RECLAIMING THE TABLE THROUGH A POSTCOLONIAL FEMINIST PRAGMATIST APPROACH

Eleanor Pinto
IITB-Monash Research Academy:
An Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, India &
Monash University, Australia Collaboration
eppintofelicia@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: This paper develops a postcolonial feminist pragmatist approach to the philosophy of food by centering the figure of the hungry, "Othered Other Body". It critiques dominant Western philosophical traditions that privilege the consuming Self and often neglect the socio-political conditions shaping food- related practices. Drawing on feminist pragmatism and postcolonial theory, the paper repositions hunger as an embodied, relational condition shaped by colonial histories, caste, and gender inequalities. Using India as a key site, particularly East Indian, Anglo-Indian, Goan, and Pondicherrian communities, it explores intra-colonial dynamics through cookbooks and food literature to demonstrate how food practices function as strategies of survival and identity negotiation. The paper proposes "culinary hybridization" as a conceptual alternative to models of cultural appropriation, emphasizing relationality, endurance, and care. It concludes by calling for a philosophy of food rooted in lived experience and vulnerability, attentive to the realities of those for whom eating is a necessity shaped by history and inequality.

Keywords: Postcolonial feminist pragmatism, hungry body, Othered Other, culinary hybridization, colonial foodways in India

Introduction

In recent years, philosophical engagement with food has expanded, and engaged with questions of ethics, identity, and cultural exchange. Yet much of this work remains shaped by dominant Western philosophical frameworks that inadvertently privilege the ethical development of the consuming Self and frame food primarily as a site of individual moral choice or cultural appropriation. This leads to the potentially dangerous neglect of the social, historical, and material conditions under which people eat, especially in marginalized contexts. This paper challenges such paradigms by developing a postcolonial feminist pragmatist approach to the philosophy of food, one that is rooted in the lived realities of the hungry, Othered body.

At the center of this inquiry is the *hungry body*; not as a passive figure of need, but as a relational and generative subject shaped by histories of colonialism, caste, and gender inequality. Hunger as an ontological condition may be universal, but how it is experienced and responded to is mediated by socio-political structures and processes that produce asymmetrical vulnerabilities. Centering the hungry body shifts food philosophy away from individualistic models of ethical consumption and toward the social, affective, and historical dimensions of eating. Food practices, from this perspective, are not merely aesthetic or ethical expressions, but are transformed into modes of survival, care, and connection forged under constraining conditions.

The project primarily aims to rethink philosophical approaches to food by beginning with the hungry body of the Other. It develops a postcolonial feminist pragmatist framework through four interrelated goals. The first goal is to conceptualize the hungry body as a figure of vulnerability, interdependence, and meaning-making. The second is to reframe the role of the colonial Other through a feminist pragmatist lens, and to critically engage with the ethics offered by Lisa Heldke (Heldke 2003). This analysis is followed by an exploration of intra-colonial differences and layered identities within postcolonial contexts, particularly India, as a way of moving beyond any reductive form of the Self–Other model to think about the philosophy of food in the postcolonial context. And finally, I aim to propose *culinary hybridization* as a conceptual alternative that centers the lived, adaptive food practices of marginalized communities. In this paper, India serves as the key site for this investigation. It provides an ideal ground for such theorization due to its complex foodways that have been shaped by multiple food colonialities (British, Portuguese and French, to name a few), as well as huge diversity in religion, language, and cultural practices, along with structural processes such

as caste. Focusing on East Indian[1], Anglo-Indian[2], Goan[3], and Pondicherrian[4] communities,[5] this paper examines how food becomes a site for negotiating identity among colonized Others themselves, not merely in relation to a dominant colonizing Self.

The first section titled "The Hungry Body and the Colonial Other" lays the philosophical foundation. Drawing from feminist pragmatism and phenomenology, it develops the hungry body as a site of ethical insight. The section then critiques Heldke's notion of the "colonial Other" within her analysis of food adventuring. I engage with Amrita Banerjee, and state that we need to reframe solidarity in more nuanced, situated terms, rooted in vulnerability. Considering this, I then take the discussion forward to explore the decolonization of the philosophy of food in the next section titled "When Others Eat with Each Other," which moves beyond the colonizer/colonized binaries to explore the multiplicity of colonial experiences in postcolonial India. I offer the concept of the *Othered Other* and argue for the necessity to begin from this framework. Through an analysis of cookbooks and food literature from Goan, East Indian, and other communities, the section aims to demonstrate how foodways[6] reflect neither pure resistance nor passive assimilation, but complex strategies of endurance that navigate overlapping colonial and postcolonial structures. The section concludes by offering culinary hybridization as a conceptual alternative to Heldke's models of anti-colonial food-related practices, and attempts to shift focus to the grounded, affective, and survival-oriented food practices of marginalized groups.

In sum, this paper contributes to feminist philosophy, pragmatism, food studies, and postcolonial theory by proposing a shift in both conceptual and ethical orientation. By beginning with the hungry, Othered body, through a postcolonial feminist pragmatist lens, it repositions food not as an abstract site of moral choice but as a lived, material practice shaped by vulnerability, history, and relation. In doing so, it calls for a philosophy of food, and philosophy in general, that is more attuned to the embodied experiences of those whose hunger is not chosen but endured, and whose eating practices are acts of survival and care, rooted in relationality. In this sense, a postcolonial feminist pragmatist approach opens space to reclaim the table from the position of the Othered Other.

1. The Hungry Body and the Colonial Other: Rethinking Food Practices through Feminist Pragmatism

This section advances a feminist pragmatist approach to a philosophy of food by locating and analyzing the potential of the hungry body. To do so, it begins by bringing together phenomenological, and pragmatist frameworks to foreground the inherent vulnerability and relationality of the body through its hunger. I then move on to articulate that shifting the focus from the body in general to the hungry body reinvents the body as a generative site for rethinking intersubjectivity, vulnerability, and sociality, thereby moving beyond eating as an act that is solely private and biological. I argue that the hungry body, along with the practices associated with it, plays a cru-

[1] East Indians are an ethno-religious group of Mumbai natives, originally from local farming, fishing, and salt-making communities who were converted to Roman Catholicism by Portuguese missionaries in the 15th and 16th centuries. For further reading, see *Hindustan Times* (2019).
[2] According to the *Constitution of India*: "An Anglo-Indian means a person whose father or any of whose other male progenitors in the male line is or was of European descent but who is domiciled within the territory of India and is or was born within such territory of parents habitually resident therein and not established there for temporary purposes only." For further reading, see Government of India (1950).
[3] I use the term "Goan" to broadly refer to the cultural identity of individuals associated with the Indian state of Goa, which was a Portuguese colony until 1961. For more information, see Young (2006).
[4] I use the term "Pondicherrian" to broadly refer to the cultural identity of individuals associated with the Indian Union Territory of Puducherry, which was a French colony until 1945. For more information, see Amesur (2021).
[5] These are particular identity categories among others which emerge in the context of colonial exchanges.
[6] In the third edition of *Food and Culture: A Reader*, edited by Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik, the term foodways is defined as "the cultural, social, and economic practices relating to the production and consumption of food." See Counihan and Van Esterik (2013, 1).

cial role in social and individual meaning-making, ethical responsibility, and collective experience. This forms the foundation of my critical analysis of Heldke's framework which is based on feminist pragmatist commitments and her discussion on the colonial entanglements within which food practices are embedded. By starting from an analysis of the potential of Heldke's focus on the colonial Other in the context of food practices, I go on to critically evaluate the limitations of her strategies of anti-colonial resistance that she urges the colonial Other to engage in to resist the food adventuring practices of the colonial Self. On my part, I argue that the understanding of solidarity of food-related practices in the colonial context needs to be more attuned to vulnerabilities.

