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Clarifying care : elaborating and expanding the care ethic

Charles Christopher Crittenden

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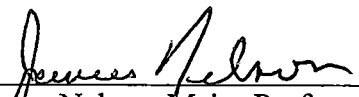
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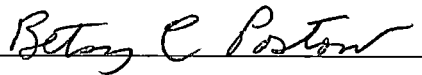
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Accepted for the Council:

Interim Vice Provost and
Dean of the Graduate School

Clarifying Care:
Elaborating and Expanding the Care Ethic

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

C. Christopher Crittenden
August 2000

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my brother, Gudger Crittenden

who taught me compassion and fortitude

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would also like to thank other philosophers who have patiently helped push along my frustratingly slow thought process. These include Jim Bennett, Kathy Bohstedt, Nancy Dumler, Annette Mendola, David Reismann, and Carey Szetela. No doubt I have left out many others who have significantly aided my dissertation efforts. This is certainly not a desert island dissertation. Without input from a wide ranging community of philosophers and friends, this project would never have proceeded this far.

A special thank you to the participants of the 1999 "Feminist Ethics Revisited Conference" sponsored by the Ethics Center and the Philosophy Department at the University of Southern Florida.

My family have been essential in keeping me psychologically grounded during my life as a graduate student. I am fortunate to be someone who has been the recipient of such love and patience from those I have know the longest. My father's dedication to philosophy inspired me, and my mother's idealism has given me a motivating passion. My sister's triumphs provide a beacon in a difficult world. Most crucially of all, my brother has provided a model of honesty and depth combined with sensitivity and strength.

ABSTRACT

The debate over "women's ways of knowing" has been contentious and growing since Carol Gillgian's groundbreaking book *In a Different Voice*, which established a contrast between the care ethic (associated with women) and the justice ethic (associated with men). The dissertation explores the care/justice distinction, taking the investigation to a new level by providing a model that explores the perspectives according to a number of criteria organized according to a conceptual-theoretical dimension and also a dimension of praxis. The concepts of unversal rights and principles are analyzed in relation to the ethics, leading to the conclusion that care can incorporate them into its ideology without thereby appealing to the justice ethic or hybridizing with it.

Two well-known theores of care, Nel Noddings' (1984) and Joan Tronto's (1993) are examined according to the two-dimensional model I develop. The end result is a fusion of the views into a comprehensive theoretical perspective with applications in both the personal and political spheres. The traditional image, then, of care as a mothering tool limited to the dynamic of family and friends is replaced by an ethical view of care that places "women's ways of knowing" firmly in the arena of business, politics, and other large-scale areas of moral concern.

CONTENTS

Introduction

The cliché is that if women were in charge of the world there would be no war. This simplistic, homogenizing, and even dangerous claim cannot in itself be the solution to our current pathology of destruction. But I will argue, fending off the various objections as peacefully as I can, that it holds a gem of truth. More precisely, I take the care ethic, that still provocative and galvanizing theory originated by Carol Gilligan, and develop it into a full-blown personal and political morality, in the process defending it against standard objections, most of which center on the concern that care is feminine where femininity is a gender role that nurtures patriarchy, not liberation.

The first issue is getting clear o the basic nature of the care ethic–what it is and how it is defined. The reader deserves to have available right from the start a transparent description of the theory under consideration. Unfortunately, as I argue, the current state of the scholarly literature lacks a satisfactory scheme, so I begin by developing my own model, which involves two dimensions and a number of criteria that lay out the fundamental position. My work in this direction, comprising chapters one and two, has a couple of important implications. It expands on an article recently accepted by *Women & Politics*, wherein I argue that care (qua moral theory) can incorporate universal principles without thereby compromising its independence, that is, without relying on the sort of ethic that, following Gilligan, has come to be known as a justice ethic (Crittenden, forthcoming).

Second, my analysis of the nature of care centralizes the problem of dualism, which is so formidable and so often broached as a hindrance to a successful care ethic that I address it painstakingly throughout the length of the project. Those who study oppression commonly link it to the practice of dividing the dominators and dominated into two radically separate conceptual categories and associating those categories with certain definitive characteristics. Men, for example, are seen as rational and women as emotional, where the labels carry the power to channel gender acculturation toward a patriarchal framework. A common criticism of care links it to the care versus justice contrast and asks whether this segregation is not simply dualism in an insidious form. Feminists sometimes respond uncomfortably that care and justice must be integrated to achieve a satisfactory stance, but without elaboration that explicitly explains away the problem, such a remonstration sounds too much like saying that the combination of women's and men's roles results in a harmony. Yet such a 'harmony' has been in place for a long time, institutionalized in the ritual of marriage, and it has brought no end to the problem of sexism. Other feminists, as we shall see, argue that reversal is satisfactory; the masculine paradigm should be replaced by a feminine one and all will be right with the world.

I take a similar route in arguing that care stands alone. It does not need a justice ethic to cling onto to become salutary in its own right. However, my claim is not that femininity can stand alone without masculinity. Rather, it is a claim that care can attain a new status that is transgendered in the sense of escaping dualistic thought entirely. Care is not one half of a polarized pair. The initial thrust of my argument is that care can

2

employ the concepts of principles, rights, and duties without thereby hybridizing with justice. It takes two chapters to argue this point but the journey is interesting in itself as I explore the many facets of care and justice and develop them into a comprehensive framework for philosophical investigation.

Chapters three and four introduce and critique two of the most discussed presentations of care theory, Nel Noddings' *Care* and Joan Tronto's *Moral Boundaries*, initializing the attempt at a fusion and combined theoretical evolution of these views into a comprehensive position that is as applicable to corporate and governmental policy as it is to family situations. Fitting both theories into my two-dimensional model, I explore the strengths and weaknesses and seek out similarities. This last point is important, for Noddings embraces the private sphere as the proper realm of care, and Tronto embraces the political while distancing herself from the sort of maternal nurturing that Noddings places at the center of her philosophy. The two theories appear to be at loggerheads and indeed are irreconcilable as they stand. Nevertheless, the differences are not so great as they at first seem. A thread of empathic understanding and perception is common to both theories, one that can weave them together after the sexist elements of Noddings' maternal model have been neutralized and the political insights of Tronto's philosophy have been elaborated and defended with clear argumentation.

Such modification of the theories is the main task of chapters five and six. In chapter five a Noddings-Tronto hybrid theory of empathy is developed that allows moral contact with persons both near and far, within both personal and political contexts, thereby breaking with the canard that empathic skills are mainly appropriate in the home

3

and with friends in nonpolitical contexts. Chapter six continues the development of a Noddings-Tronto stance by taking concepts from the work of both theorists and combining them so that care takes on a powerful role in both domestic and public settings. Noddingsian concepts such as recognition, motivational displacement, engrossment and the caring mode of consciousness are teamed with Tronto's four main components of ethical caring to yield an approach that shatters the dualistic boundaries which Tronto sees as obstacles to healthy care: the public/private boundary, the rational/emotional boundary, and the Machiavellian separation of ethics and politics.

By the end, I hope to provide a tentative unified ethic of care fortified against the common objections, one that remains close to Gilligan's claims and yet escapes the label of feminine without losing the beneficial characteristics that can be gleaned from women's roles. While the following chapters do not deal directly with the question, "Is the mature form of the care ethic a women's, as opposed to a man's, way of operating ethically?" I think there is enough evidence in the discussion to suggest that, although it is not a woman's morality, it is clearly derivative from certain aspects of women's roles, and while ti goes far beyond the stereotype, certain ways of acting associated with women remain influential, if not crucial. Moreover, the traits of traditional masculinity do not provide input as fully as the feminine ones.

As a rough sketch, if Gilligan set up a contrast between relationship and individualism, engagement and objectivity, cooperation and competition, nonreductive and reductive modes of problem solving, and virtue and principle, then the ethic I develop

draws mostly from the left-hand-side of these pairs. The one exception is the crucial force that I accord to principles, a topic that receives much attention in chapter two.

To visualize this scenario, I ask the reader to consider a story. Some wandering philosopher-carpenters come upon two piles of tools, one pink and one blue. Neither of the piles, the carpenters decide, is satisfactory for their task, and yet the pink pile could be if properly modified. The blue tools are simply unrepresentative of the kind of environment that the carpenters will be working in, and in some cases seem rather dangerous, prone toward explosion, violent outcome, and a mysterious effect upon the carpenters that makes them lose touch with their emotions. Also, they tend to isolate the carpenters from each other, so that they cannot communicate properly, and yet good communication is imperative for the accomplishment of the task. The pink tools are rather limited also, but with some tinkering they become much more efficacious. The carpenters go about their job enthusiastically, noticing that the modified tools are no longer pink, and yet they retain some of the elements that made the pink tools preferable in the first place.

Such simple allegories perhaps raise more questions than they answer. My purpose in introducing such an allegory is to connect my project, however nebulously, with the great social changes that are occurring, some of the most important involving an ascendancy of women's rights and women's voices. While my approach strives to be analytical in the professional sense of providing "journal quality" arguments and theoretical ramification, it also intends to foster a morality that rides the currents of the women's movement. This movement, after all, is not simply for women, but for the

5

liberation of all people who have suffered from the warfare, domination, abuse, hyper-competition, and stultification of creativity and emotional outlet that have plagued patriarchal regimes rather consistently for thousands of years. While patriarchal regimes have brought great technological advancements and works of genius and art, this does not grant them immunity from serious criticism or significant revision. Now that women can speak more openly, philosophically, politically, economically, legally, and so on, many of them and their male allies are asking if there might not be something better than the bellicose cultural dynamics that led, say, to WWI, WWII, and then a Cold War with a bristling of nuclear armaments whose legacy menaces us today.

My project is in this spirit of feminist reform, a spirit that has become global and assumed political shape in various social activist movements such as ecofeminism. In the true spirit of the theoretician (who has an important role in the incipient global movement against oppression, though not the only important one) I attempt to provide a foundation of complex yet consistent and defensible ideas that support such movements of liberation.

6

Chapter One
The Two Dimensional Model: Internal Criteria and Dualism

The central purpose of this chapter is to begin the development, completed in Chapter Two, of a framework that defines the general parameters of care and justice as these are understood as moral theories. In the next chapter I look at the two orientations as they play out in practice, but here I am concerned with introducing the two-dimensional model, defending its importance, and discussing the first dimension, which focuses on the conceptual elements that constitute care and justice (as opposed to the practical implications of adopting one or the other of these theories as a way to function ethically, the province of the second dimension). Because this first dimension is presented in the form of criterial pairs that prima facie set up a polarization, care at one extreme and justice at the other, the last part of the chapter introduces the problem of dualism. Chapter two then takes up the discussion and introduces the second dimension of my model in order to provide greater clarity that alleviates the concern that care is stereotypically feminine. The tactic (and both the first and second dimensions are crucial elements here) is to argue that a care ethic can employ principles, rights, and rules of the universal variety without thereby appealing to or hybridizing with justice in any way. If this is so, using such principles to prohibit sexism (and other 'isms') and the dualistic modes of thinking that are inherently sexist does not pose a threat to the status of a care ethic as independent of justice criteria.

My project for this chapter is in line with the acknowledgment by prominent

feminist theorists that research on the ethic of care is in its earliest stages and that the

ethic is currently in an immature form (Card 1996, 76). This acknowledgment, however,

is uncomfortably juxtaposed with another theme, that care is not complete in and of itself

and must merge with the justice ethic to become part of a comprehensive, salutary moral

theory. For example, Virginia Held distances her own position from that of care on the

grounds that care lacks any appeal to principles or rights:

> On ethical views that renounce all principles as excessively abstract, we
> might have few arguments to uphold the equality of women . . . On a view
> that ethics could satisfactorily be founded on caring alone, men could care
> for women considered undeserving of equal rights in all the significant
> areas in which women have been struggling to have our equality
> recognized. So an ethic of care, essential as a component of morality and
> perhaps even as a framework, seems deficient if taken as an exclusive
> preoccupation or one which fails to make room for justice. (1994, 76)

Held is not alone in her reduction of care to an essential "component" that must

cling to justice for moral adequacy. Grace Clement in her recent work, *Care, Autonomy,*

and Justice, writes that the well-worn debate between advocates of care and justice leads

to the conclusion that "care and justice should not be seen as competitors, but as allies

which are indispensable to one another." (1996, 109) Even Margaret Urban Walker, who

offers a meticulously designed "expressive-collaborative" ethic, does not entirely forsake

the tendency to belittle care when she acknowledges the merit of the feminist criticism

that such a perspective "valorizes stereotypes of bottomless feminine nurturance and self-

8

sacrifice that continue to haunt women while politically disempowering and personally exhausting them." (1998, 108)

By highlighting a neglected resource implicit in the ethic, I move toward freeing care theory from the allegation that it is an incomplete moral ideal, one that needs to work in tandem with historical abstracting methods to build a sturdy structure. The label of "care" should not immediately target a theory as defective, putting its proponents on the defensive; nor should it imply a lack of subtlety or artistry. What the label deserves to stand for is the vital power of feminism to engender global transformation and break the cultural constraints of justice "rationality," a euphemistically named, regressive program that harbors the historical silencing of women, poorly reflects the nature of human thought processes, and fails to do true justice to the world's wonderfully frustrating plurality. Feminists should be proud to speak of care as a nascent yet healing contribution to the crucible of transformative ideas, not as a wayward upstart that ought to fall back into a complementary marriage with justice and so take its proper place in the moral family.

Conceptual-Theoretical Criteria for Care and Justice

The Two-Dimensional Model. The initial motivation for a two-dimensional model is straightforward; an ethic, once adopted, profoundly affects the way persons

9

perceive themselves and the world. Behavior, self, and environment are modified accordingly. It is important, then, in describing an ethic, to give not only a description of its internal structure but also of its real-world effects, what could be called its external influence, the influence of the core conceptual elements on the greater world of daily living. In a metaphorical sense, an ethic has an inner (conceptual) structure, and external (real-life) implications. As I will show, exploring care and justice along both these dimensions yields fruitful information regarding their nature and helps bring out the complexity and difference between them.

Another reason for a two-dimensional model is that it is quite effective in organizing the complexities of care and justice into a manageable framework. Care ethicists and critics have a murky grasp of the complexity of the issues yet have not brought that complexity fully into the investigation. The need for further organization and perspicuity is exemplified in the following description by Sara Ruddick, who plumbs the murkiness yet leaves us with only dim flashing images of the wonderful life below:

> Characteristics of "justice" and "care," when contrasted with each other, are complex. The two moral orientations foster distinctive cognitive capacities, appeal to distinctive ideals of rationality, elicit distinctive moral emotions, presume distinctive concepts of identity and relationships, recognize distinctive virtues, and make distinctive demands on institutions. (1993, 204)

To begin to draw out the concepts from obscurity, the first dimension of the proposed model posits seven criterial pairs that are 'internal' in the sense of explicating the theoretical nature of the two ethics. All but one of these pairs derive

10

straightforwardly from Gilligan's work. They are not meant as necessary and sufficient conditions but rather are intended to provide a basis for 'family resemblance' in the Wittgensteinian sense. Accordingly, while some moral approaches will fall into 'gray' zones (e.g. Aristotelian ethics, Humean ethics, Christian ethics) others will 'fit' the resemblance, facilitating classification and forming the basis of argumentation as to the proper placement of a moral theory. Given that there are different specific types of care ethic (e.g. Noddingsian, Ruddickian) and specific types of justice ethic (e.g. Kantian, utilitarian), the seven-part specification below is general enough to provide a framework that describes many positions without fully defining their nuanced components. The criterial pairs are as follows (Table 1-1):

Care and Justice: Theoretical Criteria (Table 1-1)

(1c) A sense of self characterizable as connected and relational	(1j) A sense of self characterizable as isolated and independent
(2c) Responsibility determines the extent of proper moral activity	(2j) Rights and principles determine the extent of proper moral activity
(3c) The intricacies of context make it hard to generalize from one situation to another, limiting the usefulness of moral laws and principles	(3j) Contexts are most often similar such that general formulas or universal laws can do most of our moral work for us
(4c) Narrative and dialogue-based decision-making	(4j) Decision-making that features formal, mathematical, or logical procedures radically abstracting from context and tending to homogenize (e.g. pleasures become interchangeable)
(5c) The agent's moral vantage remains personalized, historically and temporally situated, and affective	(5j) The agent assumes an impersonal moral vantage that attempts to escape subjectivity
(6c) Moral motivation stems from virtues of care (e.g. those concerned with maintaining relationships)	(6j) Moral motivation impelled by rationally imposed duty
(7c) An emphasis on eliminating oppression and the psychological mechanisms of oppression	(7j) An emphasis on fair distribution of social goods and services, fair allocation of rights, and the preservation of autonomy

Usefulness and Adequacy. Before describing these criteria, it is germane to explain their

usefulness, and defend them against the criticism that they are not the best criteria to

represent the care-justice opposition.

12

These criteria are useful in drawing links between care theory and other fields of ethical investigation. For example, they affiliate ecofeminism and feminism by *clearly* bringing out the connections in precise form. It is not sufficient, for example, given the magnitude of my project, to simply accept Karen Warren's statement that her ecofeminism appeals to virtues of care as proof that she is a care ethicist. Nor is it sufficient to point out similarities in a nebulous fashion, for example by stating, 'Warren proclaims that her ethic focuses on maintaining and developing mutually beneficial relationships and so her ethic is one of care'. Fortunately, Warren provides an enumerated definition of her theory that readily maps onto 1-7c almost point for point, thereby permitting a very strong argument that her work falls into the framework I erect (1996)[1].

Similarly, it is not enough to claim that utilitarianism, for example, is a justice ethic based on broad appeals to its calculating and impartial nature, at least not given the importance of such conceptual issues to my project. Utilitarianism fits (2j) (a universal principle of utility determines the extent of proper moral action), (3j) (contexts can be

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[1] Warren proposes that an ecofeminist ethic must be structured so as to be: (1) Against oppression in all forms, (2) Contextual and historical, (3) Centered on relationships, those inclusive of the environment as well as those between humans, (4) Pluralistic, (5) Dialogic in the sense of including the voices of the poor and oppressed, (6) Anti-objective in the sense of rejecting the possibility of one absolutely correct viewpoint or logic existing beyond affective situatedness, (7) Inclusive of caring virtues, and (8) Inclusive of a relational sense of self. There are prima facie matches between these standards and the internal criteria 1-7c, and a more detailed study could, I think, cement the connections. However, my purpose is to demonstrate the usefulness of 1-7c, and that is achieved by pointing out, as I have with Warren's philosophy, that they provide a method for conducting analysis in terms of care theory.

13.

reduced into a general formula for happiness), (4j) (decision-making that resorts to mathematical procedures radically abstracting in order to maximize satisfaction), and (5j) (the moral agent assumes an impersonal vantage to engage in unbiased calculations). The theory adheres to (6j) (moral motivation through duty not care) because one follows the dictates of the maximizing equation as is rationally required, not as virtuous character recommends[2]. In its historical form, utilitarianism also conforms to (1j) (a sense of self characterizable as self-contained and rationally self-guiding) as can be seen from its alliance and support of free-market dogmas such as the theoretical construction of man (and woman?) as *homo economicus*--competitive and rationally self-interested in terms of acquiring power and material goods (Edwards 1995).

Certain Kantian and Rawlsian moralities could similarly be classified as justice ethics, which, again, implies that the above criteria are intentionally accommodating so that distinct and nonconflatable views can fall under the same heading. Each particular ethic will weave a different tapestry on the model's warp and weft, implying that some

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2 A utilitarian might respond that it is quite acceptable, given the utilitarian theory, to live so that one's motive is simply to help one's circle of friends and family. Furthermore, the utilitarian continues, the theory does not ask for radical changes in the Western lifestyle; deep emotional bonds can be fostered, relationships formed and maintained, families raised, all without the danger of sudden strange behavior arising from the utilitarian calculus. In response, I point out that the ultimate standard of what we should do, for the utilitarian, is the maximzing equation. If this equation supports a lifestyle in which one's motives are centered on friends and family, all is well, but if not, then the utilitarian cannot maintain such a status-quo-friendly stance without contradiction. In short, the ultimate justification and source of authority in the utilitarian scheme remains an emotionless logic, and to say that this logic supports a full range of emotions and close relationships does not change that fact.

ethics may be better than others in regard to specified standards of normative acceptability.

Aside from the usefulness of the criteria, one might question whether these are the best criteria available to support a framework of care versus justice. George Sher and Grace Clement both provide alternative frameworks for understanding the general nature of the two orientations, Sher's model having five criterial pairs, and Clement's possessing three. I argue below that Sher's framework is flawed for various reasons, perhaps the most outstanding of which is that he virtually identifies justice with principles (among other things, proposing the criterial pair: "principled versus nonprincipled" to represent justice versus care). Clement commits a similar error (opposing justice and care in the form of principle-based egalitarian concerns vs. "maintenance of relationships")[3]. Other descriptions, like that of Sara Ruddick presented above in the citation, are too cloudy to penetrate without identifying the specific elements that need further analysis.

There are, nevertheless, no doubt other ways of organizing the criterial pairs that are valid. With thoughtful attention, one might be able to able to generate quite a long list. One possibility is to focus on the fact that care emphasizes maintaining relationships

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3 The mistake of associating egalitarian concerns with justice also occurs in a recent article by Margaret Moore. Moore says that "equality presupposes the abstract standpoint" and criticizes Gilligan for sometimes associating equality with care (1999, 13). However, equality, as advanced through principle, can be grasped by a fully situated moral person who justifies the use of principle through narrative and not detached means such as Rawls' Original Position. Such a justification of principle, one that does not require stepping back from one's contingent selfhood and all its emotional leanings, is discussed in Chapter Five.

of a mutually beneficial nature, whereas justice focuses on maintaining and advancing the interests of the individual through Rational autonomy[4]. One might also try to unpack the notion of 'virtues of care' presented in (4c) and contrast it with the virtues or virtue-like qualities that might be associated with some types of justice approach (e.g. Objectivity, Rationality). So, a critic might argue, the system I employ is incomplete and likely to mislead by making false suggestions that certain aspects of care are more prominent or central than others.

My response is twofold. First, the criterial pairs I provide are adequate to my purposes of advancing our understanding of the structure of care theory and making my case that the concept of universal principles, in and of itself, is not justice-oriented. Moreover, those elements of care I do not specifically enumerate are included in my model. For example, in discussing the virtues of care below, I emphasize that these orbit the notion of maintaining healthy, mutually interactive and beneficial relationships; also, by listing some of the proposed virtues of care, I initiate the work of expanding upon the general framework so that other criterial pairs are suggested.

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[4] By using capital-lettered words like "Reason," "Rationality," and "Objectivity" I distinguish justice notions from feminist notions of reason, etc. More is said about this later in the Chapter, and also in Chapter Two. For now, note that the capital-lettered words, at the very least, indicate a certain ideal type or myth—that contained in 1-7j. I am ambivalent about the presence of Reason in the work of modern-day scholars (though as I discuss, I think certain utilitarians, like Peter Singer, embrace a close approximation of it). However, for my purposes the ideal type, present as an ideological thread in the fabric of western culture, is sufficient to provide an alternative against which care theory can be developed. I am not accusing, say, modern Kantians such as Kristine Korsgaard of embracing Reason. Such views are far too complex to reduce to mechanical logico-deductive models of world and morality.

16

Secondly, in line with the feminist idea of a pluralistic reality in which no one explanation, story or theory will contain the be-all-end-all account of the way things are (Mouffe 1992), I offer my framework as one perspective, one story that provides a useful epistemic lens but not the only lens. Given my pluralistic stance, the fact that I do not provide the only lens is not necessarily a problem. There are, doubtless, serious concerns that can be raised about my framework, for instance, that it does not directly deal with the differences in oppression between middle-class white women and poor black women. Such considerations, however, are not damning in light of the generality of my approach, which is commodious enough for many specific interpretations, including those of minority-theory feminists. That women of color and white middle class women might need to care differently, or might have different kinds of needs, is acceptable and even desirable within the boundaries I establish. Narrative and dialogic decision-making, connectedness of self, and a situated historical and cultural vantage are factors that provide latitude for valorizing the concerns of many oppressed groups in many situations.

A third concern is that my model is simply too vague and might allow theories that are not care theories to enter into 1-7c. For instance, perhaps Aristotle and Hume infiltrate the proposed framework.

While granting that there are likely to be 'grey' areas, I think 1-7c provide the basis for useful analysis, enumerating the specific points that need to be considered when

17

categorizing theories. For example, whether Hume presents a concept of self that is relational (1c) is debatable, given that he emphasizes a person's "self-love," which he asserts is far stronger than love for even those held dear (including the mother's love for the infant). This self-love is at the heart of moral behavior, behavior developed for practical reasons to help persons maximize their pleasure. Using these ideas as thematic, the Humean drift is toward a separate-self worldview that uses utilitarian-style reasoning to arrive at correct moral practice (indeed, Hume's thoughts link with those of his friends, Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham).

My point is not to give a sophisticated or even adequate treatment of Hume, but to demonstrate that the 'internal' criteria do provide a basis for analysis of intricate theories, at the very least pointing out the relevant areas where the philosopher should focus in order to judge an ethic as one of care or justice.

A similar treatment could be given to Aristotle. Does he emphasize a relational sense of self (1c)? Perhaps. He remarks on the importance of friendship, education, and social life, and even designates friendship as the "highest external good"; the solitary life makes happiness impossible (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1169b15), Yet he does not clearly go so far as some feminists, who claim that the self is "partially constituted" by its relationships with others (Held 1993). Is his moral decision-making procedure narrative and dialogic (4c)? Perhaps. It is concerned with finding a balance between extremes, but this is done through reason interacting with the passions—not clearly a narrative

18

procedure, but not clearly a justice procedure either. Accordingly, while the internal criteria do not provide easy answers, they are not without merit as indicators and cataloguers of sophisticated moral approaches.

Describing the Internal Criteria: Preliminaries. Before describing the specific pairs, it is useful to note a couple of things. First, when the second dimension of the model is discussed in Chapter Two, more will be added to the basic descriptions provided here, and the care-justice picture will expand. Certain of the relevant concepts, such as the connected/relational self, will be given attention throughout this project. The idea of a rarefied Rationality (the capital 'R' signifying that this is not the sort of rationality acceptable to care ethicists, the sort that is inherently situated and affective) is introduced and criticized here but much of the main criticism involves its application in practice, a topic reserved for Chapter Two. The following explanations are not intended as the denouement, but only as a basic guideline to ideas that are evolving in feminist research and which can take many complex forms.

Secondly, as the previous paragraph hints, the basic contrast between care and justice, as it emerges from the mosaic of feminist analyses, appeals to an historical trend that promotes a rarified form of reasoning largely or entirely excluding affective sources of information. The justice ethic appeals to Plato's Rational grasp of the Forms, to Kant's championing of Reason and denigration of "inclination," to Descartes' method of reduction and deduction through "clear and distinct" perception (emotions, for Descartes,

19

were created by "animal spirits" and tainted proper perception), to Rawls' construction of an Original Position in which all contingent individuality is eliminated, and to the philosophical utilitarian idea of using mathematical and empirically reductive procedures, which incorporate the scientist's disfavoring of passion, to determine the right thing to do.

One might remark that few if any modern academics hold to anything like a model of Reason that is Platonic or utilitarian. One answer is that this is simply not true. Kohlberg, as Gilligan aptly pointed out, fed into this mindset quite readily, framing an important research project with a hierarchy of moral thinking that appeals, at the most mature stages, to Platonic universality. This led him to claim that his progression of moral stages applied to all cultures in all times (Campbell 1990). Many chemists, physicists, cognitive psychologists, and physicalist philosophers, in good Cartesian fashion, seek through reductive methods to lay open the totality of reality as revealed in fundamental facts related through deterministic physical or logical laws. Whether such physical reductionists see their practices as having implications for moral theory is an open question, though their praise of Rational procedures might lead them to consider moral judgements as amenable to Rational analysis. A "scientific morality" along these lines is discussed in Chapter Two. The theory of determinism, strongly associated with the scientific project of finding causal mechanisms governed by invariant laws (though quantum mechanics has created a divide between determinism and science, at least at the level of quarks and photons), itself raises serious questions about moral agency and raises

20

a tension between predestination and moral responsibility that is difficult to resolve. Some scientists and philosophers might consider humans much like robots or sophisticated computers that are preprogrammed (or 'self-programming' in deterministic ways) and (they might conclude) therefore unable to make autonomous moral decisions.

In the modern study of ethics, utilitarianism, strongly associated with 1-7j, is alive and well. Peter Singer, a preference utilitarian, takes pains to point out that emotion cannot be the ultimate justification of moral decisions, and that reason, as understood in terms of a maximizing equation, is the universal standard of right and wrong (Singer 1990, iii). Act Utilitarian J.J. Smart, though aware of the difficulties in calculating expected values for maximizing goodness, holds that the basic idea of calculation functions quite nicely. Although he sees the proper moral agent as operating with a foundation of benevolence, good character, and fellow feeling, and so praises virtue, the role of virtue is secondary and derivative from the utility calculus, which remains the ultimate standard of judgement. For instance, Smart writes that, "The utilitarian ... will test his [sic] particular feelings by reference to his general principle," and though he is somewhat torn in cases where feelings cry out against injustice and yet injustice must be inflicted to maximize happiness, he ultimately sides with the utilitarian injustice over the feeling that justice must be served (Smart and Williams 1982, p.69-71)[5].

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5 There is no doubt that specific contexts are important to act utilitarians. As in care theory, every particular situation must be taken as complex and individual. No rule (e.g. abortion is wrong except to save the mother's life) is absolute. The difference is the utilitarian's adherence to one standard, the

More importantly, it really doesn't matter for my purposes whether many modern philosophers or even academics embrace Rational solutions to moral problems. Rationality, as represented by the internal criteria, can serve as an ideal type, a contrast against which the elaboration of care theory in my project takes place. To call the justice ethic an ideal type is not to label it irrelevant to current systems of oppression. What is often of central importance in feminist analysis is not so much logical implications, but concrete causal consequences, the presence of ideology rather than philosophy in the workings of the ambient institutions. It would be rash to claim that over two thousand years of western Rationalistic thought (including Pythagoras, Plato, Aquinas, Leibniz, Spinoza, Descartes, Kant, logical positivists, modern physicalists, utilitarians like Smart and Singer, and neo-Kantians such as Rawls) has not influenced the current western culture. Such influence, as will be discussed in Chapters Three and Four, at the very least remains strong in the psychosocial currents of dualistic thought that separate reason from emotion and, for example, link men with the former and women with the latter.

Describing the criteria. With these points in mind I proceed to the descriptions of the actual criteria. Numerical references are provided parenthetically so that the reader has signposts charting the flow of the discussion.

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maximal attainment of some desideratum, and the use of a rarefied form of reason to attain that end. The result is the reduction of context to units of happiness, as if all the relevant factors were commensurable and capable of being 'cashed out' in one logical language (Williams 1981). By Impartially fitting the moral dilemma at hand into a universal formula for problem-solving, the utilitarian deviates from the situated approach of the care ethicist.

The first distinction is between the connected self and the separate self (1c-1j), a distinction that is covered more fully when the second dimension of the model is discussed, and in succeeding chapters, so I supply only a sketch here.

The separate self is epitomized in Descartes' *Meditations*, one of the most frequently taught philosophical works, in which the cloistered scholar deduces a complete metaphysics and epistemology during a week of solitary contemplation. The message is that the properly objective mind does not need help from other minds in reaching the one sole Truth. Moreover, emotional bonds are sources of static that could disturb the transmission of Reality through the conduit of Rationality to the thinker. The core of identity is the Reasoning faculty, which harnesses the various emotions, passions, and proclivities to its service. This theme is not merely a Cartesian one but is also present in the writing of Plato and Kant and other adherents of the power of Reason to link with Truth and thereby dictate the proper course of action (ref.). Autonomy, for Kant, is acting according to the dictates of Reason. Plato claims that no one commits an evil act knowingly and willingly. If one is in Rational contact with Truth, one has a beacon that prescribes the proper course of action, and one can be absolutely confident that no mistake has been made in such a case.

Truth and Reason, then, allow the core Rational faculty to manage life supremely well. The moral agent can know the nature of the universe with certitude and moreover can have absolute confidence that the one right course of action is discoverable and

verifiable. The other parts of the self can and should be managed to attain a psychological state that maximally conduces to the advancement of Rational ends. The above description constitutes a kind of story, which I will call the Rational picture. In this picture the lesser components of mind orbit the core Rational faculty, which is the ultimate manager and discoverer. It possesses vast power to act autonomously and bring the other elements of self under its sway. The danger of emotional taint, of the passions usurping control and leading the person astray, is ever present, but if Rationality is properly in touch with Truth, and properly dominating the unruly subjective elements, it becomes the master of the self and the master planner that freely creates a moral self-definition. This is an 'hermetic' vision of the self because there is an independent core that autonomously manages the whole of the psyche and harnesses it toward self-determined ends. The Rational core possesses awesome power to shape, motivate, and control both the body and the passions.

The notion of the connected self, on the other hand, recognizes the importance of others in shaping who we are, rationally and otherwise (even modes of rationality are context dependent on this view). There is no core Rational faculty, separate from emotion and in touch with Truth. The vast power of some part of the mind to manage and direct to the degree necessary for absolute autonomy and self-definition is absent.

For example, my status as a parent is part of my makeup, and my children, whose behavior is not always mine to dictate, affect that status. Whether I see myself as a good

24

parent or a bad parent depends to a degree on factors partially beyond my control, including the actions of my children, their teachers, and so forth, and also on the environment, which itself is a multilayered entity, consisting of government, economic, and community forces, not to mention the actual quality of the surroundings. Smokestacks are not as conducive as shady trees to peace and comfort and hence to parents' sense of whether they are providing a healthy playground for their children. If I see myself as a bad parent, and again, whether or not I come to see myself this way is not totally within my control, then my self-esteem might suffer. If it does, my behavior, performance, and attitudes are typically affected in significant ways, as the field of modern psychology informs us.

This is a relational picture of self, one that could be contrasted with the Rational picture. Relationships affect me in various ways that are crucial to who I am: they affect my self-esteem, how I perceive my status within the social hierarchy, whether I am pleasured or pained, how I will treat other persons, animals, and the environment, and how I will spend my time. Secondly, and just as importantly, the nature of the relationship is not totally within my control. Thirdly, there are many kinds of important relationships: personal ones, business ones, relationships between white persons and black persons within the expectations generated by American culture, relationships between humans and nature that are heavily influenced by the basic premises of consumer capitalism, relationships between the conscious and the unconscious, between the various

'voices' or leanings within my own mind, between the different roles I play in different social situations (my father role, my teacher role, my patriotic role, etc.), and so on. When these factors are considered together, the great power of some core faculty within the mind to master the self and chart a purely autonomous course becomes nothing but a shibboleth.

The contrast between responsibility and rights/principles as determining the extent (that is, not the minimum but the maximum moral obligation—not just 'what are the options that are clearly ruled out' but more importantly 'what is the actual course of action I should take') of proper moral activity (2c-2j) reflects the fundamentally different views of selfhood expressed by care and justice. On the justice conception, one simply applies the relevant principle (or refers to the social contract) and thereby knows the right course of action; the core self as Rational faculty plugs into the appropriate logical equation. The decision-making procedure is formal and mathematical (4j), not requiring soul-searching or catharsis or other psychological processes at the normal level of functioning[6]. The ideal moral vantage, therefore, is non-emotional, non-psychological, and purely Rational (5j). Rational agents are interchangeable. Any two faced with the same moral dilemma must, in order to follow the dictates of Reason, answer it the same

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[6] I am not denying that utilitarians, for example, can go through periods of painful soul-searching that are relevant if not crucial to their future ability to make utility decisions. But painful soul-searching or passionate introspection by someone who seeks to employ Reason as a decision-making process are obviously not engaged in as central elements of moral decision-making. A care ethicist, on the other hand, finds passionate states and therapeutic processes steeped in emotion and subjectivity to be directly relevant to determinations of right and wrong; such tools, not Reason, are the essence of the moral process.

26

way, which means their cultures, histories, emotional bonds and gut feelings may diverge widely and yet this is simply irrelevant for decision-making purposes. Moreover, in this scheme, contexts become, at least in principle, collections of variables efficiently migratable into universal formulas, and therefore are 'similar' in being reducible, quantifiable, assimilatable, and interchangeable (in terms of pleasures, pains, persons, desiderata, etc.)(3j).

Responsibility (2c) is a tricky concept, one I borrow from Joan Tronto's political ethic of care. This ethic will be more fully covered in Chapters Two and Four. The basic idea is that determining the right action is a multifaceted process involving many sources of information that cannot be reduced into a covering formula that renders them commensurable and therefore processable with a simple, or even a highly complex, balancing act of pleasure vs. pain, liberty vs. justice, beauty vs. efficiency, and so forth. In a political context, democratic dialogue is crucial. No Rational individual has the correct answer because there is no 'the' correct answer (at least in many cases). Important considerations are (a) the various narratives involved, each of which captures part of reality, or a facet of it, without capturing all of it (thus reflecting a form of pluralism) and (b) the complexity of the human mind, which is primarily psychological, that is, in possession of an unconscious life that powerfully affects behavior through defense mechanisms, habits, and proclivities; additionally, there is no Rational faculty separate from the rest of the mental world and superior to it; indeed, the self seems to be

"multiplicitous," manifesting many voices and the ability to take on many seemingly inconsistent roles (Lugones 1987; Scheman 1997). Furthermore, if recent feminist, externalist and pragmatist theorizing are correct, the self exists partly outside the body, in a social nexus of interaction with others (Scheman 1993; Nelson 1999).

Determining the right thing to do, then—determining responsibility—is no simple task. If the Rational faculty as ideal type does not accurately describe the way people think, live, or decide, and the mind is multilayered and boundary-blurring in terms of its cognitive and affective processes, a new approach to morality is suggested, something perhaps resembling therapy or therapeutic telling and receiving of narratives (4c) (Meyers 1994). In such a scenario, persons do not try to escape from the complexity of levels and voices within their own heads and the complexity of levels and voices in the moral arena, but rather embrace those complexities, attempting to sort them while remaining situated within the web of being (i.e., the relations between the levels of the mind with each other and also the world, and the relations between the various persons, communities, histories, and so forth involved in the moral dilemma) (5c). A step-by-step reductive procedure specifying exactly how this technique works is improbable, but the care ethicist expects no such algorithm to be available.

Although the emphasis on therapeutic storytelling (3c) introduces vagueness, principles (as I will argue) and virtues enter into the narrative, providing useful guidelines. The specific principles of care are discussed later. Here, I want to provide an

introduction to the sort of virtues that are particularly relevant to an ethic that emphasizes mutually beneficial relationships and the elimination of oppression (6c, 7c).

A care ethic is, of course, going to accept basic virtues such as temperance and ordinary politeness, but the even such fundamentals will be cautiously examined to avoid or minimize complicity in fostering dominative mechanisms. A highly relevant notion here is that of consciousness raising, a term popularized in the 1970's by the women's movement. The basic idea is that through intensive education people can become aware of their previously unconscious, habitual participation in mundane rituals that promote subservient roles for women. Mannerisms, idioms, and even style of dress, both those of men and women, can support a social arena laced with laced with constraining behaviors. Sandra Bartky, for instance, points out that women tend to sit in a closed position, legs crossed or knees together, while men tend to take up space, a sign of the latter's power and freedom (1990).

Feminists have explored the idea of consciousness raising using the standard philosophical terms for denial such as self-deception, false consciousness, bad faith, and inauthenticity, drawing upon continental philosophy to challenge the hegemony of analytic Rational philosophy in the United States. In her exploration of the ethics of mothering, Sara Ruddick, for example, calls inauthenticity "a repudiation of one's own perceptions and values," and suggests that mothers who succumb to such self-abnegation are likely to transmit negative social values to their children (1989).

29

Self-deception, by tainting one's ability to perceive the world and oneself accurately, can interfere with another central care virtue, one that will be discussed in later chapters: attentiveness. Ruddick relates the basic concept, again in the context of mothering:

> Attention is akin to the capacity for empathy, the ability to suffer or celebrate with another as if in the other's experience you know and find yourself. However, the idea of empathy, as it is popularly understood, underestimates the importance of knowing another *without* finding yourself in her. A mother really looks at her child, tries to see him accurately rather than herself in him. (1989, 121)

In her classic book, *Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace*, Ruddick uses a care-ethic approach, derivative from the ways that mothers try to raise morally and psychologically healthy children, to challenge the mentality of war. The crucial idea underlying the whole of her project is "attentive love": "Maternal thinking is a discipline in attentive love. Clear-sighted attachment, loving clear-sightedness, is the aim, guiding principle, and corrective of maternal thinking . . . To love a child is to *do* whatever is required to keep her safe and help her grow." (p.123) This idea will inform the comprehensive ethic of care I develop in Chapters Five and Six. I argue that a salutary form of attentive love, not as strong as that between a mother and child, is possible even between persons who have never met, or even between humans and non-humans (or, perhaps, though I do not explore the issue in this work, even between humans and environmental entities such as forests and mountain ecosystems).

Other virtues of care are important, yet will not play a prominent role in my work due to issues of scope (I am more concerned with basic issues of defense and expansion of the ethic as a whole, not with detailing the fine-tuned aspects). These virtues center on maintaining mutually beneficial healthy relationships. Good listening skills, which build upon attentiveness, are important, as is trust (Baier 1995). Ruddick mentions many other skills that are relevant and potentially adaptable from mother/child interactions to other kinds of relationship. Some of the important ideas she discusses in detail, along with corresponding virtues, are preservative love, nurturance, humility, welcoming change, concreteness (vs. abstractness), story-telling, honesty, compassion, scrutiny, and delight (1989).

