpredictable action continually leaves one guilty of the consequences of their actions, thus damaging and sometimes destroying relationships with others.

Action and Speech: The Remedies of Forgiveness and Promise

The irreversible and unpredictable nature of action, Arendt believes, would destroy the web of human relationships without the necessary remedies of forgiveness and promises. The remedy of irreversibility, not being able to take back what one has set in motion, is forgiveness and the remedy of unpredictability, not being able to know for sure the outcomes of one's actions, is the faculty to make and keep promises (237).

According to Arendt, because persons can be forgiven for the consequences of what they have done, action can exist. Without forgiveness one would never recover from a single act. Forgiveness is an extremely personal act of human relationships. "Forgiving and the relationship it establishes is always an eminently personal (though not necessarily individual or private) affair in which *what* was done is forgiven for the sake of *who* did it" (241). Forgiveness, the remedy of irreversibility, is the human ability that allows the web of relationships to continue to have meaningful significance for the lives of human beings.

On the other hand, promises, the remedy of unpredictability, allow one to keep one's identity. Without promises, Arendt argues,

we would be condemned to wander helplessly and without direction in the darkness of each man's lonely heart, caught in its contradictions and equivocalities—a darkness which only the light shed over the public realm through the presence of others, who confirm the identity between the one who promises and the one who fulfills, can dispel. (237)

Forgiveness and making promises are both dependent on the presence of others, on plurality. According to Arendt, no one can forgive oneself or feel bound to a promise

made to oneself. Therefore, forgiving and making promises require the presence of others, the web of human relationships.

The fabric of human relationships is, for Arendt, realized through the human activities of action and speech. In the midst of relationship, communication—action and speech—becomes real; one inserts oneself into the world; one differentiates oneself as unique; one enters a web with others and begins and carries out a unique life story; and finally, one insures the continuance of the web through the remedies of forgiveness and promise.

Action, only possible in the presence of others, is the uniquely human ability to make something new. Communication—speech—also is possible only in the presence of others, is inextricably tied to action because in acting one *says* something about oneself, one reveals one's identity continually. Through action and speech, one inserts oneself into the world and reveals one's individuality and otherness. Through action and speech one enters into the already existing web of human relationships. Within this web, one's life story, through action and speech, begins and is carried to its conclusion. However, due to this web of relation—the actions and speech of each affecting the actions and speech of others— action and speech are always irreversible and unpredictable. Once begun, actions and speech can never be taken back. Once begun, actions and speech enter the web and the consequences become unpredictable. In order to insure the continuation of action and speech and, in the end, human relationships themselves, human beings forgive others the unforeseen and unpredictable consequences of their actions and speech. Furthermore, in order to strengthen the fabric of human relationships, human beings make promises between one another to fulfill their

obligations to each other. Labor is the private necessity that provides ground from which human action reaches out to the other and permits the meeting of one with the world. In Buber's words, "all real life is meeting"

All Real Life is Meeting

For Martin Buber, relation is an ontological reality. Man with man is the foundation of Buber's philosophy and for him a fundamental fact of human existence (Friedman, *Life of Dialogue* 85). According to Buber, relation is the beginning of life (*I and Thou* 69). Buber believed that "all actual life is encounter" (*I and Thou* 62). We can exist in the realm without relation but it is in relation that we become fully human. The first section of the exploration of relation looks at Buber's conception of relation propelled by the metaphor of otherness. The metaphors that serve to create Buber's understanding of otherness are the address, setting at a distance, and becoming aware. Each of these metaphors builds on the others, providing a striking view of relation. Next, Buber's fundamental metaphor of the interhuman or the turning encompasses the metaphors that enable one both to care and to be cared for. Mutuality, confirmation, and reciprocity are all essential metaphors for the life of dialogue and, as Noddings suggests and this work argues, are also necessary for the ability to care and be cared for. Finally, each of these metaphors points back to Buber's conviction that only when one recognizes the otherness of the other, only when one acknowledges a particular other, can there be an invitation to dialogue.

Martin Buber's philosophy grows out of his belief that relation is an ontological reality. For Buber, relation is the beginning. "In the beginning is relation—a category of being, readiness, grasping form, mold for the soul; it is the *a priori* of relation, the inborn

Thou” (Buber, *To Hallow this Life* 18). Real, full existence and genuine encounters, for Buber, exist in the life of relation. In other words, life lived without genuine relations, or dialogue with others is no life at all. Friedman explains: “The aggregate is a fact in so far as it is built up of living units of relation... That essence of man which is special to him can be directly known only in a living relation” (Friedman, *Knowledge of Man* 17). The essence of human existence is relation. Real relation is found in the life of dialogic relationships. The aim of this work is to make explicit the connection between dialogue and caring. One can begin to glimpse that intimate connection when hearing Buber’s advice for this hour. In his essay, “What is to be done?” Buber argues that the real question we need to ask ourselves is, “What have I to do?” Buber answers: turn toward the other. Turn toward the other and help. Buber states:

To it you shall learn to go forth—go forth and not withhold yourself. You shall help. Each man you meet needs help, each needs *your* help. That is the thousandfold happening of each moment, that the need of help and the capacity to help make way for one another so that each not only does not know about the other but does not even know about himself. It is the nature of man to leave equally unnoticed the innermost need and the innermost gift of his own soul, although at times, too, a deep hour reminds him of them. You shall awaken in the other the need of help, in yourself the capacity to help. Even when you yourself are in need—and you are—you can help others and, in so doing, help yourself.

(Pointing the Way 110)

Buber's advice is, "You shall help"—in other words, you shall care. Helping, caring, and dialogue all begin in relation with others. This historical moment is calling each of us to help. "What have I to do?" I have to help the other who reaching out to me in relation.

Otherness: The Beginning, the End, the Beginning

Buber's theory of dialogue and his conception of life lived in relation begins with distance. Distance is a crucial metaphor in understanding Buber's perspective on relation. Before we can truly enter into relation with one another, Buber believes, one must first set the other at a distance. Distance in Buber's philosophy is the state given to man before one enters into relation. "Distance is given to man as man, yet is ontologically speaking pre-personal, that is, it precedes the I-Thou and I-It relations which make up personal existence" (Friedman, *Knowledge of Man* 22). From the pre-personal state of distance man is able to overcome the distance and enter into relation with the other. The state of distance makes room for relation.

The initial setting at a distance must come first. In setting the other at a distance one recognizes that the other is truly other than oneself. "Setting at a distance means to recognize an other as a separate being, as unique, as otherness. This is the presupposition to entering into relation with her...with her as the unique person she is" (Taylor 331). Through distance the other becomes an independent opposite. Buber argued, "Man, as man, sets man at a distance and makes him independent; he lets the life of men like himself go on round about him, and so he, and he alone, is able to enter into relation, in his own individual status, with those like himself" (Buber, *Knowledge of Man* 67). In the state of distance man recognizes his independence from other things, other people,

and thus has “a world” from which he can choose to enter into relation with others.

Relation, for Buber, means the I-Thou relation, the relation of dialogue.

From a state of distance each person is set apart and able to create a world. From distance persons can participate in the world they have created. From distance persons recognize their responsibility for the world. From distance each person recognizes the self and the other as totally different. In overcoming the distance persons enter into relation with other persons. As stated, for Buber, relation is the beginning. The state of the relation depends on those involved: “An objective relationship in which two men stand to one another can rise, by means of the existential participation of the two, to a personal relation; it can be merely tolerated; it can be neglected; it can be injured” (Buber, *Between Man and Man* 132). As evidenced from this statement, Buber believes that simply entering into relation is only the beginning, but what happens next is crucial. If we as human beings chose to enter into relation we must hear the address of the other, become aware of the other, and finally turn to the other.

The Necessities of Relation: Hearing the address, Becoming Aware, and Turning to the Other

Human beings have, according to Buber, a twofold attitude toward life, which is due to the two basic words they can speak, I-Thou and I-It (Buber, *I and Thou* 53).

Dialogue, as already discussed, is the essence of the I-Thou relationship. From the pre-personal state of distance we can either enter into the world of relation, the I-Thou relation, or we can thicken the distance and move into the world of I-It (Friedman, *Life* 83). We invite a life of relation, a life of dialogue, when we turn to the other. The

following section explores Buber's ideas of the address, becoming aware, and the turning towards the other as they are part of Buber's theory of relation and his philosophy of dialogue and ultimately tied to caring.

In order to invite dialogue into one's life, Buber believes, one must hear the address of the other. The address is the other calling out, reaching out through thought, speech, and/or action. The address is an invitation into relation. Through the address we are invited into relation. It is up to us to hear the call and respond. However, according to Buber, the address is not necessarily an astonishing event. We are addressed simply everyday. "The signs of address are not something extraordinary, something that steps out of the order of things, they are just what goes on time and again, just what goes on in any case, nothing is added by the address" (Buber, *Between Man and Man* 11).

According to Buber, many times, because the address does not jump out at us, we fail to hear it and thus fail to enter into genuine relation with the other. Many times we are too wrapped up in the busyness of life to hear the address. But when we are responsive, attentive to the call, understand our responsibility in relation, something *happens* to us.

When we hear the address of the other we are invited into relation. When we hear the address of the other, the other "says something" to me. This "says something" or "happening" is important to Buber's theory of dialogue, because it is through this "saying" that we truly see the other. Buber explains it this way: "That ['says something'] does not mean, says to me what manner of man this is, what is going on in him, and the like. But it means, says something *to me*, addresses something to me, speaks something that enters my own life" (Buber, *Between Man and Man* 9). This "saying" for Buber is the I-Thou relation between persons. Through the address the other enters my life.

Buber argues that each of us is addressed and thus responsible. The address has real meaning for the life of the one who is receptive. The address is found in concrete reality and engaged when the one addressed really meets the moment (Friedman, *Life of Dialogue* 167).

When we are perceptive of the moment that demands an answer that moment “happens to us.” When we have been addressed and accept the call, Buber claims that we become aware, “we may term this way of perception *becoming aware*...the limits of the possibility of dialogue are the limits of awareness... living means being addressed, we would need only to present ourselves and to perceive” (Buber, *Between Man and Man* 10). Life is lived in relation, according to Buber’s philosophy. The life of dialogue begins when are addressed and we perceive the address; it is then that we become aware of the other in relation.

Becoming aware is an essential element in the life of human beings living together. Buber defines becoming aware as perceiving another person’s spirit in its wholeness. Buber states that in becoming aware of the other, we comprehend the other’s dynamic center as unique. “To become aware of a man means to perceive his wholeness as person defined by spirit: to perceive the dynamic centre which stamps on all his utterances, actions, and attitudes the tangible sign of oneness” (*Knowledge of Man* 80). Becoming aware of another is only possible when we enter into relation with the other, because it is in entering into relation that I no longer see the other as an object. In becoming aware I see the other as a partner, a whole and unique other (Friedman, *Life of Dialogue* 171). Once I have become aware I can then turn to the other in relation.

Entering into relation requires a mutual turning toward the other. Buber says, “two men bound together in dialogue must obviously be turned to one another—no matter with what measure of activity or indeed of consciousness of activity—have turned toward one another” (Buber, *Between Man and Man* 8). Turning toward the other is the next essential metaphor for Buber’s conception of relation. According to Buber, if one looks to another and addresses that other, one has turned to the other. Buber argues that turning is not only with the body, or in action or speech. Turning to the other means you have directed your attention towards the other with your essential being, in other words, with your soul (Buber, *Between Man and Man* 22). Turning toward the other is response. Turning toward the other is the invitation into a life of dialogue.

From a pre-personal state of distance a person creates a world in which he/she recognizes the other and himself/herself as totally unique. From this state he/she can overcome the distance and enter into relation with the other. The state of that relation depends on his/her reaction to the address of the other. He/she can choose to ignore the reaching out of the other. He/she may not even hear the calling because he/she is not attentive to the moment. But if he/she is perceptive, he/she does hear the address of the other. If he/she is perceptive, the address of the other speaks to his/her very existence. The address “says something” to his/her very soul. When the other’s address “says something” to him/her, when the other “happens” to him/her, he/she becomes aware of him/her. In becoming aware he/she sees the dynamic centre of the other. In becoming aware he/she enters into relation with the other. Relation, for Buber, is the very life of dialogue. Relation is the I-Thou relation, which requires the turning toward the other. In turning toward the other, one has responded. In turning toward the other, one has

communicated something to the other. Hearing the address Buber called responsibility. Becoming aware of the signs of address, Buber explained, invites the meeting of one with another. Turning toward the other in relation shifts communicative focus making visible what Buber called the interhuman—the emergent space that speaks to partners with silent clarity.