1.1 Hunger as Praxis: Embodied Relationality and Feminist Pragmatism

To approach the question of the *hungry body* (a term used by Heldke and Boisvert in *Philosophers at the Table* (2016)), from a pragmatist lens, I begin by briefly tracing the situating of the body as a site of meaning-making within the larger philosophical discussions. The philosophical significance of the body has been largely overlooked in dominant Western philosophical traditions. However, it has been re-centered as the locus of action, perception, and meaning in phenomenological as well as pragmatist accounts. In *Phenomenology of Perception* ([1945] 2012), Maurice Merleau-Ponty introduces the concept of embodied *intersubjectivity*, wherein intersubjectivity arises through our bodily presence and perception of others as lived bodies, rather than objects or abstract minds. As he writes, "The other's body is not a chunk of the world, but a way of accessing the world," revealing that our shared bodily existence forms the basis for understanding others and situating the body as a central site of intersubjective relation (Merleau-Ponty 2012, 354). Intersubjectivity highlights the *pre-reflective* nature of bodily experience. For Merleau-Ponty, the pre-reflective body is the mode through which we engage the world prior to conscious awareness. It is the body as a *being-in-the-world*, as he writes, "Before reflection, the body is already a 'being in the world,'" affirming the body's role as a direct and unmediated participant in experience (Merleau-Ponty 2012, 90). In his phenomenology, the body is not merely a passive object but a medium through which the embodied subject encounters and relates to others and the world. This body, which he terms as *the lived body*[7] is simultaneously expressive and relational. Kristina Bosáková[8] and Jan Patočka[9], through their phenomenology emphasize the pre-reflective, lived body at the core of intersubjectivity, and in their focus on the role of the body in perception and reflection. Patočka underlines the role of the body in shaping our experience when he writes, "The body is not merely a biological organism; it is the medium through which we experience the world and engage with others" (Patočka 1998, 58). Following this, Bosáková notes that Jan Patočka and Ludwig Feuerbach place corporeality at the center of their philosophical inquires[10], and that "Patočka's concept of corporeity emphasizes the body as the fundamental site of human existence, where subjectivity and intersubjectivity are intertwined" (Bosáková 2021, 315). However, by emphasizing the ethical, historical, and relational dimensions of embodiment, Bosáková and Patočka depart from Merleau-Ponty. Bosáková observes that Patočka builds on phenomenological understandings of the body by incorporating historical and ethical aspects, emphasizing that bodily experience is shaped by the historical

[7] In *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty defines the lived body as "not an object, but a means of communication with the world" (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, 190). He emphasizes that perception arises through embodied existence. The lived body is therefore "the body as I live it," and is a pre-reflective, intentional subjectivity that grounds our being-in-the-world (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, 84).
[8] Bosáková, Kristina. 2021. "Against the Self-Sufficiency of Reason: Concept of Corporeality in Feuerbach and Patočka." *Studies in East European Thought* 73, no. 3: 309–26.
[9] Patočka, Jan. 1998. *Body, Community, Language, World.* Translated by Erazim Kohák. Chicago: Open Court.
[10] Bosáková adds that in doing so they challenge the traditional notion of reason as detached and disembodied. She contends that the emphasis on the body is not merely a marginal concern but is plays a significant role in their critiques of abstract rationalism (Bosáková 2021, 327).

context in which it is situated (Bosáková 2021, 317). They introduce an account of embodiment that is more historically and socially situated, while substantially expanding his framework. Still, they remain within the framework of phenomenology by preserving its methodological commitments, including the focus on lived experience, while engaging with the ethical dimensions of embodied existence. As Bosáková points out, "While Patočka incorporates historical and ethical dimensions into his analysis, he remains committed to the phenomenological method, focusing on the lived experience of the body as the starting point for understanding human existence" (Bosáková 2021, 319).

John Dewey's pragmatist account of embodiment offers a relational, transactive, and socially embedded model, in which the body, beyond being a site for experience, is enmeshed in and shaped by social and institutional structures. Dewey advances beyond both Merleau-Ponty and thinkers like Bosáková and Patočka through his explicit integration of the ethical, social, and political dimensions of embodiment into a practice-oriented theory that aims at both collective and individual action. Embodied experience is no longer passive, but is dynamically intersubjective and socially constituted, enabled through practices and habits. The pragmatist framework, while agreeing with these commitments, emphasizes how such experience is enabled through practices and habits. This means that to entangle questions of subjectivity, inter-subjectivity, meaning-making, and inquiry, we must focus on the domain of practices and habits that have individual, as well as social dimensions. Crucially, in *Reconstruction in Philosophy (1920),* Dewey undertakes the project of reconstructing philosophy by asserting that the body, emotion, experience, practice, and food are not subordinate to intellect, reason, knowledge, theory, and thought, but are integral and equally significant dimensions of human experience that shape our understanding of the world. He argues that the gap between intellectual and practical inquiry can be bridged with philosophical reflection rooted in everyday embodied life. Dewey contends that rooting theorizing in the practical allows philosophy to cultivate a more reflective and critical consciousness capable of reshaping both individual habits and broader social institutions. Through this pragmatist lens, he explores how fundamental human needs, such as food, shelter, and work, are intricately connected to practical knowledge, challenging traditional philosophical claims of the necessity to maintain the purity of the mind through separation from the body.[11] Although Dewey does not treat food as a primary subject of his inquiry, he addresses it indirectly within the broader framework of human experience, specifically within his interest in practical human needs and social life. Within Dewey's philosophical system, food and its associated practices can be understood as integral to his emphasis on embodied experience.

Dewey's pragmatism has significant implications for philosophical engagement with food. Lisa Heldke and Raymond Boisvert, in *Philosophers at the Table* (2016), draw from Dewey to situate food as a *thoughtful practice* rather than merely sustenance or a cultural artifact.[12] Their framework effectively integrates epistemological,

[11] While Dewey acknowledges that symbolic or abstract knowledge (such as imagining fire as a dragon) plays a role in human understanding, he insists that it is practical, lived knowledge, such as that developed by the housewife who tending a fire to cook food, that is more directly connected to our engagement with the world. He adds that "we need to recognize that the ordinary consciousness of the ordinary man left to himself is a creature of desires rather than of intellectual study, inquiry or speculation" (Dewey 1920, 5). Against the traditional image of the philosopher as a detached rational thinker, Dewey draws attention to how ordinary consciousness is shaped by desires and embodied needs.

[12] Heldke and Boisvert present their concept of "thoughtful practice" which emerges by tracing Dewey's "efforts to heal the rift," which has enabled a demonstration of "why and how food-making might be a particularly valuable mode of activity" which integrates theory and practice (Heldke and Boisvert 2016, 131). Through it they contend that philosophical engagement must be grounded in concrete, everyday actions that affect and involve individuals and communities. They explain that we are not only of the world, but also in the world through our hunger, thereby placing impetus on what are considered deficiencies by traditional philosophy;

> The stomach, beneficiary of good recipes ingested, cannot be thought of as isolated, self-sufficient. It must be part of a context, of a setting in which possibilities of satiation are present…In the older intellectual landscape, dependency and neediness are inevitably labelled deficiencies. (Heldke and Boisvert 2016, 169)

aesthetic, and ethical dimensions.[13] Dewey's revision of the traditional philosophical framework enables Heldke and Boisvert to critique dichotomies such as theory and practice, self and other, and mind and body through the lens of food philosophy, thereby reorienting philosophical inquiry toward everyday practices like eating.[14] From a Deweyan perspective, they pose the question: "What if we were to begin from an understanding of humans as 'stomach-endowed' beings…'" (Heldke and Boisvert 2016, 23). By framing humans as "stomach-endowed" beings, Heldke and Boisvert invite a reconsideration of autonomy and self-sufficiency. While Heldke does not explicitly situate herself as a feminist pragmatist, I suggest that her work[15] is rooted in feminist pragmatism, as she extends Dewey's pragmatism in a distinctly feminist direction.[16] Although she builds on Dewey's emphasis on embodied practice and reflective inquiry, she explores how food practices are shaped by identity, power, and privilege in ways that Dewey does not fully address. Through the relationship she draws between the concepts of *attitude and action*[17], which correspond to Dewey's concepts of character and conduct, Heldke argues that ethical transformation requires both attitude and action, not belief alone.[18] She further applies her pragmatist framework through a feminist lens, revealing how eating practices are intertwined with colonialism, racism, and gender (Heldke and Boisvert 2016, 131).[19] Therefore, Heldke cannot be read only as a pragmatist. By reclaiming food as a site of sustained philosophical inquiry and centering it within material, ethical, and experiential contexts of gender, race and coloniality, Heldke advances a philosophical project that, I believe, aligns firmly with feminist pragmatism.

Building on Dewey's argument that embodied experience must be understood through socially embedded lived practices, as well as Heldke and Boisvert's insistence that food must be approached from a philosophical perspective, I propose that the hungry body offers a lens through which the ethical as well as political implications of embodiment can be explored. I attempt not only to center hunger as a bodily condition that marks our vulnerability and interdependence, but also to highlight the material, relational, and habitual nature of practices associated with feeding the hungry body. These practices include cooking, feeding, sharing, or even withholding food, all of which structure our experience of subjectivity, intersubjectivity, and sociality. By shifting from the generalized and abstract body toward the hungry body, my analysis foregrounds a visceral condition of dependency and basic need. This approach makes visible the precarious and interdependent nature of embodied experience. Along with revealing the pre-reflective immediacy of bodily experience, it also exposes the ethical and political dimensions of access, deprivation, and care. Hunger is not only a biological state; it transforms the hungry body into a relational one.

Merleau-Ponty's emphasis on the pre-reflective bodily perception can be deepened through the concept of the hungry body, which situates embodiment within a

[13] Heldke and Boisvert, draw from Dewey in the second chapter "Food as/and Art" of *Philosophers at the Table* to suggest that food-related practices, can embody creativity and cultural significance, just like any other form of art, thereby acknowledging their creative potential. Heldke and Boisvert base their argument that aesthetic excellence can also be found in everyday experiences, such as enjoying a well-prepared meal, on two concepts borrowed from Dewey; the s*pectator theory of knowledge* and *consummatory experiences (*Heldke and Boisvert 2016, 73-98).

