Introduction

The future of social, emotional and caring work has tremendous implications for human well-being.

—Folbre and Nelson 2000

Considering Care and Security

I t is likely that most people consider "care" to be important—even fundamental—to their daily lives. Most families rely on relations of care—parents care for children, and often those same parents care for their own elderly parents. Family members care for one another when they are ill; for many who are fortunate, those illnesses are acute and not severe. For countless others, illness or disability is a day-to-day, relentless reality in which care must be constant and comprehensive.

Most people would also recognize the importance of care outside and beyond the nuclear and extended families. In most nation-states, some form of primary health care is available; certainly, the nature and quality of this care vary tremendously from state to state and are dependent upon a series of other economic, sociopolitical, and ideological factors. Other forms of care also exist in most states: child care and care for people who are disabled, chronically ill, or elderly. Much of this care is provided variously by the state—either centrally or at the provincial or municipal level—as well as by community organizations and private enterprises. In some cases, it is provided by migrant workers, who forfeit

the opportunity to care for their own children in seeking the promise of paid "care work" in income-rich countries.

All social groups—from households to nation-states—must make decisions about how care will be organized. Human life as we know it would be inconceivable without relations of care. Despite the fundamental importance of care, many of us do not think much about it—who provides it or how and under what circumstances it is distributed. In many countries, such as Canada, where I currently reside and am a citizen by birth, many citizens have the luxury of not having to worry much about care. Although it may have many problems, Canada can still boast of one of the best health-care systems in the world. Living in an income-rich country, many Canadian families can provide, or purchase, care for their children and their elderly, disabled, or chronically ill family members. Despite the relatively high quality of care in Canada, a closer look at the situation of care even here raises a number of questions—questions about gender, race, and socioeconomic disparities. Many Canadians worry about the state of care in this country—not only our cherished health-care system but also the demand for child care in response to more and more women working outside the home, and the urgent need for elder care in the light of changing demographics. In Canada, as in all nation-states, poverty, race, and social exclusion cannot be disentangled from questions regarding the need for, and provision of, care.

In many other parts of the world, however, the situation in terms of care is much worse; for many people in developing countries, crises of care translate into immediate or long-term threats to human security. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, the HIV/AIDS pandemic has created a crisis of care that is almost unimaginable. In Botswana and Zambia, an estimated 20 percent of children under the age of seventeen are orphans, with most orphaned as a result of HIV (UNAIDS 2008: 163). In India, the financial burden associated with HIV for the poorest households represents 82 percent of annual income (162). As the primary caregivers in Africa and other regions, women have seen their household and community burdens grow as a result of HIV, often compromising their health, their ability to generate income, and other markers of well-being (168).

In countries torn apart by years of military conflict, the adequate provision of care is a constant challenge. In areas of the world most

affected by environmental change and degradation, adequate access to the natural resources required for daily life is difficult and sometimes impossible in the regions with the worst environmental disasters. As economic globalization continues, poor migrant women of color from low-income countries leave behind their own, often impoverished families to provide care work and other "intimate" labor abroad; it is this work that increasingly supports the affluent and globalized lifestyles of men and women in developed countries. When we consider care in this way, it becomes very difficult to argue that care is a "private" issue. Among the many aims of this book is to help confirm, perhaps in new ways, what feminist care ethicists have been arguing for over a decade: that the notion of care is a valuable political concept and that how we think about care is deeply implicated in existing structures of power and inequality (Tronto 1993: 21). I also seek to build on the idea that care is a *global* political issue and that decisions regarding the provision and distribution of care are of profound moral significance, insofar as they are central to the survival and security of people around the world.

But what does it mean to claim that care is a global issue? How could care possibly be related to international politics, much less to security? While states and institutions may not "care for" each other the way that individuals do, they must make decisions—including moral and financial decisions—about the distribution, nature, and quality of care for both their own citizens and, increasingly, those beyond their borders. As I argued in 1999, however, care is more than an "issue" in world politics; indeed, it can be understood as the basis for an alternative international political theory—one that challenges the instrumentalism of political realism, the normative ideas of liberalism, and the epistemology of rationalism that continue to shape our analytical lenses at the level of global politics (F. Robinson 1999).

