

**Care ethics and cloning:
A speculative literary critique of human biotechnology**

by

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Abstract

Debates about human cloning are typically argued within a framework of individual rights and justice that promote a particular view of human independence. As a result, the cloning debate is impoverished because it fails to adequately consider human interdependence. Rather than considering whether we have a right to clone, feminist care ethics offers the question, is it caring to clone? To explore questions of social and political care ethics within the cloning debate, this thesis examines two contemporary speculative novels, Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* (2003) and Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* (2005), which represent uses of human cloning that function as an ineffective cure for the social and political care that is missing in the U.S. and the U.K. These novels also suggest that the ethics of care as a social and political theory may be advanced by broadening civic discourse to involve the arts and humanities.

Cloning, Liberal Rights, and the Need for a Care Framework

Frances Fukuyama, a well known American philosopher and political economist who is a strong opponent of cloning, writes in *Our Posthuman Future*, “The language of rights has become, in the modern world, the only shared and widely intelligible vocabulary we have for talking about ultimate human goods or ends, and in particular, those collective goods or ends that are the stuff of politics” (108). Through my examination of feminist care ethics and speculative fiction about human cloning, I challenge Fukuyama’s assertion that the language of rights is, or should be, our only common political vocabulary from which to talk about ultimate human goods and ends. All societies and all individuals owe their existence as well as their flourishing to some form of care and carework, performed by someone. Care is required for survival and while it is not performed by all, it is certainly experienced by all at some point in their lives. Given this shared experience, it makes sense that the language of care is common, relevant, and intelligible to every person. The larger challenge, as articulated by many care scholars, is making the vocabularies, practices, and values of care relevant to social and political institutions.

In this thesis, I show how a social and political conception of feminist care ethics is needed in order to fully consider the ramifications of cloning technology in both the present and future. I distinguish between three different applications of care ethics: a personal/familial ethic of care, in which care values and practices take place in the home; a social ethic of care, where the needs for care and creative solutions for these needs are articulated by civic society, defined as the realm in between the individual/family unit and the government; and finally a political ethic of care, where government supports the

needs for care in the other two realms through law and policy. When we fail to value the ideals and practices of care in any one of these three realms, we live in a world in which justice and liberal values cannot fully flourish. In the first chapter I offer a discussion of challenges by care ethics scholars of liberal theories of justice. These justice-based theories serve as the primary basis for bioethics investigations into social and political issues concerning the uses of biotechnology. Because the ethics of care pays attention not only to human flourishing, but also to non-human flourishing through its broad inclusivity of human interaction with the environment and animals, it allows for an investigation of the question—*what makes us human?*—a particularly relevant question in the cloning debate.

Care is broadly defined 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” (Tronto 1993a, 142). In contrast to liberal political and philosophical theories, the feminist ethic of care offers a contemporary account of how we can learn to care for the “Other.” The concept of the Other is built in contrast to the self, and is considered a “fundamental category of human thought . . . [and] no group ever sets itself up as the One without at once setting up the ‘Other’” (de Beauvoir 29). In the case of human cloning, the “One” is humanity, and the “Other” is the clone. Through this concept of the Other, there is a connection between feminist thought and the cloning debate, articulated in fears that clones will be fundamentally different from humans, a thought echoed in history in the metaphysical relationship of men as opposed to women.

Included in this first chapter on care ethics is the foundational tenets of the theory as it has been articulated in book-length works by feminist scholars including Carol Gilligan, Sara Ruddick, Eva Feder Kittay, Annette Baier, Nel Noddings, Joan Tronto, Selma Sevenhuijsen, and Virginia Held; some of the major critiques of liberal theory by these scholars; and finally, a section describing the main arguments in the debate over human cloning and how a care ethics approach might respond to them.

The second chapter of this thesis examines two contemporary speculative novels: Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* (2003) and Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* (2005). These novels help to demonstrate the need for increased attention to the problems of care in Western societies, as well as how our current debate over human cloning is an impoverished one without a care ethics approach. The social landscape of these narratives show how cloning is imagined as a cure for problems of care in contemporary Western societies, including the United States and Great Britain. These novels portray cloning as a technology that is developed roughly in the last half of the twentieth century, with the full implications of cloning taking place in either our current time or in the near future. They point out how cloning is misused according to the social and moral landscape of a particular historical moment—*our* historical moment. These novels can be termed “speculative fiction,” a sort of hybrid genre that encompasses utopian, dystopian, sci-fi, and fantasy novels with particular characteristics that I describe below. My critique of these novels also involves questioning how the narrative of the texts and the characters' actions and thoughts reflect some of the potentially disturbing consequences of contemporary liberalism and the ethical system that underlies the uses of technological

innovation in modern biology. I conclude that the cloning cure for care is ultimately doomed to failure because it is not used within a broader vision of social care.

Cloning and Its Uses

For this thesis, I am not concerned with the actual process of cloning; both reproductive cloning and research cloning are practiced in labs today and both are controversial.¹

Also associated with human cloning, and even more controversial, is genetic manipulation of cloned embryos. “Somatic” manipulation involves manipulating strands of DNA of an embryo so that the person produced would have modified genetic traits, but the modifications would not be transferred to future generations. “Germline” manipulation changes the chromosomes of the embryo so future generations would also exhibit the same traits. Both types of genetic manipulation are practiced in labs on animals for research purposes; however,

articles proposing [human germline manipulation] are appearing with increased frequency. In mice and other animals that have been employed as models for human biology, germline modification has actually proved technically easier than somatic manipulation . . . given what has been accomplished in animals and the availability of in vitro fertilization, there appears to be no technical obstacles to initiating germline modification experiments in humans. (Council for Responsible Genetics)

¹ Both processes are similar. To clone a human, a scientist would: obtain an egg cell from a female; remove the nuclear DNA from the egg cell to produce an enucleated egg; insert the nucleus of a donor adult cell into the enucleated egg to produce a reconstructed egg; activate the reconstructed egg with chemicals or electric current in vitro to stimulate the reconstructed egg to commence cell division; initiate development of the activated, reconstructed egg (zygote) to a suitable stage of early embryonic development in vitro; then transfer the embryo to the uterus of a female host that has been suitably prepared to receive it. To harvest stem cells from a cloned embryo, instead of implanting the embryo, scientists remove them from the embryo after it has grown to the 100-200 cell stage and then discard the remainder (President’s Council on Bioethics). Recent breakthroughs in stem cell research indicate the possibility for stem cells to be derived from adult skin cells, thereby avoiding the ethical conundrum of extracting stem cells from embryos.

When we think of human cloning, it seems unlikely in the real world; however, it is not the far-fetched fantasy that many in the public would like to think. Additionally, the ethical dilemmas of cloning are not apparent to everyone, as is evidenced in some of the recent attempts to bring about the appearance of the world's first clone. In 2001, for example, Clonaid, the biotech company linked to the Raelian cult,² claimed the successful birth of the first clone, a baby girl, who supposedly now lives in Israel; however, they have never produced the baby or any documentation of the science employed (CNN.com). Mark Hunt, a Virginia state representative and lawyer, gave Clonaid over \$500,000 to produce a clone of his dead son, Andrew, a 10 month old baby who died in 1999 during a heart surgery (Lauria). His motivation for attempting to clone the baby was to assuage the grief he and his wife felt over their child's death. Dr. Richard Seed, a former Harvard professor, proclaimed in December 1997 that he intended, with Kentucky fertility expert Panayiotis Zavos and Italian "maverick" fertility doctor Severino Antinori, to set up a cloning lab in international waters to avoid any possible government or legal intervention (Caplan). These are examples of real-life persons who do not believe it is anyone else's business if they should decide to produce a clone; yet when their stories hit the media, a storm of disapproval and fear ignites the public. Richard Dawkins articulates these fears, asking "who is most likely to get themselves cloned? A nice person like you? Or someone with power and influence like Saddam Hussein? A hero we'd all like to see more of, like David Attenborough? Or someone who can pay, like Rupert Murdoch?" (55). Despite the popular argument that cloning is part

² The Raelian Cult believes that extraterrestrial aliens created human life on earth, and believe humanity's mission on earth is to develop cloning technology as a path to eternal life. (See International Raelian Movement, 2005).

and parcel of our constitutional rights to privacy and reproductive freedom, it is a divisive and controversial issue in the press and with the public.

In biotechnology, there are two ways to delineate the uses of human cloning, both of which are relevant to this thesis. The first, and the one most often discussed in the cloning debate, is its use as a reproductive technology for prospective parents (or the singular, “parent”). The other purpose of cloning technology could be called “laboratory cloning”—cloning in the lab to produce a copy of a person for reasons other than reproduction in the family. The most commonly stated desired use for laboratory cloning is stem cell research, which has the potential for curing diseases, a use that is problematized by Kazuo Ishiguro’s novel *Never Let Me Go*, in which public research programs develop clone children for organ harvesting.

Cloning for reasons other than reproduction of children is seldom discussed in academia or on ethics panels; possibly, one such use would be to create a transgenic human, which Crake does in *Oryx and Crake*. This reason for cloning is frequently denied by scientists as a motive and by ethicists as a desirable possibility, yet the reproductive uses for cloning are clearly not a viable possibility without extensive research and trials of cloning in the lab. In addition, transgenic animals are not uncommon in laboratory research, so a transgenic human, in theory, is not impossible.³ While it might be argued that even laboratory cloning will require a mother to carry a

³ Transgenic mice that express human genes are frequently used in medical research. In addition to research uses, transgenic animals received a lot of attention in the art world in 2002. Eduardo Kac, an artist from Chicago, produced a transgenic rabbit, which expressed a jellyfish gene that made the rabbit glow iridescent green in ultraviolet light. Kac asserts that artists are looking for new mediums for their work, and transgenics is an appropriate artistic medium for investigating questions concerning biotechnology (see Kac, 2003).

cloned embryo to term, thereby making the product of cloning a private matter, the commodification of childbirth through ovum sales and surrogacy contracts enables laboratories to completely control the cloning process from embryo creation to baby delivery.

There may also be the possibility in the near future for artificial wombs, eliminating the need for a gestational mother.⁴ In today's global economy, it is entirely possible for a corporation or a private laboratory to have a baby. Just because it hasn't happened yet, however, does not mean that it will not happen at all. Lori Andrews, a lawyer who specializes in biotechnology, detects

a world of difference between reproductive technologies (in-vitro fertilization, egg donation, sperm donation, or surrogate motherhood), which allow couples to make up for a missing ingredient in the normal reproductive process, and the technologies now being proposed to let dead men beget children, to reanimate dead fetuses, and to create children with only one genetic parent. The former techniques meet existing needs; the latter create needs and try to shoehorn them into the existing category of women's reproductive choice. (Andrews 256)

Atwood and Ishiguro add the creation of new species and organ harvesting to Andrews' list. How are we to know whether cloning research in private labs is undertaken for widely-accepted humanitarian reasons or if they are a smokescreen for radical, selfish or inhumane uses?

⁴ Dr. Scott Gelfand of Oklahoma State University speculates that in the future, if artificial wombs are safe and effective, they could mean that women would no longer need maternity leave from their jobs, and employers would be reluctant to allow extended leaves for pregnancy and childbirth. Another speculation offered is that they may be insisted upon by health insurance companies to "promote safer environments than natural wombs which can be invaded by drugs and alcohol from a mother's body" (McKie, 2002). This would effectively promote a deeper intrusion of science and technology into women's control of their own bodies than ever before.

Regardless of the uses to which cloning is applied, the technology to create a clone is the same. And there is no ban on cloning in the U.S., although some states have passed laws banning reproductive or research-based cloning. There is also a federal law which prohibits federal funds to be used for cloning research; however, it does not prohibit private funding. My concern is that if cloning continues to be developed privately, then the uses for it will be decided by scientists and private funders, not civil society—the area of collective, social action that exists in between the family and the state, and a foundational organizational feature of a democratic society. This raises some serious questions about how much control governments and citizens have over the applications of cloning. Private funding essentially means that the uses of cloning and the motivation behind research may be hidden, increasing the likelihood that the birth of the first clone will come before we expect it, and the fate of the first clone will be determined not within a public conception of care but a private motivation of use that may or may not be caring.

In the liberal conception, questions about cloning are commonly framed as, “do we have a right to clone?”⁵ Political and ethical debates about reproductive freedom make this question a complicated one. Less common is the question framed as, “is it caring to clone?” Feminist philosophers of care ethics, such as Virginia Held, claim that the ethics of care is suitable for both men and women, valuable for examining global issues, relevant to social problems, and critical of the encroachment of the market into every aspect of life; however, often care ethics is seen as an appropriate ethic for personal

⁵ The “we” here could refer to either individuals (reproductive freedom) or scientists; the “freedom of scientific research” movement has its own world congress and declaration that claims nations have a moral responsibility to support various types of biotechnological research, including cloning. See Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies, <http://ieet.org/index.php/IEET/more/489/>.

relations or for the family, more relevant for women than for men, and incompatible with freedom. This thesis attempts to situate the ethics of care as a preferable theory for social and political purposes within such a broad and far reaching contemporary social and political issue—human cloning.

Chapter 1: Care Critiques of Liberalism, Care Theory, and Cloning Technology

The cloning question—its possibility or fact—has undergone serious debate amongst philosophers, politicians, scientists, and even the general public in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. One can consult a large number of sources that outline the pro and con arguments that lie at the core of questions generated by the possibility for cloning humans. Most recent speculations, however, strongly imply that the “should we?” question is quickly becoming irrelevant. The Institute of Advanced Study at the United Nations University submitted a report to the United Nations in October 2007 titled, “Is Human Reproductive Cloning Inevitable: Future Options for UN Governance.” In the preface to the report, the cloning issue is made explicit; scientists around the world “predict that the birth of a human clone is inevitable” (Kuppuswamy, Macer, Serbulea, and Tobin 2). Both British and American scientists have produced embryos from cloning, although no embryos have been implanted for gestation, and so far have only lived in the lab for a few days (Sample). Other writers also speculate whether the birth of a human clone has already taken place, or when its occurrence comes in the near future whether our ethical responses to it will come too late. According to Craig Venter, one of the top researchers of the human genome in the U.S., no area of modern science starts “with ethical discussions before the first experiment [is] done” (quoted in Connor 2008). With this kind of attitude, the “too late” scenario appears to be inevitable.

This kind of reactive approach is common in current political and legal debates surrounding biotechnology. Legal measures do exist to protest unjust or unfair patents on

genetic materials; however, David Resnick claims that when we examine the values expressed in legal decisions, it becomes clear that the courts are aligned with economic values that promote the biotechnology industry, often to the detriment of personal rights and liberties (153). Furthermore, violations of rights in biotechnology cases are expensive and time consuming to deal with in the court system. In controversial decisions, it is common for judges to assert that it is the role of legislators to determine bans on particular types of research. In the U.S., there is no ban on human cloning. Although a pair of bills passed through the U.S. House of Representatives in 2001 and 2003, both failed to pass in the U.S. Senate. As of March 2008, a revised version of the previous bill proposing to ban human cloning is being proposed by the House.

Some scholars claim that the route to public acceptance of cloning will take the same path as artificial insemination and in vitro fertilization in the late twentieth century. Initial shock and horror is replaced by curiosity, then experimentation, and then scientific success and public acceptance. In *Pandora's Baby* (2005), Robin Marantz Henig traces the ethical and political debates that raged over IVF technology during the 1970s. Back then, the debate raised questions like, “Would successful in vitro fertilization demand a reassessment of qualities so central to our humanity—a sense of doom and destiny, our understanding of who we are and where we are headed, our definitions of parents, children, love, sex, generation—that its very existence would threaten our collective soul? These questions may seem overdramatic today, unless you replace ‘in vitro fertilization’ with ‘human cloning’” (15). The ethical issues of IVF, as well as their questionable applications, are still with us. Despite public acceptance of IVF as a reproductive technology, its development paved the way for scientists to continue

experimentation on human reproductive material—eggs and sperm. There is a divide between acceptable use of the technology in the public realm as a method of reproduction, and the private uses of the technology in the laboratory. If we follow the logic of the public acceptability argument down its slippery slope, then eventually we might genetically engineer humanity right out of existence. This possibility is presented in *Oryx and Crake*, as I shall explain later.

The majority of arguments for or against cloning, regardless of how it will be used, are presented within a liberal conception of individual rights. Concerns of care are rarely addressed. Before discussing specific arguments commonly offered in the debate over cloning, an outline of the ethics of care and its critiques of liberal theory is in order. Contemporary liberalism is basically the overall economic, political, and philosophical framework of the contemporary Western world, and it follows that the cloning debate is argued most frequently within the boundaries of that rhetorical world. Liberalism can be defined as “a political programme or ideology whose goals include most prominently the diffusion, deepening and preservation of constitutional democracy, limited government, individual liberty, and those basic human and civil rights which are instrumental to any decent human existence” (Thorsen and Lie 7). Liberal theory begins with the assertion that justice is the first virtue of social institutions (Rawls, 1971/99, 3). The primary features of liberal justice theory also include a particular conception of persons as rational, self interested, and autonomous, as well as reliant on reasoned judgment, abstract principles, and universality.

