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Southern Illinois University at Carbondale

Feminist Ethics, Mothering, and Caring

The relationship between feminist theory and traditionally feminine activities like mothering and caring is complex, especially because of the current diversity of feminist scholarship. There are many different kinds of feminist theory, and each approaches the issue of women's oppression from its own angle. The statement, "feminist ethics is about mothering and caring," can be critically evaluated by outlining specific feminist approaches to ethics and showing what role mothering and caring play in each particular view. In this paper, I will delineate feminine and feminist perspectives, then summarize four feminist views: liberal feminism, Marxist feminism, radical feminism, and socialist feminism. I will argue that to some extent all of the examples of feminist ethics discussed in this paper are "about" mothering and caring. In some cases this is because the particular view describes mothering and caring as features of the roots of women's oppression, or as a positive force in changing the prevailing social order to do away with women's oppression. Within each theory's framework, I will discuss the role played by mothering and caring, in terms of the roots of women's oppression and the necessary and sufficient conditions for the removal of women's oppression. I will conclude with a discussion of an additional role mothering might play in the socialist feminist framework.

A clear understanding of feminine and feminist perspectives is necessary to critically evaluate the statement "feminist ethics is about mothering and caring." *Feminine perspectives* emphasize the inclusion of women's experience(s) and focus on care, or some of what traditionally have been considered feminine virtues, in particular, nurturance and compassion, "which issue in caring behavior" (Callahan 3). Thus the feminine perspectives typically celebrate virtues traditionally perceived as feminine and experiences that are peculiar to women, such as pregnancy, labor, childbirth, and nursing (Callahan 3).

In contrast, *feminist perspectives* "take women to be in an oppressed position *vis-a-vis* men, and they focus on that position and the structures that have contributed to women's oppression" (Callahan 3). Thus, a feminist perspective begins with a specifically political outlook on the lives of women. A

feminist perspective has three features: "a recognition that women as a group have been and are oppressed; an account of the source or sources of that oppression; and suggestions for how the oppression of women can be overcome" (Callahan 3).

These explanations of the feminine and feminist perspectives highlight that feminist perspectives make no explicit appeal to the experiences of women, nor do they put forward an ethic of care. Even so, our working definition of feminist perspectives is fully compatible with our working definition of feminine perspectives. A pure feminine perspective under this definition would not perceive women as oppressed (Callahan 4). However, it is possible to characterize a feminist perspective that acknowledges the oppression of women as a group while giving serious acknowledgment to the experiences of individual women. These experiences may or may not include mothering and caring. This points to the fact that there is no single answer to the question of whether feminist ethics is about mothering and caring, since each form of feminist theory will highlight women's experiences as an oppressed group and as individual mothers or caregivers with regard to its own specific concerns.

Besides the distinction between feminine and feminist perspectives, a further description of the historical background of feminine and feminist perspectives will also shed light on how mothering and caring relate to feminism. Feminist and feminine perspectives are highly influenced by their place in history, since both perspectives give attention to women's experience and/or oppression in a historical context. The historical context within which these perspectives reside creates the backdrop for observations each perspective makes about traditional political theory. One major example that will be a recurring theme throughout the following descriptions of the four types of feminist theory has to do with the distinction between the political (or public) and private spheres. Some feminist theories will retain the distinction while others do not. However, it has been said by many different feminist theorists that "the tradition of western political thought rests on a conception of the 'political' that is constructed through the exclusion of women and all that is represented by femininity and women's bodies" (Shanley and Pateman 3).

Gilligan's research in the psychology of moral

development, presented in the landmark text *In a Different Voice*, can be seen as a forerunner to much of current feminist thought. The feminist critique of traditional political theory above echoes Gilligan's critique of Kohlberg's research in that they both involved the exclusion of women. Kohlberg's theory stated that individuals develop morally as their cognitive abilities to understand the nature of moral relations deepen, and that this process of moral development proceeds through set, hierarchically arranged stages that correspond to different levels of moral reasoning (Tronto 241). Gilligan was disturbed by Kohlberg's finding that girls were generally at lower stages of moral development than boys of the same age. Gilligan came to a very different conclusion in her own research, asserting that women and girls have a morally "different voice" that leads to the expression of an ethic of care as opposed to the traditional ethic of justice appealed to by Kohlberg (Tronto 242). Thus Gilligan exposed the "exclusion of women and all that is represented by femininity" from traditional ethics of justice. An ethic of care, as opposed to an ethic of justice, revolves around "responsibility and relationships rather than rights and rules, is tied to concrete circumstances rather than being formal and abstract, and is best expressed as an activity rather than a set of principles" (Tronto 242). Gilligan's description of a different moral voice from women could be seen as attention given to a formerly unstudied and intrinsically positive feminine ethical voice. But from a feminist viewpoint the fact that Gilligan's findings were shown to be gender-related (Tronto 242) leads to an important point about the role oppression may have played in the origin of care ethics, and traditional feminine virtues in general. Tronto notes that "whatever psychological dimensions there might be to explain women's moral differences, there may also be a social cause: women's different moral expression may be a function of their subordinate or tentative social position" (Tronto 243). Tronto and many other feminists see that Gilligan's different voice may be linked more to women's oppressed status than their gender.