[14] Heldke and Boisvert not only ground their philosophy of food in Dewey's consideration of human existence as embodied, through his criticism of the mind body distinction by explaining how the knowledge, like food underlines the vulnerability of the mind, but also how our experiences can be grounded in bodily practices and not just abstract thought (Heldke and Boisvert 2016, 17).

[15] *Exotic Appetites: Ruminations of a Food Adventurer* (2003).

[16] Dewey's approach remains rooted in a Western, Eurocentric framework and overlooks power dynamics and inequalities tied to race, gender, and colonial history.

[17] Heldke notes, "More than a promissory note for action, an attitude is best under stood as a kind of action" and "actions are shaped and formed by attitudes" (Heldke 2003, 4).

[18] Heldke writes, "My goal is not to achieve purity but to become a better thinker and actor," emphasizing that ethical eating involves sustained engagement rather than simple moral judgment (Heldke 2003, xxi).

[19]The following sub-section approaches Heldke's discussion of colonial and anti-colonial practices of eating in detail.

framework that attends to both asymmetrical vulnerabilities and mutual obligation. This transactional model of the hungry body and its associated practices, grounded in feminist pragmatism, enables a more comprehensive engagement with questions of ethics, solidarity, resistance, and normativity. Identifying the hungry body as a site for interdependence, vulnerability, and ethical responsibility enables us to approach the question of the colonial Other through a more nuanced lens. By framing the hungry body as a conceptual tool for analyzing historical and social oppression, as well as for formulating agential potential for resistance, the next sub-section delves into a critical analysis of the colonial Other in the context of food-related practices. Building on the relational aspect of the hungry body outlined in this section, the following sub-section further locates hunger as critical to confronting unequal material structures and histories in the colonial context, and as a critical foundation for solidarity and resistance in the face of colonial legacies of exploitation.

1.2 Whose Hunger? A Critique of Heldke's Model of Anti-Colonial Food Adventuring

In this section, I extend the feminist pragmatist lens developed in the previous subsection by focusing on the colonial dimensions of food-related practices to engage critically with Heldke's concept of the "colonial Other" as it emerges in her discussion of food adventuring and anti-colonial practices of eating. This critical engagement is essential, as it lays the groundwork for the next section, where I explore the possibilities of oppression and resistance faced by colonial Others, specifically in the Indian context. I devote considerable attention to Heldke's proposed strategies of resistance and reflect on their limitations. Additionally, I aim to enrich my critique by incorporating Banerjee's discussion of how we must decolonize the conception of solidarity and reciprocity. Through this engagement I seek to outline the transformative possibilities of food practices within the postcolonial context.

In *Exotic Appetites*: *Ruminations of a Food Adventurer* (2003), Heldke critiques Western "food adventurers" who exploit the Other by commodifying and appropriating cultural difference, while ignoring the contexts that give food-related practices meaning. She identifies two core tendencies of food adventurers: assuming the Other's culture is lacking and claiming universal access to it (Heldke 2003, 48). This mindset, grounded in colonial ideology, renders the Other perpetually available as a resource for the colonizer as a fact (Heldke 2003, 46).[20] As a result, the contexts and customs surrounding their food and its related practices are ignored by food adventurers leading to a harmful cultural appropriation where it is no longer innocent as it "ceases to simply be an act of eating the food of the Other" (Heldke 2003, 46). "Otherness" is constructed by emphasizing *exoticism*[21] and *authenticity*[22], creating a distance that allows the food adventurer to treat the culture as inferior and to appropriate it (Heldke 2003, 49, 56). Heldke urges food adventurers to shift toward an ethical engagement with the Other through food, one that resists reproducing colonial dynamics.

Heldke outlines ways to counter harmful food practices for both food adventurers and the colonized Other. She proposes *anticolonial food adventuring*, which involves *self-questioning, contextualism,* and a critical examination of one's biases and the historical contexts of food.[23] Drawing on bell hooks's *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (1992), Heldke highlights mutual recog-

[20] This enrichment may be economic, cultural, or social in nature.
[21] Heldke defines the "exotic" as that which is perceived, in a constructed rather than in an inherent manner, as "strikingly or excitingly unusual or different" due to its foreignness (Heldke 2003, 18).
[22] Heldke complicates the singular understanding of the term "authenticity," by tracing how it could reflect the food adventurer's desire for novelty rather than a genuine understanding of another culture, or replicability, where dishes are considered authentic only if prepared exactly as they would be in their culture of origin (Heldke 2003, 25-29).
[23] Self-questioning involves food adventurers to examine their own motives, privileges, and biases when engaging with the food of the Other, while contextualism challenges the fixation food adventurers have with "authenticity" and "exoticism," by encouraging them to recognize the broader social and historical contexts of the food they consume (Heldke 2003, 154).

nition as essential to anticolonial food adventuring. She insists that ethical eating must confront colonial histories embedded in culinary encounters, urging food adventurers to place "the colonizing relationship squarely in the center of the dining table," since "only by addressing colonialism directly through our cooking and eating can we possibly transform them into activities that resist exploitation" (Heldke 2003, 182). She also underscores that food adventuring cannot, and should not, always be pleasurable (Heldke 2003, 182).[24]

Heldke proposes strategies for the Other to promote respectful and critical engagement from food adventurers, while encouraging ethical and thoughtful food exploration as a practice. These strategies include *strategic authenticity, creative appropriation,* and *nonsubjecthood.* She suggests that by redefining authenticity as contextualization, rather than as the novelty or exoticism food adventurers seek, ownership can be claimed by insiders over their food cultures and resist food colonization (Heldke 2003, 194).[25] It also requires outsiders to take seriously and support insiders' claims when a cuisine is misappropriated (Heldke 2003, 194). This assertion of the right of the insider to decide, carries anti-colonial potential by enabling insiders to maintain control over their culinary traditions (Heldke 2003, 194).

Heldke also explores the potential of the Other to resist the process of Othering through the strategy of *creative appropriation*. She notes that cuisines are loaded with creative appropriations, that is, when colonized cultures often reimagine foodstuffs imposed by colonizers, preparing them in ways unfamiliar to the colonizer but marked by the colonized through flavor (Heldke 2003, 166). In doing so, they assert agency by redefining and recontextualizing these foods (Heldke 2003, 166).[26] This process can also transform the colonizer's presumed, unchanging identity, as seen in the example of curry, which, she notes, whether acknowledged or not by Indians, permanently influenced British cooking (Heldke 2003, 165). Creative appropriation is thus a dynamic, relational strategy that locates agency with the Other and challenges fixed notions of "good" or "bad" cultural borrowing.

Next, Heldke presents the idea of "nonsubjecthood"[27], a third category of responding to colonization, that breaks more radically from the colonizer's world[28] than "good subjects"[29] or "bad subjects"[30] (Heldke 2003, 184). Nonsubjects refuse to be defined within the colonial Us/Them dichotomy and instead assert their agency through creativity and self-determination, defining their relationship with the colonizer on their own terms (Heldke 2003, 184–185). This framework encourages food adventurers to recognize the Other's autonomy by adopting a self-reflective stance, which involves relinquishing authority, comfort, and centrality (Heldke 2003, 185). Nonsubjecthood calls for a "playful"[31] attitude grounded in humility, genuine curiosity, and an openness to discomfort and ignorance, rather than arrogance or control (Heldke 2003, 185). Here, solidarity replaces appropriation.[32] Heldke argues that food adventurers acting in solidarity with nonsubjects, who are creatively regenerating their histories without erasing them, can open new possibilities, though entrenched power dynamics make

[24] She clarifies that this is because engaging in anticolonial eating requires acknowledging the ways in which domination shapes the relationship between "first-world restaurant goers" and "third-world server Others" (Heldke 2003, 182).
[25] Authenticity becomes a tactical, situational strategy rather than a fixed external standard (Heldke 2003, 194).
[26] The next section analyses how creative appropriation differs from the model of culinary hybridization, which I propose.
[27] She credits Yvonne Dion-Buffalo and John Mohawk for the term, quoted in Frederique Apffel-Marglin, *Development or Decolonization in the Andes?* (1994). She refers to their usage of the word "subjects," to mean "the subjected ones" (Heldke 2003, 184).
[28] Heldke refers to the modern Western world.
[29] The colonized people who accept colonial ideologies without resistance.
[30] The colonized people who continue to revolt yet operate within colonial structures.
[31] Heldke borrows the concept of playfulness from Melissa Burchard who notes that "playfulness is an intrinsically useful way of being in the world…for people accustomed to carrying their white man's burden with deadly seriousness" (Heldke 2003, 188).
[32] Solidarity refers to supporting the Other's right to define and transform their culture on their own terms.

this difficult (Heldke 2003, 188).[33] She cautions against rewriting colonial history in ways that mask coercion as choice, yet urges food adventurers to reflect on whether the colonized are playing a different game altogether and prompts us to think of alternative ways to approach colonizer–colonized relationships (Heldke 2003, 187).[34]

By introducing the concept of nonsubjecthood, Heldke moves beyond the binary of complicity and resistance, allowing the colonized to occupy more autonomous, resistant, and creative positions. Her emphasis on self-reflexivity and epistemic humility is valuable, though ultimately limited. While I acknowledge that Heldke's work makes important contributions, I underline how it does not entirely overcome the problems it seeks to overcome. My critique centers on the lingering subtle presence of an attitude of unintentional colonial narcissism in her analysis. For instance, although she claims that nonsubjects do not respond to the colonizer or colonization[35], she later implicitly suggests that nonsubjects may be responding to colonization on their own terms[36], reflecting a tension in her account. I critically examine four key ways in which colonial narcissism is embedded in Heldke's analysis.

