

LOYALTY TO CARE:

ROYCE AND A POLITICAL APPROACH

TO FEMINIST CARE ETHICS

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“Loyalty is a perfect synthesis of certain natural desires, of some range of social conformity, and of your own deliberate choice.”

—Josiah Royce¹

In 2003, Charlene Haddock Seigfried wrote a state of feminist philosophy chapter for the American Philosophical Association publication, *Philosophy in America at the Turn of the Century*, and the picture of gender equity was not pretty. Although feminist philosophy had achieved the status of a strong subfield of philosophy, its ideas continued to be marginalized. In particular, feminist philosophy and mainstream philosophy appeared to be operating on distinct tracks: “Insights of feminist philosophy are too often kept in their place, that place being of interest only to women or only to feminist women, and are not taken as applicable to men or to philosophy proper.”² Seigfried goes on to address American pragmatist philosophy which although is rooted in an inclusive approach to theory, inconsistently engages the works of feminist philosophers. Since Seigfried’s clarion call, some strides toward greater inclusion of feminist thought have been made but there remains a long way to go. In American philosophy, the term “feminist pragmatism” continues to gain traction, albeit slowly. Perhaps one of the more curious failures of philosophical integration thus far is between feminist care ethics and American pragmatism.

¹ Josiah Royce, *The Philosophy of Loyalty* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1995), 62.

² Charlene Haddock Seigfried, “Has Passion A Place in Philosophy?” in *Philosophy in America at the Turn of the Century* (Charlottesville, VA: Philosophy Documentation Center, 2003), 43.

Care theory³ shares with American pragmatist philosophy a number of intellectual commitments such as an emphasis on experience and context, concerns about inclusion, an integration of means and ends, and valorization of efficacious action as well as eschewing absolute principles. Despite these points of contact, few publications have explored the potential benefits of intellectual collaboration between these two streams of thought. One of the few early exceptions was a 1993 article by M. Regina Leffers that appeared in *Hypatia*: “Pragmatists John Dewey and Jane Addams Inform the Ethics of Care.”⁴ Keep in mind that care ethics was first identified in the 1980s, so this connection took about a decade. Leffers views Dewey and Addams as helping to provide a political dimension, or what she referred to as “a universalizing caring response,” to care theory that in its nascent form had focused on individual dyadic relationships. Now over twenty years old, Leffers’ analysis did not lead to much by way of further pragmatist investigation.

As Leffers suggested, it can be argued that classical American philosophers such as Jane Addams, William James, and John Dewey offer philosophical analyses that are not only in concert with care but more importantly develop intellectual trajectories that can contribute to a more robust understanding of care. For example, Jane Addams claims that a democratic society is animated by more than policies and structures but rather requires a citizenry that is actively engaged with one another for the purpose of learning about and ultimately caring for fellow citizens.⁵ William James offers a theory of will that claims individuals can influence reality by taking an imaginative leap of faith. Such attention to motivation

³ Although the branch of feminist moral theory associated with the work of Carol Gilligan, Nel Noddings and others is commonly referred to as “care ethics,” I prefer the term “care theory” to capture a wider theoretical trajectory that integrates ontology and epistemology.

⁴ M. Regina Leffers, “Pragmatists Jane Addams and John Dewey Inform the Ethic of Care.” *Hypatia* 8:2(Spring 1993), 64-77.

⁵ Jane Addams, *Democracy and Social Ethics* (New York: MacMillan, 1902), 6-7.

can be extremely useful in considerations of caring for unfamiliar others, particularly as such care is limited by one's own perception of agency and ability.⁶ John Dewey's theory of habit as open-ended structures of experience can be applied to care as a means of understanding how care is the result of repeated performance.⁷ Other pragmatists such as George Herbert Mead and Ella Lyman Cabot might also be candidates for fruitful discussions about care. A figure perhaps less likely to receive attention for possible contribution to care theory is Josiah Royce (1855-1916).

Known as an idealist, Royce was one of the most influential of the philosophers during the origin of pragmatism in the United States. He wrote on a wide range of topics including social issues, logic, mathematics, philosophy of religion, and, of most significance to this project, ethics. In 1908, Royce wrote a *The Philosophy of Loyalty* where he offers a means for people to live a moral life that recognizes that individual morality cannot be achieved separate from the ethical strivings of others in society. The term "loyalty" becomes the linchpin of moral alignment for Royce.