The Interhuman: the Sphere of the Between

As already mentioned, Buber’s philosophy begins with the presupposition that life is lived in relation. Buber asserts that it is a basic fact of existence that we are dependent upon each other. “Man exists anthropologically not in isolation” Buber argues, “but in completeness of the relation between man and man” (*Knowledge of Man* 74). The complete relation between human beings is found in the sphere of the interhuman. The sphere of the interhuman is dialogue. Buber explains:

But by the sphere of the interhuman I mean solely actual happenings between men, whether wholly mutual or tending to grow into mutual relations. For the participation of both partners is in principle indispensable. The sphere of the interhuman is one in which a person is confronted by the other. We call its unfolding the dialogical. (*Knowledge of Man* 75)

The unfolding of the interhuman sphere, the between, the sphere in which we ultimately encounter dialogue, has several supporting metaphors that Buber stresses: the spokenness of speech, mutuality and reciprocity, and confirmation. This section discusses Buber’s conceptions of the between and spokenness as they relate to his theory of relation.

One of the most essential concepts in Buber's philosophy is the element of "the between." The between is the interhuman. "This realm, sphere, or category of human reality is constituted in speaking and listening or address and response" (Stewart, "Two of Buber's Contributions" 158). The between is constituted in address and response and at the same time, address and response find meaning only in the sphere of the between. Arnett and Arneson argue that Buber's concept of the "between" is the guiding communicative metaphor for dialogue. "Buber understood dialogue as rooted in a common center of conversation between persons. The common center of discourse is what brings people together in conversation; the common center...is fundamental" (Arnett and Arneson 128). As a guiding metaphor, "the between" calls each person to meet life relationally; this meeting requires that each see the other and that both find meaning in "the between." The between belongs to neither party, neither the I nor Thou. The between is created through the relationship between the self and the other and is more than the sum of each. The between is what interconnects persons in dialogue. The between allows the self and the other to be partners as opposed to two separate individuals. The between allows participants to focus their attention not on themselves, but on this sphere they have created by coming together. For Buber, through language we communicate the truth of our being but the meaning of that communication is found in the between. The between, according to Buber, is the source of the interhuman.

Communication comes alive in "the between"

In the sphere of the between, Buber argues, each is aware of the other and sees the other as the other really is, in the other's own particularity. Communication is the vessel in which the truth of oneself is conveyed to the other. "Whatever the meaning

of the word 'truth' may be in the other realms, in the interhuman realm it means that men communicate themselves to one another as what they are" (Buber, *Knowledge of Man* 77). Buber's philosophy places speech, language, and communication as essential to relation, essential to the sphere of the interhuman and therefore essential to the life of dialogue. Buber considers speech as one of the man's greatest characteristics and significant to his life together. "...to speak to others is something essentially human, and is based on the establishment and acknowledgement of the independent otherness of the other with whom one fosters relation..." (Buber, *Knowledge of Man* 68). It is through speech we that we reveal our humanness and our otherness. It is through speech that life together becomes meaningful. Likewise, life with men is where language is perfected and becomes speech and reply, address and response. Buber stresses the centrality of spokenness in the sphere of the interhuman when he says:

Only here does the word, formed in language, encounter its reply. Only here does the basic word go back and forth in the same shape; that of the address and that of the reply are alive in the same tongue; I and Thou do not only stand in a relationship but also in firm honesty. The moments of relation are joined here, and only here, through the element of language in which they are immersed. Here that which confronts us had developed the full actuality of the Thou. Here alone beholding and being beheld, recognizing and being recognized, loving and being loved exist as an actuality that cannot be lost. (Buber, *I and Thou* 151)

Buber argues that the speech between persons becomes real in relationship. Relation, the sphere of the interhuman, is the locus of language. In relationships with others we

develop the ability to communicate. At the same time, for Buber, we communicate the truth of our own being and recognize, through communication, the truth of the other. Through language the I can address the other as Thou and develop a truly mutual relationship.

According to Buber, speech becomes meaningful in the context of relationships. The meaning of speech is found in the context of the moment, in the context of the relation, between those involved. With the concept of the between Buber's philosophy of relation comes together and persons find meaning, concrete reality in the life of relationships.

The Between as Hesed

Relation emerges in the sphere of the interhuman or the between where persons communicate with one another and language finds meaning. For Buber, meaning is found in the relationship, "between" those in genuine relation. It is in the between that real life is lived. Genuine relationships, those that invite dialogue, are the only true way to live. In order to enter into relation with another, Buber argues, the relationship must be both mutual and reciprocal. The following section looks at Buber's ideas of mutuality and reciprocity. These metaphors are important to Buber's conception of dialogue and likewise to both the ability to care and be cared for. For Buber, without mutuality and reciprocity we cannot invite dialogue into our lives. Furthermore, as Noddings suggests and this section will argue to some extent, the life of caring also depends on mutuality and reciprocity.

Buber believes that in order to invite dialogue into a relationship, the relationship must be both mutual and reciprocal. For Buber, one cannot invite an I-Thou relation unless the relation is mutual. Mutuality in Buber's philosophy means more than simply togetherness or empathy. Mutuality means that each has turned to the other and truly values the other. Mutuality is "a quality of the relationship maintained through a commitment of the partners to be present, responsive, and responsible to each other and to the relationship" (Graf-Taylor 330). Taking responsibility means that each entering into the relation remains him/herself, different from the other.

When each sees the other as different, when the relation is mutual, it can also be reciprocal. Reciprocity means that each truly enters the relationship. According to Buber, "relation is reciprocity...inscrutably involved, we live in the currents of universal reciprocity" (*I and Thou* 67). Reciprocity does not mean that each is equal to the other or even that each contributes "as much as" the other. Reciprocity means that each is prepared to contribute, that each responds to the relationship. Reciprocity, according to Buber, is relation. Friedman explains Buber's emphasis on reciprocity: "No I-Thou relationship can be complete without reciprocity, however, and our ability to treat the other person as Thou is, in fact, limited by the extent to which he does or does not treat us as a Thou" (*Life of Dialogue* 203). While reciprocity is essential to the life of relation, reciprocity cannot be demanded. Reciprocity makes relation possible and thus life meaningful. Arnett further explains Buber's idea: "Reciprocity is not... some form of caring upon demand; Buber's emergent reciprocity is a natural dialogic response that offers interpersonal meaning between persons" (Arnett, "Responsive" 86). Reciprocity, the responsive participation of those involved in a relationship, gives that relationship life

and meaning. As Arnett points out, reciprocity emerges in the response of one to the other. As Friedman states, “dialogue is the genuinely reciprocal meeting in the fullness of the life between one active existence and another” (Friedman, *Human Sciences* 18). For Buber, an essential part of the reciprocal process and the life of dialogue is the act of confirmation.

Confirmation of Otherness found in the Between

Reciprocity, according to Buber, is relation (*I and Thou* 67). It is through confirmation, which by its very nature is reciprocal, that we encounter genuine relation and life becomes heavy with meaning (158). This next section explores Buber’s idea of confirmation, which is essential to his philosophy of dialogue. Furthermore, confirmation is the key metaphor that brings Buber’s ideas of relation together with the key metaphor of otherness.

As mentioned previously, confirmation is a key metaphor for Buber’s philosophy. Confirmation is key because Buber believes that as human beings we all need to be confirmed. Confirmation means that one knows oneself to be understood and accepted by the other. Buber explains why confirmation is so important:

Man wishes to be confirmed in his being by man, and wishes to have a presence in the being of the other. The human person needs confirmation because man as man needs it. An animal does not need to be confirmed for it is what it is unquestionably. It is different with man: Sent forth from the natural domain of species into the hazard of the solitary category, surrounded by the air of a chaos which came into being with him, secretly

and bashfully he watches for a Yes which allows him to be and which can come to him only from one human person to another. It is from one man to another that the heavenly bread of self-being is passed. (*Knowledge of Man* 71)

Buber argues that only through confirmation can human beings become the particular persons they are to be (Friedman, *Life of Dialogue* 108). Confirmation, for Buber, is the “Yes” that must be spoken to each person in order that he/she may be liberated from the dread of abandonment (Buber, *Knowledge of Man* 43). Through confirmation one assumes a self.

According to Buber, confirmation is essential for relation with others and crucial to the invitation of dialogue into the lives of human beings. Confirmation by its very nature is reciprocal. Confirmation takes place between those in relation: while one is confirming the other one is also at the same time being confirmed by the other.

It is through confirmation that each person is not only accepted for who that person is but the other also sees who he/she has the potential to become. Confirmation begins by meeting the other and accepting and confirming that other as the other is now. Confirmation does not stop here; instead in confirming the other one sees what the other can become. To be confirmed is to know that one sees the other as the other truly is and accepts the other; furthermore, and just as importantly, one sees what the other has the potential to become.

In confirmation one sees, acknowledges, and accepts the otherness of those in relation. For Buber, confirmation is enacted when those involved make the other present or imagine the real of the other. Making the other present or imagining the real of the

other, according to Kron and Friedman, is imagining concretely what the other is thinking, feeling, or willing (336). Buber describes making the other present:

Making the other present means to ‘imagine the real,’ to imagine quite concretely what another person is wishing, feeling, perceiving and thinking. This is no empathy which leaves one’s own ground in order temporarily to enter into the other but a bold swinging into the other which demands the intensest action of one’s being, even as does all genuine fantasy. Only here the realm of one’s act is not the all-possible but the particular, real person who steps up to meet one, the person whom one seeks to make present as just so and not otherwise in all their wholeness, unity, and uniqueness. One can only do this as a partner, standing in a common situation with the other... (Friedman, *Knowledge of Man* 29)

Here Buber emphasizes that in making the other present one not only sees the other in the other’s uniqueness and potentiality but one also does not lose oneself. In order to invite dialogue into a relationship there must be confirmation, each must make the other present but each does this standing next to the other as partners in relation.

Furthermore, in imagining the real of the other one may also wrestle with the other against oneself. Through making the other present each sees the other’s potentiality and for Buber, it is through the dialogic relation that one can help the other find the other’s direction. Sometimes, in the midst of the relation, one wrestles with the other in order to help the other realize the other’s potential.

The Dialogic Echo of Otherness

As evidenced through these metaphors, relation is a key metaphor for Buber's theory of dialogue. Dialogue is real outgoing to the other (Friedman, *Human Sciences* 218). One reaches out to the other through relation. According to Buber, when one reaches out and enters into relation one enters into relation with a unique, independent other. Buber's conception of relation and the related metaphors continually point back to one idea. The key metaphors of relation (setting at a distance, the address, becoming aware, turning to the other, spokenness, mutuality, reciprocity, and confirmation) all point to one of the most essential metaphors for Buber's philosophy of dialogue: otherness.

In each of the relation metaphors discussed Buber stresses the idea of otherness. From the state of distance, we first recognize the other as a truly other being. Through distance the other is set apart from the self and viewed as unique. In the address, the other "says something" to a particular other. The reaching out is intended for a particular other and has specific meaning to them alone. Furthermore, becoming aware again stresses the idea of a particular other. When one becomes aware of an address, Buber argues, one perceives the wholeness and uniqueness of the other and responds on behalf of that particular other. After becoming aware the one turns to other. Again the metaphor of otherness is crucial. When turning toward the other, one chooses to turn directly in relation to a specific, unique, particular other.

Upon turning toward the other, the relationship invites a life of dialogue and, according to Buber, enters the realm of the interhuman. Within the realm of the between we find the distinguishing power of spokenness. Again the metaphor of otherness or the particular other comes to the foreground. In the sphere of the interhuman each person

sees the other as the other really is. Each person is aware of the otherness of the other. Buber argues that through speech each person reveals who they are, reveals particular uniqueness to the other. Through speech unique individuals develop meaningful relationships. The meaning of the communication within this relationship is found not in either individual, but in “the between.” With the concept of the between Buber’s philosophy of relation comes together and persons find meaning and concrete reality in the life of relationships. The I-Thou relationship and meaning are found “between” persons. This again points back to otherness because in the I-Thou relationship each participant is recognized, acknowledged, and accepted as a particular, unique other.

Finally, otherness or the particular other is specifically enriched through Buber’s idea of confirmation. Confirmation begins in the act of setting the other at a distance, making the other independent from the self. From a distance one can then choose to enter into relation with the other, and through this interhuman relation the self confirms the other. In the act of confirmation one sees the other for who the other is and who the other has the potential to become. Through confirmation, otherness is acknowledged and accepted. Through confirmation one says “yes, I see *you*” to the other.

This section began with Buber’s belief that all real life is meeting, all actual life is found in relation encountering the other. In the metaphor of setting at a distance, a pre-personal state of being, Buber’s conception of relation is set in motion. It is here, in the setting at a distance, that Buber’s emphasis on otherness becomes apparent. In the sphere of the between, language or speech is the human mechanism for the expression of otherness. Through speech a person reveals unique otherness. For Buber, the pre-personal state of setting at a distance begins the distinction of the other and in the end; the

invitation of dialogue into a relationship is dependent upon the mutual confirmation of otherness between those in the relationship.