The final criterion to discuss is (7j), the justice ethic's emphasis on fair distribution of goods and the preservation of autonomy. Iris Marion Young's work is important here, for she points out that the political tradition of Western society does indeed follow a program of distributive fairness, one which is wanting because it does not emphasize the problems of oppression and domination (1990, 3). Writing that "the concept of justice is coextensive with the political," she provides a general framework for political justice theories that should be familiar to the reader by now (since the discussion of 1-6j makes similar points). Young's description accentuates the point that political justice theories and ethical justice theories blur into creatures of the same kind:

> A theory of justice typically derives fundamental principles of justice that
> apply to all or most societies, whatever their concrete configuration and

31

social relations, from a few general premises about the nature of human beings, the nature of societies, and the nature of reason ... It assumes a point of view outside the social context where issues of justice arise, in order to gain a comprehensive view. The theory of justice is intended to be self-standing, since it exhibits its own foundations. As a discourse it aims to be whole, and to show justice in its unity. It is detemporalized, in that nothing comes before it and future events will not affect its truth or relevance to social life. (p.4)

One of Young's targets is Rawls' *A Theory of Justice*, which focuses on distribution of goods and also liberty as expressed in the equal and expansive distribution of rights (1971)[7]. Through Rawls' philosophy, we see the importance of autonomy in that the bargainers in the Original Position are considered to "express their nature as free and equal rational beings." (p.515) This notion of rational, uncoerced citizens pursuing their self-interest is at the heart of traditional contract theories (Locke, Rousseau, Hobbes) and appears in the Enlightenment story of Rationality as the guiding principle for humanity. Kant, for example, speaks of the kingdom of ends, in which rational beings fully embrace the moral rules dictated by Reason and thereby live autonomously yet in harmony.

Care versions of autonomy and impartiality. It is important to note that care ethicists need not abandon the concept of autonomy, or the related concept of impartiality. However, given their multilayered view of the self, which extends down to

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[7] In *Political Liberalism* Rawls moves away from an emphasis on distributive justice issues and focuses on issues concerning democracy and the use of coercive force. This is a step in the direction of the care ethic, because letting all voices be heard, especially those of the poor and oppressed, is a key theme in the writings of relevant feminists (e.g. Lugones 1989, Warren 1997). Whether Rawls' discussion in this book more closely matches 1-7c or 1-7j is a topic that goes beyond the scope of this project.

the unconsciousness and out to persons, culture, and environment, they cannot accept the simple picture of a Rational faculty that impartially attaches to Reality and thereby chooses autonomously. For the care ethicist, both autonomy and impartiality have more modest goals than access to Truth. Research in this area is ongoing, but it is likely that raised consciousness and escape from inauthenticity, as these are understood in terms of a fresh awareness of rituals and behaviors that support oppression, provide benchmarks for the achievement of open-mindedness and properly judicious thought.

In this context, impartiality and autonomy could be linked to anti-oppressive awareness and the attentiveness that would be fostered by such sensitivity. Someone cognizant of society's invisible bars and their own participation in maintaining those bars, and who is capable of using empathy to 'see the world as another sees it' to help eliminate oppressive practice, is someone more autonomous than are the self-deceived who live in unconscious or semi-conscious contradiction, supporting social values at odds with their own professed beliefs. For instance, picture the optimistic case of a man who suddenly realizes how his wife perceives life as she struggles to work, raise the children, clean the house, perform counseling/nurturing tasks, keep her body sexy to meet social standards, and deal with the frustration of being doubly or triply burdened.

Consciousness-raised persons are more self-empowered yet more sensitive to the needs of oppressed others than those who unthinkingly play into the everyday routine, which more often than not preserves gender and racial segregations and the attendant

inequalities that accompany them. Additionally, by exercising attentiveness, they possess impartiality in the sense of being able to give full weight to the viewpoints of others. Virtues and principles of care can round out this picture, providing standards that prevent over-emphasizing one's own desires and underestimating those of others. Conversely, such standards can also morally proscribe stereotypically self-effacing caregivers from elevating others' needs above their own.

Dualism

Before discussing the second dimension (Chapter Two), which significantly increases the intricacy of the model, I introduce the specter of dualism, to which the added layer of sophistication will help provide a solution. The reader may be familiar with the above sort of care/justice dichotomizing and already suspect that dualism has surreptitiously crept into the model. Dualism is a complicated concept much investigated by feminists (Collins 1982; Held 1993; Plumwood 1993) but for my purposes here it can be sketchily described as a social dynamic in which two mutually exclusive extremes are poised in an oppression-fostering opposition. An example would be the roles given to women and men under patriarchy, where aggressive behavior is set against passive, independent against dependent, rational against emotional, leader against follower, and so forth.

Can a model that distinguishes care from justice avoid reinforcing the feminine/masculine dualism that has contributed to the maintenance of long-standing patriarchal roles? As a whole, the criterial pairs above may seem to describe two complementary positions and so appear to preserve a dualistic structure, counterpoising a rational extreme with an emotional extreme. It is the danger of advancing dualism that causes Blythe McVicker Clinchy, co-author of the well-known *Women's Ways of Knowing*, to lament:

> My colleagues and I may have unwittingly colluded in the misunderstanding of connected knowing . . . by labeling and defining the two modes [connected vs. separate knowing] in contrasting terms. Unlike Gilligan, who was careful to define each mode in its own terms . . . we fell victim to the "dogma of the inseparability of the two poles," treating the two modes in some respects as mirror images of each other. Because we defined separate knowing in terms that placed it squarely in the realm of *logos*, connected knowing, in contrast, could easily be drawn into the realm of *mythos*, and thus dismissed. (Clinchy and Norem 1999, 772)

Clinchy's connected knowing is a "personal, relational way of knowing" that "relies on narrative" and so interfaces well with the care criteria (4c and 5c), whereas separate knowing "clearly belongs to the masculine *logos*" in its stripping of affect from moral thought to achieve a purely rational abstraction (4j and 5j) (Belenky et al. 1986, 109). The many links between connected knowing and care have been identified by feminist scholars, care serving as a "subtext" or framework in which the connected-knowing epistemology rests (Stanton 1996, 45; Schweickart 1996, 321).

Although separate knowing falls into the *logos/mythos* dualism, Clinchy maintains that connected knowing does not. It is not identifiable with *mythos* in the way that separate knowing is with *logos*. She writes that connected knowing "partakes of both modes and fits neatly into neither." She does not lament falling head on into the pit of dualism, but rather giving that impression by employing mirror image pictures.

Clinchy's analysis provides evidence that a care ethic can avoid a dualistic opposition with justice. Even if the justice ethic succumbs to an oppressive conceptual framework of mutual opposition, the care ethic need not. This is not to say that all care ethics will avoid dualism and the problem of "reversal" (valorizing the feminine side of the oppressive dichotomy instead of the masculine), but some can take a form that "partakes of both modes and fits neatly into neither."

Nevertheless, avoiding *mythos* or pure "subjectivism," as Clinchy calls it, is not enough to avoid complicity in nurturing the sexist stereotypes. Nel Noddings, for instance, as we shall see, offers a rich ethic of care that includes many valuable insights and her philosophy is certainly not merely appeal to emotion or intuition; yet critics argue incisively that her lack of appeal to principle and her use of a "unidirectional" model renders the caretaker vulnerable to self-sacrifice and even abuse, on one hand, and moral myopia on the other. In short, Noddings supports the prosaic housewife role exemplified by the Feminine Mystique, or, more extremely, the "slave mammy" who raises the son of the plantation owner to be her new master (Card 1990; Nelson 1992).

To escape the trap of dualism, a care ethic must do more than avoid subjectivism; it must give caretakers tools for self-empowerment and assertion while insuring that care does not become too parochial. At a minimum, to overcome the reinforcement of harmful roles, it seems that principles must be included in an ethic of care (Tronto 1994).

The inclusion of principles and rights combats the perspective that care is oppressively feminine in at least two ways. First, the principles incorporated into an ethic of care can strongly proscribe behaviors that harm the caregiver in a stereotypically masculine or feminine fashion. For instance there could well be a principle—justified, as we shall see in Chapter Six, by appeal to the conceptual nature of moral care—against caregivers altogether abandoning their own goals to bolster the goals of a significant other or even their children[8]. Or, another example, a care ethic could embrace the rights enumerated in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, which, among other things, demands that "men and women . . . are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution." (1948).

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[8] A discussion of this point is given fuller treatment in Chapter Six, where I introduce what I call the principle of minimal dignity as a standard to protect the well-being of care-givers. If persons are denied minimal dignity, sacrificing their own health, mental or physical, to care for others, even those that they love, their behavior is inappropriate, barring the presence of extenuating circumstances (e.g. donating a kidney to save a life). What I am not outrightly proscribing here is the general condition of partial sacrifice in which some goals are abandoned for others. This is a common necessity of life for most everyone. But in cases of oppression, such as those described in Betty Freidan's *The Feminist Mystique*, in which frustrated housewives are effectively bondaged in their domestic role and debarred from intellectual and political positions of power (1962), concerns of minimal dignity come into play.

The second way in which the inclusion of principles, rights, and rules in a care ethic can help the ethic escape the oppressive feminine role is that, given our social context, an appeal to universal principles, rights, and rules is not an appeal to an element of morality considered feminine; and if care embraces this non-feminine mode, then, by that very fact, it is transcending the feminine role.

Some might argue that incorporating principles into an ethic of care is superfluous because such an ethic can escape dualism without appealing to principles. An ethic is not necessarily wholly emotional and subjective when it lacks appeal to universal principles. In light of this fact, isn't it possible that a non-dualistic care ethic can be created without appeal to principles, and if so, isn't the appeal to principles awkward and perhaps regressive to a primitive and unsatisfactory view of how humans actually conduct themselves morally? Some philosophers, for instance, argue that universal principles cannot be rationally justified because morality is developed by specific communities through situated historical narratives that cannot generalize to other communities with other historical narratives (Rorty 1996; MacIntyre 1984).

There are two claims of interest here. One is that principles are superfluous, and the second is that they cannot be justified rationally as moral tools. I discuss each in turn.

Without disputing that a care ethic could perhaps escape dualism without incorporating principles, I would like to point out that the inclusion of principles in the ethic is not superfluous for three reasons.

First, for simple practical reasons that involve suffering in third-world countries, it is imperative that human rights are inculcated into the politico-social fabric of such countries. An ethic that eschews talk of rights, rules, and principles is not going to be satisfactory in a current-day political setting for the simple reason that the human-rights movement is the spearhead for eliminating cruel and barbarous treatment for (at least) hundreds of millions of people (e.g. the call for women's rights is the fulcrum for much positive change in repressive countries such as Egypt, Kuwait, and Turkey). Even if progress can be made without focusing on rights (e.g. through ethical approaches that do not espouse universal principles) optimal political effectiveness is imperiled if rights talk is abandoned. Hence, since I want to develop an ethic of care that functions efficiently to end oppression and cruelty in the public as well as the private sphere, it is crucial that rights are included in the program.

Secondly, because the traditional feminine role is so entrenched in the European (un)consciousness, the danger of slipping into that role is a constant threat to advocates of the care ethic, an ethic that indeed has roots in the modus operandi of the traditional female. Given the constant peril, principles provide a useful safeguard even if they are not absolutely essential to avoiding negative roles.

Thirdly, principles provide a clear way of turning care into something of a transgendered ethic instead of a wholly feminine ethic. By transgendered I mean an ethic that "partakes of both modes yet fits neatly into neither," the characterization that Clinchy

offers for connected knowing. Like connected knowing, which situates itself outside the *mythos/logos* dichotomy, the care ethic, by including principles, situates itself beyond the masculine/feminine dichotomy. Hence, the inclusion of principles has substantive merit, and calling such an inclusion superfluous is unreasonable unless one assumes that there is another more efficient way of making the care ethic transgendered that does all the work of principle-inclusion and more. Since I am not willing to accept this assumption, it seems that principles are not superfluous but one viable option for those seeking to transgender care.

One might also take the offensive, and point out that communitarian and particularist ethics, which do not subscribe to universal principles and, furthermore, limit moral justifications to particular socio-historical contexts, are vulnerable to the charge of relativism in the sense of supporting many kinds of prima facie abhorrent practices such as female genital mutilation, murder of adulterous wives to preserve family honor, human and animal sacrifice, and so forth. Rather than hop into the ever-present debate on this issue, I simply point out that universal principles are a clear way to justify a statement that one is against female genital mutilation or other unspeakable cruelties regardless of culture or history, and an ethic that includes such principles is that much better off when it comes to combating charges of unintuitive relativism.

As for the complaint that universal principles cannot be rationally justified as moral tools, I first reply with the practical point introduced above; given the present

40

global political situation, it is imperative that the idea of universal principles be advanced and inculcated into nations throughout the world in order to ease the tremendous and egregiously unfair burden of suffering that plagues billions of people. If such practical issues can be used as evidence for moral justification, and it is not at all clear to me that they cannot, then I adduce them.[9] Note also that the employment of strategic and practical concerns for justificatory purposes does not rule out other forms of rational support for principles, as I bring out below.

Secondly, the rational justification of principles relies in part on a rather straightforward observation, one which could be justified on narrative grounds; namely, that persons everywhere, taken as social, cultural, or political groups, are the same in certain psychological and physical ways that are commonly held to be relevant to ascriptions of intrinsic value. There is no big mystery in the argument that if it is wrong to torture an American for fun then anyone maintaining that it is not wrong to torture an African for fun has a huge justificatory burden to bear. The relevant similarities require no abstruse logic to grasp. Nor do they entail that context cannot play a role in influencing moral decisions. As will be brought out in Chapter Two, the injection of principled

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[9] The importance of practical issues in justifying a role for principles suggests a deeper analysis, one that relies on shared intuitions, intuitions not shared simply by one community but more importantly shared across cultures. Intuitions against whimsical cruelty can form the justification for basic principles such as a right to life. Stories in the form of personal testimonies or powerful literary statements about suffering (for example, Dostoevsky's famous "Rebellion" chapter in *The Brothers Karamazov*) could help explore shared intuitions about evil and augment their force in terms of human-rights legislation. In this way, practical issues are keys to the deepest of human commitments and the sorts of legal manifestations of such commitments that can provide universal protection.

41

considerations into the deliberation process sets restrictions on what is permissible yet does not dictate what the right action must be in many moral circumstances.

Thirdly, the problem of moral justification plagues all ethical theories and the issue is not restricted to those who wish to employ universal principles. Justifying statements of the sort 'X is wrong' on any level that goes beyond mere consensus is a tricky business that is likely to consume philosophers for uncountable years to come. Again, rather than hop into an arena of battling perspectives, I submit that in-depth answers to questions of ultimate justification go beyond the purview of this work. I am content to show that the care ethic can employ principles without thereby becoming involved with the justice ethic, and that such employment offers a means of escaping dualism.

Since principles, as noted above, can be useful tools for combating dualism in the context of care, the task is now to demonstrate that the presence of principles does not imply the presence of the Rationality (justice) ethic. In order to do so, I develop the second dimension of the proposed care-justice model with the intent of highlighting the complexity of the two ethics and the radical differences between them. It then becomes clear that the presence of principles in an ethic does not guarantee that such an ethic appeals to justice--that would be like pulling one colored marble out of a bag of marbles, and based on that single pick, arguing that a certain pattern of colors is present in the bag.

Chapter Two
External Criteria and the Role of Principles

My project in this Chapter is to present the second half of the two-dimensional model and then discuss an important implication of the model, namely, that it allows for the presence of universal principles in the ethic of care without thereby compromising the separation of that orientation from justice. Moreover, because principles provide strong protection against dualistic influences, their presence in the ethic of care inoculates it against the tendency to support the stereotypical feminine role.

External Criteria. The second dimension of the model enhances the complexity of the two positions, care and justice, by looking at how the theoretical form of an ethic plays out in real life. There are at least four ways in which morality enters into living, and differences can be found between the two orientations along all four aspects:

(1e) Ethical behavior
(2e) A practice of engaging in moral decision-making
(3e) A worldview (a comprehensive system of beliefs)
(4e) A psychology or arrangement of the psyche

Unlike the 7 criterial pairs in Chapter One, labeled with 'c' or 'j', the four aspects of daily living are labeled with an 'e', continuing my metaphorical usage of internal (to describe conceptual components) and external (to describe praxis and practical effects of adopting an ethic). Since care and justice both contain 1-4e, there is no need to use the 'c' or 'j' distinction as it was used for the seven criterial pairs.

The two ethics will be discussed in relation to the four measurements, generating different living-styles, ways of looking at the world, and even ways of organizing the mind. Whereas the discussion of the internal criteria focused on the abstract, the discussion in this section focuses on practical circumstance. The second dimension, then, contextualizes the seven criterial pairs, though in the process clearly draws from them. It expresses them through a new lens, thereby offering a second way of viewing the two positions. Contrasts are developed, ones that could be expressed as oppositional pairs, but the emphasis is on how the two ethics interact with the world. Hence, highlighting the contrasts, as was done for the internal criteria, is not as useful as discussing the implications of adopting one or the other of these orientations.

The discussion of behavior (1e), for example, centers on the tendency for justice kinds of thinking, given the historical circumstances of our civilization, to support dysfunctional behaviors that require a deadening of the mind's affective sources of information, whereas care sorts of thinking face the danger of supporting fanaticism. The section on moral decision-making considers recent advances in cognitive psychology and computer theory, which support the conclusion that humans, in actuality, do not and cannot think along the lines of Rational moral decision-making procedures (MDMP's). In the analysis of worldview, the economic, political, and scientific implications of care and justice are emphasized. And in the section on psychology, I make the case that care tends to nurture empathy and empathic skills, whereas justice nurtures Objectivity and

44

scientific-mathematical skills, thereby affecting what people will learn and how they will learn, and whether they will be prone to certain defense mechanisms such as compartmentalization. The following table (Table 2-1) presents the themes of the ensuing discussion[1].

Table 2-1 External Criteria: Blending Theory and Practice

	Care	Justice
(1e) Ethical Behavior	Danger of excessive passion	Danger of psychological armoring
(2e) Moral decision-making	Contextual parallel process; metaphors	Digital linear process; logical or quantitative data
(3e) Worldview	Self as relational; cooperative economics; peace politics	Individualism; consumer capitalism; realpolitik
(4e) Psychology	Emphasis on empathy-oriented skills	Emphasis on objectivity-oriented skills

There are clearly some conceptual relationships between the various external criteria (e.g. the section on behavior (1e) and the section on psychology (4e) both take into account the importance of empathy) but this is expected because the four aspects interpenetrate (e.g.

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1 A full numerical delineation of the two-dimensional model could be given by labelling the components in the following table as 1-4ce and 1-4je; 1-7c and 1-7j, discussed in chapter one, would then be 1-7ci and 1-7cj. I eschew this rigorous labelling system because it is not useful for the analysis that follows and so would be cumbersome (in my own case, I find it distracting). Additionally, it also gives the impression that, say, the label '2ce,' which applies to the care ethic in terms of how it affects a moral agent's worldview, stands for one particular point, whereas in discussing worldview in the context of care I make more than one pertinent observation.

worldview informs MDMP, psychology informs behavior). However, the exact

relationships between these external criteria are not my concern. My goal is to find

another layer of difference between care and justice, one that supplements the differences

discovered in the last chapter by an analysis of 1-7c and 1-7j, thereby providing further

clarification/sophistication and furthering my case that the two positions are very

intricate, trellising in widely different directions. This will be helpful when I come to the

second half of this chapter, "Implications of the Model."

As one might study an object with two different kinds of electromagnetic

radiation, say infrared and x-ray, and gather useful information about the object in both

cases, so I examine care vs. justice from two angles. The approach is pluralistic, positing

more than one correct framework for examining the theories. I do not intend to defend

this pluralistic approach against the charge that there might be a better way to build a

framework for investigating care and justice. There are no doubt other ways to do it. As

mentioned earlier, George Sher and Grace Clement each present their own model, but I

find both wanting (Sher's approach, the more sophisticated of the two, is discussed

below). I hope that my model contributes to the evolution of care theory by providing

greater clarity than the previous literature. To the best of my knowledge, this is the case,

at least as concerns comprehensive frameworks for examining care and justice in broad

terms.

(1e) *Moral Behavior*. Obviously both care and justice involve ethical behavior, which is often confusingly referred to as caring (or just) behavior. Hence this first external criterion disabuses us of a facile distortion; namely, that an ethic of care is nothing more than being caring in one's actions. Both the care and the justice ethic include caring behavior. It is important to distinguish between care as an ethic and care as a term used to describe certain kinds of acting, for the latter is not at all indicative of the multifacetedness of the former, nor are caring acts necessarily consonant with an ethic of care (e.g. cloying caring behavior, as exemplified by constant and solicitous ministrations that create situations of codependency, would be considered inappropriate).

Although there is no theoretical bar on the possibility that someone following a care ethic will evince the same ethical behaviors as someone else following a justice ethic, it is not unlikely that characteristic differences between the moral behavior of the proponents of the two orientations will result from their differing decision-making procedures, worldviews, and psychologies (as will be discussed more fully below). Moreover, empirical studies back up the claim that care and justice support different outlooks (Sheldon 1993; Lyons 1988; Gilligan et. al. 1988). In general, it seems likely that a model which separates the rational faculty from the affective faculties and prescribes domination of the emotions by objective Reason will yield a different personality profile than an ethic that denies such compartmentalization of the mind and

47

lionizes rather than marginalizes emotions, passions, and contextual narratives 'thick' with such sources of judgement and wisdom.

In caricaturing terms (though if Rationality is an ideal type or myth, which is perfectly acceptable for my purposes, it is only a partial caricature), the Reasoning moral agent, at least while caught up in the process of making a moral decision, might be like the Vulcan Spock from the original Star Trek TV show. This character sought to express no emotion and with scientific precision searched for "logical" solutions to moral and nonmoral dilemmas. The care moral agent might be more like "Bones" McCoy, the irascible doctor who reacted with unbridled passion when confronted with a question of right or wrong. The care ethicist, however, is not the opposite of a Vulcan, and so cannot be reduced to simplistic emotionality that operates without reason or principle.

Dominator Psychological Armoring. Some feminists have gone so far as to accuse the entire Western patriarchal tradition, which is historically bellicose, of deadening empathy and fostering a pathological mentality that serves to wither affective expression and reception. Rianne Eisler, for example, sees the violent sexual domination of women displayed over the centuries in chronic and characteristic patterns as possible due to the cultural practice of instilling "dominator psychosexual armoring" in its members:

> What we are today learning about sexually obsessive and compulsive behaviors is that they generally stem from an inability to fully experience bodily sensations and a full range of emotions. In other words, behind the seemingly insatiable appetite for sex and cruelty of many Romans . . . lies a dominator psychosexual armoring that effectively blocks the full experiencing of bodily and emotional sensations.

48

It is this same psychosexual armoring that in our time continues to drive men to ever more sexual conquests, to the "excitement" of warfare, and to all the other frantic compulsions that fuel both war and the war of the sexes. It is this armoring--and the seething frustrations inherent in a dominator/dominated way of structuring human relations--that in our time still finds expression in mass media that in their celluloid violence and cruelty rival the sadism of the imperially funded Roman "circuses." (1996, 124)

Whether or not the justice ethic entails a deadening of the affective sensibilities, there is a danger that such an ethic, especially when coupled with a social system that is inherently violent and oppressive, will support such 'armoring' in its removal of affect from the moral decision-making process and the epistemic lens that seeks out moral knowledge (for example, infamous passages from Kant's writings deny any moral worth to judgements based on "inclination"). Utilitarians are quick to seek the elimination of emotion from moral calculations, as evidenced by Peter Singer's denunciation:

You cannot write objectively about the experiments of the Nazi concentration camp "doctors" on those they considered "subhuman" without stirring emotions ... The ultimate justification for opposition to ... these kinds of experiments, though, is not emotional. It is an appeal to basic moral principles which we all accept, and the application of these principles to the victims of both kinds of experiment is demanded by reason, not emotion. (1990, iii)

The removal of emotion from moral justification is a call, as discussed below, to develop a relationship of domination with one's emotions, which in turn could lead to the situation that troubles Eisler, the "inability to fully experience bodily sensations and a full range of emotions" (see the section below, "the deadening effect," for support for Eisler's claim). And historically, she points out, this is linked with the kind of insensitivity that is

49

prerequisite to acts of enslaving, torturing, killing, massacring, and oppressing humans and sentient nonhumans. The claim is not that all emotion is deadened, but that the full range of emotion and sensitivity is prevented, particularly in regards to those feelings, sentiments, and gut-reactions that concern questions of right and wrong.

For example, dominator psychological armoring, or something quite similar, emerged in some 17th –century persons who followed the Cartesian principle, justified by rationalistic philosophy, that animals are merely machines. Malebranche kicked a pregnant dog and proclaimed, "Well, don't you know that it does not feel!" Cartesian Monks nailed dogs to boards by their paws and vivisected them, laughing at their squeals (Radner and Radner 1996). If this is a situation of domination, and I would argue that it is, and if this is also a situation of callousness brought about by a Rational philosophical stance, and I would argue that, at least in large part, it is, then what we have is a case of dominator psychological armoring fostered by an ideology that preaches domination of emotion by Reason.

The production of callousness. The process of acquiring dominator psychological armoring (DPA) is sketched in the following enumerated process. Dominator Rationality (DR), that which supports oppression through reinforcement of dualism (e.g. male Rational/female emotional) will be used to highlight the dangers. The relationship between DR and Rationality is considered afterwards.

(1) In the first stage, affective sources of information and motivation like passion and emotion (E) are relegated to positions of extreme inferiority in the moral decision-making

50

process (e.g. Kant's devaluing of "inclination," Singer's devaluing of "emotion"). E sources of information cannot override DR sources of information if there is a conflict, and cannot even sway them or mitigate their dictates in such cases.

(2) The moral decision-making process suffers and goes astray because one is not 'listening to one's heart.' Hence, DR is able to justify, say, slavery and the cruelties associated with that practice, such as separating families, whipping, and chaining humans like livestock.

(3) Hence, empathy and E sources are affectively gagged, dominated by DR forces that militate against their urgings. The tension in the person between E and DR leads to 'cognitive dissonance,' an uncomfortable state that is relieved by deadening the E sources (or converting them to the cause of DR, in which case empathy for the suffering of the oppressed and sympathetic emotions are deadened and replaced by hostile emotions).

(4) After habitually deadening E sources over a period of time, the DR agent effectively dulls them permanently. Empathy and competent E reasoning toward oppressed persons are vitiated and dominator psychological armoring (DPA) results.

The relationship between DR and Rationality. One might object that the above sketch

employs Dominator Rationality instead of Rationality, and so only succeeds in showing a

link between DR and DPA. But note that historically, at least in western civilization,

Rationality has always been Dominator Rationality in the sense of supporting dualism

(Plumwood 1993). The bastions of intelligentsia in the philosophical tradition, Aristotle,

Aquinas, Descartes, Spinoza, Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, and so forth, thought men were

more rational and more capable than women of leadership roles, (women were relegated

to the noncerebral domestic and sexual roles). Just as telling are the racist and elitist

tendencies of their philosophies, which sometimes outrightly support slavery and a hierarchy of worth based on ethnic and genetic criteria[2].

Given the historical association between Rationality and DR, there is a grave danger that Rationality will slide into Dominator Rationality and engage in the 4-step process outlined above. Admittedly, the connection is not logically or nomologically necessary. It seems possible that Rationality could exist in a non-DR state (e.g., in a world where all humans were considered Rational) and so not support dualism. But even the non-DR form of Rationality is part of a polarization between reason and emotion, one that slips into dualism if women or minorities or persons in other countries or cultures are labelled as emotional against the white male leadership labelled as rational. As we see in the next section, even the tension inherent in the polarity is dangerous.

The Deadening Effect. Even if Rationality can avoid DR, there is a danger of unhealthy psychological armoring due to the relationship established between reason and emotion. Because affective sources of information (e.g. outrage at vivisecting animals,

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2 A Rational approach can be used to fight racism and slavery (e.g. both Kant and Singer are against slavery, though interestingly both have been accused of racism, Kant more rightly so than Singer). Such approaches, though, have been used to condone egregious cruelty. Descartes claimed animals were machines and heartless vivisections followed. Look how Imperialists used 'scientific' data to make a rational case justifying "the white man's burden." The deeper question is one of efficacy. What's at issue is not simply what practices end up being justified, but the soundness of the justificatory process itself and the likelihood that it will go astray, or even provide a truly practical means of dealing with moral dilemmas. While Rational approaches can prohibit the sorts of things we intuitively think they should, some of my worries, considered throughout this project, are that they misrepresent human thought process by segregating reason and emotion, that they promote a kind of psychological armoring that deadens a wide range of feeling, and that they are prone to slip into racist, sexist or other dominative modes of operation.

which within its very expression conveys a judgement of condemnation[3]) are constantly

kept under strict control (so that they do not taint the Rational MDMP) they may become

docile, meek shadows of their former selves. They may not be developed by the Rational

agent to a high level of proficiency due to their lowly status. The following diagram

illustrates the problem:

The De-sensitization Process

Undervalued/Restrained

Deadening

Underdeveloped/Devalued
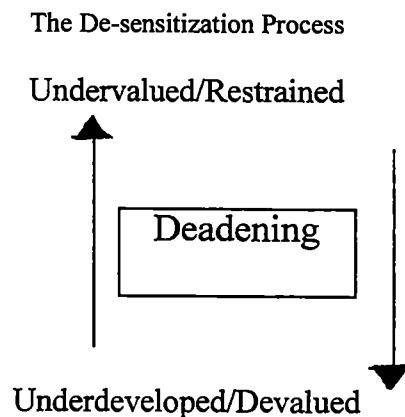
When emotions that arise from empathy or moral outrage are undervalued or restrained,

they are effectively labelled as less important than Rational mechanisms. The danger of

such labeling is that it results in something like a self-fulfilling prophecy, or what Antony

Weston calls "self-validating reduction." (1996) In cases of self-validating reduction,

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3 A full analysis of the nature of emotion and "affective sources of information" is beyond the scope of
this work. By affective sources of information I mean emotions and also the mindset of the subjectively
situated moral agent, the one who is not employing Reason. As Robert Solomon brings out in his
meticulous book *ThePassions*, emotions possess evaluative content and render judgements. They are
sophisticated states of being that can be analyzed along many scales (Solomon uses thirteen). While I
could proceed to distinguish emotions from sentiments, feelings, and so forth, this would stray from the
main point: emotional states can contain judgements in and of themselves, and can emerge from a
sophisticated interaction of attitudes, wisdom based on experience and learning, and many other factors
(Reber 1995).

one's beliefs, though initially unfounded, influence behavior in such a way that they shape reality to conform to the belief. The modified reality then reinforces the belief, which influences behavior again in a more drastic way, and so on, until a maximal molding of reality to belief is achieved. Weston gives as an example the reduction of the land to something passive and objectlike, as manifested in the creation of things like parking lots. In this case, the belief in the land as objectified passive material achieves truth by turning living systems of plants, insects, microorganisms and small mammals into asphalt expanses. This is an example of the kind of devaluation and deadening that can occur when one's belief systems calls for dominating, restraining or undervaluing, whether the target is a person, place, or one's own psychological properties[4].

In a Rational scheme, there is, if not a dualism between reason and emotion, a polarization between them, with a heavy emphasis on valuing reason in the moral decision-making process and minimizing the input of faculties like intuition, sympathy, and the 'voice' of the heart. A self-validating reduction could easily emerge in this situation, since the affective side of the person is considered unreliable, unruly, and unsophisticated. Such beliefs could have real effects as the Rational agent develops

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[4] Without disputing the deadening mechanism I describe here, some might contend that many people are simply amoral and don't possess the basic empathy or compassion that my picture of human nature assumes. Questions of human nature (e.g. are we doomed to perpetual war due to our evolutionary history?) are central to questions of ethics, both at the personal and political level, but I will not take up an extensive discussion of this topic. De-sensitizing programs are common in our society (e.g. the Marine Corps training hardens the soldier to accept killing as perfunctory) and this suggests that many people need to be trained in order to hurt or kill others, which in turn suggests that we are not naturally violent or cruel creatures. Howard Zinn, arguing against the inevitability of war, discusses this in some detail (1990, Ch.2).

distrust of emotions and begins to suppress, repress, or deny them. As the cycle of reduction continues, beliefs affecting actions which in turn affect the mind, a deadening of emotion occurs. If Eisler is correct, this deadening interferes not only with faculties like intuition and empathy but also the ability to feel, for example, pleasure in general. Prima facie, there is no reason to suppose that the above model of the 'deadening effect' does not support Eisler's claim. If, for example, feminine emotions are devalued, and these emotions are associated with sensuous and sensual pleasure (a common claim of misogynous medieval Christians was that romantic love was wicked and sex, associated with love, was wicked too (Rouche 1996)), then the the deadening of the emotions would be accompanied by a decreased ability to feel pleasure related to those emotions.

Once affective deadening has occurred, if the Rational agent makes a mistake in the logical calculus, for example, endorsing a racist or sexist political system, then intuition or empathy cannot challenge the oppressive dictate. In this fashion, even if Rationality has not devolved into Dominator Rationality, there is the ever present possibility and even likelihood because of the deadening effect and the lurking presence of the historical context of domination.

Care and zealotry. The advocate of the care ethic is not as vulnerable to the development of crippling anti-emotion armor as is the justice advocate because emotion is not regarded as a taint on moral reasoning but a welcome central element. The justice advocate wears two hats: that of the Rational calculator and that of the ordinary emotional

55

person; the former must lead and rein the latter (picture Plato's well-worn Charioteer metaphor in the *Phaedrus*). The care advocate, on the other hand, wears only one hat, and does not make divisions between how-I-treat-my-emotions-when-making-moral-decisions and how-I-treat-my emotions-when-immersed-in-daily-living.

Perhaps the proponent of care is more vulnerable to the problem of excessive passion—passion that can lead to impetuousness or moral blindness—but here again the inclusion of principles in the ethic serves a beneficial role, tempering the urge to fanaticism and rash cruelty. It is not clear that the justice ethicist has recourse to a similar protection against the threat of dominator psychological armoring. Because emotion is ostracized from moral Reasoning, and must be kept from any interference with the enactment of the dictates of such Reasoning, there does not seem to be any consistent way to give emotion a strong enough voice to protect the moral person from the danger of developing a deadened sensibility that neither transmits nor receives, with others or within the self, healthy emotional expression[5].

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5 One might wonder about the process of "reflective equilibrium," introduced by Rawls, and what its relationship is to care and justice. Since it takes into account many sources of information, it might allow the justice-ethic a means of centrally including emotion in the moral decision-making process.

Care ethicists are not opposed to reflective equilibrium as a model of moral decision-making if it is understood as a process that is engaged in by situationally embedded moral agents who include "moral emotions" in the process (Held 1993). Reflective equilibrium is capable of interpretation along the lines of both 1-7c and 1-7j. In the former case, "moral emotions" are one of the relevant factors, and the process of finding a coherency is understood in terms of resolving narratives, perhaps by introducing linking stories that merge the insights of different perspectives. In the latter case, emotion is minimized or eliminated from the list of relevant factors (e.g. Rawls uses "intuition" instead of emotion, and the relevant intuitions are derived from a detached 'cool-headed' perspective). Furthermore, the coherency mechanism used to attain equilibrium is understood in terms of logical consistency that renders all elements commensurable, and so measurable against one another in a straightforward mathematical or logical fashion (as in

This is a crucial point because a hypothetical ideal Rational ethicist might argue that if care can include principles with its theoretical body then *mutatis mutandis* the justice ethic can similarly include moral emotions. But this line of reasoning imprecisely refocuses the debate on the presence of moral emotion rather than focusing on the pertinent issue: the role played by moral emotion. The moral process of the Rationalist, in its very nature, is one that excludes partiality, subjectivity, and passion from Reasoning. While moral emotion can be accommodated within such a methodology, that place will, by definition, be secondary and not only secondary but inferior in the sense that emotion must be dominated or contained so that it does not taint proper judgement.

What we get in care is a different moral process, a combination of many factors, including both principle-based considerations and affective sources of information. The agent's perspective remains affectively situated yet there is no prohibition on the employment of reason (there is, however, a prohibition on the employment of Reason, which, as discussed above, by nature renders moral emotion secondary and inferior); indeed, narrative deliberations should not be considered irrational and subjective (thereby caricaturing feminist assertions), but as inherently rational or at least as attempts at

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utilitarianism or logical reductionism, though Rawls would not go so far as to endorse such across-the-board commensurability).

    Reflective equilibrium, then, can ostracize emotion or not, depending on what form it takes. The justice-ethic form, as I have defined it, would ostracize emotion. Rawls' version, though subject to interpretation, leans in the direction of the justice orientation, though his conception of intuition may be somewhat open to emotional content (though not passionate content) and his method for balancing the relevant factors and attaining equilibrium remains vague.

combining reason and emotion in one integrated procedure. The extreme fanaticism that is possible in subjective contexts is contained by a perimeter of principles that demarcate a deliberative space where narrative procedures can operate to determine courses of action. Such principles can be justified by appeal to the conceptual nature of moral care, as discussed in Chapter Five. Principles, then, can have an important authority in an ethic of care (see the 'xxx' section in chapter one for a fuller discussion of the role of principles in a care context). This can be contrasted with the lack of authority that moral emotion possesses in the context of justice procedures, which rely on Reason.

(2e) *Moral Decision-Making.* Whereas justice and care both include caring and just behavior, the two perspectives, as we have seen, employ very different moral decision-making procedures (MDMP's). One is equation-like and reductive, the other narrative and relational. Research into the nature of narrative morality is in its formative stages, but on the face of it, there is no inconsistency in a narrativist introducing principles into the moral dialogue or story. One need not assume that principles must be like Platonic forms, existing in a higher eternal reality and graspable only by clearing the mind of all subjective taint[6]. Importantly, the dividing line between care and justice MDMP's isn't

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6 One might argue that principles are atemporal and the care ethic, taking a narrative, situated approach is temporal and so, prima facie, the fit between care decision-making procedures and principle is awkward. However, if principles are considered as merely restrictions on what is allowable, it seems straightforward that such restrictions could be included in a narrative methodology, thereby limiting the available options as concerns appropriate course of action. If, on the other hand, one assumes that principles are atemporal in the sense that Platonic forms are atemporal, there is a tension; but assuming such a status for principle begs the question. The topic of whether principles are Form-like or not is pursued in chapter five.

whether principles are involved but how they are involved and to what extent they determine the proper course of action.

For instance, the justice ethicist places foundational or axiomatic principles at the core of dilemma resolution, balancing them when there are conflicts through applications of logic and quantification (e.g. a utilitarian's use of the "greatest happiness" principle to solve conflicts between, say, justice and liberty, thereby rendering them commensurable). A care ethicist, conversely, sees principles as useful guidelines yet does not embrace them as lawlike rules governing everyday moral problems. Answers to the question, What should I do here and now? are often found in fuzzy areas where broad-brush principles and abstracting equations cannot provide assistance. Much more will be said about this important point below in conjunction with the discussion of George Sher's philosophy.

In the meantime, it should be pointed out that developments in the field of cognitive science heavily incline toward a vision of human reasoning as situated, "worldly," and thoroughly saturated by particular circumstances. This contrasts with a hierarchical view of moral reasoning as acontextual and transcultural, developing in a series of unchanging stages toward the highest rationality, which Kohlberg associates with Plato (Campbell 1990, 270). The research by cognitive science does not imply that we ought to adopt the care ethic, but it shows that the methodolody of care, narrative, situated, and contextual, is in accord with the way that the mind operates. It also casts

59

doubt on the possibility that we can change to become less embodied and situated in our thought, or that reality is the sort of thing that can be broken down into Forms or logical atoms governed by a precise logical language.

In *The Improbable Machine: What New Discoveries in Artificial Intelligence Reveal About the Mind* Jeremy Campbell contrasts the digital computer with the parallel-processing computer and likens the human mind to the latter. The digital computer

> works in serial fashion, manipulating symbols step by step, one after another, under the control of a central processing unit, according to explicit rules . . . It performs long and intricate arithmetical calculations at high speed, much faster and more accurately than any human being can.

The parallel processing computer operates like the brain, which

> has roughly as many processing units as there are stars in our galaxy . . .Yet in spite of this profusion of processors, most of the brain consists of "wires"; a single unit may have thousands of connections with other units and with itself. That is not the case in a standard computer, where a chip usually has less than six connections . . . It seems likely that the brain can accomplish its complex feats of perception and thought by means of millions of connections acting in parallel. The connections as a whole define the information content of the system. In this way a vast amount of knowledge can be brought to bear on a decision all at once. (1990, 12)

Campbell associates "step-by-step deduction" with the digital mode of reasoning, since it is serial and involves manipulating a set of logically separate premises in a simple formula. Yet Campbell submits that, even when we appear to be reasoning deductively in simple everyday situations, the situation is more complex:

> Research in cognitive psychology has shown that we are logical only in a superficial sense; at a deeper level we are systematically illogical and biased. Our everyday reasoning is not governed primarily by the rules of

logic or probability calculus, but depends to a surprisingly large extent on what we know, on the way our knowledge is organized in memory, and on how such knowledge is evoked.

Research has extended this analysis of reasoning to the more specific case of moral thought. Campbell makes the case that Kohlbergian morality fits the acontextual, reductive, deductive, formal-logic model, that is, the model of the digital computer, whereas actual moral thought, in line with developments in cognitive theory, is narrative, situational, and generally in line with the revelations provided by Gilligan. Campbell writes:

> Formal logic and eternal principles of justice are useful and effective in freeing adolescents from the cramping constraints of a conventional mode of moral thinking, but in adulthood, the choices that arise are too complex, too much entangled in the uniqueness of each specific event, of each character in the drama, in our knowledge of the world, to be amenable to such an abstract treatment. Form can no longer afford to be indifferent to content. (p.269)

The lesson to be garnered from this analysis is that recent research supports the sort of MDMP associated with care as the actual method of reasoning employed in everyday moral decisions. People do not think deductively or logically, organizing data in the fashion of digital computers, but rather, in order to navigate the world's complexity, reason according to situated narratives informed by prior learning/experience and the actual context in question (Rooney, 1999).

These "narratives" are referred to as "explanations" by Campbell, and he notes, following the feminist contention, that the world is pluralistic, that no one explanation

61

captures all of reality, but rather each explanation has strengths and weaknesses, and it is often preferable to have more than one explanation so that a problem can be tackled from different angles.

Recent work by Lakoff and Johnson has taken the route of expressing the fundamentals of reality in terms of metaphors. Again, directly contradicting the view that reality is unified and can be understood by one logic or overriding deductive system, these authors claim to have toppled millennia of philosophical assumptions by elaborating the recent research in cognitive science, which they express in three concise statements: "The mind is inherently embodied. Thought is mostly unconscious. Abstract concepts are largely metaphorical." (Lakoff and Johnson 1999, 3)[7].

