CARE AS A WEAPON AGAINST EVIL:
FEMINIST CARE ETHICS AND THE HUNGER GAMES TRILOGY

Suzanne Collins' s

by

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The idea of care as a weapon seems like a contradiction. Care is usually pictured as soft, gentle and nurturing, not aggressive and attacking. One pictures a mother bending over a cradle, or a nurse caring for a wounded soldier. They are not on the battlefield attacking. Rather they are passively responding to what the battle brings, seeking to do what good they can, but not changing things on a larger scale. They are focused on helping the individual in front of them, not changing society as a whole. This paper will seek to challenge that stereotype, and posit that it is possible for care to be more active on a larger scale. Care can be both the motivation and the tool for addressing evil in society.

This will be examined particularly in the context of the fantasy/science fiction series *The Hunger Games*. This series illustrates the range of care. At the beginning, care is individually focused, protective and reactive. But that care develops into a force that challenges an entire evil society. Care is both the motivation and tool for rebellion. It is the motivation for as she seeks to protect those who are being mistreated. The caring acts are also seen as acts of rebellion, both by the government and by the oppressed people. The series shows how care can be more powerful than the forces of evil. However, it also shows the dangers of care being abused for evil ends. The loss of care contributes to evil, rather than fighting it.
This study addresses the conception of ethics of care. This ethical theory says that care should be the basis for how we make ethical decisions. Rather than abstract principles or logical reasoning, they say that emotion, relationships and compassion should affect moral decisions. They focus on experience and particular situations, rather than universal moral principles. They argue against impartiality in ethics, saying that we should be influenced by our relationships with others.

The ideas of the care ethics authors can be useful in helping us understand ethics in *The Hunger Games*. Much of what they say supports the idea that care can be a powerful weapon against evil. However, some of the care ethics writers posit ideas that would undermine that idea. For example, some authors say that care should be focused only on those to whom we are closely connected, not a broader scope of society. Some critics have said that care ethics doesn’t challenge the status quo of society. These concerns will be discussed and addressed. A nuanced ethics of care that answers these issues can help support the idea that care should be used to change society.

Buckland says that an essential part of fantasy is the battle between good and evil. Because fantasy requires the suspension of disbelief, readers are more likely to enter more deeply.
into this battle and choose sides.\footnote{Corinne Buckland, “Fantasy, the Moral Imagination and the Good,” in Towards or Back to Human Values? Spiritual and Moral Dimensions of Contemporary Fantasy, ed. Justyna Deszcz-Tryhubczak and Marek Oziewicz (Newcastle, U.K.: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006), 100.} This then influences how they think about moral dilemmas in this world. This is especially true of popular fantasy series such as *Harry Potter*, *Twilight*, or *The Hunger Games*. Young people’s vision of good and evil can be profoundly affected by how deeply they engage in these stories.

Examining ethics in the context of a fantasy story can therefore be helpful for a couple of reasons. First, it can help us examine the issues from a new perspective. A purely philosophical perspective can miss nuances that a story can illuminate. In fact, care ethicists say that ethics should not be purely abstract, rather it should be grounded in particular situations. The situation presented in a story can present an ideal place for examining ethical ideas. Secondly, examining a fantasy story can help us understand our culture better. Stories both reflect our culture’s values and influence them. The final chapter of this thesis will further develop how we can use *The Hunger Games* to better understand and respond to our culture’s ethics.

The rest of this chapter will set up a basic framework for understanding *The Hunger Games* and feminist care ethics. First will be a synopsis of *The Hunger Games*, giving an overview of the main events in the trilogy, and then discussing the overarching themes. Next will be a description of feminist care ethics, including the history, key people.
and major issues. We will then focus particularly on those issues directly related to the issue of care as a weapon to change society.

The following chapters will develop these ideas in more depth. Chapter two develops the arguments in care ethics theory, and suggests a nuanced version of care ethics. Chapter three looks at how these care ethics ideas show up in The Hunger Games, and how this series can inform our understanding of how care should work. Chapter four will examine these issues from a theological and biblical perspective. For the Christian, this perspective should further nuance the feminist care ethics ideas. The final chapter will discuss how these care ethics ideas and The Hunger Games can help us understand our society and our ethics.

Synopsis of The Hunger Games trilogy

The Hunger Games series will be analyzed in more detail in Chapter Three. The following is a synopsis of the series to orient the reader to the plot, characters and major themes.
Book One: *The Hunger Games*

*The Hunger Games* is set in a futuristic, apocalyptic world. North America has been destroyed by war and a nation called Panem has taken its place. The country is divided into twelve districts. The people in the central Capitol live in luxury supported by the poverty-stricken districts.