The major features of the ethics of care include a conception of persons as social and relational, which forms the basis of care critiques of liberal autonomy. Second, where

liberal theory is reliant on abstract principles and universality, care ethics is grounded in contextuality and is concerned with the needs of particular persons. Equal rights, both human and civil, are important to both liberal theory and care ethics; however, care ethics recognizes that relationships are often not characterized by equality and have the potential to be oppressive in ways that are not obvious to either the oppressor or the oppressed. Third, power relations are an important consideration for care theorists who draw attention to ways in which care is interfered with or even damaged by power relationships. While liberal theory assumes that care takes place in families, a private realm of life often outside of the concerns of politics or justice, care ethics scholars challenge this assumption. They point out that not only is justice within the family an important part of building a caring society, so is learning to value and support carework that is performed, typically by women, both inside and outside of the home. Finally, while justice and fairness are important, Virginia Held argues that care is the primary value; indeed, she writes, “there can be care without justice, but there can be no justice without care” (134).

One of the strongest critiques of liberal values within the ethics of care comes from scholars who challenge its conception of autonomy. The conception of the liberal self, an autonomous agent who is self-governing and self-determining, occupies a central role in liberal theory, including Kantian moral philosophy and the utilitarian liberalism of John Stuart Mill. The *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* states, “Put most simply, to be autonomous is to be one’s own person, to be directed by considerations, desires, conditions, and characteristics that are not simply imposed externally upon one, but are part of what can somehow be considered one’s authentic self” (Christman). Liberal

autonomy assumes that we are self-interested individuals who are free to choose our conception of the good life free from outside forces.

Feminist scholars, particularly those who focus on care ethics, claim that this notion of autonomy is false and misleading. Relational autonomy theories contest the individualistic and atomized notion of human moral life found in the liberal conception of autonomy. Relational autonomy is better understood as a sort of relational negotiation, where people recognize how their relationships with others, as well as the social world in which they make their personal choices, greatly affect how they choose to live. As relationships change and our society changes, so does our autonomy. It is as flexible and constantly changing as we ourselves are, rather than a state of being we reach at adulthood and maintain throughout our adult lives. Relational autonomy is characterized by the conviction that persons are socially embedded and function as agents whose identities are formed within a context of social relationships and are shaped by social determinants (Mackenzie and Stoljar 4). The bedrock of relational autonomy is a conception of the self—the “social self”—that stands in contrast to the “independent self” of justice-based political and moral theories. Rather than viewing individuals as independent, the concept of the social self emphasizes relations that come before and after one’s existence. The social self is produced through interaction with others.

In more intimate relations, as between friends and family, the social self “focuses moral concern more on the qualities and activities appropriate to care of others than on legitimizing individual rights as the means for protecting individuals from one another” (Barclay 59). Interaction with others is not an option for anyone to reject; from a moral standpoint, caring relations are preferable to non-caring ones for both personal and social

reasons. From birth until death, we live in a matrix of interpersonal relationships, which in many ways work to both enhance and inhibit our autonomy, our sense of ourselves, and how we choose to live. Relational autonomy is the process by which we mediate these relations—both personal and social—to determine our values, ends, and actions. Since we are relational by default, our autonomy is also relational.

A second feminist critique of liberal theories is that they were developed in a patriarchal framework that separated concerns of the public and private spheres. Carol Gilligan's 1982 critique of Lawrence Kohlberg's work on moral psychology and her contrasting study of women's moral development, *In A Different Voice*, articulates the need for a morality grounded in feminist values in contrast to Kantian based moral theories that emphasize autonomy and rights. Her intent is to demonstrate

the centrality of the concepts of responsibility and care in women's constructions of the moral domain, to indicate the close tie in women's thinking between conceptions of the self and conceptions of morality, and finally, to argue the need for an expanded developmental theory that would include, rather than rule out from developmental consideration, the difference in the feminine voice. (Gilligan 1997, 582)

Gilligan's work functioned to launch expanded studies of feminist care ethics, which has undergone rigorous critical debates among feminist and non-feminist scholars for the past 25 years. Early critiques of liberal theory focused on calling attention to the potential social and political value of carework traditionally performed by women in the private home.

Early formulations of care ethics were somewhat dominated by motherhood as a concrete representation of what care ethics entailed. To demonstrate the gulf between the abstract concepts of liberalism and the concrete application of care ethics, Sara Ruddick's

Maternal Thinking (1989) articulates a process of critical thought that develops when mothers engage in caring work with children. According to Ruddick, “a mother caring for children engages in a discipline,” described much like any other discipline that involves establishing criteria for failure and success, prioritization of responsibilities, identifying virtues required of the work, evaluating progress, developing attitudes and making value judgments (24). Differences in disciplinary thought, whether they are scientific, critical, religious, or maternal, according to Ruddick, is how they will “distinguish true from false, will take some matters on faith, others on evidence, will judge evidence inadequate or faith misplaced” (16). The end goal of feminist maternal thinking is to foster preservation, growth, and social acceptability of children through works of preservative love, nurturance, and training (17). The thrust of Ruddick’s work is to point out that war and violence are antithetical to the lifework of every mother; therefore, it is in every mother’s interest to resist all forms of violence. The critical thought developed in the work of motherhood, according to Ruddick, is the same as feminist peace politics: “peacemakers create a communal suspicion of violence, a climate in which peace is desired, a way of living in which it is possible to learn and to practice nonviolent resistance and strategies of reconciliation. This description of peacemaking is a description of mothering” (Ruddick 244). Taken further, maternal thinking is not restricted to mothers, but is applicable to anyone who engages in carework for another person. Men are just as capable as women to develop the types of concrete thinking that evolve from practices of carework. Ruddick was among the first to develop a solid theoretical framework for care ethics. *Maternal Thinking* demonstrates that caring values,

developed through concrete practices of care, are critical to the political and social spheres.

Eva Feder Kittay also recognizes the potential in the mother/child relationship as a model for social and political practices. Kittay drives the point that traditional ethics and liberal theory assume that relationships between persons are equal and voluntary, when in reality, many of our relations are not chosen, nor are they equal. She sees “maternal practice as a paradigm for moral relations between two individuals who are not equally situated from the perspective of individual-based equality” (275). In contrast to liberal scholars such as John Rawls, whose philosophy requires that we remove our understandings of our selves in order to come to a fair conception of justice,⁶ Kittay’s conception of connection-based equality proposes that we see everyone as some mother’s child. With this understanding, we can recognize our entitlements to care when it is needed, as well as our entitlements to a socially supportive caring situation in the event we are called upon to give care to another (273). Kittay names her perspective the “vulnerability model” of care ethics, emphasizing the need both for care in society as well as for the dependent and the dependency worker, and highlighting the need for moral theories to recognize unequal distributions of power. Where Kittay’s theory fails as a larger social and political ethic of care for cloning is evident in Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*. Kittay claims that “being a mother’s child gives one a claim to equality” (1999, 25). Ishiguro’s clones have no mothers and are exploited by their ‘guardians’ through an

⁶ In John Rawls’ *A Theory of Justice*, in order to come to a fair conception of justice, representative members of a society must put themselves behind a “veil of ignorance,” disregarding their actual positions in life (gender, class, religion, etc.). Only by ignoring our conceptions of the self will we come to a fair conclusion of what justice requires (Rawls 1971/1997).

oppressive application of the ethic of care. While Kittay is concerned with power relationships, she seems to be concerned mainly with genetic relationships and responsibilities of the greater society to ensure that families are able to take care of their children, even children who have more than typical dependencies. When cloning confuses family relationships, particularly if cloning should occur outside of reproductive choice, a social and political care ethic is necessary for guiding how a cloned child will be treated in personal relationships as well as social relationships.

Care ethics is firmly grounded in the context of power relations that is often unrecognized in liberal theory. Where liberal theory assumes universal application of justice in the public realm separate from the private realm, Joan Tronto focuses carefully on power relations and makes a strong case for extending the ethics of care out of the personal and into the political in *Moral Boundaries* (1993a), providing a comprehensive definition of the values and practices necessary to a more complete political conception for care ethics. Tronto explains how moral arguments made within particular historical, social and cultural contexts functioned to block the effectiveness of women's moral reasoning, which led to "moral boundaries" set between men and women in the 18th century. Tronto connects what was considered women's morality—a deficient moral sense for the public realm—to the same kind of thinking that characterized the Scottish Enlightenment, which was greatly influential to philosophy and politics during the late eighteenth century. The Scottish Enlightenment, like women's moral voices, exhibited "senses of connection, moral sensibility, attachment to others and to community" (1993a, 57). In this way, Tronto effectively argues that women's morality is not a biological,

psychological, or cultural connection women had due to their “natural” qualities or their historical relegation to the private sphere.

According to Tronto, care is an integral part of human moral life, and a “crucial concept for an adequate theory of how we might make human societies more moral” (1993a, 154). Care ethics functions as a contextual moral theory, rather than a universal moral theory. The liberal assumption of universality—that abstract rules cover a wide variety of contexts and are applicable for everyone—may work well for large nations with a diverse population; abstract rules of conduct can be made universal and are able to avoid conflicts over religious or cultural differences in moral judgment. Yet, feminist critiques of universal theories demonstrate how universality functions to keep the private and public spheres separate, a boundary that is unacceptable (Tronto 1993a, 29).

Tronto articulates care as an ethic that is applicable for both public and private spheres. In developing a political conception of care ethics that moves beyond this public/private boundary, Tronto defines care as a set of four phases, or practices: caring about, taking care of, care-giving, and care-receiving. Out of these four elements of the *practices* of care, the four moral values of the *ethic* of care are: attentiveness, responsibility, competence, and responsiveness (1993a, ch4). These four values of care—attentiveness, responsibility, competence, and responsiveness—form the foundation of Tronto’s political theory of care. Later, when I evaluate the social and political characteristics of care in *Oryx and Crake* and *Never Let Me Go*, I will use these four values of care as a critical part of my analysis.

Tronto also identifies possible problems inherent in the care ethics framework, including difficulties with properly assessing human needs, the possibility of difficulties

arising from attitudes of paternalism and parochialism, the need to minimize detached kinds of caring, associating those who need care as “others,” and the historical devaluation of care and carework that may hamper transforming care into a social and political ethic. Nevertheless, Tronto argues that “despite the intractability of the problems of otherness, privilege, and paternalism, I suggest that a moral theory that can recognize and identify these issues is preferable to a moral theory that, because it presumes all people are equal, is unable even to recognize them” (1993a, 147). For Tronto, as well as other care philosophers, to conceive of care as an integral element of our moral terrain we must reconceive some of our most deeply held assumptions about human nature and recognize that government intervention in care—traditionally conceived of as a private realm of life—may be necessary for promoting care in the personal/familial and social realms.

The practices of care are complemented by values of care—articulated by Tronto as attentiveness, responsibility, competence, and responsiveness. Care ethics involves both practices and values, and cannot operate effectively without both. Many feminist philosophers in care ethics agree that while current conceptions of feminist morality derive from “feminine” values associated with historical female practices of caring for family in the private home, an adequate moral framework must incorporate values that are a cooperative project of men and women’s insights. Annette Baier’s work in *Moral Prejudices* (1994) suggests that the ethic of care should be modeled with the value of trust as a primary consideration. In direct contrast to contractual relationships, in which conditions must be set forth in advance for the rights and responsibilities of each party, trusting relationships, such as those modeled on friendship, provide an alternative moral

paradigm to contract-based theories. Trust needs to be cultivated, responded to with critical reflection, and given careful attention. In addition to trust, according to Baier, we also must recognize that there will be times when we cannot trust, as well as times when we must learn to forgive and be forgiven. Baier's caring ethical approach to trust forms a meta-ethical account of what a caring society would value as an alternative to the contract.

While Baier makes suggestions for the development of social and political care ethics in part of her book, a majority of her work forms a comprehensive critique of liberal moralism, in particular Kantian ethics. In the chapter, "How Can Individualists Share Responsibility?" Baier writes, "It is very easy for a citizen in a large nation like this one to wash her hands of any responsibility for any decision taken by any public officials. Especially when one deplores a particular decision . . . responsibility is conveniently passed along to those with a taste for the exercise of power" (254). This very scenario is played out in *Oryx and Crake*, as Jimmy continually defers to Crake's scientific knowledge and personal opinion about human nature and the organization of society. As Snowman, putatively alone on the earth after a global disaster, he cries out, "You did this!" (Atwood 12). We aren't sure if he is speaking to his dead friend Crake, or to himself as he realizes his complicity in creating the apocalypse. " 'I didn't do it on purpose,' he says, in the sniveling child's voice he reverts to in this mood. 'Things happened, I had no idea, it was out of my control! What could I have done?' " (Atwood 45). Yet throughout the narrative there are places in which it is clear that Jimmy did have opportunities to change the course of events. Reasons why Jimmy did not, or rather could

not, act effectively for change are directly related to the impoverished caring he received and learned as a child, both from his parents and from the society in which he grew up.

In order to live in a caring society, we have to care enough about our society to take responsibility for how decisions are made and executed. Baier favors a more communitarian conception of the relationship between individuals and the society they live in. “Passive citizenship,” characterized as “clinging to the idea that moral responsibility must divide without remainder into the bit that is mine and not yours and the other bits that belong exclusively to other specific individuals” will only result in limiting the “sorts of shared action we engage in, [limiting] our ability to reform our inherited schemes of cooperation for the better” (266). In this sense, Baier’s ethic of care is grounded in a conception of care as a value that demonstrates how to encourage an active and public ethic of care about our society and all the people who live in it, including “Others” whom we do not know.

Selma Sevenhuijsen’s work on care and citizenship firmly establishes the link between the three realms of care—personal/familial, social, and political, and defines what “active citizenship” looks like. Sevenhuijsen describes the current argument for “new democratic practices” relevant to the shifting locations of government power in global society. The notion of a “controlling and steering government should be replaced by the idea of a responsive, supportive and organizing government, resulting in a two-way traffic in politics” (180). She claims that this type of reciprocal politics will result in the “intertwinement” of the social and the political. Civic society becomes a place to

exchange narratives of what counts in [people’s] lives and become acquainted with the stories of others. In this way, they will arrive at systems of shared meanings that will make sustainable forms of co-

existence possible . . . policymakers, as people who occupy positions of social responsibility, have the task of actively and responsively reacting to what they can learn from this about matters which are relevant for their institutional practices. (180)

Sevenhuijsen observes that practices of care are being “relocated” in a similar way. Care is moving from being women-centered to being a shared responsibility with men. Also, care is being moved from inside the private home to the social and political realms, as people articulate their needs for care or support of care-work in civic life. A third relocation is occurring in the medical world, where private medical care is no longer affordable or accessible, raising civic concerns about quality of life as people live longer and need long-term care. As a result of the needs for care and growing practices of active citizenship, values and practices of care will become an integral part of social and political organization. While Sevenhuijsen’s approach focuses on concrete needs for physical care, including day care and elder care, I argue that her approach towards the link between active citizenship and the values of care can contribute to developing a broad conception of care ethics that can be applied to a wide variety of human concerns, including such issues as human cloning.

Nel Noddings agrees that “caring about” is a prerequisite to “caring for.” Noddings’ work takes a bottom-up approach, emphasizing the need for education of children to involve learning how to “care about.” An education stressing care would promote its value in personal relationships, its application in civic society, and its policy in government. While rights are important and should not be rejected, Noddings points out that needs have served as the historical basis for rights: “A group expresses a need as

a demand for a right. The audience that is addressed listens and has the power to act (or acknowledges that the demanding group has the power to seize what it wants), and it grants the right, sometimes after a bloody struggle” (55). According to Noddings, the traditional liberal conception of persons as rights-bearers is faulty; a more realistic approach is one that views persons as “organisms needing care” (56). Noddings contrasts Rawls’ Original Position with the “original condition” of vulnerability as an infant with needs addressed in the home. Noddings admits that this approach is subject to critique—not all homes are good ones, and not all needs are met because they can often conflict; however, “best practices” of care in the home can translate to the public sphere in order to create a more caring society with institutions that promote policies more in line with real life as it is lived by real people, rather than ones based on a faulty view of persons as rational, autonomous (in the liberal sense), and only self-interested.