Relation: The Otherness Between

Human relationships constitute the anchor that secures the meaning and enactment of responsibility, guilt, and labor. Human relationships are the impetus for the horizon of significant outcomes borne in those relationships. Human relationships provide one with the *why* for accepting the burden that is life. Through relationships one feels the full impact of human existence in the unity of contraries that is joy and suffering, blessing and burden. It is only in relation that one can realize genuine encounter and become truly human.

Genuine human relationships are communicatively constituted through the metaphors of otherness, the between, and action. In order to invite real meeting into any relationship one must recognize and confirm the radical difference of the other. Otherness begins in distance, is confirmed in relation, and is engaged through action and speech in the web of human relationships.

This section on relation began with Buber's pre-personal state of setting at a distance in which one recognizes that the other is truly other than oneself and moved to the communicative act of confirmation in which one says to the other "Yes, I see you, I see you for who you really are and who you have the potential to become." The section ended with Arendt's philosophy of action and speech through which one inserts oneself into the already existing web of human relationships and reveals through action and speech one's individual otherness.

The confirmation of otherness and the action of revealing one's otherness can only be realized in the sphere between oneself and another. In the sphere of the between one communicates oneself to the other and thus reveals one's otherness. It is between oneself and another that communication finds meaning. It is in the interaction between persons that relationships become meaningful and genuine encounter is invited. In order for the between to exist the relationship must be mutual and reciprocal. Each must be willing and able to participate in the interaction between them. Reciprocity is realized in the act of confirmation. The metaphors of otherness and the interhuman—the between—come together in the significance Buber places on the act of confirmation. It is through confirming that the other is truly different than oneself that relation can even begin to invite dialogue, and confirmation can take place only in the sphere between persons in relation.

In the sphere of the between one confirms the other by understanding and acknowledging who the other really is and who the other can become. For Buber, communication is the vessel in which the truth of oneself is conveyed to the other. It is through speech that one reveals one's humanness and one's otherness. Arendt's explanation of action and speech is akin to the ideas of Buber. According to Arendt, action and speech create an in-between-ness for persons. This in-between-ness is the web of human relationships in which action and speech bring people together. Action and speech are the human activities through which one inserts themselves into the web of relations and the activities through which one reveals one's individuality.

The web of human relationships in which one inserts oneself into the world through action and speech is the anchor that gives the burden of obligation the reason

why. As Buber stated, each person is answerable to a concrete moment into which that person is called to responsibility. The obligation to respond is a necessary burden which one must answer for. Through relation one can invite genuine meeting into this obligation and find meaning and sustenance. Through relation obligation, answering for one's responsibility to the other becomes more than a burden. Through the relation created between one and another life can achieve live unity. The full impact of life can be felt through the unity of contraries, joy and suffering, blessing and burden. The web of human relationships gives one the reason *why* to accept the burden of obligation. The relationships created between oneself and another invite a horizon of significant outcomes into the lives of human beings living *with* each other.

The next section, "Horizon of Significance: The Shaping of Life Together," looks at the final metaphor of care, horizon of significant outcomes, and Buber's concept of lived unity, the life of dialogue and Arendt's concept of natality, the miracle of beginning.

The Horizon of Significance: The Shaping of Life Together

The intertextuality of care—dialogue and the imperative of labor—establishes the link between dialogue and caring through the connection of the primary care metaphors—obligation, relation, and horizon of significant outcomes—to the driving metaphors found in Buber's philosophy of dialogue and Arendt's philosophy of the human condition.

In this chapter, the intertextuality of care begins with the metaphor of obligation. Obligation requires that one take responsibility for call of the other who is reaching out.

Responsibility means that one responds. If one fails in their obligation to the other, fails to respond, it is guilt created in the relationship between them that calls one back to the other seeking reconciliation. Without the impetus of guilt, trust is lost and relationship is lost. Through guilt one turns back toward the other and responds to the call of obligation. In responding, one recognizes that one is responsible for and answerable to the signs that call to one everyday. Responding to the other is a necessity for the invitation of dialogue, genuine meeting, into one's life.

Responding is labor. Obligation is, at times, a burden requiring great toil and trouble. Obligation is labor that requires the commitment of genuine response to the signs that call one into responsibility every day. Obligation is a vital necessity that bears blessing and burden, joy and suffering. Through the unity of contraries, blessing and burden, joy and suffering, engaged in the midst of labor, one is able to feel the full intense impact of human togetherness.

The unity of life grasped in the midst of the labor of responding to one's obligation to the other can only come to fruition in the presence of others. Relation, the second primary metaphor of care, serves to build further the intertextuality of care that is dialogue and the imperative of labor. Through the connection of relation to the metaphors of otherness, the between, and action, obligation finds the anchor necessary for its realization.

Human relationships and the unity of contraries discovered in the labor of inviting dialogue into those relationships are the reason human beings accept and welcome the inescapable burden that is borne of those relationships. Genuine meeting, in which one answers the call of the other and the concrete moment, in which one accepts and

welcomes the necessary labor of communicative life, in which one acts, thus inserting oneself into the life of the other and the web of human relationships, gives the fabric of human relationships a horizon of significant outcomes.

The final metaphor of the intertextuality of care is the horizon of significant outcomes in which persons and ultimately all humanity finds not only survival but the communicative road to the good life. This section completes the intertextuality of care by exploring the horizon of significant outcomes that are borne through the connection of dialogue, labor, and care. It is the contention of this work that the invitation of dialogue into the caring relationship and the imperative of labor required can not only offer relief to the communicative life of the caring relationship—give those in caring relationships ground upon which to stand—but that by inviting dialogue into the caring relationship a horizon of significant and unexpected outcomes will appear. Through the invitation of dialogue into the caring relationship one has the incomparable opportunity to realize a life of dialogue through which one finds not only oneself but also the possibility of genuine community. Through the recognition that by inviting dialogue into the caring relationship one must accept and welcome the labor involved and the action required, one finds the courage to care. The engagement of labor and action in the caring relationship points to the significant and albeit unexpected outcome of natality.

The goal of dialogue is not the self or what one can “get” out of dialogue. The focus of attention in dialogue is the interchange between those in relation. From this focus of attention there emerges, as a byproduct, a horizon of significant outcomes as a result of those inviting dialogue into their lives. This section explores the horizon of significant outcomes of dialogue according to the work of Martin Buber. For Buber,

dialogue has the potential to change the world. According to Buber, if human beings can learn to invite dialogue into their lives, they can overcome the existential mistrust that plagues our historical moment. The following section looks at significant outcomes that emerge as a result of inviting dialogue into one's life and relationships.

In Turning One Receives

The essence of man is only known in living relation. According to Buber, it is through relation, dialogue, that one sees the full image of human beings. "Consider man with man, and you see human life, dynamic, twofold, the giver and the receiver, he who does and he who endures...and always both together, completing one another in mutual contribution, together showing forth man" (*Between Man and Man* 23). "Man with man," persons in relation, is an ontological fact of human existence for Buber, but it is also a gift. The invitation of dialogue into one's life allows one to find more than burden in one's relations with others. The invitation of dialogue into one's life gives one the gift of oneself.

The self in dialogue abandons separateness and enters into togetherness. In dialogue one turns to another and responds to the call of the other, the moment, and the concrete situation. At no time in inviting dialogue into one's life is there a focus on the self. While one stands one's own ground and does not conform to the other or lose oneself to the other, the basic movement of dialogue is the turning to the other in relation. In turning to the other, one confirms the other as the other really, truly is and has the potential to become. Through inviting dialogue into a relationship one confirms the other, in essence saying "yes, I see you as completely other than myself and I accept you." In the life of dialogue one receives confirmation, "the heavenly bread of self-

being” (Buber, *To Hallow This Life* 25). The act of confirmation is a reciprocal act, for while one is confirming the other, saying “yes, I see you,” the other is also confirming. It is through the reciprocity that is dialogue, genuine relation, that a person’s self is confirmed.

The reciprocity that occurs in genuine meeting between oneself and another is the gift of dialogue that confirms one as part of something bigger and more important than just oneself. Buber describes reciprocity as “being associated while one is altogether unable to indicate what that is like with which one is associated, nor does association make life any easier for us—it makes life heavier but heavy with meaning” (Buber, *I and Thou* 158). The life of relation is an ontological fact of existence and is necessary for the survival of the human race, but the life of relation and being associated with others does not make life easier. On the contrary, the life of relation makes life heavy with meaning—meaningful enough to welcome the burden found in relation.

Through inviting dialogue into a relationship, the self grows. Buber tells us, “The inmost growth of the self is not accomplished, as people today like to suppose, in man’s relation to himself, but in the relation between one and the other, between men” (*Between Man and Man* 21). The self becomes and discovers who the self really is in dialogue. In answering the call of the other, in responding to the other who reaches out, the self is given the gift of growth. “So the responsibility for this realm of life allotted and entrusted to him, the constant responsibility for the living soul, points him to that which seems impossible and yet somehow granted to us—to self education” (Buber, *Between Man and Man* 101). By accepting the burden of obligation and entering relation the self learns

about the other, about relationships, about communication, and as a byproduct about the self and grows.

In dialogue there is an inner transformation of the self. According to Buber, inviting dialogue into one's life involves risk, risk of giving oneself and risk of inner transformation. Buber explains, "Inner transformation simply means surpassing one's present factual constitution; it means that the one is intended to be penetrates what has appeared up until now, that the customary soul enlarges and transfigures itself into the surprise soul" (*Pointing The Way* 206). The invitation of dialogue into one's relationship gives one the gift of inner transformation in which one becomes who one is intended to become.

By inviting dialogue into one's life something happens, one receives the heavenly bread of self being, one comes to understand that life is heavy with meaning, one's soul "enlarges and transfigures" so much that a "surprise soul" emerges. By inviting dialogue into one's life something happens:

At times it is like feeling a breath and at times like a wrestling match; no matter; something happens. The man who steps out of the essential act of pure relation has something More in his being, something new has grown there of which he did not know before and whose origin lacks any suitable words...Actually, we receive what we did not have before, in such a manner that we know: it has been given to us...Man receives, and what he receives is not a 'content' but a presence, a presence of strength. (Buber, *I and Thou* 158)

For Buber dialogue is one of two attitudes that one takes to the world. One cannot continually live a dialogic life but one can be open and attentive to the moments that call one into responsibility. By inviting dialogue into one's life genuine meeting can occur, life can obtain a meaning that it lacks without it, something happens, one is given the gift of presence of strength. This strength, a significant and unexpected outcome, allows one and encourages one to accept and welcome the unity of contraries that is life in relation.

Nativity: The Miracle that Saves the World

Martin Buber once answered the question "what is to be done?" by suggesting that it was the wrong question. The real question, according to Buber, is "what have I to do?" He then answered this question by saying, "You shall help. Each man you meet needs help, each needs *your* help" (*Pointing the Way* 110). Buber offered the philosophy of dialogue as a way to help each other, a way to invite genuine meeting into our lives with others. For Buber, one is given the gift of oneself; one becomes a self through dialogue. "The help that men give each other in becoming a self leads the life between men to its height" (Buber, *The Knowledge of Man* 85). One finds meaning in the burden of life with others.

In asking the question "what have I to do?" this work has already suggested that the help needed in this historical hour is the invitation of dialogue into the caring relationship. It has also been asserted that labor and action are essential elements in this invitation of dialogue into care. It is necessary to recognize, accept, and welcome the necessity of labor which is an inescapable condition of human life. Labor, while it is marked by toil and trouble, brings with it the unity of contraries that is blessing and burden, joy and suffering. Through this unity of contraries one can experience the full

impact of human existence, a meaningful life. Action, on the other hand, is the human activity through which one inserts themselves into the web of human relationships. Action, inextricably tied to speech, is bound to plurality. Action and speech are the human activities that take place between persons and establish relationships. Through the activities of action and speech one reveals oneself to others and thus differentiates oneself in the web of relations.

The final metaphor for the intertextuality of care is provided by Arendt through her conception of natality. In her work, Arendt proposed that we should “think what we are doing.” Through Arendt’s contemplation of the human condition and the activities persons engage in, particularly, labor and action, the metaphor of natality emerges as a significant outcome of inviting dialogue into the caring relationship.

Natality, according to Arendt, is rooted in the human activities of labor, work, and action, “in so far as they have the task to provide and preserve the world for, to foresee and reckon with, the constant influx of newcomers who are born into the world as strangers” (9). But it is action to which natality is most closely linked. Arendt explains, “The new beginning inherent in birth can make itself felt in the world only because the newcomer possesses the capacity of beginning something new, that is of acting” (9). Natality is imperative to the intertextuality of care, because through Arendt’s conception of natality, the action of caring can find new and significant meaning in the web of human relationships.