Katniss Everdeen is the sixteen-year-old heroine of the trilogy. Her father died in a mining accident, after which her mother slipped into depression and failed to take care of Katniss and her younger sister, Prim. The family was in danger of starvation until Katniss begins hunting illegally outside of the district’s fence. Her hunting partner is the good-looking Gale, with whom she has a close friendship.

The book opens on Reaping Day, which is when two teenagers (one boy and one girl) from each district are chosen by lottery for the Hunger Games. The twenty-four teenagers will be sent to a large arena where they must fight to the death until one survives and is the victor. The battle is televised for the entertainment of the Capitol citizens. At the lottery, Katniss’ sister Prim is chosen. Katniss volunteers to take Prim’s place, which is relatively rare, and the people are moved by her sacrifice. The other contestant chosen is Peeta, the son of a baker. When Katniss’ family was starving, he helped them by giving her some bread, for which Katniss has always felt obligated. But because they are both

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contestants who will work to kill each other, she doesn’t trust his overtures of friendship. A love triangle between Katniss, Peeta and Gale is developed over the course of the trilogy.

They travel to the Capitol with Haymitch, a previous victor from their district, who will be their mentor for their games. Haymitch tells Katniss and Peeta to act like they like each other. At the Capitol, they are prepped by the stylist Cinna who helps them to dazzle the crowds with fiery costumes. At an interview, Peeta tells everyone that he has always loved Katniss. The crowd is moved, but Katniss mistrusts him.

In the arena at the start of the games, Katniss runs for her life and spends many days hiding in the trees. She discovers that Peeta had joined a pack of Careers (tributes who have trained their whole lives for the games) who have joined forces temporarily. She later discovers that he had done this to protect her. Peeta fights Cato, the strongest Tribute to help Katniss escape.

Katniss befriends a young girl, Rue, who reminds her of her sister. Together, they plot to take out the Careers’ food supply. Afterwards, Rue is killed by another Tribute. Katniss kills Rue’s killer, and then mourns Rue’s death with a song and covers her with flowers (an act that would be seen as rebellion by the Capitol).

An announcer tells them that the rules have been changed and if two tributes from the same district survive, they can both live. Katniss begins to look for Peeta, because for the first time she knows they don’t have to kill each other. She finds him severely injured, with an infected leg. She cares for him as they hide out in a cave. Katniss kisses
him and pretends she loves him, for the cameras. She makes a risky trip back to the starting area to get him medication that he needs. The idiom is OK for conversations, but not for academic writing. At the end, it's down to them and Cato, the strongest Tribute. They are chased by Mutts, which resemble the Tributes who have died. The Mutts are slowly killing Cato until Katniss mercifully kills him to end his suffering. The announcer then says that the earlier rules are invalid, and that one of them must kill the other. Katniss and Peeta act as if they are going to eat poison berries to commit suicide rather than kill each other. As Katniss expects, the Gamemakers choose to let them both live instead.

Afterwards, Katniss discovers that this act was seen as a dangerous form of rebellion by the Capitol. She must pretend that she did it because she was crazy from love for Peeta. Peeta is heartbroken when he discovers that she actually wasn't in love with him.

Book Two: *Catching Fire*^3^ italicized

President Snow, the evil leader of the Capitol, comes to visit Katniss in her home. He tells that her act of eating berries was seen as rebellion in some of the districts, and that there have been uprisings as a result. He warns her that she must act as if she is really in love with Peeta, so the districts don't see it as an act of successful rebellion. Otherwise he threatens her family and Gale.

As Katniss and Peeta go on a victory tour of all the districts, she tries to convince the people that her act was out of love, not rebellion. Yet she gives an impromptu speech at one of the districts, showing compassion and care for the families of her allies in the arena, including Rue. The people respond with a hand gesture that is seen as act of rebellion, and some people are shot in response. Katniss is shaken by how much worse the oppression is here than in her district.

After the tour, President Snow tells Katniss she failed, and Katniss decides to escape with her family and friends into the woods. But Gale wants to stay and rebel instead. After Gale is severely whipped, Katniss decides to stay and fight as well, as she realizes that she has to fight to save others beyond her family.