This liberal conception of persons, argues Virginia Held, “leads to a narrowing of the gap between model and reality and to the wider acceptance of the assumption of indifference as standard and appropriate—not only as an assumption but as a guide” (83). In other words, these liberal assumptions teach us to be uncaring towards other persons with whom we are not closely and emotionally connected. With this view, passive citizenship and non-interference becomes an ideal to strive towards—a way to “respect” the rights of others. Care ethics scholars claim that this perspective is fine for certain domains, such as criminal law; however, “the assumptions and conceptions of liberal individualism do not serve us well in many of our other experiences as human persons in a large variety of relationships and that [care] perspectives should also inform our views of the legal and the political” (Held 88). While current conceptions of care ethics

maintain the critique of justice frameworks, very few care ethics scholars think that care and justice are incompatible with each other, or that one should be subsumed under the other. In fact, many believe that we cannot have one without the other. Injustices can be found in contexts of care, and care scholars are quite aware of the inequalities between those who have the capabilities to provide care and those who are in need of care.

Recognizing the right to receive care free of oppressive circumstances as a valid political claim is one example of how care and justice frameworks are mutually supportive. Justice and care can work in tandem to promote a caring society in which everyone still has the full rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic state.

Virginia Held's *The Ethics of Care: Personal, Political, and Global* (2006) is the most recent book-length publication on care ethics, and her work in this text provides an excellent overview of the state of the theory. Most importantly, Held's position asserts that care is more important than justice, and "though justice is surely among the most important moral values, much life has gone on without it, and much of that life has had moderately good aspects" (71). Additionally, care is a more basic human value, because we can have care without justice; we cannot have justice without care. Some critics attack this view by claiming that care approaches will result in oppressive government policies against citizens who do not wish to care. This critique is based on the liberal assumption that we should not be interfered with by others—that our decisions are not or should not be tempered by outside interference—a view that is conceptually different than the relational emphasis in a care ethics approach.

Care ethics as a whole does not offer such a narrow view by throwing justice and concerns for rights out the window. Furthermore, a feminist care ethic is not necessarily

composed of paternalistic or maternalistic qualities and values. Gilligan reminds us of the crucial distinction between a *feminine* ethic of care and a *feminist* ethic of care:

Care as a *feminine* ethic is an ethic of special obligations and interpersonal relationships. Selflessness or self-sacrifice is built into the very definition of care when caring is premised on an opposition between relationships and self-development. A *feminist* ethic of care is an ethic of the relational world as that world appears within a patriarchal social order: that is, a world apart, separated politically and psychologically from a realm of individual autonomy and freedom which is the realm of justice and contractual obligation. (emphasis added 1995, 122)

Care ethics involve primarily relational values of attentiveness, responsibility, competence, and responsiveness to the needs for care—qualities that are not restricted by any social category, be it gender, race, or class (Tronto 1993b, 252). These practices are not only present through the predominant theoretical examples of parent/child care, elderly care, or care of the sick and ill; the ethics of care can be practiced among adults who have no legal impairments (such as limited legal/political rights of those under 18 years old) or physical or mental impairments (such as the elderly and disabled). Care in this sense should not be *equated* with respect of others' rights, although it is certainly a component, but an ethic that requires involvement in the personal and social context. In contrast to respect for rights, care ethics promotes mutual trust and empathy. Through the mutual practices of care—both giving and receiving, which every person experiences—we develop our ideas of how we want to live and who we want to be, a critical component of autonomy formation. Held's conception of "mutual autonomy," which fits under the relational autonomy umbrella, explains that "good caring relations can involve not only mutual recognition of moral equality but practices that avoid subtle as well as

blatant coercion where it is disrespectful and inconsiderate . . . we can foster trust and mutuality in place of benevolent domination” (56).

Held devotes an entire chapter to critiquing the emergence of market-driven values into every area of our lives, a topic relevant to my analysis of *Oryx and Crake*. She connects market values with liberal values of individual rights, autonomy and independence, and the primacy of the contract. In health care, education, environmentalism, child care, and other areas of life in which care is an explicit issue, any value system which privileges individualism over relation or universality over context is inappropriate because it devalues the ethic of care and its values of attentiveness, responsibility, responsiveness, and competence in the relational context. Held believes that if we draw boundaries around particular issues, such as these, then we will be able to allow the development of moral values outside of market values—where individual preference, primacy of the contract, and profit motives govern all activity. This would entail a radical restructuring of our society, our politics, and our market.

In some of the most recent work on care ethics, some scholars are speculating that care and markets can be reconciled without such a radical approach. In a geographical study of a housing market in the U.K., Susan Smith, a political geographer, examines how people actually engage with markets, noting that they do not always do so within liberal values of independence and autonomy in their minds, but with concern for others and with the values of care. Smith asserts that “markets are made, and in all kinds of ways, not many of which resemble the economism by which they are so often indexed” (8). Markets do not exist in a vacuum; they are made socially, politically, and culturally. With this knowledge in hand, Smith claims that not only “the practice of politics but also

the performance of markets could, in theory, be made, required and expected to adopt vocabularies, motivations and inclinations that are positive rather than negative to welfare; that could prioritize (or not) concern for others. Markets do not have to be exempt from an ethic of care” (15).

Issues of care and the needs of the vulnerable form a particular problem for liberal theory, which is framed by a model of contracts between disinterested strangers who could care less about what reasons the other has for his or her actions. For liberal theory, the relationships between family and friends—people who care for each other—are unsuited for the development of moral theory because

adult individuals . . . don’t want to be seen for moral purposes as enmeshed in relationships they did not choose . . . [persons] recognize obligations to respect others’ rights. But caring is something seen as limited to particular relations of family, lovers, or friends and as largely irrelevant to political institutions or even to moral theory. (Held 76-7)

Within liberal theories, individuals are separate, autonomous agents who are free of obligations unless they enter into them voluntarily. A social and political care ethic is devalued directly because of the conception of the liberal subject; there are no moral obligations to care unless they are voluntarily entered into. Individual autonomy dictates that in the moral sense, no other person, their needs, or their relational claims upon you can dictate your choices in life, which are to be decided after rational consideration with emotion put to the side.

Held writes, “It is not satisfactory to think of care, as it is conceptualized by liberal individualism, as a mere personal preference an individual may choose or not. Neither is it satisfactory to think of caring relationships as merely what rational individuals may choose to care about as long as they give priority to universal, impartial,

moral principles” (95). Held argues for making care more relevant in our social lives, as well as learning how to care about others for whom we are not directly responsible—including “the Other,” that we define ourselves against, “Others” for example, that live on the other side of the world, or “Others” who are not like us, such as the potential clone. Care ethics have great potential for entering into and widening the debate on cloning with relevant questions of care and how cloning interferes with, confuses, or effaces issues of care in familial, societal, and global contexts.

A final issue that care scholars address in liberal theory is the presumption of care that underwrites the entire rights framework. While liberal theories tend to claim that individual rights can only be restricted on the basis of harm to society, care ethics raises our attention to the realm of civic association that takes place in between the individual and the larger society. In civic associations,

members develop enough empathetic feeling for one another to engage in common projects . . . [they] often think as much about maintaining the association and the connectedness it involves as about the individual gains or losses to them resulting from their membership. There exists in this realm of public life a presumption of social relations that hold individuals together, and without them, the larger society will not cohere. (Held 131-2)

Empathy is a civic virtue that maintains community relationships. Liberal theory presumes that this civic life exists, as well as caring relationships between families in the private sphere.

These civic associations are extremely important according to Ruth Groenhout, a feminist scholar whose work, *Connected Lives: Human Nature and an Ethics of Care* (2004), includes a chapter on care and cloning. Groenhout claims that liberal conceptions of rights and justice obscure or dismiss the social production of identity. This social

production of identity takes place in the middle ground between the individual and the larger society—the civil society. Ultimately promoting a new form of eugenics, cloning technology will not be a social good, Groenhout argues, but rather will create a new category for discrimination. Groenhout rejects the possibility of human cloning on the basis that “we need to learn what it is to be human by accepting human differences and finitudes rather than assuming that the best way to think about human nature is as something we can modify with impunity” (183).

The Politics of Cloning and the Concerns of Care

When we examine current debates about cloning, it is apparent that liberal justice theory provides the framework from which to discuss whether it should be allowed, who should fund it, or how it could be regulated. In this section, I will discuss some of the main arguments in favor of cloning research and speculate how care ethics approach might respond to these arguments.

One of the primary arguments in favor of allowing human cloning is reproductive freedom, “properly understood to include . . . a negative right, that is, a right to use [assisted reproductive technologies] without interference by the government or others when made available by a willing provider” (Brock 143). This right is based on the liberal assumption that autonomy is fostered by the right not to be interfered with by others, in particular, society or the government. Reproductive rights to cloning are also tied to open markets for care, which are problematic for care ethics scholars like Held. The right to reproduce, according to many liberal critics, includes the right to choose what kind of child to have, relevant to the cloning debate and debates over “designer

babies,” genetically enhanced children whose parents could choose particular genetic attributes to be manipulated or inserted at the embryonic stage. This right is also argued within the context that parents maintain a substantial amount of control over who their children will become outside of genetic considerations through educational choices and parenting practices; therefore, genetic factors should also be considered as entrenched within parental rights rather than subject to state restrictions. John Harris claims that the right to reproductive freedom also includes the right to genetically manipulate a potential child for desirable characteristics (79). With a strict interpretive framework of constitutional law, the right to reproductive freedom must arguably allow the freedom of choice to produce *particular* children through germline manipulation.

In *Oryx and Crake*, this technology is just starting to be widely practiced by prospective parents, who have lost the ability to appreciate children for who they are in favor of molding them into a particular type of person who will easily conform to a narrow conception of what is considered “successful” in society. A care ethics approach would consider carefully the practices of parenting that form the context for cloning and genetic manipulation. Today, there is an increasing trend towards intensive parenting, documented in the practice of motherhood by Sharon Hays. While Hays’ book, *The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood* (1998), concentrates on the evolution of the practices of mothering, we can apply its main point towards parenting in general. Intensive parenting practices result in a highly controlling and potentially coercive relationship between parents and children. Accompanied by the increasing tendency for medical practices to intervene in the well-being of children, as defined by socially constructed norms of successful personhood, intensive parenting ideologies combined

with cloning and/or genetic manipulation of children before they are born may be detrimental to individuals as well as family relationships.

The relationships between children and parents are sometimes articulated as a conflict between parents' rights to reproductive freedom and a child's right to an open future. In a speculative U.S. Supreme Court opinion about the constitutionality of cloning under reproductive rights, Cass Sunstein argues that there may be a constitutional right to reproductive cloning, "akin to the rights to use contraception and to have an abortion, firmly recognized under our prior causes" that can be invaded only "if the government can satisfy 'strict scrutiny', by showing the most compelling of justifications" (208). On one side, a federal government cloning ban "could not survive rational basis review" in the courts. On the other, the government might have a rational basis for the ban based on the prevention of social harm (213). Arguments against human cloning that parallel reproductive freedom invoke the "right to have a unique identity and a right to ignorance about one's future or to an open future" (Brock 151). These rights of a would-be child conflict with the rights of would-be parents, and have provoked an ethical debate concerning whether we have a duty to consider the rights of future persons at all.

How would a care approach address the right to cloning under the right to reproductive freedom? Parents may harbor expectations of a clone or a genetically enhanced child that are unrealistic because social and environmental factors of a child's development would be discounted. This would function as an oppressive form of relational autonomy in which parents would, perhaps unconsciously, apply affection and love upon a child only if they turned out the way they were genetically "ordered." A common objection to the right to reproductive freedom, as articulated above, is the

contrasting right to an open future, which would be in doubt if a clone of another person were produced. A common argument against this assertion is that clones frequently occur in nature. Identical twins could be said to be clones, and there does not appear to be any psychological or identity issues particular to twins that would be exacerbated or amplified in a clone; however, this analogy does not reflect the intention present in the creation of a clone that is not present in the creation of identical twins. Additionally, Groenhout asserts that it is ridiculous to ignore the genetic determinism that is advanced by scientific rhetoric and its effect on potential parents. A care ethics approach draws attention to the relationship between those who need care, such as children, and those who provide care, such as parents. The parent child relationship is not a relationship of equality, and the argument that a child has a right to an open future may be discounted because children are not extended the same rights as full adults in our society. Therefore, the conflict of rights claim is problematic. As explained above, care ethics, as a contextual approach to ethical problems, would consider the cultural contexts of the right to reproductive freedom. Groenhout speculates that “it is hard to see why parents would choose to produce a child through the complicated, expensive, and risky technique of cloning if they did not think that the cloned individual would be, in some sense, the individual cloned” (172).

The genetic determinism assumption is supported by the study of “behavioral genetics,” which implies that human traits including intelligence, sexuality, criminality, mental illness, and even caring behaviors have genetic links that may be manipulated (U.S. Department of Energy Office of Science). It is fairly clear that proponents of genetic manipulation of embryos for particular genes that express certain traits, *would*

have the motivation of creating a particular type of person whose autonomy would be limited by the expectations of those with whom they have close relationships, such as their parents. This could be demonstrably true in a social sense, if not a biological one. With a clone, a parent might know what to expect beforehand, taking some of the anxiety out of parenthood. Known quantities always seem safer and simpler than unknown ones. This also draws attention to the fact that parenthood is often seen as a one-sided responsibility and right; by contrast, a care approach to parenthood recognizes the reciprocal quality of the parent/child relationship. Few parents, I think, would disagree that children teach parents about life just as much as parents teach children. Removing the uncertainty factor in a child would diminish our capacity to learn from our children, as well as the joy and surprise we often find in them. Because the care ethic approach to autonomy is at its core a relational condition, we must pay attention to the values and motivations expressed in a desire to produce a clone and the potential relationships that may be affected as a result. Under a care ethics approach, the constitutional right to reproduction would not include the right to clone.

Another major argument for the advancement of cloning technology is the appeal to freedom of scientific research, linked explicitly to freedom of thought and freedom of speech. This right is contested mainly by pointing out that cloning is not safe, transferring the onerous of proof onto the scientific community. At this point, we should be reminded of the earlier quotation from Craig Venter, a leader in the scientific community, who claimed that ethics does not come before experimentation. Still, most scientists agree that cloning is not safe and should not be pursued to produce a new person. Regardless, there is no law prohibiting it in the U.S. Another question we might ask is *how* science will

determine when it *is* safe to attempt a human clone. This question has yet to be addressed by anyone, either in science, bioethics, care ethics, or civic society.

One of the difficulties in answering this question lies in the fact that because federal funding is not approved for research on cloning, the majority of research takes place in private laboratories. The public has no say in what a company does beyond their willingness or refusal to buy market shares. A care approach to scientific freedom would be to simply limit the incursion of the market into areas of life such as reproduction. Also, science as a practice could be made more transparent to the public, bringing public concerns to the realm of civic discourse. Removing the market from reproduction would effectively change the current negative right to reproductive freedom into a positive right—the state would have to intervene as a provider of reproductive options, but we could demand that it do so with caring policies that are still fair and just. Within a care framework, constitutional rights to equal access could be invoked to avoid discriminatory application of reproductive services.

State intervention would have to also include removing market involvement in currently used reproductive technologies such as IVF, which are well documented to be poorly regulated, highly selective in who they choose to help, and prone to low success rates (Weil 2006). In addition to restricting market involvement in reproductive technology, the issue of infertility should be treated not as a medical problem, but a social one that places a high value on the condition of motherhood to the detriment of women. Jean Bethke Elshtain writes that many women put themselves through the reproductive IVF wringer in order to have a genetically related child, which causes misery that “comes from having expectations lifted out of all proportion in relation to chances of success

(with procedures like *in vitro*), only to find, time and time again, that the miracle of modern medicine has turned into an invasive, expensive, mind-bending, heart-rending dud. A doleful denouement to high-tech generated expectations and the playing out of ‘reproductive freedom’” (187). While not a care scholar, Elshtain’s remarks hit upon two important features of care ethics—attention to the care of the self, and to being aware of how our social world creates and encourages particular forms of behavior that may enhance or detract from autonomous choices.

The commodification of biotechnology includes such issues as the patenting of genes, cures to diseases discovered through genetic research, the future prospect of what Lee Silver calls the “Genrich,”⁷ and the body-parts industry; these issues fuel criticism by social justice advocates who see only greater inequality resulting from human genetic technology. Yet these same advocates find ways to argue within the justice framework, suggesting that perhaps social disadvantage could be bred away by using genetic technology to deliberately enhance the characteristics of certain historically disadvantaged groups.⁸ A care ethics approach asserts “we need to think through whether ‘genetic improvement’ can ever be separated from the illegitimate assumption that some human lives are worth less than others” (Groenhout 181). If we kept market values out of reproduction, then we would have an opportunity to examine more closely the social implications of genetic intervention and cloning.

Richard Epstein, a libertarian legal scholar, states that “the major social task is to divide legal action from illegal conduct” in the context of harms to society (265).

⁷ the upper economic classes who are the only ones who can afford access to genetic technology, See Silver (1997).