In the way Gilligan's work moves from specific experiences of women to the role oppression plays in shaping these experiences, Gilligan's work neatly parallels the move from feminine to feminist perspectives. Gilligan's research gave attention not only to the traditionally feminine virtues

like mothering and caring, but also to the relationship such virtues have to women's oppression. The feminist perspectives that do seem to fit the statement, "feminist ethics is about mothering and caring," at least in some small or highly specific sense, were undoubtedly informed by Gilligan's work.

The shift from feminine to feminist perspectives in ethics emerged from feminist criticisms of feminine perspectives. An analogous example is Card's critique of Gilligan. "Gilligan's writings portray everyone as basically honest and of goodwill," Card states, "although often misunderstanding one another" (Card 17). From this partial picture, gynocentric and androcentric perspectives in ethics (i.e. feminine and masculine ethics) have come to seem more comfortable than they should to many who might have benefited from fuller pictures. Feminist perspectives on ethics have tried to provide some of these fuller pictures.

A helpful guiding statement on the differences between feminine and feminist ethics is given by Tong in *Feminine and Feminist Ethics*. Tong states that

Clearly, feminist approaches to ethics have a different set of goals than feminine and maternal approaches to ethics. Whereas feminine and maternal approaches tend to focus more on retrieving women's "feminine" values from the netherworld of patriarchal neglect, feminist approaches tend to focus on criticizing those values to determine whether they add to or subtract from women's oppression. A feminist approach to ethics is always interested in issues of power—specifically, male domination and female subordination—and it always seeks to provide women with action guides that will lead to women's liberation from oppression, suppression and repression (Tong 184).

Thus a major difference between feminine and feminist ethics lies in their teleologies. Feminine ethics holds the feminine virtues of mothering and caring to be intrinsically positive activities to be maintained. Some feminine views are not concerned with whether or not such activities perpetuate the oppression of women within a wider political context. Some

other feminine views may hold that the valorization of the feminine is the necessary and/or sufficient condition for the removal of women's oppression. In contrast, feminist ethics holds the removal of women's oppression to be more important than or prior to any judgment as to the intrinsic goodness or utility of feminine virtues.

A productive but generalized characterization of the four major feminist viewpoints can be made by describing two specific assertions of each form of feminism: what each view claims to be the root(s) of women's oppression, and what each view claims to be the necessary and sufficient means for removing women's oppression. From these two issues, the relationship of each form of feminism to the traditional virtues of mothering and caring will be clarified.

One feminist approach to ethics is related to liberal feminism. Liberal feminists believe that the roots of women's oppression can be found in those cultural constraints that hinder women from competing in the public world: the world of politics, medicine, business and so forth. Because traditional society holds the "false belief that women are, by nature, less mentally and physically capable than men, traditional society largely excludes women from the academy, etc." (Tong 7). Having described the discriminatory state of affairs, liberal feminists insist that society should give women the same educational and occupational opportunities that men have, because only then will women be able to achieve all that they both can and want to achieve (Tong 7). Thus equal opportunity is the necessary and sufficient condition for the elimination of women's oppression, according to liberal feminism. Tong's characterization highlights that liberal feminism is concerned with the division between public and private life. Public life is seen as the realm of political action, personal achievement and personal fulfillment, while private life is seen as the realm of mothering and caring, within which women have been trapped and subordinated. In so far as liberal feminism makes these observations about the private sphere, it could be said to be "about mothering and caring." Tong's characterization of liberal feminism serves as an example of how some, but not all, feminist reinterpretations of political theory deal with the issue of sex difference. Such feminist views expose that the question of sexual difference (or gender difference) is inseparable from the question of the relationship between the

private and the public (Shanley and Pateman 3).² Liberal feminists in particular note that "political theorists have seen women as having a vital part to play in social life—but not as citizens and political actors. Rather, women have been designated as the upholders of the private foundation of the political world of men . . ." (Shanley and Pateman 3). Mothering and caring activities are integral parts of this "private foundation of the political world."