Their conclusions about the constitution of reason and the implications of this constitution support the care approach and challenge the justice approach. For instance, "There exists no Kantian radically autonomous person, with absolute freedom and a transcendent reason that correctly dictates what is and isn't moral." "There is no a priori, purely philosophical basis for a universal concept of morality and no transcendent,

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[7] If asked whether they are making epistemic or metaphysical claims when they promote states such as "reality is not unified," I think many feminists would respond that their main concern is to eliminate oppressive practice and that both knowledge claims and reality claims are germane. Moreover, there is no simple divide. Someone who makes knowledge claims about the inferiority of women probably thinks that she or he is talking about what is real. There can be real effects of such bigotry, as through self-fulfilling prophecy. At the core of oppression studies seems to be the idea that how we know influences who we are, and furthermore there are many ways of knowing and no one way is ultimately best. This makes for a milieu in which epistemic and metaphysical claims are not clearly separable. Suffering and oppression are real and their existence is modulated by the kinds of filters used in cultural settings to evaluate people and environments.

universal pure reason that could give rise to universal moral laws." "The utilitarian person, for whom rationality is economic rationality--the maximization of utility--does not exist . . . People seldom engage in a form of economic reason that could maximize utility." (p.5)

Hence, in an unlikely alliance between feminists, cognitive scientists and psychologists, there exists a serious challenge to the justice program, a challenge to the very description of reason employed by that program, and a call to engage in metaphorical, narrative, pluralistic modes of reasoning that engage the self on both the conscious and unconscious levels[8]. The recent research, then, bolsters the feminist view and provides an additional means of defining the MDMP of care as it opposes the MDMP of justice.

The work of Lakoff and Johnson (and that of Campbell) could be challenged. The empirical studies they rely on could be flawed. But what is more likely—since I am unaware of anyone who currently uses empirical research to posit that the mind is like a deductive computer, that the unconscious realm is not significant in thought process, and so forth—is that a proponent of justice would accept Lakoff and Johnson's conclusions and yet try to define a justice ethic within these parameters. Embodiment, unconscious

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[8] There is no condemnation of physicalism here, nor does a care ethicist need to go in that direction. Indeed, there is no bar on a care ethicist promoting physical substance as the basis of reality. Lakoff and Johnson, whose work is used to defend the care worldview, claim to be physicalists while positing that there are three types of substance: physical, phenomenological, and metaphorical.

63

thought, and the essential metaphoric construction of concept might not prevent a Rational moral decision-making procedure that grasps Truth. One attempt in this direction is described in the next section where I discuss the possibility of a kind of scientism or scientific morality.

Nonetheless, the existence and power of the unconscious is widely accepted in psychology (Skinnerian techniques are considered useful in some circumstances yet are not postulated to be definitive of the self); the attempt to generate models of the human mind along the terms of simple computational models has become restricted to specialized applications that do not make broad claims about mental life (Tavris 1997); and with the collapse of the logical-positivist project of constructing a universal language to which all others reduce, philosophers have abandoned correspondence theory as a means of mapping words to facts in a simple one-to-one fashion and have acknowledged the irreducible significance of social situation and acculturation.

This transition is exemplified in the work of Wittgenstein, which starts from the logical positivist platform of attaching ultimate meaning to foundational, empirically observable objects in the world. David Pears associates this early stage of Wittgenstein's thought, that expressed in the *Tractatus*, with the worldview of Plato, whose use of Reason to reach Truth I have associated with the justice orientation:

> The uncritical realism of the *Tractatus* is, of course ... the doctrine that is usually called 'Platonism' nowadays. The idea is that in all our operations with language we are really running on fixed rails laid down in reality before we even appeared on the scene. Attach a name to an object, and the

64

intrinsic nature of the object will immediately take over complete control and determine the correct use of the name on later occasions. Set up a whole language in this way, and the structure of the fundamental grid will inexorably dictate the general structure of the logical system. (1987, 10)

The later Wittgenstein gives up the project of logical reductionism and equates the meaning of a word with its use in a socio-historical context. Situated "language games" come to define the parameters of philosophical investigation. Such a step into the realm of ordinary language to provide ultimate justification of meaning is not to concede that the world outside of human discourse does not influence reality (Lovibond 1992), but it is a move in the direction away from extreme Rationalism toward dialogic modes of problem solving (witness Wittgenstein's aphoristic style in most of his writing)[9].

(3e) *Worldview.* Care and justice support different worldviews. Worldviews encompass MDMP's (the MDMP's draw justification from the accepted larger picture) so there is no simple division between these two aspects of moral life. One significant contrast here is reductionism vs. anti-reductionism. The justice ethicist envisions a world that can be carved into logical units that permit direct rational contact with in-principle absolute answers. For instance, Kohlberg's hierarchical moral scale ended with his ideal

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[9] It might seem strange to contrast Plato's view with dialogic kinds of morality, since Plato engaged in dialogic techniques to express his views. But his pedagogical techniques differ from his theory of how we access truth or most effectively find answers to problems. Truth, for Plato, is attained by Rationally apprehending a form; it is best approached by eliminating the carnal influences and engaging in purely Intellecutal endeavor. Care ethics, in contrast, use stories and dialogue (i.e. means of analyzing stories) as the best way to uncover truth, or at least the complexity of a situation, which might be open to many valid interpretational truths (e.g. is an abortion in some context X either absolutely right or absolutely wrong? Or is it something that is partially right and partially wrong?)

at stage six, a Platonic morality of convention-independent reason reflecting universal truths (Campbell 1990, 270). The care ethicist posits a world that does not map well onto a logical lattice erected *sub specie aeternitas*. In this world, there is not always one right answer to a moral dilemma, covering laws yield to pluralism (e.g. a variety of explanations or stories that may or may not result in a 'right' answer), and a satisfactory epistemology operates through a discerning though subjective lens, one that weeds out biases that support oppression (e.g. sexism) yet maintains a basic level of sympathy or fellow-feeling for other persons (Gowans 1994).

Another aspect of worldview related to care and justice, one that bleeds into the issue of psychology, and so defies attempts at exact specification, is the consideration of how the self is conceptualized. In the logical reductive worldview, the self qua rational agent guides itself by connecting with the Forms or Categorical Imperative or the Original Position or Utility Principle, or some such external-reasoning system. When such an image of the ethical self is extended to politics and economics in the form of a self-interested actor, the result is what has been called "progressive ethics," and a society-oriented justice worldview results:

> The ontology of "progressive ethics" is . . . individualistic. Its paradigm is the autonomous, individual self, the one that gives itself a moral law, makes a life plan, and then follows it . . . The individuals are basically competitive and oppositional, even when they are taking part in a collective activity (the [Western] idea of contract presupposes this). The ethics for progressive society takes individuals in the public sphere as the paradigm--the political man of the Western democracies, the rational economic man of the marketplace. But that is abstract theory. The

66

attempt to put the paradigm into practice yields nothing other than the
ideal of an impartial, detached professional, the one who makes
knowledge without caring how it will be used, the one who gives care
without caring. (Addelson 1994, 19)

The picture of the connected self associated with care is not yet fully understood and

currently a source of much scholarly ferment (though more will be said about this crucial

concept in the forthcoming discussion of Noddings' ethic in Chapters Three and Four).

The trend is toward mutual sympathetic creation through relationship (e.g. in the

mother/child dynamic) (Meyers 1995; Benjamin 1989; Ruddick 1989), a conception of a

nonunitary self capable of many social roles (Lugones 1987; Scheman 1997), and

acknowledgment that individuals are more like participants in and products of some

larger entity than ratiocinating judges (Addelson 1994; Walker 1998). Psychological

research advances the view of self as largely formed and maintained through family,

social, and subconscious factors resistant to conscious control (Kollock and O'Brien

1994). Additionally, current studies in "externalism" examine the possibility that the self

exists in part outside the physical boundaries of the person in question (Scheman 1993;

Nelson 1999).

Feminists averring this sort of conception of self, if their theorizing takes a

political and/or economic flavor, call for sweeping changes. Consumer (profit-centered,

materialistic) capitalism must go; militarism must go; political institutions must be

drastically altered; the objectification and domination of nature must go; exploitation of

third-world persons must go; the psychic bifurcation of emotion and rationality into

67

inimical forces must go; the notion of freedom as freedom to engage in (bourgeois) commerce must be replaced by the notion of freedom as a psychological state of raised consciousness. My point is that the picture painted here is vastly different from that of the ethicist who champions the dogma of the rationally self-interested actor eager to maximize intake of goods and services.

Another divergence in worldview comes from comparing the two ethics to the scientific approach. The justice ethicist sees moral methodologies as akin to scientific methodologies. Scientists, donning their objective hats, reduce empirical context into causal chains in order to discover 'laws of nature' that apply universally in similar situations. Justice ethicists also employ universal laws concerned with uncovering the Truth. They seek the same sort of objectivity indoctrinated into the scientist, one which supposedly eliminates all subjective prejudice and distortive passion. In both cases the empirical 'facts' are approached with an eye for placing them into universal formulas. Both mathematical and logical formulas are embraced by justice ethicists. The utilitarian takes a mathematical tack that involves assigning quantities of happiness to variables and then processes those variables in terms of probabilities and expected values (if the actual procedure does not precisely fit this methodology, it at least serves as the touchstone for exemplary decision-making). The Kantian employs a logical formula, seeking to uncover inconsistencies in behavior in terms of a standard of Rationality. In both cases there is a

preference for deduction—arriving at a justifiable conclusion in simple deductively justifiable steps that start with the reductive identification of all the relevant premises.

An extreme case is the physicalist who reduces morality to biochemistry [f21]. Such a philosopher is arguably a kind of justice ethicist, given the telling similarities between the scientific and justice methodologies. Such a scientific morality could be fleshed out as the belief that science is the crucial gateway to truth and reality, and accordingly the human mind is reducible to physical components interacting in ways describable by physics, chemistry, and (preferably) other hard sciences. Moral claims, then, coming from subjective sources, such as personal testimonies and preferences are (a la emotivism) meaningless, mere expressions of irrational feelings. The most satisfactory ethic under such circumstances, the scientific moralist informs us, derives not from emotion-laden statements coming from subjectively positioned moral agents, but from those who see the Truth through Reason. In line with the quantiable nature of reality, this moralist continues, some kind of utilitarianism that tries to maximize net happiness is the logical and proper ethic, where happiness is measured neurochemically (the choice of happiness as an end would be justified in terms of evolutionary theory).

Such an ethic would be imperialistic in that it would trump cultural preference in favor of objective judgement. Those who, based on affective sources of information such as sentiment or tradition, disagreed with the objective standard would be considered misguided and treated accordingly. The scientific ethicist would have to factor such

69

irrationality into the equation, perhaps having to manage society from a lonely pulpit where a few shared the esoteric knowledge of the ultimate Truth. However, in such a case deceit and manipulation would be tools of the enlightened, and one should question, as Bernard Williams does, whether in such cases consequentialist theories have gone too far, undercutting their own appeal (1981).

(4e) *Psychology.* The importance of psychology is often overlooked by ethicists, but given the very different epistemic and metaphysical lenses of care and justice it is clear that each will affect the psyche in radically different ways. One orientation marginalizes the personal affective contextual mode of perception, the other valorizes it. One emphasizes the skills of the mathematician and the reductive empiricist, and the other those of the good listener and liberated individual; that is, the one who has experienced consciousness raising and the accompanying self-empowerment and seeks to operate within such a framework to come to terms compassionately with the differences and similarities between individuals, groups, and cultures.

In one case, the mind will act as in Plato's *Phaedo* and *Phaedrus*, compartmentalizing rationality and using it to dominate the affective side through the development of anti-emotion impartiality. In the other case, the boundary between rationality and affect will blur and an emphasis will be placed not on dominating the emotions but listening to their voices and combining those voices with other sources of reasoning in a therapeutic process that might involve intense psychical experiences such

70

as catharsis, painful realization, validation of fears and sublimation [ft21]. Advocates of the care ethic maintain that the strict division of the mind into a rational faculty and various irrational faculties is not reflective of the mind's nature. Since the justice orientation takes the opposite view on this point (for example, as manifested in the Cartesian split between the *res cogitans* and the body/emotions, or Plato's tripartite division of the soul into rational, courageous, and carnal components) the differences are irreconcilable (Lakoff and Johnson 1999).

Lastly, one might consider the differences in psychology fostered by the models in terms of the contrast between empathy and objectivity. Already discussed above was the tendency for justice thinking to support the status quo and its burden of dominator psychological armor; but leaving aside this anti-empathic tendency there is the matter of the concentration on the science-mimicking skill of objectivity, a stepping back from any subjective situated 'biased' view in order to reach an Archimedean point [f22].

The care ethicist, conversely, focuses on the different skill of empathy (Meyers 1994), of which much will be said in Chapter Five, but for now it might be considered as 'seeing through the eyes of another' in the sense of taking on the other's vantage in its full experiential and embodied form. A crucial skill is sensitivity to the many factors that contribute to people's ways of looking at the world, including emotions, history, family and cultural dynamics, economic conditions, gender identity, and so forth. Such sensitivity is not a means of quantifying pain or pleasure but a way of approximating the

other's wants and needs by feeling with them.

Cultivating empathy as opposed to cultivating objectivity as a central component of moral reasoning will lead to the emphases mentioned above: a mental journey of therapeutic process vs. a mental journey that revolves around honing analytic logico-mathematical skills and extending the results of the universal formulas to new scenarios, thereby bringing more and more situations under the rule of objectively validated law.

Implications of the Model

I am now prepared to assert that a satisfactory ethic of care avoids dualism and also dependence on justice. Fourteen criteria have been posited along an internal dimension and eight explored along an external dimension with regard to the two perspectives. The resultant pictures of care and justice are multi-layered and accordingly multi-divergent. In light of such detailed and differing characteristics, it would be a mistake to conclude that because a care ethic appeals to principle (to avoid dualism) it relies on justice or is really a hybrid of the two positions. This would be like saying that because the music of Ravel and Debussy shares some fundamental characteristic, Ravel's music is not distinct and unique, nor able to stand alone without 'stealing' from Debussy. The complexity of the two styles is so great that even a significant overlap is not going to

72

make Ravel into a Debussy, or establish the claim that Ravel's compositions are actually fused Ravel-Debussy compositions. Such, in fact, would be absurd.

Assuming for the moment that principles in and of themselves, without consideration for *how* they are used in decision-making, are indicators of justice, it is still clearly fallacious to infer from the presence of an indicator characteristic of X to the actual presence of X. Sometimes this is appropriate (e.g. in the case of a sufficient condition) yet often not (e.g. from red bird to cardinal). In light of the constellation of characteristics that assemble to form the justice ethic, it is simply poor form to argue that when the indicator characteristic of principle is present the justice ethic is present. The fact that care employs principles does not yield the further claim that the care orientation employs a justice orientation or depends on justice [f23-use the note to Besty].

A die-hard traditionalist might remark that the above discussion assumes principles are at best indicators, and not something much more essential to the justice project. Such a person might further claim that in fact principles are not only at the heart of justice morality but care morality as well, for the latter indeed reduces to the former. The next section studies George Sher's arguments along these lines and exposes them as invalid because, as I shall argue, the presence of principles cannot determine whether an ethic is one of care or justice.

Separate Rooms, Please! There are a few good reasons for studying Sher's arguments. The first is to demonstrate that principles in and of themselves are not

73

indicators of justice, thereby shoring up the above arguments for the liberation of care. The second is to compare his care/justice model to the one developed here and thereby reveal the power of the latter as a tool of philosophical analysis. And the third is to refute his thesis that care is merely justice in disguise, or, as he puts it, "Women's moral judgements may be expressed in a different voice, but that voice echoes through some quite familiar rooms." (1987, 179)

Fortunately these goals dovetail nicely. Sher's model contains five opposing pairs and his modus operandi is to join each pair with an argument that supports the assimilation of care into justice. My purposes are achieved by revealing two central and related flaws in his approach: (a) his care/justice model misrepresents the two orientations, effectively creating a straw person and (b) he relies on the assumption that principles strongly connect to the justice ethic.

Before embarking on my criticism, I should point out that although some of Sher's arguments have been criticized in the past, no one has examined his general framework for care and justice and found it wanting. Similarly, no one has dismantled his arguments in the way that follows, nor as thoroughly invalidated his points. Cheshire Calhoun, for example, criticizes Sher for emphasizing abstract similarities between people without similarly emphasizing differences, but she does not go so far as to claim that his position is entirely wrong (Calhoun, 1988). My analysis demonstrates that Sher suffers from more

74

than a problem of emphasis; his entire framework and the dependent argumentation misjudges the intricacy of care-versus-justice and therefore tumbles like a house of cards.

Although Sher's model lacks external criteria (i.e. it contains nothing similar to 1-4e), his opposing pairs effectively constitute internal criteria for distinguishing care from justice. The three opposing pairs relevant to principles and the accompanying arguments can be compactly summarized (arguments given in parentheses)[10]:

(A) *nonprincipled versus principled* (even moral agents denying that they use principles may well employ them; whether someone uses principle or not should be determined by a "counterfactual inquiry"; such an inquiry is likely to demonstrate that care ethicists employ principles)

(B) *care versus duty* (it is possible that a morality of "duty and principle" is entirely compatible with a morality "sensitive to the demands of relationship," so the former can replace the latter)

(C) *responsibilities versus rights* (those acting out of responsibility might well see themselves as "owing" their services to others; hence talk of responsibility reduces into considerations of rights)

The main problem with the arguments is a tendency to beg the question (e.g. by assuming that duty and care will never yield conflicting recommendations), but of more interest here is the arguments' appeal to principles (or rights, which can be seen as a type of principle bestowing valid claims against other moral agents) to assimilate care into

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10 In reproducing Sher's arguments, I am faithful to his reasoning but sometimes draw the likely conclusion that he only implies yet does not state directly.

justice. If principles in themselves are not strong indicators of justice, then the arguments fail and the relevant oppositions set up unrepresentative and false dichotomies.

Certain types of principles can be derived from most any ethical stance and so obviously are not strong indicators of specific paradigms. For instance, a "counterfactual inquiry" might reveal that an agent holds to the principle, "don't be unnecessarily hurtful," but the rule is couched at such a high level of abstraction that it fails to be action-guiding. But even more refined principles, ones that do significant moral work, do not inevitably correlate with justice morality. To see this clearly, consider the views of two feminist philosophers working outside the traditional philosophy. Virginia Held sees a significant role for "general principles," yet submits that they must be balanced with the judgements of "embodied persons":

> The persons from whose points of view I would hope for improvement in the development of morality would try to progress toward coherence between their particular moral judgments and their general principles. But the particular moral judgments between which they should seek coherence would not be the judgments of an abstract rational individual from whose perspective all particular emotions and interests had been washed out. They would be the particular judgements of embodied persons, persons with feelings for others and for themselves, with interests shared and unshared with others, and with ties to others that help make them the persons they are[11]. (1993, 36)

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[11] Held is reacting to a Rawlsian notion of reflective equilibrium. In the chapter from which I draw the citation, she indicates that she agrees with the procedure of seeking coherence in moral decision-making between principle and intuition yet disagrees with the vantage of impartiality often associated with the same, because it does not make space for "moral emotions." I think there is a key distinction here, one which provides grist for the care/justice debate.

Rawls inclines toward an 'anti-emotion' vantage concerning our "considered judgements," those which enter into the reflective equilibrium process, as can be seen from the following passage: "We can

If Held is seen as a care ethicist, we have an example of care theory that includes

principles in a strong way and yet retains its distinctness. Sher, adding another design

problem to his model, omits discussion of the connected self, but Held's theory suggests

that the moral vantage of embeddedness can radically shift decision-making away from

formulaic space (i.e. the realm of abstracted logic-manipulated symbols) and so is crucial

to characterizations of care and justice, whereas principles, on the other hand, play no

such pivotal role. The function principles fulfill by preventing certain kinds of actions

(e.g. one's that support oppression) is not itself indicative of moral stance that embraces

Rationality and Truth.

Margaret Urban Walker goes even farther in mitigating the role of universalizable

principles. For Walker, in many moral contexts the only person similarly situated to the

moral agent (and thus bound by the relevant principle) is the moral agent. The reason is

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discard those judgements made with hesitation ... Those given when we are upset or frightened or when we stand to gain one way or the other can be left aside. All these judgements are likely to erroneous or to be influenced by an excessive attention to our own interests." (1971, 47) Norman Daniels, a proponent of Rawlsian philosophy, is similarly hyper-cautious about letting emotion influence our considered judgements. He says "a considered moral judgment, even in a particular case, is in many ways far more like a 'theoretical' than an 'observation' statement." (1979, 270)

In a footnote, however, Daniels acknowledges, "Sometimes anger or (moral) indignation may lead to morally better actions and judgements than 'calm'." This demonstrates that modern scholars working along the themes of Kantian/Rawlsian rationalism do not "wash out" all emotion as Held assumes. The emotion is backgrounded however, and still not fully permitted into the decision-making procedure. Daniels, for example, speaks of considered judgements as the kinds of things that can be revised (p.267). But we do not revise emotions or revise our subjective vantage. The use of the term "revise" indicates (along with other indicators, such as Daniels distaste for "gut reactions") that the considered judgement is detached from the emotion-rich mentality of the situated moral agent; but such detachment is just what is criticized by some feminists.

that there may be "various morally *acceptable* solutions in line with general values or common principles" (1987, 171) but only some of these adequately reflect the person's history as the bearer or guardian of particular morally significant values. Moral histories and identities become individual through "attunements and specific commitments." Over time, by endorsing commitments formerly held or repudiating them and setting a new moral course, moral agents can build "strong moral self-definition" that creates a unique "moral persona." (Walker 1987; Nelson forthcoming) Given this account, universal principles would remain in the background, part of the lattice on which one's rich identity becomes embellished. They would be nebulous and largely unhelpful in particular cases of deliberation, most of the work being done by careful self-exploration (this might well require conversation with others if the self is seen as relational).

Walker offers an elaborate four-branched example of such delicate self-attunement, but a short passage from *Middlemarch* makes the same point (though Walker's example concerns placing someone in a nursing home, while the one below covers a less important matter). Early in the novel, Dorothea decides that it would be wrong in her own case to wear a diamond-adorned cross, but that it is morally permissible for Celia, her sister, to wear it:

> "A cross is the last thing I would wear as a trinket," Dorothea shuddered slightly.
> "Then you will think it wicked in me to wear it," said Celia uneasily.
> "No, dear, no," said Dorothea, stroking her sister's cheek. "Souls have complexions too: what will suit one will not suit another." (Elliot 1964, 15)

Dorothea's decision could be seen in terms of her history of previous choices, which combine to provide her with a certain moral identity[12]. No universal principle compels her course; rather, she is guided by a personalized code that does not extend even to those very close to her. One could postulate some sort of broadly applicable principle in the margins (e.g. 'if one is a Christian, it is wrong to wear the cross upside-down') but that principle is not doing the delicate moral work of weaving an identity or addressing the complexity of everyday decisions. This does not mean that principles are useless in the moral process, for they set outer limits beyond which no one can justifiably go. No Christian can wear the cross upside-down, but some Christians can wear ornate crosses whereas others do not feel that is an acceptable option in their own case.

Given the above account of ethical customization, one might simply grant Sher's dubious assertion that the dictates of principle are fully compatible with the motivations provided by an approach of caring virtue, and yet still forcefully deny that care assimilates into justice. The theory of moral self-definition, for example, is consistent with a perimeter of principles yet the exquisite self-embroidering that emerges does to reduce to that bare armature.

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12 Some might claim that Dorothea's decision is not a moral one (e.g., perhaps it is an aesthetic decision not to wear the cross). Whatever Dorothea's mindset, certainly it is possible to imagine that she does not want to wear the diamond-adorned cross because it is morally wrong, given her interpretation of Christianity, for her to do so. Cecelia, being of a different "complexion" of soul, is not so constrained.

If Walker is right, principles frame the pictures we paint in adopting a course of moral living, but much of the work takes place in grey areas, zones of complexity that belie the power of abstracting, rule-based formulas to engender solutions. Will such a formula be found someday? Annette Baier voices her skepticism:

> Is it likely that we will come up with rules on how many times betrayal should be forgiven, or how distrust is properly focused after "enough" betrayals, or how long insulting distrust should be ignored? (How many rapes should a woman take, before turning against all men? After one rape, how should she focus her future distrust?) . . . I am skeptical both of the insistence that there must be such general moral rules that codify our moral beliefs and of the assumption that we can establish their validity in a non-question-begging manner. (Baier 1995, 142)

How would a care ethic work within the grey areas? Consider a woman who has been raped now trying to rebuild a life not dominated by terror and depression. How much should she trust men? To what degree should she try to overcome her fears or incorporate them into her worldview and sense of self? How should she heal and grow wise? There will be soul-searching and reinterpreting of stories: the story of the event, of her life, of society, and relationships with others. Ultimately the woman might come to a new awareness or self-acceptance, but this can only arise through regenerative yet painful psychological processes, not simply by adhering to rational principles. Perhaps principle can tell her that she ought to begin a therapeutic story-telling journey, but once the journey has commenced, there's no rule book explaining when to cry, when to dig deeper into the soul, when to retreat for a while--and surely these are moral processes, albeit ones that have gone far beyond the purview of the detached analytic method.

Two insights have been generated in the discussion of Sher's first three opposing pairs. First, principles can be extracted from various types of contemplation (and this is not hard to do) without getting at the nature of that contemplation and, secondly, fuzzy zones exist in which principles of the universalizable sort are not helpful. If these fuzzy zones are fairly common, and based on my own case I would speculate that they are, it seems reasonable to infer that how agents work in these fuzzy zones better indicates their MDMP, worldview, and psychology than the guidelines in the background. Principles, then, in and of themselves, are not indicative of care or justice unless the means in which they are employed and positioned are also taken into consideration.

The upshot is that the claim made earlier--that care can utilize principles without thereby depending on justice--is cemented as a credible conclusion (a justification of principle within the framework of the care ethic is pursued in chapter five). Given that care and justice possess multi-layered natures best approached by a family-resemblance criterial model, and that principles are at best indicators of the justice orientation (but more likely neutral, as the discussion of Held and Walker brings out), then care and principle go hand in hand quite readily. Because principles are a powerful tool for setting limits that prevent dysfunctional caring behavior (e.g. unidirectional care that supports the status quo), a morality of care can escape dualism without relying on the justice ethic.

The Need for External Criteria. Sher's arguments fail to support assimilation because his model distorts the true relationship between care and justice. It is not one of

81

principled versus nonprincipled morality, or some variation on that theme, for principles are neutral in this debate. The distinctions in the two-dimensional model--such as (4c) (narrative and dialogue-based decision-making) versus (4j) (decision-making that features formal procedures abstracting from context and tending to homogenize)--better represent the positions. The internal criteria of the two-dimensional model, then, are more accurate than Sher's oppositions. By examining Sher's final arguments, I now demonstrate the necessity of the external criteria for fair assessment.

His last two opposing pairs and the accompanying arguments can be summed in the same fashion as before:

(D) *contextual versus abstract* (the contextual element of morality is a pool of particular data, and abstraction is the process of choosing relevant data from that pool; care and justice, in light of this explanation, are both contextual and abstracting, so this opposition cannot form the basis for a true difference between the two orientations)

(E) *personal versus impersonal* (many moral situations are impersonal, so a morality of care cannot be operating in these cases, and thus at best applies only to personal relationships)

In both cases, straw person fallacies are created because the oppositions are conceptually loose, allowing misrepresentation to seep into the argumentative structure. External criteria would have helped Sher attain a proper comprehensiveness. He should contrast one MDMP with another, or a psychology with another, or two ostensibly disparate worldviews. But, lacking a scheme for distinguishing the ways in which moral theories

82

affect the actual practices of living, he wanders unmoored onto the shoals of shallow philosophy.

For Sher, the contextual element of care is not, for instance, narrative decision-making but merely a collection of data, and the abstracting element of justice is not a leap to formulaic space but the much blander practice of generically sorting particulars. Similarly, impersonal *situations* are assumed to necessitate impersonal decision-making procedures, but there is no theoretical or practical bar preventing virtuously motivated narrative modes of deliberation from operating in situations that involve distant others (e.g. one can tell stories about them, listen to their stories, tell one's own, and so forth, all the while remaining sensitively and emotionally situated). A full-blown morality of care that considers distant others and our moral relation to them is developed in Chapters Five and Six.

Critiquing Sher's final pairs allows us to see that the external criteria of the two-dimensional care/justice model are necessary for a sophisticated understanding of the care ethic as a moral, psychological, and social force capable of pervading life at all levels. Its themes foreground key ideals such as ending oppression, engaging in mutually beneficial relationships with both those near and far, developing the mind's potential for rich empathic sensitivity, and appreciating the power of stories to weave a fabric that unites life's multifarious strands in overlapping patterns of self, community, and world.

Conclusion. If my discussion has succeeded then care has been revealed as an intricate, multi-component entity with tentative claims to its own versions of autonomy and impartiality, and its own employment of principle that radically diverges from Rational-theory employment. Although much more would have to be said to solidify the case, there is reason enough for a hesitant conclusion that care has been liberated from justice; it is whole in itself and does not need to cling to formulaic space and its empirical reductionism. This is to the disadvantage of the "justice" orientation, at least in terms of its extreme ideal form, which virtually annihilates emotion as a component of moral decision-making. Given its historical association with oppression, and its egregious oversimplification of the world's dizzying multifariousness, it is doubtful that justice, exemplified in complex processes that abstractly magnify dictums like "always maximize the aggregate utility," can find a central niche in proper moral thinking. In certain circumstances formalizing techniques might be appropriate. At times a simple look at the relevant pleasures and pains and a quick calculation might be what is needed to determine the right thing to do. However finding a nontrivial, nonbizarre case of such simple pleasure-pain arithmetic is not as easy as it seems, and even in such cases there will be a story in the background, a weaving of cultural, community, personal ideologies and psychological dynamics, all of which might interfere with the basic quantification technique or render it entirely unhelpful. Even prima facie straightforward questions like, Should I cheat on a test to save a friend's life? require a *ceteris paribus* clause; otherwise,

84

the answer depends on a context (e.g. the answer might be no if my friend is in a persistent vegetative state). Once background stories are introduced as relevant, context becomes so morally complicated that abstract rules and formulas lose their central importance. No one has come up with a simple procedure to decide questions of right and wrong that has been embraced by scholars or laypeople as *the* correct procedure for all cultures and times. Unfortunately--or perhaps fortunately, if the spice and gusto of life emerge from its withering kaleidoscope of variables—it seems that the world does not come packaged with an array of *ceteris paribus* clauses.

The stage is now set to examine a particular ethic of care and analyze it rigorously along two dimensions. After some tinkering and a bit of metamorphosis, the ethic's original structure emerges partially intact and yet partially enhanced, becoming the foundation for the final version of my care ethic, a comprehensive political theory developed in the second half of my project.

Chapter Three
Noddings and Care Theory

In this part of the project, comprising the next three chapters, I play Frankenstein with Nel Noddings' theory, combining it with other philosophies and performing some conceptual surgery in order to bringing it back to life in Shelley's positive sense and not Hollywood's version of monstrosity. The template developed in the first two chapters allows a sophisticated analysis of Noddings' work that begins the process of finding a particular ethic of care that not only resists the standard philosophical criticisms (e.g. that care can result in codependency and moral myopia) but provides the foundation for a political feminism, a feminism that extends moral consideration beyond the realm of the domestic to wide-ranging issues of wealth-distribution, cultural oppression, and corporate and governmental conduct. With the general template providing structure, Noddings' theory will be augmented with the insights of another care ethicist, Joan Tronto. This hybrid theory will then be defended and expanded such that the core elements are amenable to both public and private moral situations, thereby liberating care from the dualistic either/or of the masculine/feminine divide and propelling it into a categorization that does not fit neatly into the traditional gender scheme.

This Chapter has two main sections: a detailed introduction to Noddings' philosophy and a thorough criticism of it. The first section contains a brief overview followed by the presentation of the key components of the theory, ones that will remain, though in a modified form, in the improved NT (Noddings-Tronto) version of the ethic.

Noddingsian Care.

Overview. In 1984, just two years after the publication of *In a Different Voice,*

Noddings came out with the first book-length normative theory of care. Gilligan engaged

in descriptive ethics, using empirical studies to verify certain patterns of thought she claimed

were operative in society. Noddings moved beyond mere description to prescription,

advancing a theory of how moral agents ought to behave, though the basis of her project lay

in the insights of Gilligan's work.

Unlike Gilligan, who saw moral maturity as a combination of care and justice (1982,

100) Noddings rejects what she calls "the language of the father," the language of principle

and reduction through abstract procedure. Noddings states at the outset that she intends to

give a "feminine view" of morality, associating the hegemony of principle-based ethics with

the great miseries of our time:

> When we look clear-eyed at the world today, we see it wracked with
> fighting, killing, vandalism, and psychic pain of all sorts. One of the
> saddest features of this picture of violence is that the deeds are so often
> done in the name of principle. When we establish a principle forbidding
> killing, we also establish principles describing the exceptions to the first
> principle. Supposing, then, that we are moral (we are principled, are we
> not?), we may tear into others whose beliefs or behaviors differ from ours
> with the promise of ultimate vindication. (1984, 2)

If one takes Gilligan as presenting a masculine and a feminine ethic, of which she has

been accused despite her denials, then Noddings, rather than seeing a satisfactory

approach in the combination of the two, rejects the one and embraces the other,

expanding it and providing details that Gilligan did not entertain.

On the surface Noddings might seem to be rejecting 1-7j in favor of 1-7c, which in light of the last two chapters is an acceptable anti-dualistic strategy, but she does not make such refined distinctions as are present in the internal criteria of the two-dimensional model. She pursues the coarser practice of rejecting principle, abstraction, and "universalizability," which brings up the suspicion that she might be unintentionally supporting dualism, embracing if not *mythos* (unqualified emotional judgement) then something close enough to provide an opposite extreme to *logos*. As the chapter proceeds, this suspicion will be shown to contain a great degree of validity. It would, however, be grossly unfair to reduce Noddings' ethic to pure subjectivism or intuitionism. As we shall see, she provides structure that is useful to the current project of establishing a care ethic applicable to political concerns.

Key Components. This section presents the heart of Noddings' theory. The first half discusses the conceptual building blocks that underlie the practice and process of moral care, while the second half takes these elements and uses them to inform an analysis based on the two-dimensional model; specifically, behavior, decision-making, psychology, and worldview are defined for Noddingsian care.

1. Important concepts and basic problems.

Several concepts basic to Noddings' philosophy—"motivational displacement," "engrossment," "I-ought," "recognition," the 'personal-relationship barrier,' "chains of caring," and the "caring mode of consciousness"—will be scrutinized here, as they all

remain useful in the NT version of care. I will also discuss two of the most problematic features of her view, the 'energy-proximity limitation thesis' and what I call the "tar-baby effect." Along with the lack of appeal to principles, which as we saw above Noddings explicitly endorses, these two mechanisms lead to the main thematic flaws that will be discussed in the next section. The basic ideas that suggest trouble, then, will be combined, elaborated, and augmented to generate the meta-level comprehensive objections that render the positive aspects of the theory something of a pyrrhic victory for feminists.

Motivational Displacement. Motivational displacement involves a "motivational shift" in which one's "motive energy flows toward the other." This transference of attention and support is not only a shift in feeling; it is also a shift in goal or purpose. That motivational displacement can involve a profound transformation of orientation is signaled by Noddings' cautionary statements, for example: "I do not relinquish myself; I cannot excuse myself for what I do." Still, one puts oneself "at the service" of another, not merely in a fashion as might be called for by a sense of duty, but by merging one's own needs with the care-receiver's such that the care-receiver's successful achievement generates well-being for the caregiver (p.74). One goal is pursued by two, with the caregivers sharing vicariously in the accomplishments of their cared-fors.

There are, then, both affective and teleological components to the process of displacement. "Motive energy," for instance, is not merely motivation, which could stem from purely external sources (e.g., one could be motivated to help another out of fear of

reprisal if service is denied). The caregiver experiences internal shifts in feeling and purpose. The binding to the other's goal extends beyond obligation, duty or external considerations and enters the sphere of psychology.

Although the penetration can go deep into the psyche, motivational displacement, as Noddings uses the notion, is not always a major life event. Pets, for example, are included in the realm of those who can be cared for morally. One of Noddings early examples, among many others devoted to nonhumans, concerns the declawing of cats (p.13), and a later section of her book focuses on the humane treatment of animals (p.148).

Further, one can care for mere acquaintances or even "proximate strangers" in Noddings' scheme (but then, as we shall see, the acquaintance or stranger becomes closer to the caregiver and she or he is more obligated to help). There is, nonetheless, the potential for great shifts in one's motives that in some sense could represent a sacrifice of oneself to another's projects. Noddings does not use the terminology of sacrifice, probably because motivational displacement allows fulfillment of both the caregiver and the care-receiver by merging their concerns. But there is the danger, as will be brought out below, that the caregiver's new purpose, that of serving the care-receiver, amounts to the obliteration of self-initiative and self-determination by subordinating one's own autonomy to the needs of others. This danger is especially acute due to the de-emphasis on self-care in Noddings' version of care theory. Nowhere does she write that caregivers should motivationally displace (i.e. apply motivational displacement) reflexively. Self-

care comes only through caring for others, which minimally involves displacing one's self and engrossing one's self in their concerns (p.112).

Engrossment. Noddings writes that motivational displacement can arise from the caring skill of engrossment, which she describes using a passive metaphor as a state of receptivity in which the one-caring clears her or his mind and is mentally filled by the cared-for such that the receiver becomes a "duality" capable of seeing, at least to a large degree, through the eyes of the other ("cared-for" and "one-caring" are Noddings' terms to describe the participants in the morally caring relationship):

> Caring involves, for the one-caring, a "feeling with" the other. We might want to call this relationship "empathy," but we should think about what we mean by this term. *The Oxford Universal Dictionary* defines *empathy* as "The power of projecting one's personality into, and so fully understanding, the object of contemplation." This is, perhaps, a peculiarly rational, western, masculine way of looking at "feeling with." The notion of "feeling with" that I have outlined does not involved projection but reception. I have called it "engrossment." I do not "put myself in the other's shoes," so to speak, by analyzing his reality as objective data . . . I set aside my temptation to analyze and to plan. I do not project; I receive the other into myself, and I see and feel with the other. I become a duality. (p.30)

Note, then, the difference between motivational displacement and engrossment: clearing one's mind of projections and "feeling with" another, thereby engaging in an advanced sort of moral empathy, is not the same as taking another's goals as one's own in the course of everyday living. It is possible to take another's goals as one's own without empathizing with them (e.g. adopting my friend's goal of helping the poor while remaining obtuse to her feelings). Conversely, it is possible to empathize with another without changing one's emotions and life-purposes to conform to the other's goals.

91

Although engrossment can occur in rather casual situations (e.g. one of Noddings' examples discusses engrossment at a meeting with a co-worker who was previously an aloof acquaintance (p.30)), it can reach dramatic heights. Noddings uses Buber's *I and Thou* to provide the quintessential example of letting the other, previously contemplated at the level of "object," "invade" deeply into the one-caring's psyche:

> He is no longer He or She, limited by other Hes and Shes, a dot in the
> world grid of space and time, nor a condition that can be experienced and
> described, a loose bundle of named qualities. Neighborless and seamless,
> he is Thou and fills the firmament. (Buber, cited in Noddings, p.74)

As was the case for motivational displacement, nowhere does Noddings write that ones-caring should engross in themselves. Although she states the importance of self-maintenance, it is a means to the end of maintaining the cared-fors in one's charge, and it is accomplished, as we shall see, by vicariously sharing in the accomplishments of others and by evaluating oneself in terms of how well one has helped them achieve their triumphs.

The I-must and the I-ought. Through engrossment or often simply the closeness established by relationship, the one-caring can experience the "I-must," which is an "impulse" or feeling that "carries obligation with it" though according to Noddings it is not in itself a moral imperative but simply "natural." The "I-must" is short for "I must do something," and it is not morally binding unless it transforms into the "I-ought." Noddings writes that two conditions must be present for the "I-must" to become an "I-ought": (a) the existence or potential for present relationship, and (b) the dynamic potential for growth in relationship (whether these conditions exist or not is determined

92

through a narrative analysis that takes place within the caring mode of consciousness, discussed below).

If the first condition is met, the obligation is "absolute" in the following sense:

If the other toward whom we shall act is capable of responding [receiving the caring "honestly"] as cared-for and there are no objective conditions that prevent our receiving this response—if, that is, our caring can be completed in the other—then we must meet that other as one-caring. (p.86)

The second condition introduces the possibility that the obligation can become even stronger than the "absolute" level. To make this point, Noddings discusses the differing cases of animals and children:

> The second criterion asks us to look at the nature of potential relation and, especially, at the capacity of the cared-for to respond. The potential for response in animals, for example, is nearly static . . . But a child's potential for increased response is enormous. If the possibility of relation is dynamic—if the relation may clearly grow with respect to reciprocity—then the possibility and degree of my obligation also grows. If response is imminent, so is my obligation. This criterion will help us to distinguish between our obligation to members of the nonhuman animal world and, say, the human fetus. We must keep in mind, however, that the second criterion binds us in proportion to the probability of increased response and to the imminence of that response. Relation itself is fundamental to obligation. (p.87)

Three key factors apparent in Noddings' scheme for determining the extent of obligation are the *potential* for relationship, the *imminence* of the response from the cared-for, and also *proximity*, which affects the possibility of "receiving" the response of the cared-for. A wounded animal in close proximity might turn the "I must" into an "I ought" at the level of absolute obligation, whereas a fetus has greater potential but less imminence of response and so presumably falls somewhere between the animal and the child (or

93

perhaps has less status than animals—Noddings is unclear on this). Note, however, that distant children, for example the starving in Africa, do not even generate obligation at the level of the proximate animal. In fact, Noddings asserts that there is no obligation at all to help such children (p.86).