⁸ For an excellent primer on genetic equality arguments, see Farrelly (2004).

Relevant harms to cloning may include psychological harms to the cloned child; however, Epstein dismisses these easily with the “twin” argument. Another might be psychological harm to the parent, which Epstein believes can be fixed by making it clear, “by statute and by agreement, if not by birth, that the woman who gives birth to a cloned child must agree to raise it as her own, for better or for worse. We can demand that her husband take on the obligations of its father. For single women, we might be forced to do without a father” (274). Epstein does not support a ban on human cloning because “few would be inconvenienced” (276). Epstein is comfortable with legally burdening women more than men, as he does not include what legal obligations a single *father* of a clone would have. It must be unthinkable that a cloned child would have to do without a *mother*. Epstein’s argument demonstrates the liberal approach to care. Care takes place in the private home, and how a clone would be cared for by a parent or set of parents that do not truly want it (i.e., if it does not meet their genetic expectations) is not a consideration for the law, presumably unless the child is abused. A care approach would address these motivations in advance, and work out ways in which society and political policy could contribute to an appropriate and caring environment for optimal development of all children, whether they are produced “naturally” or through reproductive technologies.

In conclusion to his analysis of the legalities of cloning, Epstein argues that “if it should come to pass that some horror stories occur, then we can think of more focused responses, just as we do in many other areas of life” (Epstein 277). His argument demonstrates the reactive character of liberal conceptions of the role of law and policy in society and should serve as a warning flag that the political system in place will wait for those horror stories first, before they attempt to legislate against them. *Never Let Me Go*

demonstrates the difficulty in relying on legislation against Epstein's "horror stories after the fact"; Ishiguro's clones provide a benefit for humanity that is not easily reversed by appeals to justice. Because clones are denied human rights, they have no legal standing either; they are embedded in relationships of power that are unrecognized either by themselves or their "guardians," setting legal solutions outside the realms of possibility.

The care approach to legal issues is, as always, a contextual one; however, it does advocate that there are particular areas of life that are subject to claims of justice, while others are subject to claims of care. I have presented care ethics as opposed to cloning for a variety of reasons, all of which are related to the concept of persons as socially embedded, relational in their autonomy, and resistant of the reach of the market in reproductive choices. Epstein's suggestion that statute and agreement be forced upon a woman who gives birth to a cloned child is an example of an extremely uncaring application of justice and illustration of the reactive nature of liberal procedures. Epstein's arguments for not banning cloning are uncaring in the same manner that Venter's claim about science and ethics is uncaring. Care ethics would advocate for a wide ranging, inclusive, and public debate over how to ensure *attentiveness* to potential harms, *responsiveness* to those harms in a proactive way, *responsibility* to see that harm is avoided, and *competence* to ensure the avoidance of situations that would make care a complicated and difficult process.

A commonly used argument against cloning is that it would be a violation of the principle of human dignity. What exactly is human dignity? According to the U.N. Declaration on Human Rights, human dignity is an inherent quality of human persons that entitles them to certain rights and standards of living (United Nations). In order for

cloning to be a violation of human dignity, then, clones would have to be widely considered as non-human, an issue explored by Ishiguro in *Never Let Me Go* through the clone rights movement. The Catholic Church is the strongest proponent of the human dignity argument, although they also assert that clones would be human, and “extend to persons created through cloning the same moral protections that already apply to other persons created in the image of God” (National Bioethics Advisory Commission 170). The National Bioethics Advisory Commission argues that “concerns about identity and individuality focus mainly on how persons created through cloning will inevitably or possibly be treated, rather than whether such persons are actually unique creatures in God’s image” (170). The crux of the human dignity argument is not actually whether clones would be human—they clearly would be—but is based on the historically-supported presumption that society will not treat them so, no matter what rights are set in place to protect them.

In *Never Let Me Go*, clones, who do not have parents or genetic ties to any others, are exclusively genetically determined. As products of humans rather than nature, they are assumed to be lacking souls and are treated as animals. The creation of clones outside of the institution of the family supports denying them human rights and human dignity. Cloning as an explicit power issue has not been explored yet by any theorist. If the debate over cloning continues to be framed by rights and justice, then it appears to be simply a matter of passing laws that guarantee clones human rights. The global struggle for human rights demonstrates how passing a resolution or a law that applies to everyone in theory does not necessarily work in practice. By contrast, a care ethics approach is firmly rooted in human dignity; the values and practices of care acknowledges and advances human

dignity. The inherent dignity of persons can be affirmed by justice and a platform for human rights, but it does not begin there. It begins with an appropriate social and political conception of care as the foundation for human flourishing. Care must be valued and supported if human rights are to have any effect on human life.

Political arguments about human cloning are almost universally based on liberties and rights that can obscure issues of care. Care theorists have been careful to demonstrate how many of the personal freedoms we take for granted grow out of a presumption of personal and social formulations of care. Only by paying attention to the personal and social needs for care can we hope to promote a more equally just society through law and policy. Cloning would not necessarily ease the needs for care; it would likely exacerbate these needs, both for clones as well as for the people that produce them and live with them. In the second chapter of this thesis, I demonstrate that speculative fiction can help to provide a concrete context from which to analyze how caring relationships cannot be presumed when we are looking at the social implications of cloning technology, as liberal theory presumes they exist. Cloning is envisioned by scientists in these novels as a cure for the needs for care, with disastrous consequences for individuals and larger society.

Chapter 2: Speculative Visions of Cloning Technology

The novel is a literary mode that embeds characters in particular social situations and as such, may serve as a context for examining ethical issues. This point is elaborated by Peter Johnson, when he states that moral philosophers use literature in three ways. First, novels are deployed in moral philosophy as sources for examples. Second, characters, plots, or narrative events are “used as a way of illustrating the weakness in the ethical theory that purports to explain them,” (13) as well as, in the case of the works of speculative fiction examined here, to point out the strengths of an ethical theory whose tenets are devalued in the society depicted in the narrative. Third, the novel can perform a persuasive role in an ethics “completely disestablished from its traditional foundational role” (13). Martha Nussbaum, in her interdisciplinary exploration of ethics and literature, finds that literature provides “a certain type of priority to the perception of particular people and situations, rather than to abstract rules . . . this conception, rather than being imprecise and irrational, is actually superior in rationality and in the relevant sort of precision” (vi). Literature provides a concrete context for ethics. This approach is particularly appealing for feminist moral theory, which functions to show the inadequacy of the historically valued model: “the representation of morality as a compact, propositionally codifiable, impersonally action-guiding code within an agent, or as a compact set of law-like propositions that ‘explain’ the moral behavior of a well-formed moral agent” (Walker 7-8). Moral philosophy and literature, working hand in hand, seem to be a particularly useful place for a feminist inquiry into the ethics of care.

For example, Tronto notes how historically, utopian fictions have served as criticisms of current social habits more than in their vision of what is possible (1999, 158). She also observes how “some of the most compelling visions of politics of care are utopian” (1993b, 251), pointing specifically to Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s *Herland* and Marge Piercy’s *Woman on the Edge of Time*. Like Tronto’s observation that utopian narratives provide compelling visions of the political uses of the ethic of care, speculative, dystopian narratives also provide interesting insights into care, primarily its glaring absence or its misuse.

The speculative novels I consider here follow the characteristics of dystopian literature. Dystopian fiction is less an established genre than a “particular kind of oppositional and critical energy or spirit” (Booker 3). While dystopian literature “situates itself in direct opposition to utopian thought . . . [it also] constitutes a critique of existing social conditions or political systems, either through the critical examination of the utopian premises upon which those conditions and systems are based or through the imaginative extension of those conditions and systems into different contexts that more clearly reveal their flaws or contradictions” (Booker 3). In short, the picture of the society that develops within the narrative must be recognizable to our own, in contrast to completely made-up worlds of hard science fiction or fantasy novels. This interpretation is supported by Margaret Atwood, who describes the difference between science fiction proper, which “denotes books with things in them we can’t yet do or begin to do, talking beings we can never meet, and places we can’t go—and speculative fiction, which employs the means already more or less to hand, and takes place on Planet Earth” (2004, 513).

Neither of the novels directly opposes the development of biotechnologies such as cloning. Instead, they aim their critique at the society in which we now live, a moment when we have a chance to stop and consider how we will use technology and the role it will have in shaping how to live well in the future. In this analysis, I intend to show that traditional liberal conceptions are inadequate for developing a full understanding of the potential individual and social disruption and conflict that may result from an unregulated biotech industry.⁹ Political and social discussions of cloning must take place in public forums, and without the dismissal of concerns that encompass emotional and caring questions. In these novels, public discourse regarding the uses of human cloning and other related human biotechnologies is a major missing component of the societies in which these developments take place. My analysis demonstrates a concrete application for care ethics and shows how care ethics, an alternative framework to the dominant liberal conception, can function as a social, political, and global theory with critical applications for the future.

The major themes and issues presented in these two novels offer up critiques of contemporary liberal ethics that can be addressed by analysis through a care ethics framework. Issues of care are present in the novels; however, they are not the main focus of either of them; instead, care issues are embedded, demonstrating how difficult it can be to recognize problems of care. Many of my criticisms will deal directly with the absence of a care perspective in the societies and communities depicted in the novels. I extract from character development and narrative how a care approach would change the

⁹ Critics claim that the industry will likely not be heavily regulated, but left to consumer choice. See Hilden (2002).

ultimate outcome of each novel. The main components of care ethics forms the basis for my critique, which includes: a conception of persons as social and relational as opposed to autonomous and self-interested; the need for a contextual approach to problems rather than universal rules that are assumed to promote a just and fair society; the power issues that arise in relationships, which deeply affect care provision and autonomous agency; and finally, the need for some form of civil society where regular citizens can articulate concerns of care and promote the values of care in the absence of political or governmental provisions for care.

I examine each novel's depiction of the society from which cloning emerges and show how the values of care and the practices of care are directly correlative to developments in cloning technology. In each case, cloning emerges in a society that lacks appropriate individual/familial or social care ethics, or the social care ethic that does exist functions within oppressive and perverse conditions. The missing value of care in the social realm affects each character in different ways, but always with a negative result. Lack of caring values is manifested in the relationships of characters, both in the public and private realms. In *Oryx and Crake*, cloning technology develops to correct this lack of care for future generations. Lack of care—both its values and its practices—is demonstrated as a causal factor of the downfall of the human, and care becomes an important characteristic of the engineered posthuman future. Atwood's posthumans, as imagined and genetically engineered by Crake, are particularly caring and communal. For Ishiguro, cloning is used subversively to provide organs for a donation program that is inherently unjust and oppressive for donors; care ethics are forced on a segment of the

population who are denied even basic human rights because it is easier to choose not to see them as human than to give up scientific advancements in medicine.

Oryx and Crake and *Never Let Me Go* are framed by narrators who are looking back, retrospectively, in an attempt to figure out how they came to be in a particular situation in time; the telling of life narratives allows us to look back in order to see points in time in which the narrative could have gone in a different direction. They each present a social history of sorts, with references to “before” (before cloning became a reality). Both *Oryx and Crake* and *Never Let Me Go* have particular points in the narrative in which a main character could have made a different choice—could have resisted—and changed the trajectory of the story. The novels critique the world of science without ethics, and place the arts and humanities as critical discourses for individual, social, and political change, but only when they are applied, as Cathy Davidson and David Theo Goldberg describe, normatively and prescriptively—suitable to critique social organization with full appreciation for the magnitude and implications of change necessary to create a caring and just world (Davidson and Goldberg 2004). In the introduction to this thesis, I claimed that the larger challenge of care ethics scholars is to discover ways of making care issues more visible and valued by our social and political institutions. I suggest, as do these novels, that the arts and humanities could help to draw attention to care issues, bringing them out into the open for civic discussion and promoting the values of care—attentiveness, responsibility, competence, and responsiveness—in order to demand a social and political care ethic in addition to, and in support of, private care efforts.

Oryx and Crake¹⁰

In this analysis of *Oryx and Crake*, I will show how injustices are brought about by misplaced values. Market values and particular liberal values including reproductive freedom, scientific freedom, and individual choice are accompanied by a dismissal of the values of care and inattention to the needs for care. This absence of care is represented in the characters' personal development and in their relationships with each other. While care ethics has developed as a theory from the private to the public, *Oryx and Crake* demonstrates the need for reciprocal realms of care. A theoretical reversal is now needed, one of social and governmental valuation of care that promotes appropriate care in the family. Social or governmental attention to the needs for care in the family could have resulted in an avoidance of a global catastrophe in Atwood's novel; but the social, political, and economic system that shapes the characters' lives prevents any critical reflection on how they might change their world into a more caring one. *Oryx and Crake* is a retrospective narrative told by "Snowman," who is presumed to be the last living human on earth, attempting to avoid starvation and disease in a now hostile earth environment. Left in his care are the Crakers, a bioengineered race of posthumans, created in the lab by Crake, the scientist of the novel and Snowman's former best friend, who is now dead. The Crakers are a communal race that exhibit caring behaviors towards each other and to the "Other," in direct contrast to the liberal, individualist, and

¹⁰ Literary criticism on *Oryx and Crake* is limited; I do not use any of the literary criticism on *Oryx and Crake* as much of it is not directly related to my topic. Selected criticism for review might include: Grayson Cooke's article (2006) on the underlying myths and the scientific hubris of the novel; Stephen Dunning's article (2005) that stresses the dangers of worshipping modern science over art and humanistic pursuits; Toby Widdicombe's essay (2006) on several of Atwood's books that imagine the future; Danette DiMarco's article (2005) that highlights human instrumentalism in *Oryx and Crake*; and Coral Ann Howells' essay (2006) on *Oryx and Crake* as a survivor narrative.

market-driven characteristics of humanity before the global catastrophe that nearly wipes them out. As “Snowman” contemplates what he must do to survive, he reflects on his life as “Jimmy,” and the course of events that led him to his stranded situation.

Jimmy grows up in a corporate biotechnology compound, where his father and mother both work to develop technical cures for human problems. His mother eventually quits her job for ethical reasons, and after an extended depression, flees the compounds in secret to join an underground radical group that uses violence to protest the oppressive economic values of science. Jimmy befriends Crake, a lonely and isolated teenage genius, who comes to believe that humanity on earth has outlived its usefulness. He uses the economized values of science to engineer a worldwide plague, accompanied by humanity’s replacement race, the Crakers, which he developed in the lab with caring values and species survival biologically predetermined. Following this engineered destruction of humanity, only Jimmy, immune to the virus, is left to care for the Crakers so they can survive in the earth’s damaged environment. Snowman muses, “Despite their irritating qualities . . . he feels protective towards them. Intentionally or not, they’ve been left in his care, and they simply have no idea. No idea, for instance, of how inadequate his care really is” (Atwood 153).

The society that shapes the events in Atwood’s novel is one in which care values (attentiveness, responsibility, responsiveness, and competence) are subordinated to those of the market (property rights, choice, entrepreneurism, spectacle) with deep implications for how people live and how children develop. Relational aspects of life are de-emphasized, while the values of freedom, liberty, profit, and efficiency are widely shared and promoted by corporate biotechnology research and development compounds. Crake

develops in accord with the values of the community in which he lives. He views himself and the rest of humankind in opposition to “nature” and shapes his life so that he can be in control of nature. In contrast, Jimmy possesses a sense of relational interdependence and caring values, but because of the market value driven society he lives in, is not able to practice those caring values with other people. He is only able to develop and practice it with nature; he is affectionate and relational with animals and later, with the Crakers. Jimmy’s mother, Sharon, is ultimately the foil to Crake, representative of the modern “mad scientist,” who conducts work in isolation that will have a profound effect on humanity, free of the social critique that may limit scientific freedom. The only method of social critique of biotechnology available is through radical, underground, and violent activist groups. In addition to obscuring the values of care, the supremacy of the market also prevents democratic values from flourishing. Because of the social world Sharon lives in, she is unable to affect any real change, even through this radical brand of collective political action. *Oryx and Crake* is fundamentally about the relational interdependence of all living things on earth, a critical component of a care ethics approach, and the novel serves as a warning that if we should fail to recognize our interdependence—not only *human* interdependence—disastrous consequences will follow.