In this article, I suggest that Royce's understanding of loyalty has much in common with a robust notion of care and that dialogue between the notions of care and loyalty has the potential to yield a more robust political theory of care. Prior to attempting a synthesis of loyalty and care, I begin by describing the trajectory of care being employed here, followed by an overview of Royce's concept of "loyalty to loyalty" with an eye towards its relational implications.

An Expansive Theory of Care: Embodied and Political

Given the diverse and fertile explorations of care being undertaken today, it is useful to clarify what character of care theory is being employed here. Born out of feminist analysis of women's experience by philosophers and social scientists, theorizing about care is now engaged in by individuals from many disciplines, some who identify as feminist and some who do not. Although all care theorists view care as a relational approach to ethics that places the emphasis on contextualized individuals rather than universal normative interpretations of acts, there is wide variance on the moral status of care theory vis-à-vis traditional moral theories. Some view care as an alternative ethical theory, or a variance on virtue theory, while others define care as a paradigm shift in moral thinking representing something different (or more) than a normative theory of moral adjudication. The assumption for this paper is a theory of care that falls into the latter camp through what has been referred to as "embodied care." Many care theorists recognize the ontological shift required for the interconnected and interdependent assumption of identity required for care.⁸ A few theorists have acknowledged that care also entails an epistemological transformation that alters the connection between the knower and the known.⁹ I have suggested that care is an expansive postmodern theory of being that has implications for who we are, what we know, and what we value. As such, care is a function of our embodiment, not as a purely natural function but an extension of our physical capacities and animated by iterations of actions that constitute our moral selves. Accordingly, every act of care is an act of will that negotiates with social forces that endeavor to place both demands and limitations on our caring for others.¹⁰

⁶ Maurice Hamington, "The Will to Care." *Hypatia* 25:3 (Summer 2010), 675 – 695.

⁷ Maurice Hamington, "Care Ethics, John Dewey's 'Dramatic Rehearsal' and Moral Education," *Philosophy of Education Yearbook 2010*. Spring 2011.

⁸ For example, Fiona Robinson, *Globalizing Care: Ethics, Feminist Theory, and International Relations* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1999), 39.

⁹ For example, Vrinda Dalmiya, "Why Should A Knower Care?" *Hypatia* 17:1 (2002): 34-52.

¹⁰ Our ethical actions negotiate between perceived social

Reflective repetitions of these actions constitute our mental and physical habits or performances of care that over time instantiate our moral selves. Thus, our moral identities become known through our actions on behalf of others. Authentic caring is a moral ideal that begins with attentive knowledge of the one cared-for through temporal and proximal relations (what Nel Noddings refers to as “engrossment”¹¹) and is ultimately manifested in caring actions.

Such embodied care engages in a different kind of “work” than traditional ethical theories. Rather than answering the question, “What should one do?” thus applying abstract and universal rubrics, care is a particularist theory that engages imagination in a caring disposition to specific circumstances. However, care is not purely subjective as authentic acts of care result in the flourishing and growth of the one cared for. As such, the efficacy of care can be assessed, if not with the precision of “right” and “wrong” judgments, through the well-being and potential for thriving of the one cared for, given available evidence and reflection. Accordingly, care theory offers a radical departure in thinking about normativity that does not fit well within existing Western concepts. Care offers a tenuous trajectory of normativity rather than one abstracted from the context of the individuals involved through rules or calculations of actions. Traditional normative abstraction is supported in the name of objectivity and fairness. Care entails a more

norms of deficient and superogatory behavior. For example, if while walking down the street one is asked for directions, a response of “ask someone else” or ignoring the person would generally be considered substandard moral behavior. However, going so far as flagging down a taxi and paying for the stranger to get to their destination, or perhaps even engaging them in a lengthy conversation only to discover that they really have a different need than the destination they had intended could provide, resulting in giving them directions to a different destination, is considered superlative moral behavior beyond the norm. Individuals can discipline themselves or others when the actions are outside the usual range.