Noddingsian limitations on moral care. Noddings' reason for disallowing obligation toward, for example, the starving in Africa is that completion (i.e. receiving the response of the cared-for) is not possible in this circumstance unless the one-caring abandons the proximate caring to which she or he is obligated. Since completion is not possible without unacceptable moral wrongdoing, there is no potential for relationship. Concerning the starving in Africa, Noddings writes that "one may choose to do something in the direction of caring," but her assertion that we cannot care for the dying children without generating unacceptable damage to those in our "inner circles" seems to rule out the acceptability of truly moral care to distant others (p.86). Apparently, even if distant others are starving to death while those in our proximity are relatively healthy, the "feminine ethic" does not obligate moral care. The next two sections bring this point out clearly by investigating Noddings' concepts of "caring about" and "recognition."

'Caring about' and the personal-relationship barrier. Noddings' notion of "caring about" solidifies this harsh conclusion by emphasizing one of her most provocative claims: that moral caring can only take place within the confines of a personal relationship. The implications of this personal-relationship barrier are telling. For example, it centers the "feminine ethic" in the realm most often associated with

friendship, intimacy, and family, that of the domestic or private sphere. Feminists have demonstrated the harm that comes from restricting women to a household morality, a stultifying code of etiquette that has acquired a mantle of rectitude within the patriarchal system. Certainly "women's ways of thinking" are of limited use in business and politics, which often require dealing with distant others, if they cannot be employed except in situations of personal familiarity.

Noddings acknowledges that persons can pay a kind of sympathetic attention to the starving in Africa, but she disparages such "caring about" so roundly that apparently for her it does not constitute moral behavior at all, or if it does it is decidedly of an inferior variety:

> I have brushed aside "caring about" and, I believe, properly so. It is too easy. I can "care about" the starving children of Cambodia, send five dollars to hunger relief, and feel somewhat satisfied . . . This is a poor second-cousin to caring. "Caring about" always involves a certain benign neglect. One is attentive just so far . . . One might say that we should, occasionally, care about, but we should not suppose that in doing so we are caring for. Caring requires engrossment, commitment, displacement of motivation. (p.112)

One might question, as I shall below, whether caring for distant others must lack engrossment, commitment, and displacement of motivation, or some psychological state similar to these that lends the genuine depth of a caring mode of consciousness to moral behavior toward strangers—or even to animals, or to biomes, watersheds or other such

"environmental beings." It is enough for now to note that such an extension of personal

caring to distant others is not possible in Noddings' framework[1].

Recognition and the personal-relationship barrier. Like "caring about,"

Noddings' notion of "recognition" reinforces this point. Even if the one-caring

experiences engrossment and motivational displacement in an appropriate context of

emotional proximity, ethical behavior does not take place unless the individual receiving

attention "does not hide from" the offered care or "deny it." If there is no recognition,

there simply is no caring:

> I have claimed that the perception by the cared-for of an attitude of caring
> on the part of the one-caring is partially constitutive of caring. It and its
> successful impact on the cared-for are necessary to caring. Does this mean
> that I cannot be said to care for X if X does not recognize my caring? In
> the fullest sense, I think we have to accept this result. (p.68)

One can think of numerous cases where the restriction imposed by recognition rules out

moral caring no matter how satisfactory the practice of the moral agent. The autistic or

even emotionally unresponsive child, the comatose, the senile, the chronically

malnourished in distant lands, the wounded animal, the pollution-ravaged ecosystem, the

terrorized, and so forth—none are commonly in a position to recognize helping behavior

directed toward their benefit, let alone the good intentions that could accompany such

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1 Noddings' emphasis on "caring for" and her harsh view of "caring about" (a concept exemplified by the practice of donating money to charity) lead to the interesting question of whether "caring about" might be much more acceptable than she thinks. Should donating money to charity be condemned rather than praised? If more affluent folks engaged in "caring about" the world would be much improved. As my project develops, I reject the caring for/caring about distinction in favor of a more sophisticated form of practice that distinguishes between those persons we know and those persons who are distant while retaining respect for moral action concerning both groups. Both the private and public versions of care I develop utilize a modified Noddingsian framework, so despite its two-headed nature there is continuity in my theory. These issues are discussed in more detail at the end of Chapter Four and in Chapter Six.

behavior. Here, again, Noddings specifies strict boundaries on what is to count as care of the moral variety, indicating a strong emphasis on emotional bonding, as evidenced by such concepts as engrossment, displacement, caring about, recognition, proximity, potential, and imminence. A strong case can be made that for Noddings a personal relationship is necessary for care, even if that relationship is only of the sort that occurs between a pet and a human, and that personal relationship must become intimate in the sense of two-way communication; one side communicates care and nurturance and the other communicates gratitude or, even less, acknowledgement.

Myopia and the tar baby effect. This uncomfortable result brings us to a key basic problem with Noddings' philosophy, one that will be expanded when the meta-objections are discussed: that it is myopic and likely to ignore or belittle serious suffering distant from the caregiver's "inner circles." The problem is exacerbated by what could be called the tar-baby effect. Noddingsian moral agents could become absorbed with their own personal relations and ultimately fall into obtuseness or despairing moral imprisonment. Remember that for Noddings relationships grow more demanding as they proceed and there is no specified upper limit on obligation. As the child matures and modifies proximity, potential, and imminence factors, the input required by the parent increases accordingly. Br'er Rabbit touched the tar baby tentatively at first, yet soon found himself glutinated and immobilized. So too could parents find themselves trapped by an ever-expanding obligation to their own children that effectively shackles them to the domestic sphere. A parent might endure this shackling in "quiet desperation," to borrow the

97

language of Thoreau, or become obtuse to issues outside the household, thereby psychologically retreating from the frustration that continued awareness, paired with an inability to act, entails.

Someone might object that if a state of quiet desperation exists, there is no "caring for." Such extensive suffering rules out the possibility of caring. In response, I think that dysfunctional situations of this kind present warped cases but ones that fall under the category of nurturance. Loving and hating someone at once is perhaps contradictory but also part of the human condition. And I don't see that any necessary elimination of empathy occurs simply because the moral person is torn, even horribly torn. If Thoreau is right, the majority of people live despairing lives and yet they somehow function adequately, going through habitual patterns that stultify yet demand competent or semi-competent participation. Significantly, Freidan's *Feminist Mystique*, the conformity-shattering clarion call to escape the domestic role (1962), identified an entire class of women who were frustrated and unfulfilled while they carried out their socially prescribed duties as homemakers.

Chains of caring. Noddings doesn't have an easy way to escape this problem of tethering the one-caring to local relationships. More will be said about this in the next section, but for now I use this topic to introduce two helpful indicators by which her theory could begin to lend itself to a broader perspective. Unfortunately Noddings leaves both relatively undeveloped and flawed. They are not clearly distinguished from the elements that push in the direction of domestic limitation.

The first hopeful sign is Noddings' discussion of "chains of caring" by which her feminine ethic extends its range beyond the immediate circles of family and friends. Through "personal or formal" relations, those individuals not in proximity can be considered in a way especially amenable to future moral caring:

> Beyond the circle of proximate others are those I have not yet encountered . . . Out there is a young man who will be my daughter's husband; I am prepared to acknowledge the transitivity of my love. He enters my life with potential love. Out there, also, are future students; they are linked formally to those I already care for and they, too, enter my life potentially cared-for. Chains of caring are established, some linking unknown individuals to those already anchored in the inner circles and some forming whole new circles of potential caring. I am "prepared to care" through recognition of these chains. (p.47)

If chains of caring could allow us to morally care for a stranger, then Noddings could escape the domestic-imprisonment effect, but she stops short of going that far; the chains only impress upon the moral agent the vaguely defined state of being "prepared to care." The quality of "formal" connection is weakly described, but provides some kind of link with strangers not in proximity. A question I return to later, one that must be answered in the affirmative to avoid the problems besetting Noddings, is whether some kind of connection, "formal" or otherwise, can be established between strangers such that moral caring can take place between them, even across a large distance. Such distant caring will be shown to be possible, but the notion of chains of connectedness must be considerably sophisticated before it can play a positive role.

The caring mode of consciousness. The second hopeful sign in Noddings' theory toward the end of escaping the domestic-imprisonment effect is the concept of "an

appropriate and characteristic mode of consciousness in caring." Noddings' discussion is

vague, but she associates this mode of consciousness with the sort of receptivity and

clearing of the mind that would facilitate engrossment. It is contrasted with the "analytic-

objective" mode, which is "assimilatory," and in which we "impose order on the world."

The caring mode of consciousness is akin to that which artists, musicians, or

mathematicians experience when "seized" by their respective subjects. It does not

proceed according to step-by-step rules but can occur in a framework of passion and

"concretization," a process of analysis that remains within the ambient context and lends

itself to narrative analysis in the form of "personal histories":

> The [analytic-rational] moves immediately to abstraction where its
> thinking can take place clearly and logically in isolation from the
> complicating factors of particular persons, places, and circumstances; the
> [caring mode] moves to concretization where its feeling can be modified
> by the introduction of facts, the feelings of others, and personal histories.
> (p.37)

Later Noddings explains that ones-caring must review their own histories to avoid self-

deception, for self-deception is a threat to the "internal dialogue" which is the crucial

"locus" for moral decision-making:

> We want to ask why the ethical ideal must drag about—like Marley's ghost
> with its chain of coin boxes and keys—all of the past deeds of its moral
> agent. It must do this to avoid self-deception and to remain in contact with
> what is. Since the locus of ultimate decisions concerning true-false and
> right-wrong is in the internal dialogue of the one-caring, self-deception has
> the potential to destroy the ethical ideal. The one-caring, then, must look
> clearly and receptively at what is there-in-herself. This does not mean that
> she must spend a great deal of time self-indulgently "getting to know"
> herself before reaching out to others. Rather, she reflects on what is inside
> as she relates to others. (p.108)

100

There rests in Noddings' work the rudiments of a narrative and affective kind of problem solving distinguishable from the analytic-rational as a different mode of consciousness, and this consciousness requires internal dialogue that is free from denial or bad faith or self-deception or other possible taints of false consciousness. Could such a mode be part of a care ethic that permits and even requires caring for distant others? (by *distant others* I mean persons that the moral agent has never met or with whom the moral agent cannot enter into a personal relationship due to physical or psychological barriers). This is at least intuitively attractive, as opposed to the less palatable stance adopted by Noddings—that a caring mode of consciousness, as an aspect of moral caring, must be limited to those in proximity with whom we have formed personal relationships. As in the case of chains of caring, the idea of a caring mode of consciousness can be helpful in the construction of a salutary feminist morality, but the concept must be extracted from Noddingsian restrictions.

2. Noddings and the two-dimensional model.

In analyzing the N version, there remains the task of placing the theory within the framework of the two-dimensional model. This will be helpful for many reasons. For example, by breaking the discussion into four parts corresponding to the four external criteria, I derive concise statements about the nature of caring behavior, the connected self, the moral decision-making process, and mental health. Along with the concepts discussed above—motivational displacement, engrossment, the caring mode of consciousness, the I-Ought, and so forth—this material provides the building blocks for a

reconstituted NT version ethic. The internal criteria, 1-7c, will be referred to occasionally in the discussion thereby providing more concrete evidence, though it may seem unnecessary, that Noddings' ideas indeed conform to the specifications laid out in Chapter One that define an ethic of care.

Moral Behavior (1e). For Noddings, truly moral behavior of the caring variety cannot occur without meeting rather strict standards. Her discussion of "caring about" indicates that she divides caring behavior into two sorts: that of the praiseworthy kind and that which is not fully moral, if it is moral at all. Someone operating according to a justice ethic, proceeding through the analytic-rational mode of consciousness, could not engage in caring behavior except in a diminished sense. This is an important point that deserves emphasis: in Noddingsian ethics, the quality of caring depends, among other things, on one's level of empathy and motive attachment to the individual on the receiving end. Being just or egalitarian or open-minded or magnanimous in action is not sufficient for one's actions to be morally caring. True care, given Noddings rather complicated definition, must meet standards of engrossment, displacement, recognition, proximity, potential, and imminence (5c) and must take place within a caring mode of consciousness that operates in a narrative contextualized mindset (2c, 4c) geared toward establishing whether or not the moral person is confronted with an I-ought. Noddingsian care also manifests as a practice; that is, as a process with behavioral, psychological, and ideological components, as will be brought out below[2].

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2 At this juncture, some readers might be asking whether the Noddingsian stance is plausible at all, even as a starting point for conceptual development. Remember, though, that Tronto's theory, introduced in

Decision-making. Moral decision-making takes place in a caring mode of consciousness and employs the skill of engrossment. One receives the other by allowing them to "fill the firmament" of one's mind, thereby entering into a state of duality. In such a state, one can experience the I-must (or at least facilitate the future experience of the I-must in the relationship), which transforms into an I-ought if the proper conditions of proximity, potential, and imminence are met (see the citations earlier in this Chapter), which means, among other things, that there are no extenuating circumstances, such as previous commitment that limit one's energy to such a degree that "completion" cannot occur. Noddings eschews any simple formula for determining obligation, but instead refers to an "inner dialogue" that is not well defined yet, as we have seen, includes a narrative analysis and an appeal to historical circumstance (p.108). Given her emphasis on the caring mode of consciousness and the "concretization" it necessitates, it is clear that Noddings' decision-making emphasizes the intricacy and irreducibility of context (3c) and does not invoke formulas that combine moral rules in quantifying or mathematizing ways to reach solutions (3j).

Inherent in the idea that determination of obligation is linked to personal relations is the tacit claim that a moral person only has so much caring energy to go around, where

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Chapter Four, is a co-starting point, one that begins with political care, and thereby provides a nice contrast to the domestically oriented view we get from Noddings. My project is to take concepts from the work of both philosophers and modify them so that both private and public care benefit from both sets of ideas. To speak sartorially, I will be sewing the two theories into one fabric with conceptual threads, creating the unified NT theory. This two-sided approach is important because, as discussed in Chapter Four, I want to eliminate public/private dualism but not a public/private distinction. Noddings' mothery forms of empathy and motivational displacement are, *mutatis mutandis*, the sorts of conceptual tools relevant to personal relationships (and with extensive modification to other kinds of relationship), and so have a place in a grand theory of care.

caring energy is associated with the affective and motivational transference of displacement, the drain of engrossment, and so forth, as these are understood in the context of personal bonds. Noddings writes that "if we are meeting those in our inner circles adequately as ones-caring and receiving those linked to our inner circles by formal chains of relation, we shall limit the calls upon our obligation quite naturally" (p.86) by which she suggests that there is only so much emotional support and attention a person can give, and beyond a certain limit, usually met within the framework of nurturing family and friends, no more obligation can reasonably be expected. The starving in Africa (and of course I use this reference as a synecdoche for the many groups that meet similar conditions of neglect) are excluded not simply because of physical distance but because of energy limitations.

Hence, when Noddings claims that completion is limited by "objective conditions," she seems to include under the rubric of objective conditions at least the following: (a) the moral agent must have enough energy to form a personal relationship, (b) the physical barriers between the moral agent and the potential cared-for must not be so great that they prevent a personal relationship. Since I challenge the necessity of both (a) and (b) for moral caring, it is useful to provide a name to the restrictions they imply. I will refer to the thesis that energy and distance considerations that set limits on our personal relationships also set limits on our ability to morally care as *the energy-proximity limitation thesis* (EPT for short). Confuting the EPT is essential to my project

of manumitting care from the domestic sphere, and so the thesis receives a great deal of attention in Chapter Six.

Worldview (connectedness of self). The worldview established by Noddings is one where the reductionistic methods exemplified in 1-7j are not reflective of the interconnected complexity of reality. The caring mode of consciousness takes precedence over the analytic-rational as a state of moral awareness in which engrossment, displacement, and emotional interaction can flourish. The nature of the self is highly relational (1c). Noddings writes that the ethical self can only develop through caring relationships (where, as we have seen, such relationships require personal exchange). The world is of such constitution that we must morally help others in order to define ourselves:

> The ethical self is an active relation between my actual self and a vision of my ideal self as one-caring. It is born of the fundamental recognition of relatedness; that which connects me naturally to the other, reconnects me through the other to myself. As I care for others and am cared for by them, I become able to care for myself. (p.49)

In one sense this picture of connectedness is very insightful and in another very dangerous. It is insightful because the concept of the relational self takes on depth and meaning: who I am depends on my relationships and they define me not just in their type but also in their quality. To elaborate on Noddings' claim, it is not simply the fact that I am a parent which impinges on my psyche and partially constitutes who I am, but the fact that I am a 'good' parent or a 'bad' parent or, more realistically, someone in-between these two extremes. When I care for my child, for example, I evaluate my behavior in

105

terms of the ideal and arrive at a pronouncement, whether consciously or unconsciously. Over time I accumulate a history of such pronouncements that together form the basis of a story, the story of the ethical character of my parenthood as I see it (of course, how I see it could be influenced by external factors such as how others see it, how society sees it, and so forth). This story then becomes part of the narrative of who I am. In Margaret Urban Walker's terms, it partakes in the construction of my moral self-definition. I see myself, for example, as a good parent, and that affects my self-esteem, my exuberance, my emotional condition—in short, it influences my self-image along a number of indices. Studies in psychology affirm that how we see ourselves, both consciously and unconsciously, and how others see us results in real effects; that is, perception shifts the reality of who we are and how we behave and this behavior then alters the world (Kollock and O'Brien 1994).

Noddings, then, provides a useful description of the connected self: it is a self that is partially constituted by the nature of its relationships with others, both in character and quality. The moral agent, under this description, cannot absolutely control who she or he becomes for the reason that the type and quality of our relationships is often outside of our control. For instance, the quality of our interaction with our children often relies on the children's responses, which even the best parents cannot mold to their own liking (attempts at complete molding of the child to suit the parents, in fact, are probably indicative of pathology). It is perhaps alarming to think that the selfhood of a parent is altered by the actions of an infant, but if the theory of connectedness presented above is

106

correct, then we are constantly sculpted by relational dynamics. Indeed, life is permeated by relational roles: relationships with lovers, friends, children, parents, co-workers, bosses, merchants, animals, and environmental beings such as ecosystems and even plants (Addelson 1994, 2)[3].

Although Noddings' worldview yields a workable model of connectedness, it also creates a dangerous trap. The trap can be seen by pointing out two of her claims: (a) the self can approach the moral ideal only through caring relationships, and (b) caring relationships must be personal relationships delimited by the appropriate proximity and energy restrictions. Combining (a) and (b) produces the conclusion that being moral is being properly intimate with those with whom one is emotionally close. This result has the effect of excluding many political or economic actions from the category of those that can seriously advance someone's integrity.

Giving money to charities, for example, no matter the sum, is not an action that involves a caring relationship, and so it cannot aid one in becoming more moral. Such altruistic action is "caring about," which Noddings disparages. Similarly, if I choose not to by certain brands of clothing because they are manufactured in sweatshops, this is not

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3 Although it is at first strange to think of persons as in relationships with plants, the idea has some tentative plausibility. For example, the image of a good gardener or a bad one, or of someone who respects nature or treats it instrumentally, could have powerful effects on self-perception and behavior, behavior which in turn can reinforce assumptions and beliefs about the self. (Many persons in capitalistic society tend to see nonhumans as mere instruments for human pleasure, thus defining a relationship of consumer to fodder, a relationship that lacks respect or sacrosanctity and takes on the mantle of the dominator/dominated dualism common in Western culture). Not only can a person be affected by their perception of how they treat environmental beings, but the environmental being can be affected as well. In a significant sense a relationship exists between persons and the environment because the two interact organismically (i.e., as life-bearing collections within a larger ecology) in ways that affect both. Moreover both are affected as a result of the attitude, exploitative or otherwise, that underlies the interaction.

an act of genuine moral caring and so cannot be an indicator of moral character. The problem, as will be discussed, is that condition (b) effectively endorses self-centered behavior, confining morality to a small island of personal relations. It reinforces the comfortable lifestyle of the affluent Westerner content to care for family and ignore larger human-rights and environmental issues.

Psychology. The psychology accompanying the Noddingsian moral decision-making procedure and worldview would be in opposition to the traditional view of the impartialist who tries to bring emotion under tight rein so that it may be escaped when necessary to achieve the more worthy state of contemplative Rationality. A Noddingsian moral person would cultivate the sort of empathy that permits engrossment, and would also prioritize the sort of passion and displacement that enhances the quality of caring relationships (in contrast to, say, prioritizing objectivity). The caring mode of consciousness would take precedence over the analytic-objective, privileging the ability to problem-solve through intuitive or narrative means over abstracting mathematizing methods. The ability to form deep and sensitive relationships would be crucial, as would the ability to communicate in an open honest fashion (6c). Whereas traditional theory lionizes the independent rational hero who overcomes the weakness of desire and partiality, the Noddingsian picture praises the person who immerses in healthy and mutually beneficial relationships despite the difficulty and patience required. Whereas the justice philosopher would attempt to reach a plateau of rationality that escapes the ebb and flow of the emotional world (here one is reminded of Plato's famous metaphor in the

Republic where the goal is to escape the dismal cave and achieve the light of unearthly Truth), the Noddingsian person would attempt to reach a state better defined by psychological standards of health than logico-mathematical standards of excellence (I leave aside the serious problems with Noddings' theory, discussed in the next section, adverting here to the frail step it takes in the direction of re-defining the proper goal of moral excellence).

Interestingly a standard definition of mental health from *The Oxford Companion to Mind* matches well with the moral emphases of the Noddingsian person:

> Answers given nowadays to the question 'What are the characteristics of a mentally healthy person?' are likely to refer to such signs as the capacity to co-operate with others and sustain a close, loving relationship, and the ability to make a sensitive, critical appraisal of oneself and the world about one and to cope with the everyday problems of living. (1987, 469)

In regard to the four criteria of mental health presented here:

1. The capacity to co-operate with others
2. The capacity to sustain a close, loving relationship
3. The ability to make a sensitive, critical appraisal of oneself
4. The ability to cope with the everyday problems of living

the care ethicist may be better situated than the justice ethicist, who starts from a vantage remote from daily human life and therefore must somehow apply the wisdom gained on high in the state of Objectivity to the messy world of emotional and social interaction. The first two criteria deal directly with issues concerning relationship and sensitivity to emotional needs, matching well with the care emphasis on mutually beneficial relationship. Motivational displacement and engrossment are clearly relevant here, if not comprehensively so.

The third criterion, self-appraisal, will be covered in Chapter Five when the concept of self-empathy is explored in some detail. Self-empathy (derivative from engrossment) will be shown to be a difficult though rewarding means of exploring one's own goals, values, and psychological states. It is perhaps not the only effective means of "sensitive, critical appraisal of oneself," (e.g. conversations with a therapist might be at least as useful) but it is hard to see how a program of turning inward with the purposes of regarding one's own deep emotional states could be carried out without truly knowing how one feels. This in turn suggests 'getting in touch' with feelings through empathic channels.

Finally, concerning the fourth criterion, coping with everyday living, the narrative approach might be more efficacious than the mathematical approach given that reality is pluralistic and best described through various metaphoric concepts that do not reduce into each other yet individually represent one valid interpretation without exhausting the pragmatic possibilities. Such a metaphoric and nonreductionistic paradigm was defended in Chapter Two by appeal to recent research in cognitive science and computer theory.

Criticisms of Noddingsian care.

In preparation for the restructuring of Noddings' ethic so that it can become a central part of an NT morality, I present below three meta-level objections, thematic problems that plague the original N version. These meta-objections build on and expand the basic problematic tendencies already introduced; namely, those associated with the tar-baby effect, the energy-proximity limitation thesis (EPT), the asymmetric nature of the care relationship, and the lack of appeal to principles. Together, the triad of meta-level problems presents the main obstacle to the creation of a satisfactory ethic of care founded on Noddingsian elements. Each member of the triad—dualism, paralysis, and biological intuitionism—will be discussed in turn.

1. Dualism. To support dualism is to support the patriarchal roles that channel men and women into two conceptually, socially, and politically separate yet complementary groups reflecting polarized attributes such as active-passive, leader-follower, doer-nurturer, and so forth. The main problem facing Noddings is that the energy-proximity limitation thesis and the tar-baby effect team up with the asymmetric nature of the caring dyad to support the stereotype of the feminine nurturer, a stereotype further reinforced by other feminine-oriented aspects of her theory and its lack of appeal to principles.

The feminine nurturer. Many elements of Noddings' ethic are reminiscent of the traditional motherly role. Noddings intends to give a "feminine" ethic and readily incorporates elements of the cliché female personality. Her notions of engrossment and

displacement highlight a passive, receptive, and giving role. Those of proximity, imminence, and potential emphasize the familial closeness of the home. If the moral person attempts to maintain obligations to friends and family at a level that permits pursuit of commitments outside the domestic sphere, the EPT and the tar-baby effect quickly pull the reins. There is only so much energy to go around. It must be parceled out person by person and each person can increase obligations without specified limit. The danger of being sucked into the family drama without energy or moral justification to expand one's field of concern is everpresent. If Noddings specified some strong rules or principles that mitigated the gravity-like force of the tar-baby and EPT effects, and the tendentious drift of characteristics such as engrossment and displacement, then she would at least have some claim against the contention that she mires the moral person in the depreciated extreme of the classic public-private dichotomy. Yet she denies even this minimal protection.

Stereotypical Asymmetric Nurturing. In the dramatis personae of the Noddingsian caring relationship, a character sketch of the one-caring reveals that she or he is dedicated to giving without expecting much in return except "honest" affirmation or, even less, a lack of denial. This is evident in the basic structure of the moral dyad: engrossment and displacement on one hand as opposed to mere recognition on the other. While the one-caring is passively receiving input, committed to serving the needs of the cared-for, the receiver of this magnanimity need reciprocate merely with acknowledgement. One can too easily picture the mother (and often the daughters) as the most talented at becoming a

"duality," doing so frequently without expecting the same in return, content at least on the surface with occasional gifts and special attentions from the males. What we have, then, is a lopsided relationship of giver and provider, nurturer and nurtured, homemaker and breadwinner—a replication of the patriarchal socialization program.

Such a system is self-justifying and Noddings inadvertently provides a philosophical foundation for such justification. One can envision a traditional mother and housewife, tired and busy, reasoning as follows: "My kids and my husband aren't sensitive to my needs like I am to theirs, but I make sure that they are well taken care of, and that's my reward. My happiness comes from taking care of them." This fits too easily within the Noddingsian framework: the one-caring doesn't need the sensitive treatment from the cared-for because she can help others and thereby approach the moral ideal—the ideal ethical self—by immersing in their concerns and needs. In this light, Noddings' vision of the relational self, a self that can grow morally only through giving to others in caring relationships, becomes a vehicle for self-sacrifice and self-abnegation; it permits the cared-for to become something of a parasite, taking without giving and not needing to defend such inequality because the one-caring has justified the asymmetry in her own mind. She engages in a sacrifice that is not a sacrifice because by denying her own right to empathic and validating respect, she can better strive to attain the ideal of the caring mother. The cared-for need merely remark, "That's the way she wants it," and continue to feed on her displaced motive energy.

Noddings' care relationship, then, is structured by what Hilde Nelson calls "unilateral care." (1992, 10) It does not incorporate mutual giving and validation, but a flow of energy one-way from the nurturer. The situation is one where the one-caring not only does not expect more than recognition but additionally is intended to morally thrive despite the sacrificial nature of the dynamic. As we saw in the above discussion of the Noddingsian connected self, the mothering member of the relationship does not depend on the cared-for except as a mirror to reflect information on the effectiveness of her or his care. The input expected from the cared-for is minimal while the output expected from the one-caring is lavish.

Mutual Recognition. What is lacking here is the depth of mutuality that, for example, is postulated by feminist object-relations theorists. Jessica Benjamin claims that the relationship between the mother and child can aspire to "mutual recognition," where recognition is not understood in Noddings' sense as a mere acknowledgement of care but as a validation of the other as a center of conscious being, someone who should be treated with respect and empowered to pursue their own flourishing through that validation. Benjamin describes recognition as:

> that response from the other which makes meaningful the feelings,
> intentions, and actions of the self. It allows the self to realize its agency
> and authorship in a tangible way. But such recognition can only come
> from an other whom we, in turn, recognize as a person in his or her own
> right. (1988, 12)

And she points out that not only the caregiver but the care-receiver engages in recognition of this empowering sort:

114

> The need for *mutual* recognition, the necessity of recognizing as well as being recognized by the other—this is what so many theories of the self have missed. The idea of mutual recognition is crucial to the intersubjective view; it implies that we actually have a need to recognize the other as a separate person who is like us yet distinct. This means that the child has a need to see the mother, too, as an independent subject, not simply as the "external world" or an adjunct of his ego. (p.23)

Noddings presents one of those theories that Benjamin accuses of missing the importance true recognition. Nowhere does she mention the need for this sort of validation, the sort that grants intrinsic value. For Noddings, even adult relationships of care, such as teacher/student, do not involve the cared-for demonstrating caring toward the nurturer; rather, the cared-for immerses in selfish projects and the one-caring derives self-esteem, not from the cared-for's acknowledgement of her or his value, but from self-acknowledgement of the same:

> To behave ethically in the potential caring relation, the cared-for must turn freely toward his own projects, pursue them vigorously, and share his accounts of them spontaneously. This is what the one-genuinely-caring wants but never demands. (Noddings 1984, 75)

Indeed, Noddings' very definition of reciprocity is not a situation of two-way giving at all, but a celebration of the cared-for's accomplishment by both parties:

> What the cared-for gives to the relation either in direct response to the one-caring or in personal delight or in happy growth before her eyes is genuine reciprocity. (p.74)

The "personal delight" or "happy growth" of the cared-for is sufficient to establish a morally appropriate bond. As for the "direct response," this is merely the sharing of accomplishment with the motherly figure so that she can see more of the cared-for and thereby engross and displace with greater efficacy (p.75).

115

Connectedness, as postulated by Benjamin, can aspire to a more salutary state than the relationship of mother/cheerleader to achiever. The partners in the caring relationship are both called upon to proclaim the other as worthy of special attention and non-instrumental treatment. In Noddings' relationality, the cared-for may legitimately see the one-caring as a lesser sort of being, a 'nurturer' or taken-for-granted appendage who should be properly attended to as a giver yet not as someone who in-and-of-themselves should be nurtured.

Note that Benjamin's form of recognition does not require that both members of the relation actually take care of each other—asymmetry of care is permissible. The care-receiver might not be able to reciprocate, for whatever reason, the ministrations of the caregiver, yet this does not invalidate the importance of recognizing the caregiver as a bearer of intrinsic value equivalent to that of the receiver. Benjamin is not claiming that children should be expected to wholly return a parent's attentions; what she claims is that the child should look upon the parent as a nonobject, and further, as another center of consciousness, as a person who has their own needs and projects.

So even in the case of the parent-child or teacher-student relationship (i.e. those kinds of relationships that receive the lion's share of attention in Noddings' book) more can be expected of the cared-for than simple Noddingsian recognition, a kind of response that leaves the one-caring in a mainly instrumental role. Furthermore, as other kinds of relationships are considered, like those between emotionally attached adults, or those that extend beyond the traditional sphere of women—relationships that concern political and

business issues—Noddings' "logic of care" becomes even less appropriate and even misleading.

For example, in chapters five and six, which concern care in political contexts, I argue that recognition is not necessary for appropriate care to take place. In short, in typical personal situations, more should be expected as a moral standard than mere recognition from the care receiver, and, in situations that involve caring in political contexts, even the barest recognition should not be a requirement of proper ministration. Noddings, then, misses the mark on both counts.

By crafting her logic to focus on activities traditionally slotted for women, the nurturing parent/child and teacher/student interactions (though at the high school and college level, the teacher/student interaction becomes masculinized), Noddings buys into the public vs. private dualism. By emphasizing one half of the dualism and customizing her logic to characterize the behaviors and roles common in that extreme, she effectively supports the oppressive conceptual framework that underlies it. Her caring model is feminine as opposed to masculine, but plays into the patriarchal system because the feminine role is as much a part of that system as the masculine.

The problem cannot be fixed simply by proclaiming that everyone should become feminine in their mode of caring. This is Noddings' tack when it comes to "equal" relationships. In such cases, such as between adult lovers, "we need not, in a practical sense, try to distinguish the roles of the one-caring and cared-for." (p.70) But then we would have everyone stereotypically feminine, abundantly giving and passively receiving

117

the other's wants. Everyone would have a tendency to become heavily obligated to those within proximity who offered high potential for personal relationship and imminence of response. We would have receptivity and displacement but not assertion of self. A healthy situation requires graciously taking as well as giving (and whether giving must be as selfless as Noddings portrays it is questionable).

As Benjamin is aware, salubrious relationship involves assertions of independence as well as recognition of dependence (on an intrinsically valuable other), and therefore a state of tension that requires constant balancing and vigilance (1988, 25). What is needed is a dynamic that escapes both the extremes of feminine and masculine, extreme dependence and independence, taking characteristics from both yet, by mixing and modifying those characteristics, reducing to neither.

2. Paralysis. Although dualism, which fosters oppressive roles that degrade both males and females, is abhorrent, moral paralysis may be worse. The two afflictions are of course connected, since paralysis tends to lock persons in dualistic modes of being and patriarchal roles are in themselves shackling, but paralysis goes farther. It can directly nurture extreme states of cruelty, such as partner abuse or serious pathology such as alcohol or drug addiction. On a world scale, it can lead to the tolerance of atrocity and egregious injustice.

Imagine an affluent middle-class mother (the one-caring) slaving away, emotionally neglected and abused, thoroughly engrossed and motivationally displaced, driven by an I-ought that, ultimately, as we shall see in the next section, relies on biology

and intuition for its bedrock justification. While this thorough commitment of her energy is underway, balancing her on the edge of exhaustion, the Earth's ecosystems rapidly deteriorate and a growing number of people, already well over a billion and a half, languish in poverty, millions of them starving to death each year.

In this scenario, neither the care-taker nor those in her inner circle nor those beyond are properly served by her way-of-being. Yet this is an all too common pattern in Western society, one that Noddings plays into readily. The problem can be highlighted quickly by recalling the crucial trouble-makers, the tar-baby effect, the EPT, and the lack of appeal to principles. The combination of these elements promotes, as we have seen, status quo care (read: patriarchy). Yet perhaps worse, it can tie the moral person to a particular personal relationship so thoroughly that there may be no escape, no matter how hellish the consequences.

The tar-baby effect increases obligation as bonds grow tighter. The EPT links morality to those few persons in proximity to whom the caregiver has allocated a bit of their precious personal attention. The lack of appeal to strong principles (in conjunction with a vague nod toward what is "natural," as will be discussed) shuts off an important avenue of escape from personal relationships that grow monstrous, siphoning time and energy, and demanding ever more motivational displacement and receptivity from the caregiver.

In this tripartite process in which location and energy restrictions combine with burgeoning commitment and lack of principled protection, the care-taker can become

119

effectively paralyzed, unable to help the starving children overseas or the deteriorating ecosystems, unable to step outside the domestic role, or even to escape abusive relationships, because her energy is tied up in a few persons.

Noddings of course would not accept this conclusion and gives many examples throughout her book where care-takers set limits so that they can take care of themselves. However, even when defending the well-being of the ones-caring, Noddings explains it in reference to their ability to help others. The ones-caring should be maintained so that they can serve others most efficiently:

> The one-caring . . . needs no special justification to care for herself for, if she is not supported and cared-for, she may be entirely lost as one-caring. If caring is to be maintained, clearly, the one-caring must be maintained. She must be strong, courageous, and capable of joy. (p.100)

Even in defense of the well-being of the ones-caring, Noddings renders them secondary to the caring function, which takes place in an asymmetric dyad that generates a unilateral flow of support toward the cared-for, who uses that energy to attain personal growth and delight. The assertion that the ones-caring must be strong and courageous and capable of joy is too vague and feeble to counteract the structural flaws inherent in the approach. Strength and courage can manifest in negative ways, and the capacity for joy is not enough to insure that care-takers are assertive enough to make time to experience it, or, perhaps more telling, assertive enough to experience any sort of joy except that which comes from vicariously sharing in the happiness of those who benefit from their incessant sacrifice.

120

These paralysis effects are rightly noted by critics. Both Hilde Nelson and Claudia Card see the potential for abusive relationships to become inescapable morally caring relationships in the Noddingsian framework (Nelson 1992; Card 1990). Nelson argues that unilateral care can degenerate into the kind of relationship in which the "slave mammy" supports the child of her master, bestowing her attention on one who will someday treat her as property much like a livestock animal. Card points out that a one-caring does not ever seem to be justified in leaving a relationship once it has solidified, and remarks on the restrictive nature of this arrangement (1990).

These critics, though supplying trenchant analyses, do not identify the root causes of the defects as thoroughly as I have. The tar-baby effect and the EPT are not identified in their commentaries, though the lack of appeal to principles is. Card conflates engrossment and displacement, and additionally, only vaguely and misleadingly identifies other important elements of Noddingsian care. Compare her three-part analysis to the more sophisticated one above that discusses recognition, the caring mode of consciousness, engrossment, displacement, the I-ought and so forth:

> [Noddings'] "caring for" is not just "being concerned about"; it has three
> elements: (1) motivational engrossment—or "displacement"—in another,
> (2) a regard for or inclination toward the other . . . and (3) an action
> component, care-*taking*, such as protection or maintenance. (1990, 102)

Nelson aptly discusses unilateral care and its potential for dysfunction, but, like Card, overlooks the complex interlocking of concepts in Noddingsian care. For example, she does not capture the entirety of the subtle and insidious danger that the obligation-indicators, proximity, potential, and imminence, present. In the Noddingsian scheme,

emotional bonding can lead to a kind of bondage, a total engrossment in a few persons and a total inability to operate morally beyond that restricted range. And, frighteningly, the web can start to wrap almost invisibly, for each act of caring could be another small inch of self-determination lost into the tar-baby.

3. Biological Intuitionism. As we saw in Chapter One, Clinchy worried that she and her colleagues had inadvertently supported the mythos/logos dualism where logos was the extreme of emotionless acontextual reason and mythos represented the justification of decision by nothing more than appeal to blind intuition or emotion, which she labeled as "subjectivism." In this section, I demonstrate that Noddings' decision-making procedure contains strong elements of subjectivist naturalism-- and so not only wanders perilously close to the mythos-logos trap but also flirts with a kind of dangerous vagueness that seems to morally justify most any behavior that a one-caring perceives as intuitively correct. The tar-baby effect and the EPT do not play a major role (though through their support of dualism and paralysis they outline a picture of the *feminine mystique* female who is associated with the whimsy and caprice of shallow relativistic thought), but the lack of appeal to principles contributes strongly to this problem. Noddings ends up with a kind of reliance on nature, with the mother-child bond serving as the raw material from which good actions derive their justificatory force. The rudiments of the narrative approach that can be distilled from her philosophy cannot save her from this problem because, first of all, these rudiments are not conceptually developed enough to provide any strong constraints on behavior, and secondly the

content of the narrative will prioritize information gained through biological intuitionism and thus infect the MDMP.

Mothering care as natural. Noddings writes that the I-must stems from a natural impulse to care that is evident in the mother-child interaction, which she gives as one of her prime examples of such natural nurturance at work. Accordingly, she sees the mother's care for the child as more natural than moral, and the mother does not merit blame if she fails to care for her child, but rather acts pathologically:

> When my infant cries in the night, I not only feel that I must do something but I want to do something. Because I love this child, because I am bonded to him, I want to remove his pain as I would want to remove my own. The "I must" is not a dutiful imperative one that accompanies the "I want." . . . The most intimate situations of caring are, thus, natural. A woman who allows her own child to die of neglect is often considered sick rather than immoral. (p.83)

The view that mothers care for their children primarily out of a natural impulse and do not therefore deserve moral praise or blame, the view toward which Noddings gravitates, is highly suspect. Sara Ruddick, for example, argues that mothers do deserve moral praise. She provides a nonfictional story of an ordinary mother who becomes so frustrated that she wants to kill her child, the point being to demonstrate the heroic journey that mothers undertake in child-rearing, one that has been too often dismissed as merely a natural function, and therefore worthy of little acclaim (1989). Indeed, mothers receive no pay for the demanding job of caring for their children, whereas men are recompensed for their work outside of the home. The 'private' sphere is blatantly devalued and relegated to the realm of instinctive and automatic service. As Benjamin rightly points

out, developmental theorists reinforce this idea of the invisible mother who is no more

than a bland background providing a contrast to the child's spectacular struggle and

achievement:

> It must be acknowledged that we have only just begun to think about the
> mother as a subject in her own right, principally because of contemporary
> feminism, which made us aware of the disastrous results for women of
> being reduced to the mere extension of a two-month-old. Psychology in
> general and psychoanalysis in particular too often partake of this distorted
> view of the other, which is so deeply embedded in the culture as a whole .
> .. Yet the real mother is not simply an object for her child's demands; she
> is, in fact, another subject whose independent center must be outside her
> child if she is to grant him the recognition he needs. (1988, 24)

Natural care founds the moral good. Noddings' association of the mother/child bond

with instinctive natural caring becomes even more hazardous when that biologically

based source is proposed as the basis for all moral goodness:

> I am arguing that natural caring—some degree of which each of us has
> been dependent upon for our continued existence—is the natural state that
> we inevitably identify as "good." This goodness is felt, and it guides our
> thinking implicitly. Our picture of ourselves as ethical inevitably involves
> a consideration of this goodness. (p.49)

Given that natural caring forms the basis of goodness, the danger of subjectivism

becomes apparent. Since the "I must," which can quickly become an "I ought," is

summoned through the natural impulse to care, the natural impulse takes on a

justificatory role. But it is only vaguely defined and structured, so there is the problem

that, for example, someone could use the "I must" to motivate unacceptable behavior—"I

must" punish my child with harsh spanking, "I must" continue to buy my alcoholic

spouse whiskey, "I must" sacrifice my priorities for those around me. When pressed for a

124

reason why such behavior is acceptable, the moral person might simply appeal to an "internal dialogue" that ultimately draws normative force from intuitions based on a natural impulse to care. The problem is not the appeal to general human tendencies, which is common in many moral frameworks, but rather the use of such tendencies to provide justification without other mechanisms such as principles or stipulations about mutual recognition to prevent abuses of the model.