It is announced that this year’s Hunger Games will have a special twist. The competitors will be chosen from the victors from previous years. Katniss and Peeta are chosen, which means they will return to the arena. Katniss is determined that this time she will save Peeta and die herself. Haymitch is again their mentor, and he advises them to make friends with the other competitors. Katniss is reluctant to do this, but Haymitch tells her to remember who her enemies are.

In the arena a few of the other competitors help to save Peeta when he is injured. One old woman even sacrifices her life for him. Another competitor sets up an electrical system to trap the opposing competitors. Katniss shoots an arrow to redirect the electricity into the arena’s outer force field, which destroys the arena. Katniss is airlifted
out. She discovers she has been rescued by a rebel group that has been living in District 13, a district they all thought had been destroyed. What happened in the arena had been part of an elaborate plan by the Head Gamesmaker, Haymitch, and several of the other contestants to rescue her and start a rebellion. Peeta was not among those rescued and was instead captured by the Capitol. The book ends with Katniss’ home district being destroyed by the Capitol.

Book Three: *Mockingjay*[^1]

Katniss is now living in District 13 with the rebels, along with her mother, sister and Gale. The people of District 13 live in an underground complex with well-developed weaponry. In order to survive, they have developed a strict society where people are given daily schedules and rationed food. The rebels are trying to convince Katniss to become the “Mockingjay,” a symbol for the revolution. Katniss is suspicious of them, particularly the leader, President Coin. She finally agrees, with the condition of immunity for Peeta and others who may be considered traitors by the rebels. She also demands that she be the one to kill President Snow.

After President Snow uses the torture of Peeta to try to break Katniss’ spirit, the rebels stage a rescue of him. But it turns out that Peeta has been brainwashed into believing that Katniss is evil and he tries to kill her. To escape from thinking about the loss of Peeta, Katniss volunteers to fight in the districts and Capitol, with the goal of killing President Snow.

Katniss first goes to District Two, the one district the Capitol still controls. The challenge is a mountain that contains mines and fortresses within it. Gale suggests causing an avalanche that will cut off all the airways and escape routes. Katniss objects that innocent people will die. The rebels decide to allow one escape route. As Katniss is threatened by one of the escaping soldiers, she gives a speech to both sides about how they should not be doing this to each other.

After District Two falls, they move to the Capitol. The Capitol is planted with different kinds of traps, which makes it similar to the arenas for the Hunger Games. Katniss works her way through the city with a group of soldiers which includes Gale, and later Peeta. Peeta is still struggling against the effects of the brainwashing, trying to determine what is real and what is not. During their journey, much of their group is killed, including the leader, who makes Katniss the leader before he dies, telling her to kill President Snow. Along the way, Katniss kills a civilian who recognizes her, and she witnesses rebel forces killing civilians, including children.
When they arrive at the gates of the palace, there is a barricade with children in front. Airplanes fly overhead and drop parachutes on the children which contain bombs. Some of the bombs explode, injuring children. Rebel medics, including Katniss’ sister Prim, rush in to help. Then the rest of the bombs explode, killing all the children along with Prim.

Katniss believes this was a trap set by the Capitol. But after the Capitol falls, President Snow tells her that it was a plan by the rebels and President Coin. Katniss remembers that Gale and another victor had earlier devised a trap like this, which would use hurt children to entice those with compassion into the trap. Snow also tells her how District 13 had used and manipulated the districts to overthrow the Capitol and gain power.

The president of District 13, President Coin, has become president of the country. She has the surviving Hunger Games victors vote on whether to hold a new Hunger Games that would use the children from the Capitol. She says that this would help satisfy the districts’ desire for revenge. It is then arranged for Katniss to publicly kill Snow with an arrow. But at the execution she instead shoots President Coin. Snow also dies, either from laughing and choking on his blood or being crushed by the crowd.

After a trial, Katniss is sent home to District 12. An election has been held and a new good president selected, and conditions in the country improve. There are no more Hunger Games. However, Katniss remains in deep depression, mourning those who died. Peeta returns also and they marry. After many years, they have children, and Katniss
dreads telling them about the Hunger Games and what happened. To battle the depression, she practices reminding herself about the good things people have done.

*Care Themes in the Trilogy*

Each of the books in the trilogy develops ideas of care, particularly related to attacking evil. However, each of the books develops the idea of care in a different way.