My objective in this book, however, is to do more than simply advance an international political theory of care. This book aims to rethink security and, in particular, human security, through the lens of the ethics of care. It seeks to demonstrate, theoretically and through discussion of particular examples and contexts, why a thorough consideration of care in both ethical and practical terms is the best starting point if we are seeking to address the material, emotional, and psychological

conditions that create insecurity for people. My goal is not to lay out a map or a utopian vision of how to achieve a more caring world; rather, it is to consider how our view of security in global politics would change once we recognize and accept not just interdependence among states but the ways responsibilities and practices of care grow out of relations of dependence and vulnerability among people in the context of complex webs of relations of responsibility. To this end, I explore the ways these relations are constructed by the interplay between discursive and representational practices of gender and race on the one hand, and the social relations of gender and production on the other. How we think about care—who is entitled to care and on what terms, who is responsible for care, how care is valued and remunerated—governs the decisions that are made regarding the nature of care at the household, community, state, and transnational levels.

This book is concerned with care both as a way of understanding ethics and as a set of practices. While the ethics of care has not yet entered the wider public consciousness in the way that the ethics of rights or the ethics of justice have, the term "care ethics" describes a now well-established and vibrant tradition of ethical thought that offers an alternative to the more mainstream traditions of rights and justice. Briefly, an ethics of care starts from a theory of the self as relational. In this view, the self has no "separate, essential core but, rather, becomes a 'self' through relations with others" (Hekman 1995: 73). Identity and subjectivity are thus not developed in isolation from other actors; rather, identities are mutually constituted. This understanding of subjectivity is tied to a specific social understanding of ontology. Relationality is thus a claim about the most basic nature of human social existence. Beyond the claim that humans are "social beings," the relational ontology of care ethics claims that relations of interdependence and dependence are a fundamental feature of our existence.

In addition to this relational ontology, an ethics of care regards morality as existing not in a series of universal rules or principles that can guide action but in the practices of care through which we fulfill our responsibilities to particular others. It argues that the nature and quality of relations of care are important and appropriate areas for moral inquiry. That these relations and the practices to which they give rise are most often directed toward particular others within relations of

intimacy and proximity does not entail that the values and practices of care are of only "private" moral or social significance (and, by implication, of no political significance). On the contrary, relations of care and intimacy are of great political significance in that their form and nature are determined by relations of power that play out in a variety of different contexts—from the household to the global political economy.

My understanding of the ethics of care, however, parts company with the literature on care in which care is posited as normatively "good" and based on an unproblematic assumption of "need" (Cooper 2007: 244). As Kimberly Hutchings has argued, a feminist ethics of care is most powerful when voiced as a claim about the nature of the world we inhabit rather than a claim about what ought to be the case (2000: 123). That world is one in which moral reality is embedded in relations and practices of responsibility and recognition (123). This argument is in stark contrast to most justice-based moral reasoning, which asserts that morality is about the objective application of universalizable principles among mutually disinterested, disembodied individuals. By contrast, care ethicists claim that relationships matter morally; it is these relationships that give rise to responsibilities and practices of care. Relationships, however, do not simply arise naturally; they are constructed by material, discursive, and ideological conditions in a given context.

In this book I argue that relations of care in a global context are constructed by relations of power determined primarily by gender, class, and race. These are, in turn, structured by the discourses and materiality of neoliberal globalization and historical and contemporary relations of colonialism and neocolonialism. In this view, thinking about care in the context of global politics and security cannot posit a universal need for care as unproblematic or undifferentiated; needs are themselves constructed and produced by a wide range of relationships and structures. Care as a disposition is reflected in multiple and diverse relational contexts that shape needs and relations of power and define the nature of care. Relations of care are not always good or pure; indeed, part of the job of the care ethicist is to consider the conditions under which relations can, and often do, become relations of domination, oppression, injustice, inequality, or paternalism.