¹¹ Nel Noddings, *Starting at Home: Caring and Social Policy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 14.

organic approach to normativity. Fiona Robinson recognizes this when she describes the naturalized epistemology that underpins care as “*not fully normative* in the strong sense, it still retains normativity” (2011: 27). In a stronger critique, Margaret Urban Walker asks, “I have come to wonder, or rather to worry about, why it is so important to know whether ‘we’ are right and ‘they’ are wrong, *tout court* (1998: 13). Rather than eschew normativity altogether, care theory offers a context-driven emergent trajectory of moral standards. The moral response (caring) is found within the relationships and the individuals involved. In this manner, care transcends the objectivity/subjectivity dualism. Care is not subjective in that any response cannot simply be labeled as caring. It is also not objective in that a single best caring response cannot be predetermined given the complexity of context. Rather, care involves the time and attention to be responsive to the other, the care receiver, prior to any course of action.

Because care is enacted through the body in the world and in relationships, it is inherently political by challenging and influencing personal and social power. The feminist challenge to the dichotomy between personal and political spheres is played out in caring actions that wield power to listen to and help others as well as our selves. One of the positive changes in philosophy since Seigfried’s critique of feminist philosophy’s marginalization is the growth of political theorists who have embraced and employed care to analyze institutions, policy, and economics. However, as is the nature of paradigm shifts, many political theorists are falling back on familiar structures of ethical theory to understand the political nature of care. For example, some theorists discuss the “right” to receive care or the “responsibility” to give care, or even how to adjudicate current political practices according to the values of care.¹² Such explorations are admirable because they

¹² Joan Tronto, *Caring Democracy: Markets, Equality, and Justice* (New York University Press, 2013), 153-155.

infuse the language of care into social and political conversations previously devoid of such relational concerns. However, applying entitlements and duties to care fails to fully appreciate the radical potential of care theory. When care is a right or a responsibility to be assigned or distributed, it loses its character as an act of individual will and engagement. When one is internally compelled to care rather than externally commanded to care, the opportunity for robust action, connection, and transformation is severely limited. It is in this context that we turn to Royce, and his concept of loyalty, to see if there is a political understanding of care that can balance internal and external motivation—private and political interest—in a manner that does not abdicate the radical potential of care to reconceive the moral domain as expansive. In other words, can Royce’s work on loyalty contribute to a more robust understanding of care’s political character without returning to the modernist categorical frameworks of traditional liberal political theory?

Loyalty to Loyalty

“It [Josiah Royce’s late ethics] does not fit traditional forms because it is *primarily* neither utilitarian nor deontological, nor divine command, nor a virtue ethics. Yet it contains key features of all these kinds of ethics. So, it is *not* one of a kind. It is *unique, sui generis.*”

—Frank M. Oppenheim¹³

Loyalty has long been regarded as a moral virtue of devotion to a person, group, or idea yet held in some suspicion because it violates the standard of impartiality required for objectivity and justice within liberal theories. Royce elevates and elaborates loyalty to a place of primacy among moral virtues. For Royce, genuine loyalty is an absolute good, however it is both means (loyalty begets more loyalty) and ends (a moral ideal). This section addresses how Roycean loyalty is

simultaneously normative, relational or social, political, and an art of self development. The challenge in describing Roycean loyalty is that it is all these elements enmeshed in one another thus transcending easy demarcation.

Royce begins with a traditional definition of loyalty and then adds nuance as witnessed in the quote that follows. Note that Royce emphasizes loyalty to a cause as well as consistency of devotion and action:

*The willing and practical and thoroughgoing devotion of a person to a cause. A man is loyal when, first, he as some cause to which he is loyal; when, secondly, he willingly and thoroughly devotes himself to this cause; and when, thirdly, he expresses his devotion in some sustained and practical way, by acting steadily in the service of his cause.*¹⁴

The immediate critique that stems from valuing such devotion is what of the nature of the object of devotion? There are plenty of evil causes to align oneself with. Royce’s response is found in the notion of loyalty to loyalty. For Royce, genuine loyalty also entails loyalty to loyalty or a commitment to not hindering the loyal projects of others.¹⁵ If one impedes the loyalty of others, then they are justified in rethinking and shifting their loyalties. Thus loyalty is an ethical ideal for Royce and loyalty to loyalty is a maximizing principle: our loyalties should increase overall loyalty in the world. Loyalty to loyalty then becomes the normative element of Roycean ethics. According to Royce, when confronted with a moral dilemma, individuals should choose the path that facilitates the greatest loyalty among those affected.