In the first book, Katniss’ acts of care are natural and unplanned. They are seen as acts of rebellion against the Capitol, but this was not Katniss’ intention. Volunteering to take her sister’s place was an unplanned, instinctive action when seeing her sister’s vulnerability. The crowd responds to her act with a gesture of rebellion. This is partly because such an act of care and sacrifice is unusual and inspiring to them. The people of the districts have learned to live in a state of passivity, acting out of self-protection and not threatening the status quo. In contrast, Katniss actively chooses to care. This act of care instead of self-protection is a threat to the Capitol, which has worked to keep the people divided and afraid. Their instinct for care has been suppressed, but is awakened by seeing Katniss’ care.

At first Katniss’ circle of care only included those closest to her, including her sister, her mother and Gale. She is mistrustful of anyone outside that circle (particularly Peeta). Rue is the first one she decides to include in her circle of care, because of the
connection to her sister. Her caring act of covering Rue with flowers was also seen as an act of rebellion against the Capitol, as she drew attention to the value of her life.

Peeta is the next one she includes in her circle of care, but only once she knows that it will be possible to save him without sacrificing herself. Her act of eating the toxic berries was seen as the most powerful act of rebellion against the Capitol. In fact, throughout the series characters refer to this moment as the defining moment of the rebellion. It showed that an act of care, self-sacrifice and solidarity between two people could challenge the plans of the Capitol. The Capitol was shown to be vulnerable. With this act, Katniss is aware that it is rebellious, and this is part of her motivation. But she is still mostly acting instinctively to protect Peeta and herself.

In the second book, the expansion of care becomes more prominent. Katniss begins to care about those beyond her immediate connections. But she must struggle with the possibility that such care could mean sacrificing those closest to her. At first, Katniss goes along with President Snow's requests in order to save her family. But she begins to care for the plight of the people in the other districts. This begins in Rue's district as she sees the brutality that others are suffering.

Later she must decide whether to escape into the woods with those closest to her to protect them, or whether to stay and fight for a wider circle of people, all of those in the other districts. She struggles with the fact that this might mean risk to herself and, more importantly for her, danger to those she cares about. She decides to stay and fight. After the
events of the third book and losing Prim and others, she questions this decision. However, even then, she seems to realize that it wouldn’t have been right to protect just those close to her.

In the arena, this time Katniss is choosing to save Peeta instead of herself. (In the first book, her self-protection was a higher priority.) She is still mistrustful of those she is not close to her, such as the other victors, but comes to appreciate their acts of sacrifice for Peeta. Her act of shooting an arrow at the arena was more of an open challenge to the Capitol, and motivated by anger and rebellion.

In the third book, we see the tragedy of the loss of care. Care can be lost; it can be twisted and abused. This is the true source of evil. Evil does not reside in a particular person or government, but in anyone who chooses their own agenda over care. Evil wins when care is lost.

Both sides in the war use care to manipulate others. President Snow tries to use Katniss’ care for Peeta to manipulate and break her. The rebels, inspired by Gale’s ideas, use the caring impulse as a trap to manipulate the people of the Capitol. The president of the rebels, Coin is shown to be as evil as President Snow. Both of them see people as things to be used and discarded for their own purposes. Both sacrifice innocent people of the districts to try to gain and keep power.

There is also a question of whether justice is more important than care. (This question is also raised in feminist care ethics.) For most of the book, Katniss is inspired by
a desire to get revenge on President Snow by killing him. This leads to the loss of many of her companions. In the end, she realizes that retribution against him will not help. He is no longer in a position to continue evil. So instead Katniss chooses to kill someone who was in a position to continue evil. This was a choice of care over justice. It was more important to protect people from future harm than to punish for past evil. However, it is interesting that there is still natural justice; President Snow still dies.

The end of the series is very dark. Although the “good” people have ultimately triumphed and there is a better society, there is still a sense in which evil has won. Katniss’ goal from the start of the series was to protect her sister, and she was lost. It shows the reality of what happens when there is a loss of care. There is also the pessimistic outlook that loss of care is likely to happen again in the future. Katniss’ one link to hope is to remind herself of the acts of care that she has seen people perform.

This book demonstrates the reality that caring is not simple and guaranteed to “win” against evil. However, although Katniss’ character is struggling at the end, the series still seems to suggest that there is a mandate to act in caring ways, even if there is not a guarantee that care will defeat evil. To do otherwise is to allow and participate in evil oneself.

Although care is not the only theme in the series, it is clearly a central theme. In chapter three, these themes will be developed more. We will particularly focus on the themes of the extent of care (who one should care for) as well as how care can challenge
evil in a larger society. But first we will look at feminist care ethics, which will be used as a framework to help explore these issues.