In addition to considering care ethics theoretically as the normative basis for rethinking human security, this book examines the more

practical implications of relations of care for security in a variety of contexts: humanitarian intervention and peacebuilding, health, environment, and women's labor in the global economy. I argue that the responsibilities and labor associated with care can no longer be brushed aside as a "soft" or marginal issue; the provision of care and the distribution of care work are integral to the workings of the global political economy and to the human security of millions. As Saskia Sassen argues, the last decade has seen a growing presence of women in a variety of cross-border circuits that have become a source for livelihood, profit making, and the accrual of foreign currency (2002: 256). Sassen conceptualizes these developments as indicators of the "feminization of survival"; in other words, it is increasingly on the backs of low-wage and poor women that these forms of survival, profit making, and government revenue enhancement operate (274). Due in large measure to their growing role in the global political economy, relations of care are a central axis around which the security of all people, in the context of webs of relations, revolves. Assuming this is true, then the ways we think about, describe, and act in relation to care must be interrogated. In addition, we must consider the obstacles and inequities that currently serve to hinder the ability of many individuals and institutions (including states) to be attentive to care needs and that obstruct and prevent the equitable and adequate delivery of care in many contexts around the world.

It is probably already obvious that taking care seriously as the ethical and practical basis of human security will require a fairly dramatic rethinking of the nature of security and insecurity in the context of global politics. On the surface, the links between security and care may appear nonexistent; indeed, the two ideas may appear to be contradictory. As Jorge Nef argues, "security" is a multifaceted and often contradictory word (2008: 159). In the field of international relations, security is usually understood in military terms, insofar as militaries provide states with their security from external threats—in particular, other states. But militaries are not "caring" institutions; indeed, as Simon Dalby points out, they are primarily "designed, equipped and trained to break things and kill people" (2009: 4), not to nurture, listen, and respond with patience and attentiveness. This understanding of

security implies the use of force, "legitimated" violence, and the exercise of sovereignty (Nef 2008: 159). But the term "security" is also applied to health and food; these constructions, along with "social security," are closely associated with second- and third-generation human rights, human development, and the maintenance of sustainable communities and livelihoods (159). Thus, the "national" and "human/social" understandings of security express starkly contrasting conceptions of global relations, interfaces between state and civil society, and the role of the state (159).

The word "security" is derived from the Latin root *securus*, which means "without care." Care in this sense refers to concern, worry, fear, or anxiety; thus, to be secure is to be "carefree," or without anxiety. As Liz Elliot argues, the impression here is that security "frees the individual from care or concern about her or his own safety, presumably to self-actualize without fear" (2007: 194). Interestingly, the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines "secure" as "untroubled by danger or apprehension" and "safe against attack," but it also includes "reliable, certain not to fail or give way" and "in safe keeping." These definitions point to a paradox inherent in the idea of security.

While achieving a state of freedom from anxiety or worry, or being carefree, may appear desirable, a superficial understanding of security as a condition achieved by an individual actor may mask networks of social relations—providing ongoing support and attentiveness to needs—required to even approach such a condition. In other words, a feeling of security is most often the product of feeling attached and included—a feeling that others are "here" with you to provide support. Furthermore, to speak of security as a carefree existence that may ultimately be achieved and sustained bears no resemblance to the realities of most people's lives—lives that are always already heavy with concern not only for themselves but also for a range of particular others for whom they take responsibility.

The focus of this book is not on state or national security; thus, its approach does not resemble the approaches to "security studies" dominant for decades in the discipline of international relations, especially in the United States. Moreover, while it is more closely aligned to the so-called critical security studies movement that has flourished since the

late 1980s in Europe and Canada, it departs significantly from many of those major schools of thought. This book does not involve detailed analyses of security practices as "techniques of government" or of state and media discourses of security (see Huysmans 2006). Nor does it take an emancipatory approach, which would focus on achieving individual security through the realization of individual human rights (see Booth 1991). Rather, the feminist orientation of this book is manifest in a commitment to the project of revealing the effects of both discursive representations and material structures of gender through the application of different ontological lenses. Revealing the importance of moral relations of care for the security of most people around the world necessarily involves attention to the apparently "powerless" in societies—those who are constructed as weak, vulnerable, and dependent. As Maria Stern points out, much of the critical security studies literature focuses on "discourses of danger written by state security elites," yet there is very little work in "marginalized" sites (2006: 182–183). Those who care for others, and those who are most in need of care, are among the world's most marginalized people. This book seeks to illustrate why and how their security matters for our understanding of world politics.