First, despite her intent to center the ethnic Other's autonomy, her argument ultimately remains focused on the food adventurer, their ethical awakening, and the commercialization of food practices through the restaurant landscape. Strategic authenticity and creative appropriation both center the colonial subject by placing the burden of responding to appropriation on the already commodified Other, potentially constraining rather than liberating their cultural expression, while the Self is tasked with being "supportive." Even in her concept of nonsubjecthood, where the Other refuses to play the colonizer's game, the emphasis shifts back to how this transformation to nonsubject benefits the food adventurer by prompting them to adopt humility, discomfort, and relinquishment of control, which is linked to their "White Man's Burden".[37] In this framework, I believe that the colonizer's subjectivity still remains central, while the Other's agency as a nonsubject remains reactive, a counterforce and ethical catalyst that benefits the colonizer. It may assert some control of the encounter with the food adventurer, but it cannot initiate it. Though Heldke aims to move beyond the limiting colonizer–colonized binary, in her discussion on the potential for resistance by the ethnic Other, the food adventurer nevertheless remains the focal point in her approach to anticolonial eating.

Second, while creative appropriation and the creative, self-determined figure of the nonsubject are powerful conceptual tools that invite humility and critical reflection by the Self during dialogical cultural exchange, they risk romanticizing resistance and overlooking the depth of structural power asymmetries. Both presume that rejection of colonization is always possible through empowered creativity, thus ignoring conditions shaped by trauma, displacement, or necessity that prevent the Other from being able to refuse, flag misappropriation, or co-create. Heldke briefly acknowledges that nonsubjecthood may be unviable under coercion; I, however, suggest that she severely downplays this in favor of taking up the "challenge" to explore alternative interpretations

[33] However, Heldke does not explore these societal structures further.

[34] While Heldke briefly addresses the distinction of the colonized potentially acting out of force or choice, she does not address it significantly enough to be a potential critique of the limitations of nonsubjecthood. I take this up later in my critique of nonsubjecthood, along with how ultimately nonsubjecthood requires the participation of the colonial food adventurer Self in the form of "reflection" thereby centering them in her narrative.

[35] Hedke writes, "…on the nonsubject model the colonized culture is transformed on terms of its own making—not those of the colonizer— nor those of the colonized in reaction to colonization" (Heldke 2003, 185).

[36] Heldke implicitly notes the "response" of the nonsubject to colonization when she notes, "Considering the possibility that members of a culture may be responding to colonization as nonsubjects who are deciding for themselves whether and how they will incorporate the strange foods…" (Heldke 2003, 186).

[37] Heldke notes in her discussion on playfulness that "Finally, cultivating playfulness is, in and of itself, a useful thing to try to cultivate, because playfulness is an intrinsically useful way of being in the world, particularly for people accustomed to carrying their white man's burden with deadly seriousness" (Heldke 2003, 188).

of colonial exchange (Heldke 2003, 187). She overlooks that refusal is not an option for many and may come with severe consequences.

Third, I critique the presumption of a homogeneous marginalized group through Heldke's three strategies and, on my part emphasize the possibility of food relations which take the Other as capable of negotiating and co-creating equally. For example, creative appropriation assumes all members of the marginalized group have equal power to identify and agree on the occurrence of misappropriation. Similarly, Heldke's idealization of the nonsubject also overlooks ambivalence and hybridity in postcolonial identities, thereby denying the possible strategic use of colonial structures for resistance and negotiation. Within the framework of strategic authenticity there is an expectation that outsiders "support the claims made by insiders," assuming a stable insider/outsider binary, while ignoring the complex, hybrid identities of diasporic or postcolonial subjects. Although, through tactical authenticity marginalized communities can assert agency, and resist the extractive impulses of food colonization, strategic authenticity may also inadvertently reproduce power dynamics it seeks to resist.

Fourth, Heldke's suggestion that food adventurers act in solidarity with the nonsubject by relinquishing authority and control reflects an individualist model of ethical transformation rooted in self-reflection, discomfort, and humility. Her framework of creative appropriation emphasizes emotional labor and intention by relying too much on individual ethical agency over structural analysis, leaving material inequities unaddressed and setting aside the possibilities of collective political change. Additionally, while she challenges exoticized notions of authenticity, she lacks a sustained and nuanced engagement with how power circulates within and across communities, especially when lines of cultural ownership are blurred or contested. Framing decolonization as dependent on "curiosity" and "playfulness" risks trivializing the violence of colonialism and reduces solidarity to attitudinal improvement.

Heldke's strategies of nonsubjecthood, strategic authenticity, and creative appropriation offer the colonial Other useful ethical tools for addressing colonial dynamics in food and cultural exchange. However, a pragmatist and feminist approach enables us to critique her individualist lens, that centers the food adventurer's moral struggle over the material realities of the Other, thereby limiting their agency. Although she aims to decenter the colonial Self, my analysis notes that she inadvertently ends up recentering it. Resistance once again becomes dependent on the Western food adventurer, which in turn dilutes the Other's subjectivity and may deny their potential for agency. Her approach, I caution, while important, remains incomplete and potentially risky. Thus, we need a philosophical approach that is more robust and structurally grounded.

To enrich and move beyond Heldke's strategic models, I draw on Amrita Banerjee's essay "De-colonizing Solidarity and Reciprocity" (2022), that is grounded in phenomenology, from a postcolonial and transnational perspective. I engage with it through a feminist pragmatist lens toward a philosophy of food that I have been developing so far. While both traditions emphasize relationality, embodiment, and lived experience, a pragmatist reading can add focus on social transformation, practical consequences, and epistemic accountability. Additionally, I propose that such a reading of Banerjee's critique of the liberal notion, and her positive notion of reciprocity, rooted in interdependence, incommensurability, and ambiguity can be useful to overturn Heldke's overemphasis on individual ethical transformation, which may instrumentalize the Other. This allows us to move toward a more relational and embodied ethical paradigm. Though Banerjee does not address food directly, I suggest her intervention can inform a decolonial philosophy of food rooted in feminist pragmatism. This can decolonize Heldke's strategies, be attentive to the complexities of colonial entanglements, and account for them. While Heldke burdens the colonized Other with responding to colonial

dynamics, on the other hand, Banerjee offers a model in which agency and vulnerability are co-constitutive. She writes, "the very conditions that establish us as agents also situate us as vulnerable beings" (Banerjee 2022, 148). Acknowledging the Self's vulnerability shifts the focus beyond empowerment as resistance to a shared condition intersubjective dependence, which affirms, rather than denies historical and material asymmetries. From a pragmatist feminist philosophy of food, the food adventurer can be decentered not only ethically but ontologically, through embodied hunger that underscores their dependency. This unsettles the Subject-Object dynamic that Heldke inadvertently reinscribes because the agency of the colonial Other is reimagined by foregrounding the Self's vulnerability and dependency, embodied in hunger. Heldke's reliance on ethical dialogue, consensus, and mutual understanding risks coercion, along with burdening the Other, while simultaneously erasing difference. Banerjee, drawing on Ofelia Schutte, affirms that difference and incommensurability can be foundations for ethical solidarity and reciprocity, not obstacles. In her concluding remarks, Banerjee adds, "If we attribute sufficient importance to asymmetry and incommensurability as aspects of reciprocity and within an ethics of recognition, then there is significant potential to prevent both abusive power relations and the impulse to colonize the other" (Banerjee 2022, 149). The unpredictable "gap" between Self and Other becomes an ethical space that honors the Other's irreducible agency and affirms their situatedness (Banerjee 2022, 135, 149). Banerjee discusses the function the "blind spot" or "gap" performs in in intersubjective relations as helping "to highlight and maintain a degree of ontological and phenomenological incommensurability between the self and the other, which can reorient an ethics of recognition in fundamentally new ways" (Banerjee 2022, 149). In this frame, we can engage across asymmetries by dwelling in the gap with uncertainty and attentiveness to difference, not by bridging it. An ethics of responsiveness enables us to approach the Other not as a tool for moral development but as a situated subject whose actions lie beyond the Self's approval or comprehension. Unlike Heldke's food adventurer, who relinquishes control as a moral act, the privileged subject within this frame is forced to surrender authority and control as a real, ontological necessity and face the Other's irreducibility.