Action, as Arendt conceives it, corresponds with birth, beginning something new, natality. Speech corresponds to distinctness, “and is the actualization of the human condition of plurality, that is, of living as a distinct and unique being among equals”

(178). Through the action of natality, beginning something new, and speech in which one participates as an equal in the web of human relationships, we as human beings can find faith and hope. For Arendt, natality is the miracle that saves the world:

The miracle that saves the world, the realm of human affairs, from its normal, ‘natural’ ruin is ultimately the fact of natality, in which the faculty of action is ontologically rooted. It is, in other words, the birth of new men and new beginning, the action they are capable of by virtue of being born. Only the full experience of this capacity can bestow upon human affairs faith and hope. (247)

The new, in Arendt’s view, always appears as a miracle. Natality, through action, allows human beings to start something new. The capacity of natality and action offer faith and hope because they can “break through the commonly accepted and reach into the extraordinary” and achieve greatness (178).

Persons have the capacity to achieve greatness through natality and action. “The fact that man is capable of action means that the unexpected can be expected from him, that he is able to perform what is infinitely improbable” (178). One can achieve greatness, perform the improbable, because in the web of human relationships one distinguishes oneself and is unique and in one’s uniqueness one can begin something entirely unique.

Conclusion: The Intertextuality of Care—Dialogue and the Imperative of Labor

The need for care is more evident than ever; however, the necessity of care for human existence is eclipsed by the manifestations of postmodernity. As alluded to

earlier, the crisis of care is exacerbated by the dominant tenets of the contemporary postmodern situation and the values and ethics it endorses. This postmodern moment is marked by extreme individualism, skepticism, and existential mistrust. These conditions of postmodernity prevent us from realizing the importance of care to human interaction and existence. They have left us without the communicative background to answer the call of care. Furthermore, the changes in the family, the changes in the roles of men and women, and the increasingly aging world population demand that we take notice and make changes in our ability and willingness to care for the other. We live in a time that is calling each of us to take responsibility for the moments we are answerable to. This chapter has described the intertextuality of care in order to set up the connection between dialogue, caring, and the imperative of labor. Through the touchstones of care—obligation, relation, and significant outcomes—the work of Buber and Arendt frame a deeper examination of these guiding ideas in order to engage the metaphor of dialogue as the labor of care in the next chapter.

The intertextuality of care begins with the guiding metaphor of obligation and its relationship to Buber's conceptions of responsibility and guilt and Arendt's conception of labor. Through the metaphors of responsibility, guilt, and labor, obligation takes on a communicative nature.

For Buber, responsibility means response to the other. The other is reaching out, calling one into responsibility, calling for response. In order to invite dialogue in the relationship, the response must be made with one's whole being in a unique and authentic fashion. Response requires the one called into responsibility to be attentive to call of the other, the uniqueness of the other, and the uniqueness of the situation. When one fails in

responsibility to the other, guilt, borne of the relationship between persons, calls one back, thus permitting the rebirth of trust and human relationships.

Labor is human activity that emphasizes the necessity of obligation to human communicative lives. The labor of responding requires that one engage in the toil and trouble of obligation, thus permitting those involved to feel the intense nature of human existence. The recognition of and engagement in the necessity of labor permits one to engage in the unity of contraries that is life, joy and suffering, blessing and burden, struggle and triumph.

The next section, "Relation: The Anchor for Obligation," introduces the connection between Buber's and Arendt's conceptions of relation. Responsibility is always response to someone. Guilt is always found in the relationship between oneself and another. The necessity of labor is always engaged because of one's relationship with another. Burden is always endured for the sake of someone. Joy can only be experienced with someone else. The metaphor of obligation becomes meaningless without relation. Relation is the anchor that binds one to obligation.

Buber's conception of relation is propelled by the metaphors of otherness and the between. For Buber, "all real life is meeting," the meeting between an I and a Thou. In order for one to invite real meeting, genuine encounter, into one's life, one particular metaphor comes to the fore, the metaphor of otherness. In the pre-personal state of setting at a distance, Buber argues, one first recognizes the other as truly other than oneself. From a state of distance one is set apart as other and able to create a world. In overcoming the distance one enters into relation with other persons. When one chooses to overcome the distance between oneself and the other, one can begin to invite dialogue

into one's life. According to Buber, in order to invite dialogue into one's life, one must hear the address of the other. The address is the other calling out, reaching out through thought, speech, and/or action. The address is an invitation into relation. The address, which calls one into responsibility, is grounded in otherness because one must recognize that the other is totally other in order to respond properly to the address.

When one is responsive by being attentive to the call of the other and understands one's responsibility in relation, something *happens*—one becomes aware. When one has been addressed and accepts the call, Buber claims, one becomes aware. Becoming aware is an essential element in the life of human beings living together. Buber defines becoming aware as perceiving another person's spirit in its wholeness. In becoming aware of the other one comprehends the other's dynamic center as unique and comprehends the otherness of the other. Upon becoming aware of the other one can then turn to the other and invite dialogue into the relationship.

In turning to the other one looks to another and addresses him/her. Turning to the other means one has directed one's attention towards the other with one's essential being, with one's soul. In turning toward the other, one has responded. In turning toward the other, one has communicated something to the other. In turning toward the other, one has entered the sphere of the interhuman, the between.

The complete relation between human beings is found in the sphere of the between. The between calls each person to meet life relationally; this meeting requires that each see the other and that both find meaning in "the between." The between is created through the relationship between one and the other and is more than the sum of each. The between is what interconnects persons in dialogue. The unfolding of the

interhuman sphere, the between, the sphere in which we ultimately encounter dialogue, has several supporting metaphors: the spokenness of speech, mutuality and reciprocity, and confirmation.

In the sphere of the between each person is aware of the other and sees the other as the other really is, in the other's own particularity. Communication is the vessel in which the truth of oneself is conveyed to the other. It is through speech we that we reveal our humanness and our otherness. It is through speech that life together becomes meaningful. Likewise, life with men is where language is perfected and becomes speech and reply, address and response.

In order to invite dialogue into a relationship, Buber believes, the relationship must be both mutual and reciprocal. Mutuality means that each has turned to the other and truly values the other. Reciprocity means that each truly enters the relationship. Reciprocity means that each is prepared to contribute, that each responds to the relationship. Reciprocity is relation.

Reciprocity, the responsive participation of those involved in a relationship, gives that relationship life and meaning. An essential part of the reciprocal process and the life of dialogue is the act of confirmation. It is through confirmation, which by its very nature is reciprocal, that we encounter genuine relation and life becomes heavy with meaning.

Confirmation begins in the act of setting the other at a distance, making the other independent from the self. From a distance one can then choose to enter into relation with the other, and through this interhuman relation the self confirms the other. In the act of confirmation one sees the other for who the other is and who the other has the potential

to become. Through confirmation, otherness is acknowledged and accepted. Through confirmation one says “yes, I see *you*” to the other.

The invitation of dialogue into any relationship requires the recognition and confirmation of otherness by those in relation. For Arendt, otherness, the complete uniqueness of an individual, is revealed through action, and action only takes place in the presence of others. Action corresponds to the human condition of plurality and is the only activity that goes on between persons. Action can only be recognized in concert with others. Plurality or the fact that we live among other people, is the condition that allows us as humans to act and start something new. Action is present only in the public sphere. The public sphere is where one inserts oneself into the world through word and deed and thus distinguishes oneself from all others.

Communication—speech— is the conduit through which relation becomes real, and relation only becomes real through communication. Action and speech constitute the fabric of human relationships and affairs. Action and speech, word and deed, are essentially interaction—relation. Through word and deed one inserts oneself into the public sphere, into relation, in order to reveal one’s unique distinctness. Human togetherness, where people are really *with* others, is where speech and action reveal the who-ness of an actor. Action and speech are the human activities that allow one to reveal oneself in the world. This revelation of otherness allows human beings to interact and form meaningful relationships.

Action and speech are subjects of and dependent on relation, falling into the web of human relationships. The web of human relationships always affects and is affected

by the speech and action of those living in relation. When one inserts oneself into this web through action and speech, one's unique life story begins.

The web of human relationships is an important factor in the consequences of human action and speech and their affect on human relationships. One can never count on one's actions to achieve one's desired purpose because action is irreversible and unpredictable. Irreversible and unpredictable action continually leaves one guilty of the consequences of those actions, thus damaging and sometimes destroying relationships with others. The communicative acts of forgiveness and making promises are the remedies of the irreversible and unpredictable nature of action.

Once begun, actions and speech can never be reversed. Once begun, actions and speech enter the web of human relationships and the consequences become unpredictable. In order to insure the continuation of action and speech and, in the end, human relationships themselves, human beings forgive others the consequences of their actions and speech. In order to strengthen the fabric of human relationships, human beings make promises between one another to fulfill their obligation to each other.

Responsibility, guilt, and labor are enacted and find meaning between persons in relationships. Human relationships provide one with the *why* for accepting the burden of responsibility, guilt, and labor. Through relationships one finds human existence in the unity of contraries that is joy and suffering, blessing and burden. It is only in relation that one can realize genuine encounter and become truly human. Human relationships are the impetus for the horizon of significant outcomes borne in those relationships.

The final section of the intertextuality of care, “The Horizon of Significance: The Shaping of Life Together,” completes the connection between dialogue, care, and labor through the ideas of in turning one receives and natality, the miracle that saves the world.

Through the invitation of dialogue into one’s life something happens, one receives the heavenly bread of self being, one comes to understand that life is heavy with meaning, one’s soul “enlarges and transfigures” so much that a “surprise soul” emerges. By inviting dialogue into one’s life something happens...the self is given a horizon of significant outcomes that it did not expect and which give one a reason *why* to continue to accept and welcome the burden of communicative life.

Through the acceptance and welcoming of labor into one’s communicative life one recognizes the necessity of labor and the fact that with it comes the unity of contraries, joy and suffering, blessing and burden, triumph and struggle that allow one to engage in the full impact of human existence. Through the recognition of action as an activity found in the public sphere, conducted in the presence of others, through which one differentiates oneself and in which one can begin something new, one finds that action has the potentially significant outcome of saving our communicative lives. Natality, the action of beginning something new, is the final metaphor of the intertextuality of care. Through natality, a miracle because of which the unexpected can be expected, the extraordinary can happen. It is the contention of this work that the action of natality has the extraordinarily significant outcome of being able to save our communicative lives. Human beings can start something new; they can invite dialogue into their lives, thus realizing the unity of life.

The goal of this chapter was to describe the intertextuality of care by uniting the guiding care metaphors—obligation, relation, and horizon of significant outcomes—with the connecting metaphors from Buber’s philosophy of dialogue and Arendt’s philosophy of the human condition. The intertextuality of care will serve as a guiding touchstone to make explicit the undeniable connection between dialogue and caring. This chapter has laid out the connections between dialogue, care, and labor pointing to the relevance between each. The last chapter, “The Lived Unity: Welcoming the Contraries,” will bring these metaphors together, making the connections explicit and thus creating the communicative ethic of dialogue as the labor of care. In the next chapter the intertextuality of this metaphor is made explicit, enhancing understanding and making possible its application and engagement in everyday life.

Chapter Five: The Lived Unity: Welcoming the Contraries

Abstract

Dialogue as the labor of care is the seminal idea guiding this work. Thus far we have examined Buber’s understanding of dialogue as the foundation for dynamic communicative life, and care as an action constituted in communication. In addition, the relationship between dialogue and care has been bridged through the work of Martin Buber and Hannah Arendt. The direct connection between Buber’s theory of dialogue and the concept of care is seen primarily through the metaphors of responsibility (obligation), the interhuman (relation), and unity of life (significant outcome). Furthermore, Arendt illuminates this relationship through her conception of labor as a necessity of private life, and action as a necessity of public life. Through Arendt’s

distinction between the public and private spheres of existence and the way in which this work views dialogue as the labor of care, it becomes clear that the labor of caring occurs both in the public and private spheres. However, as previously highlighted, this work is careful to recognize the danger of the social and understands the importance of not blurring the lines between public and private life.

The invitation of dialogue into the caring relationship is necessary for the communicative life of caring and ultimately the unity of life as it is lived out in everyday relationships and encounters. Dialogue and the necessity of labor to all human caring converge in this chapter to make explicit what this work presents as the metaphor of dialogue as the labor of care. This metaphor re-engages the importance of care for both public and private life, and renews the communicative health of the action through a dialogic framework marked by the unity of contraries that is life lived in communication.

Dialogue as the labor of care represents the burden and blessing, joy and suffering, labor and action—the unity of contraries—that form the communicative associations of people. In this chapter, dialogue as the labor of care comes to life in these “contraries” as a renewed communicative ethic for caring. The first of two sections introduces the metaphor as the collective articulation of work related to dialogue, labor, and care. The second section applies dialogue as the labor of care to the work of Victor Hugo in *Les Misérables*. Dialogue as the labor of care is thus presented as a communicative ethic for public and private life.