Loyalty initially appears ill suited to a feminist theory of care because it addresses a relationship to a cause rather than a person. However, Royce proceeds to suggest a

¹³ Frank M. Oppenheim, “Royce’s Practice of Genuine Ethics.” *The Pluralist* 2:2 (Summer 2007): 1.

¹⁴ Royce, *The Philosophy of Loyalty*, 9.

¹⁵ Royce, *The Philosophy of Loyalty*, 57.

strong social dimension to loyalty.¹⁶ Bette Manter contends that you cannot separate Roycean ethics from his theory of individuation. However, individuation is not the same as traditional atomistic individualism for Royce. Manter indicates that the notion of individuals as “unencumbered autonomous self-reliant agents who pull themselves up by their boot-straps” is a myth and “utterly antithetical to everything Royce believed to be true and good about human being.”¹⁷ Royce defines individuals in relational terms: “Individuals are describable enough, if only,--as I said before, --*if only* you assume other previous individuals to which to relate them.”¹⁸ When Royce turns to fleshing out loyalty, that same relational ontology permeates his characterization:

The cause to which a loyal man is devoted is never something *wholly* impersonal. It concerns other men. Loyalty is social. . . . The cause to which loyalty devotes itself has always this union of the personal and the seemingly superindividual about it. It binds many individuals into one service. Loyal lovers, for instance, are loyal not merely to one another as separate individuals, but to their love, to their union, which is something more than either of them, or even than both of them viewed as distinct individuals.¹⁹

Not only is loyalty a social endeavor, it serves to build community. Royce describes moral insight as having as one of its aims the destruction of “all which separates us

into a heap of different selves.”²⁰ Shannon Sullivan refers to Roycean loyalty as a method for knitting together the individual with the community.²¹

Perhaps surprisingly, for Royce loyalty is at once both a social concept and a means for individual identity formation. Royce indicates that loyalty helps individuals define who they are by clarifying their commitments. For Royce, the pragmatist idealist, moral agency is derived from finding purpose.²² He conceives of loyalty as not merely blind commitment but an act of will that builds upon what an individual learns from society. He uses the term “enlightened loyalty” to describe the personal reflection and choice that goes into relationships. The relationships require sustenance and are not static in their commitment to the cause. Jackie Kegley sums up Royce’s concept of loyalty as “highly personal, involving choice, affection, and a sense of self.”²³ It is this last point that Kegley makes, loyalty as a sense of self, which opens up loyalty to be so much more than a normative theory of ethics. Thus the binding together of individuals to support a cause is not merely a political or ethical act but one that helps to establish a relational self.

Royce’s 1908/1909 lectures on loyalty at the University of Pittsburgh included a lengthy discussion of the “art of loyalty.” For Royce, loyalty was an art available to the masses. Rather than an elite moral form, loyalty is the thoughtful support for a collective cause larger than oneself that anyone can participate in.²⁴ However, Royce

¹⁶ Ironically, in *Loyalty: An Essay on the Morality of Relationships* (New York: Oxford, 1993), George P. Fletcher criticizes Royce’s formulation of loyalty as overly steeped in the result of an individual will that fails to capture the significance of the loyal person’s shared history with others (153).

¹⁷ Bette J. Manter, “The Incompleteness of Loyalty” in *Josiah Royce for the Twenty-First Century: Historical, Ethical, and Religious Interpretations*. Kelly A. Parker and Krzysztof Piotr Skowronski (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012): 119-132.

¹⁸ Josiah Royce, *The Conception of God: A Philosophical Discussion Concerning the Nature of the Divine Idea As A Demonstrable Reality* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1902), 257.

¹⁹ Royce, *The Philosophy of Loyalty*, 11.

²⁰ Josiah Royce, *The Religious Aspects of Philosophy* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, and Co., 1895), 193.