For the liberal feminist, the suppression of women into mothering and caring roles is based not only in the public/private dichotomy but also in false claims about women's nature (Tong 7). In contrast to some feminine perspectives which uphold a conception of essentially feminine virtues and natures, the liberal feminist position "seems to be that male and female natures are identical; or, to put it more accurately, that there is no such thing as male and female nature; there is only human nature and that has no sex" (Jagger 37). Thus liberal feminists see mothering and caring as socialized and oppressive gender roles rather than evidence of a feminine nature shared by all women. While "liberal feminists are forced to recognize the indisputable physical differences between women and men . . . it is presupposed by the feminist argument that an individual's sex is irrelevant to her rights . . ." (Jagger 37). Avoiding claims about specifically male and female natures enables liberal feminists to argue that men and women are entitled to the same opportunities in both the public and private spheres. In the liberal feminist view, when all are afforded equal opportunities, all women may freely choose to "mother" or not to "mother."

A second feminist approach to ethics comes from Marxist feminism. Marxist feminism finds the roots of women's oppression in the classed nature of society and private property (Tong 7). The Marxist feminist view suggests that capital, and not men per se, causes women's oppression. Thus the necessary and sufficient means of removing women's oppression is the replacement of the capitalist economic system with a communist system. Both women and men will have economic equality under communism, because no one would be economically subordinate to anyone else (Tong 7). The relationship between Marxist feminism and the statement that "feminist ethics is about mothering and caring" is illuminated by the fact that Marxist feminists see the economic oppression

of women taking place not only in the public but also in the private spheres. In the Marxist feminist view, "the inegalitarian system of classes leads to exploitation and imperialism—the domination at home (including the household) and abroad of the have-nots by the haves" (Callahan 6). Thus mothering and caring would be described by a Marxist feminist as part of this domination and exploitation at home and in the household. Further, exploitation at home is specifically contingent with the overall exploitation of women that results from the classed nature of capitalist society and the introduction of private property. Many Marxist feminists have also argued that women constitute a single class of workers who produce use-values for home consumption (Callahan 6). Although this view is criticized because not all women come from the same economic class, it shows that many Marxist feminists believe the home to be where much of the oppression of women lies, and assert that the oppression will only be overcome when the domestic work that is done by women is transformed (Callahan 6). In unpacking this notion of transformation, it is important to note that Marxist theory itself would not find "anything intrinsically degrading about childbearing, childrearing, cooking, . . ." but instead Marxist theory criticizes the way in which these tasks are organized under capitalism (Jagger 219). Thus, Marxist feminists call for a transformation of domestic work (i.e. mothering and caring) in so far as it is part of an economic system that leads to the overall exploitation of women. In this sense, Marxist feminist theory could be said to be "about" mothering and caring.

A third feminist approach to ethics is tied to the radical feminist view. Radical feminists believe that the root of women's oppression lies in patriarchal society. Tong states that according to radical feminists, the patriarchal system that oppresses women—a system characterized by power, dominance, hierarchy, and competition—is so flawed that it cannot be reformed; it must be eliminated (Tong 7). Patriarchal legal, political, and economic institutions must be overturned as well as patriarchal social institutions, especially the family (Tong 7). Therefore mothering and caring, as they serve the patriarchal social order, are causes of women's oppression. Women's reproductive roles and responsibilities, as well as the institution of compulsory heterosexuality, are the fundamental causes of women's subordination and men's

domination (Tong 8). Radical feminists affirm the importance of love between women, agreeing that the ideal of the feminist woman who knows herself and is not afraid to love herself and other women must replace the ideal of the feminine woman who lives only for her children and/or men (Tong 8). In the specific sense that mothering and caring are asserted to be causal factors of the subordination of women, radical feminism does concern itself with mothering and caring. Radical feminists differ from Marxist feminists in that Marxist feminists do not assert that mothering and caring as institutions should be eliminated, but that the overriding capitalist and classed system should be eliminated. In contrast, radical feminists insist that men, not capital or capitalism, are women's primary oppressors (Tong 8). Because capitalism serves patriarchy and not vice versa, the elimination of capitalism is at most a necessary condition, but not a sufficient condition, for the elimination of women's oppression on the radical feminist view (Callahan 7). One aspect of radical feminism's sufficient conditions for women's liberation is the elimination of institutions like the family. It is interesting to note that in discussing the institutions to be eliminated, radical feminism is unlike both liberal and Marxist feminism in that it rejects the distinction between public and private spheres (Jagger 306).