Look into life. It is so constituted that we feel punishment everywhere. Are you what is called a fortunate man? Well, you are sad everyday. Each day has its great grief or its little care. Yesterday you were trembling for the health of one who is dear to you, to-day you fear your own; tomorrow it will be an anxiety about money, the

next day the slanders of a calumniator, the day after the misfortune of a friend, then the weather, then something broken or lost, then a pleasure for which you are reproached by your conscience or your vertebral column reproaches you; another time, the course of public affairs. Without counting heart troubles. And so on. One cloud is dissipated, another gathers. Hardly one day in a hundred of unbroken joy and unbroken sunshine. And you are of that small number who are fortunate! As to other men, stagnant night is upon them.

The true division of humanity is this: the luminous and the dark.

To diminish the number of the dark, to increase the number of the luminous, behold the aim. This is why we cry: education, knowledge! To learn is to read is to kindle a fire; every syllable spelled sparkles.

But he who says light does not necessarily say joy. There is suffering in the light; in excess it burns. Flame is hostile to the wing. To burn and yet to fly, this is the miracle of genius.

When you know and when you love you shall suffer still. The day dawns in tears. The luminous weep, were it only over the dark. (Les Misérables 854)

Introduction

Dialogue as the labor of care unfolds a vision of how the philosophy of dialogue can assist us as human beings to enact care in our daily lives. In the end, caring is both a blessing and a burden, joy and suffering, necessity and triumph. The invitation of dialogue into the communicative life of caring requires bravery and courage and thus creates strong and rare natures.

A communicative ethic such as dialogue as the labor of care is relevant to this particular historical moment, first, because several of the manifestations of postmodernity have left human beings at a loss as to how to connect with each other in meaningful ways. This postmodern moment is marked by extreme individualism, skepticism, and existential mistrust. These conditions prevent us from realizing the importance of care to human interaction and existence. They have left us without the communicative background to answer the call of care. Furthermore, changes in the family, changes in the roles of men and women, and an increasingly aging world population demand that we

take notice and make changes in our ability and willingness to care for the other. Today more than ever persons are being called into roles of caring and need to be able to connect to others.

Up until this point the communicative relationship between dialogue and care has been implicitly assumed and on occasion made explicit as a suggestion by authors such as Richard Johannesen, Nel Noddings, and Ronald C. Arnett. Through Martin Buber's theory of dialogue and the multidisciplinary literature related to care, this work points to the necessity of a more textured understanding of dialogue and care. The purpose of this work, then, is to make explicit this relationship. Through Arendt's concept of labor, dialogue and care are united in a metaphor that frames the nature of caring as obligatory and relational—an action that yields life-related communicative outcomes in the context of everyday public and private human interaction.

Like caring, dialogue is communicatively constituted. Through the small struggles of life strong and rare natures are created—great souls emerge. Those souls who invite dialogue into their lives and the lives of others are the persons who live a truly human existence. It is the contention of this work that through the invitation of dialogue into the lives of individuals caring and being cared for, human beings can find fulfillment in the joy of caring. In its simplest definition dialogue, according to Martin Buber, is “where each of the participants really has in mind the other or others in their present and particular being and turns to them with the intention of establishing a living mutual relation between himself and them” (*Between Man and Man* 19). In dialogue, there is a reaching out to the other and there is, in turn, response. Through this reaching out and response there emerges a genuine encounter in which the participants co-construct the

sphere of the “between.” The invitation of dialogue and life lived in the “between” is an unseen triumph of the everyday. Martin Buber offers dialogue as a vision of turning mere communication into communion (*Between Man and Man* 5). Dialogue is specifically necessary for this project not only for its intimate connection to care, but also because dialogue is always situated within a particular historical moment, always responding to the contingencies that surround it, and dialogue is always embedded. Through revealing the connection between dialogue and care this work shows a horizon of significant outcomes that occur when the one caring and the one cared for truly meet.

Arnett and Arneson once wrote, “Dialogue can transform the world- through reflection and action, dialogue enables us to determine the type of world we want to constitute together” (181). It is the hope of this author that in bringing together dialogue, caring, and labor that we can transform our current devaluation of caring and constitute a new way of engaging caring practices.

The philosophy of dialogue focuses our attention to the world in which we live with others. In dialogue there is an emphasis on the recognition that we inhabit the world, making it a world of meaning. Meaning is directly connected to and constituted through human speech. With this in mind it becomes apparent that dialogue is a philosophy of speech communicating.

As a philosophy of communication, dialogue highlights the communicative argument that words are constitutive; they bring something into being; they establish existence. If one chooses to invite dialogue, as opposed to monologue, into a relationship, one can invite genuine meeting with others. Because dialogue is a philosophy of communication that is intimately connected to care, this argument is

foundational. Because words are constitutive they contribute to and impact the caring relationship. The invitation of dialogue or monologue into the caring relationship determines the quality and depth of the caring relationship.

Dialogue is essential to a human understanding of communication because through dialogue communication becomes communion and communion is genuine meeting. Through genuine meeting one can realize the lived unity of life. Highlighting the communicative nature of dialogue establishes that it is through communication that one realizes lived unity. The invitation of dialogue into the caring relationship highlights the idea that in order for one to engage in true caring for another, in order for the caring to be more than simply acts of technique, communication must invite genuine meeting. The invitation of dialogue into the caring relationship is directly connected with the quality of one's life.

Buber's philosophy of dialogue is based on his understanding that it is through genuine relationships that we become truly human. The ontological fact of relation reminds us that we live in the world with others. Caring is an act that brings people together in relationships. Caring is necessary to relationships between persons primarily because caring is integrally tied to relationships. Caring is the act of reaching out and connecting with another's experience.

Dialogue as the labor of care brings together the metaphor of care, emphasizing care's role in the life sustaining web of human relationships, and the metaphor of dialogue, emphasizing the need of caring relationships to move beyond mere communication and invite communion. Finally, dialogue as the labor of care reminds one that while there are significant joys to caring, there is also suffering. Caring can be

viewed as one of the great unsung struggles of life. Great are the souls who recognize the necessity of caring. They are the heroes who realize the necessity of labor involved in caring. Labor, seen as the necessity that produces life, provides texture and meaning to dialogue and caring (Arendt, 88). According to Hannah Arendt:

Labor is the activity which corresponds to the biological process of the human body, whose spontaneous growth, metabolism, and eventual decay are bound to the vital necessities produced and fed into the process by labor. The human condition of labor is life itself. (7)

This work agrees with Arendt that labor is part of the unending life cycle and asserts that there is a connection between care and Arendt's view of labor. By linking labor and caring to this conception of life, this work suggests that caring is a part of the human life process and dialogue is needed for the sustenance of caring relationships. In other words, inviting dialogue into the caring relationship is necessary for the life and fulfillment of caring. The driving metaphor of labor reveals and emphasizes that not only is care a necessity for human communicative life, care is at the same time a blessing and a burden. The necessity of labor points to the notion that care is an imperative for everyday communicative life.

For purposes of shaping the communicative ethic dialogue as the labor of care, caring is defined as an *obligation* to the other grounded in *relation* with a particular other. Caring requires both the ability to care and the ability to be cared for. The focus of attention in caring is always on the other but there is a *horizon of significant outcomes* that emerges from the caring relationship. Three guiding metaphors emerge from this

culminated definition and serve as touchstones for understanding the nature of care as communicatively constituted: obligation, relation, and horizon of significant outcomes.

The direct connection between Buber's theory of dialogue and the concept of care is seen primarily through the metaphors of responsibility (obligation), the interhuman (relation), and unity of life (significant outcome). Arendt illuminates this relationship through her conception of labor as a necessity of private life (obligation), action as a necessity of public life (relation), and natality as the extraordinary human ability to begin something new (significant outcome). Through these metaphorical connections chapter four set up the intertextuality of care and points to their connection to the caring relationship.

It is the goal of this last chapter, "The Lived Unity: Welcoming the Contraries," to weave the metaphorical web pointed to in chapter four. It is the contention of this work that the invitation of dialogue into the caring relationship is necessary for the communicative life of caring and ultimately the lived unity of life. Dialogue, the communicative action of care, and the necessity of labor to all human interaction converge in this chapter to make explicit what this work presents as the metaphor of dialogue as the labor of care. After the metaphorical web of dialogue as the labor of care has been made clear, the second half of this chapter invites the novel *Les Misérables* into the conversation to serve as the illumination of the power of the communicative ethic dialogue as the labor of care.

Communication Ethics: Ground Upon Which to Stand

In *Dialogic Confession: Bonhoeffer's Rhetoric of Responsibility*, Ronald C. Arnett sets forth a working definition of communication ethics that provides a clear sense

of “fuzzy clarity”—guidance without *a priori* clarity— for the field of communication regarding the role of communication ethics (201). Communication ethics, according to Arnett, “informs us about what is ethical, bringing philosophy and information into direct contact with persons and the historical situation” (*Dialogic Confession* 200). The role of communication ethics is to provide those looking for ground to stand upon practical wisdom—*phronesis*—about what is “right” and “appropriate” for a given historical moment (200). For Arnett, communication ethics involves “the interplay of narrative framework, behavior (social practices), the historical situation, and impact upon the Other” (203). Arnett explains further:

Communication ethics involves principles coming from a narrative framework and particulars emergent from the historical moment. Principles guide behavior; additionally, particulars guide and temper behavior. The particulars—communicative relationships and the historical moment—in interplay with narrative principles form communication ethics. (Arnett, *Dialogic Confession* 203-204)

In this explanation Arnett emphasizes the importance of the interplay of principles and practices that guide one’s communicative behavior as essential to the work of communication ethics. Dialogue as the labor of care is a communicative ethic that understands and stresses the necessity of this interplay.

Dialogue as the labor of care is offered as a communicative ethic that offers insight into the ethical communicative behavior of those in caring relationships. By bringing the communicative philosophy of dialogue and the human condition together with the social practices and behaviors of caring relationships informed by the

circumstances of this current historical moment, dialogue as the labor of care offers practical wisdom to those looking for “fuzzy clarity” in fulfilling the communicative necessity of caring. From the narrative framework of caring three primary metaphors emerge to suggest that caring is communicatively constituted: obligation, relation, and the horizon of significant outcomes. From the particulars of this historical moment, the communicative manifestations of postmodernity and the current circumstances that demand us as a society to reclaim the value of caring to our lives, it is clear that the importance of care is eclipsed and the communicative enactment of care is in crisis. Caring is a communicatively constituted relationship that not only has a significant influence on individual lives, as many care scholars pointed out, but is directly linked to the continued existence of the human race.

Dialogue as the labor of care is communicative ethic that offers hope for this hour: hope that we can recognize the importance of care to our lives; hope that in inviting dialogue into caring relationships we can enact the caring that is calling us into responsibility; and finally, hope that in welcoming the labor that is care we can invite the unity of contraries of joy and suffering, blessing and burden, struggle and triumph into our daily lives.

This chapter weaves the metaphorical web of dialogue as the labor of care. Employing the primary metaphors of obligation, relation, and horizon of significant outcomes set forth in chapter four as guiding threads, the following sections make explicit the connection between dialogue, caring, and labor.

Labor: The Necessity of Caring that Bears Blessing and Burden

Dialogue as the labor of care is a communicative ethic that asserts the intimate connection between the philosophy of dialogue and the act of caring with the additional metaphor of labor. Labor is the driving component behind the connection between dialogue and caring because as a necessary part of everyday living, labor illuminates the truth of life: our responsibility to the other is a blessing and a burden, joy and suffering, triumph and struggle. This unity of contraries found in the labor of inviting dialogue into the caring relationship configures how we live and interact. It is the foundation of who we are as individuals and as a community. Labor is the call of the other on each person—a necessity to act (care) out of responsibility in the interest of someone other than oneself.

Arendt's conception of labor reminds us that obligation binds one to a duty and that these duties are part of the necessity of life. Caring is an act of labor. Arendt defines labor as "the activity which corresponds to the biological process of the human body, whose spontaneous growth, metabolism, and eventual decay are bound to the vital necessities, produced and fed into the life process by labor. The human condition of labor is life itself..." (7). Banned to the private sphere, Arendt's description of labor explains many of the reasons that caring has been eternally devalued.

According to Arendt, "Life becomes a burden to man because of his innate repugnance to futility (pointlessness). This burden is all the heavier because labor is urgent and actually forced upon man by necessity, as the elementary need of life" (118-119). The necessity of caring is a burden and has been depicted in most societies as futile. In recent times especially, caring has been forced upon people by necessity. The changing circumstances of today's society, such as the increasing number of elderly

needing care, has forced the responsibility of caring onto their children. In many cases middle aged children with children of their own either do not want or are not capable of the responsibility of caring. The continual rise in nursing homes for the elderly is not only a sign that the population is getting older, it is also a sign that people are looking for ways to escape the call to care. The fact of care is an elementary need of life, the enactment of care a labor many people are unable or unwilling to engage in.

Caring is an act of labor that has historically been enacted in the private sphere. Caring, as Arendt describes labor, has typically been the responsibility of those persons less important in the eyes of society. Caring has been viewed as undesirable, an activity from which to escape but always recognized as an essential activity of life.