Oryx and Crake is set in the near future, but recalls our present time as a conception of the good life, before advancements in commercial applications for biotechnology became the driving force that guided all areas of life. This conception of the good life involves the civic society, the area in between the individual and the government, where citizens engage in common projects for social good. As “Snowman”

reflects on his life as “Jimmy,” he describes the OrganInc compounds where he and his parents lived. He says that “inside, [things] were the way it used to be when Jimmy’s father was a kid, before things got so serious . . . Jimmy’s mother said it was all artificial, it was just a theme park and you could never bring the old ways back, . . . but you could walk around without fear, couldn’t you? Go for a bike ride, sit at a sidewalk café, buy and ice-cream cone? Jimmy knew his father was right, because he himself had done all these things” (27). Despite the appearance of a “good life” in the compounds, “everyone’s parents moaned on about stuff like . . . *remember when you could drive anywhere? Remember when everyone lived in the pleeblands? Remember when you could fly anywhere in the world, without fear? Remember hamburger chains, always real beef, remember hot-dog stands? Remember before New York was New New York? Remember when voting mattered?*” (italics in original, 63). In their nostalgic recollection of what society used to be like, Jimmy’s parents articulate a conception of the good life, which the compounds unsuccessfully attempt to recreate. This conception includes the values associated with shared action in a relational context—“everyone lived in the pleeblands” and “voting mattered.” The inclusion of voting accentuates the quality of this previous age, when politics was something that had an effect on people’s lives. Prior to the “end of humanity,” democratic politics has no role; the market is completely unfettered.

Society is represented as dangerous, indicating that the liberal ideal of limited government is taken to an extreme. The contemporary public realm of *Oryx and Crake* is described as an unsafe and risky environment, with fingerprint identity cards, leaky public security, people cruising around who could forge anything and might be anybody, “not to mention the loose change—the addicts, the muggers, the paupers, the crazies” of

American cities—the “pleeblands” (27). The corporate compounds are where the privileged live and work completely separate from others in society. For those in the compounds, almost exclusively scientists, the pleeblands are nothing more than experimental labs for biotech products. For compound dwellers, “nothing of interest went on in the pleeblands, apart from buying and selling . . . plus a lot of criminal activity” (196). They exist only for economic exploitation. There is no sense of shared community; the ties that might bind a nation or a state together are absent—there is only a distinction between the compounds and the pleeblands. Relational values are effaced in the values that govern the compounds.

The governmental role in the economy is also absent in Atwood’s novel, exemplifying the neoliberal ideal of free markets. There is no government oversight of the compounds to ensure that research takes place within boundaries that secure social good; each corporation, ruled by market considerations alone, is completely isolated within its own walls. We might say that they represent on a large scale, the liberal, autonomous subject. As a result, technology in *Oryx and Crake* is developed for profit rather than for the good of humankind. Biotechnology firms are privatized, and follow the neoliberal “assumption that individual freedoms are guaranteed by freedom of the market and of trade” (Harvey 7). Products developed in the compounds are marketed on the liberal assertion that people’s motivations within the market are purely individualist rather than caring and relational. The purpose of “pigoons,” which are pigs hybridized to grow human organs for transplant, means that replacement parts are cheaper than “getting yourself cloned for spare parts” or “keeping a for-harvest child or two stashed away in some illegal baby orchard” (23). In advertising “NooSkins for Olds,” technology for

growing skin cells is marketed to “well-to-do and once-young, once-beautiful” women or men who would “sell their house, their gated retirement villa, their kids, and their soul” to maintain a youthful appearance (55). Little consideration is given to NooSkins being used in medicine for burn victims or skin grafting. Caring purposes for compound products are not developed because they are not as profitable.

HelthWyzer, where Jimmy and Crake grow up, is a healthcare corporation, but their practices are not governed by concerns for care; HelthWyzer practices “the economics of scarcity, so they’re guaranteed high profits” (211). While curing diseases is their main goal, HelthWyzer recognizes the need for a continual customer base in order to stay in operation.

“Listen, this is brilliant,” Crake tells Jimmy, “They put the hostile bioforms into their vitamin pills . . . they have a really elegant delivery system—they embed a virus inside a carrier bacterium, *E. coli* splice, doesn’t get digested, bursts in the pylorus, and bingo! . . . Naturally they develop the antidotes at the same time as they’re customizing the bugs . . . The best diseases, from a business point of view,” said Crake, “would be those that cause lingering illnesses. Ideally—that is, for maximum profit—the patient should either get well or die just before all of his or her money runs out.” (211)

The values of the market govern even healthcare corporations, demonstrating how idealized values of neoliberalism may actually be practiced in the future real world, if, as Susan Smith suggests, we fail to collectively demand from our politics a caring aspect of our markets.

One of the values being associated with biotechnology markets today is secrecy—a form of protectionism of intellectual property rights. In *Oryx and Crake*, this value interferes with care values in the family, so that not even “special” relationships between individuals have primary importance. Crake’s father had collected evidence of the

vitamin conspiracy, and “was going to do some whistle-blowing through a rogue Web site—those things have wide viewership, it would have wrecked the pleebland sales of every single Helthwyzer vitamin supplement . . . it would have caused financial havoc. Think of the job losses. He wanted to warn them first” (212). Before Crake’s father could make the information public, he told his wife and his brother, either of whom may have been the one who reported the possibility of scandal to the compound police. Crake speculates on his father’s “execution,” in the form of assisted suicide, thinking “They’d have said he was about to destroy an elegant concept. They’d have said they were acting for the general good” (212). This “assisted suicide” of Crake’s father shows the breakdown of care in the nuclear family in the society of *Oryx and Crake*. His wife and brother are suspected of turning him into the CorpSeCorps, demonstrating that care is no longer possible within the private domain. Care ethics scholarship frequently points to the liberal presumption of care that takes place within special relationships of friends and family. In *Oryx and Crake*, the secrecy attached to market values dominates relationships among family members. The concerns for care within the family, the relationships that underwrite liberal assumptions of freedom and liberty, are obliterated by market values that function to run right over liberal freedoms. If secrecy can be replaced by transparency, then a space for public discourse about the way biotechnology is developed may reveal the need to remove the values of the market from areas that are most concerned with caring practices and values, as Held suggests. If biotechnology is developed in our society exclusively in private corporations, such as HelthWyzer in *Oryx and Crake*, our own society implicitly aligns with market values, such as secrecy, to the detriment of care.

The market's interference with care also extends outside of family relations in the compounds, where care for citizens is subsumed under concern for the economic value of technology. The CorpSeCorps are the private police force of the compounds, trained to defend the technology that is developed in them, not the people that live and work there. Bio-theft and bio-piracy among competing corporations and scientists of other nations are rampant, "[o]ther companies, other countries, various factions and plotters. There was too much hardware around . . . too many hostile bioforms, too many weapons of every kind" (27-8). The CorpSeCorps have authority to kill anyone who might directly or indirectly interfere with research. Jimmy's father tells of an "incident" shortly before they moved into the HelthWyzer compound, where a woman, "some fanatic . . . with a hostile bioform . . . nuked a guard who'd unwisely had his face mask off . . . The woman had been spraygunned at once and neutralized in a vat of bleach" (53). Later, Jimmy's own mother becomes a target of the compound police force, even though she no longer lives within the compounds.

The products of biotechnology are dangerous, and their development promotes oppressive practices rather than caring ones both inside and outside the walls of the compounds. Security patrolled the walls of the perimeter as well as the grounds. Jimmy's father saw them as "for our own good," to keep them safe (54); by contrast, his mother Sharon "felt like a prisoner" (53). Inside the compounds, people are discouraged from taking advantage of the biotechnological developments that are produced there, indicating the dangerous nature of various technologies in development. When Jimmy reports to work following a weekend in the pleeblands with Crake, he hopes that his bosses do not find out where he has been because "though it encouraged all kinds of

chemical experimentation by its paying clientele, AnooYoo frowned upon anything similar amongst the hired help” (290). Atwood occasionally describes the results of research and development in the compounds, such as Crake’s attempts to perfect the BlyssPluss pill:

At the clinical trial stage . . . A couple of the test subjects had literally fucked themselves to death, several had assaulted old ladies and household pets, and there had been a few unfortunate cases of priapism and split dicks. Also, at first, the sexually transmitted disease protection mechanism had failed in a spectacular manner. One subject had grown a big genital wart all over her epidermis, distressing to observe. (295)

The results were “distressing to observe,” but no care is extended to prevent or relieve the suffering of the test subjects, who come “from the poorer countries. Pay them a few dollars, they don’t even know what they’re taking” (296). The unmarketed, but known to investors, purpose of Crake’s BlyssPluss pill is to reduce the population of the world—the population outside of the compounds—in order to make “fewer people, therefore more [resources] to go around” (295). This is a fully acceptable use of biotechnology for Crake’s investors, who were “very keen on it, it was going to be global. It was all upside. There was no downside at all” (294). Once again, the values of care are absent. The only considerations for investors and researchers involve possible profits.

Despite being born and raised in a society that places its highest values within those of the market, Jimmy’s early values are aligned with values of care. As Snowman reflects on his childhood as Jimmy, he recalls his earliest memory, a bonfire of animal carcasses (the result of some bioterrorism in the compounds) he watches with his parents. This early memory marks Jimmy’s potential as a caring person. At the bonfire, Jimmy is concerned “about the animals, because they were being burned and surely that would hurt

them . . . he thought he could see the animals looking at him reproachfully out of their burning eyes. In some way all of this . . . was his fault, because he'd done nothing to rescue them" (18). After the bonfire he had to walk through a pan of disinfectant. His boots were "red with a smiling duck's face on each toe," and he was "worried that the poison would get into the eyes of the ducks and hurt them" (15). In contrast to most people in the compounds, Jimmy felt an empathetic connection with other living things early in his life. He exhibits the potential to be a caring person, thinking of other lives with genuine concern and care. He also recognizes that other life is tied to his. When he visits the pigoons, hybrid pig/human animals bred for organ harvesting, his father warns him not to fall in the pen because the pigoons would eat him. Jimmy claims that they would not, because "I'm their friend . . . Because I sing to them" (26). Even after he grows up, Jimmy holds to these values in small ways. As he recalled watching videos of Alex the parrot, Jimmy thinks of how the bird would ask for a certain reward for answering a question correctly; instead, they gave him something else—something he did not ask for . . . "seeing this would bring tears to Jimmy's eyes . . . If Alex the parrot were his, they'd be friends, they'd be brothers" (260-61). Jimmy's memories show him to be a relational subject, but only with animals—other important people in his life, all "numbers" people, turned to science in order to control nature, rather than develop a relationship with it. This "controlling" aspect of life in the compounds extends far beyond social and environmental considerations. It extends all the way down to relationships with each other.

This attention to Jimmy's caring qualities as a young man may be interpreted as a claim that care is an inherent value to humans. Michael Slote theorizes that care is a

virtue and a disposition rather than a value and a practice (Slote 2001). This is the difference between virtue ethics and care ethics. Jimmy is a caring and relational person, but is unable to develop his personal virtues into a care ethic, because his social environment discourages “the intention to care and the disposition to care effectively [and to actively participate] in caring relations” (Held 51). His recognition of the social self and his relational status does not result in a solid care ethic that involves action as well as reflection. A social ethic of care is necessary if we are to develop persons who act through an ethic of care, and this social care ethic is missing in every aspect of Jimmy’s life.

Jimmy’s parents fail to recognize and develop his talents for language or for caring attitudes towards other living things. How they live prevents them from developing their own care ethic with its accompanying values of attentiveness, responsibility, competence, and responsiveness. In keeping with the values of the compounds, Jimmy was encouraged to develop skills in science and math—become a “numbers person”—even though he naturally gravitated towards being a “word person.” Recalling his birthdays, he reflects his father’s belated gifts “that would not be a gift but some tool or intelligence-enhancing game or other hidden demand that he measure up . . . By OrganInc’s math-and-chem-and-applied-bio yardstick he must have seemed dull normal” (50). Jimmy’s relationship with his father was formal. They did not interact much with each other unless it involved his studies. In Jimmy’s own mind, he thought “they knew nothing about him, what he liked, what he hated, what he longed for. They thought he was only what they could see. A nice boy but a bit of a goof, a bit of a show-off. Not the brightest star in the universe, not a numbers person” (58). His skills and

interests with language are a stark contrast to his difficulty with numbers, but this skill is not allowed to develop in a productive way. As a consequence, Jimmy learns to make jokes and to provoke people with his words.

Caring relationships such as those between parents and children should exhibit the values of care; without them they may become coercive. Daniel Engster claims that “when individuals feel their particular needs and opinions are not being recognized . . . they experience humiliation and anger and often resort to covert or open acts of rebellion to demand recognition, or in other words, they counter unsociable treatment with more of the same” (Engster 130). Jimmy’s relationship with his depressed and emotionally absent mother is characterized by antagonism in an effort to get any kind of reaction: “He loved her so much when he made her unhappy, or else when she made him unhappy: at these moments he scarcely knew which was which . . . And he was sorry, but there was more to it: he was also gloating, congratulating himself, because he’d managed to create such an effect” (33). Later, his relationships with other women are characterized by the same kinds of games. He manipulates their emotions in order to get what he wants from them, never ending a relationship himself, but waiting until they were so frustrated by his “rainy day allure” and “emotional dyslexia” act, they dumped him (190). Jimmy’s lack of success in relationships are a result of the previous lack of attentiveness and responsiveness from the people who should be closest to him, his parents.

The tension between the values of care and values of the market are manifest in their most extreme form in Sharon. She stops working when Jimmy first starts school because of ethical concerns about “interfering with the building blocks of life” (57). She criticizes her husband for celebrating a scientific discovery, accusing him of thinking up

“yet another way to rip off a bunch of desperate people . . . the whole organization is wrong, it’s a moral cesspool” (56). Chronically depressed with her life that implicitly supports the values of the compounds, Sharon leaves the compound in secrecy, eventually joining an underground political group that fights against the biotech industry with subversive and violent methods. Throughout the telling of his story, Snowman reflects on his mother and can only see that she abandoned him; he fails to recognize that she was simply unable to care for him or herself in the corporatized society they lived in. One of the things that attracts Jimmy to Oryx is her unwillingness to pity him because of his mother’s abandonment. “*So Jimmy, your mother went somewhere else?*” she tells him, “*Too bad. Maybe she had some good reasons. You thought of that?*” (italics in original, 191). Sharon had no outlet within the compounds for the lack of social caring, which greatly damaged her own ability to care for her son.

Sharon’s story demonstrates the totalitarian social regime that the compounds enforce. The lack of democratic institutions in the society within the walls means that there are no outlets for dissent other than violent ones on the outside. For example, just after Jimmy graduates high school, the “Happicuppa” coffee wars began. The Happicuppa coffee beans, developed by a biotech compound, “could be grown on huge plantations and harvested with machines. This threw the small growers out of business and reduced both them and their labourers to starvation-level poverty. The resistance movement was global” (179). The Happicuppa coffee wars, called by Crake “history in the making,” are actually a recreation of past history—the “Boston Coffee Party” sprang up, dumping crates of Happicuppa coffee into Boston Harbor (180). As they watch news coverage on TV, Crake’s Uncle Pete remarks that it will not be long before the activists

give up, claiming that ““[e]verybody wants a cheaper cup of coffee—you can’t fight that”” (180). Jimmy catches a glimpse of his mother, one of the participants in the Coffee Wars, on the news, concrete evidence of her subversive political activities.

Sevenhuijsen writes of the “relocation of politics” taking place in today’s global society, with “power seeping away from the political centre of parliamentary democracy” in Europe, which, she claims, may lead to power without accountability (180). In *Oryx and Crake*, political power has been relocated to the private corporation, shutting out the possibility for civic agency to produce social change. Collective action in *Oryx and Crake* becomes a route to resist the commodification of life and ways of life, although it is ultimately an ineffective one for the characters that engage with it. Resistance groups are relatively powerless, demonstrated by the fact that they must operate outside of the law and in secret. Groups are represented as crazy, motivated by religion (clearly not a legitimate stance according to the corporatized moral majority), and out of touch with the real concerns of people. These “real” concerns are represented by the idealization of the freedom of competition, ultimately found in things like *cheap* cups of coffee, or in advancing an individual’s own chances in the “sexual market” by purchasing a brand new skin. The values of the market are so pervasive that people who seek to live inside legal or political boundaries—like Jimmy—are both physically and mentally paralyzed by those boundaries.

This “paralysis” in Jimmy is manifest in his inability to see a road to change, either his own life or the society he lives in. Jimmy becomes a representation of Baier’s “passive citizen” who refuses to acknowledge responsibility for how the social and political world is organized. He is almost always angry, but is never able to release his

frustration. To compensate, he looks for other people to blame, especially Crake, after the global disaster caused by the BlyssPlus pill: “Things happened, I had no idea, it was out of my control! What could I have done?” (45). He wonders, “If I had killed Crake earlier . . . would it have made any difference?” (276). As he witnesses the downfall of the human race on television, he writes an account of what happened as a historical record, writing, “it is my belief that none, with the exception of Crake, was cognizant of what that effect [of the BlyssPlus pill] would be” (347). Occasionally, Jimmy recognizes his culpability in shaping his life and affecting the lives of others. He greatly regrets his mother’s leaving, thinking “why hadn’t he seen it all coming and headed it off?” (64). His tendency to blame others, then himself, for various circumstances, demonstrates this physical and cognitive paralysis that results from the inadequate care he receives as he is growing up.