A feminist care ethics perspective on security is inherently critical insofar as it reveals relations of power that are normally hidden from view and provides a method of analyzing the ways that these relations are connected to people's security. In particular, it allows us not only to recognize why most individuals and groups of people are not simply "autonomous" (like affluent businessmen) or "vulnerable" (like women and children, especially women of color in income-poor countries) but also to see how "autonomy" and "vulnerability" are constructed through the co-constitution of social relations and dominant norms and discourses. The lens of care allows us to see types of subjects—relational subjects—and threats to their human security that are normally hidden from view: elderly grandmothers in sub-Saharan Africa struggling to shoulder the burden of care for their adult children suffering from AIDS and their grandchildren orphaned by this pandemic; migrant women of color working as nannies, maids, or sex workers and the children they leave behind; and mothers who tolerate physical abuse because they lack

independent means of support for themselves and their children. We also see women struggling to rebuild households and communities, and the networks of relations and sources of livelihood that uphold them, in the aftermath of violent conflict or natural disasters around the world. These women are certainly vulnerable to neoliberal economic reforms and feminized cross-border circuits of globalization (see Sassen 2002). But they are also agents who are using their skills as caregivers to meet their responsibilities for the security of their families and, often, members of their wider communities. We see *women* so often when we look through the lens of care because women shoulder the majority of the world's care work burden, and their moral agency tends to be characterized by practices of care toward particular others. To make this claim is not to make a claim about women's essential nature but about the feminization of care in most societies around the world.

It should be made clear at the outset, however, that this is not a book about *women's* security. When we look through the lens of care, we also see many men who are shouldering heavy burdens of care and who live every day with insecurity for themselves and their families. But we also see men detached from caring responsibilities—responsibilities that have been "feminized" and degraded by gender norms in a variety of contexts. As I discuss in the next chapter, it is crucial that we consider the possible ways in which the feminization and degradation of caring relations and practices, and the isolation of men from these roles, contribute to the construction of hegemonic forms of masculinity that are associated with violence. Violence here is understood as a continuum that includes domestic violence in the household and political violence within and among states. While this book takes a broad view of security that encompasses more than just physical violence and military threats, it also argues that these threats are not distinct from but intimately related to other forms of insecurity that result from a lack of attention to care in societies.

I do not offer care ethics as a prescription for achieving human security, but I do argue that a redescription can bring to light the ways in which the dominant approaches may be failing to illuminate how insecurity is experienced for many of the world's people. My redescription is based on three key points. First, *the "human" in human security cannot*

be understood as an autonomous individual; the human subjects of security must be understood as beings-in-relation.[1] This is tied to the second point: *efforts to enhance human security must recognize the importance of relations and networks of responsibility and care in determining people's everyday experiences of security and insecurity.* Relations of care occupy a position of centrality in people's moral lives, as well as in their day-to-day activities. When these relations of care are damaged or severed, security is threatened. A critical feminist lens focuses our attention on these relations and activities rather than obscures them. I seek to distinguish this argument from liberal internationalist approaches that promote the West's "responsibility to protect" the vulnerable peoples and countries of the Global South. Thus, my third point: *an approach to human security based on a feminist care ethics challenges assumptions about dependency and vulnerability in world politics by reading care discourses and practices through historical and contemporary relations of domination and exclusion.*

In seeking to avoid the danger of paternalism, my approach to care ethics confronts the traditional formulation of "victims" in the human security literature. It challenges the static conceptualization of certain individuals and groups as dependent or vulnerable—women and children, developing countries, the poor—on empirical grounds. As Chapter 3 illustrates, women's care work can be empowering, and women's strategies for coping with poverty and care deficits demonstrate their resilience and active resistance in the face of economic and social obstacles. Furthermore, recognition of the increasing dependence of the Global North on the states of the Global South for the provision of care work challenges conventional understandings of the Global South as "dependent" on the Global North (F. Robinson 2010). If we look historically