Noddings' view lends itself to this kind of free-floating naturalism because the appeal to a natural impulse to care seems much like an appeal to intuition. We do good act X because X derives from our innate disposition. What is the nature of this disposition? It is seen in the mother-child interaction, but by what authority does it support judgements that some caring behavior is good and some bad? Noddings' rejection of principles and rights makes it that much harder to set limits on what the appeal to natural impulse can authorize. As we have seen, the factors that determine the extent of obligation and fix the "I ought" are proximity, potential, and imminence, but these are not going to rule out, say, wantonly spanking a child or chronically purchasing whiskey for an addicted, abusive spouse. They are not the sort of mitigating factors that prevent cruelty or disorder, for they remain at a very basic level of delineation, sketching when and to what degree a one-caring should devote energy to a relationship, not how that energy should be expressed. The same lack of constraining force troubles other Noddingsian concepts, such as recognition, as we have seen above.

Conclusion.

I have spent some time laying out the essentials of Noddingsian care and developing the objections into thematic comprehensive forms because the tension between her theory and its problems so clearly marks out the site at which care, as a fundamental moral concept, will either fail or succeed. Dualism, paralysis, and biological intuitionism are the three main problems and only if they can be eliminated without concomitantly eliminating the attributes that make care a distinctive moral approach will my project reach its goal. In the next few chapters, I take on this task. With the help of Joan Tronto, who develops a political ethic of care, one which specifically seeks to draw care out of its domestic shell, and by modifying concepts like motivational displacement, engrossment, chains of caring and the caring mode of consciousness, I craft a new version of the care ethic, one that recognizes differences between private and public caring yet does not restrict tools like moral empathy and narrative decision-making to either arena. The goal is a reworking of the common idea of care as a motherly exercise in support and maintenance of a brood of youngsters. In its reworked form, care becomes a ethic for corporations and governments, for environmental questions and sensitive foreign policy decisions. It transcends the image of the feckless nurturer sequestered in the suburban home.

Chapter Four: Tronto's Ethic of Care

The abundance of problems plaguing Noddings' framework should not lead to its total abandonment. The concepts of engrossment, displacement, caring mode of consciousness, and others have a place in a non-oppressive ethic of care. Nevertheless, getting to such a harmonious state from the "feminine ethic" requires radical alterations and additions to the basic Noddingsian ideas.

The goal of this chapter is to lay a framework for the required changes by appealing to the work of an important thinker, Joan Tronto, whose *Moral Boundaries: An Argument for a Political Ethic of Care* breaks the mold and focuses a feminist eye on international issues such as sexual slavery in Thailand. Tronto is helpful in many ways, all linked to the theme of expanding care beyond the private realm. There are at least three vital insights that her book provides: (a) it places care within a political context with an emphasis on escaping dualistic structures, (b) it argues that universalistic principles must be included in the ethic, and (c) it extends the notion of engrossment so that it is applicable to distant others.

Each of these enhancements will be discussed in turn. Unfortunately Tronto is better at pointing out how a political ethic of care should be structured than providing arguments which support that structure. Hence, in Chapter Five, I begin a process of elaboration, building argumentation into the combined Noddings-Tronto theory (the NT version of the care ethic, which is an evolution of the N version). The following

discussion is broken into three parts: first, a tripartite discussion that expands on (a), (b), and (c) above; second, Tronto's theory is analyzed within the framework of the two-dimensional model, thereby placing the analysis of the first part within a broader framework that supplies further clarification and detail. Thirdly, the basic warp and woof of the NT version is discussed, preparing for the in-depth analysis of its components in the next Chapter.

(A) A politically oriented ethic. We have already seen how Noddings' philosophy gravitates around home and family and how it channels the moral agent toward domestic servitude. Tronto is acutely aware of such problems manifesting through the maintenance of what she calls the public/private "boundary." The metaphor of a boundary expresses the social mechanisms by which certain classes of persons are included or excluded from roles of authority:

> Feminist scholars have long noted that, while the particular line drawn
> between public and private life changes over time and with varying
> cultural circumstances, within most of Western thought there is a division
> between public and private life, and women are restricted to the private
> realm. Thus, even if women could demonstrate that they possess a unique
> set of moral qualities and perspectives, these perspectives could easily be
> contained by arguing that they have no place in a realm of life that extends
> beyond the private sphere of friends and family. (1994, 10)

The indictment outlined in the citation is fully applicable to Noddingsian care—it restricts "feminine" morality to home life and effectively excludes one-carings (read: women) from politics. What is needed is a feminist morality that demolishes the public/private boundary. Tronto makes this clear in her criticism of "parochialism," the condition in which those outside the caregiver's favored circle are callously ignored or provided

insufficient attention. She is especially worried about affluent Westerners who might bury themselves in the upkeep of their own privileged groups while paying scant attention to large though physically distant problems like third-world starvation or, to use her own example, sexual slavery in Thailand. Care, then, should not be limited by selfish emotional bonding and ought to extend to political causes of even global proportions.

Unlike Noddings, Tronto distrusts intimate relationships as models of appropriate moral nurturance. Emotional closeness can lead to myopia and selfishness. The mother/child relationship, much invoked by Noddings as a standard of care, is particularly unsuited as the basis of a politically oriented feminist ethic:

> Those who are enmeshed in ongoing, continuing relationships of care are likely to see the caring relationships that they are engaged in, and which they know best, as the most important . . . This danger is made especially virulent when care is understood . . . as growing out of the metaphorical relationship of mother and child. (p.170)

Selfish preoccupation with one's preferred relationships is the true challenge to the success of a care morality according to Tronto. She holds grave doubts that Westerners can responsibly address the impacts of their lifestyles on persons outside their privileged domains. As we shall see below, part of her solution to this problem is the enforcement of rigorous democracy and strong principles of justice. Moreover, she advocates the development of an advanced form of engrossment that involves "attentiveness" and "responsiveness."

Key dualisms and their historical links. In Chapter Three we saw that the public/private boundary is a dualistic pair in which women are sequestered in the lesser

129

sphere of the familial routine and men are accorded the prestige of governing and managing the distribution of wealth. Tronto ties the public/private boundary historically to the boundary between two types of ethical thinking that struggled for influence in the 18th century. One approach "draws upon emotion, daily life, and political circumstance," an ethic developed by the Scottish philosophers Hutcheson, Hume, and Smith that relies on cultivated and contextually sensitive sentiments to arrive at appropriate conclusions. The other type of ethical thinking is "universalistic" and "requires that moral judgements be made from a point of view that is distant and disinterested." (1993, 27)

Tronto sees Kant as epitomizing the universalistic perspective and argues that the Kantian theme won out over the Scottish theme as social distance increased during the 18th century, widening class and social distinctions, creating mass migrations, taking men out of the home and restricting women to the private sphere, and generally shifting the consciousness of the citizen from communal closeness to individualism and capitalist competition. As separation became the key theme in social relations, so detachment became central in terms of proper reasoning. Political, historical, economic and social forces combined to engender a shift to a kind of justice-ethic approach from a more care-oriented one (more will be said about the association between the Scottish philosophers and the care ethic below).

For Tronto, then, a satisfactory care ethic must shatter the public/private boundary built into our culture and it must also overcome the related boundary that separates aloof universalistic thought from emotionally centered thought. In dissolving these boundaries,

130

Tronto seeks to overcome two dualisms that plague Noddings—the public/private and the rational/emotional split.

(B) A place for principles. Unlike Noddings, who openly rejects universalistic principle and grants moral rules at best a weak guiding role, Tronto proclaims that a care ethic that does not include principles and rights which enforce a "relentlessly democratic" system is liable to foster parochialism and, furthermore, "paternalism," a form of care-giving which disempowers and invalidates concerns of the care-receiver. Targeting Noddings, she writes, "Without strong conceptions of rights, care-givers are apt to see the world only from their own perspective and to stifle diversity and otherness." (p.161) Additionally,

> The only solution that I see to these problems [parochialism and paternalism] is to insist that care needs to be connected to a theory of justice and to be relentlessly democratic in its disposition. It would be very easy for nondemocratic forms of care to emerge. (171)

In order to address the problem of dysfunctional care, which can almost invisibly steer our moral behavior in classist, racist, and sexist directions, Tronto emphasizes the importance of setting standards of competence and constantly remaining vigilant to abuses of privilege and authority. *Competence* is one of the four touchstones of ethical caring that Tronto introduces into her theory (along with *attentiveness, responsiveness, and responsibility,* which will be covered shortly), and doubtless she intends that principles play a crucial part in monitoring the competence of care.

It might seem that by appealing to a "theory of justice" to monitor competence of care Tronto retreats to a Gilligan-like stance of combining the care ethic with the justice

131

ethic, thereby defending a hybrid position. Yet this is a false impression partially

fostered by a misleading use of the phrase "theory of justice." There is little evidence in

Tronto's writing that she is supporting anything like 1-7j. Arguing for a kind of

democratic dialogue far more progressive than that evidenced in the United States today,

she rejects the universalistic Kantian mode of moral decision-making, claiming, "morality

is always contextualized and historicized, even when it claims to be universal." (p.62)

Additionally, she embraces a conception of the self as interdependent:

> Humans are not fully autonomous, but must always be understood in a
> condition of interdependence. While not all people need others' assistance
> at all times, it is a part of the human condition that our autonomy occurs
> only after a long period of dependence, and that in many regards, we
> remain dependent upon others throughout our lives. At the same time, we
> are often called upon to help others, and to care, as well . . . the conception
> of the rational, autonomous man has been a fiction constructed to fit with
> liberal theories." (p.162)

These two shifts, to a contextual, engaged morality from a detached, timeless morality,

and to a conception of humans as interdependent from a conception of independence, are

two of the "changing assumptions about humans" that Tronto envisions as resulting from

a transformation to a political ethic of care (the third is a shift from a focus on interests to

a focus on needs, discussed below). Given the discussion in Chapters One and Two,

these shifts are clearly consistent with the general parameters of 1-7c and at odds with the

justice criteria 1-7j.

Finally, although Tronto appeals to principles and rights to establish norms of

competence, Chapter One argued that the inclusion of such rules in no way entails that a

care ethic must marry a justice ethic. If principles and rights bolster democratic dialogue

132

yet are not part of a leap into formulaic space, then their presence does not entail

impartial judgement *sub specie aeternitas.*

(C) **Extending engrossment to distant others.** Tronto's ethic embraces a

procedure similar to engrossment. Remember that engrossment is an intense form of

empathy in which the caregiver becomes as receptive as possible to the perspective of the

other, transforming into a "duality." The point is to see as clearly as possible the world

through the eyes of the other:

> The notion of "feeling with" . . . does not involve projection but reception.
> I have called it "engrossment." I do not "put myself in the other's shoes,"
> so to speak, by analyzing his reality as objective data then asking, "How
> would I feel in such a situation?" On the contrary, I set aside my
> temptation to analyze and to plan. I do not project; I receive the other into
> myself, and I see and feel with the other . . . The seeing and feeling are
> mine, but only partly and temporarily, as on loan to me. (Noddings 1984,
> 30)

One way to understand this procedure is to consider it as having two parts: a stage in

which the care-giver becomes receptive and tries to make ready a space within her- or

himself for the other to fill (as when the other becomes a Buberian Thou and "fills the

firmament") and secondly a stage in which the actual shared seeing and feeling take

place. The first is the preparation stage, and the second is the sharing stage.

Attentiveness. With this analysis in mind, Tronto's attentiveness and

responsiveness, two of the four cornerstones of her theory, together closely approximate

Noddings' engrossment. Attentiveness is not purely a preparatory activity, for it involves

recognition of a need for care; however, to engage in this recognition properly requires

133

"absence of will," a concept that Tronto extracts from the work of Simone Weil (though she thinks Weil "overstates" the power of the practice):

> Attention consists in suspending thought, leaving it available, empty and ready to be entered by its object . . . thought must be empty, waiting, seeking nothing, but ready to receive in its naked truth the object that is about to penetrate it[1]. (Weil, cited in Tronto, 128)

Tronto declares that absence of will entails suspending "one's own goals, ambitions, plans of life, and concerns," and though Noddings does not specifically engage in this objectivist mode of speaking, she clearly comes close by requiring that the moral agent, when engrossing, refrain from bias, projection, and planning and assume a receptive mode of consciousness, which implies that judgements and affective preconceptions should be kept to a minimum to avoid tainting the incoming impression.

Somewhat surprisingly, Tronto apparently agrees with Noddings that ethical care cannot take place unless the moral person uses something like absence of will. Given that absence of will, epitomized in the citation by Weil, and engrossment, epitomized by Buber, both require intense stripping of self to receive another's perspective, one might question whether they are truly necessary conditions of proper moral nurturance. In most real-life scenarios, perception of other's emotional states and needs surely takes place through thick epistemic and attitudinal filters that prefigure and alter interaction significantly. How close absence of will and engrossment take the moral person toward a condition of *tabula rasa* is an interesting question. There are difficulties ahead for a

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[1] Tronto does not comment on the gendered subtext of this citation, though it clearly has sexual connotations. These same sort of hidden symbolisms can be found in Noddings' writing, especially where she describes engrossment as a passive receptivity for the penetration of the other's thoughts and feelings.

moral theory that claims persons are inevitably historicized and particularized and yet at the same time required to escape their own social molding to communicate properly with others.

However, neither Tronto nor Noddings need link the moral person to a Nagelian "view from nowhere" to support the thesis that caring requires receiving the other's perspective. Weeding out the most dangerous preconceptions—for example, discrimination arising from sexism, racism, classism, and eurocentrism—does not require that the caregiver mimic a blank canvas. A certain level of self-honesty and introspection (which, for instance, might be garnered from consciousness raising activities, as discussed in Chapter Five) may suffice to eliminate the pernicious barriers to good empathy without erasing individual marks entirely.

The tension between the subjectivity of even empathic perception and the stripping-effect of absence of will also leads to the question of partialism: Can a parent, for example, favor their child over distant others in the NT ethic of care? As will be brought out more fully in Chapters Five and Six, the answer is yes. Not only is the answer yes, it would be difficult for the competently caring parent not to privilege their own. The kind of empathy, the nature of motivational displacement, and the sorts of nurturing options differ in the private and public domains. These differences practically insure that a tighter bond and greater responsibility on a more personal and subtle level emerge with loved ones. However, as Tronto is acutely aware, emotional linkages and obligations to distant others should not be considered insignificant next to the needs of

135

one's family. In some cases, for example when weighing the needs of sweatshop workers who are grossly mistreated against the luxury of purchasing expensive t-shirts, the public responsibilities trump the private.

Responsiveness. Tronto's concept of responsiveness provides the link with the second stage of engrossment, the stage of sharing in which the one-caring sees and feels with the other as if the other's perspective were, to use Noddings' phrase, "on loan." Responsiveness is a process meant to prevent abuse of the care-receiver and to maintain a balanced and healthy relationship. At its core is an idea very similar to that expressed by Noddings; namely, that moral persons should see as the other sees (and not merely shift their own affective/attitudinal state to another vantage) at least to whatever degree is feasible:

> Responsiveness suggests a different way to understand the needs of others rather than to put ourselves into their position. Instead, it suggests that we consider the other's position as that other expresses it. Thus, one is engaged from the standpoint of the other, but not simply by presuming that the other is exactly like the self. From such a perspective, we may well imagine that questions of otherness would be more adequately addressed than they are in current moral frameworks that presume that people are interchangeable. (p.136)

The element of attentiveness creates a readiness for the receiving exemplified by responsiveness. Tronto is aware that the two are integrally connected when she writes, "Adequate responsiveness requires attentiveness," reinforcing her more general point that the components of proper caring intertwine in complex ways. In any case, the similarity between Noddings' engrossment and Tronto's procedure is sufficient evidence to postulate that engrossment, or some variant, is a crucial part of an ethic of care.

136

Differences between Tronto and Noddings. The key difference between Tronto and Noddings when it comes to engrossment (or attentiveness + responsiveness) is who can be received. For Noddings, engrossment is limited to those with whom we can enter into personal relationships. There is no hint in her work that moral persons can engross themselves in distant others; rather, the concept is linked to the EPT and centered in the private sphere. Noddings goes so far as to claim that organizations (including nations) cannot be ethical because they operate according to strict principles, which "diminish the ethical ideal" by demanding conformity along the lines of duty, honor, and loyalty (Noddings' arguments against the use of principle in a theory of care are discussed in Chapter Five). There is no discussion of the possibility that organizations—even the most benign, such as Amnesty International—can benefit from the practice of engrossment or use it to overcome their ideal-diminishing tendencies. The discussion of engrossment as a component of decision-making in a public forum is completely lacking from Noddings' treatment, and in any case the problems that hamper her view, dualism and paralysis, effectively rule out a strong publicly oriented ethic of care and thereby undercut any strong public role for engrossment.

Tronto, on the other hand, maintains the opposite: that political organizations can be morally caring and that a required element of such caring is engrossment (as represented by attentiveness and responsiveness). She assumes, apparently axiomatically, that caregivers can open themselves in some way that approaches the profound sense of "filling the firmament" (though since she does not accept Weil's description entirely

137

(p.128), she does not subscribe to the dramatic extreme). Such a liberation is necessary if moral caring is to break out of the circle of family and friends and escape the private/public dualism. We have, then, in Tronto's theory, a bold step beyond the ordinary conception of feminine empathy. The empathic moral agent can now tune in to persons (and perhaps animals and environmental entities) around the globe. There are no doubt restrictions on this power; for example, to attempt engrossment with everyone at once seems more a practice in short-circuiting the mind than a legitimate activity. But whatever these restrictions turn out to be, they will not be as confining as the EPT, which is refuted in Chapter Six.

Since Tronto gives no argument that moral empathy is possible for distant others (nor does Noddings give an argument for the opposed proposition that engrossment must be limited to those with whom we can enter into a personal bond), it remains to provide one and to develop a theory of empathy that is consistent with the conclusion. This shall be one of the main projects in the forthcoming Chapter, "Reconstructing care."

Tronto and the two-dimensional model. Before using Tronto's theory to inform a reconstruction of the N-version, it would be helpful to appeal to the external criteria developed in Chapter One to outline the political ethic in *Moral Boundaries*. Such an analysis demonstrates the strengths as well as the weaknesses of Tronto's approach, allowing a contrast with Noddingsian ethics that reveals a need for a fusion of the two positions. Combining elements from both perspectives results in a more comprehensive and criticism-resistant ethic than either provides in isolation. To demonstrate the links

between Tronto's theory and the internal criteria 1-7c, I include parenthetical references

occasionally though not rigorously, as was the case in Chapter Three when Noddingsian

care was explored in this fashion.

(1e): Caring behavior and political care. While Noddings distinguishes between

fully ethical care and "caring about," a less worthy form, Tronto gives a broad definition

of caring and then identifies a subset of this category that, by meeting certain standards,

qualifies as properly moral. The general definition is so broad that it covers a vast range

of activities:

> On the most general level, we suggest that caring be viewed 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, cited
> in Tronto 103)

Underscoring the wide scope of Tronto's conception of caring is her explicit inclusion of

the nonhuman and even the nonsentient. She continues, "We include the possibility that

caring occurs for objects and for the environment, as well as for [human] others."

Understood in this expansive sense, care is both a "practice and a disposition" that

manifests as a process or as a directed activity.

Moral care is bounded by the conditions Tronto establishes, which center on the

four elements of ethical care, three of them already discussed (competence, attentiveness,

and responsiveness) and one to be discussed in the next section (responsibility).

Competence requires the avoidance of parochialism and paternalism, and is connected

with principles that are egalitarian yet allow space for care to tailor itself to specific

historical, cultural, and contextual circumstances. (On the surface, this results in a viewpoint vaguely similar to Margaret Urban Walker's, discussed in Chapter One, where universal principles frame the individual process of developing moral self-definition yet leave a great deal of latitude for individual circumstance).

Like Noddings, Tronto does not think that generosity, kindness, open-mindedness, objective deliberation, or unselfishness are sufficient to indicate the presence of moral care. At the heart of moral care is an empathy that can, contra Noddings, extend to distant others. This empathy includes "absence of will" in order to render it as accurate as possible, and it must take place within a framework of competency that rules out the sort of lopsidedness one sees in such comments as Rudyard Kipling's:

> Take up the White Man's burden—
> Send forth the best ye breed—
> Go, bind your sons to exile
> To serve your captives' need.
> ("The White Man's Burden," 1899)

Tronto no doubt would classify Kipling's attitude as paternalistic in the worst sense. In this instance, care is not only overbearing and destructive of autonomy, it is a thinly veiled excuse for executing an avaricious and hegemonic program of the Western powers. In regard to 19th century Imperialism, true moral empathy would have identified the pain and horror of peoples across the globe as their cultures were dismantled and assimilated into a capitalistic program of exploitation and would not have propped up a program of colonization.

140

(2e): Moral decision-making and political care. Without drawing out the connections, Tronto asserts that her ethic bears a "family resemblance" to those of the Scottish philosophers, Hutcheson, Hume, and Smith, whom she contrasts with the universalistically oriented Kant. The Scottish philosophers are not known for their deductive, rationality-centered moral decision-making procedures (MDMP's). Hume, for example, was content to make reason the slave of the passions and thus subservient to an "internal sense or feeling," and never fully worked out his conception of practical reason in terms of clearly explaining its operative role in morality (Norton 1997, 168; Copleston, V, p.341). In general, the Scottish philosophers offer a tapestry of virtues and socially expedient customs that facilitate proper living. One of the side-effects is a considerable amount of vagueness concerning how individual choices of right and wrong are carried through. The presence of such vagueness, in fact, is the source of common criticism of virtue- and sentiment-based ethical approaches, as introductory ethics textbooks frequently bring out.

Tronto's MDMP suffers from the same weakness. The crucial element of her theory in regard to MDMP is "responsibility" (2c). Once a moral person determines that someone is in need (for example, the sexual slaves in Thailand), the question arises as to whether there is a responsibility to provide care.

Tronto avoids any specific methodology, preferring a "flexible" approach sensitive to "political motivations, cultural practices, and individual psychology." Beyond this, there are many concerns in her book that directly affect one's ability to

141

decide fairly whether to administer care. These include the tendency to ignore distant others because of the seductions of wealth and comfort or because of emotional bonds with family and friends. Also relevant is Tronto's exhortation that a properly caring society needs a rigorous democracy that allows all voices to be heard—especially the poor and oppressed—indicating that dialogue and perhaps storytelling play a role in questions of responsibility (4c, 5c). Additionally, Tronto writes that responsibility goes beyond contractual obligation and duty, thereby distancing herself from justice-ethic criteria.

Although Noddings is also vague concerning MDMP, referring to an "internal dialogue" that seeks to confirm or disconfirm an "I ought" by appealing to personal history and context, she includes a notion of a caring mode of consciousness and narrative-centered self-examination absent in Tronto's work, and so the two theorists' philosophies can be combined to attain a stronger MDMP scheme than either provides alone. In isolation, neither strongly defines a narrative procedure, but when joined the ideas of rigorous democracy (with an emphasis on hearing the voices of the poor) and "internal dialogue" suggest a full-fledged narrative approach that encompasses both group and personal deliberation.

A specified procedure for moral decision-making, the sort one might find in a utilitarian (quantify, maximize pleasure) or Kantian (seek logical consistency through application of universal formula) ethics, is still lacking. This lack, however, does not negate the protective web of principles and rights that frame Tronto's procedure of responsibility. And, given the possibility of pluralism, reality may be subject to multiple

valid interpretations, thereby complicating any attempt to reduce MDMP to simple steps or formulas. Nevertheless, in Chapter Six, I lay out the rudiments of a narrative MDMP meant to augment the Noddings-Tronto fusion of care theory and bring it up to the current level of research in the field of narrative ethics.

(3e): A worldview of political care. The Trontoan worldview is much like the general worldview of care discussed in Chapter Two. It highlights the interconnectedness of self and, further, all life, and directly contradicts the view of insular rational agents pursuing ego-focused goals, the standard exhibited in the dominant neoliberal paradigm. Recall, for example, Tronto's assertion that care takes place within a framework of interconnectedness in which "we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web." Hence we do not attempt purely selfish endeavors, in the sense of the atomistic billiard-ball model where each individual's pleasure is pitted against or disconnected from that of others (disconnected in the sense that altruism is necessarily detrimental to the self, a view portrayed, for example, in the free market philosophy of Ayn Rand); rather, we try to interact such that the web of life is maintained, preserving and enriching the holism in which we "interweave" in ways that belie classical notions of autonomy[2].

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2 One way to understand the holistic vision of autonomy is through the dissipation of the selfish/unselfish polarity. Since many actions are not clearly either/or, (e.g. caring for my child is both selfish and unselfish), we can care for ourselves while caring for others. Because the selfish/unselfish distinction breaks down, needs and goals can be seen as interpenetrating and the moral person as integrally woven into the eco-social fabric. Autonomy is no longer understood in terms of a voracious ego seeking to satisfy itself by defeating and instrumentalizing others (as in the Hegelian master-slave dialectic, or as Lacan observes in the commodifying psychotic paradigm of western culture) but as a practice in cooperation. In this scenario, autonomous persons strive together to bring about harmonious results.

This non-objectifying version of autonomy is complicated by the destruction of the Cartesian idea that rational minds are hermetically sealed against the intrusion of others. The social arena is not a collection of objectively contemplating atoms but rather a holism connecting many centers of consciousness with multiple input/output webs. For example, my initial feelings affect your feelings, which after modification alter my

In addition to embracing this general epistemic frame of the care ethic, one that is characteristically feminist, Tronto makes strong and radical political statements that derive from her interconnectionism and emphasis on eliminating oppression (7c). Her ethic encourages a reconstruction of society such that all social barriers restricting women (and other power-excluded groups) to subordinate roles are eliminated. This includes eradication of the pubic/private dualism, the rational/emotional dualism, and presumably other hindrances as well, as long as they can be plausibly indicted as tools of oppression within the current acculturation. It is probable, given Tronto's anti-oppression stance and her highlighting of the sociological walls that channel women into servitude status, that she would challenge both social (e.g. lack of federally subsidized day care) and psychological (e.g. self-esteem hampered by an unrealistic body image) impediments to a full-ranging flourishing by women.

To demonstrate that she is ready to engage in tumultuous upheaval of the social order, consider one of Tronto's most subversive passages. She claims that care is "ultimately anti-capitalistic" because "it posits meeting needs for care, rather than the pursuit of profit, as the highest social goal." (p.175) Moreover, she empathically rejects the main foreign-policy theory of the last half-millenium, rejecting the separation of morality and politics inherent in Machiavellianism. Indeed, the separation of morality and politics is a full-fledged "boundary," where, as we have seen, this label connotes a

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initial feelings, and so forth. If we are part of a group, then the dialectic between our personalities affects the whole, which in turn, after modification, affects us, both as individuals and as a dialectic unit. Envision each human as part of multiple such dialectic structures and the holistic nature of the human condition becomes more readable through the illusion of separation that western culture fosters through ideologies of individualism and egocentric consumerism.

detrimental social mechanism that fosters injustice.

In epistemic, economic, and political ways, then, Tronto's worldview deviates from Western dogma (and thereby the justice ethic criteria, which were shown in Chapter Two to conform to standard notions of autonomy, free market capitalism, rational self-interest—in general, the basic tenets of liberalism that took form in the late 18th century). It is important to point out that the rejection of dualisms, and barriers that support dualisms, does not imply the rejection of binary distinctions. So, for example, though Tronto rejects the public/private barrier and seeks to radically rework society accordingly, there is nothing in her philosophy that forces a destruction of the division between moral care in the home and moral care as applied to distant others in political contexts. The nature of this division, between public care and private care, remains to be worked out and that is a project for the next Chapter. Yet it is important to point out that elimination of the public/private dualism is not acquiescence to a total dissolution of public and private differences.

(4e): A psychology of political care. Tronto does not directly discourse on the psychology of the moral person, though like Noddings she promotes a form of moral empathy that is progressive in the sense of trying to eliminate the sorts of bias that arise from classism, sexism, and eurocentrism (note, however, that Noddings does not address the issue of oppression in any way remotely approaching the degree to which Tronto hammers on this subject; in fact, discussion of sexism and its dangers is absent from her book *Caring*, further indicating that she has not adequately dealt with the anti-woman

145

tendencies of the traditional social dynamic that feminists have analyzed in meticulous detail). The psychological profile of a moral person in a Trontoan world reflects, at minimum, the skills associated with attentiveness and responsiveness. A discussion of the caring mode of consciousness, as present in Noddings' theory, is lacking, and so here is another point at which a combination of the two orientations is fortifying.

One can plausibly speculate that for Tronto psychological structures or defense mechanisms that play a chronic and significant part in reinforcing a culture of oppression would have to be eliminated, and the social processes that foster them reconfigured (it is less plausible to speculate this way in reference to Noddings' work because, as mentioned, she does not specifically denounce the current system as oppressive to women). States of denial, projection, compartmentalization, confabulation, and so forth would (morally should) be dissipated, perhaps through consciousness-raising groups, an intensive and reiterative telling of one's story, or by other therapeutic measures. One can grasp the radical nature of Tronto's suggestions by contrasting this ideology—an ideology in which freedom is attached to the struggle against the hierarchic psychosocial machinery of the *centrisms*—with the liberal ideology that embraces liberty to acquire wealth and maintain it as the primary mechanism of happiness. (Centrism is Joan Callhan's term for an oppressive state, sexism, racism, naturism, and so forth, in which the center, i.e. the group in power, is contrasted with those on the periphery, i.e. those groups subjugated to domination, exploitation, objectification, and other modes of control that establish inferiority (1996)).

146

More generally, though related to the therapeutic implications of the emphasis on eliminating oppression, Tronto proposes a shift toward needs assessment, a psychologically loaded process, and away from patterns of wealth accumulation as a standard of health and liberty. This tendency is brought out in another of her radical shifts concerning our "assumptions about humans": the shift from a paradigm of interests to an in-depth focus on needs:

> Too often moral and political thinkers conceive of human activity in terms that are either logically or culturally individualistic, such as "interest" or "project." In contrast, to use "needs" is necessarily intersubjective, cultural rather than individual . . . For someone to say, "I have a need," is less indisputable from the care perspective and invokes a different response than the notion, "I have an interest." (p.164)

A focus on needs becomes psychological in the broad sense in which culture and socialization affect the way in which consciousness (and the unconscious) operates. People are not autonomous islands in a vast archipelago but culturally demarcated territories within the continent of collective caring, molded on all sides and levels by the social forces around them. To serve a need is not necessarily to leave someone alone to pursue rational goals, and may entail more complicated support that includes counseling and a 'safety net' of welfare subsidies. To serve a need, if that need is an escape from oppressive cultural forces, might require not just individual but also collective ministrations, a reshaping of social "boundaries."

The process of determining a need could quickly devolve into tyrannical arrogance or self-serving prophecy, but such perils are the reason for Tronto's strong promotion of rigorous democracy, anti-parochialism, and anti-paternalism. Determining

147

a need may be more difficult than determining a project or interest, and might sometimes require going beyond self-testimony. What are the needs of an orphaned child? What are the needs of a caste-restricted woman in a culture that is half-misogynistic, half-progressive, torn between the forces of tradition and those of the late 20th century human-rights movement? What are the needs of the victims of a vicious dictator like Augusto Pinochet?

Some persons, certainly, may not be able to articulate their needs or might not even be aware of them. The assessment process in many cases must be multileveled and involve multiple participants (moral empathy, democracy, dialogue, competence, and responsibility all play a role here). Such complexity of assessment is nothing new and already exists in the context of medical, congressional, and environmental boards, committees, caucuses and so forth. Despite the potential for bias, "group think," dysfunction, political wrangling, and corruption, these groups are recognized as superior to the monarchic or monolithic approach where one logic or personality thoroughly predominates.

Life would be simpler if the justice paradigm held, if people were perfectly computational, able to determine their rational desires through immediate formulas and articulate them in a universal logical language that reduced every nuance to manageable and interchangeable symbolisms. Alas, life is not a simple thing. The care psychology acknowledges the insidious grip of the centrisms, which pervade all levels of consciousness. Furthermore, it acknowledges the recent research in cognitive science that

148

renders people ir-Rational yet effective navigators of the world's pluralistic complexity via their use of schemas, stories, and explanations. Finally, it acknowledges the power of denial and other defense mechanisms to undercut moral persons' self-esteem and even decision-making capability. In these ways, it escapes the unrealistic "computational model" of the human mind and the worldview of logical reductionism that supports it.

Conclusion. Table 4-1 summarizes the views of Noddings and Tronto and suggests the warp and woof of the NT version of care. This version is an 'evolution' from the N version, combining the insights of both theorists and thereby creating a stronger more comprehensive ethic. And yet as we have seen this is not simply the slapping together of two unrelated views. Both conform to the general parameters of a care as represented by the two-dimensional model. Both employ a concept of moral empathy. And both set themselves against the traditional rationalist paradigm. Moreover, substantial modifications will be made in Chapters Five and Six to the Noddingsian view so that it will become friendly to the concept of political care.

Table 4-1: Noddingsian and Trontoan Care

	NODDINGS	TRONTO
Caring Behavior	Motivational displacement, engrossment, caring mode of consciousness, bounded by the energy-proximity limitation thesis	Competence, attentiveness, responsiveness, responsibility; no parochialism or paternalism
MDMP	Within the caring mode of consciousness, an "inner dialogue" that remains situated and historically oriented while avoiding self-deception—informed by engrossment and the urges of natural care	Virtues and customs interact in a democratic process framed by principles that set minimum standards of conduct—interactions and decisions informed by moral empathy
Worldview	Connected sense of self; the ethical self develops through caring relationships; self-identity and worth partially determined by type and quality of relationships. Moral care for animals is possible and sometimes an obligation	Humans and environment "interweave" to create holisms; reworking of political, cultural, and economic boundaries to eliminate oppression; three changing assumptions about humans: (1) shift to interdependence from autonomy, (2) contextualism from timeless universalism, (3) needs assessment from a focus on rational interests
Psychology	Emphasis on skills that enrich personal relationships like empathy, sensitivity to loved one's needs, good listening and empowerment skills; the caregiver must be strong and capable of joy to maintain the proximate cared-fors; "self-deception" should be eliminated.	Emphasis on escaping dualistic structures; moral empathy augmented by consciousness raising; no denial, compartmentalization, confabulation, and so forth; no radical separation of reason and emotion

There are important differences between the two theories that yield compatibility,

complementarity, or outright conflict. For instance, Noddings' rejection of universal

principle is itself rejected in the NT version, as is her limitation of moral empathy to personal relationships. Nevertheless, in the sphere of family and friends, it is perhaps awkward to appeal to universal principle or to detach from the emotional bonds that Tronto finds dangerous to proper care in a political context. In her description of moral empathy, Noddings urges receptivity and openness to the other, but she does not follow Tronto in straightforwardly embracing the "absence of will" of attentiveness. There may be some difference between the two philosophers concerning how the mind should be cleared and what exactly should be put to the side when 'receiving' in the empathic sense. Noddings might say that engrossing in one's child does not imply that one must clear one's mind of affection or love for that child. Tronto, on the other hand, insinuates that parent-child bonding is a threat to moral empathy and indicates that the empathic agent should step outside of such bonds in order to see effectively through the other's eyes.

Yet these differences in the use of empathy and principle are not incompatible when we take into consideration the differences that arise in caring for family and caring for distant others. As noted, the elimination of the public/private dualism does not entail the elimination of the public/private distinction, and a comprehensive theory of care must take into account this distinction and adjust its procedure to fit the different cases accordingly. Hence, in some situations, mostly public ones, "absence of will" may be the most appropriate mode of empathic receptivity; in other cases, the caregiver could let the other "fill the firmament" and thereby become a "duality" without stepping back from feelings of love for the cared-for.

151

One might argue that the different accommodations needed to serve public and private interactions create a rift that is so great that the project of a comprehensive ethic is doomed to theoretical schizophrenia; that is, combining two entirely different theories awkwardly in a kind of shotgun wedding. A comprehensive ethic is not truly comprehensive in an efficacious sense when two unrelated orientations are simply stuck together.

But it is not as if combining the insights of Noddings and Tronto is like forcing a marriage between a Cubist and an Impressionist. The similarities are striking. Moral empathy in both philosophies is a 'seeing through the eyes of the other' that requires receptivity and clearing of the mind. And, to reiterate perhaps the most important point of linkage, both philosophies conform to the parameters set by the two-dimensional model for a care ethic, which requires general agreement across a number of criteria, both internal and external.

Where the two theories do not agree or disagree, there is often useful enhancement provided by one or the other. For instance, Noddings' concept of recognition, absent in Tronto's scheme, may provide a useful standard for judging the quality of certain caring relationships (we would say then, in the NT version, that recognition is not a necessary condition for care, as Noddings would have it, but a significant component nevertheless). Conversely, Tronto's insight that society is undergirded by cultural "boundaries" could be helpful in both private and public contexts to insure that care does not foster centrisms.

In general, then, there will be differences between public and private care and yet also similarities. A backdrop of similar worldview, psychology, and MDMP combines with differences in levels of empathy and recognition to provide a flexible ethic that is also theoretically coherent and comprehensive. In the next Chapter the hard work of providing arguments for Tronto's insights begins. I argue that a care ethic can indeed operate in the political arena. Engrossment, motivational displacement, chains of caring, the caring mode of consciousness and other Noddingsian concepts have roles when we make decisions about, for example, the starving in Africa. As Tronto asserts, care must escape a purely domestic function or else continue to support the public/private dualism (or boundary). I give the political ethic she offers full argumentative and conceptual support, using the very ideas that Noddings employs in confining care to suburbia to extend it to those who live in cardboard boxes in Rio de Janeiro.

Chapter Five
A Place for Principles and Empathy

We have seen that Tronto's approach raises three central problems for Noddingsian care: (a) that it does not employ principles, (b) that it supports a public/private dualism, and (c) that it limits attentiveness and responsiveness (which together are roughly equivalent to the kind of moral empathy that Noddings calls engrossment), as processes of moral care, to those in close proximity with whom a personal relationship is imminently possible or actual. In this chapter, I begin to reconstruct Noddingsian care using Tronto's insights so that a new ethic emerges, one that draws from "feminine" and "political" care and yet goes beyond both. The new NT version maintains a public/private distinction but not a public/private dualism. Moreover in NT care persons will be able to engage morally with distant others as well as those in proximity, where the term "distant others" is construed broadly to encompass political situations and relationships or social connections with individuals across the globe who are not personally known.

The first task is to clarify and defend the role of principles in a care ethic, in this way addressing point (a) above. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to constructing an indirect kind of moral empathy that escapes the stereotype of the mother-child dyad and places care-oriented moral agents in the thick of the global currents of politics and megabusiness. In Chapter Six, the reconstruction of care continues with a reworking of

the non-empathic elements of Noddingsian care (e.g. recognition, motivational displacement, the I-ought) into long-range forms.

Principles and the ethic of care.

As argued in Chapter Two, an ethic of care can incorporate principles without thereby compromising its status as a revolutionary form of moral thinking. Upon acceptance of universal principles, it does not thereby become a care-justice hybrid anymore than Ravel's music can be described as Ravel-Debussy music because it shares some similarities with the work of Debussy. More to the point, principles are neutral insofar as indicating care or justice. How principles are positioned and utilized is more indicative of the nature of an ethic than their mere presence.

We have also seen that principles are effective tools for fighting dualism and that there is a strong case to be made that they are not redundant or easily replaced by other tools for challenging oppressive social systems, such as the appeals to custom, habit or virtue that one might find in a particularist or postmodern ethic.

The implication is that Noddings is wrong to vilify principles and distance herself from them so thoroughly. Her disenchantment should focus on the type of rationalistic thinking represented by Tronto's "moral point of view" boundary; that is, the sort described by the internal criteria 1-7j. Tronto is aware that the replacement of the paradigm of timeless acultural observers, which embraces "the Archimedean point," does

not preclude the use of principles or rights (p.171). Noddings, conversely, fails to make a clear distinction between wholly abstract forms of reasoning and reasoning that employs principles. For Noddings, principles imply abstract moral decision-making and vice versa (though she does permit "moral rules" to serve as weak guidelines for proper conduct).

Refuting Noddings' arguments. Since the power of principle to challenge dualism and their permissibility within the care framework have already been discussed, I turn to Noddings' arguments, with the intention of refuting them. Early in her book *Caring*, she associates principles with "the language of the father" and connects that methodology with horrible conditions, "fighting, killing, vandalism, and psychic pain of all sorts" (p.1). One argument, then, is that a tripartite correlation between principle, patriarchal politics, and atrocity entails, at least for practical purposes, that principles should be shunned as moral devices.

Such reasoning, however, strains the power of correlation to dictate the value of a moral concept. The association of principle with corrupted practice does not render principle innately corrupting. A good tool can help build an unsound house if not utilized properly. Furthermore, the straightforward association of principle with harmful practice can be challenged. For instance, the concept of a universal right (where a right could be considered a kind of principle that establishes a valid claim), originating merely centuries ago, has evolved with and accompanied widespread improvements in standard of living, assuming an advanced form in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, the

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and others.

It is true that, despite the ratification of such declarations, flagrant discrimination and barbarous infringement continues. Nevertheless, this does not negate the recent improvements that plausibly link to the greater moral awareness epitomized in the recently canonized rights. Moreover, some feminists, while noting that violations of rights occur routinely, do not call for their abandonment—a call that would in fact ring most callously in light of the pragmatic value of rights-talk in improving living conditions for many indigent third-world persons—but rather demand better attunement of rights and rights-governed behavior toward the goal of ending oppression. Andrea Dworkin, for example, does not trumpet a call to abandon rights-talk but rather presses for a more succinct and efficacious implementation:

> [T]he refusal to demand . . . one absolute standard of human dignity is the greatest triumph of antifeminism over the will to liberation . . . A universal standard of human dignity is the only principle that completely repudiates sex-class exploitation and also propels all of us into a future where the fundamental political question is the quality of life for all human beings. (1983)

Additionally, one might point out that for practical purposes the establishment of rights grants certain legal protections that could not otherwise be guaranteed or strongly maintained. It is not for merely idealistic reasons that early 20th-century proponents of women's suffrage focused their activism on attaining a constitutional amendment.