The labor of caring is a necessity and part of the unending lifecycle of relationships. Caring is needed in almost every aspect of private life, i.e. children, neighbors, friends, and family. The labor of caring is also a necessity of in many aspects of public life, for example, the doctor-patient relationship, the teacher-student relationship, the mentor-apprentice relationship. The need for care is an aspect of both public and private life. Furthermore, the overwhelming increase of the need for care, for example, in daycares, nursing homes, and similar contexts has contributed to what Arendt warns against in the social. Because the needs of the private have been forced upon the public, both those caring and those being cared for have lost their differentiation, lost their ability to distinguish themselves in the world, an aspect of the public realm. Furthermore, many of these caring institutions have inadequate resources both communicative and material to provide the proper care of those in need, as aspect of private realm.

Viewed as part of the unending life cycle of relationships, caring has no beginning and no end. Even though new relationships enter one's life and others leave, it is unlikely that one can pinpoint a time in their life that one actually began caring for others. And unless a person either passes away or abandons society, caring is part of that life at least to some small degree. The labor of caring never comes to end as long as life lasts.

As part of the unending necessity of human existence the labor of caring is viewed as futile because caring never produces anything but life itself, it leaves nothing behind, and the result of its effort is almost as quickly consumed as the effort is spent. The caring relationship never produces anything tangible and because we live in a material world that emphasizes "what do I get out of this," caring for another is many times viewed as a futile activity.

The labor of caring has been eternally devalued and viewed as futile because it is endlessly repetitive and produces nothing tangible. The labor of caring is consumed almost as immediately as it is produced. In order for society to begin reclaim the value of the labor of care we must begin to see the necessity of care not merely as a futile burden but, as mothers from the beginning of time have known, as a blessing also.

Even though the labor of caring leaves nothing tangible behind, caring produces the seed of caring in the one cared for and ultimately in society. When a mother labors to care for her children she teaches them how to care for others. The caring we give is the caring we teach. Even though the caring one bestows on another is consumed as soon as it is offered, the mere fact of instant "consumption" of the caring given gives the one caring further reason to continue caring. When someone is sick and in need of care, the continual need calls the one caring into consistent responsibility to care for that sick

person. Even though caring has been viewed as futile, the labor of caring does produce life itself. The labor of caring is necessity because it produces life. The quality of that caring relationship, of that life, is partially determined by the kind of communication engaged in to enact the labor of care. The labor of caring is an inescapable necessity addressed in daily life through which human beings can engage the intensity of life. Through the labor of inviting dialogue into the caring relationship human beings can experience the unity of contraries of joy and suffering, blessing and burden that make life meaningful.

The Labor of Care: A Necessity that Brings Life

The labor of caring is a necessary element of human existence. Furthermore, the labor of inviting dialogue into the caring relationship is necessary for the existence of genuine caring relationships. Dialogue as the labor of care brings to the foreground the necessity of caring in human relationships and, more importantly, the necessity of inviting dialogue into caring relationships.

Just as care is a necessity to the fulfillment of human existence and the invitation of dialogue a necessity to the fulfillment of the caring relationship, the labor involved in caring and dialogue is blessing and burden, joy and suffering. Using Arendt's conception of labor illuminates the idea that while both caring and the invitation of dialogue involve toil and trouble, painful exhaustion, and unending burden, they also bring about life's most treasured reward, joy, which is a deep abiding presence that remains even through suffering.

Dialogue as the labor of care calls attention to the idea that there is burden: first, the burden of caring for the other itself; second, and the communicative burden of inviting dialogue into the relationship. Caring, as Noddings suggests, always involves one of two responses—either “I am here for you” or “I must.” Arendt’s notion of labor as burden highlights the obligation and burden of these responses. When the other calls one into responsibility there is a burden to respond, a burden to care. Many times the burden of caring is exhausting. The burden of caring requires continual effort, because caring never ends. Moreover, continually inviting dialogue into the caring relationship requires one to enter into the relationship with one’s whole being, turning to the other in recognition of his/her uniqueness and the uniqueness of the situation. Responsibility is response. These elements are the necessities of the communicative life of caring, but can be at the same time a burden and exhausting. If the invitation of dialogue into the caring relation is removed, the essence of the relation itself is changed. The impact of the caring relation is only truly felt through the communicative invitation of dialogue into that relation. They are bound together in labor, necessity, of life lived together. However, even though there is burden in this relation, Arendt’s conception of labor stresses that there is also reward.

By accentuating the labor component of the connection between dialogue and caring, this work calls attention to the fact that not only is there toil and trouble involved in the caring relationship, not only is it exhausting to invite dialogue continually into that relationship, there is both joy and blessing that emerge as byproducts of the relationship. Because caring involves labor and burden there is an intensity borne of that labor that

allows the full impact of life to be felt. The impact of toiling through the sometimes exhausting burden of caring is the realization of rare spells of joy.

The rare spells of joy found in caring can only be realized communicatively and require the invitation of dialogue. By inviting dialogue into the caring relationship, one responds to a unique other in a concrete moment. One answers for the moment to which one is called, in this case the moment that calls one to engage in care. When one responds on behalf of the moment to which one is called, one fulfills responsibility to the other, to the world, to oneself. Therefore, in Arendt's words, one has fulfilled one's responsibility to life and thus realizes the blessing of life, joy.

The rewards of a fully realized caring relationship are pleasurable regeneration and joy. As part of the unending communicative cycle of caring, inviting dialogue into the relationship generates rare moments of genuine meeting in which those in the relationship are regenerated. They are given new energy to continue caring and to continue inviting dialogue into the relation. Furthermore, in those rare moments of genuine meeting the lived unity of life is felt and the joy of life is met.

Arendt's conception of labor reminds us that obligation binds one to duties, and that these duties are part of the necessity of life. As a necessary part of everyday living, labor illuminates the truth of life: our responsibility to the other is both a blessing and a burden. This unity of contraries configures how we live and interact. It is the foundation of who we are as individuals and as a community. Labor is the call of the other on each person—an imperative to act out of responsibility in the interest of someone other than oneself. Labor is the private necessity that provides the ground from which human action reaches out to the other.

Action: Entering the Web of Caring Relationships

Labor is the human activity through which persons in the caring relationship recognize and welcome the burden that is involved with caring. Action and speech, the human activities that goes on between persons, not only allow those in the caring relationship to engage the task at hand, but allow those in the relationship to differentiate themselves from others and to insert themselves into the web of human relationships.

Action and speech correspond to the human condition of plurality and are the only activities that go on between persons. As already mentioned, caring is an action (ground in the necessity of labor) that brings people together in relation. Through action and speech one can truly invite genuine meeting with another in a caring relationship.

Action and speech constitute the fabric of caring relationships. Human togetherness, where people are really *with* others, is where speech and action reveal the who-ness of an actor. In the caring relationship action and speech determine not only the quality of the caring, but also the potential of the relationship. If one truly engages the caring relationship, acting on behalf of the other, inviting—through action and speech—dialogue into the relationship, those in the relationship can realize the full intensity of the relationship. Furthermore, through action and speech those in the relationship reveal the extent to which they care, revealing their “who-ness” to the other. When the one caring acts genuinely on behalf of the other, one reveal the kind of person one is. For example, when some people caught in the Twin Towers on 9-11 enacted the ultimate engagement of caring by choosing to stay with those who were unable to leave, they revealed an unparalleled courage in the face of tragedy. This extreme example finds echo in

countless other less striking, but still significant, daily practices that shape lives of caring. Through action persons reveals who they are and the extent to which they are willing to engage the necessity of caring.

Action and speech are the human activities that allow one to reveal oneself. This differentiation allows human beings to interact and form meaningful relationships. It is through action and speech that human beings insert themselves into the web of human relationships. When one inserts oneself into this web through action and speech, one's unique life story begins. Through the invitation of dialogue into the caring relationship, human beings not only reveal the extent to which they care for another, they also effect and affect their life story. As Arendt points out, it is in acting and speaking that one's life story commences and continues. Through the invitation of dialogue into the caring relationship, the story of the individual becomes one of responsibility, labor, and genuine meeting. Through the invitation of dialogue into the life of caring, the story of caring can change from one of futility to one of lived unity.

This work calls for the necessity of inviting (through action and speech) dialogue into the caring relationship, beginning something new, thus changing the story of care. It is the contention of this work that through the invitation of dialogue into caring relationships, caring can emerge from the current crisis and we can change the view of caring from futile to significant.

Responding to the Call of Care

Caring as a call into responsibility demands that the one caring respond to the needs of the other. As realized through Buber's idea of dialogue, the quality of the caring relationship depends on the authenticity of the response. One can engage in the act of

caring without inviting genuine meeting; however, the relationship then can never reach its potential. The communicative life of caring requires inviting dialogue into the relationship. The extent to which caring is fully realized is determined by the extent to which dialogue is invited—never demanded—into the relationship. Dialogue as the labor of care points to the idea that the communicative life of caring is brought to fruition when there is a genuine meeting where those involved really have in mind the other in their present and particular being.

According to Buber, every human being is responsible for and answerable to the signs that call to him/her everyday. One has only to be attentive to the moment and the other to hear, see, and feel the signs of address. However, as Buber points out, being attentive is not the decisive factor in taking responsibility for the address directed at one. The decisive factor is in the response. But human beings have built armor around themselves in order to avoid responsibility and ignore the call of the other. Buber describes this armor as that which wards off the signs of address because the risk of response is “too dangerous for us, the soundless thunderings seem to threaten us with annihilation, and from generation to generation we perfect the defense apparatus” (*Between* 10). According to Buber, when one senses the signs of address this armor allows one to say to oneself, “Be calm...nothing is required of you, you are not addressed...” (*Between Man and Man* 10).

Becoming aware of the signs of address and responding to the other because the other has reached out are both necessary elements of the caring relationship; it is a labor. Human beings avoid them, ignore them, build armor around themselves in order to excuse themselves from the obligation of caring because caring is not an easy task.

Caring is a burden; genuine caring requires not only one's soul—one's entire being—but also a daily commitment to response. Labor is that commitment.

Dialogue as the labor of care requires that one recognize one's obligation to the other, to oneself, and the world. In both dialogue and care there is an obligation that requires a recognition of and engagement in the labor necessary on the part of those involved in the caring relationship. Through the necessity of labor one finds joy and suffering, blessing and burden, triumph and struggle.

Responsibility and guilt are significant metaphors that emerge in one's engagement with the obligation not only to respond to the call of care, but to invite dialogue into the communicative life of the caring relationship. Caring as an act that is communicatively constituted requires more than superficial response. In order for the caring relationship to have meaning, those involved are obligated to recognize the necessity of labor in the caring relationship and the necessity of the invitation of dialogue into the relationship.

The life of the caring relationship is fulfilled in the labor of response to the address of the one in need of care. By responding to the caring relationship, one accepts the responsibility and burden of caring for another. It is the obligation and necessity of the one called to care to respond. In responding to the need of the other the caring relationship comes alive. In order for those in the caring relationship to realize the lived unity that can become life their responsibility is not only to accept the labor and burden of response, but it is a necessity for those involved to invite dialogue into the caring relationship.

The invitation of dialogue into the caring relationship requires more than simple response on the part of those in the caring relationship. For dialogue to be invited into the relationship it is the obligation and labor of those in the relationship to respond. Respond to what? “To what happens to one, to what is to be seen and heard and felt. Each concrete hour allotted to the person, with its content drawn from the world and from its destiny, is speech for the man who is attentive” (Buber, *Between Man and Man* 16). Response in the caring relation requires that one caring be attentive to everything about the call of the other that can be seen, heard, and felt. In order to respond to the signs of need that can be seen, heard, and felt the one caring must be attentive. There are concrete hours that address one, but each person must first see the signs of address, hear what calls, and feel the address of the other. When the one caring is attentive, that person is then able to understand the need of the other and respond. It is the labor of genuine response that will invite dialogue into the caring relationship.

The person who is attentive has an obligation to the caring relationship that calls his/her presence into responsibility to respond with the soul, or, in Buber’s words, with the entire being. Responding with one’s whole being implies that those in the caring relationship enter the situation and act with the whole of their substance. The one caring can be attentive by recognizing that caring is a labor in which one must take an active part in the life of the other. The one cared for can be attentive by responding to the caring with his/her whole being. Both the one caring and the one cared for must be attentive and participate by responding to the communicative labor of inviting genuine meeting into the relationship. Attentiveness requires the labor of one’s hands, one’s heart, and one’s soul.

Attentiveness also requires response to the concrete moment calling one into responsibility to care. In order to invite dialogue into the caring relationship both the one caring and the one cared for must be attentive to the concrete situation and respond in unique and authentic ways. Each caring situation, each moment calling for care, each person in need of care is unlike any other and cannot be answered with a formula or a technique. Response to the situation is equally as important as response to the person when one is called into responsibility. Each situation is new and demands a unique answer, despite any similarity the situation has to those of the past. It is the responsibility of the attentive person to recognize the uniqueness of the situation and answer for it.