Baier’s description of passive citizenship includes the acceptance of past social and political relationships—our inherited schemes of cooperation—between people as irrelevant to our current social and political responsibilities. In *Oryx and Crake*, moral responsibility, if it exists anywhere, exists only within individuals. Most individuals in the compounds see their scientific work as performing social good and giving people what they want. The larger context is simply someone else’s responsibility. Baier claims that

if we insist on clinging to the idea that moral responsibility must divide without remainder into the bit that is mine and not yours and the other bits that belong exclusively to other specific individuals, then not only will we limit the sorts of shared action we engage in, but we will drastically limit our ability to reform our inherited schemes of cooperation for the better. (266)

The organization of society in *Oryx and Crake* does not include a sense of shared responsibility, one hallmark of democracy. Baier warns that this kind of social organization “degenerates into lawgiving by some elite, accompanied by a willing subjection of the rest . . . if we cannot find [more worthy versions of equality and mutual respect] we should be willing to be called revolutionaries” (267).

Snowman reflects on his inability to recognize the need for change: “he can’t describe himself, the way he’d been. Not unmarked—events had marked him, he’d had his own scars, his dark emotions . . . There had been something willed about it though, his ignorance. Or not willed, exactly: structured. He’d grown up in walled spaces, and then he had become one. He had shut things out” (184). Jimmy simply conforms to the role society has set for him. His career choice demonstrates the pervasive reach of market values into every area of life. He has an opportunity to study the arts and humanities, but as disciplines of study they are judged by society as worth only as much as they can produce in economic terms. Graduating high school with poor math and science scores, he attends Martha Graham Academy, an arts and humanities college where the studies concentrate on disciplines “no longer central to anything” (187). His studies do not teach him how to frame conceptual ideas, a technique that offers the arts and humanities flexibility, creativity, and contemporary relevance. The only application for Jimmy’s degree, or any degree from Martha Graham, was advertising, “decorating the cold, hard, numerical real world in flossy 2-D verbiage” (188). Jimmy will become a tool of oppression. His talent for words is destined to be used to promote the biotech industry; in this society, there is no other practical use for words.

Gillie Bolton writes of the critical need for the arts and humanities to “retain an intrinsic value, and not become “instrumental technologies” (as a mere means to promoting, for example, communication skills)” or scientific advances that may be risky or dangerous (2003). Jimmy’s first job with the AnooYoo compound is instrumental, involving writing promotional material for self-improvement items, “not books any more . . . [but] the equipment and the alternative medicines you needed in order to get the optimum effect” (245). Personal fulfillment, according to the AnooYoo compound, would not come from mental effort at attaining happiness, but on chemicals and technology utilized to change your biological state. Later, Jimmy goes to work for Crake at his Paradise Dome, writing the advertising campaign for the BlyssPlus pill.

Jimmy’s inability to apply his talent for words to reconceive how the organization of society is structured is also hampered by Crake’s failure to respond to Jimmy’s ideas. In a caring relationship, the value of responsiveness is required on the part of the cared-for, in order to support the needs of those who do the work of care. This concept can also be applied to unequal friendships, such as the one between Crake and Jimmy. Crake refers to the years when he and Jimmy developed their friendship as “definitive times” (300). These were the years that Jimmy, the word man, learned to defer to Crake, the scientist, and the relationship between them grew into a power relationship that was fundamentally uncaring. Occasionally attempting to “defend the art-and-creativity turf,” Jimmy will challenge Crake’s assumptions about his notions of biological determinism (166). “When any civilization is dust and ashes . . . art is all that’s left over. Images, words, music. Imaginative structures. Meaning—human meaning, that is—is defined by them . . . Jimmy would have liked to have said, *why are you always putting me down?*”

But he was afraid of the possible answers, *because it's so easy being one of them*" (167). While Jimmy challenges Crake on rare occasions, he never actually 'wins' the argument; Crake does not even seem to value Jimmy's opinions, a marker of the missing reciprocity in their relationship as 'best friends' and Crake's lack of responsiveness to Jimmy's feelings and opinions.

Their teenage years were also ones in which they had almost no caring parental supervision or guidance. Crake's mother is characterized as a robot. When fixing a snack for Jimmy and Crake, sometimes she would "stop in the middle of her preparations—the dumping of stale crackers on a plate . . . —and stand stock still, as if she could see someone else in the room. Jimmy had the impression she couldn't remember his name; not only that, she couldn't remember Crake's name either" (88). Like Jimmy's father, "Uncle Pete," Crake's stepfather, was rarely home. The parents of Jimmy and Crake fail to care, and it seems that Jimmy and Crake, for the most part, raise themselves.

Lacking parental care, Jimmy and Crake entertained themselves with pursuits wholly unsuitable for children or teenagers, which helped to form Crake's ideas about the problems of humanity; the education they received stressing the biological sciences and math led Crake to work out a technological solution to social problems. Together, while getting high, Jimmy and Crake played violent battle games like "Blood and Roses" or "Barbarian Stomp," or "trading games" that echo themes of commodification and economics, only with human atrocities and human achievements as relevant items of trade (77-8). When they weren't playing games, they surfed the internet, looking at sites like "hedsoff.com, which played live coverage of executions in Asia," or alibooboo.com, with various supposed thieves having their hands cut off and adulterers and lipstick-

wearers being stoned to death by howling crowds,” or “[s]hortcircuit.com, brainfrizz.com, and deathrowlive.com” (82-3). They would also watch porn, even stealing Uncle Pete’s private code for “the more disgusting and forbidden sites” (85). Jimmy notes that “his parental units—supposing they were there, and downstairs—never seemed to notice a thing” (87). Their relationship is one of shared spectacle rather than true friendship; Jimmy recalls that “these sessions would take place for the most part in silence” (86). Jimmy even defines the friendship in economic terms, hoping to “build up some gratitude equity” with Crake by helping him get a girl (73). As illustrated in the relationship between Jimmy and Crake, the uncaring environment of the compounds extends to familial and personal relationships.

As a result of their activities, Jimmy and Crake learn to commodify and to view human suffering as a fabricated creation designed for entertainment. Their first encounter with Oryx was watching her on the “hottots” website, as she performed an act that “involved whipped cream and a lot of licking” as well as fear and crying (90). Jimmy supposed, “they were supposed to look like that . . . this was a feature of the site. There were at least three layers of contradictory make-believe, one on top of the other. *I want to, I want to not, I want to*” (italics in original 90). Oryx looks right at the camera, “right into Jimmy’s eyes, into the secret person inside him. *I see you*, that look said. *I see you watching. I know what you want*” (91). Oryx, by returning the male gaze, demands her subjectivity and makes Jimmy feel “that what they’d been doing was wrong” for the first time (91). At the same time, he “felt hooked through the gills: if he’d been offered instant teleportation to wherever Oryx was he’d have taken it, no question” (91). Jimmy’s

reaction to her returned gaze marks his empathy for her, as well as his desire for a different conceptual framework for his life and the world he lives in.

Despite activities that objectify others and tolerate oppression and suffering, Jimmy feels an inexplicable pull towards Oryx, who refused to allow him to simply see her or other girls who are like her as objects to be commodified. Years later when they are together, Jimmy shows her the still photo Crake took of the moment she gazed back at him, and asked her if it really is her, “Look! It’s your eyes!” he says. “A lot of girls have eyes,” she said. “A lot of girls did these things. Very many.” (91). Her point is that a lot of people are like her—uncared for, exploited, and lacking basic human rights—but there is no empathy spared for them because of societal fixation on desire and individual preference. Had Jimmy developed a care ethic within a more caring and democratic society, coupled with an ability to reconceptualize the social world with his talent for language, then it is likely that he would have been able to make a proactive response with caring motivations, rather than regret his lack of action when it is too late.

Crake and Jimmy learn to suppress feelings of empathy that might make them more caring towards each other as well as other persons. Empathy is a critical relational capacity for understanding the feelings of other people. Crake is able to suppress this capacity through his scientific faith in genetic determinism. Jimmy learns to suppress empathy because it is not valued in society. This tendency to suppress feelings, presumably to make them feel more masculine, also fits with the conception of liberal autonomy that privileges rational thought over emotional engagement. When someone he cares for is depressed or sad, Jimmy thinks offering “words of comfort [to be] superfluous” (212). For Crake, the effect is to desensitize him to suffering, which later

allows him to develop his Paradise project through to completion. When Crake's mother is dying from exposure to a "hot bioform" which physically melts her body, he describes her final moments with absolutely no affect:

She was in isolation and losing shape rapidly. Crake couldn't go in to see her, of course—nobody could, everything in there was done with robotic arms, as in nuclear-materials procedures—but he could watch her through the observation window. . . . "It was impressive, Crake told Jimmy. "Froth was coming out" . . . His mother was supposed to be able to speak her last words to him via the mike system, said Crake, but there was a digital failure; so though he could see her lips moving, he couldn't hear what she was saying. "Otherwise put, just like daily life," said Crake. (177)

In disbelief of Crake's callousness, Jimmy "didn't understand . . . the thought of Crake watching his own mother dissolve like that. He himself wouldn't have been able to do it" (177). Crake's childhood and his scientific worldview contributes to his lack of compassion for others, which ultimately drives his scientific work in the Paradise Project. Jimmy maintains an emotional connection with his physically distant mother. A target for the CorpSeCorps, they eventually catch up with her. In order to confirm that it was really her they had captured, they show Jimmy the video of her execution. His emotional reaction to the video confirms their suspicions, despite Jimmy's attempt to hide his feelings.

Like Jimmy, Crake is raised by uncaring parents, but unlike Jimmy, he has the talents for math and science that are valued by society. Crake has what we might call the social and intellectual capital to change the social world of *Oryx and Crake*, but not in a way that is caring, relational in nature, or considerate of others. Crake is encouraged not to think in relational terms, or even develop significant relationships with other people. As a science-math whiz, Crake is treated as a VIP throughout his schooling, in contrast to

Jimmy, who is considered a “serf” when he visits Crake, the “nobility,” at college. (198). At the Watson-Crick Institute, Crake can simply request anything he wants from Student Services, including sex, and have it delivered. Relationships between students at Watson-Crick is discouraged, although it is referred to by Crake as “pair bonding . . . I can’t waste time in unproductive random scanning” (207). Through this service, he requests Oryx. Sold by her mother as a child sex slave to keep the rest of the family from starving, Oryx manages to make sexual “trades” in order to learn English and be sold to someone in the U.S. After he “requests” her from Student Services, Crake convinces her to stay. She becomes Crake’s research assistant and lover when he starts his job at RejoovenEsense Compound.

In this society that values science and technology above all others, Crake is given a high level of research autonomy at the RejoovenEsense Compound, characterized by his self-imposed isolation within the compound community. Crake stands in for the self-interested, self-governing, rational actor of liberal autonomy. He designs the Paradise Dome and negotiates with RejoovenEsense for his own security, so that CorpSeCorps would not be allowed in. Inside the dome, Crake “was obviously the biggest ant in the anthill . . . there was a lot of deferential smiling and –this wasn’t faked—a lot of awe” (298). There is no one above Crake to oversee his research, other than investors, whose greed is exploited by Crake. He uses the social order, manipulating the values of the market in order to achieve what he truly thinks is a humanitarian vision. The “Crakers,” his genetically engineered, transgenic replacement for humanity, represent all that is caring, and all that is missing in the social world Crake and Jimmy grew up in. The goal of the Paradise project as it is articulated to Crake’s employers and investors, is to

produce babies made to order, ultimately resulting in whole populations created with pre-selected characteristics, including “beauty, of course . . . and docility: several world leaders had expressed interest in that” (304). Crake’s ulterior motive is to simply remove humanity with its inherent problems of competition and individualism. In addition to giving them additional protection against environmental hazards,¹¹ he designs his models based on what he observes are particular problems of the human race, problems in caring relationships including personal, sexual, familial, and social. The replacement race, the Crakers, would function as a corrective to the individualistic, liberal, market-driven society that caused so much harm.

The Crakers’ inherently relational traits downsize long-term commitments and responsibilities for individual would-be parents, and eliminate sexual and resource-based competition. Sexual relationships among the Crakers are communal and fertility is cyclical. When a woman enters a fertile cycle, she mates with several men after some simple group mating rituals, “it no longer matters who the father of the inevitable child may be, since there’s no more property to inherit, no father-son loyalty required for war. Sex is no longer a mysterious rite, viewed with ambivalence or downright loathing, conducted in the dark and inspiring suicides and murders. Now it’s more like an athletic demonstration, a free-spirited romp” (165). The children grow at accelerated rates; at the age of four, they are comparable to teenagers, so there is no need for women to be overburdened for many years with care-work of small children.

¹¹ The Crakers have biological insect repellent, their skin is able to resist radiation from the sun, and they are herbivores, so hunting and killing are unnecessary, other than hunting fish for Snowman.

The behavioral characteristics of the Crakers, engineered through genetics, function as correctives to the society that previously inhabited the earth. Unlike humanity, which separated groups within society, the Crakers accept Snowman. “They’ve accepted [his] monstrosity . . . [and] known from the beginning he was a separate order of being” (101). When Snowman decides to leave the beach where they all live to get food and supplies from the compounds, the men try to convince him that he must let them accompany him in order to keep him safe from predators. Upon his return to them, they purr over his injured foot in an attempt to heal him. While they recognize that Snowman is not like them, the Crakers care for him as if he were one of them. They are attentive to differences in Snowman’s character, responsive to his needs for food and for physical care and are competent in providing care, and recognize their relationship with him as important to them. The Crakers care about the “Other.”

Unfortunately, Crake’s solution to the uncaring world—our possible, near future world in Atwood’s vision—is ultimately as ineffective as the underground political activities of Sharon. The destruction of humanity is not a viable solution to problems of care. While we may think of Jimmy as the foil to Crake, Sharon is the mirror for the mad scientist. Where she engages in a political community in order to promote shared goals, Crake—like Dr. Frankenstein—isolates himself and separates his activities from the concerns of society. Carrying out subversive political activities that are motivated by a metaphysical sense of care for humanity, Sharon sees that collective action, even if considered illegal, is the only way to change the world. Her failure was due to the fact that before things got so bad, people did not recognize the need for civil society or for politics to keep up with economics. In contrast to Sharon, Crake believes that one man

can change it all—*he* can—and he works within the system to do so, with catastrophic results. Crake is motivated by a twisted sense of care, evident in the creatures he creates—transgenic humans Jimmy calls the “Crakers,”—who exhibit all the caring tendencies missing in the social world of the human race.

Shaped by the society he lives in, Jimmy’s paralysis, his inability to change, is cured once the society that fostered it is broken. The final pages of the novel indicate that there may be hope for the world, not because Jimmy is there with the Crakers, but because there are other humans who survived, and collectively they might begin to build a new society that recognizes the relational interdependence of all living things—both human and nonhuman. In order to do this, they will have to start with a shared vision of a civic relationship that includes a strong care ethic in order to ensure their mutual survival. This outcome is left open at the close of the novel, when Jimmy weighs his choice of words as he approaches a ragged trio of survivors—“I can show you much treasure,” or “I come in peace”—a choice between the ethos of the market and the ethos of care—treasure or peace (374). His thoughts illustrate the choice he will make. He knows he cannot make the decision alone and asks the ghosts of his mother and of Oryx, “what do you want me to do?” (374). Despite his isolation, he thinks in relational terms. Despite the purposefully ambiguous ending Atwood provides, it seems as if Jimmy will approach the other survivors and work out both a collective understanding of their history and their future.

***Never Let Me Go*¹²**

Tronto declares that making the “Other” matter is the most difficult moral quality to establish in practice (1993b, 130). The question of what is human and what is not is a central one for Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*. The “Other” in this novel is the clone. In order to clarify when I am speaking about clones in Ishiguro’s novel, and when I am speaking of non-clones (as this question is ambiguous in the novel), I will refer to clones as clones, and non-clones as humans. However, this practice should not be taken as defining terms of opposition. The entire point of the book is to question the distinction between our understanding of human and non-human. In our reading of *Never Let Me Go*, we identify with Kathy H. the narrator; however, she is a clone, and is “Othered” by the society she lives in. Kathy H. and the entire clone community are denied basic human rights; instead they are treated as organ factories. Their status as a member of the human race is in question, although Kathy’s narrative voice makes it fairly clear that clones *are* human. One of the central questions in the development of contemporary care ethics is how to “spin the web of relationships widely enough that some are not beyond its reach” (Tronto 1993b, 250). In Ishiguro’s novel, the web is small and narrow, and human rights are not highlighted as a paradigm for clone rights. The narration is from a clone’s point of view, involving seemingly mundane details of teenage life, but in the voice for an

¹² As with *Oryx and Crake*, literary criticism on *Never Let Me Go* is limited, and irrelevant to my topic. In addition to Keith McDonald’s “Days of Past Futures: Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go* as “Speculative Memoir,”” (2007), which is mentioned in the text, academic criticism includes Deborah P. Britzman’s “On Being a Slow Reader: Psychoanalytic Reading Problems in Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*,” (2006), which suggests that in the process of reading the novel we are confronted with an internal world of object relations (the clones) and our affective representations about our own fears of objectivity. Wai-chew Sim includes a chapter on the utopian characteristics of *Never Let Me Go* in his collection of essays on Ishiguro’s work (2006).

oppressed Other who, as the reader gradually learns, is considered undeserving of rights or care in her society.