A fourth feminist approach to ethics would be related to socialist feminism. Jagger gives an influential and detailed description of socialist feminism in *Feminist Politics and Human Nature*. Socialist feminism describes the roots of women's oppression in a holistic way, asserting that the necessary and sufficient conditions for elimination of women's oppression involve a massive revamping of the entire prevailing system of social relations. It is socialist feminism that I would assert has the most to say about mothering and caring.

Socialist feminism recognizes that much, though never all, of women's energy has been consumed in sexual and procreative labor (such as mothering and caring)—and most of this labor has always been forced rather than free. This historical situation is inseparable from the prevailing system of social relations, such as class, race, and sex (Jagger 305). Socialist feminism argues that sexual and procreative activity are constrained both by technological and social conditions, and that sexual and procreative freedom therefore requires developments in both technology and social organization

(Jagger 305). One example of such a development is a means of controlling fertility. Socialist feminists also argue that the abolition of exploitation is a necessary development for freedom of sexual and reproductive activity (Jagger 305).

Socialist feminism's vision of sexual and procreative freedom is based on a conception of sexual and procreative activity as no more biologically determined than any other human activity. As such, sexual and procreative activity are equally capable of social development (Jagger 306). Freedom is a social achievement and cannot be achieved by isolated individuals in the absence of a general reordering of society (Jagger 306). Thus socialist feminism calls for change in every area of human life, including sexuality and procreation.

One way in which Jagger describes the current sexual and procreative situation of women is in terms of the Marxist conception of alienation (Jagger 308). With regard to mothering and caring, socialist feminism finds that women are alienated as mothers because they do not control the conditions of their motherhood (Jagger 310). "Conditions of motherhood" are things like how many children a mother will have, involuntary sterilization, and many other social and technological influences that are an overwhelming part of today's mothering experience. Jagger lists many social and technological issues women have faced as mothers, noting that "the increasing subjection of the domestic childrearing process to scientific control suggests that mothers' experience is parallel in this respect to the experience of wage laborers, and provides one reason for characterizing mothers' work as alienated" (Jagger 312).³ The conditions of modern women's oppression as seen by the socialist feminist view leads to the conclusion that women's liberation requires totally new modes of organizing all forms of production and the final abolition of femininity (Jagger 317). Socialist feminism makes an explicit commitment to the abolition of both class and gender in the name of establishing reproductive freedom. These sweeping changes are the necessary and sufficient conditions for what Jagger calls "reproductive freedom," as well as the other stated goals of socialist feminism and the elimination of women's oppression.

I would assert that mothering can play an even greater role within Jagger's model of socialist feminism, in the present and in the future. Mothering, in a socialist feminist framework,

is a central experience of many oppressed women.⁴ As such, the experience of mothering and the directness of its alienation under the prevailing social system can play an educational role in exposing their oppressed status to more women, though not all women. After this illumination, it may be more possible for women and mothers to begin to take action toward creating the massive social changes that are the necessary and sufficient conditions for the elimination of women's oppression on the socialist feminist view. Because an integral part of socialist feminism's conception of the material base of society is the mode of producing sexuality and children, Jagger directs her proposal for social change toward the transformation of sexuality and procreation (Jagger 317-318). The fact that mothers and caregivers are currently closest to the foundational material base of society because of the role they play in the mode of producing sexuality and children is important in two ways: in the present, mothers and caregivers bringing about the aforementioned "developments in technology and social organization" is a necessary condition for the new social system; and in the future, the new "mothers and carers" maintaining the developments achieved by the past mothers and carers will be a necessary condition for the successful maintenance of the new social system.