Responsibility in the caring relationship is response to someone in need of care. Responsibility involves the one called to care taking an active part in the life the other. The one caring is answerable to the one in need of care. In reaching out and calling for care the one in need of care entrusts the other with something of him/her. In reaching out the one in need makes a claim on the other. In reaching out there is a leap of faith by the one in need of care that the one called will hear the call and respond. In reaching out the one in need of care offers the other a trust that involves blessing and burden, labor and action. Because the one caring has a responsibility to the other he/she is bound to take care of that trust. What the one who is called into responsibility to care does with that trust determines the nature of the caring relationship.

Obligation and responsibility require the one called to care to answer; when that person fails to respond, that trust is lost, responsibility becomes a “phantom,” and the caring relationship takes on a superficial nature, if it survives at all. When one fails to respond to need of care in another, genuine meeting cannot occur. In order for there ever

to be a possibility for the caring relationship to become more than superficial, something must call persons back to the caring relation. Guilt is the something that calls persons back to the caring relation.

Guilt is the human condition that gives rebirth to trust, to responsibility, and to the caring relationship. In failing to respond to a legitimate claim, one is guilty. True guilt, existential guilt, has to do with one's engagement with the world, in this case the caring relationship. Existential guilt is ignited when one fails in how one cares for other people. Guilt is ignited when one does not engage in the labor that is caring. Guilt is ignited when one fails to invite genuine meeting—dialogue—into the caring relationship.

The invitation of dialogue into the caring relationship implies that caring is about more than simply taking care of the need of the other. The caring relationship can and does contribute to authentic existence if those in the relationship recognize and accept the labor involved in caring, the responsibility of genuine response, and that caring is a necessity of life through which one can realize the unity of contraries of blessing and burden.

The Caring Relationship: The Welcoming of Labor and the Action of Invitation

Obligation is the element of caring that calls one into responsibility. Relation is the element of caring that gives one the reason why to accept the burden of caring. The caring relationship requires that the one caring take an active part in the life of the one being cared for. Relation is the aspect of caring that points one away from the self and toward the other in connection. Connection is essential to the quality of the caring relationship. Communication is the mechanism used to establish and maintain caring

relationships. The quality of the caring relationship is ascertained by the type of communication one employs to engage the relationship.

The between, then, is a fundamental metaphor for caring, because caring is not an act in the person but emerges between persons. The significance of Buber's concept of the between to caring is that it moves one from a focus on the self and focuses one's attention on the relation between oneself and another. By emphasizing Buber's concept of the between in the caring relation, this work highlights the necessity and power of the unity of contraries found in these relations. Life is best lived in the unity of contraries, between joy and suffering, blessing and burden, and triumph and struggle.

The caring relationship takes on meaning for the lives of those involved when each one in the relationship invites certain communicative habits into the relationship. The first and probably most important for the realization of a meaningful relationship is the recognition that the other is radically different from oneself. The quality of the caring relationship is partly determined through the recognition on the part of the one caring that the other is a particular other, radically different from oneself. By recognizing that the other is radically other than oneself, one responds to that other in a unique fashion. The recognition of otherness requires the one caring to truly understand the other and that other's embedded circumstance. The recognition of otherness invites a meaningful caring relationship because if one recognizes the other as unique, one's communication of caring for will be fashioned to this "particular" individual.

The caring relationship begins to become meaningful when the one caring recognizes that the one being cared for is totally other than him/herself. The caring relationship has the opportunity to reach fruition when the one caring brings certain

communicative abilities with them to the relationship. As discussed previously, the one caring must first choose to assume the burden of caring. By accepting the responsibility to care the one caring turns to the other in relation. The one caring may be called to enact a variety of communicative gifts: respect, devotion, mutuality, trust, patience, honesty, humility, love, empathy, and compassion. These are only some of the gifts that may be required in the caring relationship.

One of the most important communicative gifts the one caring brings to the caring relationship is the gift of a willingness to learn. Because no two circumstances are the same and no two people need to be cared for in the same way, caring requires that the one caring be able to learn continually in and from the caring relation.

A willingness to learn is not only a gift the one caring brings to the caring relationship—a willingness to learn is a gift the one caring gives oneself. Caring is act in which one answers the need of another. Caring is an act in which one helps another. Because of the components of obligation, burden, and relation, the other is not the only recipient of rewards in the caring relation. There is a horizon of significance that enables and encourages the caring relationship to continue. Through the response of caring one learns about the other, about relationships, about communication, and about oneself. Through the acceptance of burden one realizes a lived unity. In accepting burden and toiling through the caring relationship one not only realizes the suffering of caring and human relationships, but finds the joy of true engagement.

Caring is an action that is communicatively constituted through the labor of inviting dialogue into the relationship. The labor of inviting dialogue into the caring relationship is a necessity for realization of caring. If human beings turn to the other,

accepting the burden that is caring, they can realize the lived unity of life: joy and suffering, blessing and burden, triumph and struggle.

Caring is enacted in human relationships in which those involved are truly connected and recognize the uniqueness of the other and the circumstance. Caring is the valuable labor that sustains our lives and enables humanity to survive. The invitation (through action and speech) of dialogue into the caring relationship has the potential of natality, to begin something new, and to change the story of caring from of futility to one of significance.

Les Misérables: The Unity of Contraries

For there are many great deeds done in the small struggles of life. There is a determined though unseen bravery, which defends itself foot to foot in the darkness against the fatal invasions of necessity and of baseness. Noble and mysterious triumphs which no eye sees, which no renown rewards, which no flourish of triumph salutes. Life, misfortunes, isolation, abandonment, poverty, are battlefields which have their heroes; obscure heroes, sometimes greater than the illustrious heroes.

Strong and rare natures are thus created; misery, almost always a stepmother, is sometimes a mother; privation gives birth to power of soul and mind; distress is the nurse of self-respect; misfortune is a good breast for great souls. (Les Misérables 588)

As Hugo asserts, “*there are many great deeds done in the small struggles of life,*” and caring is one of those deeds. Through the creation of the communication ethic of dialogue as the labor of care one finds Hugo’s comment on “illustrious heroes” even more profound. In this passage one sees each of these metaphors emerge.

Caring is a deed from which illustrious, unseen heroes emerge. The communicative ethic of dialogue as the labor of care begins with the idea of caring. Caring is a human activity “that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our ‘world’ so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our

bodies, our selves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life sustaining web” (Tronto and Fisher 40). To this end, the life sustaining web of caring, one finds joy and suffering, triumph and struggle. As joy and suffering, care is an essential part of the human condition and is communicatively constituted.

Dialogue as the labor of care is offered as a communicative ethic that provides guidance without *a priori* clarity. A practical wisdom is informed through the philosophical theories of Buber’s conception of dialogue and Arendt’s conception of the human condition—labor and action. The goal of this project has not been to provide a formula or technique for caring. Caring is act of labor in which those involved discover between them the caring needed. The goal of this communicative ethic is to point those looking for ground to stand on in the direction of welcoming labor and dialogue into the caring relationship. Ultimately, there is no dictate for the caring relationship—labor is carried through dialogue in the stories manifested in the lives of those responsive to something beyond themselves.

Both Buber and Arendt demonstrate the power of stories for understanding the lives of people living together. Buber used Hasidic tales to give people a deeper understanding of the meaning of life. Buber never used stories to suggest exactly “how” to enact something. Buber used stories to help guide those looking for answers. According to Arnett and Arneson, Buber used Hasidic tales to point a person in a direction without dictating: “The answer is found between the reader, text, and the historical moment of one’s living” (137).

Arendt states that it is through action and speech one inserts oneself into the web of human relationships and thus begins one’s unique life story. Because stories are

produced in the web of human relationships, Arendt argues, they can be recorded and subsequently told and retold. Stories, according to Arendt, tell us about their subjects, “the hero” in the center of each story (184). “*Who* somebody is or was we can know only by knowing the story of which he is himself the hero—his biography, in other words; everything else we know of him, including the work he may have produced and left behind, tells us only *what* he is or was” (186). Because through action and speech one reveals who one is, the story of *whom* one is can be told as a result of one’s action and speech in the web of human relationships.

This last section of this work employs the use of Victor Hugo’s novel *Les Misérables* in order to illuminate the enactment of dialogue as the labor of care, pointing in the direction of the fuzzy clarity found between the reader, the text, and the historical moment. Through the characters of the Bishop, Jean Valjean and Javert, the who of dialogue as the labor of care is revealed. The actions of these characters points to the enactment of dialogue as the labor of care.

Dialogue: The Invitation to Life

The bishop turned to the man:

“Monsieur, sit down and warm yourself: we are going to take supper presently, and your bed will be made ready while you sup.”

At last the man quite understood; his face, the expression of which till then had been gloomy and hard, now expressed stupefaction, doubt, and joy, and became absolutely wonderful. He began to stutter like a madman.

True? What! You will keep me? You won’t drive me away? A convict! You call me monsieur and don’t say ‘Get out, dog!’ as everybody else does...

Every time he said this word monsieur, with his gently solemn and heartily hospitable vice, the man’s contenance lighted up. Monsieur to a convict, is a glass of water to a man dying of thirst at sea. Ignominy thirsts for respect...

“Monsieur Cure,” said the man, “you are good; you don’t despise me. You take me into your house; you light candles for me, and I hav’n’t hid from you where I come from, and how miserable I am.”

The bishop, who was sitting near him, touched his hand gently and said: "You need not tell me who you are...I tell you, who are a traveler, that you are more at home here than I; whatever is here is yours. What need have I to know your name? Besides, before you told me, I knew it."

The man opened his eyes in astonishment:

"Really? You knew my name?"

"Yes," answered the bishop, "your name is my brother." (Les Misérables 66-67)

The actions of the bishop, Monseigneur Bienvenu, in this passage exemplify what Buber conceived of as an invitation to genuine meeting: dialogue. In choosing to invite dialogue into his relation with Valjean from their initial encounter, the bishop invited Valjean into a genuine encounter, which ultimately changed Valjean's life. In this passage the guiding dialogic metaphors of turning, confirmation, communion, address and response and responsibility bring the story of dialogue alive.

In the beginning the bishop turns to Valjean with his soul and treats Valjean as a man. The bishop calls him "*Monsieur*" which, to a convict, is a glass of water to a man dying of thirst at sea. The bishop confirms to Valjean that he sees him as he truly is—"miserable, a convict"—and in calling him *monsieur* confirms in Valjean what he knows he has the potential to become. The bishop hears the address of Valjean and responds to this claim. He responds through acts of care, kindness, and respect. He gives Valjean what he needs physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

In choosing to turn to this man and respond with his entire being, the bishop changes the course of Valjean's life forever. In choosing to be genuine and respectful with Valjean, the bishop not only communicates to Valjean who he is, he communicates to Valjean the type of man he can become. The way in which previous persons had treated Valjean upon his release from prison only confirmed to him his wretchedness as a permanent condition and served to destroy him even further. The bishop, on the other

hand, invited Valjean into his home. He invited Valjean to change his life. He invited Valjean into the lived unity of life, dialogue. The bishop not only called Valjean monsieur, he called him brother.

Caring: To Be Caressed

Let us say by the way, to be blind and to be loved, is in fact in this earth where nothing is complete, one of the most strangely exquisite forms of happiness. To have continually at your side a woman, a girl, a sister, a charming being, who is there because you have need of her, and because she cannot do without you, to know you are indispensable to her who is necessary to you, to be able at all times to measure her affection by the amount of her company that she gives you, and to say to yourself; she consecrates to me all her time, because I possess her whole heart; to see the thought instead of the face; to be sure of the fidelity of one being in the eclipse of the world; to imagine the rustling of her dress the rustling of wings; to hear her moving to and fro, going out, coming in, talking, singing, and to think that you are the centre of those steps, of those words, of that song; to manifest at every minute your personal attraction; to feel yourself powerful by so much the more as you are the more infirm; to become in darkness, and by reason of darkness, the star around which this angel gravitates; few happy lots can equal that. The supreme happiness of life is the conviction that we are loved; loved for ourselves—say rather, loved in spite of ourselves, this conviction the blind have. In their calamity, to be served, is to be caressed. (Les Misérables 145)

Monseigneur Bienvenu had been formerly, according to the accounts of his early manhood, a passionate, perhaps a violent, man. His universal tenderness was less an instinct of nature than the result of a strong conviction filtered through life into his heart, slowly dropping in upon him, thought by thought; for a character as well as a rock, may be worn into by drops of water. Such marks are ineffaceable; such formations are indestructible” (Les Misérables 48).