Besides the correlation with horrible practice, Noddings offers other reasons why principles cannot be part of a satisfactory ethic of care. She claims that principles bog the

157

moral process in complication which in the end dampens empathy and spawns dark

justifications:

> When we establish a principle . . . we also establish principles describing
> the exceptions to the first principle. Supposing then that we are moral (we
> are principled, are we not?), we may tear into others whose beliefs or
> behaviors differ from ours with the promise of ultimate vindication. (p.2)

Moreover, the empathy-dampening effect of principle can lead to inappropriate

conformity of the sort associated with horrors like fanatic inquisitions and vicious

pogroms (ref.). These concerns are so telling that Noddings uses them to justify her

assertion that institutions, organizations, and nations cannot be truly ethical (p.103, 117).

However there is hardly a necessary or even obvious connection between

principle and the three problems: dark justification, inappropriate conformity, and vitiated

empathy. In fact, Noddings gives no argument for a connection except the historical

correlation already discussed. Given her lack of any conceptually or logically oriented

reasoning to support a necessary link between principle and the three problems, there is

no obligation on my part to produce counter evidence of a similar nature, though I will

point out that prima facie the concept of principle does not straightforwardly undermine

itself as a useful moral procedure. Why shouldn't the presence of principle render dark

justification all the more difficult (for example, a Hitler-like pogrom would be in direct

contravention of the Declaration of Human Rights)? Why shouldn't the presence of

principle enhance empathy (for example, there could be a principle opposing certain

hindrances that Tronto spotlights as particularly damaging to moral empathy)? And why

158

shouldn't principle militate against inappropriate conformity by challenging the mindset and behaviors that lead to or result from the same?

All that Noddings' arguments satisfactorily conclude is that in some historical circumstances principles have been used in ways that are unhelpful or damaging. What she fails to bring out is that intuitions and unmoored subjective decisions can be as terrible as the misuse of principle, and that in such cases principles can serve as a check to prevent outbursts of reckless destruction. For example, Nazism gained momentum from the strength of the Romantic age, which was in part a reaction to the Rationalist movement of the 18th century. Fascist nationalism and *volkgeist* derive more from social currents that reflect the Dionysian mentality of poetics, pastoral, and passion than adherence to reasoned principle.

I do not want to minimize the close connection between the dominant operative principles in a cultural milieu and the dominant regime. The relationship between the way principles are formulated and enacted and the currents of social power is not arbitrary but rather determinitive in a strong sense. Bolstered by this point one might argue that since patriarchy dominates at the present, any use of principle to forward revolutionary goals is doomed. The control of the dominant class over the political force of principle is so great that reformers must seek other mechanisms of transformation.

This conclusion, though, is too strong in light of the deployment of rights and principles in legal and governmental proceedings across the globe that have sometimes lead to monument changes for the better in living conditions and basic freedoms.

159

Feminists are well aware that principles are weapons in a battle of ideologies, and that often battles raging around the employment of such weapons are lost, as Catherine Mackinnon is eloquently aware:

> In reality begins principle. The loftiest legal abstractions, however strenuously empty of social specificity on the surface, are born of social life: amid the intercourse of particular groups, in the presumptive ease of the deciding classes, through the trauma of specific atrocities, at the expense of the silent and excluded, as a victory (usually compromised, often pyrrhic) for the powerless. Law does not grow by syllogistic compulsion; it is pushed by the social logic of domination and challenge to domination, forged in the interaction of change and resistance to change. (Mackinnon 1993, 84)

Mackinnon, however, does not find the interaction between social force and principle to be inevitably awful. There is the possibility of "victory" for the powerless, however "compromised" and fraught with the "pyrrhic" threat.

Rather than reject the link between political dynamics and codified morality that Noddings invokes to undermine the benefits of principles, some feminists not only acknowledge but embrace it. What should be denied is the Noddingsian leap to the claim that the cultural impact of patriarchy on the tailoring of legislation renders principles, rules, and rights devoid of positive value. Rights and the sorts of principles they generate were ideologically birthed only a few centuries ago in the midst of a extremely bellicose and rapacious civilization, but they carry seeds of positive change and the possibility of a desperately needed burgeoning of thought regarding the appropriateness of violence and tyranny as mechanisms of rulership[1].

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[1] My paean to rights is not meant to invalidate other important ideas that are associated with moral progress, at least as it is understood in the sense expanding the list of who gets intrinsic value. The Golden

Feminist justification of principles. I have expanded and clarified the care ethic, analyzing the concepts developed by Noddings, Tronto and others in light of the two-dimensional model, and demonstrating how they might help a moral agent operate in both personal and political contexts. My investigation leads to the conclusion that the care ethic can employ principles without thereby relying on justice. A deep, or metaethical, justification of care principles, however, goes beyond the purview of this work. Questions of ultimate justification require another level of study, comparison of theories on such justifications, explanations why certain justificatory theories are better than others within a care perspective, and so forth—all of which is extremely important yet best addressed in a project dedicated solely to such matters.

This being said, I do want to take some of the concepts developed in this work and show how they help inform an answer to the question of how a care ethicist could come to accept universal principles. By focusing the discussion to matters of 'how it is possible' and not 'why it is right,' I avoid the larger question of justification, yet provide a picture of how a subjectively situated moral agent might plausibly come to embrace principles.

My goal, then, is to indicate how a subjectively situated agent might come to accept a general or universal claim, such as a right to life. Such claims could be at odds

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Rule—Do unto others as you would have them do unto you—as presented in the Gospel and the writings of Confucius has been praised by some ethicists as perhaps the first attempt at universalizing consideration of interests (Rosenstand 2000). The concept that 'they are like me' is central to the project of universalizing laws and creating an egalitarian system. The Golden Rule, by promoting a consideration of how others should be treated in terms of my own standards of suffering, helps draw important connections between persons who might otherwise, due to differences in worldview, gender, culture, and so forth, ignore the other's capacities to feel deeply as a fully active human subject.

161

with some subjective goals. For example, I might want to privilege my children over distant others, and so my subjectivity, in such a case, seems to push away from the acceptance of universal claims that would jeopardize the special status of my children. Hence, the full question I want to address is the following: How is it that I as a subjective, emotional, situated person come to accept principles without putting aside important elements of my particular feelings and situation?

The simple answer is this: the care ethicist comes to accept principles through empathy for distant others and the compassion it generates. Two concepts I use to elaborate this simple answer, both discussed in this work in some detail, are long-range empathy and the caring mode of consciousness.

As will be discussed in chapter six, the caring mode of consciousness is fundamentally compassionate due to a process that starts with self-empathy (which involves, among other things, moral agents honestly exploring their own psyches and accepting themselves, perhaps with the help of empowering imagery) and expands to empathy for others, both near and far. Compassion will also (in chapter six) be postulated as an element of moral care in reference to Martha Nussbaum's discussion of *epieikeia*, a concept that includes mercy as a fundamental component of the proper judicious attitude. It is through compassion, not Rationality, that a care ethicist might come to accept principles. Kantians, utilitarians, and also Rawlsians who embrace the Original Position, employ non-passionate procedures in their arguments for principles. Reason takes precedence over emotion (thereby setting up a contrast between Rational

162

and emotional sources of information). This is not to say that emotion is irrelevant to such theoreticians. A utilitarian, following the maximizing calculus, might well say that we ought to be compassionate and that we ought to respect rights. But it is Reason and not emotion that motivates this conclusion. A care ethicist, in contrast, does not see Reason at the core of the acceptance of principles, but instead compassion itself; compassion for others motivates a desire to establish universal protections.

Such compassion could be achieved by long-range empathy. Five methods of achieving long-range empathy will be explored in the next section (through story, through imagination, through representation, through self-history, and through chains of caring). These methods do not take moral agents outside of their own subjective situations; in fact, as we will see, our own peculiar subjective situations help us to better 'see through the eyes' of others. For example, the forthcoming section on imaginative empathy discusses how person who is a recovering alcoholic, who has lost a friend in a car accident, and who has also read Elie Wiesel's *Night* can use those experiences to better understand the plight of the starving in a distant country. Of course, those three characteristics (the alcoholism, the death of the friend, and the reading of *Night*) might not be the only relevant ones that facilitate compassion for distant others. Learning of many different sorts and a great number of life events might be relevant.

Contrast this to the methodology of the Kantian, utilitarian, or the Rawlsian, where the goal is to step away, 'detach', from one's contingency and approach truth without personal history, subjective situation, and passion getting in the way (perhaps this

is most clear in the case of Rawls' Original Position where contingency is completely eliminated by the "veil of ignorance"; though Kant's denunciation of "inclination" and anti-emotion moves by Peter Singer and J.J. Smart, as we have seen, generate similar conditions of impartiality). There are, then, at least two contrasts between the care ethicist's subjectively situated acceptance of principles and the methodologies of Rationalists: the care ethicist appeals to compassion and not Reason, and, second, the care ethicist uses empathy to generate that compassion, an empathy that directly employs personal situations and history as tools for becoming aware of others' perspectives.

To round out this picture, consider the hypothetical case of someone who is relatively callous concerning the plight of distant others until a tragedy strikes her life. This personal tragedy, along with other sensitizing sources of information she has encountered over her life, such as reading newspapers, Weisel's *Night*, or learning about women's oppression in a women's studies class, makes the suffering of distant others tangible (e.g. through imaginative or representational empathy). It is not just her own suffering that strikes her deeply now, or that of her family, but the suffering of people in general. It is not simply the starving in Brazil or the war-ravaged souls in Ethiopia, but suffering persons everywhere for whom she feels a new compassion. Her experience causes her to become more aware and more sympathetic to the torments of the human condition. She wants people to have rights against unjust treatment, because she has been made more aware of how brutal pain and torment can be. If asked why all persons should get rights and not simply certain select classes, the answer might simply be, "We're all

humans, we can all experience awful pain." (I see no reason why this sort of generalization, which can be made even by young children, indicates Rationality. It could be inductively yet passionately generated through one's own situated experience and seems so simple and common sensical that to argue that it implies someone is following a Rational ethic would be absurd—it would mean that most everyone everywhere is following a Rational ethic).

The above is a plausible account that follows common sense in not embracing solipsism or other bizarre scenarios when it comes to other persons. It is of course not the only possible account. The above hypothetical person could become very bitter after her tragedy and become absolutely selfish. Or perhaps she comes to have compassion only for a certain group of people, those that have been through the same horrible experience she has. Acknowledging these alternatives does not invalidate the possibility of my account. I feel that my own life, in fact, somewhat follows the path of the hypothetical agent above, though there was no sudden and dramatic change, but rather a gradually increasing awareness that led to concern for others.

The question of how care ethicists can come to accept principles without losing their subjective vantage has been addressed. It is not that the subjective vantage is lost, but rather that empathy for distant others transforms the subjective vantage. Family and friends do not become secondary or irrelevant. As pointed out previously in the discussion of long-range as opposed to proximate empathy, it is possible to morally care for distant others and still privilege one's family due to the stronger bonds fostered by

165

closer contact—but this privileging of family can only go so far. I am not going to answer the question, Why should compassion for distant others override our concern for our family's well being, even in cases where our families are quite content and the suffering of the distant others is great (e.g. their fundamental rights are being violated)? To purse this thought would require developing a full-scale normative theory, something I cannot do, I think, without at least some detour into metaethical considerations concerning the validity of principles. The question, say, of why it is wrong to countenance cruelly induced starvation while feeding one's family cake is very important but outside the scope of my current project.

Similarly, there is no doubt that compassion and empathy can be misused, and that they can foster oppression and cruelty. But I am not going to rigorously argue that my picture of empathy and compassion, one that demonstrates how a care ethicist could plausibly accept principles, is the one right method that everyone should follow. In keeping with the general tenor of my project, I am content to show how it could be done without tackling broader considerations concerning why it should be done.

Extending care to distant others: Moral empathy.

With the task of fixing a place and role for principles in the ethic of care mostly behind me, a task begun in Chapter One and only now brought near completion, I turn to the challenge of arguing that care can extend to distant others. The basic strategy is simply to take the Noddingsian concepts and demonstrate that they apply beyond the sphere of personal contact. Once this is done, care will have been extended beyond the

166

domestic level. Since Noddings' definition of moral care is rather strict, by meeting her standards I exceed less rigorous descriptions, such as might be found in a dictionary or in common parlance, and thereby tender a strong case that moral care, at least on one sophisticated interpretation, is as much a political and business skill as a friendship-oriented one.

The remainder of this chapter concerns questions of empathy: How is it to be extended to distant others, and what form will it take? The investigation has three main divisions. First, a general introduction to the problems, second, a discussion of attentiveness, and, third, a discussion of responsiveness. The section on responsiveness takes up the majority of the analysis, branching into six subsections that cover the various ways in which we might form empathic impressions of those persons who stand beyond the sort of contact that can lead to a full-blown familiar relationship.

Moral empathy and distant others. I have argued that the concepts of moral empathy put forward by Noddings and Tronto are very much the same. Both convey the impression of making oneself receptive to the other by adopting a passive attentive state, and both speak of seeing not simply as an ego transplanted into another's physical situation, but as the other sees in a fully transformative sense. In both philosophies the empathic condition can be intense and invoke profound if not spiritual overtones, Noddings appealing to Martin Buber and Tronto drawing from the writings of Simone Weil. The difference between the two is one of scope. Can the caregiver experience

167

moral empathy for distant others, persons with whom there has been minimal or nonexistent direct contact?

The issue addressed here is one of proximity (In Chapter Six I examine the energy question: Do caregivers have the stamina to empathically receive distant others while caring for those nearby?). Noddings' energy/proximity limitation thesis rules out moral empathy for those beyond direct contact. Of course, proximity is not a simple concept. Noddings would probably admit that engrossment is possible through letter writing, over the phone, or maybe even through email. In our global society, the issue is as much one of communications technology as physical distance. Furthermore, Noddings would probably grant that engrossment is possible if proximity was achieved in the past though isn't currently attainable. For example, even if one's children are currently out of direct contact (e.g. doing work for the Peace Corps in Africa), one can see through their eyes in an accurate way, intensely experiencing vicarious suffering or joy if the suffering or joyous children are remarked on by friends, heard on a radio report, seen on television, referred to in a newspaper, etc.

What I argue below is that attentiveness and responsiveness, Tronto's two elements of moral empathy, can be used effectively in regard to distant others. The significant and meaningful sense in which they can be used indirectly (i.e. toward those beyond personal reach) is not the same as the sense in which moral empathy applies to familial relations. This different usage, however, does not imply a difference in basic structure.

For the purposes of clarification, I will use the term engrossment to describe the process of being attentive and responsive to those nearby with whom one has a personal bond. In this fashion, engrossment can be considered synonymous with 'direct moral empathy.' Tronto's application of attentiveness and responsiveness to distant others I shall refer to as 'indirect' or 'distant' moral empathy. Hence, Noddings and Tronto employ moral empathy similarly in that the two stages, preparation and reception (attentiveness and responsiveness) are the same. But the two philosophers differ in conclusion as to who can be reached, and, as I draw out, at what level of human contact empathy becomes morally relevant. Indirect moral empathy yields different information than direct moral empathy because different levels of human contact are involved. Determining the mindset of one's child given highly specific personality and contextual variables is different from determining the general state of oppressed *campesinos* in South America. If different levels of human contact permit different levels of 'seeing through another's eyes', then Noddings mistakes engrossment for the broader category of moral empathy and thereby contributes to the faulty supposition that an ethic of care cannot include true caring for distant others.

Attentiveness and distant others. If attentiveness is a state of readiness marked by acute receptivity, as both Tronto and Noddings indicate, then there is no bar on performing such a process in reference to distant others. Whether such preparedness is futile is another question, one to be discussed in the next section; yet even if futile, due perhaps to an inability to receive a relevant impression from a *campesino*, it is still

possible to clear one's mind and attain the sort of openness and readiness befitting the exercise of moral empathy. Parochialistic and paternalistic biases can be temporarily escaped, petty worries can be shelved, and so forth. Perhaps such efforts fail to bring affective understanding of the distant other, but the caregiver should not be faulted for making a courageous attempt at being as sensitive as possible.

There is evidence in the writing of Simone Weil that attentiveness is indeed a kind of receptivity with varied application. In the article cited by Tronto, Weil's thesis is that attentiveness can be developed in relation to school studies of geometry and Latin, and that studying such subjects is useful, among other things, because it develops this rare skill in the student (Weil 1977, 44-52). Ultimately, Weil says, one seeks to be attentive to the love of God. Loving one's neighbor is similarly tied with "attention" in a profound and essential way:

> Not only does the love of God have attention for its substance, the love of our neighbor, which we know to be the same love, is made of this same substance . . . The love of our neighbor in all its fullness simply means being able to say to him [sic]: "What are you going through?" It is a recognition that the sufferer exists, not only as a unit in a collection . . . but as a man, exactly like us, who was one day stamped with a special mark by affliction. For this reason it is enough, but it is indispensable, to know how to look at him in a different way. (p.51)

If we can summon attentiveness in relation to Latin and geometry, using those topics as modes of practicing and developing the skill, then why can we not use attentiveness in relation to distant others? It seems plausible that we can 'empty the soul' in readiness, even if that readiness goes unrewarded. However, some kind of reward seems inevitable if Weil correctly associates attention with "recognition that the sufferer exists . . . as a

man, exactly like us, who was one day stamped with a special mark of affliction." If part of attentiveness is a recognition that the sufferer is like me, not an object or instrument, not an inferior or alien entity but someone who shares the qualities that render me deep, sensitive, phenomenologically intricate, fascinating, then it is likely such is possible in relation to distant others; otherwise, one must hold to the dubious claim that we cannot recognize (i.e. *feel* and not just acknowledge) intrinsic value in persons we have never met.

If attentiveness includes this sort of recognition of likeness and intrinsic value, then its nature is further clarified. The clearing of the mind that sweeps away parochial or paternalistic biases, that permits us to escape the consuming selfishness of our own worries and affectional ties, includes the further procedure of acknowledging likeness: the person starving in Africa is like me in many important and barrier-piercing ways.

If we see news footage of starving persons in Africa, if our minds are attentive in the Tronto-Weil sense, we can become accurately receptive to what they are going through—much more so than if we are told that a xeno-creature on planet X is experiencing a lack of some substance vital to its survival. In regards to the xeno-creature, we have no pertinent information about the social, cultural or political context, or even the physical context.

The gap between the xeno-creature and the starving African is informative. It demonstrates that there are gradations in our ability to perceive distant others, and that some distant others might be easier to relate to than others. Those who we can relate to in

a strong sense, such as distant humans, allow us to acknowledge 'they are like me' in a profound way that prepares us to feel, in a fashion relevant to moral deliberation, what they are going through (whereas in the case of the xeno-creature we cannot even be sure if it suffers in virtue of its lack). In the next section I argue that this preparedness is not in vain and that acceptance of likeness opens the door to true empathy.

Responsiveness and distant others.

I now begin one of the most important tasks of my project, demonstrating how we can 'see through the eyes' of distant others and, further, demonstrating why this is not only useful but vital to proper political engagement. This general strategy is to use moral empathy in the context of Tronto's distinction between envisioning a world of people with interests and envisioning a world of people with needs. According to Tronto, the relocation from interests to needs is a major paradigm shift that leaps away from the neoliberal model of autonomous actors to a world of mutual dependence, vulnerability and psychological complexity. Given this paradigmatic shift, the fundamental question becomes, Can we 'see through the eyes' of distant others in order to determine their needs?

Below I offer five means by which such moral empathy is possible. In preparation, I first present two objections that attempt to undercut the possibility and/or need for the empathic grasp. The first objection requires, in response, an explanation of the usefulness of the practice, and the second requires an explanation of its very possibility, naturally leading into a discussion of the five means.

172

Argument one: assessment is straightforward. One might simply argue that recognizing basic needs, the sort of needs that are relevant in political or long-distance circumstances, is straightforward enough to gainsay a role for any special skill. For instance, determining that malnourished people require food does not necessitate a form of empathy; the procedure is more like an intuitional or common sense observance.

In response, common knowledge suggests that determining the needs of distant others is much more complex than might immediately appear. The issues go beyond the simple implementation of humanitarian aid into a cultural and political morass that belies clear-cut solution. Consider, for example, the intricacy of factors surrounding the topic of a recent *New York Times* article, "The Price of Arabs' Honor: A Woman's Death," which exposes the tradition of killing women who commit adultery in order to remove the perceived blemish from the family name (adding to the horror, if possible, a male relative commits the murder in a violent way, such as with a gun). In this scenario, determining needs involves much more sophistication than a bald assertion that Middle-Eastern women need to be freed from a cruel practice. They do. But how to go about it involves a closer examination of the social fabric: Why does the society engage in this practice? What ritualistic function does it fulfill? What are the psychological and misogynous dynamics at work? What are the biases in our own thinking that interfere with our ability to enact a proper response? Once the horrible knottiness of the dilemma is exposed, the need for a deeper understanding becomes apparent[2].

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2 One might ask whether empathizing with the killers in cases of sororicide to preserve family honor is necessary for a competent political practice of moral care (or what about other situations that involve

There are at least four good reasons to think that this deeper level of understanding should, in part, derive from indirect moral empathy (assuming for the moment that such empathy is possible). First, as noted, there is a tendency for affluent Westerners to go into denial, to hide from the tribulation that cripples one fifth of the human species in the form of poverty and malnourishment. In order most effectively to jumpstart a transformation of awareness in the relatively rich, it is best for them to truly feel as much as possible the suffering of the downtrodden billions. If Westerners turned off their television sets for even an hour and dared to put themselves in contact with the starving (perhaps in the fashion of a Stanislavsky technique in which actors attempt to totally become the person they are representing) then the injustice of inequality that blights our global community might well falter and at a certain critical point of public outcry begin to recede.

Second, there is the related problem of paternalism, particularly in terms of malicious biases such as racism and imperious tendency. Remember Kiplings' ode to "the white man's burden," which captured the spirit of the times as, for example, Africa was carved into colonies for resource-voracious European aggressors. I agree with

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similarly disgusting violence? Must a moral person empathize with those who perform female-genital-mutilation rituals?). The answer is probably no, but that does not mean that such empathy is not useful for the purposes of diplomacy, negotiation, or determining just punishment for the killers.

Furthermore, understanding the workings of oppression, where such understanding might well be useful toward eliminating the same, seems to require understanding both the mentality of the oppressor and the oppressed. If individual perpetrators of patriarchal violence could be said to reflect some crucial aspect of the mentality of the oppressor, then empathizing with them advances an understanding of the oppressive dynamic, at least from a psychological point of view. To empathize with someone, of course, is not to condone their brutal behavior. In such cases, empathy is a means of assessment and an attempt at greater understanding for the purposes of therapy, sentencing, diplomacy, or negotiation.

174

Tronto that empathy can be of use in combating such narrow-mindedness. A genuine attempt to view as a *campesino* or as a homeless person in Detroit or as a black youth in a Rio de Janeiro ghetto views the world could help dispel arrogance and callousness. For example, persons who are pro-'free trade' might think twice if they deeply realize the anguish of *campesinos* who are displaced from their land by corporate competition and forced to move into cardboard-box slums. Recognition of this anguish might also serve as a psychic shock that would galvanize Western admission of the racist and sexist effects of neoliberal policy.

Third, in addition to alleviating denial and discrimination, both of which blunt sensitivity and lead to phlegmatic nonaction or haughty intervention, there are the straightforward informational benefits of empathy. To get food to the starving often requires dealing with war-torn governments, soldiers, and religious patriarchs. Knowing the mindset of these individuals could facilitate diplomacy, and such knowledge is partially graspable by recognizing emotions, attitudes, and the effects of long-held beliefs—all of which are approachable through empathic perception. Foreign Service Officers might use engrossment (direct moral empathy) to increase understanding of the government officials with whom they must haggle. Private citizens or support officials in the US might use indirect moral empathy to help determine where best to apply pressure toward effecting change. What would seem to work best is a combination of facts, stories (e.g. from newspapers, personal testimonies), and open-mindedness that informs a willingness to see as the other sees. With all the relevant stories and histories on the

175

table, all biases and selfish tendencies negated, and recognition of the other's viewpoint empathically solidified through attentiveness, understanding should increase, and the achievement of a mutually beneficial solution becomes more likely.

Before proceeding to my fourth point, I want to comment on the uncomfortable issue of empathizing with despicable persons or highly offensive group mindsets. Should we empathize with Nazis or those who kill their female relatives to preserve family honor? It is important to note here that empathizing does not necessitate condoning. Empathy can involve recognition of the "disvalue" in another's mind frame (Kupperman 1991). It can also be seen as an information-gathering tool that neither condones nor condemns (Hare 1981). Furthermore, empathizing with someone who has committed a brutal crime might lead to greater fairness in determining punishment, an issue I take up in Chapter Six when I discuss Martha Nussbaum's treatment of the Greek concept *epieikeia.*

A final point in this regard is that empathy for those with highly offensive mindsets can help induce change sensitively. A care ethicist is not going to recommend military action to rectify oppressive honor-killing acculturation in the Middle East (though some feminists, like Ruddick, do not rule out military action in all cases). Change might come about through political agitation, or what Meyer's calls "dissident speech." Knowing how to influence keepers of the patriarchy most effectively is important in such progressive nonviolent struggles. Of course in such cases empathy can also remind us that even domineering patriarchs are human beings who were influenced

by social forces, perhaps sometimes harsh ones, in their upbringing. It might be possible to have compassion for them even as they are strongly challenged and their views repudiated.

My fourth point in regards to defending a role for empathy in political circumstances is an adjunct to the above consideration that empathy heightens understanding. As I discuss below, there are benefits to be had from self-empathy relevant to grasping the essentials of difficult political situations. Briefly, self-empathy requires introspective exploration of the reasons why the introspector acts as she or he does. Carried out in a courageous and tenacious fashion, this kind of inquiry can yield multiple insights. For example, one might realize that one has been unconsciously promoting sexism or other negative patterns, whether social or family-related (e.g. a son could discover that his alcoholic behavior copies that of his father). Without such self-understanding, garnered in part through empathy, it is hard to approach the complexity of global problems with the proper respect for custom, habit, and tradition and their power to instill dogmatic values almost indelibly in the mind. Because I argue below that self-empathy provides fertile soil in which indirect empathy can flourish, I include here the insights it offers as evidence of the power of empathy to contribute to the understanding of distant social troubles. In short, I posit that one's acumen regarding a broad range of psychological issues increases if one has grappled with and come to terms with one's own psychological issues.

Argument two: the abstraction barrier. Perhaps the strongest argument that empathy can't function in regards to distant others is that there are just too many unknowns. The distant other has never been met, no specific personality traits are observable, cultural differences abound—in what fashion, then, can one really understand the world as this amorphous other sees it?

I attempt to answer this objection by delineating five ways in which such long-range contact is significantly possible. However, before embarking on this journey, there are some preparatory considerations to be borne in mind. These help clarify the role and importance of indirect empathy and distinguish it from the direct kind.

First, I wish to emphasize that what is at stake is not whether moral empathy can solve difficult dilemmas. The issue is whether the indirect version garners useful information for the purposes of determining what ought to be done; but note that the decision-making function is above and beyond the gathering of information, just as deliberation is above and beyond sensing. Moral empathy is not a self-contained mode of solving problems nor a panacea. It can go astray, and furthermore there are certainly other information sources that are relevant, such as scientific data, psychological theory and historical background.

Second, there is no claim in my thesis that indirect moral empathy can perform the punctilious observational work of empathy as employed in some personal situations. Personal and non-personal empathy may focus on different sorts of needs, though they may overlap to an extent (e.g. if one's child is emaciated, empathy for that child may

detect the same need as indirect empathy does for those languishing in Africa). Consider a caregiver using moral empathy in the kinds of situations that Sara Ruddick astutely records as commonly besetting a mother:

> Should a child be allowed to stay indoors all weekend when all the other children are out playing? Should children be forced for their own good where they fear to go—into classrooms or to birthday parties, for example? Does a boy's identity require that he play with guns, a girl's liberation that she be denied the doll-house she wants? How much should a mother tell her children about adult sexual life, her own past and current moral failures, or the bigotry of their neighbors? When is allowing a child to grow "naturally" a cover for impotence in the face of her will? (1989, 85)

A parent in these situations uses moral empathy in a different way than someone using it to 'fill the firmament' with the plight of starving children in Africa. In the first case, the information may be more specific, concerning the intricacies of a child's personality, while in the latter case the information is general yet motivating, conducive to breaking down walls of denial, and, as we shall see, regenerative of the love and compassion that can be part of a caring mode of consciousness.

Of course, and third, perfect 'contact' with another through empathy is not even possible with the closest family member or lover. We can never 'see' with full replication through another's eyes. It is in all cases a question of degree. Consider four persons for whom a moral person might attempt empathy: a close-by loved one, Ms. Jones on the other side of town in a housing project, Ms. Rodriguez living in a barrio in Los Angeles, and Martine, a starving child in Africa. Barriers to empathic understanding exist in each case, but they are not the same.

Someone might balk at the possibility that we can, in any morally significant sense, experience the world as a starving African such as Martine perceives it but at the same time acknowledge that we might be more able to identify with Ms. Jones, who lives in the same nation, state, and city. Or, perhaps, Ms. Rodriguez, though she is far away in Los Angeles, is more easily identified with than the much closer Ms. Jones if the moral agent is Latina and like Ms. Rodriguez has experienced the ubiquitous discrimination against persons of color in the United States. Obviously people have different experiential frames that are influenced, among other things, by culture, nationality, socio-economic class, and the ambient biases and ideological configurations that affect them. Given that we may share experiential frames more strongly with some distant individuals than others, there is a strong pull toward the conclusion that we can empathize with some far-removed individuals or groups of individuals better than others (contra Noddings, who suggests that indirect empathy is not morally pertinent at all).

The barriers affecting our ability to empathize with an adult across town may be no greater than those obstacles presented by the age gap between parents and their child. In all cases, there will be differences that make perfect identification impossible. Moreover, the presence of a personal relationship, the sine qua non of proper moral empathy according to Noddings, does not guarantee deep understanding or fair determination of another's needs. It can and often does interfere with understanding for the other, perhaps because intimacy makes us vulnerable and raises our defenses, or

because poor communication skills lead to a build up of tension and resentment, or because old dysfunctional patterns from childhood re-emerge.

The complexity of issues relevant to determining the likelihood of an empathic connection is vast, and there are no easy answers. Below I argue for five routes through which we can plausibly succeed in the indirect sense. Some of these are quite basic and address the fundamental mechanisms of the empathic process itself. The unrefined definition of empathy going into the discussion is: a process of 'seeing through the eyes of another' to determine needs, enliven connective moral emotion, and recognize intrinsic value.

(1) *Through Story*. The power of story to affect our lives should not be taken lightly. Books change life-plans and direct the thoughts of great thinkers and movers. There is considerable ferment in feminist circles surrounding the idea of narrative as an essential device toward understanding human decision-making, sense of self, and worldview. Narrative could be said to be at the heart of the paradigm shift from 'justice' morality to an ethic of care, and the phrase "narrative ethics" is appearing more frequently in the pertinent philosophical literature.

Understood in the broadest sense, stories can take many forms. They can be written or spoken, fictional or nonfictional, and might even be told without language as in the case of a series of pictures. What stories share is a certain structural template that includes a plot and a thematic tension that is dealt with in one of several ways. The kinds of plots, themes and tension-resolutions are fairly limited in number, though by varying

the specifics within the general templates, there is always the potential for fresh twists and new ideas. Science fiction novels, for instance, are known for exploring different conceptions of time, space, and technological achievement, sometimes famously predating the actual invention as was the case with Jules Vernes' *2000 Leagues Under the Sea*. Innovative or reform-minded political or moral systems can be experimentally introduced under the guise of fiction (Charlotte Gilman Perkins' *Herland*, Ursula K. LeGuin's *The Dispossessed*). Candid reactions to social injustices can be related forcefully (Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*) and employed to foment positive social change (Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle*).

In the case of nonfictional accounts, the basic mechanisms of storytelling remain in place though sometimes, for instance in the case of an ongoing crisis, the final outcome has not been determined. Happy denouements cannot be engineered, and the rectitude of the actors shades into the grey of ordinary albeit intricate life. Unbiased reporters and investigative researchers also tend to court the multiplicity of voices and perspectives relevant to a given event and so often tell many related stories. For example, the target audience might get two or three detailed, heartfelt accounts of the merits of keeping the Confederate Flag flying over the state capitol building in South Carolina.

What is nearly indisputable, except at the skeptical level of solipsism is that stories can expand our awareness of how others see the world, in a sense thrusting the reader into a kind of empathic engagement (DePaul [ref]). The viewpoint of the skillful author and the author's characters, crafted to possess their own personalities, becomes

182

available, permitting entrance into a one-way sharing of experiential perspective that mirrors the unilateral nature of the receptive empathic act. If the reader's mind is open (or attentive, to use Tronto's language), this one-way flow of experiential information can lead to an understanding of how other groups of people view the world, even if the group in question is far removed in cultural or socio-economic terms. It is hard for even an isolated white middle-class New Englander to peruse *Black Boy* without gaining some insight into the lives of the victims of racism and poverty.

Narrative and virtuous sensitivity. Martha Nussbaum claims that reading certain kinds of texts can improve moral sensitivity and contribute to the development of virtuous character [ref.]. Although she has been accused of elitism due to her focus on a narrow range of classics, the idea of literature as a moral impetus is sound. If we take a relatively accessible work, such as *The Jungle*, there's much plausibility in an approach that recognizes such muckraker material as a catalyst for greater awareness and positive social unrest. Similarly, if we read a trenchant account, realistic and sensitively written, about the global sexual trafficking in women, revealing the horror as they experience it, we are that much closer to understanding their plight. A nonfictional investigation of probing quality (e.g. a *New York Times* article) that includes testimony, history, fact, and philosophy can similarly incline us to develop a sense of the need to alter conditions, and might jar us into greater connectedness and fellow-feeling with our distant sisters and brothers.

183

Through story, then, distant others can become not so distant. The term "distant other" seems almost a misnomer in certain cases. Consider, hypothetically, a documentary movie about the plight of Brazil's *campesinos*, poor farmers basically toiling under feudal circumstances and threatened by the avarice of the rich (as 17th century English peasants were threatened by the enclosure of the commons for economic purposes). Through a combination of visual and verbal impression, the viewing audience could be drawn, if only for a moment, into a sensation of actually being in the presence of the sufferers. The sufferers remain individuals with whom we cannot enter into a personal relationship, nor can they recognize or reciprocate our care, but we find ourselves caring nevertheless. Given the current technological power of the multimedia to portray forcefully the plight of others, no matter their location, it is clear that "distant other" is a term not to be misinterpreted as implying that there must be emotional distance, or distance in the sense of detachment, coolness, or uncaring on the part of moral persons.

Basic problems: (i) The limits of generalization. The above account of empathy through story raises some basic problems. First, even if it can extend to distant others, how broadly does empathy generalize? Does an attentive audience, affected by the sort of documentary that reveals the plight of South American *campesinos*, become empathically engaged only with the sufferers in the movie, or do they gain insight into the experiential framework of a larger group?

The common sense answer is that the larger group is reached, albeit at a basic level of human connectedness. It is not simply the plight of the several persons in the movie that becomes important and available, but the plight of all those in the similar circumstance, whether that includes the village, the city, the province, or the larger area in question. The excruciating suffering of the few becomes a representation allowing a glimpse into the condition of many others not present in the documentary.

Underlying this group-oriented empathy is the basic claim that humans, even across culture, are in a significant and large part the same, and similar circumstances will affect members of the same group similarly in certain fundamental ways. If it is painful for one *campesino* family to lose their livelihood due to the ability of multinational corporations to undersell them (e.g. by using "green technology," pesticides, chemical fertilizers, and genetically altered crops), then other families in the same circumstance are likely to be pained in a comparable way[3]. Moreover, those of us in the West, who support the multinational corporations by purchasing their products, can nevertheless empathize with the distant poor farmer once we see the documentary because of the basic premise of human similarity.

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3 The agribusiness industry, offering the fairly standard corporate utilitarian line, claims that green technology, even if bad for individual small farmers, is beneficial overall because it increases the efficiency of grain production and so allows more people to be fed in a world of ever-increasing population. This ignores the fact that politico-economic dynamics that worsen the lacuna between rich and poor are more to blame for famine than actual lack of food (indeed, right now there is enough food on the planet to feed everyone a 3000 calorie a day diet). In any case, we can empathize for the *campesinos* who lose their land and face a cruel migration to urban slums whether or not their displacement can be morally justified by corporate ends-justify-the-means dogma.

(ii) Solipsism. There is of course the skeptical objection to this premise of human sameness. In its harshest form it clings to the Cartesian-style argument that we cannot see through another's eyes at all, no matter how close they are to us, because the simple fact is that the only mental states we can directly contact are our own, and it follows that others might be automatons. We cannot be sure, and this status of less than absolute certainty impels the conclusion that we cannot experience as another experiences, even partially, when we take on the empathic role.

At the metaphysical level there may be a problem of knowing whether other people exist (this is a contentious issue in itself, but I accede to the point for the sake of argument). However, the applied ethicist is willing to accept some empirically and inductively based assumptions: namely, that other people do exist, and furthermore that our similarly of body, constitution, physical means of locomotion and environmental interaction, and our commonalties in forms of social behavior even across wide cultural divides, lead beyond a reasonable doubt to the conclusion that human phenomenologies are not bizarrely different; it is not as if everyone but me experiences the world as a mosquito or a squirrel or some jabberwocky creature that exists on the far-removed planet Wonderland.

As humans, similarly configured and behaving, evolving on the same planet in the same gravity, with almost the same atmospheric pressure and atmospheric chemical composition, with the same 24-hour rotation cycle, experiencing the same sorts of commonplace things like trees, birds, sunlight, moonlight, wind, rain, and so on, it is

clear beyond practical doubt that we share an epistemic framework that allows one *Homo sapiens sapiens* to understand the mental life of another, sometimes only roughly yet sometimes very sensitively. The skeptic can doubt it and appeal to outrageous possibilities, but applied ethicists, disturbed by the ivory-tower tendency of academics to dull to social ills, accept certain premises that are not controversial in the carrying out of daily living, including political, social, and economic functions. (Think how absurd it would be to even broach the topic of solipsism in the Senate or the Supreme Court or the World Court of the United Nations; such remote philosophical puzzles are completely uninteresting when we struggle with the magnitude of keeping an ever-growing population from egregiously harming themselves and the planet Earth.)

(iii) Solomorphism. The skeptic may balk at my references to solipsism and may argue in this more subtle fashion: The issue is not whether other people exist but to what extent I can receive their experiences into my own consciousness. It is in fact absurd to think that I can share mental life with another, continues the skeptic. By clearing my mind and attempting to receive, I merely project my own version of reality. So, as anthropomorphism is a valid accusation against someone who tries to attribute human characteristics to animals, plants, and rocks, we might consider the attempt at empathy with another human being what I call 'solomorphism'; that is, seeing what we think we should see and not truly what the other is feeling or thinking ('morphism' indicating that others' perspectives are distortively transformed to fit the preconceptions of the individual or 'solo' agent). The claim is not that other humans might not exist but,

instead, that the barriers separating one mental life from another are so great that empathy is doomed to be an unrepresentative speculation on another's perspective.

What this objection amounts to is the claim that empathy is projection without true reception, whereas care ethicists, such as Noddings, are unhappy with the traditional definition of empathy as projection and insist that it is entirely a receptive process (Noddings 1984, 30). For Noddings and others, empathy is receptive because not only the existence but also the fundamental similarity of other persons is indisputable. If I grant that others feel pain as I experience it—and the match need not be perfect to generate similarity—then when I see another grimace after putting a hand in the fire, I accept the other's actual state of mind as of the sort that I can experience. I can thus understand what they are going through quite well based on my painful encounters with excessive heat. Hence, the skeptic's shift from solipsism to solomorphism does not change matters; the applied ethicist is simply willing to accept as a premise what the skeptic, in either case, would dispute: that the mental lives of human beings are at least roughly similar, enough to allow a significant understanding of what others go through when they experience joy, pain, sadness, hunger, sexual excitement, and so forth[4].

In the next section, "through representation" and the one afterward "through self-history," I explore the nature of empathy and argue that it is neither wholly projective nor

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[4] The fact that humans are similarly constituted such that accurate empathy is possible does not guarantee an easy road to that achievement. In the last section of this chapter I discuss some of the pitfalls and perils that interfere with the exercise of empathic skill. In the end, I hope to impress upon the reader that good empathy is difficult and requires knowledge of one's inner states, including one's biases and psychological defense mechanisms. Such a self-exploration could involve much psychic pain and travail.

wholly receptive. Given the premise of human alikeness (HAP), we do in a sense receive what another individual is going through when we hear their story or see their behavioral cues. Nonetheless, to understand what the other experiences we refer to our own experiences—my experience of burning my hand in a flame allows me to better understand the other's experience. In this sense, how well we know ourselves affects how well we can get in touch with another's situation. There is a projective element in that my states of mind are used to represent your states, but the empathic projection is receptive because, if I am attentive, I can use empathy to get in touch with your orientation accurately and in some fashion 'see through your eyes.' The process is best described as one of matching, not one of projection or reception. My mental states are capable of matching yours (or I can imagine yours) to a significant degree of accuracy if I am attentive.

(2) *Through representation.* In this section and the next, I explore the ways in which we can use our own life-experience to get in touch with what other persons are going through even if they are distant or not personally known. The focus here is on the general level at which all humans could be said to share fundamental similarities (given the HAP) whereas the discussion of personal history to follow ties specific people together through shared hardship that is limited to certain groups or socio-political contexts.

As discussed, it would seem that a minimal level of self-awareness or self-empathy is necessary to empathize with others, if only because sharing the other's

189

perspective requires having some healthy understanding of that perspective. If we do not

reach into our own pains and sufferings, feeling them honestly, our information about the

affective state of others is limited by internal blinders. Someone in denial, for instance,

not fully aware of how suffering affects their own psychology, cannot attentively and

responsively meet the suffering of others. An abusive husband, tortured by memories and

self-denigrating thoughts that derive from dysfunctional childhood patterns (patterns that

perhaps involved abuse on par with that currently being inflicted), refusing to face the

pain generated by those memories and thoughts, cannot use empathy to connect properly

with his battered wife's terror, shame, and self-loathing. If he did so, he would have to

face his own demons, something he is unwilling to do.