My description of a new role for mothering and caring in the socialist feminist view comes from Jagger's description of new developments in both technology and social organization. Jagger has already argued that necessary conditions for a holistic change in the social order and the removal of women's oppression are developments in technology and social organization (Jagger 305). While Jagger did not specify who is to bring about these developments, I argue that mothers and caregivers are the necessary choice, because they are the closest to the material base of society. Because the material base of society includes the mode of producing sexuality and children, a change in that mode will be a necessary condition for starting a massive change of the prevailing social system. This change in the mode of producing sexuality and children will involve two steps: first the illumination of oppression to women who experience it; and second, a response of resistance to that oppression by those women who are engaged in mothering and caring. This response of resistance will entail women, in their roles of

mothering and caring, making concerted group efforts to achieve the aforementioned "developments" in technology and social organization. Jagger describes a means of controlling fertility as one such development (Jagger 305).⁴ Jagger notes that socialist feminists offer no guaranteed route to the overthrow of male dominance and capitalism (Jagger 317), and I would not be presumptuous enough to claim my suggestion is foolproof. It is also important to note that although I describe mothers' and caregivers' actions as necessary conditions of sweeping social changes, they are by no means sufficient to change the entire prevailing social system. In the future, when these changes are made and the necessary and sufficient conditions are met, the new experience of "mothering" can be a positive instantiation of the equal reproductive freedom for all regardless of gender and class. The maintenance of the aforementioned developments will then be a necessary condition for creating further developments that will be a part of the broad social changes and the removal of women's oppression described by the socialist feminists. In this way, mothering and caring can play an important role in meeting the goals of socialist feminism.

The primary criticism of my view would no doubt be the question why, since mothers have been around as long as they have and the oppressive social system has been around as long as it has, did the changes prescribed by socialist feminists not occur yet? My response to this question would be three-fold: 1) many women are still unaware of their own oppression; not because of any deficiency on their part but because of the overwhelming ability of the social system to maintain its oppression; 2) even though many women do not yet fully comprehend their oppression, many more women comprehend their oppression today than one thousand, one hundred or even ten years ago; and 3) it is important to note that although socialist feminism calls for holistic changes in the social order that will affect both sides of the public/private dichotomy (discussed earlier in the context of liberal feminism), many women still have little chance or encouragement to transcend the public/private dichotomy in their individual lives. While more women than ever are able to lead lives that are fulfilling in both the home and the workplace, many women are still forced into a choice between the two. It may be the

case that socialist feminism's necessary and sufficient conditions for change are simply on such a grand scale and so all encompassing that they will require a long period of preparation, a process spanning generations. I simply argue that a necessary place to begin the process of making holistic societal changes is with "mothers," because they are so closely connected to the material base of society.

One example of mothers and caregivers who are not only keenly aware of their own oppression but who are also making a concerted effort to achieve some of socialist feminism's developments in technology and social organization comes from an electronic mail "list" or discussion group of philosophers called the Society for Women in Philosophy Information and Discussion List, or SWIP-list.⁶ The list is "owned" by Linda Lopez McAlister, and provides a forum for discussion of various issues. A recent discussion on the list has been focused on how institutions, like philosophy departments and universities, can address the needs of individual caregivers with regard to time commitments and financial support. Many caregivers on the list have called for changes in departmental or institutional expectations about their departmental time commitments, or "distributions of effort," that will respect the fact that their responsibilities are divided between home and work. Many professors and students on the list have expressed their need to spend time with their children or elderly parents without being perceived as not serious or not dedicated enough to their discipline. These individuals are challenging the traditional expectation that professors and students will work or attend classes full time, and either not have any caretaking responsibilities, or have a spouse who assumes such responsibilities. Members of the list have also discussed the possibility of non-traditional financial support (such as increased travel allowances) from their employers or departments that would enable them to bring those for whom they care (i.e. their children) to conferences and other professional gatherings. This discussion reflects the heightened awareness of mothers and caregivers about their situations, and an active attempt to bring about changes. These changes would no doubt reach beyond individual caregivers and institutions: once a policy change is found that works in one department or one institution, the

information can be passed on to other caregivers at other institutions. A similar electronic mail list, called UKGEG, is in place specifically for graduate students at the University of Kentucky. Through that list, a group of graduate students who are caregivers has organized to seek subsidized funding for day care. The day care location would be on campus and staffed by the graduate student-caregivers themselves. The day care center would be designed in a co-op format to allow those involved to work around each other's class and teaching schedules, thus enabling parents to spend more time with their own children.