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[1] The term "beings-in-relation" is very close to Carol Gould's "individuals-in-relations" (1978); my "relational ontology" is also close to Gould's "social ontology." In *Globalizing Democracy and Human Rights*, she writes: "We begin from the principle of justice as equal positive freedom, which . . . is the normative conception that goes along with such a social ontology of individuals-in-relations and constituted social groups" (2004: 122). Conceptually, I am indebted to these formulations, insofar as they understand the self as constituted in and through relations (120). However, my formulation focuses primarily on affective relations of responsibility and care that may include, but are by no means limited to, relations among family members and friends rather than those existing among members of social groups such as nations, and ethnic or religious groups. I am grateful to Carol Gould for bringing this to my attention.

at patterns of dependence and interdependence among actors in global politics, it becomes clear that these patterns are subject to flux and transformation over the long term. Conceptually, my approach challenges the notion that dependence and vulnerability are something detrimental and temporary that must be overcome. While the balance and direction of dependence may change over time, dependence is a regular feature of human existence that, for some individuals and groups, is inevitable and permanent. All human beings are dependent on some others at times throughout their lives. The challenge is to integrate these empirical and conceptual insights into our theorizations of international politics in ways that eschew paternalism.

These arguments rest on the claims that well-being for people is achieved and sustained through relations and activities of care and that, in the absence of these relations or where they are deficient or disrupted, well-being and security are threatened. These are partly empirical claims; in other words, they rely on the work of sociologists and economists that has documented both the centrality of practices of care to the livelihoods of households and the workings of the global political economy. This work has also addressed the enormous inequality—by gender and race—present in this kind labor, both paid and unpaid. This book aims not simply to reiterate these claims but to consider theoretically the moral and practical implications of these inequalities, particularly through consideration of how the everyday conditions of people's lives are discursively and normatively constructed through ideas about the nature and value of care as a set of values and practices and, importantly, as a type of work. Especially important will be how these ideas are constructed through understandings of gender, "women's work," and the family and how these understandings serve to filter out considerations of care from the idea of human security.

A key implication of this new understanding of human security is that individual human rights will no longer be an adequate normative or analytical basis for understanding human security. Of course, securing rights for individuals can never be regarded as irrelevant or unimportant. This is particularly the case for women and other historically disadvantaged groups, including racial and ethnic minorities. As the analysis in Chapter 6 demonstrates, basic human and legal rights are crucial in the context of HIV/AIDS and human security. But the moral

and transformative power of rights is most intense when rights are understood as "relational" and located within the wider context of care (see Minow 1990; Nedelsky 1993). Dominant liberal understandings of rights can no longer serve as a sufficient guide for ethical or policy deliberations aimed at mitigating human insecurity. Rather, attention must be directed toward the implications of various developments—in areas such as poverty, conflict, health, and environment—on the quality, stability, endurance, and resourcing of networks of caring relations at a variety of different scales.

Undoubtedly, my choice to invoke the term "human security" in this study will be controversial. Put simply, human security is widely understood as seeking to safeguard the "vital core of human lives from critical pervasive threats while promoting long-term human flourishing" (Alkire 2003). This idea—which arose in the immediate post–Cold War climate of the early 1990s—has attracted a remarkable amount of attention, much of it critical. At a time when traditional security concerns seemed less relevant and attention was able to refocus on the "everyday" insecurities of poverty, human security provided a framework for considering the impact not of external threats for states but of long-term vulnerabilities for people. Of course, the human security paradigm has generated much criticism; it has been described as "hot air" (Paris 2001), "reductionist" and idealistic" (Buzan 2004), and "inscrutable" (Paris 2004). In a comprehensive list, Ken Booth describes the range of critiques that have been articulated against human security: analytically, it is regarded as vague, unwieldy, and too expansive; in terms of policy, it has been criticized as being impossible to measure, giving a false sense of priorities, deflecting attention away from war, and simply reformulating existing human rights measures (2007: 322–323). Much critique has been focused on human security as a "paradigm," as a discourse, and as a foreign policy strategy of governments, especially the Canadian government. As Edward Newman points out, the policy orientation of human security—and its adoption as a policy framework by some governments—has made scholars of critical security studies suspicious of human security as a hegemonic discourse co-opted by the state (2010: 77). More recently, it is widely thought that human security's day is done—that the space for considering security in this way has now disappeared, especially in the light of recent geopolitical and economic developments.