Conversely, someone who has introspected, through meditation, group

exploration, writing, art, therapy, discussion, or other methods, and heard the voice of

their own pain reaching up through the multi-levels of consciousness that depth

psychologists are just beginning to understand, has a better grasp of how someone else

can feel. The claim that one can achieve understanding of others and, additionally,

compassion through a difficult journey of self-awareness is not revolutionary but rather

hails back to ancient practices that take modern form in, for example, Western-styled

Buddhism:

> What we find as we listen to the songs of our rage or fear, loneliness or
> longing, is that they do not stay forever. Rage turns to sorrow; sorrow
> turns to tears; tears may fall for a long time, but then the sun comes out. A
> memory of old loss sings to us; our body shakes and relives the moment of
> loss; then the armoring around that loss gradually softens; and in the midst

of the song of tremendous grieving, the pain of that loss finally finds release . . .

Somehow, in feeling our own pain and sorrow, our own ocean of tears, we come to know that ours is a shared pain and that the mystery and beauty and pain of life cannot be separated. This universal pain, too, is part of our connection with one another, and in the face of it we cannot withhold our love any longer. (Kornfield 1993, 43)

It seems impossible to give a deductive and conclusive proof that honest self-exploration leads to compassion and understanding for others; in fact, the conclusion probably does not follow from the premises. But the kind of thinking in the above citation resonates with many of us, for it seems that if we face our own torments and come to some sort of cathartic resolution, we are likely to have compassion for ourselves; our struggle becomes a hero's struggle, and this very understanding gives us courage and insight to continue the journey. Furthermore, given the HAP, which most all of us accept axiomatically (and which all of us accept in action whether we purport to believe it or not), if we see our own struggles as indicative of a heroic journey, we are likely to see others' struggles in a similar light. Then others become heroes too, perhaps fallen, perhaps floundering, perhaps progressing, yet heroes nevertheless who like ourselves generate compassion.

Take the example of the abusive husband above. Suppose he comes to face his internal anguish and realizes that he has from early childhood been faced with forces that could be understood metaphorically as monsters. Suppose he comes to see himself as temporarily defeated by those forces, and yet by facing them now he sees himself as newly resisting. He sees himself no longer as a monster but as a struggler in a harsh world, and this gestalt shift, from observed monstrosity to humanity, sparks compassion

and the beginnings of self-valorization. He now has insight into the nature of the human condition, and can better understand how his mind coped with conflict both before and after his honest exploration (such an exploration would most likely be carried out in a therapeutic setting or with the help of psychology books and encouraging friends).

At the most general level, then, I propose the following argument: When we honestly introspect, breaking through barriers of denial and fear (as an abusive partner might, or an alcoholic, or someone who has not faced their sexist or racist tendencies) we can see ourselves in a candid light as similar to a hero (perhaps along the ancient transcultural mythological theme investigated by Joseph Campbell in his classic work *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*). Seeing ourselves as a hero tends to invoke compassion. And when we recognize ourselves as a hero, we are driven to recognize others as heroes (fallen, floundering, or progressing) due to the universality of suffering and the difficulties and injustices of life that make it inevitable. Hence, through difficult intrapsychic sojourning, we can view even distant others with compassion and gather insight into their experiences of travail and torment.

Some feminists might object to my usage of the hero metaphor due to its aggressive masculine connotations. Gilgamesh, Beowulf, and Achilles, heroes in some of the earliest dramatic writing, were violent and even cruel, yet valorized and presented as the standards of excellence. The trend of associating the hero with the strong militaristic male continues to this day in the form of monolithic characters such as those played by Sylvester Stallone and Arnold Schwartzenegger.

Certainly the hero image is just one of many possible evocative labels providing direction, and I don't mean to proclaim that it is the only one that can promote healing (it can, obviously, be very destructive if improperly used to advance callousness and bellicosity). However, I like to think that my employment of the term is a reclamation for the purposes of empowerment, similar to the fashion in which lesbian activists reclaimed the word "queer." Note for example that in Greek legend Hero was a woman whose courage concerned matters of love and passion, not war or killing. One could counter that Hero did nothing heroic in committing suicide when her lover Leander drowned in the Hellsport. The retort is that maybe she did, but the accounts of the myth we have focus on Leander's prowess at swimming. As a priestess of Venus, Hero's decision may have been very difficult and ethically motivated (Edith Hamilton's account has Hero committing suicide only after she buries the body of Leander, leaving time between his death and hers for reflection (1969)). Perhaps, as in the case of Antigone, who defied a warning from Creon that she would be killed if she buried the corpse of her brother, Hero should be praised for her conviction and passion, not marginalized as someone performing an impetuous, irrational act.

Campbell notes that the first great hero myth in Western culture was the Sumerian adventure of Inanna, Goddess of life and creation, who journeyed to the underworld kingdom of her sister Erishkigal (the myth is a precursor to the tale of Orpheus and lacks the violence and bloodshed of the Odyssean theme). Another influential and evocative female hero is Psyche, best portrayed in a substory within Apuleius' *The Golden Ass*.

Erich Neuman, a famous Jungian psychologist, wrote a classic book on Psyche's adventure and its effect on the Western mind. Like Hero and Inanna, Psyche is not concerned with attaining honor through gory battle. Her battle is to attain love, and her legacy is artistic, spiritual and psychological:

> The triumph of Psyche's love and her ascension to Olympus were an event that has profoundly affected Western mankind for two thousand years. For two millenniums the mystery phenomenon of love has occupied the center of psychic development and of culture, art, and religion ... It has brought good and evil, but in any event it has been an essential ferment of the psychic and spiritual life of the West down to the present day. (1956, 139)

These hero images of women are no doubt imperfect in the sense of providing liberation. Psyche, for example, exhibits feminine characteristics that can be part of an oppression-fostering weak role, and the association of women with matters of love has been used to keep them from the 'hard' pursuits of business, politics, and science. On the other hand, the female hero image begins to transcend the stereotypes by empowering women to take potent roles that place female actors on center stage, not at the periphery where they provide enshadowed assistance to a glorified adventurous Hercules or Rambo. It is a form of "dissident speech," I think, to couple the word hero with the actions of women, for in so doing a transgendered character is created, one that pulls from both the masculine and the feminine repertory of traits, thereby creating a new category that could be refreshing for people of any sex.

Limitations of representation. Despite the power of comparing the experiences of self to others and drawing connections—a method at the heart of empathy—there is a

potential for exaggerating the benefits. Environmentalist proponents of Deep Ecology, for example, argue that the self, assuming an ego-transcendent form, can "expand" by the process of "identification" and thereby subsume other living beings into itself. The effect is so enlightening that conventional morality falls away:

> I can experience this . . . sense of self that includes my family and friends, other animals, physical objects, the region in which I live, and so on. When this happens, I experience physical or symbolic violations of the integrity of these entities as violations of my self, and I am moved to defend these entities accordingly . . . This has the highly interesting, even startling, consequence that ethics (conceived as being concerned with moral "oughts") is rendered superfluous! The reason for this is that if one has a wide, expansive, or field-like sense of self then . . . one will naturally (i.e., spontaneously) protect the natural (spontaneous) unfolding of this expansive self (the ecosphere, the cosmos) in all its aspects. (Fox 1995, 217)

This is the arrogant extreme, the godlike version of contacting another and 'seeing through their eyes.' The self gets bigger and bigger, others become parts of it and their condition is fully assimilated such that moral dialogue need not occur. Since the heart of the expansion of self is identification, and identification is finding "commonality," and commonality is "the deep-seated realization that all entities are aspects of a single unfolding reality" (p.231), listening skills and empathy become inferior to the more esoteric forms of gaining lofty truth. The "personal" aspect of relating to others is superseded by "ontological" and "metaphysical" identification, which are represented by Zen (a highly abstracting form of meditational practice) in the first case and cosmological science (quantum physics, et al.) in the other (p.250).

195

Feminists who focus on the power of identification to connect with others do not entertain such grandiose hopes. They do not propose that empathy can be transformed into or replaced by science or ontologically oriented meditations, nor that these two disciplines can lead to an enlightenment that renders ethics superfluous. Retaining a sense of modesty that acknowledges the inability of one person to know all the right answers, care-oriented feminists recognize the limits of attentiveness and responsiveness. Moral empathy is not a cure all; nor is it capable of grasping the entirety of the relevant perspectives of others; nor does it, despite its interconnecting aspects that form the basis for spiritual harmony, proclaim that we can become omniscient godlings nestled in our own private centers of the "single unfolding reality."

Val Plumwood criticizes the Deep Ecologists for ignoring the differences between beings with intrinsic value. While there are no doubt similarities between me and someone in Africa, it is condescending to posit perfect identification based on those traits. Both similarity and difference must be acknowledged, according to Plumwood, if we are to interact properly in a moral community (1993).

(3) *Through self-history.* It is straightforward that humans share a great many similarities as manifested, first, in body shape and function, and, secondly, in environmental understanding as in the common acknowledgement of the existence of such things as rocks, rivers, the sun, and so forth. This shared foundation allows, to a significant extent, the possibility of 'seeing through another's eyes.'

The possibility of understanding what another person is going through, moreover, is magnified when the commonalties go beyond the basic level to shared life experiences of specific kinds. Two women experiencing sexual harassment in the same Nissan factory share much more than the experience of being human. Their oppressive situations overlap to such an extent that empathy becomes easier and capable of greater depth (barring extenuating factors, such as animosity between the two workers). Of course, life and personality are too complex to allow simple statements like 'similarity of experience leads to greater empathy' to be more than rough guides. Generally speaking, however, similarity will contribute to mutual understanding. It is commonplace for those in like circumstances to bond or engage in group solidarity, and it is not unreasonable to attribute this social phenomenon in part to greater levels of shared understanding between group members.

Castle-worlds. To clarify the picture of empathy I am presenting and to demonstrate how one's own history can lead to a better understanding of those with similar histories, I introduce a simple analogy in which a human being is likened to a castle and its surrounding grounds, a castle-world for short. This rudimentary model is not meant to exhaust the ways in which humans can be pictured, nor is it an attempt to enter into the complexities of the philosophy of mind except in the very limited sense of portraying a certain way of understanding empathy. Note, though, that it is not my purpose here to initiate a full-blown conceptual analysis, nor is such necessary for my basic point: that a model exists whereby it appears plausible that we can have empathy

197

for distant others.

Castle-worlds and the HAP. If a human is considered like a castle-world, then the exterior of the castle is the empirically observable, and the interior is the psychological-phenomenological realm that cannot be directly accessed by observers. The grounds constitute the social and environmental forces that affect the castle. Given the Human Alikeness Principle, we can postulate that all or most all castles are roughly the same in exterior form and importantly most all are known beyond a reasonable doubt to be roughly similar internally (parity of brain structure—where brain structure is an empirically observable fact —seems a strong support for this point given the correlation between brain and mental activity). At a very basic level, it is reasonable to generalize to most of the castles from the consideration of just one. I have ten toes, so others have ten toes, I move by walking, so others move by the same sophisticated process of walking, I feel pain so others feel pain, and so forth.

There is a danger here, though, of creating invidious categories, if for example the HAP is used to discriminate against handicapped persons. But, importantly, the principle does not embrace any one criterion as the essential component of humanity yet instead brings into account the multitude of traits that are relevant and so operates in terms of Wittgensteinian family resemblance. The HAP brings persons in wheelchairs together with those who aren't into one category of alikeness for the similarities outweigh the differences; the general contours of the body are still very similar and the brains are identical in basic structure. Also important here are the similarities in life patterns,

similar feelings (e.g. joy), experiences (e.g. sexual relationships), and environments (e.g. the sun, moon, stars).

The HDP. Another danger is that the HAP could be used not to overly separate but to overly conflate—the handicapped person's distinct perspective and needs might be assimilated into a broader class of human needs and thereby not give fully moral consideration. It is easy for those who walk to ignore the frustrations of those in wheelchairs, the biases they endure, the frustrating (mis)placement of curbs and stairs, especially if we are all simply considered 'equal' or alike.

It must be remembered that the HAP only applies at the general level. It is introduced to highlight the possibility of empathy for even those persons vastly removed from our own specific history and culture. As Plumwood and Benjamin argue, recognizing differences as well as similarities is crucial in the mutually empowering relationship. To underscore this point, I introduce the Human Difference Principle (HDP), which claims that there are morally relevant differences between persons. Whereas the HAP claims we are all alike, the HDP claims we are not alike. This is not inconsistent because the two principles apply at different levels. The HAP narrowly targets the general level, whereas the HDP dives into the bewildering diversity of specific context. Following Benjamin's train of thought, I postulate that healthy moral interactions retain a dialectic between similarity and difference, HAP and HDP, maintaining a dynamic tension rather than seeking resolution by creating absolute categories (superior/inferior, master/slave, cultured/primitive, etc.).

The role of self-history in empathy. We can refer to our own state of humanness to understand others on a general or a specific level. On a specific level, if my personal history includes starvation, or sexist oppression, or a terrible accident, or the tragic death of a loved one due to drinking or misuse of guns, then barring complications I can relate better to others who have suffered in the same way. Using the castle-world analogy, saying that my self-history is like yours is like saying that my castle has a peculiar pattern of design that matches yours, and so we can understand each other better than someone who has never encountered such a pattern of design. Although the person who has never encountered it might be able to imagine it fairly well, it is not the same as actual experience.

Perhaps you and I have both struggled with alcoholism. The interior of our castle will share a similarity beyond the basic human template. If we represent this further similarity as, say, a series of spiraling staircases, then, although I cannot directly see into your castle (though I can observe the exterior and the grounds), I know it contains spiraling staircases like the ones in my castle, and the link between us is enhanced. Someone without a spiraling staircase in their castle can imagine what it must be like, and perhaps thereby attain considerable empathy (perhaps they have a curving staircase, representing an obsession, from which they can interpolate), but it is not the same as having the spiraling staircases.

This is not to say that my spiraling staircase and yours are identical. Surely there will be differences in architecture and additionally the surrounding constructions may be

radically different. But I have more in common with you in this one respect than someone who, for example, has only straight corridors in their castle. In this fashion, humans can match at levels beyond the most general, where similarities and differences start to manifest in full. These more precise matches in experience, as they accumulate, tend toward an increased potential for understanding. This is not to say that shared life experiences necessarily lead to greater empathy (e.g. an alcoholic who is in denial is unlikely to empathize with other alcoholics), only that in conditions of attentiveness they enhance the possibility of 'matching' between the caregiver and the care-receiver.

Suppose I have experienced famine as a result of war, like many European survivors of WWII. This experience affects my castle grounds, my exterior, and my inner architecture. Now, by watching films, reading newspapers, searching the web, and so on, I learn about the suffering of persons starving in Uganda as a result of internecine conflict. Is it not feasible to suppose that I will feel, or recall from memory, a painful state that partially describes what the Ugandan is feeling? It will not be the exact same state. The technology does not yet exist for me to literally plug into others' heads and see through their eyes as two computers might share data. It is not the same pain but it is of the same quality, for drawing upon my experiences I summon a state that reaches out to the distant sufferers and captures a significant part of their misery. Using the castle-world analogy, because my grounds and exterior and inner world partially match those of the Ugandans, I can generate a condition of mind that is relevantly like theirs, though it will not be as vivid and brutal as what they are going through, but rather a vicarious or

imaginative approximation. I am not literally seeing through their eyes, but the experience is shared, both I and they experiencing facets of it at the same time.

The castle-world analogy and empathic paradoxes. The castle-world analogy also allows an analysis of the circumstance that, in some cases, we can empathize with others without knowing ourselves well at all; that is, seeing through another's eyes does not seem to require meticulous introspection. Such a claim seems partially right but also partially wrong. It is right insofar as empathy can take a broad form that allows basic recognition of other's sorrows and joys (corresponding to the general similarities between all castles), yet wrong insofar as it overlooks the value of deeper phenomenological-psychological experience in relating to others' perspectives.

For example, feminist consciousness-raising requires facing the painful revelation that one has been living a lie, that society has two-levels, one which manifests at the superficial level of cheery contentment (e.g., the June Cleaver syndrome) and another which uses this cheery contentment to manipulate. Perhaps no one better describes the metamorphosis of consciousness-raising than Sandra Bartky, whose eloquent articulations I can hardly do justice here. Yet a sliver of her writing gives some credence to the contention that someone living in a sexist society who has not undergone consciousness-raising is going to have a difficult time empathizing with feminists:

> To apprehend myself as a victim in a sexist society is to know that there are few places where I can hide, that I can be attacked almost anywhere, at any time, by virtually anyone. Innocent chatter, the currency of ordinary social life, or a compliment ("You don't think like a woman"), the well-intentioned advice of psychologists, the news item, the joke, the cosmetics advertisement—none of these is what it is or what it was. Each reveals

itself, depending on the circumstances in which it appears, as a threat, an insult, an affront, as a reminder, however subtle, that I belong to an inferior caste. In short, these are revealed as instruments of oppression or as articulations of a sexist institution. Since many things are not what they seem to be and since many apparently harmless sorts of things can suddenly exhibit a sinister dimension, social reality is revealed as *deceptive*. (1990, 17)

Unless the patriarchal social programming is cleared from one's gaze, one cannot see the full depth of the predicament of an angry/sad/horrified feminist who is unfulfilled in the traditional role of house cleaning, PTA attendance, and nurturance of spouse and progeny.

Nevertheless, empathy is still possible to a useful degree. The housewife in the traditional role can empathize to the extent of relating to the strong emotions of the feminist. The housewife might feel the feminist's anger yet will not have the means of grasping its motivation. If open-minded, she can recall an instance from her own life in which she felt anger at being treated unjustly, and use that experience to relate to the feminist's ire. However effective this technique might be in providing common ground between the two, it is clearly not as powerful a linking tool as it would be if both parties had undergone consciousness-raising. More will be said about imaginative techniques in the section on imaginative talent.

The complexity of empathy. The castle-world analogy brings out the complexity of factors relevant in determining the likelihood of empathic connection. There seem to be many layers to life that can affect the architecture and landscaping of the castle-world. Firstly, there are the most basic levels of anatomy, common environment (the sun, wind,

water, birds, etc.) and core behavior (eating, sleeping, pattern recognition, etc.) that most all humans share. After that, things rapidly diversify. For example, everyone living today shares the same temporal slice. We are all circa-2000 creatures and most of us are inundated by an increasingly homogenous culture of consumerism and rapid development. This is something we all share that makes empathy a bit easier between us. Other factors are gender role, cultural upbringing, personal proclivities, and so forth.

What emerges is a vastly intricate picture that exceeds the power of simple prediction. You and I might share a certain feature in our castles, but the rest might be bewilderingly different. In this case, our ability to empathize, even if we are fully attentive, contents itself with the more general levels. On a more optimistic note, castle-worlds are constantly changing entities, and positive modifications and additions can be had simply by reading books or watching movies. Two castle-worlds that are initially far apart can be changed to match more closely. This can be as complicated a process as consciousness-raising, or it can involve a more simple kind of sensitization. Peter Singer's classic *Animal Liberation* created many vegetarians and launched a movement via graphic descriptions that made plain the horror of torturing animals for frivolous purposes. Perhaps people were not only re-sensitized to their own internal architecture (i.e. their own ability to feel absolute agony) but impelled to relate it to animal suffering as well. Some were convinced enough of the similarity between humans and animals that they radically changed their behavior, based on the formula: 'If it is painful to me, it must surely be significantly painful to them.'

204

Adding to the complication, it is important to note, again, that similarity is not sufficient for empathy, and moreover dissimilarity is not going to prevent the possibility of powerful forms of matching, as the section below on imagination brings out.

(4) *Imaginative talent*. In stereotypical fashion, a mother's sometimes uncanny ability to know her child's mind is considered the epitome of empathic contact. If there is laudable empathy here, which I think is plausible in many cases despite the stereotyping, then how is it achieved? This is an interesting question because the mother and the child are very different persons. There does not seem to be much similarity and yet the mother often quickly learns the child's personality and predilections and can determine with impressive accuracy the various needs, frustrations, joys, and so forth that are part of the vibrant and fast-paced process of developmental growth.

Self-history, story, and general human sameness can account for much of the phenomena. After all, the mother was a child once, so her own self-history comes into play. Books, discussions with grandmother, and other narrative sources can offer helpful insights. Moreover, elation, sleepiness, hunger, and discomfort, to take just a few typical states, are not just hallmarks of childhood. A basic understanding of these phenomenon in a son or daughter is not extraordinary.

Still, something more might be said of the mother's empathic insight. How, for example, does she use self-history to relate to her child? Is it a simple procedure of trying to find close connections between the interior structure of two castle-worlds? Or is there a great deal of hypothesizing and adjusting that takes place? What I suggest is that we are

205

able to imagine successfully what others are feeling, thinking, or experiencing by using our own experiences as a basis of estimation. This process might be effective even when the caregiver does not have much in common with the cared-for. In this sense, empathy becomes much more than a procedure of trying to find precise similarities between the lifestyles and personalities of two persons. It becomes a process of imagination and exploration.

Consider a hypothetical moral agent, a recovering alcoholic, trying to empathize with two persons: a neighbor who is also a recovering alcoholic, and the mother of a starving child in Africa. Empathy with the first person is perhaps much (though not entirely) a matter of grasping specific connections. Both the survivors went through similar addictions and patterns of denial. Perhaps they share the same cultural upbringing, the same set of religious values, the same reaction from the community. In short, their castle-worlds contain a large number of close matches that facilitate understanding.

Empathy with the second person, the mother of the starving child in Africa, is more (but not entirely) a matter of imagination. The moral agent has at least three sources of information: self-history, narrative, and basic human commonalties. Perhaps she has never experienced chronic hunger and can only put up as a personal similarity a short period of fasting. However, perhaps she has experienced serious trauma and suffering that does not specifically relate but which nevertheless allows some insight.

Assume that she had to endure the death of a close friend who was killed in a car accident. Moreover, there is the experience of alcoholism.

The moral agent might now use this self-history, the information from a few narrative sources (e.g. newspapers, books and television), and the foundation of general human alikeness to engage in an imaginative empathic project. She imagines how the death of a starving child might affect a mother in Africa, recalling how she felt when she lost her close friend. The situations are different: the best friend died unexpectedly in a car accident, while the mother in Africa must watch her child slowly deteriorate. Our moral agent speculates that maybe famine-afflicted mothers become dulled to their children's' emaciation so as not to go mad from perpetual anguish. It is hard to envision such a state of restricted response to the suffering of one's child but the moral agent remembers reading Elie Wiesel's *Night*, a book about Holocaust victims that examined, among other things, how and why they became indifferent to the suffering of relatives, sons even stealing life-sustaining bread from their fathers in the concentration camps.

Again, the match is not perfect, but as more narratives and life-experiences are recalled a mosaic of psychological reactions forms, one that lends understanding and sympathy to the plight of African mothers. The moral agent might even use her own experience of dull-mindedness, endured while she was drinking heavily, to relate to the deadened state of awareness that could accompany chronic starvation and constant suffering.

For a well-to-do American, buffered from world strife in a middle-class suburb,

strong reproduction of the mental state of a starving distant other would seem to require an almost supernatural or telepathic circumstance (though a documentary movie that shows actual scenes from famine-ravaged areas could allow a personal closeness). But is a strong match necessary to feel another's suffering to a morally relevant degree? On the contrary, even with our best friends and loved ones, empathy is a flawed affair, and probably never approaches the state of perfect matching where the moral agent's mental representation of the cared-for's condition is entirely accurate. Even a mother's empathic understanding of a child, the classic cliché, is no doubt significantly imprecise.

(5) *Chains of caring.* Noddings uses her concept of chains of caring to establish links from the moral agent to distant others, yet, as we have seen, she asserts that such links can only create a preparedness to care, not inspire actual moral caring itself. Furthermore, such preparedness remains mired in the domestic sphere as indicated by Noddings' examples: teachers can link to future students through their current ones (is it that the current students 'represent' future ones?), and a future son-in-law can be linked to the potential care-giver by the consanguineous fiancée.

Noddings does not explore the possibility that chains of caring can take us out of the domestic sphere into the broader context of global society in all its social, economic, and political fuzziness. Yet not only can chains of caring take us far abroad, they can form the basis of genuine moral care. They can do more than simply usher in a preparedness to be morally caring. In the course of this Chapter, a case has been made that it is possible to have empathy for distant others, and if chains of caring connect us

with distant persons with whom we can form an empathic link, they are more than mere predecessors of ethical contact; they are routes to the crucial contact itself.

Chains of caring can also enhance empathy, though in themselves they do not seem sufficient to permit 'seeing through another's eyes.' Nevertheless, if one reads about the horrible conditions in third-world sweatshops (or sees one of the presentations by Charles Kernaghan, President of the National Labor Committee, a popular figure on the campus lecture circuit) and soon afterwards, perhaps on a routine buying foray, drives to the local mall only to discover the label "Made in Haiti" on a Disney garment, then the presence of the garment can be a tangible sign of the horror.

One realizes that the sewing of such bourgeois-status clothing is conducted under Dickensian conditions, that the workers are treated with nothing approaching the dignity afforded a middle-class American, that they are denied basic labor rights, that they live in a state approximating Marxian alienation, that they are paid wages that cannot sustain a nutritious diet or healthy periods of recreation. One looks at the smiling Mickey and feels revulsion. A connection to the horror is suddenly tangible and so is the link between the American consumer and the exploited Haitian (Filipino, Honduran, Pakistani, Chinese, etc.). A chain of caring is recognized, one that spans the globe yet nonetheless renders a distant other none so distant. The anonymous nameless Haitian who touched the Disney sweater that the moral person is now touching, who joins with the moral person in a neocolonial system, is closer in some ironic sense than Ms. Jones who lives a few blocks down the street.

Martin Luther King Jr. recognized the importance of the interconnectedness of life

in "A Christmas Sermon on Peace":

> It really boils down to this: that all life is interrelated. We are all caught in
> an inescapable network of mutuality, tied into a single garment of destiny.
> Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. We are made to live
> together because of the interrelated structure of reality. Did you ever stop
> to think that you can't leave for your job in the morning without being
> dependent on most of the world? You get up in the morning and go to the
> bathroom and reach over for the sponge, and that's handed to you by a
> Pacific islander. You reach for a bar of soap, and that's given to you at the
> hands of a Frenchman. And then you go into the kitchen to drink your
> coffee for the morning, and that's poured into your cup by a South
> American . . . This is the way our universe is structured, this is its
> interrelated quality. We aren't going to have peace on earth until we
> recognize this basic fact of the interrelated structure of all reality. (1986,
> 254)

Chains of caring are intimately wound into this global interconnectedness. And though

we do not personally know the individuals who produce our soap or weave our clothes,

we can have some idea of their toil (through story, general representation, self-history,

and imaginative talent), and that can spark us to true moral concern and in many cases

impel if not obligate us to become involved in the greater processes of civilization which

exist beyond our suburban consternations.

While chains of caring cannot in themselves guarantee moral empathy they can

fortify it and provide powerful evidence catalyzing stronger conviction and caring for the

downtrodden. Chains of caring are causal networks of intricate and multiple associations,

sources and targets interacting repeatedly and shiftingly. When we infuse them with

moral emotion, we become concerned with fostering the general well-being through

sensitive participation in the great web of life.

Conclusion

Perils and pitfalls. In this brief concluding section I want to emphasize how difficult it can be to become proficient at the skill of empathy. We have seen how parochialism can lead to callous nonaction, and how paternalism, epitomized by Kiplings' poem "The White Man's Burden," can invalidate and even negate the humanity of the care-receiver. It also has become apparent, given the castle-world analogy, that persons who are not in touch with their own psychological dynamics will have trouble empathizing with others; in fact, deep empathy seems ruled out in such a case because the moral persons in question obviously cannot summon to consciousness states that are blocked off from such access. The traditional housewife can 'see through the eyes' of the feminist only vaguely, if at all, because she has not experienced consciousness-raising and might be highly resistant to going through such a painstaking process, if not outrightly hostile.

The core obstacle toward engaging in proper empathy might be self-deception, a self-imposed lack of awareness of one's own condition. In its strongest mode it takes the form of denial. In contexts of oppression, this could be denial by the master that the slave is fully human, denial by the *pater familias* that the spouse is fully intelligent, or denial that animals can suffer or even think. In contexts less obviously tied to social forces of domination, denial can manifest, for example, in the repeated assertions of alcoholics that they can quit whenever they want and that their drinking is not part of a dysfunctional pattern despite clear indications, legal, work- and family-related, to the contrary.

Such self-deception in the service of sexism or racism can egregiously skew the empathic process. While granting along with some psychologists that it might be impossible to completely escape intrapsychic deception (e.g. for Freud, the ego is inevitably deceptive), we might distinguish between those who have experienced consciousness-raising, and so are less likely to reinforce oppressive social mechanisms, and those who have not. The goal for the empathic agent then becomes the removal of a kind of self-deception, the sort that reinforces the subjugation of certain classes, cultures, and the female gender.

Along the lines of much feminist analysis, such self-deception would take the form of reinforcing dualistic thinking, the sort that splits men from women, not only creating a framework that admits of only two genders but categorizing them, if object-relations theorist are right, in terms of a master-slave dialect that derives from Hegelian thought (Meyers 1995; Benjamin 1988). Accompanying this radical divergence, which manifests in the psyche as the defense mechanism of "splitting," is a mentality of commodification/objectification that links the alienating and exploitive forces of modern capitalism with the creation of a slave or passive class (Brennan 1993). The facility with which the American citizen consumes products draws strength from an organization of mind that configures in terms of subject-object, master-slave, devourer-devoured.

Given that this pathology of splitting exists (Lacan calls it a psychosis), one might distinguish between fully competent empathic persons and those that are still mired in paternal/parochial biases by reference to consciousness raising as it is gauged in terms of

212

escaping the delusory ontology of master vs. slave. Those who see others as objects to be manipulated for self-gratification of libidinous needs, or those who see themselves as objects to be so manipulated, play into a vast social conditioning of denial and oppression, exploiter and exploited, colonizer and colonized, and so are likely to see the other primarily in instrumental terms; that is, the other is not viewed as 'like me' but as a contrast in a dialectic of competition and conquest.

To the extent that we escape this subject-object orientation and operate in a subject-subject mode, we are able to see the other as both alike and different and so as a potential partner in mutuality—a state of two-way recognition that is validating and empowering to both parties. In this condition of mutual growth, the powers of the two persons involved work together, forming a synergist dynamic for enhancement, rather than engaging in a struggle for control.

It is important, then, to avoid what could be called slave empathy, which occurs in the context of the subject-object polarity. The slave extends empathy toward the master yet only in a superficial way, for the slaves are in denial regarding their own personhood and see the masters through a delusory lens that magnifies them into something suprahuman. In short, the castle-worlds, the psyches, of the slave and master cannot be compared in a context of similarity, only one of radical difference, so the empathy is hampered, partial, and dysfunctional.

In contrast, subject-subject empathy occurs with the understanding that there are similarities and differences between the two agents. Furthermore and crucially, both are

213

considered subjects and the hyperextensions of master and slave are avoided entirely.
Only in this context, without the dualistic masquerade, can deep understanding flow
between the parties involved. Other obstacles will no doubt remain (e.g. neuroses,
cultural barriers, and other self-deceptions), but recognition of the other as a subject 'like
me' is a good step toward mutually beneficial growth. Full recognition comes with a
dynamic tension between the HAP and the HDP. Not only is the other 'like me,' that
other is also different in important ways and those differences should be respected.

Chapter Six
Other Factors in Moral Care

The concepts of motivational displacement, recognition, energy limitation, self-care, caring mode of consciousness, and the I-ought, all introduced in Noddings' work, play a role in the new version of care that I am in the process of developing. In this chapter a place is carved out for these concepts in the context of long-range care, completing the project of breaking away from the domestic limitations that have become so thoroughly associated with women's ways of thinking. The Noddingsian concepts must be modified somewhat, mainly by squaring them with Tronto's prohibitions and admonitions, but in large part they remain true to the original ideas. A general metaphor that governs the following discussion is this: Noddings discovered certain tools and illustrated how they could be put to work a certain way; I take those same tools and show how they can be employed in another salient fashion. The overarching goal is the escape from the traps of paralysis and dualism, which as we have seen can cripple an ethic of care.

(A) *Motivational displacement.* The idea of motivational displacement, never fully explored by Noddings, concerns a "motivational shift"—"my motive energy flows toward the other and perhaps . . . toward his ends" (p.33) In the most general form, motivational displacement occurs when one is moved to help another not merely out of duty but because one cares in a deeper sense, though Noddings writes that the experience is "more than a feeling." In chapter three, I determined that motivational displacement

has an affective and a teleological component, and furthermore presents a danger: that the caretaker's goals will assimilate into those of the cared-for, resulting in the loss of self-determination.

Given this account, it is straightforward that someone could experience motivational displacement toward a distant other, and in fact there are everyday examples to verify the case, such as persons who evince genuine and impelling concern for the starving in Uganda though they have never been to that country. The affective attachment in such cases is indisputable, and the sharing of goals transparently manifests in the behavior of the caregiver, who strives to end the suffering of the far away victim.

No doubt some persons, such as those who donate money for the purpose of attaining a tax break, concern themselves with distant plights for purely selfish motives. And certainly many if not most charity-oriented Americans do not involve themselves in the tribulation of foreigners to the point of hardship. Noddings' concept of "caring about," which portrays a rather feeble mode of helping, is broadly applicable to the narcissistic citizenry of the West. But unless one resorts to cynicism, the case is clear that people can 'care' in the affective sense for those far away such that the caregiver's well-being becomes wrapped up with addressing the well-being of the sufferer. The fact that most benefactors only engage in "caring about" does not finalize the conclusion that deep modes of fusing one's purpose and passion with distant others are impossible (sadly, however, the majority of the U.S. population does not even reach the "caring about" level). No argument for the impossibility of such profound commitment can stand

against the common-sense perception that praiseworthy if rare individuals do succeed in achieving such a state.

This naturally leads to the problem of energy and sacrifice. Does motivational displacement toward distant others insure that one cannot properly care for family and friends? I argue below, under the topic of energy limitations, that the answer is no.

(B) *Recognition.* Noddings claims that moral care cannot take place unless the recipient acknowledges, appreciatively, the efforts of the care giver, thereby providing feedback that sustains at least a minimally reciprocal interaction. As discussed, she places this claim in a context that limits true caring to proximate others with whom the moral agent has formed a personal tie. The critique in chapter three redirects her conclusion, demonstrating that recognition has a central place in private-sphere interactions but not a necessary one; autistic, senile, or otherwise unresponsive individuals deserve and benefit from moral care. In this section, I demonstrate that the role of recognition in the political sphere is even more mixed.

For instance, having determined that moral care is appropriate, there are many ways a person might combat starvation in Uganda, few of which might ever result in personal contact with the beleaguered, let alone recognition. Donations, conscientious consumption, education of fellow citizens, the prodding of government officials, voting, demonstrations—none of these requires recognition to be effective or to insure that the empathically motivated response is truly heartfelt and appropriate. The healing of the Ugandan community can begin without the caregiver, in this case a citizen in the West,

217

ever forming a personal bond. Hence, recognition in the Noddingsian sense might never take place, despite the presence of empathic, compassionate, effective moral behavior.

Of course, arrogance and paternalism are always a danger, one that can be combated by open communication between the caregiver and the receiver. If recognition is realistically attainable, then it should be sought out, among other things, as a means of monitoring the quality of interaction. Desirability, however, does not imply necessity.

Additionally, sometimes feedback from the care-receiver can be misleading and must be taken warily. I am thinking of the situation in which the care-receiver outrightly rejects or denounces the moral person trying to administer care. In many circumstances, this sort of repudiation, or anti-recognition, should be taken as a serious grounds for cessation, no matter how kind or well-intentioned the treatment. But, again, there is no necessary connection: anti-recognition does not entail that care should automatically cease. Care may not be wrongheaded even if the care-receiver outrightly rejects it.

A domestic scenario that comes to mind is that of an angry adolescent who needs constructive direction. Suppose the adolescent acknowledges the care-giver who is performing the painful yet justifiable task of discipline in a fashion that would not count as proper Noddingsian recognition; that is, with profanity and denunciation. Is there no moral caring here?

In a political context, there sometimes occur circumstances so wretched that recognition may not be possible (even if the means are available to communicate openly): warfare, genocide, or massacre conditions that create severe post-traumatic stress

syndrome, disease or famine that produces skeletal humans unable to support even the most lopsided form of reciprocation. Imagine persons so tortured and ashamed (perhaps tortured by shame) that they vehemently resist any offered assistance. In such cases, recognition or its opposite, rejection, should not provide the standard whereby care is deemed moral.

There are other 'grey-zone' scenarios that show the inadequacy of recognition as a necessary criterion. No doubt emancipation was not looked upon favorably by all slaves in the 19th century. Some would have rejected freedom, given the option. The question, then, is, Could it be morally caring to free them anyway despite their rejection? The answer, based on certain fundamental considerations of rights, is a qualified yes (keep in mind also the consequential issues: leaving some persons in slavery, even under comfortable circumstances, would foster the institution as an ever-present threat to the health of society).

Another case: We are back at the year 2000 ce and over 100 million women, mostly in Africa and the Middle East, suffer from "female genital mutilation," which in a present form is mutilative in the extreme, consisting of clitorectomy and removal of vulval flesh. This process is finalized by the sewing together of the vaginal opening so that the wound heals into a fused state that leaves only a tiny hole for menstruation and urination. Commonly this atrocity takes place in an unsanitary environment with unsterilized tools. At the time of marriage the husband cuts his new wife open, assured of her virginity.

Suppose that a strong anti-mutilation campaign representing the majority of the population manages to wrest control of the government from conservative forces and outlaw the unconscionable practice. Furthermore, the new regime requests foreign assistance toward the end of enforcing the new legislation. Assume (very hypothetically) that US political leaders follow a care ethic and in this context decide to listen to the testimonies of the women affected by the recent ruling. Most testify that they want the law, but some protest such interference with their millennia-spanning sacred tradition. Without the ritual their daughters will not find husbands. And they are tired of the "colonization of culture" carried out by imperialistic Western ideology. What should be done?

However uncertain the answer, the criterion of recognition does not provide a clear direction. If the US intervenes, there will be gratitude yet also loathing. A decision to provide assistance might be well thought out and much discussed on an empathic and open-minded level, and yet recognition could be said to be partial at best. Does the fact that many women in the traditional role not only fail to recognize yet repudiate the western intervention negate the appropriateness of an ethic of care in this circumstance? To answer in the affirmative seems a cowardly retreat from the dizzying maze of worldly imbroglios into the cozy shell of suburbanite insulation.

(C) *Energy Limitation Thesis*. So far the discussion of indirect moral empathy has focused on overcoming the barriers of distance. Noddings, however, argues that energy as well as distance considerations rule out the possibility of long-range caring. As

we saw, she asserts that caring for the starving in Africa leads to neglect of family obligations, the point being that it is simply too burdensome to meet two sets of demands, domestic and distant, given the absorbing nature of motivational displacement and its tendency to increase toward specific individuals as obligation increases.

Noddings' argument tacitly relies on the premise that caring for one's children, spouse, an friends is very much the same energy-wise as caring for a distant other. As I argued in chapter three, a morally caring relationship, under the Noddingsian scheme, must be a personal relationship complete with emotional ties and the kinds of obligations that entails. If the starving children in Africa, due to an extension of caring, become little Maricela's brothers and sisters (in terms of requiring the sort of care demanded by a personal relationship) then the mother of Maricela is suddenly the mother of ten million very needy youths. The result is madness and impossibility. The energy framework at the heart of this picture is one of a singular mapping in which each person cared for is individually picked out and allotted a certain amount of a very finite store of the caregiver's emotional energy.

The discussion of moral empathy in Chapter Five, however, highlighted the possibility of two sorts of awareness, which might in turn support two kinds of energy transference. The empathic skills used by a parent to untangle parenting dilemmas differ from those used to reach out to the third world. In both direct and indirect moral empathy, attentiveness and responsiveness are present; yet, importantly, the two kinds of empathy diverge in the degree to which the cared-for can be received into consciousness.

In relation to the castle-world model, the grounds, exterior, and the interior are much more accessible in relation to family members. This close empathic contact is liable to foster individual emotional bonds of the sort Noddings envisions in her writing. In the context of the home, there is a clear limit on the caregiver's time and opportunity to scrutinize the behavior of children. The energy mapping is one-on-one.

When empathizing with distant others, there might be a large degree of vagueness. The contact is profound yet generalizable. In opening ourselves to the perspectives of the starving, for example, we rely on the axiomatic assumption that people everywhere conform to the general castle-world condition. In contrast, the situation at home—where greater accessibility accompanies a greater need to make subtle moral decisions in an ever-evolving, personalized climate—individual characters and predilections come fully into play.

Due to the more general nature of long-range empathic contact, it is not commensurable with the subtle sensitivity displayed by, say, parents toward their children. Since motivational displacement—the transfer of concern onto another—can emerge out of empathic contact, one might speculate that the kind of motivational displacement that occurs across distance can be of a different flavor from the domestic kind; that is, generalizable to a group and based more on universal attributes than unique profiles. My love for my children cannot be 'spread out' to make a million emaciated youths into the equivalent of offspring (energy limitations certainly prevent loving a million persons like I love and care-for my children). But my heartfelt concern for

someone slaving in a Haitian sweatshop can be expanded to encompass many such workers. Many can be apprehended as one, thus altering the energy equation.

It appears that we can empathize broadly and motivationally displace broadly if we stay at a general level of human similarity. Noddings is wrong, then, to insinuate that caring for the distant starving in Africa will require energy from moral persons in the same fashion that their children require energy. The type of empathy, the kind of motivational displacement, and the sorts of behavior and strategies initiated to meet one's obligations are different in the two cases.

In addition to theoretical considerations, there is the straightforward empirical observation that caring for distant others and for one's family at the same time is not a radical deviation from common practice and is perfectly in line with common sense. Many people profess deep concern for distant others while raising a family, not only attending competently to their progeny but also writing to officials, protesting, educating others, and boycotting in regard to worldly matters. The two goals, raising a family and caring for distant others, can coincide, as for example in the practice of buying products that are 'sweatshop free' and informing one's children as to why this is important. The children are edified, virtuous habits inculcated, and perhaps the moral agent joins in a larger process that can eventually reduce some part of global civilization's senseless misery.