Feminist Ethics of Care

Feminist care ethics rose to prominence in the 1980s as feminist ethicists began to question whether traditional ethics was based more on a male perspective, which ignored a female perspective. One of the major developers of the theory was Carol Gilligan. Her theory was in part a response to the work of Lawrence Kohlberg. Kohlberg developed a hierarchy of moral development. In his framework, women often were stuck at the third level, where they based their ethical decisions on their relationships.\(^5\) Men were more likely to reach Kohlberg’s highest sixth level, which emphasized moral reasoning based on abstract, universal ideas. Gilligan noted that Kohlberg’s theory seemed to indicate that women were less morally developed than women. In response, she interviewed women and developed her own hierarchy of development that emphasized the importance of caring relationships in moral theory. Her highest level of development was one where the person is able to care for both self and others in a healthy way.\(^6\)


\(^6\) Ibid., 74.
Gilligan also distinguished between justice and care ethics. She described justice ethics as being more male-oriented and focused on abstract ideas, impartiality, detachment, logic, equality, respect, individual rights, and independence. In contrast, a care ethics orientation is more common among women and focuses on relationships, a response to need, hearing and being heard, connection, emotion, and dependence. Other authors of this time also developed ideas of care as a basis for ethics.

Sarah Ruddick wrote about using the care of mothers as an example for ethics. Eva Fedder Kittay likewise said that everyone is "some mother’s child" and is therefore deserving of care, and has an obligation to care. She said care was the basic foundation for society and existence, since without care we would not survive as children.

Nel Noddings further developed the philosophical ideas of how care ethics should work. Later writers criticized her for some of her ideas. She placed a greater emphasis on the distinction between justice and care, saying we should choose care over justice. (Other authors argue that both justice and care are important.) She described care as being an instinctive, natural process, but one that must also be chosen even when we don’t.

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9 Eva Kittay, *Love’s Labor: Essays on Women, Equality, and Dependency*
feel like it. She highly valued caring relationships, saying that breaking a relationship leads to ethical diminishment.\(^{10}\) She also controversially said that care should be focused on those closest to us, and that it is impossible to care (as she defines it) for those who are more distant.\(^{11}\) She rejected “universability,” that there could be universal moral principles true for everyone in every situation. Rather, she said that our moral decisions should not be based on universal principles, but rather on the unique context and relationships.\(^{12}\)

Some feminists have been opposed to care ethics, particularly as it was developed by Noddings, saying it helps perpetuate women’s submissive role. Claudia Card said that we should not idealize either male or female ethics, since both are warped.\(^{13}\) Both Card and Tronto said that women’s caring nature is actually a survival technique from a culture that has made women submissive and dependent.\(^{14}\) Walker says that care ethics keeps women in the “ghetto” rather than freedom.\(^{15}\)


\(^{11}\) Ibid., 18.

\(^{12}\) Ibid., 5.

\(^{13}\) Claudia Card, “Gender and Moral Luck,” in *Justice and Care: Essential Readings in Feminist Ethics* (Boulder Colo.: Westview Press, 1995), 82.

\(^{14}\) Ibid., 94; Joan Tronto, “Women and Caring: What Can Feminists Learn About Morality from Caring?,” in *Justice and Care: Essential Readings in Feminist Ethics*
Joan Tronto developed her own theory of care ethics that addressed some of the issues with Nel Noddings' theory. She argued that care should not be limited in scope, but should have broader societal impact. She says that we cannot ignore politics as we look at morality. Virginia Held also tried to nuance Noddings' ideas. She said that both care and justice are important for ethics, and discusses the different realms for each, saying that care should not be confined to the private and justice to the public.

Chapter two will further develop the theories of care ethics, particularly focusing on Nel Noddings' ideas and the criticisms and responses. While much of what she and other care ethicists say can be helpful, the problem areas need to be addressed. Next we will look at some of those issues in care ethics, particularly those related to care challenging evil in a larger context.

**Issues in Care Ethics**


There are many debates over issues related to care ethics, more than can be addressed in this paper. For example, one debate is over the relation between justice and care, and whether they have separate domains. Care ethics also emphasizes ethics based on experience and concrete situations, rather than logic and abstract ideas. Another topic of discussion is gender issues, and whether one can (or should) distinguish between ethics based on gender.

This paper could look at any number of these issues. However, it will be focused on those topics related to care as a weapon for battling evil. In particular, the following issues will be examined. These are the objections someone could make about the idea of care ethics being useful in battling evil. The question is whether care ethics can be conceived as a way to move beyond an intimate personal relationship and bring about large-scale change.