The novel points out how oppression and cruelty are tolerated by many different groups. In contrast to the genetic determinism that guides their fates as organ donors, social determinism prevents the clones in Ishiguro's novel to claim their rights as citizens. The values of a society and the particular groups one belong to shape the thoughts, actions, and attitudes of individuals; for these clones, there is not an opportunity for any sense of autonomy. At the same time, Ishiguro's clones are trapped within their bodies, defined by their bodies, yet curiously disembodied by the style of the narration. Ishiguro's clones are feminized and, like women in a patriarchal society, denied any role apart from their physical function in the wider society, denied basic rights, and denied even their own souls. This scenario is a familiar one for oppressed women in feminist theory. Susan Moller Okin writes of how, in traditional philosophy and in the history of political thought, "philosophers who, in laying the foundation for their political theories, have asked, 'What are men like?' 'What is man's potential?' have frequently, in turning to the female sex, asked, 'What are women for?'" (10). A similar question could be asked of the status of Ishiguro's clones; they are not considered to have personal potential or a "nature," of any kind. Their purpose—what are clones for?—is purely instrumental for humans.

Like Atwood's U.S., Ishiguro's U.K. is a divided society; there are regular humans, and there are clones. They live separately, and although known to each other, neither group understands how they are interconnected. Clones are raised to express strong *feminine* care ethic toward "normal" humans rather than a *feminist* care ethic,

which would provide them with contextual, relational, and critical thinking tools to care for themselves. The feminine ethic of care embodied in the clones is a perverse and oppressive ethic because of the context in which it develops, demonstrating how crucial a public, feminist care ethic is to a just society. A central question of *Never Let Me Go* is, *can* we care for people who are not like us, and if we can, *how* do we care for people who are not close to us or not like us? This text draws attention to the correlative responsibilities of rights-holders in a society and concludes that unless society cares about all of the groups that are included in its boundaries, justice is not possible.

Ishiguro begins the chronology of the narrative in *Never Let Me Go* immediately following World War II in England. Told as a memoir of a clone, Kathy H., this story actually begins before her lifetime. In Ishiguro's depiction of British society in post-World War II, "great breakthroughs in science followed one after the other so rapidly, there wasn't time to take stock, to ask the sensible questions" (262). While certainly true of real-world, post-war scientific developments, Ishiguro's depiction of the 1950s and 60s might stand in for our contemporary moment. In Ishiguro's world,

suddenly, there were all these new possibilities laid before us, all these ways to cure so many previously incurable conditions. That was what the world noticed the most, wanted the most . . . by the time people became concerned about [clones] . . . by then it was too late. How can you ask a world that has come to regard cancer as curable, how can you ask such a world to put away that cure, to go back to the dark days? (262-3).

As in *Oryx and Crake*, there is a market for the products of biotechnology; in this case it is specifically clones for organs, but unlike Atwood's novel, Ishiguro's clones exist in a closed, government controlled biotechnology market. In the context of socialized medicine, government clinics run the donation program. British politicians have

separated clones from the general public, raising most of them in organ farm orphanages.¹³

The narrative is framed by a political movement for clone rights that turns out to be a sham, because the activists who protest on behalf of clone rights refuse to fully concede their own status and power as members of a privileged group. They apply care ethics as a private, paternalistic ethic. The clones' needs for care are not physical ones—in fact, the clones' physical needs are provided for with exceptional care so they can be organ donors. *Never Let Me Go* stresses the needs for psychological and developmental care that supports an adequate and autonomous self-conception and understanding that promotes just treatment. Self-care is denied to the clones through an education that is designed to isolate and “protect” them from knowledge of the outside world and from the fate that awaits them after they “graduate” from school.

The founders of the Hailsham boarding school, a privileged clone school for experimental learning, were dependent upon contributions and gifts from private funders to continue their work in proving that clones did have souls, just like humans. The reason the school had to close was because of the “Morningdale Scandal,” caused by a rogue scientist whose work inflated public fears of cloning technologies through his private research. James Morningdale “carried on his work in a remote part of Scotland, where I suppose he thought he’d attract less attention” (263). Working on genetic enhancement of

¹³ We can deduce that this is a politically controlled market by noting that the persons invited to the clone art exhibits are politicians; also, in speculative fiction, there is an assumption that the society presented in the text is similar to reality. In the UK, medicine is regulated in a socialized, government controlled system. Morningdale, the rogue scientist, went to a different country to pursue his research, presumably because it would be closely watched and regulated politically in England. My reading of the society in *Never Let Me Go* does rely on the assumption of a government regulated medical industry.

the human body, Morningdale wanted to offer people the chance to create their own designer babies with “superior intelligence, superior athletic ability, that sort of thing . . . he’d taken his research much further than anyone before him, far beyond legal boundaries” (264). The possibility that genetically enhanced humans would try to take their place in general society was unthinkable to Ishiguro’s Britain—“that frightened people. They recoiled from that” (264). Morningdale was arrested and his research program stopped, but not before it had repercussions for clones, most of whom were raised in horrible conditions anyway. The Morningdale Scandal affected how the donors to the clone rights movement began to think about what could happen if clones took their rightful place in society. Funding for the Hailsham operation, as well as other schools like it, completely dried up. The public visibility that had been afforded the movement fades away.

The majority of Kathy H.’s narrative in *Never Let Me Go* is her own personal memoir; however, there are moments in which we develop a picture of the society from which cloning develops and its abuses take place. Humans are aware of clones. The art that the students produce at Hailsham is intended to prove that clones have souls and deserve better treatment. The leaders of the movement—“Madame” and “Marie Claude”—“selected the best of it and put on special exhibitions. In the late seventies, at the height of [their] influence, [they] were organizing large events all around the country. There’d be cabinet ministers, bishops, all sorts of famous people coming to attend. There were speeches and large funds pledged” (262). Yet a lack of social care is evident, for despite the fact that most clones “are being reared in deplorable conditions . . . [people’s] overwhelming concern was that their own children, their spouses, their parents, their

friends, did not die from cancer, motor neurone disease, heart disease” (261, 263). Before the Morningdale scandal, the clone rights movement had met with some success and support, challenging “the entire way the donations programme was being run” (261). The society from which cloning emerges is one in which the government is highly influential to individual health and social well-being.

Atwood’s novel suggests that political intervention through demands made by civic associations in the biotechnology market would alleviate some of the harms that arise. In contrast, Ishiguro’s novel shows that not any kind of democratic politics is sufficient; it must be a politics that includes social values of care that are engaged and practiced by the general public. The clone art exhibitions indicate that there is a public venue for civic discourse; but it is not the general public that is attentive, perhaps by design of the clone rights leadership. While Atwood’s novel suggests that the missing ingredient in the market is government control, Ishiguro’s depiction of a politically controlled market shows how governmental control of a market is not enough; citizens must care enough to demand the governing decisions that enable a caring society. The result of the political intervention into cloning in *Never Let Me Go* is a society that is comparable with systemic patriarchal ones—just as women were once ruled by their supposed “biological destiny,” clones are likewise “stuck” in their proscribed roles. Assumed not to be human at all, they are unable to even recognize what an alternative might look like.

Clones are raised so that they understand their place in society as destined to care for humans in everything that they do, whether that is donating organs or simply caring about how humans feel. This is not reciprocated. Kathy H. expresses surprise when she

finds out details about the politics of cloning. She asks, “[w]hy did you have to prove something like that . . . did someone think we didn’t have souls?” (260), and “[why would] people want students treated so badly in the first place?” (262). Clones are not educated to understand how greater society works; they are left in the dark about how humans live. Any place “beyond Hailsham was like a fantasy land; we had only the haziest notions of the world outside and about what was and wasn’t possible there” (66). Still, normal people and clones intermixed in society. In a lecture to students about having sex on the “outside,” Miss Emily, the head guardian of Hailsham school, tells students that they always must be careful having sex because of the risk of STDs, but “we had to be extremely careful about having sex . . . with people who weren’t students, because out there sex means all sorts of things” (83-4). The emotions that clones may feel are subordinated to those of normal persons. Clones are taught to always remember that on the outside, the rules for living are different and they are expected to conform to them while protecting the sensibilities of humans.

Despite being free to travel or interact with humans, the clones maintain their close group association after they leave school; they do not engage in the wider social world of England, and so they continue to remain ignorant of their places in society and outside the boundaries of civic discourse. Kathy does not include in her narrative any direct interaction with a human other than the guardians, even after students graduate from Hailsham to go to “the Cottages,” half-way houses for clones where they live for a while between school and their time as organ donors. Clones are free to travel anywhere they want to; Kathy, Ruth, and Tommy all go to Norfolk to look for Ruth’s “possible,” the person from whom she was cloned, and during the trip they shop in department stores

and interact with normal people. They are secretive about who they are; they simply claim when asked that they are “students,” which is what they have been called in clone society their entire lives.

Although clones are trained to intermix with humans, humans do not appear to be physically aware of clones, although it appears that they are aware of the existence of clones. There are no physical markers that identify them as clones, and clones do not disclose who they are to humans. Humans are frightened of the idea of a cloned person, which the students at Hailsham figure out fairly quickly. When Madame comes to collect student art for an exhibit, Kathy’s group of friends decides to test their suspicion that Madame is afraid of them. After purposely surrounding her in a hallway, they realized she was afraid; “she was afraid of us in the same way someone might be afraid of spiders . . . it never occurred to us to wonder how *we* would feel, being seen like that, being the spiders” (italics in original, 35). The fear inherent in Madame’s attitude towards the clones, as well as the guardians’ inability to fully disclose to them their tragic fates, is also indicative of their unwillingness to fully acknowledge the clones’ full humanity. The public attitude towards clones appears to be one of indifference. Despite the art shows, and public knowledge of clones as organ donors, no one challenges the hierarchy of care that exists. The government takes care of everyone, although with discriminatory policies that deny rights to clones; humans take care of humans; clones take care of clones. Each group is indifferent and unacknowledged by other groups.

Feminized care values that promote self-sacrifice or martyrdom for others through carework become the only set of values Ishiguro’s clones can cling to; they have no “right” to claim unjust treatment that they know of, affirming Held’s claim that without a

social care ethic, rights are simply not possible. Their education stresses this perverse care ethic in personal and public ways, much like girls have been traditionally raised in the nuclear family,¹⁴ the clones are urged to care for themselves physically, and taught that their mission in life is to help all of humanity. This is an oppressive ethic of care, forced on a group of people in society that extends all the way down to simple touching; though they are together for almost their entire lives, “we didn’t do things like hug each other” (76). Students have weekly physical exams, are discouraged from touching, and exhorted not to ever smoke cigarettes or engage in risky sexual behavior. Miss Lucy, one of the guardians, tells them, “keeping yourselves well, keeping yourselves very healthy inside, that’s much more important for each of you than it is for me” (69). She does not attempt to tell them that the reason for good health is to be good donors. Clones do not understand the full implications of their education. They do know that someday they will have to “donate,” but the guardians’ use of euphemisms shield the students from full understanding. “Death” is replaced by the term “complete,” but the concept of “completing” is not fully understood until after they become carers for donors. The clone students do not question their guardians. The guardians’ misguided attempt to raise political awareness of clone rights never includes directly informing the clones themselves of their oppressive circumstances or helping them to help themselves as a collective group. This is not a “mistake” or part of an ill-advised care ethic on the part of the school founders, but an inability for guardians to truly see the clone students as their

¹⁴ Nancy Chodorow’s 1978 work, *The Reproduction of Mothering*, demonstrates how women’s supposed “natural” affinity for childcare and the work of motherhood is not innate but socially constructed, and “reproduces” from generation to generation through “social-structurally induced psychological mechanisms” (211).

equals—as fully human beings. The care relationship between guardians and clones is a power relationship, and the values of care are distorted through this power dynamic.

While they secretly wish for guardians to express emotional feelings for them as individuals, the clones turn toward each other for care, but this care is also inadequate because of their own limited competencies for providing adequate care.

Keith McDonald notes that in typical biographical memoirs, schooling is “an experience that informs and sets a template for adult life, here the focus is on Hailsham because this is the only experience of any relative normality, family, and co-existence. While in Hailsham, the students willingly participate in a denial of both the outside world and their futures” (78). Student “cliques” are formed as an alternative to family structures. These groups of students police behavior and encourage conformity to group values. When one student, Marge K., says something that embarrasses her group of friends, they “punish her by hauling her out of bed, holding her face against the window pane and ordering her to look up at the woods” (51). The woods were symbolic of the outside world, that “cast a shadow over the whole of Hailsham” (50). Rumors circulated of a student who hopped the fence to see what was beyond Hailsham, then “when she tried to get back in, she wasn’t allowed” (50). There is an implicit understanding that group membership was extremely important, and the most horrific fate for anyone was to be isolated and alone. Hailsham provided the clones that were raised there with a sense of normalcy and belonging in some ways; in other ways, it sheltered them from understanding their fate and developing an individual identity and formulating a sense of self. Clones’ senses of themselves are completely wrapped up in their group membership.

There is no opportunity for any of the clones to develop autonomous selves—either in the individualistic liberal sense or the relational sense.

Care ethics describes autonomy as a relational condition that ebbs and flows throughout life that contrasts with liberal theory's attention to self-government and independence. For the clones of *Never Let Me Go*, there is no opportunity to develop a sense of themselves as separate from the rest of the clone society. An exclusively relational autonomy is no better than the essentialist liberal conception. The clones of Hailsham are strictly socially determined. Being isolated at Hailsham or one of the other various orphanages for clones around the country, there is no other social world from which to draw from to imagine an alternative existence. When future speculation begins to occur, it is stopped dead in its tracks. Up until their last year at Hailsham, the clones do not fully understand what their lives will be like. Miss Lucy stops Peter, one of the clones at Hailsham, when he is talking with another boy about "what it would feel like if we became actors. What sort of life it would be" (80). She tells the entire group of students, "none of you will go to America, none of you will be film stars. And none of you will be working in supermarkets as I heard some of you planning the other day . . . if you're to have decent lives, you have to know who you are and what lies ahead of you, every one of you" (81). They are taught that their only chance for a decent life is to understand how they must give up that life. They are treated as "mere means" to an end, rather than as an end in themselves.

Group dynamics are a powerful theme in *Never Let Me Go*. Margaret Atwood remarks in a review of the novel, "One motif at the very core of [the novel] is the treatment of out-groups, and the way out-groups form in-groups, even among themselves.

The marginalized are not exempt from doing their own marginalization: Even as they die, Ruth and Tommy and the other donors form a proud, cruel little clique, excluding Kathy H. because, not being a donor yet, she can't really understand" (2005). Kathy still considers Ruth and Tommy her best friends. No attempt to communicate their shared existence is expended in their attempts to be considered "normal." This demonstrates the possible problems inherent in Sara Ruddick's conception of carework involving training children to be socially acceptable, and the need for a constant critique of caring practices so that they are effective. A social care ethic would encourage communication and understanding between its members, rather than frustrated resignation characterized by divisiveness.

While clones form groups to substitute for families, they fail to develop caring practices that are often found in families. For Ishiguro's clones, there is no solid group affinity because the rules for behavior continually change. For example, Ruth is quick to adopt behaviors of whatever group she happens to be involved with. At the Cottages, when couples parted they did not kiss each other goodbye, but slapped each other on the arm, so Ruth began to slap Tommy on the arm as a goodbye. "Tommy didn't have a clue what was going on, and would turn abruptly to Ruth and go: 'What?,' so that she'd have to glare furiously at him . . . after a week or so they were managing to do it right, more or less exactly like veteran couples" (121-2). When Kathy challenges Ruth's behavior by claiming "that's not how it works in real families," she responds with passive aggression, telling her "you're upset because I've managed to move on, make new friends . . . You can't expect me to hold your hand all the time" (124). Kathy is excluded from Ruth's

new group of friends, just as the clone community as a whole is excluded from the benefits of being included as a valid member of a political group of citizens.