Where Heldke's model relies on the moral development of the Self, Banerjee proposes solidarity grounded in mutual dependence and difference, rather than shared experience and homogeneity. From the perspective of the hungry body, hunger is not experienced equally, as the Self's vulnerability differs from the Other's due to material and political inequalities. While hunger is a shared ontological condition, it does not translate into a shared and equal experience. Food practices, then, are inherently social and relational, rooted not in moral heroism but in mutually responsive care across unequally situated bodies. Thus, while Heldke advocates for playfulness and emotional intention that risks trivializing histories of colonial violence, Banerjee's framework reframes solidarity as politically attuned, grounded in opacity, tension, refusal, and incommensurability rather than in agreement or assimilation. Within this decolonized approach to reciprocity[38] and solidarity[39], decolonizing food practices would require recognizing asymmetrical vulnerabilities that affirm the Other's subjectivity.

In the first subsection, by shifting from the general body to the hungry body, I reframed embodiment by emphasizing dependence, vulnerability, and shared responsibility. Hunger reveals our bodies as entangled with social and material conditions, transforming food from mere sustenance into a site of care, inclusion, and rela-

[38] Banerjee critiques the liberal understanding of reciprocity, which "takes it to signify a kind of contractual relationship between individuals considered as equals and is marked by mutual sharing, benefit, and exchange" (Banerjee 2022, 132).
[39] Banerjee also critiques the traditional liberal definition of solidarity which takes it "to be a given rather than something which is to be achieved and makes it look much simpler than it is in practice" (Banerjee 2022, 133).

tional ethics. The second subsection offered a pragmatist and feminist approach to the colonial Other through food-related practices, and a critique of Heldke's strategies for anti-colonial food adventuring. The pragmatist emphasis on ethics grounded in historical and material contexts, rather than reduced to internal moral states[40], enabled a critique of Heldke's focus on individual attitude transformation, particularly that of the food adventurer. I challenged the assumption that colonial Others can always resist through creativity, appropriation, rejection, or refusal. Instead, I drew on a pragmatist approach to agency as relational and contingent on material and historical conditions, thereby critiquing any romanticized or universalized notion of resistance. Moreover, pragmatism rejects fixed binaries and essentialist categories, a stance reflected in my critique of how Heldke's strategies risk reifying identity by overlooking and potentially denying the hybridity, ambivalence, and fluidity of postcolonial subjectivities. Finally, by rooting my analysis in lived consequences, a key-tenant of pragmatism, I pointed to the coercion, structural inequalities and violence that expose the gap between ethical ideals and postcolonial realities.

Feminist insights deepened my critique. My criticism of Heldke's tokenizing and idealizing of the Other for the Self's growth aligns with the feminist concerns of the instrumentalization of the marginalized for the service of the Self's self-realization.[41] I addressed the relational nature of ethics by highlighting the feminist concerns regarding the unequal distribution of responsibility and care in framing cross- cultural interactions by underestimating the potential of differences, asymmetries, and incommensurability. I also engaged in a feminist material critique by drawing attention to the insufficiency of emotional intention that fails to account for institutional structures. My argument that decolonization must be materially grounded rather than reduced to attitudinal shifts reflects these concerns. I also emphasized collective responsibility and structural change over individual morality, while affirming the agency of a constrained and embedded Other who is neither romanticized nor reduced to a tool for ethical development. Lastly, I drew on Banerjee through a feminist and pragmatist lens which allowed me to not only extend the critique of Heldke, but also to stipulate what would be involved in decolonizing a philosophy of food. The next section builds on this discussion and I move on to propose an alternative way to approach the Self and Other relation. Beginning from a highly contextualized consideration of food-related practices, the following section suggests that inclusivity is not an "add-on," but a generative starting point with transformative potential not only for marginalized communities, but also for feminist pragmatism itself.

2. When Others Eat with Each Other: Reclaiming the Table through a Postcolonial Feminist Intervention

This section aims to develop a feminist postcolonial pragmatist approach by focusing on the internal fissures and layers in the postcolonial Indian context[42] as a philosophical starting point that challenge binary understandings of cultural exchange. Postcolonial theory, like traditional philosophy has operated largely within the binary of "colonizer–colonized" and "Self–Other." As a result, the complex social dynamics of postcolonial societies and identities are often obscured when examined through

[40] Two examples are humility or discomfort.

[41] My analysis of Heldke's work resonates with feminist concerns, which emphasize the imperative to engage with the "Other" in ways that acknowledge and respect their agency and specificity. Some of these include Chandra Talpade Mohanty's criticism in "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses" (1991) where she critiques the homogenizing tendencies of Western feminist scholarship, which often constructs the "Third World woman" as a singular, monolithic subject, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's criticism in her essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?"(1988) of the tendency of Western intellectuals to position themselves as benevolent voices for the oppressed, thereby reinforcing the very structures of domination they seek to dismantle.

[42] In this work, I employ the term "postcolonial" to denote the distinct historical contexts that emerged following the formal independence of colonized India. This usage does not imply that colonialism is entirely relegated to the past, either temporally or structurally.

frameworks that reduce them to this dichotomy. Such models fail to account for the multiple, intersecting identities embedded in concrete realities shaped by class, caste[43], race, gender, and religion. Scholars like Lisa Heldke in *Exotic Appetites: Ruminations of a Food Adventurer* (2003) and Uma Narayan in "Eating Cultures" (1997) have contributed to postcolonial discourse by emphasizing the need to move beyond these binaries, particularly in the context of philosophically approaching food and cultural exchange.

Narayan briefly points to the necessity of breaking with the "Western colonizer" and "colonized Third World peoples" binary, which has dominated postcolonial discourses (Narayan 1997, 183). However, although her analysis focuses primarily on immigrant Third World women in Western contexts, she does not extend to the internal differences among colonized groups within the Third World itself. Heldke, as examined earlier, introduces the concept of "nonsubjecthood" as an alternate approach to the binary framework. Yet, her account does not sufficiently consider the plurality of colonial Others or the reality of multiple colonial encounters. Moreover, by positing nonsubjecthood as a solution, Heldke risks instrumentalizing and romanticizing the Other, while concealing the structural power imbalances between Self and Other, as I have argued in the previous section. Her work remains oriented toward the ethical development of the Self in the context of food adventuring, rather than exploring how colonized Others navigate, resist, and relate to one another within postcolonial contexts.

This section seeks to move beyond both, Narayan, and Heldke, by developing a feminist postcolonial pragmatist framework rooted in the specificities of the Indian context. India, as the analysis reveals, offers a rich site for theorizing relationality, conflict, and resistance beyond the colonial Self–colonized Other binary. This approach not only enriches the critique of postcolonial theory which has been charged with being hegemonic and overly Western-centric, but also the exclusion, oversimplification, and marginalization of diverse postcolonial identities. I aim to account for and begin theorizing difference from the perspective of lived intra-colonial difference and multiple colonialisms, in multipolar and entangled positionalities, within and beyond the colonial framework. Rather than solely adding "intersectionality" to an existing Self–Other binary, I argue for a fundamental restructuring of the dyadic conceptual model itself. This would shift how we think about postcolonial food politics; not as a site for the ethical transformation of the privileged Self, but as a space where multiple, relationally embedded subjectivities negotiate agency, power, resistance, and solidarity.

2.1 The Indian Context: An Approach Rooted in Multiple Colonialities

This sub-section explores how the postcolonial Indian context can serve as a site for theorizing that contributes not only to the philosophy of food but also to broader philosophical discourses. Before its full potential can be realized in the following discussions, it is necessary to understand the specificities and complexities of the Indian context; in particular, its multiplicity of colonial encounters and intra-colonial differences. Banerjee affirms the importance of attending to these intra-group complexities in group-based identities, failing which there is a risk of erasure of minority voices and the homogenization of collective identities (Banerjee 2022, 130). She argues that solidarity must grapple with not only with inter-group dynamics but also with internal differences, fragmentations, and the multiplicity of identities within marginalized groups themselves (Banerjee 2022, 130).

Unlike settler colonial contexts that Heldke discusses[44], the colonization of India did not follow a single tra-

[43] The caste system in India is a hierarchical social stratification system with roots in ancient Hindu society, that divided people into groups or "castes," based primarily on birth, which also determined social status and occupation.