The first is the perception that care is soft and tender, and is not strong and aggressive enough to challenge evil. Certainly some of Nel Noddings’ descriptions of care seem soft; she emphasizes displacing one’s interest from oneself to the cared-for, completely empathizing with them.\(^\text{18}\) Even when reprimanding someone for wrong, she says that the goal isn’t to punish, but to guide or instruct.\(^\text{19}\) In general, she says that killing, war and loss of relationship are wrong. However, even Noddings would say there is a time


\(^{19}\) Ibid., 91.
to be tough and fight. She says that killing is justified if it is to defend the cared-for (although this still leads to ethical diminishment).\textsuperscript{20} She even says that she doesn’t believe in “fair fights;” if you are fighting to save someone, you should do it with everything you have. \textsuperscript{21} One thinks of animals protecting their young. They may be gentle and nurturing with their young, but are more dangerous than normal to anyone who is a threat. Thus although it is true that care ethics promotes gentleness with the cared-for, it does not follow that it cannot be strong and proactive in addressing evil.

Another criticism directed toward the care ethic is that there is also a concern that care is not built on a strong foundation for challenging evil. Edwards says there is a “vagueness to care ethics.”\textsuperscript{22} Indeed, there is a problem when some of the ethicists such as Noddings try to claim that care in itself can be a complete basis for morality. Noddings is against any kind of universalizing morality, saying that our morals should be based on particular situations and relationships. This gives the uncomfortable sense that care ethics is changeable, not concrete. Critics say this means that it is difficult for ethics to challenge societal evils. Noddings herself actually recognizes that there must be some foundational basis for care ethics that is outside of itself. She says that

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 107.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 118.
care ethics does presuppose at least one universal principle: that care is good.\footnote{Noddings, \textit{Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics \\& Moral Education}, 5.} Some of these issues will be addressed more in the chapter on theological issues.

Another issue is what Edwards calls the "problem of partialism."\footnote{Edwards, "Three Versions of an Ethics of Care," 233.} This is the tendency of care ethics to prioritize close, personal relationships over those who are more distant. Noddings says that universal care is impossible. She even says that we shouldn't care for the children in Africa. She believes care should be based in a relationship, and they are too far away for us to enter into the caring, empathetic, mutual relationship that she describes.\footnote{Noddings, \textit{Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics \\& Moral Education}.} This emphasis can be a problem for trying to make change on a broader scale. Priorities when one is just focusing on those closest to yourself may be different when you are also including the needs of others. As Card says, it is a problem if an ethical system ignores anyone that you are not in a relationship with.\footnote{Claudia Card, "Caring and Evil..," \textit{Hypatia} 5, no. 1 (Spring90 1990): 101.} This issue will be particularly helpful to examine in relationship to \textit{The Hunger Games}, which shows some of that struggle over how far care should extend.

Finally, critics say that care ethics is not effective in challenging the status quo. Because it is focused on immediate relationships, it may ignore issues in the broader
society. They also suggest that care-givers tend to provide care within the context of that society, rather than challenge wrongs in that society. They learn to passively accept the status quo instead of challenge it, as they focus on caring for immediate needs of those closest to them. Collins talks about this struggle as she describes how black mothers would teach their daughters to survive within an unjust society, which meant not openly rebelling. However, these mothers also hoped to give their daughters the ability to transcend, not just survive the preservation-oriented injustice. ²⁷ Caring must overcome a protective survival instinct in care in order to work for broader change.

One issue that Hoagland mentions is that care ethics needs an ability to judge in order to challenge society. ²⁸ This can be a problem, since Noddings says that you shouldn’t judge others, but rather seek to understand. Noddings even prioritizes relationships over judging evil. She describes a situation where a woman would choose to be on the side of her family, even though her family is racist. ²⁹ When interviewing women, Gilligan discovered that some women felt insecure in their right to say something is wrong.


and take a moral stand. An inability to say that something is morally wrong is a problem when one hopes to address problems in a society.

However, this problem does not need to be true of care ethics. Sullivan-Dunbar talks about a web of dependencies. We must challenge the status quo because we’re all connected. We must work to challenge the system in order to make caring more possible. This is what Katniss comes to realize in *The Hunger Games*. It is not enough to just protect one’s family within an unjust society. One must ultimately challenge that society in order to fully care for one’s family and beyond.

Again, there are many different issues in care ethics that could be examined in relation to *The Hunger Games*. However, we will focus on the issues related to whether care can challenge evil in society. These issues will be more fully developed in the next chapter.

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30 Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 66.

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