Merely 'caring about'? A Noddingsian might remark that purchasing politically correct clothing is only an indication of "caring about," not full-blown moral care.

Noddings sees giving money to charity as "too easy," assuaging the heavy conscience yet failing to involve the moral agent in a motivationally displacing, engrossing, recognition-validated emotional bond that allows the cared-for to "fill the firmament." She might treat acts such as buying sweatshop-free clothing as similarly feeble efforts.

Leaving aside the issue of whether "caring about" should be so roundly denounced (it seems arrogant for Noddings to issue a condemnation when ordinary practices of charity are a matter of life and death for many people), I focus on another concern: Is it truly inconceivable that a middle-class American might commit to helping the far away poor in an arduous and heartfelt way? Can't such a commitment coexist with love for family such that both spheres of concern, public and private, receive ample attention? Behaviors geared toward helping distant others are not inevitably superficial. It is not merely "too easy" to reconfigure buying habits, to challenge the myopia of relatives, friends, and the larger social institutions in which one is embedded, to suffer from their stubbornness, apathy, and recrimination, to sacrifice comforts, to increase the risk, however slightly, to the safety of one's family for a cause (I am thinking here of the protection provided by an SUV as opposed to the more environmentally friendly yet relatively unarmored Chevrolet Geo, and of a consumer's choice to purchase the latter for ethical reasons). While I do not deny that moral persons can be superficial, self-serving, and hypocritical, the fact remains that politically aware moral caring can be very demanding and requires courage, self-initiative, and serious lifestyle management (Unger 1996; Singer 1990).

Moreover, the position that most behaviors geared toward helping distant others will be "too easy" and thus not count as moral care ignores the fact that helping distant others is often not a separate issue from family concerns. "The personal is political," a well-known feminist maxim, challenges the separation of community and the larger world. Unenlightened, poor, or dead tired homemakers reinforce political and economic agendas all the time by consuming the products of corporate capitalism, by permitting television and computer entertainment to massage their children's minds, by driving sports utility vehicles instead of Geos, by patronizing McDonalds, by purchasing toy guns for their children, and so forth. Actions that at first seem solely relevant to family-oriented care turn out to concern care for distant others as well.

And though individuals and communities often fall into unthinking habits that support negative forces, it is also possible for the immediate community to combine its well-being with the commonweal of larger collectives. It is possible for the family dynamic to support moral growth, awareness, and rectitude. If the personal is political, parents can teach their children habits with broad implications for society and the world. Vegetarianism and recycling, for example, help the environment, and conscientious buying can be part of a trend to eliminate reliance on exploitive forms of labor such as those that occur in the agribusiness or the textile industry[1].

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1 A source book I recently used for an applied ethics class contained a list of trend setters, including many persons with children, who had altered their lifestyles to provide a salubrious personal environment while simultaneously and symbiotically promoting sustainable living practices geared toward a global shift into ecological consciousness (Nolt et al. 1998).

Noddings plays into a public/private dualism, failing to see the connections between the two spheres. She buys the bromide that activity in one sphere is separate from that in the other, and as a consequence to operate in both realms at once requires a double-dose of energy. I do not deny that moral agents can exhaust themselves quickly if they do not focus their energy on a sliver of the relief opportunities surrounding the exigent problems of our times. However, attenuation of focus is not going to force retreat into domestic ignorance.

Americans, at least, are probably morally required to involve themselves in transnational political issues due to their complicity in the degenerative aspects of the current global system. For example, Americans have direct consumer links to three serious problematic commercial complexes: (a) Wal-Marts, K-Marts, malls and others that sell sweatshop-produced clothing; (b) supermarkets and other food distributors that sell the chopped corpses of factory-farmed animals and the produce harvested by exploited workers; and (c) Home Depots and other home-improvement retailers that sell the wood of old growth forests (though Home Depot recently acquiesced to protest and now claims that it will cease the sale of such wood by 2002).

Taking the step of boycotting such products is not going to disrupt family life dangerously, and it might in fact provide edification. It can be a morally caring behavior that involves the Trontoan procedures of responsibility, competence, attentiveness, and responsiveness—and also Noddingsian motivational displacement, as the following table (Table 6-1) brings out. The example of enlightened purchasing, in fact, provides a

counter-example to the claim that moral caring for distant others cannot co-exist with appropriate care at home.

Caring Skills in an Applied Circumstance: Laborers Who Make Our Clothes	
Responsibility	Through various sources of information, media, newspaper, film, and so forth, the moral person learns of the plight of the workers, and through a narrative process decides that she is responsible and should take moral action.
Attentiveness	The moral person clears the mind in preparation for empathic contact. She recognizes the sweatshop workers as persons with intrinsic value who are constituted 'like her' in their basic thoughts, feeling, and needs.
Responsiveness	The moral person imagines or vicariously experiences part of the frustration, monotony, anger, and pain that permeate the sweatshop factories.
Motivational Displacement	The life goals of the moral person shift to include the well-being of the distant worker. Genuine concern is felt for such individuals.
Competence	Avoiding paternalism and parochialism, the moral person does not become so involved in her family's issues that she forgets about the sweatshop workers. If she has the power to influence the situation strongly (e.g. she's a political player or leader in a relevant group), she acts so as to empower the workers, not to reduce them to dependent nonautonomous pawns.

(D) *Self-care: responsibility to self.* Caring for self is an extremely important part of a workable feminist ethic. Historically women have been 'programmed' to become helpmeets, with the stereotype of the feminine nurturer—passive, empathic, all giving—reflecting this sacrificial role. If a care ethic demands that a caregiver focus preponderantly on others, especially others who do not reciprocate, then the well-worn dysfunctional image of the sacrificial mother reaps positive reinforcement, and the approach in question ironically undercuts what feminists most wish to promote: the liberation of women from oppressive roles. Needless to say, the influence on a woman's self-esteem tends toward the negative when her raison d'être, stated or unstated, revolves around support for anyone but herself. The tacit message is that the cared-fors are more important than the caregiver just as the boss is more important than his secretary, the master more important than the servants, and the householder more important than the maid. Traditionally, those who receive attention are considered more special than those who give it, and if a caregiver is constantly giving attention and receiving none, not even from herself, the message is a resounding "I matter only secondarily, as a useful appurtenance."

Noddings' theory, as we have seen, with its emphasis on obligations that lead to more and steeper responsibility, engenders a tar-baby effect that can quickly paralyze caregivers, trapping them in the maternal always-give-never-take status. But the care ethic can avoid the over emphasis on expanding obligation to others that negates proper

228

self-care. I explore two avenues worthy of pursuit in this regard: the concept of minimal

dignity and self-empathy.

Minimal dignity. Minimal dignity is a principle-based consideration that places a

strong prohibition on the kind of care that paralyzes care-givers and drives them into self-

debasing patterns of perpetual attention to others. The main idea is that persons should

be treated with at least minimal dignity and that includes self-treatment. Since sacrificing

oneself for others (in non-extraordinary circumstances), or vitiating one's own potential

to flourish, violates the principle of minimal dignity, such behavior is proscribed.

Obviously, the self-sacrificing feminine role of patriarchal fame does not qualify as an

extraordinary circumstance. Sacrificing one's health by donating organs to save lives

might be an extraordinary circumstance in which the principle of minimal dignity is

trumped, but drowning one's dreams and crucifying one's potential in order to play an

honored though ultimately auxiliary, demeaning, and subordinate role, a role that feeds a

general pathology of dominance, is quite another matter.

Carol Gilligan's recent research poignantly underlines a common shift of

orientation that girls undertake in the patriarchal system. Until adolescence, they are

confident, vibrant, and assertive, but around age twelve a socially motivated

transformation occurs; their self-esteem plummets as they adapt to the standard story that

they are less competent than and should be subordinate to males (1992). Gilligan evokes

the symbol of Iphigenia, the daughter of King Agamemnon (who was willing to sacrifice

her to the gods as an oblation for success at war) to symbolize the sacrifice of the American girl acculturated to trade her confidence for the mantle of selfless inferiority.

Application of the minimal dignity principle would prevent such a senseless commerce. Although, as with many other principles that are considered basic and fundamentally fair, to bring our actions truly into line with the edict would require a radical reworking of the social script that we find ourselves habitually playing out (often against our own will it seems)[2].

Self-Empathy. According to Clinchy, the clinical literature suggests that self-empathy, or "intrapsychic empathy," "is a skill arduously to be learned, requiring discipline and practice, usually under the guidance of some sort of tutor (a therapist, perhaps, or a Zen master)." (1996, 229) The implication is that self-empathy is at least as difficult as seeing through the eyes of another, a conclusion that Clinchy supports. It is not hard to imagine doors inside our own castle that are difficult to unlock, out of fear, out of shame, out of psychic torment, or because they are palisaded by socially instilled values (e.g. it is hard for some men to feel and express certain emotions because this means challenging their socially approved masculinity). Moreover, voices in our minds, the Critic or the Evaluator, create a haze of negativity that clouds insight into self.

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2 My presentation of the minimal dignity principle intentionally draws from the style of deontic philosophers, for I want to push the boundaries on the style of language with which care is normally discussed. Talk of duty and rights is traditionally associated with Kant, who in turn is commonly taught to students as the champion of rationality and as no friend to partial decision-making (based on love, preference, or other affective sources of direction). However, as I argued in Chapter Two, care can make space for universalizability in the form of rights and principles, so why not present the principle of minimal dignity as having the full import of a deontological rule, implying certain obligations, in this case to oneself? I don't see that such obligations necessitate Rationality or a moral framework that is inherently adverse to a care methodology.

Self-empathy should involve the attentiveness and responsiveness that are part of the other kinds of empathic perception. The mind remains open and nonjudgemental, and the flow of emotion/thought/image that arises under such receptive conditions is held in consciousness such that it becomes Thou (i.e. it is treated with as much respect as the thoughts and feelings of others who are contacted through empathy). Clinchy relates Joanna Field's version of this experience, which involves introspective writing:

> Field found that one way of bringing her thoughts and feelings up in their wholeness was to let them "write themselves" into the friendly pages of her journal. The journal turns the "I" into an "it," objectifying the knower's subjectivity, and in perusing the journal the knower turns the "it" into a "thou," in effect practicing connected knowing with herself. (1996, 230)

At the core of self-empathy is a deep affective understanding and acceptance that informs a full recognition of one's own intrinsic worth. Not only does this intrinsic worth or thou-ness place caregivers on the same level of importance as others, it does so in light of their privileged access and influence in nurturing themselves. Caregivers, to speak tautologically, will be around themselves constantly, in effect yielding many more opportunities to empathize with themselves than with most other people, even those close to them, whom they might see only a few hours each day.

Second, caregivers have a unique vantage toward themselves in the sense of directly contacting not only their own consciousness but perhaps also certain levels of their unconsciousness (e.g. through meditation, visions, or dreams). While others can validate us effectively, and while most of us probably need such validation from others for mental health, the power of honest self-affirmation should not be underestimated.

231

Caregivers, then, have a considerable responsibility to care for themselves given their ability to perceive themselves honestly with an acceptance that can heal and soothe on many layers of the intrapsychic.

Without this self-acceptance, which can only be granted by the caregiver, the efforts of others can only go so far, the depth of personal relationship is limited, and the mutually beneficial flow of open communication cannot occur in full blossom. Clinchy, along the lines of the castle-world analogy but using the different terminology of "templates" and "matches," underscores the importance of self-knowledge (gained through self-empathy and the self-acceptance that is part of it) not only for the moral person but for the relationships that partially constitute the moral person's identity:

> It is reasonable to argue that without intimate knowledge of one's self one cannot enter into intimacy with another, that one "who is essentially a stranger to himself is unlikely to forge an affective connection to someone else." Without self-knowledge we cannot exploit genuine similarities between self and other, using "templates" in the self to guide us to "matches" in the other. Without self-knowledge we cannot preserve the otherness of the other; he, she, or it becomes a creature of our projections. But how *well* must we know ourselves before we can know another, and must self-knowledge always come first? (1996, 230)

Self-empathy comes close to being a prerequisite of healthy close relationships (though like Clinchy, I find it hard if not impossible to specify how much self-knowledge is necessary to sustain an open intimate bond), and since overall well-being links to the quality of one's interactions with others, self-empathy takes on an even more vital role[3].

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3 By making self-empathy a prerequisite of healthy relationships, I do not intend to imply that we can discover all we need to know about our psychic constitution without the help of others. In a mature relationship, self-exploration and understanding are facilitated by an insightful dialogue between the participants. In this situation, self-empathy and empathy for the other feed off each other in an

Although reaffirming one's own self-worth does not provide 'hard' protection against the martyrdom of the mystiqued housewife, as does the principle of minimum dignity, it is perhaps more effective than the principle for three reasons.

(i) Anti-stereotype. First, self-empathy goes against the stereotype. The all-giving mother of patriarchy is expected to maintain herself to the extent that it benefits the care-receivers, but the self-empathic mother, by attentively turning inward and apprehending a Thou, avoids instrumentalizing herself. Her introspective concern benefits others, but that is not its purpose (nor perhaps do others benefit as much by her self-empathy as if she totally committed to supporting them). Her inward-turning transcends the false dichotomy of helping-me vs. helping-them.

Self-empathy goes against the stereotype in the further way of initiating a non-superficial exploration of self that goes beyond the simple idea of Western individualism into a mental landscape that is complex and, at least initially, as frightening as it is fascinating. I follow Diana Meyers here in drawing upon the work of Kristeva. According to Meyers, Kristeva envisions the everyday social world as crippled by a communal neurosis, a neurosis treatable by the use of psychoanalytic methods that involve embracing the "heterogeneity within ourselves." (1995, 56). On this view, one turns inward to study the power of the unconsciousness, a realm of many voices and urges that inevitably affect conscious functioning. Similar lines of thought on the

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environment of mutual enhancement. To begin such relationships, though, it seems one must be capable of engaging in self-empathy, and perhaps also at least minimally aware of one's own particular psychology.

233

"nonunitary" self have been developed by Scheman (1993), Bartky (1990), and Lugones (1990).

My purpose here is not a full-blown exploration of the topic of the heterogeneous self but to illustrate how self-empathy, which requires opening to (necessarily indirect) communication with the unconscious, takes the moral person beyond the stereotype of Western selfhood, a selfhood understood as unitary and rational, possessing one voice and not a Hydra's tangle of conflicting ones. For example, the script of the traditional middle-class white housewife (which has faded somewhat from its glory days of "Leave it to Beaver," but which still casts tendrils into women's expected role—*she* is responsible for housework, *she* is responsible for supervising the children, *she* buys groceries) does not make space for introspection that recognizes deep and powerful unconscious forces and figurations, forces that work in tandem with social conditioning to create mechanisms for the release of libido and other unruly psychic energies in ways of which we are hardly aware in our ritualized routines.

Given its weighty nature, self-empathy doesn't fit well with stereotypes of male or female behavior. To engage in it honestly is to challenge one's social programming. The very nature of the process requires, like meditation (and perhaps that is why Clinchy suggests a Zen master's tutelage), going beyond the level of habit and acculturation. It can summon tears and exultant joy, immersions in history, or take on a spiritual dimension that wends through mythological symbolisms or draws upon the realization of the miraculous ineffable quality of life. In short, such activity is far removed from the

self-denying daily role (which for many people, academics sometimes forget, is a practice in dawn-to-dusk dreariness punctuated by hyperfemininity or hypermasculinity, the receptiveness of the receptionist, the aggressiveness of the car sales*man*). It is geared toward revivifying the psyche rather than deadening it under layers of repression that hide sexist mechanisms.

(ii) Equalization plus. The second reason that self-empathy is effective in counteracting the tendency for caregivers to drift into martyrdom is that, as previously noted, it renders them as equals—just as worthy of positive attention as proximate or distant others in need—through self-recognition of intrinsic value. And once intrinsic value is self-acknowledged, as is appropriate, caregivers should take account of their unique and crucial vantage as regards their own validation, a vantage that magnifies their responsibility to themselves and in many cases mitigates how much can be properly demanded by others. Our responsibility to ourselves may well be greater than that to other persons, then. In that sense, the self, from one's own vantage, is not only an equal of others but carries greater weight of obligation.

(iii) Compassion. Finally, self-empathy contributes to a virtuous character that starts with inwardly concentrated compassion. With compassion-for-self at the core of moral sensitivity, the likelihood that the moral person will engage in neglect or abuse against their own being diminishes greatly. This issue is pursued further in the next section.

(E) *The caring mode of consciousness.* The process of self-empathy is quintessentially caring. It involves a recognition of self as valuable and, furthermore, a validation of one's hidden pains and fears, those inner voices we often try to ignore as stigmas of weakness, inferiority, or shame. This inward-turning valorization is not only strengthened by the introspector's attitudinal frame, which involves apprehension of a Thou, but also by the perseverance, patience, and suffering entailed by such a journey. Because the difficulty of grappling with one's faults and hidden wounds occurs in a context of acceptance that is empowering, understanding, and sympathetic all at once, the process informs a virtuous state of compassion that is integral to the caring mode of consciousness.

The fundamental tenets of acceptance and openness arise, as was discussed in the section on empathic representation, from the perception of the self as a struggler against mythologically describable forces, which include the manifold kinds of injustice and anxiety that trouble humanity. Once the self is seen as a hero (and as discussed I wish to reclaim this word from its use in macho motifs), it is by that association granted worth. It has strength and the skill to challenge mighty obstacles. It is beautiful and wondrous, capable of soaring yet, like Dedalus and Icarus, also in peril of horrendous descent. Importantly, none of us asked for this journey that was thrust upon us as we emerged *ex nihilo*. We were born without giving consent and subjected to myriad shaping forces without serious means of resistance. By the age of five we have suffered many encounters with injustice, limitation, and fearful objects. By fourteen, we may have

236

passionately converted to whatever religious or other ideological cause our parents strove to instill. From there the journey only continues to unfold dauntingly along the capricious course of life.

The caring person recognizes these conditions and feels compassion. It is a compassion that might start with self but then also turns outward, motivated by a deep exploration of the inner castle-world that combines with the insight that others are 'like me' and yet also 'not like me' in ways relevant to moral analysis. Having delved into their own complexity, moral persons become aware of others as never before, gaining a more subtle grasp of the human condition, the potential for people to carry immense concealed burdens of pain and self-accusation—the 'demons' that haunt the layers beneath the perfunctory smile become more vivid and poignant. Having faced the 'demons,' the moral person enters a level of mind that many others may be aware of only vaguely. In some ways, then, the moral person might understand others better than they understand themselves (in castle-world terms: through self-knowledge and the resultant empathic representation, the moral person knows the castle-world of someone else who is compartmentalized, denying, or repressed better than that very individual, whose awareness is blocked by those defense mechanisms). Nonetheless, it would be hazardous and arrogant, as we saw when discussing the "identification" process used by Deep Ecologists, to assume that such insights give the moral person empathic omniscience or a prerogative to single-handedly decide another's course of action. In dealing with 'demons,' the specter of paternalistic expropriation raises another no less serious threat.

The caring mode of consciousness, then, can pervade many aspects of life and extend compassion outward through the local environment to strangers far away (such far away humans are no less 'like us' in the relevant sense than someone down the block). It can also foster a sensitivity that manifests in good listening skills and adroitness in discerning nonverbal cues. Such adroitness can perhaps foster an almost automatic, sophisticated form of the attentiveness/responsiveness sequence. Quick empathy, in fact, might be simply a refinement of that sequence through practice and habit in order acknowledge others' perspectives efficiently within the time-limitations of contemporary life. In any case, the caring mode of consciousness includes skills and attitudes, such as empathy and compassionate acceptance, that extend the practice of moral care to the greater "holism" of life, to use Tronto's term.

Agape and Empathy. Noddings is careful to distance herself from agape ("unselfish love for all persons") and the religious framework that envelopes it. She holds that religious institutions tend to breed conformity and dull moral sensitivity, too frequently embarking on dubious or even atrocious courses of action, such as the Crusades. When she speaks of care for distant others, she sometimes associates it with agape, and emphasizes that her approach is not "agapeism," which according to her philosophy is impossibly draining and deleterious to personal relationships (1984). A Noddingsian argument, then, can be constructed along the following lines: The caring mode of consciousness, when it includes empathy for distant others, results in agapeism, and agapeism demands too much, if not the impossible. Therefore, care for distant others

238

is unfeasible.

Certain votaries of all-encompassing love, such as Martin Luther King Jr., have succeeded in maintaining a family life while dedicating great amounts of time to the rectification of sweeping social problems through nonviolent methods. King, for example, specifically appeals to agape in justifying his peaceful form of civil disobedience (1963). If example serves as evidence, there is no contradiction inherent in the combination of universal love and proper care toward family.

Nevertheless, a caring mode of consciousness that reaches out to distant others need not embrace agape and perhaps should not. Though noble, such a comprehensive love is very demanding, butting against the truism that negative feelings are a part of life and not necessarily unhealthy. For instance, it might be acceptable to hate Hitler in a way that precludes any significant feeling of love for him, and to eliminate that hatred and replace it with other affections could be dishonest and psychologically damaging.

Moreover, as Noddings is aware, agape as commonly understood is a kind of motivator that impels the moral person into ceaseless activity that might undermine self-empathy or personal projects, goals, and commitments. The guilt generated by a failure to love everyone, or by self-oriented action that diminishes that love, could be harmful if not devastating to those who strive to meet such high standards, standards exacerbated in their danger by the vague yet powerful connotations of the word love.

The caring mode of consciousness as I have framed it asks that moral persons develop dispositions to accept and understand, on a deep level, the human condition,

239

starting with their own mental world and expanding the insights thereby generated to others. There is no injunction that everyone must be loved, unless love is understood as only a recognition of intrinsic worth; but it seems strange to reduce love to such an evaluation, one that seems more aligned with a purely rationalistic apprehension.

Furthermore, the caring mode of consciousness and the empathy it fosters are not meant, as in Christian and Buddhist conceptions of compassion and love, to support unselfishness. There are two important points here. First, care for distant others is not necessarily devoid of selfish content. This is true both materially and psychologically. Helping distant others could provide me with useful goods or services and support economic growth. It could also serve my psychological needs (e.g. recognition from my community), hone my virtuous skills, and provide personal insight. The simple distinction between selfish and unselfish action stumbles when the complexity of motive in caring behavior is fully entertained.

Second, the caring mode of consciousness includes self-empathy where the purpose of self-empathy is the initiation of a respectful dialogue with oneself, not the harnessing of psychic forces for unselfish duty. Caring moral persons should validate their own individuality. Introverts should not feel doomed to act extrovertedly because unselfish all-reaching love adjures such a course. Both the introvert and the extrovert have a role to play in easing the world's needless injustice, though they might go about it differently. The point is that we each have our own personality and that personality should not be devalued or suppressed in the cause of universal love; rather it should be

given expression and validated according to the dictates of self-empathy.

Empathy for distant others clearly does not entail agape. When the plight of the emaciated in Africa is revealed, the empathic agent does indeed experience more than a simple recognition of intrinsic worth. There is a strong passion component in the reaction to the slow deterioration of the starving, which takes place in the context of enough food to feed everyone on Earth a 3000 calorie a day diet. Yet despite the passion and outrage that combines with the empathic perception, there is not necessarily agape. The moral person is focused on the starving in Africa, not everyone. There might even be hatred for the leadership in the famine-afflicted countries, perhaps rightly so.

Hence, agape and empathy are not twins nor mutually entailing. In fact, such mutual entailment would be disastrous for the care ethic. A zealous missionary driven by agape can do more harm than good, replacing indigenous cultural wisdom with Western implants that are not obviously superior and in any case could constitute a kind of mental rape or invasion, slaying the old identity and thrusting another into the vacuum. The "white man's burden" would have been of a different kind entirely had empathy been properly employed and not overridden by greed, *realpolitik*, and a patronizing sense of religious superiority. It is probably unfair to closely associate agape with the historical Christian fanaticism that has been responsible for so much callousness and cruelty, but the magnitude of the injustices wrought call out for caution and perhaps even distrust.

(F) *The I-Ought and narrative decision-making.* Noddings introduced a rudimentary form of narrative decision-making by placing the determination of obligation

241

("I ought") within the context of a caring mode of consciousness that served as the crucible in which a complexity of contextualized factors interacted to determine a moral course. The details of how this complex interaction carried through to a resolution were left unstudied, though the process appears to be dialogic in nature. Tronto also appeals to dialogic or narrative decision-making in her care criterion of responsibility, but again the mechanisms by which the intricacies of situation are to be sorted and transformed remain mysterious.

Though it is beyond the purview of my project to develop a full-blown narrative decision-making scheme, a few salient points can be mentioned that chip away at the vagueness of the narrative process. A great deal of vagueness will remain, however, requiring much future study. Fortunately, projects toward this end are just beginning to take complex book-length forms (Nelson, forthcoming).

Epieikeia. Drawing on the jurisprudence of the ancient Greeks, Martha Nussbaum informs us that there is a viable alternative to the impartial judge who promotes the perfect balancing act of rational eye-for-an-eye neutrality, and that is the judge who shows a preference for mercy or compassion. The caring mode of consciousness, as the foundation for a narrative analysis, fits well with the disposition of the compassionate judge, the one who is open-minded and thoughtful yet also inclined toward leniency. Nussbaum sees this orientation in the Greek concept of *epieikeia*:

> There is a puzzle in the evidence for ancient Greek thought about legal and moral reasoning. Two concepts that do not appear to be at all the same are treated as so closely linked as to be aspects of the same concept, and introduced together by one and the same moral term. The moral term is

242

epieikeia. The concepts are ... the ability to judge in such a way as to respond with sensitivity to all the particulars of a person and situation, and the "inclination of the mind" toward leniency in punishing—equity and mercy. From the beginning, the idea of flexible particularized judgement is likened with leniency. *Epieikeia*, which originally designated the former, is therefore said to be accompanied by the latter; it is something mild and gentle, something contrasted to the rigid or harsh. (1993, 86)

The point here is simply to suggest a plausible framework in which a narrative analysis can take place, a framework provided by a caring mode of consciousness, which, as we have seen, involves a far-reaching compassion. This sort of compassion is compatible with a proper judicious attitude, if Nussbaum's analysis is correct. Since one of Nussbaum's central points, roughly, is that leniency and sensitive attention to particulars are linked because people are interconnected and therefore not fully culpable as individual agents, her stance is something care ethicists are likely to accept, given their own emphasis on the relational self. Nussbaum's "equity and mercy" or *epieikeia*, then, fits well with the compassion of the caring mode of consciousness, which recognizes the similarity between all persons and our interdependency and resultant vulnerability. I tentatively posit that *epieikeia* resides at the heart of a narrative decision-making procedure in the context of care, and that it fits nicely in the framework provided by the caring mode of consciousness.

Stages and kinds of narrative procedure. Various stages or kinds of narrative analysis can be identified, and proper moral deliberation might require engaging in all of them (with *epieikeia* in the background). There is first of all the 'inner dialogue' that one can generate through self-care, discussed above. Second, there are the various stories that

can be individually identified and examined for their own merit. These could be either personal testimonies of other people, or the paradigmatic stories that underpin daily life (e.g. the trope of the aggressive competitive white male), or one's personal stories. Third there is the possibility for community dialogue, public forums, and other forms of interaction in order to exchange and mingle multiple narrative perspectives.

There are at least two dimensions, then, to the narrative approach: dialogue vs. analysis of a particular story, and introspective vs. community process. This suggests at least four possible kinds of narrative interaction, all of which might be relevant to decision-making:

Introspective Dialogue	Community Dialogue
Introspective Examination of Particular Stories	Community Examination of Particular Stories

Introspective dialogue may seem strange at first until we remember Lugones' "multiplicitous self," or the writings of Jung, or our own experiences of being ambivalent or torn, two 'voices' within us locked in struggle. The dialogic process of resolution might not be so much a matter of determining which voice is right and which is wrong but of finding a way to release tension and mollify both parties. The same holds true in public forums where various persons are speaking their point of view.

The examination of particular stories, on the other hand, may be more of a philosophical or judicious procedure. What are the sources of these stories? Do they foster hatred or oppressive tendencies? Are they the products of immemorial patriarchal

244

tradition? Are they in the interest of the person that holds them? What are the consequences of implementing their messages?

Vagueness, a virtue? It is not my intention to plunge into these issues in depth. Obviously more needs to be said in terms of examining the intricate processes surrounding the power of the story to do moral work. The vagueness here is the vagueness that plagues the main Western strands of virtue theory, the Humean and the Aristotelian. The inability to provide a step-by-step methodology does not invalidate the value of such approaches nor that of the care ethic. As discussed, the hope for a deductive step-by-step decision-making process may be a lost cause floundering on a false picture that presents reality as a carveable structure perfectly reducible to logical units.

What does need further examination, I think, in regard to narrative approaches, is the way in which humans react psychologically to painful questions of right and wrong. What are the psychological processes and mechanisms by which stories are maintained, challenged, altered, and merged. We might be able to generate a taxonomy or lexicon of construction tools for narrative.

The virtue ethics provide structure in their general parameters, which can serve as impressive guidelines to proper conduct. The care ethic, for example, embraces principles and prohibits psychological mechanisms that fuel oppressive cultural practices, such as denial. It maintains a foundation of compassion and self-honesty. It challenges parochialism and paternalism. Without being too invasive—that is, without prescribing a

strict course of action in every context and thereby trapping the moral person in the kind of ethical determinism that mars some forms of deontological theory—the ethic of care provides comprehensive guidance in a slippery world that refuses to be pinned to simple solutions.

Conclusion.

The following table sketches the changes that occurred in transitioning from the N to the NT version of care. The general strategy has been to implement the three crucial points that arise as a result of Tronto's philosophy—(a) that care should involve principles, (b) that empathy can extend to distant others, and (c) that care should extend beyond the private realm and thereby shatter the public/private dualism—and in this manner overcome the three core problems plaguing Noddings' theory: paralysis, dualism, and intuitionism.

Noddingsian vs. NT Care

	Noddingsian Version (N)	Noddings-Tronto Version (NT)
Principles	No universal principles or rights. "General rules" admissible as weak guidelines.	Strong universal principles, with an emphasis on those that combat oppression of all kinds: gender, class, race, political, and economic. Example: UN Declaration of Human Rights. As per Tronto's provisions, parochialism and paternalism would be

		specifically targeted by the canon of principle as unacceptable.
Moral Empathy	Limited to those in proximity with whom we can form personal relationships. Hence, the only relevant empathy is direct moral empathy ("engrossment")	Includes indirect as well as direct moral empathy. We can be attentive and responsive to both proximate and distant others.
Energy and Proximity	Energy and proximity factors limit care to those persons with whom we can form personal relationships. Energy mappings are one-to-one, with each new cared-for taking a significant amount of the caregiver's supply of energy.	Energy limitations do not prevent caring for groups; energy can be 'spread out' to encompass many at the general level of human similarity. Likewise, proximity is not necessary to form an effective caring bond (though the nature of the bond will differ from that developed in personal situations of care).
Chains of Caring	Cannot form routes to distant others who we presently care for, but instead only prepare us to care (in case proximity is achieved).	Can link us to distant others for whom we care; furthermore, the causal connections (economic, political, etc.) might be the basis for a strong obligation.
Recognition	Without acknowledgement or appreciation from the cared-for, there can be no moral caring.	Recognition is a useful and desirable though not necessary component of moral care. In political situations of care that focus on an ideologically heterogeneous culture recognition becomes problematic.
Caring Mode of Consciousness	Frames a mode of moral decision-making that is contextualized and narrative.	Includes the Noddingsian elements, and also becomes a general mode of perceiving that involves compassion (though does

		not entail agapeism).
Motivational Displacement	Only discussed and employed in the context of personal relationships.	Extended to apply to distant others such that goals can merge and affective bonding occur on a morally significant level.
Self-Care	Necessary as a means of insuring the ability to care for others.	Important in its own right. Required by the principle of minimal dignity and facilitated by the difficult process of self-empathy.
I-Ought and Narrative	Limited to the private sphere. Narrative procedure honestly considers the moral person's self-history and takes into account the dynamics of relationship in the current context.	Narrative and I-Ought are subsumed into the concept of Trontoan responsibility, which places the moral person in political as well as private contexts of relationship and care.

Note: A **distant other** is someone with whom the moral person cannot form a personal relationship due to proximity limitations (i.e., an inability to communicate due to lack of physical, psychological or technological means)

The means by which the NT project overcomes these obstacles have already been discussed and so do not require in-depth attention here. The general strategy, however, can be quickly summarized with two points. First, the presence of principles in the NT version is a protection against all three of the problems associated with the earlier Noddingsian theory. For example, the principle of minimal dignity, discussed in relation to the topic of self-care, morally prevents caregivers from neglecting themselves by heaping all their energy and attention on others. In this fashion, the dualistic role of the all-giving housewife and the tendency to become morally paralyzed by overwhelming obligations to family members are both counteracted.

Second, by taking the key conceptual elements of Noddingsian care and demonstrating how they can be applied to distant others, albeit in modified form, I effectively demonstrate that a sophisticated kind of moral care is indeed applicable in contexts relevant to political, economic, and other globally oriented decisions. In so doing, the simple dualistic picture—care at home, reason at work—is undermined. The new picture is care at home and at work, and furthermore the boundaries blur because "the personal is political." The housewife or househusband who buys products at the mall or supermarket is contributing to global conditions affecting all of us. Individuals who buy responsibly and simultaneously educate their children about proper consumption engage in care for both proximate and distant others.

Relationships with distant others. In the remainder of this chapter I concern myself with a sweeping objection to a political ethic of care, the sort represented by the NT version. In refuting this objection, I invoke elements from many of the previous chapters. The objection is this: at the heart of care philosophy is the insight going back to Carol Gilligan that we orient ourselves toward maintaining relationships and partially define ourselves by those relationships that we maintain; but, concerning people we have never met, the starving in Africa, and so forth, in what sense is there any solid relationship? Do we really have relationships with far away persons we have never met, seen, heard, or contacted in any way? And if we cannot have relationships with such distant others, which seems quite intuitive, then how can we possibly care for them in any sense, given that the maintenance of relationship is essential to care activities?

This argument relies on a presupposition that I have already effectively contested—namely, that there must be personal contact for a caring relationship to exist. In this fashion, I have challenged the conventional notion of relationship associated with caring and indicted it as just the sort of question-begging that preserves the traditional bias. A perusal of standard dictionary sources, of course, does not support a simple 'face-to-face' role for "relationship." Instead, we see a panoply of uses that reinforce both personal and non-personal implementations. Alongside the definitions that indicate romantic, connubial, or consanguineous affiliation are broader ones: "a state involving mutual dealings between people or parties or countries"; "a state of connectedness between people (especially an emotional connection)"; "a particular type of connection existing between people related to or having dealings with one another" (American Heritage Dictionary 3rd Ed.).

The key words in these definitions that feed the broader sense of relationship are "dealings" and "connectedness." I have endeavored to show that the reworked notion of chains of caring can comprise such broadly construed dealings and connections between those of us here in the affluent west and those in the exploited class who suffer the proletarian regimen. A full-blooded Marxian analysis along the lines of causal ties between the bourgeoisie and the underclass could no doubt expose the more minute elements of the relationship; and within this intricate web of buying, spending, manufacturing, and capital transfer, there is no reason that we cannot care for the distant sweatshop laborer.

Indeed, whether we care or not, we will be in a relationship with those distant others who make the things we buy, and that relationship, in accordance with the thesis of the connected of self, will affect the nature of our own identity. Callousness and sensitivity both mold the mind.

We can motivationally displace and engage in moral empathy toward such proletariatized laborers, and our concerned behavior can impact them, either directly (e.g. through donations) or through more complicated routes (e.g. educating others, lobbying, supporting activist groups). Moreover, we are complicit in the system that holds them hostage to spirit-numbing travail. In short, by arguing that we can morally care for distant others, the parallel case has been made that there is a relationship between moral persons and distant others that goes beyond the sort of pure causal mechanism that does not concern our emotional reactions, our ability to reach out, or our ability to feel sympathy or even some understanding for suffering human beings.

If this analysis is apt, then we have to take seriously a radically new notion of moral relationship, one that has not impressed itself on the Western consciousness. In this new form of moral relationship, our interactions with distant others are not to be ignored on the excuse that they are incapable of emotional depth or significant ethical content. We can feel for distant others, and we can relate to their suffering. We might not know who we are interacting with when we buy a sweatshop-produced product, but we are interacting with someone (actually the many someones involved in the production process). In the case of textiles, the person who did the sewing is most likely a twenty-

something woman or a teenage girl. Do these young souls have dreams? We don't know for sure, but we know what it is like to have dreams, and we can understand how dreams might rupture under such circumstances.

Mutuality. One might object that there is no mutuality factor in such a situation. Caring is supposed to concern the maintenance of mutually beneficial relationships. Where is the mutuality in the interaction between the sweatshop laborer and the activist Westerner? Surely this is a one-way flow of concern at best, with the buyer worrying about the worker but not vice versa. And in light of this unilateral motion, there certainly cannot be a condition where both parties benefit and the relationship evolves. The characteristics of nurturance and potential for growth so important to caring relationships are lacking in this long-range connection.

I have already argued that recognition is not necessary in situations of proximate or long-range care, and if recognition is not required then mutuality, which would seem to include in its conceptual nature a kind of recognition, is not either. However, leaving this point to the side, I think that there is an important kind of mutuality in the economic dance of the rich and the distant poor who effectively serve them. At present, this is a relationship of domination and exploitation. But it could be, in some radically altered system of commerce, a relationship of mutual benefit, buyers, retailers, manufacturers and laborers interacting in nonoppressive and even salubrious market conditions (Crittenden 2000).

The mutual benefit that applies in this global sense involves political as well as financial links and, importantly, emphasizes not so much the interplay between specific persons but that between large groups. The reply, then, to the objection that there is no possibility of mutuality between Westerners and sweatshop laborers (or other distant others affected by our actions) is that groups can care for each other and individuals participate in the actions of the relevant groups. The possibility of one-on-one caring might not exist between rich and distant poor (though some charities do allow a kind of "adoption" where a certain child is sponsored in a developing country) but group-on-group caring is a different matter.

Long-range care requires not only that we reconsider what counts as a moral relationship but that we reconsider our own identity. Our relationships with distant others manifest in the give and take of the powerful and the weak within the backdrop of an historical systematic domination that spans half a millennium. When we feel for the sweatshop worker, we are feeling at the general level of human sympathy that applies to a large number of exploited workers. And we ourselves, as part of the herd of purchasers wading into the retail and food outlets of multinational corporations, take part in a collective role, that of the affluent.

Such a reworking of identity to include group dynamics is perfectly concordant with feminist and care ethicist ideas of self. And this more expansive identity does not undercut moral agency but on the contrary tunes our sense of responsibility to planet-wide conditions. Where before the moral person might have felt disconnected from

distant others, now there are linkages at two levels, the individual and the collective. Both levels contribute to the moral connection between the exploited and the exploiters. The group level demonstrates the direct physical connection, and the individual level demonstrates the emotional and empathic connections that are possible. The moral person partakes in both levels and so is fully immersed in the intermingling of cultures, fates, and fortunes.

Perhaps someday the affluent group and the third-world group will engage in mutual recognition of the sort that Jessica Benjamin describes: a two-way acknowledgement of basic human worth in which inheres a fundamental respect and dignity. Unfortunately, judged by their actions and ignorance, the members of the affluent group currently treat those in the laborer group only as ciphers, objects hardly noticed that feed into their common comfort, as they see it, much as the air they breathe. How those in the laborer group feel about those in the west is more a matter of speculation on my part. Perhaps they see us as cruel masters, hence completing the circle that defines a true relationship of master to slave, dominator to dominated, active to passive, manipulator to object.

Conclusion.

Coming to the end of a project of this type and magnitude, I am led to reflect on what sort of importance it could have beyond personal edification. One standard criticism of ethics scholars is that their ideas don't translate well into change. It is one thing to erect an erudite system in the abstract and quite another to bring that system into

efficacious usage within a community. Applying this consideration to my work, one might submit that even if I have succeeded in liberating care from the feminine stereotype—that is, succeeded in arguing that a care ethic can operate outside a patriarchal male/female gender scheme—there is little hope of actually 'selling'this idea to the public.

Such concerns are troubling, even more so given a further consideration: what I have accomplished is a sketch, one that needs much more detail and one which no doubt has its flaws. What I am faced with then is a two-pronged problem: the project is incomplete and imperfect, and second, even if the system of ideas presented is a good one, there is little chance of impressing its usage into the general community. For an idealist who embraces social activism, such as myself, the above argumentation is humbling.

Yet it is obviously wrong to condemn a project solely on the grounds that it does not induce global transformation. In terms of a care worldview, even the most powerful among us must accept our place within vast ritualistic and bureaucratic collectives of persons. Although it can be disheartening to admit that one does not have a tremendous amount of control in terms of broad change, it can be heartening, on the other hand, to discover one's part in a social movement. By a social movement I mean a large number of people, organized around galvanizing ideas, who attempt to shift the mindset of the greater society and thereby its behavior, worldview, and psychology.

A kind of scholarly movement, thriving on the momentum of the activism of the 1970's, sprung up around Gilligan's work and continues to this day in various academic

disciplines. Part of the ferment is generated by the thought in the background that we can end warfare, poverty and oppression, and we can do so by dismantling the political and economic mechanisms that embrace aggression, harsh treatment for the poor, and a singularly male leadership. This idea has been in the background of my project, though so complicated are the issues at the theoretical level that I have hardly been able to broach it, nor for that matter would it have been effective to pursue it in my context.

Nevertheless, the idea is there, and it is characteristic of the kinds of thoughts that lend impetus to feminist movements. My work alone is not going to spark radical change, but it is one little piece of kindling that adds to the fire. Taking this frame of mind, I find contentment and connection, for if the self is "partially constituted" by relationships, then my support for the sort of movement I admire is cause for celebration.

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259

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VITA

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His guiding reason for entering the field of philosophy, and more specifically, the subfield of applied ethics, has been to focus on issues concerning oppression and violence in the context of our (read: all of humanity's) rapidly changing technological, ideological, and physical landscape. This guiding motivation remains and is apparent in his study of environmental and feminist ethics. The soul-deadening dangers of the academic establishment have so far been kept in check, though the struggle continues.