Perhaps the most damning critique is that human security potentially reinforces the unequal nature of the contemporary global order by unintentionally legitimizing two of the principal features of the post-9/11 world order: "democratic imperialism"—the result of liberal internationalism—and neoliberal or "predatory" globalization (Shani 2007: 18–19). Closely related is the claim that "human security" as a discursive concept functions to securitize realms of human life—biological and bare life—not previously subject to security's purview and control and functions as a form of biopolitics (Berman 2007: 31). Thus, human security discourse simultaneously repeats national security's structuring logic and extends/empowers it to take control of "bare life" as such (31; see also Duffield 2002).

I am sympathetic to these critiques; indeed, I am well aware of the potential for human security discourses to become a technique of governmentality or a project of paternalism. As I discuss in Chapter 5, paternalism is a particular danger of care ethics that must be addressed. It should be made very clear that my aim is *not* to replicate the politics of those critical and human security approaches that revolve around the concept of emancipation, where the agent of emancipation is almost invariably the West (Barkawi and Laffey 2006: 350). I do maintain that the idea of human security still has relevance—and may indeed have renewed importance—in spite of the changes in security politics since 2001. While attention and resources have, in the last near decade, been drawn to the "war on terror" and other "new security threats"—drugs, organized crime, "human" trafficking—they have simultaneously been drained from the ongoing, often deepening crises of poverty and health, especially in the Global South. Furthermore, at the time of writing, the world is in the midst of a major global economic downturn that is refocusing attention and opening up space for discursive shifts and policy innovations. While the focus of attention tends to be on the hit taken by large Western economies, especially that of the United States, the crises in many countries of the Global South continue to deepen.

Despite the association of human security approaches with largely uncritical and theoretically unsophisticated, policy-relevant, Western-centric literature, there exists within the idea of human security the potential to develop an approach to security studies that foregrounds the insecurities of people in the context of their real lives in ways that do

not reproduce familiar dichotomies between the powerful and the powerless, North and South, protectors and protected. Furthermore, while a care ethics approach to human security is neither an emancipatory theory nor an explicitly policy-relevant approach to security, it is committed to the possibility of progressive change in the day-to-day lives of all people. While it is important, as Booth argues, to recognize the extent to which the (state) practices associated so far with the concept of human security work to maintain the status quo, it is also important to consider the fundamental changes in attitudes and behavior of governments that are required in order to begin to overcome "systemic human insecurity" (2007: 326).

By foregrounding and prioritizing the consideration of the politics of care, we can recover the potential of human security to focus attention on innovative strategies for addressing exclusion and oppression that are neither Western-centric nor imperialistic. This approach would critique, rather than reempower, the institutions and processes of neoliberal globalization and would recognize the need to distribute responsibilities for well-being in ways that are democratic and equitable. Considering security through the lens of care need lead neither to depoliticization nor to a focus on "bare life"; on the contrary, it may lead us to a greater awareness of the complexity of care in the contemporary world and the spatially extensive and diverse matrix of social relations and political deliberations on which it relies.

It is widely understood that human security approaches understand security "comprehensively and holistically in terms of the real-life, everyday experiences of human beings" and shift the focus of security studies from the "security dilemma of states" to the "survival dilemma of people" (Hudson 2005: 163). As I discuss in Chapter 2, feminists have cautiously embraced the idea of human security, welcoming the broadening of security beyond its conventional military focus and state-centrism while critiquing the ungendered human subject of security. Despite these feminist interventions, there is little work that addresses human security from the perspective of care ethics and care work. One notable exception is the work included in the edited collection *Engendering Human Security: Feminist Perspectives* (Truong, Wieringa, and Chhachhi 2006). The editors of this collection argue convincingly that there remains something inherently important about an approach to

security that advocates a redirection of policy concerns from a state-based to society-based framework and intends to emphasize the significance of quotidian needs and conditions of common people. They note, moreover, that virtually all approaches to human security have failed to recognize the extent to which care as "maintenance" is a foundation of the human condition that makes the "continuity of life and social institutions possible" (xviii–xix). I seek to build on these important observations through philosophical analysis and through illustrations of the importance of care in a number of contexts in global politics.