The first value of care ethics is being open and attentive to potential problems of the needs for care. Unless this first criterion of care is met, then care will be inadequate or nonexistent. Tommy, who feels the need for self-care even though he cannot articulate it, is the only clone that appears subject to what Alisson Jaggar has termed “outlaw emotions.” Jaggar writes, “People who experience conventionally unacceptable, or what I call ‘outlaw,’ emotions often are subordinated individuals who pay a disproportionately high price for maintaining the status quo . . . when [these] are experienced by isolated individuals, those concerned may be confused, unable to name their experience; they may even doubt their own sanity” (Jaggar 396). Tommy frequently engages in emotional outbursts, which are regarded by the other clones as alternatively amusing and disturbing. As a joke, other clones tend to provoke him to rages. In one such example early in the novel, Kathy recalls other boys laughing at him because he was picked last for teams, and “Tommy burst into thunderous bellowing . . . he began to scream and shout, a nonsensical jumble of swear words and insults” (9). At the close of the novel, after Tommy and Kathy find out about the clone rights movement, just before Tommy donates his fourth and final organ, Kathy speculates, “ ‘back then, at Hailsham, when you used to go bonkers like that, and we couldn’t understand it . . . I was thinking maybe the reason you used to get like that was because at some level you always knew’ ” He responds, “maybe I did know, somewhere deep down. Something the rest of you didn’t” (275). Jaggar describes outlaw emotions as the “first indications that something is wrong with the way alleged facts have been constructed, with accepted understandings of how things

are. Conventionally unexpected or inappropriate emotions may precede our conscious recognition that accepted descriptions and justifications often conceal as much as reveal the prevailing state of affairs” (Jaggar 397). Frustratingly, this conscious recognition of the unjust state of affairs is never realized, never acted upon, never questioned.

Jaggar’s articulation of outlaw emotions are related to care ethics in the need to be attentive to contexts in which care might be needed. Attentiveness is a primary value of care ethics, that requires recognizing potential problems when they arise. That clones at Hailsham do not recognize the injustice present in their lives may be a result of inattentiveness in the social world they live in, and can be extended to the broader social realm of the nation. If there were national attention and civic debate about the injustice of cloning persons for organ harvesting, then it seems reasonable that the lack of care and justice in this health program would also be brought to the attention of the clones themselves, who would then be able to think critically about how to change their lives.

In addition to the four core values of care articulated by Tronto (attentiveness, responsibility, competence, and responsiveness), to develop a suitable social ethic of care critical thought must take place. This element of caring practices is missing at Hailsham. Care ethics is practiced within a particular context, with the attributes, needs, and desires of actual persons taken into consideration. As Held claims, “We can hope [that] feelings of solidarity will be extended to all persons everywhere, sufficiently to see their rights respected and their needs addressed. But it may be the value of care as much as the value of justice that can help this happen” (132). In their particular context, the rest of the clones ridicule Tommy for his acting out. The guardians view it as an expression of his frustration in creative pursuits. Tommy himself doesn’t understand why he loses control

of his emotions. They are never subject to serious examination by anyone, until much later when Kathy and Tommy understand the broader context of their situation.

As mentioned earlier, critical thought and reflection are necessary for appropriate application of the values and practices of care. Creative work has the potential for inspiring caring values and raising creative solutions, but this is not allowed to develop in the clones at Hailsham because of the inherent power differences between clones and their guardians. Creativity is encouraged in the clone students for dual purposes, the first being for art exhibitions for the public to prove that clones had souls. The second motivation for providing clone students with a strong arts and humanities background is the hope that the clones will be able to lose themselves and forget their destinies by engaging in creative work. This is a privatized care ethic that is effectively paternalistic, a primary danger of both private and public forms of care ethics, according to Tronto (1993a, 170). Miss Emily discloses to Kathy H. and Tommy that they did not think it in the students' best interests to understand the contexts of their lives: "We had run Hailsham for many years, we had a sense of what could work, what was best for the students in the long run, beyond Hailsham" (267). Protectionism of clones is an ineffective political solution to clone rights; it allows the guardians to think that happiness in a life is more important than having a self-inspired purpose or a valued point of view about what is needed.

Paternalist applications of care ethics occurs when "care-givers may well come to see themselves as more capable of assessing the needs of care-receivers than are the care-receivers themselves" (Tronto 1993a, 170). Paternalist care is brought about by failure to communicate and from the power relationships that can exist when the cared-for is

vulnerable to the care-provider. One guardian recognizes the dangers of paternal applications of care and addresses it with her students, although she later gets fired for it. Miss Lucy attempts to correct her previous advice to Tommy that he need not be creative if he doesn't feel like it. For some undisclosed reason, however, she cannot tell him openly how to use his knowledge, likely because she knew her job would be in danger. She exhorts, "Look, there are all kinds of things you don't understand, Tommy, and I can't tell you about them. Things about Hailsham, about your place in the wider world, all kinds of things. But perhaps one day, you'll try and find out. They won't make it easier for you, but if you want to, really want to, you might find out . . . But why should you be any different? The students who leave here, they never find out much. Why should you be any different?" (108-9). Unsure why she suddenly wants him to "create," Tommy assures her, "I'll be all right, Miss. I'm really fit, I know how to look after myself. When it's time for donations, I'll be able to do it really well" (108). Despite training in the creative arts and humanities, clone students learn it as an escape from real life. They never learn to think about themselves and why they must live as they do. Without critical thought and reflection on the part of both the care-providers and the cared-for, care ethics is a paternalist ethic that is oppressive and unjust.

Paternalism is also evidenced in the type of education the clones receive from the guardians at the school. Details in the novel inform just how involved clones are in the kind of artistic and humanistic intellectual investigations that might inspire them to rebel. Kathy H. mentions reading *Daniel Deronda*, a Victorian novel by George Eliot that critiques the anti-Semitism of British society, with themes of national unity and self-determination of peoples (122). Greg gives "speeches about Proust," to anyone who will

listen at the Cottages (120), and Proust's work involves issues of memory, physical infirmity, and cruel relationships. They also argue amongst themselves about the significance of Franz Kafka, who wrote of isolation and alienation in *The Metamorphosis*. The reason they never apply humanistic ideas to their own lives is that they were specifically trained not to do so.

Miss Emily tells Kathy and Tommy towards the end of the novel, "We were able to give you something, something which even now no one will ever take from you, and we were able to do that principally by *sheltering* you . . . You built your lives on what we gave you. You wouldn't be who you are today if we'd not protected you. You wouldn't have become absorbed in your lessons, you wouldn't have lost yourselves in your art and your writing" (268). Miss Lucy, Kathy H.'s favorite guardian, was fired for wanting to tell students what lay in store for them, which would have effectively challenged the power structure of the clone-rights group and given clones a chance to change their lives. Tommy reflects to Kathy H., "I think Miss Lucy was right, not Miss Emily," and then exhibits a final moment of uncontrolled rage in a deserted field before he returns to his clinic to finish his donations (273).

There are other moments in the text when clones as a collective group gravitate towards a potentially inspiring metaphor for their oppressed lives, but their habit of excluding each other from experiences, and their formation of "in groups" and "out groups," keeps all of them from fully realizing the meaning of their own interests. Late in the novel, when Kathy is a carer, and Ruth and Tommy have moved on to donating their organs, the entire clone community obsesses over visiting a dilapidated boat stranded in a bog out in the English countryside. Kathy speculates, "God knows how these things

work. Sometimes it's a particular joke. Sometimes a rumor. It travels from centre to centre, right the way across the country in a matter of days, and suddenly every donor's talking about it. Well, this time it was to do with this boat . . . (216). The boat becomes a pilgrimage site for clones; for the reader it functions as a metaphor for the lives of the clones themselves. They, like the boat, are stuck in a way of life that they have no idea how to escape. It seems quite odd that anyone would be interested in traveling hours by car and then further by foot to see a broken boat stuck in a wild bog, but this is what they do, and the boat could represent an unconscious attempt to understand how they might attain their freedom; however, because art was taught as escapism rather than as a conceptual discipline, they fail to recognize the subconscious implications of what they see.

They had to walk to see it, but the three friends, Ruth, Tommy, and Kathy H. manage to help each other make trip together. Walking through a boggy marsh, they reach a point when their feet start to sink into the ground and can go no further. As they view the boat from a distance, they talk about donating, and the possibility of not making it to four donations before they die. When Kathy H. attempts to reassure her friends that people do "come to terms with it," Ruth claims that Kathy cannot possibly understand since she is a carer rather than a donor. Tommy tells them that he was a lousy carer, but a good donor, and Ruth remarks that, "it's what we're *supposed* to be doing, isn't it?" (227). This attention to the ethics of duty is taken to an extreme by the clones in *Never Let Me Go*, a trait shared by characters in other Ishiguro novels such as *The Remains of the Day* (1989). Clones are raised to be eager to please, and to do their duty without

reflecting on the costs of that duty. This is another marker of the feminine care ethic that the clones live by.

Following the trip to the boat, Ruth, whose death during her second donation is immanent, attempts to encourage Tommy and Kathy to approach Madame at her home and apply for a “deferral” from donating. The rumor was that clone couples who went to Hailsham, because they were special, could apply for a deferral if they could prove that they were in love—proof that came from their artistic endeavors. The guardians at Hailsham, however, did not see art as transformative in nature, and they trained the students in the arts and humanities so that they could “lose themselves” in the process, not transform their lives.

The clones of Ishiguro’s Britain are unable, for a variety of reasons, to claim human rights for themselves. The onus of responsibility, however, is on the society that has recognized and then ignored the injustice of the organ donation program. This is a moral failure of a society that values individual rights and obligations that are only voluntarily undertaken; accompanying these rights must be a moral imperative to uphold human rights and a concept of human flourishing that is caring for others. A particular criticism of liberal theory by care ethics scholars is the missing correlation of responsibilities to rights. Tronto claims that the values of care “need not be restricted to the immediate objects of our care, but can also inform our practices as citizens” (1993a, 168). If citizens in Ishiguro’s England recognized and attempted “an honest recognition of the intersection of needs and interests,” they would likely find that the interests of society were underwriting an oppressive and unjust health care regime, and subsequently “imagine vigorous challenges to assumptions that we are not responsible for misfortunes

that are distant from us. Public agencies may be held responsible for their policies or challenged for their incompetence” (Tronto 1993a, 168). And cloning would not be viewed as a just and fair solution for the problem of care in British society.

Final Speculations on Liberal Theory, Care Ethics, and Cloning

Oryx and Crake and *Never Let Me Go* form a critique of the cloning cure for care.

Alternative value systems, such as care ethics, might have provided a way for characters to change the narrative and prevent the destruction that takes place, but in both novels two failures prevent an alternative outcome: the failure of individuals, society, and politics to practice an ethic of care; and the failure to link creative, conceptual thinking with group or civic solutions to oppressive social and political practices. Care between the individual/familial, social, and political realms should be integrative and reciprocal. The scientists in these narratives interestingly embody the liberal autonomous subject; had they seen themselves as embedded in mutually sustaining relationships, we might speculate that their research programs would have been very different, subject to civic discourse and government policy that promoted its uses for social good. Had the relational conception of autonomy been widely accepted, social and political solutions to the problems of care could have been worked out contextually, with the particular needs addressed to avoid extreme solutions. If there had been a location for civic discussion of the problems of care in these societies, with the recognition that all persons are on equal moral standing, perhaps clones would not be thought of as so fundamentally different from humans. And finally, had the power dynamics that exist among the characters been highlighted, particularly those between the scientists and characters we might call “creative humanists,” the unjust quality of their respective situations may have been brought into the open and corrected. All of these issues could have been dealt with by a

stronger individual, social, and political care ethic that is valued in relation to, rather than subordinated to, liberal and scientific worldviews.

Feminist care ethics offers an alternative conception to human life that contrasts with liberal theory. Where liberal theory relies on a conception of persons as independent, rational, and self-interested, care ethics recognizes that persons are emotionally and socially embedded in personal and societal relationships that greatly affect how they choose to live. While care ethics began its development in recognizing women's different moral voice, as it moves out of the private and into the social and political applications of the theory, we can see that in each relational aspect of life—individual/familial, social, or political—care can be valued and practiced with profound implications for other areas of human life. A complete theory of care involves valuing and practicing a feminist care ethic in personal, familial, social, and political relationships.

In conclusion to this thesis, I would like to speculate on the possible advancement of a social and political ethic of care brought about through the imaginative application of the arts and humanities. *Oryx and Crake*, and *Never Let Me Go* suggest a conception of the arts and humanities as a valuable component to combating the problems inherent in liberalism and in technological determinism. The arts and humanities “offer critical civic competencies, ways of comprehending cultural and technological values, and the worlds such values conjure; in short, ways of world making. A world without the [arts and] humanities would be one in which science and technology knew no point of social reference, had lost their cultural compass and moral scope” (Davidson and Goldberg 2004). As the ethics of care develops into a normative social and political theory, it can

advance the value of creativity, narrative understanding, and artistic expression while promoting the language and values of care in civic discourse that can be common and intelligible to everyone. In *Oryx and Crake*, the rhetoric of science functions to oppress critical application of the arts and humanities. At the same time, the market serves to silence needs for care in the family as well as in the larger community. A similar theme is found in *Never Let Me Go*, but the way in which arts and humanities are taught function to isolate characters from their social context rather than help them identify creative solutions to oppression.

These novels offer a concrete location for care ethics to investigate problems that could be solved by applying the values of care—attentiveness, responsibility, competence, and responsiveness—to individual, familial, social, and political issues. The narratives of each novel would be changed quite dramatically if there had been a location for the characters to voice their concerns over the uses of scientific technology. Care ethics can be advanced through civic discourses and democratic governance that start with empathy as a civic virtue. The novels examined here do not exhibit clear and easy critiques of the problems for care, and this analysis demonstrates that care ethics is not a simple, unconscious application of altruistic virtues of particular persons. Care is hard work. Sometimes it is physical work, although a political and social conception is often focused more on the values of care that can underwrite caring policies and just institutions. Citizens must be attentive, responsive, competent, and responsible in recognizing the particular needs for care that can be missed when we focus civic attention on rights and liberties alone. Some of these assumptions include the notion that our only responsibility is to keep our noses out of other persons' business, which becomes an

effective excuse for inattentiveness. Responsiveness is typically thought of as someone else's job, and with this conception of responsiveness, social responsibility is absolved. With a social and political care ethics approach, these negligent behaviors can be considered moral issues.

This thesis also demonstrates that liberal justice-based theories are not adequate to addressing the range of possible implications of human cloning. As the cloning debate stands today, any unjust or oppressive circumstances that may arise from cloning will occur and be dealt with after-the-fact. Two of the novels analyzed here speculate that after-the-fact might be too late. I assert that if ethical discussion that involves only a rights framework is employed, this unacceptable reactive procedure will continue, and it will be unproductive.

Care ethics in civic discourse can express the values and needs of real people who choose how they want to live within a conception of themselves as relationally and socially embedded. By bringing care out of the private realm and into the public realm, societies can promote active citizenship and recognize that instead of reacting to uncaring applications of human biotechnology, or any other area of public concern, through retroactive law and policy, we can find proactive solutions that are embedded in the contexts of actual lives that may be affected. In cases where oppressive or coercive actions may be a risk, we can address these potential issues in advance to lessen the impact of power relationships that affect how we care for ourselves and others. Rather than seeing the individual as opposed to government, as liberal theory does through its articulation of law as liberty-limiting, care ethics draws attention to how these boundaries drawn around ourselves as individuals only serve to deepen our isolation and our concept

of ourselves as different from other people we do not know, but whose lives affect ours in any case.

Fukuyama's assertion that we only know how to argue within a rights framework is called into serious doubt through this analysis of care ethics and the cloning debate. The language of care ethics is not heavily theoretical, nor is it unfamiliar or incomprehensible to our current way of life. In the context of care ethics, speculative fiction is a particularly interesting location from which to think critically about where science is taking our society. It is easy to dismiss these novels as far-fetched fantasies that represent extreme scenarios that could never happen in the real world; however, as Elshtain claims, when it comes to the issue of cloning "often the far-fetched gets us nearer the truth of the matter than all the cautious, persnickety pieces that fail to come anywhere close to the pity and terror this topic evokes" (183). While cloning seems an odd topic to investigate through a care ethics approach, it is an issue that bridges the conceptual gap between the individual, family, social, and political aspects of life. Cloning has the potential to affect everyone, and it is possible that it will happen within a context that disregards concerns of care. Considering the cloning debate through a care framework also shows how care ethics as a theory can move away from only considerations of carework, such as child care, elder-care, or health care. This consideration of cloning demonstrates the wide applicability of care ethics.

Liberal political philosopher John Rawls writes at the end of *The Law of Peoples* (1999) that "if a reasonably just Society of Peoples whose members subordinate their power to reasonable aims is not possible, and human beings are largely amoral, if not incurably cynical and self-centered, one might ask, with Kant, whether it is worthwhile

for human beings to live on the earth” (128). It is my hope that where Rawls, and liberal theory in general fail, the ethics of care can intervene to promote a just and caring society.

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