In this paper I have explored the relationship between four feminist theories and the traditionally feminine virtues of mothering and caring. To understand this relationship, the distinction was made between feminine and feminist perspectives. It is important to reiterate that even though oppression may have played a role in the origin of care ethics and traditional feminine virtues, as Tronto noted, this does not necessarily imply that those same traditionally feminine virtues and behaviors could not play a major role in the removal of women's oppression when coupled with a feminist perspective. Feminist ethics was further clarified by an explanation of four major feminist theories, with special attention to what they claim to be the roots of, and the necessary and sufficient conditions for, the elimination of women's oppression. This explanation of feminist theory showed that in some sense all four feminist theories must address, or be "about," the traditionally feminine virtues of mothering and caring. While this paper discussed possible roles for traditionally feminine virtues and behaviors, its focus is decidedly feminist in that the removal of women's oppression is taken to be more important than any judgment as to the intrinsic goodness or utility of those feminine virtues. With this in mind, I sought a feminist perspective that, like those described by Tong, would critique feminine values to determine whether they add to or subtract from women's oppression. Especially in the case of socialist feminism, which seeks solutions to the biological and social factors of women's oppression with equal vigor, the traditionally feminine experience of mothering and caring can hold an illuminating as well as corrective function in feminist theory, in that certain

actions of "mothers" are necessary conditions for the instigation and maintenance of massive social change.

CHRISTINE JAMES
University of South Carolina

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END NOTES

1. There may be a subtle difference between a "feminist ethics" *per se* and the feminist "approaches" or "theories" I will discuss in this paper. Rather than attempt to give one concise definition of a feminist ethics, or attempt to delineate social theory from ethical theory, I must bracket

those issues for some other work and utilize the four feminisms stated above as examples, or at least sources, of feminist ethics.

2. There is an important distinction between gender and sex, which must unfortunately be bracketed for this statement. For clarification, see the Jagger quotes on page 8. (Thumbnail sketch: Sex is acknowledged as a biological trait while gender is a trait based in sex role socialization.)

3. Jagger provides many other reasons for characterizing mothers' work as alienated on pages 312-314.

4. An experience of many women, but of course not all.

5. Although in the current social context women do have some means of controlling fertility, the type of means I believe Jagger refers to here is on a much broader scale, and would entail much less oppression of women's reproductive behavior under societal norms (such as when to have children, and how mothers are perceived in the workplace), and technological norms (such as the involvement of doctors and medical technology in the birth process).

6. SWIP-List and UKGEG discussions described with consent of the list owners.

If you have an electronic mail (or e-mail) address and would like more information about "lists" like those described in this article, you can send the one line message GET OTHER LISTS to LISTSERV@UMDD.UMD.EDU (on Internet) or LISTSERV@UMDD (on Bimnet). In nearly every case, you can become part of the list by sending a one line message saying SUBSCRIBE [YOUR FULL NAME] [NAME OF LIST] to the LISTSERV at the same nodename and address of the list to which you wish to subscribe. (For example, SUBSCRIBE Jane E. Doe Fem-List)

To set up your own e-mail list, talk to the e-mail liaison in the computing center on your campus.

On the "One Goal": An Exegesis of Nietzsche's Role for the Overman in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*

I will provide an exegesis of chapter 15 in book one of Friedrich Nietzsche's book *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, a work that is considered by Nietzsche himself to be his *magnum opus*. The primary focus of this paper is on Nietzsche's perspicacious comments that address divergent moral systems and the culmination of these systems into one system. This task is exacerbated by the fact that Nietzsche's writings are typically couched in a very aphoristic style which becomes almost cryptic at times. Additionally, I will elaborate and comment upon the facet of his text that suggests a relativistic, or more accurately, a contextualistic, account of moral systems, arguing that true relativism would be incoherent and that a charitable interpretation of Nietzsche's work should focus on the contextual aspect of his insights into various moral systems. However, I will not, as might seem natural, draw parallels between *The Genealogy of Morals* and *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, though they may be ubiquitous.

Nietzsche's teaching in book one reaches its climax in chapter fifteen entitled "On the Thousand and One Goals." One commentator, Laurence Lampert, suggests that:

The unusual but precise wording of the title ... points to the argument of the chapter itself, the replacement of the indiscriminate variety implied in "a thousand" by the particular thousand and first yet to come, the novel and greatest adventure with which the chapter will close (Lampert 59).

In fact, the phraseology "On the Thousand and One Goals" seems to suggest a unique relationship between the plethora of moral systems, or "the thousand" and "the one." Nietzsche is very meticulous and innovative with his locutionary devices and it would be a gross error to gloss over this point as Lampert seems to do. For example, Nietzsche could have written, "On the One Goal and the Thousands," thereby attempting to emphasize the importance and the centrality of "the one goal" over the many by mentioning the one goal first.

Moreover, Nietzsche's locution, "On the Thousand and