[44] Indian colonialism involved multiple European powers employing distinct methods of domination, with varying degrees

jectory and brought with it concerns and challenges for colonized Others to negotiate, including through their food practices. Colonial rule in India was not imposed by a single monolithic European power, as is often assumed. Rather, it involved multiple colonial regimes, such as Portugal, France, and Britain, each occupying different regions, for varying durations, and employing distinct methods of control. These layered colonial histories challenge the homogenizing construction of a singular "Indian" identity, especially one rooted in misplaced nationalist or anti-colonial imaginaries.[45] They also give rise to multiple, complex, diverse, and often invisible identities, such as the Goan, East-Indian, Anglo-Indian, and Pondicherrian, which remain "off the menu," so to say, of the dominant national imaginary. This does not simply imply that they are entirely absent or non-existent; rather, they are neither on the inside, nor on the outside. These marginalized identities enable us to approach colonial relationships not as a dyad, but as a web of relationally embedded subjectivities, by recognizing not only the presence of multiple Others, but also multiple Selves.

These difficult to swallow diverse identities are neither fully inside nor outside the construction of a homogenous Indian identity. For example, the encounter itself with the British itself produced the different categories of East-Indian and Anglo-Indian amongst a variety of others, each embedded in different cultural configurations**,** with intra-group differences within each of these two identities as well. For instance, Anglo-Indians in Kolkata on the eastern coast of India differ significantly from those in Mumbai, on the western coast, despite both tracing their lineage to different colonial encounters with the same colonial power, the British. These differences are often suppressed in favor of simplified easy-to-digest public political categories that emphasize sameness, and are therefore insufficient accounts. In colonial and postcolonial India, food plays a significant role in the suppression of these differences that emerge. It has however also been a site for resistance and the forging of solidarities across plural identities.

In the following subsections, I philosophically approach representations of food-related practices in literary texts and cookbooks authored by individuals from marginalized postcolonial Indian identities to examine how food operates as both a site of oppression and resistance. By foregrounding the presence of multiple Others and beginning from the perspective of the Other, I fragment the Self/Other relationship, and present alternate ways of conceptualizing it. This textual, rather than ethnographic approach, treats cookbooks, memoirs, and literary narratives not only as cultural artifacts but as philosophical texts that mediate colonial and postcolonial relations. These texts illuminate the cultural politics of representation, interpretation, and narration, revealing the epistemic and ethical stakes involved in how food is imagined, narrated, and consumed. Through this method, the forthcoming analysis aims to reconstruct a philosophical framework that can engage with the uneven terrain of postcolonial life. It avoids both instrumentalizing the Other and romanticizing colonial cultural encounters, and instead begins from difference itself and from nested relationalities.

2.2 Other-Others: Locating the Legacies of Multiple Colonialities through Food

The East-Indian, Anglo-Indian, Goan and Pondicherry cuisines represented in literary and cookery books provide a lens to address cultural imperialism within the postcolonial context. In the foreword of *The East Indian Cookery Book* (1998), Thangam E. Philip writes; "the present day East Indian cuisine is the outcome of many influences-Indian (Maharashtrian), Portuguese and British". This is

of violence across regions. The British largely imposed systematic, large-scale violence through wars, famines, and direct rule, whereas the Portuguese pursued cultural imperialism, enforcing their language, customs, education, and legal systems to reshape local societies.

[45] In *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (1993), Partha Chatterjee critiques the celebratory view of nationalism as anti-colonial resistance, by arguing that it masks internal contradictions and complexities by promoting a homogenized national identity.

visible from the recipes in the book which features British and Irish stews, puddings and biscuits, Portuguese beefsteak and sarapatel, locally distinctive bottle masala which is made from a combination of Indian spices, and Bombay ducks; a type of fish found in Mumbai.

Similarly, the ranging influence of cuisine is visible even in the recipes in *The Pondicherry Cookbook* (2012), where Tirouvanziam-Louis informs the reader about the origins of Pondicherry dishes. Some of these include the recipe for a Mughal influenced chicken curry, Prawn Kussidu, which her friend notes kussid is term borrowed from Goan cuisine, but Tirouvanziam-Louis asserts is Pondicherrian as the spices differ, and a dessert called Dodol that her Creole friends make and she notes is also made in Goa but has different ingredients and varies in colour, taste, and consistency (Tirouvanziam-Louis 2012, 92, 172). Therefore, Tirouvanziam-Louis contextualises the recipes in her cookbook demonstrate that Pondicherry cuisine is not restricted to the influence of the French cuisine, despite Pondicherry being a French colony. The cuisine reflects multiple layers of influence, including Creole, Goan, Mughal, French, local flavors. and other European, African, and pre-Columbian American influences. Vindail is another dish, which shows the simultaneous convergence and divergence across identity categories as it is known differently as vindail, vin d'ail or vindaloo in regional recipe books, and is prepared differently in the East-Indian, Anglo-Indian, Goan and Pondicherry identities, despite sharing certain ingredients.

An analysis of these recipe books reveals the multiplicity of marginal Indian cuisines, many of which share dish names or culinary influences that span local, regional, and colonial histories, including British, French, and Portuguese. These overlapping yet distinct culinary traditions point to the existence of multiple colonized Others, each shaped by different colonial and cultural forces. The presence of such "Other Others," for instance, East-Indian, Anglo-Indian, Goan, and Pondicherrian communities, complicates any singular or binary understanding of cultural identity. Rather than viewing Indian food merely through the reductive lens of "curry," as critiqued but also maintained by Heldke as a frame of analysis,[46] we can instead explore the nuanced interplay of difference and convergence through dishes like *vindail*, *vin d'ail*, and *vindalu*. This approach rooted in these texts show how the question of identity shifts beyond how the Self defines the Other; to how Others perceive alongside multiple colonial Others, relate to, and differentiate themselves from one another in the process of self-definition. As these culinary intersections and negotiations expose multiple colonial Selves alongside multiple Others, they not only fragment the singular category of the Other who is out of the grasp of the colonial Self, but also destabilize the coherence of the Self. As a result, the Self too is rendered vulnerable in their fragmented state by the fragmented Other who they cannot grasp. The presence of differentiated Others forces the Self to confront its own multiplicity, and realize that it is relationally constituted through Others that are irreducibly plural. Although I do not do away with the Self altogether, but decenter it, the reconceptualized model of multipolar subjectivity breaks down any unified notion of the Self. Therefore, while the vocabulary of Self and Other can be retained for analytical purposes, they are reconfigured not as binary opposites but as participants in a dynamic, historically situated web of relationships.

This approach differs from Heldke's concept of non-subjecthood. It articulates the ethical and political stakes of Other-Other relationships. In this way, food emerges as a philosophical site where identity can be conceptualized as developing within a dynamic, contested web of colonial entanglements, asymmetries, and mutual negotiations. This postcolonial feminist pragmatist approach moves beyond traditional notions of intersubjectivity, which remain tied to a dyadic framework, by

[46] Heldke notes that although origins of curry are contested, it is nonetheless "a dish a dish with genuine, legitimate origins— in colonialism" (Heldke 2003, 39).

foregrounding a more complex model of subjectivity that is layered, dynamic, and relationally constituted. This re-conceptualized model better captures the postcolonial ethical and political realities, especially in postcolonial nations like India, where identities are shaped not by static oppositions but through situated entanglements and negotiations among differentiated Selves and Others. Foregrounding these intra-colonial dynamics allows for a richer analysis of conflict, oppression, and solidarity, thereby transfiguring difference in the postcolonial context as a basis rather than postscript, from which the colonial Self must engage.

2.3 Beginning from the Othered Other

In the previous subsection, I asserted the importance of reconfiguring the Self-Other model by highlighting the presence of multiple Others and Selves, and presenting the Other-Other model as an alternative. In this subsection I develop the Other-Other model by proposing that ethical inquiry must begin not just from the Other, but from what I call the "Othered Other." The Othered Others are figures which are marginalized not only by colonial power but also by dominant Others within their own postcolonial societies. To illustrate the potential of beginning from the Othered Other, I philosophically approach the memoir *Filomena's Journeys* (2013) set in Goa, a state under Portuguese colonial rule from 1510 to 1961. The writer Maria Aurora Couto writes about the relationship her mother Filomena, who was a "bhatkar" or a landowning Goan woman shared with the women "mundkars," the landless laborers who tilled her land (Couto, 17). Though embedded in entrenched caste and class hierarchies, this relationship included some acts of reciprocity such as cooking and feeding: the mundkars labored on the land in return for a portion of the yearly harvest, while Filomena, from her dominant position, prepared meals for them out of kindness. Attempting to frame solidarity based on shared gendered experience and framing them as acts of "kindness" is oppressive, as it obscures the systemic exploitation and the structural dynamics of caste and class that that underscore these interactions. Couto herself critiques how colonial governance actively exacerbated and exploited these divisions to fragment the possibilities of forging solidarity: "Chardo pitted against Brahmin...both pitted against the *mestiço*" (Couto 2013, 130). This insight underscores the importance of interrogating how colonial regimes manipulated existing caste stratifications not only to maintain power but also to prevent coalitional resistance across caste lines.