²¹ Shannon Sullivan, “Transforming Whiteness with Roycean Loyalty: A Pragmatist Feminist Account” in *Contemporary Feminist Pragmatism*. Eds., Maurice Hamington and Celia Bardwell-Jones (New York: Routledge, 2012), 19-41, 27.

²² John Clendenning, *The Life and Thought of Josiah Royce, Revised and Updated Edition* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1999), 300.

²³ Jacquelyn Ann K. Kegley, *Genuine Individuals and Genuine Communities: A Roycean Public Philosophy* (Nashville: University of Vanderbilt, 1997), 86.

²⁴ Mat Foust, “What Can I Do For the Cause Today

saw an element of skill development in the art of loyalty. He believed that individuals could “train” themselves to resolve conflicts among causes. The art of loyalty is much like a critical thinking skill to reflectively consider one’s moral motivations and commitments. As Mathew Foust describes, “The art of loyalty is that of discovering what one’s own rational will is and how to be faithful to that will in the face of the unpredictable nature of life.”²⁵

Roycean Loyalty and Feminist Appropriation

Appropriation is a crucial issue for contemporary feminist philosophy and bears some discussion here prior to addressing a synthesis of care and Roycean loyalty. Feminist scholars have engaged in at least three paths of analysis. 1) Critiquing the sexism and misogyny in the canons of Western philosophy. 2) Recovering the work of forgotten women writers and scholars. 3) Appropriating the ideas and analysis of non-feminist intellectuals. It is the latter path that is pertinent to this project. One of the significant questions in feminist appropriation of male philosophers is whether their expressed sexism nullifies their insights for enriching feminist philosophy.²⁶ Marx, Freud, and Foucault are a few of the figures who articulated various forms of sexist or exclusionary thought in their lives and yet feminists have found their work sufficiently serviceable to apply or appropriate. Royce is clearly not a feminist theorist. As Kara Barnette describes, “Royce himself never developed an account of gender, never explained how his theories might differ in relationship to women, and in his major

works, never explicitly advocated for women’s suffrage.”²⁷ Yet, Royce offers insight into ethics, community, and interpretation that feminist philosophers have found useful.

Three recent feminist appropriations of Royce can be found in the works of Shannon Sullivan, Celia Bardwell-Jones, and Kara Barnette. Sullivan acknowledges that at times Royce appears to endorse racist and imperialist thinking however she finds that Royce’s concept of loyalty might provide a positive method for combating racism on the part of those who identify as white. Rather than distancing themselves from their race or being racked with guilt, Sullivan views loyalty as a method for transforming white identity in a constructive manner. Roycean loyalty supports the building of loyalty of others. According to Sullivan, “Developing a critical loyalty to themselves and to other white people, white people’s racial habits might be less toxic to people of color” and they may learn to love themselves.²⁸ For Sullivan, loyalty to loyalty has sufficient critical character as to allow for self analysis without devolving into self deprecation or self justification. Bardwell-Jones’ feminist appropriation of Royce also engages issues of identity but is more concerned with Roycean concepts of interpretation and community rather than loyalty. According to Bardwell-Jones, traditional propositional formulations of knowledge acquisition as depicted in S knows P seem inadequate to account for interpersonal, intercultural knowledge. In his theories of interpretation and community, Royce transforms the dyadic knowledge relationship into a triadic one through the role of the interpreter.²⁹ The interpreter must “know” both parties to the translation to create knowledge that transcends difference. Bardwell-Jones views this approach as useful

Which I Never Did Before?’ Situating Josiah Royce’s Pittsburgh Lectures on Loyalty.” *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society* 47:1 (2011):87-108, 96.

²⁵ Foust, “What Can I Do For the Cause Today Which I Never Did Before?” 99.

²⁶ Over two decades ago, Nancy Tuana noted that the central concern for feminists who read mainstream philosophy is when male philosophers’ gender assumptions, “affect their central categories of their system—their conceptions of rationality, their construals of the nature of morality, their visions of the public realm.” Nancy Tuana, *Woman and The History of Philosophy* (New York: Paragon, 1992), 116.

²⁷ Kara Barnette, *Necessary Error: Josiah Royce, Communal Inquiry, And Feminist Epistemology*. Dissertation. (University of Oregon, 2012), 141.