Notes on Methodology

As described previously, the purpose of this book is to reconsider human security theoretically through the lens of a feminist ethics of care. It is not primarily a work of security studies. Indeed, the trajectory of my research to date has always been, and continues to be, driven by inquiry into effects of using different ethical lenses in circumscribing and enabling various aspects of world politics. Moreover, I have long been interested specifically in the implications of looking at politics through *feminist* ethical lenses, since these are widely seen by moral theorists to be irrelevant to ethics and by international political theorists to be irrelevant to public, and certainly to global political, life. Thus, while my approach is, broadly speaking, that of normative international relations theory (IR theory), I do not seek to develop a definitive, universal "ethics" of security. Rather, as I have discussed elsewhere, I see the business of "doing" ethics in IR as, primarily, a critical activity (see F. Robinson 2006c). Thus, in undertaking this activity, my job is not to prescribe a set of norms or moral principles upon which a theory of global justice, for example, or a theory of global ethics can be constructed. Rather, in this approach, the role of the normative theorist is to interrogate critically the ethical ideas that prevail in given contexts and to consider the political implications of those ethics. Political philosophy, including international political philosophy, is in this sense a critical activity, as James Tully has so clearly described:

> It seeks to characterize the conditions of possibility of the problematic form of governance in a redescription (often in a new

> vocabulary) that transforms the self-understanding of those subject to and struggling within it, enabling them to see its contingent conditions and the possibilities of governing themselves differently. Hence, it is not only an interpretive political philosophy but also a specific genre of critique or critical attitude toward ways of being governed in the present—an attitude of testing and possible transformation. (2002: 534)

It is, again in Tully's words, a species of "practical philosophy" (politics and ethics), that is, a philosophical way of life oriented toward working on ourselves by working on the practices and problematizations in which we find ourselves (534). This task necessarily entails a descriptive and empirical burden—indeed, one that is far greater than is commonly thought (M. Walker 1998: 13). While it does not involve an ethnographically thick description that aims at clarification or understanding for its own sake (Tully 2002: 534), critical moral inquiry bears a distinctive moral and political responsibility to "seek out and entertain many distinct moral understandings that supply a going social-moral order" (M. Walker 1998: 13–14). It is, in this sense, "political philosophy for Earthlings," as David Miller puts it in his 2008 essay of the same title. Understood in this way, political philosophers "must also be social scientists, or at least be prepared to learn from social scientists." They must consider what it would mean to implement the principles they prescribe and discover whether the "ensuing consequences are acceptable, in the light of the fundamental beliefs of their fellow citizens" (Miller 2008: 47).

Feminists, by and large, have always been especially good at ensuring that their political philosophy was "for Earthlings"; in other words, a hallmark of feminist research has been situated, contextual analysis that takes as its starting point the concrete realities of women's daily lives. Indeed, some feminists have insisted on drawing a sharp dichotomy between abstract concepts and concrete reality in order to argue that the "reality of women's lives" constitutes a given reality that provides a necessary grounding for feminist theory. In contrast, I would argue, with Susan Hekman, that "women's reality" is itself a socially constructed discursive formation constituted by shared concepts (Hekman 1997: 361). But this does not render it politically meaningless;

recognizing the ways realities are discursively constructed discounts neither the social origins of those discourses nor their impact on real people's lives. As Hekman argues, the fact that women's reality is "closely tied to the social actors' own concepts and provides a counter to the hegemonic discourse of masculinist science makes it no less a discourse" (355). Hekman articulates this point clearly in the case of feminist standpoint theory: "Feminist standpoint theory can and, I argue, should be defined as a counterhegemonic discourse that works to destabilize hegemonic discourse. But this can be achieved without denying that it is a discourse or according it epistemological privilege" (355). In this sense, feminism constitutes an important feature of the theoretical methodology employed in this book and of my version of the ethics of care. I agree with the claim made by Nancy Hartsock that feminism is, at bottom, a mode of analysis—a method of approaching life and politics rather than a set of political conclusions about the oppression of women (1981: 35). Again, however, it should be emphasized that this does not render feminism politically neutral or disabled; on the contrary, from this perspective, the values and the interests of the investigator are integral to the way in which the research is undertaken. Thus, the aim is not to uncover a new or more complete or better "truth" but to "create a set of ideal types that allow us to 'see' a different world" (Hekman 1997: 361).