Understanding Filomena and the mundkars as both colonial Others, vulnerable to hunger, gender inequalities and enmeshed in food labor, does not erase the material asymmetries that structured their relationship. Rather, it highlights the importance of relational positionality: Filomena's acts of "kindness" are inseparable from her caste and landowning privilege, while the mundkars' labor is shaped by coercion and necessity. From the vantage of the Othered Other, such dynamics of relationships are not easily reducible to either oppression or liberation; it is marked by simultaneous, entangled relations of dependency, care, and domination. Beginning from the perspective of the *mundkar*, who is the Othered Other, foregrounds the ambivalence of such relationships, challenging idealized narratives of solidarity that rely on benevolent figures of power or calls to moral action. It calls for a reframing of food ethics, not around acts of ethical consumption by privileged Selves, but around the lived, often painful, negotiations of survival by those multiply marginalized Others within colonial and caste-based hierarchies. Such an approach reorients our understanding of agency, resistance, and care toward the shifting and structurally constrained realities of the Othered Other.

By beginning from the Othered Other we are also forced to acknowledge that food is not always a choice, but is also often a matter of survival. In *Rescuing a River Breeze* (2023), also set in Goa, by Mrinalini Harchandrai,

caste and class dictate food access. Through the characters of Munshu and his lower-caste mother, Harchandrai shows how caste-based notions of pollution and purity dictate who may eat, cook, or access water. Denied access to the bhatkar's well and rice fields, Munshu's mother is relegated to collecting husk and dung, which she later burns for fuel (Harchandrai 2023, 26). Munshu's mother eventually dies after consuming rotten fish or contaminated water (Harchandrai 2023, 75). Her death is not metaphorical, but structurally embedded in material conditions shaped by caste hierarchies. Heldke's framework of food ethics, premised on creativity and choice, is ill-equipped to address such realities where food is not an ethical concern for Self-transformation, but primarily a matter of survival. For Munshu and his mother, in the face of struggling to survive, "eating ethically" is not a choice at all, but a distant concern and an inaccessible ideal.

Further, Harchandrai complicates these dynamics through the intersection of caste, class, and religion. A Catholic priest, despite being a beef and pork eater, is offered food by the upper-caste bhatkar when he visits, unlike Munshu's mother, who is denied even water. However, the bhatkar discards the priest's utensils after the meal, revealing the persistent caste-based restrictions and taboos that override religious affiliations (Harchandrai 2023, 74-75). There is once again an ambivalence at play as the Othered Other is fractured by these hierarchies. Tellingly, Munshu's mother replicates this discriminatory logic and deems the priest impure as well by telling Munshu to get rid of these same discarded utensils that he had picked up, highlighting how oppressed subjects can internalize and reproduce hierarchies established by dominant Others (Harchandrai 2023, 75). Munshu and his mother who are Othered Others in this context, do not act freely on their own terms as autonomous Others; rather, they are constrained to act within structural frameworks constructed by the colonizing Self and caste-based Others. Hence, these hierarchies are viciously self-perpetuating.

In such contexts of entrenched, multiple, and intersecting oppressions, Heldke's model of creative appropriation proves inadequate, as it fails to grapple with the coercive structures that limit the agency of the Othered Other. Heldke's strategy of creative appropriation centres the colonizing Self and its ethical transformation by framing food exchange as a space of resistance. In this space, the colonized Other resists the colonizing Self through creative and intentional acts of adapting the Self's cuisine, transforming it into something new while also making the influence of the colonized visible. While this model gestures toward disruption, it still begins with the Self, thus positioning the Other as being primarily reactive. In contrast, I propose "culinary hybridization" as an alternative framework rooted in a postcolonial feminist pragmatist approach. While it shares Heldke's goal of decentring the Self as the primary ethical subject, my framework departs from hers by focusing instead on the material, affective, and historically grounded experiences of the Other. Culinary hybridization, as I outline it, refers to food-related practices, which include the acts of cooking, eating, adapting, and remembering by marginalized subjects who engage with food not to subvert the Self,[47] but to survive, to connect, and to endure. Unlike Heldke's framework, which emphasizes intentionality and visibility of the Other's influence on the Self's culinary practices, culinary hybridization foregrounds the lived conditions, affective labor, and creative resourcefulness beginning from the Othered Other. It reframes food and its related practices not only as cultural exchange or ethical choice, but as deeply situated practices tied to histories of hunger, care, and constrained possibility.

In *Filomena's Journeys* (2013), for instance, Filomena adapts the Portuguese dessert bebinca by substituting eggs with more affordable sweet potatoes to feed her seven children who she raises alone. Her act is not a creative response to the Self to assert agency, but is a response

[47] Although it may resist the Self in the process, it is not its primary intention.

to scarcity marked by hunger on the body. Its aim is not creativeness, but creative resourcefulness. It is a materially grounded improvisation born of necessity. Similarly, in *Rescuing a River Breeze* (2023), the protagonist's mother modifies her grandmother's recipe in the Goan kitchen, that she learnt in her grandmother's Karachi kitchen, to suit her husband's preferences, as an act of comfort after his long day of work. Her culinary preparation is not merely cultural; it is affective, material, and historical. It is a hybrid act of remembrance, love, and adaptation that emerges from a layered history of displacement, gendered labor, and colonial legacies. These practices would fall outside Heldke's model because they are not intended to engage the Self. Instead, they affirm the agency of the Other in relational, grounded, and embodied ways.

Culinary hybridization, in comparison to creative appropriation, thus emerges as a more inclusive philosophical and ethical model that is grounded in material realities and affective ties, not just resistance. This framework holds space for complexity, contradiction, and contingency by recognizing that food as a site of survival and relational ethics is shaped by caste, colonialism, gender, and class. Through it the Other can act and resist with agency on their own terms, rather than those defined by the Self. By beginning form multiple Others, and particularly Othered Others, the potential of culinary hybridization can be realized, by identifying the subjectivity of the Other and their agency. It allows for a more grounded and relational approach to food ethics that refuses to burden the Other with the task of transforming the Self.[48] It neither centers the Self, nor locates the Other as a mere counterpoint.

Banerjee (2022) further clarifies the stakes of this shift by arguing that solidarity and recognition of agency must not arise from liberal benevolence or from the moral transformation of the privileged Self, but from a deep understanding of interrelational subjectivities and shared vulnerabilities. From this perspective, the Other is not "given" agency as a gift from the Self, but already possesses it, however precariously, within a complex web of social, historical, and structural constraints**.** Culinary hybridization reflects Banerjee's call for ethics rooted in interrelational subjectivities, rather than unilateral recognition. It resists the grasps of the Self and instead affirms agency as emerging within, not despite of oppressive conditions. These are not acts performed with unbounded autonomy but expressions of affective strength, relational negotiation, and survival.

In conclusion, this paper makes a critical shift from feminist pragmatism to postcolonial feminist pragmatism, and emphasizes the relational nature of intersubjectivity within the specificities of the colonial and postcolonial context. By focusing on the hungry body, the analysis moves away from abstract, individualist conceptions of intersubjectivity, instead highlighting how material realities, asymmetries, and histories shape agency and resistance. In doing so, I critique Heldke's strategies for resistance, arguing that her model falls short of addressing the complexity of the colonial Other's embodied experiences, particularly in postcolonial contexts marked by hierarchies and intersections of caste, class, religion, and gender. It did not only offer an intersectional account, but a reconfiguration of the entire Self-Other dyad, challenging traditional notions of identity and relationality by emphasizing the dynamic, contingent, and multifaceted nature of subjectivity.

The move to postcolonial feminist pragmatism centered the idea of the "Othered Other," emphasizing that all Others are not equal, and their experiences of hunger and resistance are shaped by different material conditions. This perspective challenged the binary Self–Other framework by foregrounding the multiplicity of identities and the relational dynamics that emerge within postcolonial societies. It argues that intersubjectivity is not a simple exchange between the Self and the Other, but a dynamic and layered process that recognizes the con-

[48] The question of whether the "burden" of the Other to resist the colonizing Self can ever completely be achieved or approached as a choice by the Other is something we to think about further.

tingency of agency shaped by structural inequalities and historical legacies. By situating the Other not as a mere object of resistance or inclusion, but as a subject with its own agency, this paper called for a more nuanced understanding of intersubjectivity in postcolonial contexts. It proposes that the Other's agency is not a response to the Self's benevolence, but arises from its own material conditions, struggles, and relational entanglements. Furthermore, it asserted that maintaining incommensurability and differences is a necessary condition for affirming the subject status of the Other, while not denying their agency. This approach also insisted on the importance of collective responsibility and structural transformation, rather than individual moral transformation, in fostering ethical practices. Ultimately, this work contributes to a global feminist pragmatism on a philosophy of food by noting that a feminist philosophy of food would be incomplete without considering the lived realities and subjectivities of the Other. By grounding intersubjectivity in the complexities of relationalities that characterize postcolonial contexts, we can develop a more robust, relational framework for ethics that recognizes agency, vulnerability, and the need for structural change.

References

Amesur, Amrita. 2021. "Pondicherry Dreaming – Inside French India." *Sarmaya*. November 18, 2021. https://sarmaya.in/spotlight/pondicherry-dreaming-inside-french-india/.