²⁸ Sullivan, “Transforming Whiteness with Roycean Loyalty,” 36.

²⁹ Griffin Trotter, *On Royce* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2001), 78-81.

for thinking about cultural border crossings: “The mediation essential in the process of interpretation reveals that knowledge is not a solipsistic pursuit. The importance of the social emergent in Royce’s thought requires the interactions and encounters with others. This implication becomes an attractive feature for feminist epistemology.”³⁰ Kara Barnette is particularly enthusiastic about the potential for feminist appropriation of Royce. Lamenting the dearth of such explorations, she states: “This oversight misses the extraordinary contributions Royce’s work could make to feminist philosophy.”³¹ Like Bardwell-Jones, Barnette is also concerned with applying Roycean concepts to feminist epistemology and community. In separate works, she addresses epistemic privilege, the role of error, and the role of traitors. Barnette contends that Royce provides a middle way between communitarianism and individualism that allows for fallibility and transgressors who are loyal to the greater good of society. Ultimately, Barnette argues that in applying a Roycean framework, the struggle of feminists who continue to work in patriarchal organizations but subvert those communities for the benefit of all people in building a more inclusive society is a form of loyalty to loyalty.³²

Each of the applications of Royce discussed above not only support the notion that Royce’s work is ripe for feminist appropriation, they point to why care theory might particularly benefit. In each case, there is a relational dimension to Royce’s contribution that bridges personal and social arenas in a manner that is surprising

³⁰ Celia Bardwell-Jones, “Border Communities and Royce: The Problem of Translation and Reinterpreting Feminist Empiricism” in *Contemporary Feminist Pragmatism*. Eds., Maurice Hamington and Celia Bardwell-Jones (New York: Routledge, 2012), 57-70, 67.

³¹ Kara Barnette, “Communities, Traitors, and the Feminist Cause: Looking Toward Josiah Royce for Feminist Scholarship.” *The Pluralist* 2:2(Summer 2007), 81-90, 81.

³² Barnette, “Communities, Traitors, and the Feminist Cause.” 89.

for a philosopher known for his idealism and metaphysics. The trans-negotiation of epistemology, ethics, and ontology in the ameliorative service of society are explicit or implicit in the analysis of Sullivan, Bardwell-Jones, and Barnette, which is also consistent with the expansive understanding of care theory that underlies this article.

To reiterate what is probably obvious at this point, an appropriation of Roycean loyalty for care theory is not to suggest that Royce is a feminist or a care theorist. Such appropriation is not a form of revisionist history or moral exoneration but an endeavor consistent with the scholarly enterprise: meaningfully building on the insights of those who have gone before.

Loyalty and Care

“Every political theory contains an implicit or explicit account of caring”

—Joan Tronto³³

Two potentially fruitful directions of exploration for integrating Royce’s notion of loyalty and care theory are in regard to the interrelated notions of the responsibility to care and the role of causal loyalty in framing a political theory of care. In each case, Roycean loyalty offers a means to address an aspect of care that has not been clearly resolved in the care literature. This article concludes with a discussion of the nature of a duty to care and a fresh approach to a politics of care from a Roycean framework.

For care theorists, the idea of a moral duty to care has been the subject of some disagreement. Specifically arguing against a Kantian approach, Nel Noddings resists reducing caring to a principle, duty, or right: “care theorists advise turning away from arguments that concentrate on the wordings of principles and abstract

³³ Tronto, *Caring Democracy*, 28.

interpretations.”³⁴ Noddings distinguishes between natural caring, the human inclination to care for family and friends, and ethical caring, the decision to care for less familiar others. For Noddings, rather than making a more moral society by creating a duty or requirement to care, we should expand the natural inclination to care: “many of the most important acts and attitudes are governed by inclination, not duty.”³⁵ Fiona Robinson also finds that a Kantian account of moral obligation is unsatisfactory when it comes to motivation for behavior. Robinson contends, “the ability to care with commitment about another can emerge only through sustained connections among persons and groups of persons.”³⁶ However, not all theorists agree. Some believe that Kant and the notion of an obligation to care have been sold short. John Paley suggests that a Kantian approach to morality can accommodate care and asks, “How can a writer who would urge us to accept the ethics of care do so without suggesting that we *ought* to care, and that we ought to cultivate the appropriate sentiments if we have no natural tendency in that direction?”³⁷ Some theorists suggest that a duty to care is needed for practical reasons. Sarah Clark Miller also cites the need for a Kantian approach because of the historical disparity in caring labor provided along gender and class lines. According to Miller, a duty to care can help foster more equitable distribution of care burdens.³⁸ Some theorists, like Daniel Engster, employ the notion of a rational obligation to care rather than a Kantian duty to a categorical imperative. For Engster, it is the fact of human interdependency that creates the moral responsibility for us to be responsive to the caring