The caring demonstrated through the bishop’s sister is the kind of caring that invites more than healing. This kind of caring invites happiness in the midst of need. The relationship between the bishop and his sister shows a picture of caring that reveals the depth to which caring can enhance a person’s life and soul. The devotion of the bishop’s sister does not end in simply taking care of the bishop’s functional needs—his blindness.

The genuine caring the bishop's sister brings comfort, caress, affection, fidelity and, ultimately, happiness to the bishop's life.

The bishop's sister embodies the true face of caring. In her devotion and caring for her brother the bishop's sister is always there when he needs her. Furthermore, she understands him and what it is that he needs from her. As a result of the absolute conviction of her caring for him, the bishop knows and feels how much she cares for him. As a result of her absolute devotion to her brother, the bishop knows he is the center of her attention, care, and love. As a result of his need of her and her genuine response to him a powerful relationship is borne, one in which the care of one in response to the need of the other creates the love and happiness of both.

Obligation: Dialogue as the Call of Care

When Jean Valjean left the bishop's house, as we have seen, his mood was one that he had never known before. He could understand nothing of what was passing within him. He set himself stubbornly in opposition to the angelic deeds and the gentle words of the old man, "you have promised me to become an honest man. I am purchasing your soul, I withdraw it from the spirit of perversity and I give it to God Almighty." This came back to him incessantly. To this celestial tenderness, he opposed pride, which is the fortress of evil in man. He felt dimly that the pardon of this priest was the hardest assault, and the most formidable attack which he had yet sustained; that his hardness of the heart would be complete, if he resisted this kindness; that if he yielded, he must renounce that hatred with which the acts of the other men had for so many years filled his soul, and in which he found satisfaction; that, this time, he must conquer or be conquered, and that the struggle, a gigantic and decisive struggle, had begun between his own wickedness, and the goodness of this man...

The bishop had hurt his soul, as a too vivid light would have hurt his eyes on coming out of the dark. The future life, the possible life that was offered to him henceforth, all pure and radiant, filled him with trembling and anxiety. He no longer knew really where he was. Like an owl who should see the sun suddenly rise, the convict had been dazzled and blinded by virtue. One thing was certain, nor did he himself doubt it, that he was no longer the same man, that was all changed in him, that it was no longer in his power to prevent the bishop from having talked to him and having touched him (Les Misérables 96-97).

The metaphors of responsibility, guilt, and labor are significant in one's engagement with an obligation. In this passage from *Les Misérables*, the connection between the care metaphor of obligation and those of responsibility, guilt, and labor come together to reveal the obligatory nature of dialogue as the labor of care.

Jean Valjean finds that in the act of "purchasing his soul" the bishop calls him into responsibility. In this act the bishop binds Valjean in obligation to himself, to the bishop, to mankind, and ultimately to God. Against his will, Valjean realizes that he has made a binding promise to become the man he has the potential to become. This promise turns out to be a blessing and a burden. In his angst, Valjean realizes the decisive struggle it will require to fulfill this promise. This promise necessitates that Valjean labor through his past transgressions and re-engage the world and those in it. The bishop calls Valjean to responsibility for his life and invokes in him a sense of duty and indebtedness. When Valjean considers the possibility of turning away from this obligation, guilt calls him back to responsibility. The guilt born of his relationship with the bishop and ultimately mankind reminds Valjean of his responsibility and encourages him to seek the reconciliation he so desperately needs.

From the point at which Valjean realizes his obligation to the bishop until the day he dies, Jean Valjean accepts and welcomes the obligation of labor and responsibility of caring for others. In seeking reconciliation through his acts of giving to the poor, especially children, Valjean continually looks for the boy from whom he stole the sous. In his role as Mayor Madeleine, Valjean begins to reach out and participate in the community by residing fairly and genuinely over citizens' disputes. When he hears that a young woman is unjustly punished he comes to her defense to set things right.

As it turns out that woman's incarceration for prostitution is in this circumstance due to the action of Valjean. In the course of reconciling with her and the unforeseeable events that take place as the result of his actions, Valjean comes to care about and in the end cares for her. Jean Valjean is first called into responsibility by the bishop. The bishop calls Valjean to be the man he can become, a man of responsibility and action. The call of the bishop changes the very nature and direction of Valjean's life. The second time Valjean is called into life-changing obligation is upon the death of Fantine. When Fantine dies she turns to Valjean and asks him to care for her child. Valjean accepts the burden of this obligation, and it changes the very fabric of his soul. Through Valjean's acceptance of the claim that Fantine makes on his very life, to care for Cosette, Valjean enters a genuine caring relationship and receives the lived unity found in such a relationship.

In all these and other acts, Valjean is answering the call of the other, responding to the address of those in need and at the same time responding to the obligation he felt to the bishop, to himself, and to God. When the bishop touched him, bought his soul from the devil, he offered Valjean a new life, and Valjean chose to make his life a life of caring for the other.

Relation: Dialogue as the Face of Care

Nature had placed a wide chasm—fifty years' interval of age—between Jean Valjean and Cosette. This chasm fate filled up. Fate abruptly brought together, and wedded with its resistless power, these two shattered lives, dissimilar in years, but similar in sorrow. The one, indeed, was the complement of the other. The instinct of Cosette sought for a father, as the instinct of Jean Valjean sought for a child. To meet, was to find one another. In that mysterious moment, when their hands touched, they were welded together. When their souls saw each other, they recognized that they were mutually needed, and they closely embraced. (Les Misérables 381-382)

The lives of the characters of *Les Misérables* find meaning in and through relation. It is the relationship with the bishop that calls Jean Valjean out of despair and anchors him to the world of men. It is the relationship with Cosette that gives Valjean's life meaning. Likewise, it is the relationship with Valjean that takes Cosette's life in a different direction. It is in Valjean that Cosette's life is reborn.

Jean Valjean accepts the labor of caring for and the obligation of responsibility for Fantine's child upon her death. Valjean first meets Cosette in the "care" of the Thenadiers. The relationship between Valjean and Cosette begins when Valjean takes from her the burden of carrying a heavy bucket of water a very long distance. Through this initial act Valjean begins his caring relationship with Cosette: "At that moment she felt the weight of the bucket was gone. A hand, which seemed enormous to her, had just caught the handle, and was carrying it easily" (340). From that moment on, Valjean consistently and continually welcomed the burden of caring for Cosette. From that moment on Cosette had someone she knew loved and cared for her and this knowledge warmed her soul. From that moment on Valjean's life changed. "*Something new entered his soul*" (380): love.

Jean Valjean, the hero *Les Misérables*, is so because he enters into genuine relation. In his initial relation with the bishop, Valjean's soul is saved. In his relation with Fantine, Valjean is called to learn to care for another, something he had never done. In his relation with Cosette, Valjean is called to care, to love, and to sacrifice. In the end, Valjean sacrifices his own happiness in order for Cosette to enter into a relationship with Marius.

The Horizon of Significance: Dialogue as the Reward of Care

Jean Valjean confounded him. All the axioms which had been the supports of his whole life crumbled away before this man. Jean Valjean's generosity towards him, Javert, overwhelmed him. Other acts, which he remembered and which he had hitherto treated as lies and follies, returned to him now as realities. M. Madeleine reappeared behind Jean Valjean, and the two figures overlaid each other so as to make but one, which was venerable. Javert felt that something horrible was penetrating his soul, admiration for a convict. Respect for a galley slave, can that be possible? He shuddered at it, yet could not shake it off. It was useless to struggle, he was reduced to confess before his own inner tribunal the sublimity of this wretch. That was hateful.

A beneficent malefactor, a compassionate convict, kind, helpful, clement, returning good for evil, returning pardon for hatred, loving pity rather than vengeance, preferring to destroy himself rather than to destroy his enemy, saving him who had stricken him, kneeling upon the height of virtue, nearer the angels than men. Javert was compelled to acknowledge that this monster existed.

His (Javert's) supreme anguish was the loss of all certainty. He felt that he was uprooted. The code was now but a stump in his hand. He had to do with scruples of an unknown species. There was in him a revelation of a feeling entirely distinct from the declarations of the law, his only standard hitherto. To retain his old virtue, that no longer sufficed. An entire order of unexpected facts arose and subjugated him. An entire new world appeared to his soul; favour accepted and returned, devotion, compassion, indulgence, acts of violence committed by pity upon austerity, respect of persons, no more final condemnation, no more damnation, the possibility of a tear in the eye of the law, a mysterious justice according to God going counter to justice according to men. He perceived in the darkness the fearful rising of an unknown moral sun; he was horrified and blinded by it. An owl compelled to an eagle's gaze. (1140 – 1141)

Jean Valjean is the perfect exemplar of dialogue as the labor of care. Through this passage one can glimpse the horizon of significance that emerged as a result of Valjean's caring. Valjean, in caring about Cosette, Marius, and the condition of his relationship with God, not only saves Marius' life and the life of Javert, he surrenders himself to Javert. The significant outcomes that emerge from Valjean's caring actions are both unpredictable and irreversible. Faced with the contradiction of the convict and the caring man, Javert's life is changed. Through the caring actions of Valjean, Javert realizes that not only is this man, whom Javert was convinced was evil, good, but that the

world could be a better place. Through the caring acts of Valjean, Javert sees the possibility of a world built on mutuality, devotion, compassion, indulgence, and respect for persons. For Valjean, his acts were acts of love and caring entered into for the sake of those he cared about: Cosette and, in turn, Marius. His act of saving Javert was an act of caring done in the light of own soul and obligation to the Bishop.

Jean Valjean suffered many trials, endured many struggles, labored through many tasks, but from the moment he accepted the obligation set upon him by the bishop, Valjean unfailingly accepted and welcomed the labor of caring for those in his charge. Valjean's relationships reached unpredictable depths and meaningfulness because he had the courage to invite dialogue continually into those caring relationships. Jean Valjean embodies the communicative ethic of dialogue as the labor of care.

This work suggests that through the labor of inviting dialogue into the communicative life of caring, caring can realize the lived unity it is meant to offer. As Hugo suggests, "When you know and when you love you shall suffer still. The day dawns in tears. The luminous weep, were it only over the dark" (*Les Misérables* 854). Every day we experience sorrow, suffering, and frustration—we cannot escape them. It is the fortunate person—the person of the light—who also experiences love, joy, and caring.

"Look into life."

The communicative ethic dialogue as the labor of care lives between the call of obligation and the communicative act of responsibility. It is in such a communicative light that we glimpse of the face of the other, our face eclipsed and in so doing provides our identity. Dialogue as the labor of care moves us from being individuals to persons

and ironically gives us a human face, a face that shines as long as when we look into the mirror we are wise enough not to see but to hear the call of obligation and responsibility.

Mayer off

Obligation

- Obligation to the other
- Continued call to responsibility
- guilt

Particular other

- Being with the other
- Being for the other
- the constancy of the other
- Caring is not a technique

The ability to care

- Respect
- Devotion
- Mutuality
- Being there
- Consistency
- Persistence
- Willingness to overcome difficulties
- Knowing the self
- Knowing the other
- Ability to learn form the past
- Trust
- Patience
- Honesty
- Humility
- Hope and courage

The ability to be cared for

- reciprocation

By product

- self actualization as

Gilligan

Obligation

- responsibility
- caretaker and protector
- universal obligation
- encumbrances are concrete

Relation

- connection
- interdependence
- social participation

Particular other

- irreducible particularity
- self is radically situated and particularized

Ability to care

- love,
- empathy,
- compassion,
- emotional sensitivity
- moral development
- selfishness to responsibility
- goodness as self sacrifice

By product

- moral action

Noddings

Obligation

- Natural Caring (I am here for you)
- Ethical caring (I must)
- I *Ought*
- Duty
- Guilt
- Responsibility
- The call of the stranger

Relation

- relation as basic
- connection b/w two

Particular other

- Embedded
- Turning toward the other
- Imagining the real

Ability to care

- responsiveness
- receptivity
- Receiving
- Engrossment
- Desire for the other's well being
- Presence
- Confirmation

Cared for

- Reciprocity
- Response

By products

- joy
- Good life

Tronto

Obligation

- assuming responsibility for care;
- Burden

Relation

- Engagement
- Other than self

Particular other

Ability to care

- Action
- noticing the need to care in the first place;
- taking care of,
- care-giving,
- the actual work of care
- attentiveness
- competence

Ability to be cared for

- care—receiving,
- responsiveness of cared for

By products

- sustains life

- Universal practice
- Practice
- caring about,

Wood

Obligation

Relation

- interdependent sense of self

Particular other

- particular other
- insight into the other

Ability to care

- interpersonal relationships
- partiality
- empathy
- a willingness to serve others
- responsiveness
- sensitivity to others
- confirmation
- acceptance of others
- patience
- trust
- dynamic autonomy

Ability to be cared for

By products

- allows us all to live with a modicum of comfort, security, and grace

Gaylin

Relation

- attachment

Ability to care

- identification
- empathy

Obligation

- conscience

By products

- good life
- joy
- survival

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