Chapter Overview

Chapter 1 explores the ethics and practices of care and places both in the context of existing literatures. In the first part of the chapter, I outline in detail my understanding of the nature and scope of a feminist ethics of care. The second part focuses specifically on the relationship between care, masculinities, and violence. This understanding of ethics provides both the theoretical framework and the methodological approach for my analysis of the ethics of human security.

Chapter 2 addresses the idea of security in world politics. It focuses primarily on critical, human, and feminist security studies. I argue that a care ethics approach to human security draws on all three of these broad schools of thought but that there are important differences that distinguish it; the result is a complete rethinking of the most basic

idea of security and what might be necessary in efforts to work toward achieving it.

Chapter 3 grounds these arguments by placing them in the context of contemporary global social relations of care. By focusing on "women's work" in the global care and sex economies, this chapter reveals the ways in which changes in social relations—including the intensified transnationalization and commodification of care—create new challenges of security connected to care. Contemporary feminist analysis requires that unequal relations within a household have to be situated within an international division of reproductive labor that is structured by social class, "'race'/ethnicity as well as gender inequalities" (Yeates 2005: 232). I consider these flows in relation to the wider movement of poor women across borders for sex, domestic, and other low-wage labor.

Chapter 4 explores the relationship between the social relations and discourses of care on the one hand and the dominant normative understandings of "global security governance" on the other. One aim of this chapter is to consider how we might rethink the ethics and politics of humanitarian intervention when looking through the lens of care ethics. I argue that the relational ontology of a critical feminist ethics of care—which emphasizes human interdependence and mutual vulnerability—overcomes the dichotomies between the needy and the strong, victims and agents, and objects and subjects in the construction of categories in humanitarian intervention. Combined with the revised view of human security outlined in earlier chapters, this approach also destabilizes the inside-outside dichotomy by pushing theorists and policy makers to look at the state of care within their own societies. Finally, it breaks down the distinction between crisis and normality, putting the very idea of humanitarian intervention in question. If we were to look through the lens of care ethics, then greater attention would be focused on the permanent background to identified "humanitarian crises" in order to better understand how gender relations, as well as those based on religion, ethnicity "culture," race, and class, affect the real, day-to-day lives and security of people, their families, and their communities. A narrative, rather than a principled approach to moral judgment, would demand attention be paid to the particularities of different humanitarian emergencies, including the relationship between the situations and wider social, economic, and geopolitical relations and processes.

Chapter 5 explores the "rebuilding" aspects of human security through the lens of care ethics. It is widely recognized that peacebuilding is a crucial aspect of human security; however, the dominance of the so-called liberal peace either ignores considerations of care or gives rise to paternalistic care. This chapter addresses theoretically the dangers of paternalism in care ethics and argues for the importance of reading care through neocolonialism in the context of peacebuilding.

Chapter 6 explores human security implications of health, focusing on HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa, through the lens of a critical, feminist ethics of care. The first section in the chapter concentrates primarily on the material conditions and impact of the care crisis; the second blends material and discursive analysis to provide an analysis of the link between hegemonic masculinities and forms of HIV/AIDS-related violence. Specifically, this section examines violence against women, which includes violence in the home and militarized sexual violence, in relation to HIV/AIDS. Addressing gender-based violence in terms of hegemonic masculinities and the feminization of care can shed light on the significance of gender relations in transforming cultures of violence and enhancing security for women, men, and children who are living with the realities of AIDS.

Chapter 7 explores the ethics of global environmental security. I argue that, examined through the lens of care ethics, the health and flourishing of the natural environment must be seen as inextricably connected to our ability to give and receive the care necessary for basic human security. While there is much debate in the literature regarding whether or not care ethics is strategically or conceptually appropriate as a lens through which to consider the relationship of human beings (and often, specifically, women) to the environment, I argue that this arises when care is understood in highly essentialist, apolitical terms. When care ethics is politicized—through interrogation of the global political economy of care as part of a feminist political agenda seeking just and sustainable societies—these "dangers" are mitigated.