needs of others.³⁹ In summary, the extent to which care can be morally required has not been resolved among care theorists.

Royce’s philosophy of loyalty creates a non-Kantian ethic of responsibility that may address some of the concerns of care theorists around the limitations of duties. Royce was not antithetical to the notion of duties⁴⁰ in fact he described loyalty as “the whole duty of man.”⁴¹ However, he formulated a conception of loyal duty that rests upon internal motivation and connection while establishing the idea of a commitment to something greater than oneself. Royce creates a theory of obligation that is neither objective in the traditional sense, nor abstract. For Royce, there can be no categorical imperative imposed from an external or abstract position. The duty to loyalty comes from within and flows from the moral commitments one makes. As Royce describes, “The loyal man’s cause is his cause by virtue of the assent of his own will. His devotion is his own. He chooses it, or, at all events, approves it.”⁴² Royce acknowledges the role of psychology and specifically motivation in the force of a chosen duty. As mentioned above, the loyal commitment is critical yet simultaneously it is thoroughgoing:

Whenever a cause, beyond your private self, greater than you are, -- a cause social in its nature and thus at once personal and, from the purely human point of view, superpersonal,--whenever, I say, such a cause so arouses your interest that it appears to you worthy to be served with all your might, with all your soul, with all your strength, then this cause awakens in you the spirit of loyalty.⁴³

³⁴ Nel Noddings, *The Maternal Factor: Two Paths to Morality* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 238.

³⁵ Noddings, *The Maternal Factor*, 36.

³⁶ Robinson, *Globalizing Care*, 157.

³⁷ John Paley, “Virtues of Autonomy: The Kantian Ethics of Care” *Nursing Philosophy* 3 (2002): 133-143, 140.

³⁸ Sarah Clark Miller, “A Kantian Ethic of Care?” in *Feminist Interventions in Ethics and Politics*. Eds. Barbara S. Andrew, Jean Keller and Lisa H. Schwartzman (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005), 111-127.

³⁹ Daniel Engster, *The Heart of Justice: Care Ethics and Political Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 36-54.

⁴⁰ Mathew A. Foust, *Loyalty to Loyalty Josiah Royce and the Genuine Moral Life* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), 184n60.

⁴¹ Royce, *The Philosophy of Loyalty*, 140.

⁴² Royce, *The Philosophy of Loyalty*, 10.

⁴³ Royce, *The Philosophy of Loyalty*, 25.

Although to characterize loyalty as both a duty and voluntary appears contradictory, Mathew Foust finds the two reconcilable. Foust uses the example of a “patriot” to make the case. To be a patriot implies a complete commitment that cannot be externally imposed. One must choose to be a patriot.⁴⁴ Furthermore, the obligation created by loyalty is manifested in action. Unlike the Kantian valorization of a good will, Royce finds action paramount for the loyal actor. In introducing the lectures that make up *The Philosophy of Loyalty*, Royce admonishes that they are intended to foster moral action.⁴⁵ He goes so far as to claim, “Every form of dutiful action is a case of loyalty to loyalty.”⁴⁶

This internal sense of duty represents a significant divergence from a Kantian approach that may provide the means to address both Noddings’ skepticism about duties and Engster’s need for a rational obligation to care. Recalling that Royce integrated idealism with pragmatism, care, like loyalty is an ethical ideal. An ideal is not the same as an obligation. The duty to care is self imposed and grows with my commitment to care through relationships with others. Returning to the expansive notion of performative care mentioned earlier, meaningful proximal relations with others creates the opportunity for greater understanding of others. This knowledge has the potential to be disruptive rather than merely propositional in that it has the possibility of raising my level of concern to the point of taking caring action. The commitment grows and eventually there can be a felt duty to care. The choice to care is mine but it is experienced as a willing obligation. In addition, the duty to care is responsive to individuals in their context and so cannot be predetermined. The specifics of the duty are not prescribed imperatives such as not lying but emerge from the caring relationship. As

such, even though Noddings claims that care does not come from “grim duty but from a recognized need to produce and cherish a special response,”⁴⁷ she likely would approve of this Roycean form of duty.

Another way that Roycean loyalty might contribute to a political theory of care is through the notion of a commitment to a cause. Care theorists have been primarily concerned with care for human beings and sometimes non-human animals.⁴⁸ Royce offers a means to think about caring that does not abandon interpersonal care, as we have seen through his explicit construction of loyalty as social, but rather ties direct care to larger causes. Such an approach fits particularly well with an expansive notion of care that endeavors to integrate identity and epistemology with morality. Royce frames causes that elicit loyalty as fundamentally social: “you cannot be loyal to merely an impersonal abstraction.”⁴⁹ In this sense, loyalty is never about an ideological commitment to a cause but always entails consideration of the relationships formed and the well-being of others. There is a reflective quality to Roycean loyalty that connects the proximal relations with a greater cause on behalf of humanity. Here Royce interjects not only motivation for action but imaginative connections political consequences. For example, in describing using a Roycean framework to build a more global community with common interest and purpose in a cosmopolitan world, Joseph Orosco claims, “From a Roycean perspective, people today can indeed act *as if* they are world citizens, but they do so only when they are *actually* working alongside, responding to, building trust with, and become trustworthy with concrete others in their more local communities.”⁵⁰ Note how Orosco

⁴⁴ Mathew A. Foust, “Loyalty in the Teachings of Confucius and Josiah Royce.” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 39:2(June 2012), 192-206, 195-196.

⁴⁵ Royce, *The Philosophy of Loyalty*, 6.

⁴⁶ Royce, *The Philosophy of Loyalty*, 67.

⁴⁷ Noddings, *Starting at Home*, 168.

⁴⁸ For example, Carol J. Adams and Josephine Donovan, *Beyond Animal Rights: A Feminist Caring Ethic for the Treatment of Animals* (New York: Continuum, 1996).

⁴⁹ Royce, *The Philosophy of Loyalty*, 25.

⁵⁰ Jose-Antonio Orosco, “Cosmopolitan Loyalty and the Great Global Community: Royce’s Globalization.” *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 17:3(2003), 204-215, 209.

infuses relational considerations while simultaneously describing an imaginative connection between local and global work. Although a bit of an over generalization, recent work on care ethics has roughly taken two tracks. One track emphasizes developing the theoretical work around interpersonal care ethics in the spirit of Noddings. The other track has focused on social policy and political care in the spirit of Tronto. Royce's loyalty to a cause when mapped onto care suggests a method to hold both the relational and social tracks together.

What of a loyalty to care? Ultimately, loyalty to care can be considered a metaethical position that links particularism to a liminal sense of normativity that can be the basis for a more robust understanding of political care. Loyalty to care suggests a commitment to a moral ideal of care even when I am confronted by unfamiliar others. Thus Royce's insight can contribute an active dimension to care not often addressed in the literature. Care tends to be framed as a response to expressed need but loyalty to care suggests a more constant obligation to care that may even be preempting and proactive. In

all situations we *should* have a commitment to care—an openness to the other that entails listening with the possibility of action. Employing a Roycean framework, the “should” in the last sentence is the result of an internally developed duty based on experience and reflection not an externally imposed standard.

Why should I care for an unfamiliar person? Perhaps I should care not only because they express a need but also because I have a loyalty to care for which I have made a personal commitment. I can commit to care on a personal level in my interactions with other people, but I can also leverage those experiences to imagine and support caring that takes place on a community, regional, or national level. Caring is an ethical ideal that helps define who I am as a moral person through my performances of care but is also a cause much larger than myself. Accordingly, as a society we can attend to the value of care and make it a cause for which we collectively commit to and participate in.