Banerjee, Amrita. 2022. "De-colonizing Solidarity and Reciprocity." In *An Imbecile's Guide to Public Philosophy*, edited by Murzban Jal, Jyoti Bawane, and Muzaffar Ali, 130–53. New Delhi: Routledge.

Bosáková, Kristina. 2021. "Against the Self-Sufficiency of Reason: Concept of Corporeality in Feuerbach and Patočka." *Studies in East European Thought* 73 (3): 309–26. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11212-020-09398-8.

Brown, Patricia. 1998. *Anglo-Indian Food and Customs*. Navi Mumbai: Penguin Books India.

Chatterjee, Partha. 1993. *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Counihan, Carole, and Penny Van Esterik, eds. *Food and Culture: A Reader*. 3rd ed. New York: Routledge, 2013.

Couto, Maria Aurora. 2006. *Filomena's Journeys: A Portrait of a Marriage, a Family & a Culture*. New Delhi: Penguin Books.

Dewey, John. 1920. *Changing Conceptions in Philosophy*. In *Reconstruction in Philosophy*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

———. 1925. *Experience and Nature*. 1st ed. Chicago: Open Court.

———. 1934. *Art as Experience*. 1st ed. New York: Perigee Books.

"East Indians Were the Original Inhabitants of Mumbai: This Website Profiles Their Unique Culture." 2019. *Hindustan Times*. Last modified December 13, 2019. https://www.hindustantimes.com/art-and-culture/east-indians-were-the-original-inhabitants-of-mumbai-this-website-profiles-their-unique-culture/story-9oxJTxzceADGbH3KiSCC3N.html.

Government of India. 1950. *Constitution of India*. Ministry of Law and Justice. https://legislative.gov.in/constitution-of-india.

Harchandrai, Mrinalini. 2023. *Rescuing a River Breeze*. New Delhi: Bloomsbury.

Heldke, Lisa M. 2003. *Exotic Appetites: Ruminations of a Food Adventurer*. New York: Routledge.

Heldke, Lisa M., and Raymond A. Boisvert. 2016. *Philosophers at the Table: On Food and Being Human*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. 2012. *Phenomenology of Perception*. Translated by Donald A. Landes. New York: Routledge. Originally published in 1945.

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. 1991. "Under Western Eyes." In *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*, edited by Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Ann Russo, and Lourdes Torres, 51–80. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Narayan, Uma. 1997. "Eating Cultures: Incorporation, Identity and Indian Food." In *Dislocating Cultures: Identities, Traditions, and Third World Feminism*, 159–87. New York: Routledge.

Patočka, Jan. 1998. *Body, Community, Language, World*. Translated by Erazim Kohák. Chicago: Open Court.

Rodrigues, Dorothy. 2013. *East Indian Cookbook, Vol. I*. Mumbai: M/s Specific Assignments India Pvt. Ltd.

———. 2019. *East Indian Cookbook, Vol. II*. Mumbai: M/s Specific Assignments India Pvt. Ltd.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. 1988. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" In *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, edited by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, 271–313. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

The Bombay East Indian Association. 1998. *The East Indian Cookery Book*. Bombay: The Bombay East Indian Association.

Young, Donna J. 2006. *Defining Goan Identity*. Master's thesis, Georgia State University. https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/history_theses/6.

DISCLOSING GLOBAL FEMINIST PRAGMATIC VALUES: SOLVING THE GLOBAL SCOURGE OF WOMEN'S OPPRESSION AND CRIMINALIZATION

Rebecca L Farinas
Tulane University of Louisiana, New Orleans, USA
rebeccafar38@aol.com

ABSTRACT: Cosmopolitan feminism has contributed to critical theory, specifically in terms of identifying the intersection of social problems such as sexism, racism, greed which substitutes competition for creativity, poverty, crime, violence, and war. Jane Addams saw these problems as solvable if we act from our sympathetic understanding. Ongoing interpretations of her writings and activism offers a social ethics entailing doing the right thing according to moral progress and solidarity, brought about through our open social relationships. However, we need to continually re-inquiry about the expected and lasting meanings of our associated relationships, as we reach out to others as individuals, while acknowledging our life affirming values of love. Therefore, I propose three feminist pragmatic values, which correlate with Addams' radical approach to international feminist activism. I contend, such value analysis will continually inspire feminist sympathetic knowledge, which is not dependent on our privileging moral judgements or law-based mandates, that are most often formulated with male authoritative values in mind. I think this is a more productive approach to dissolving women's ongoing oppressions.

To uncover such a value theory, I interpret Addams' thoughts in the context of other axiology of her time. In some respects, Max Scheler's theories about sympathy and a sociology of knowledge correlate with Addams' values as embedded with our sympathetic understanding. There are feminist criticisms of both Addams and Scheler which are important to address, before I assert their writings on sympathy are helpful to a contemporary feminist value theory. As well, to tackle long standing oppression and criminalization of women in terms of pragmatic values, we need to understand the dualistic problems planted in our understanding and practices. Such dualist tendencies, which not only led Addams astray but continue to mis-guide our thinking and actions away from an orientation of love and nurturing, stand in the way of our sympathetic knowledge. Therefore, contemporary feminists, such as M. Joan McDermott, can help us discern solutions to the criminalization of women, as we understand more about feminist approaches to our phenomenal and spiritual experiences. So, we return to persistent, experiential life- affirming values, rather than man made laws, to re-orient ourselves and to eliminate the oppression and criminalization of women and all people around the world.

Keywords: Jane Addams, Max Scheler, John Dewey, post-modern critical theory, axiology, sympathy, criminalization/erasure of women

Introduction

Recently Elon Musk said, "The fundamental weakness of Western civilization is empathy." To briefly add context, he warns against "civilizational suicidal empathy, not caring about other people." (Rogan 2025, Podcast).[1] Taking a contradictory position to his socio/political argument is not the main thrust of my thoughts, however, I will explain how sympathetic knowledge, as embedded in a feminist, pragmatic approach to feminist values makes the world a better place.

The most contemporarily progressive legacy left by Jane Addams, lies with her understanding of "*overcoming, substituting, recreating, adjusting moral values, forming new centers of spiritual energies*" (Addams 1906, p.8).[2] Problematically, an example of unfinished work, if transformed values retain our attention and praxis, is to change the ongoing, world-wide criminalization and murder of women. Today, around the globe, women are incarcerated and murdered by people in painful personal relationships and in the name of state institutions, at an alarming rate. I think reinterpreting Addams writings, in terms of feminist, sympathetic values, helps repair her mistaken confidence in social constructivism of eugenics and denegation of some women, as we continue to act, eradicating the criminalization and oppression of women.

I will not be able in this essay to outline the genesis of sympathy, as such has a vast storied history, i.e. disputes about fact/value dichotomy and value objectification. Also, it is not my project here to decide whether interests or values are most effective when finding solutions to human problems. Although I do think, Addams integrates vital interests and decision making with values and emotions. As well, I am not able to complete a defense of the efficacy of pragmatic value theory over an embattled

[1] During a three-hour interview with the podcaster Joe Rogan released February 28, 2025, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSOxPJD-VNo.
[2] Addams 1906, *Newer Ideals of Peace*, The MacMillan Company, p. 8.

Darwinian approach to meliorism, or an increasingly less sustainable relational ethics of care.[3] So, with such disclaimers, we find ourselves in the fields of ontology, phenomenology, and epistemology, as a somewhat theoretical pursuit. However, I will argue that in terms of Addams' pragmatism, value solutions are most beneficial when devising our practices as sympathetic. But possibly the most relevant urgent caveat, to my discussion, is that I will not defend Addams' misinterpretation of 'pure values' as Western values, which has caused disastrous problems, as she unwittingly undermined uplifting women.

To begin, Addams' writings on Hull House have been particularly influential when considering social ethics as a matter of equally empowering, personal, yet broadly contextualized relationships. For example, contemporarily, a citizen's personal choice to have an abortion, because of well-being concerns, brings new associations and understandings of the challenges and strengths of the women in our communities. Her contributions to advocacy practices for social justice, such as elevating personal testimony, participatory assistance, and community organizing, have historically been effective. Particularly helpful to our current discussion, is Addams' development of sympathetic understanding by our active listening. When directing the programming at Hull House in Chicago (founded in 1889) and paving the way for an international ethos of feminist activism, she encouraged open dialogue amongst the immigrant residents about their personal struggles, which in turn was understood as important to community building activities and practices. As pointed out by feminists involved with an ethics of care, such as Maurice Hamington, par Addams' example we listen with our bodies as we are emotionally involved with the hopes and fears of those we care about, and thereby we become value bonded (Hamington 2001, pp. 105-122).[4] Our emotional bonds take on enlarged significance as we continually relate our dialogues to the public's interests. With such sympathetic understanding, we act with solidarity, by realizing our shared aspirations for a better life amidst our reciprocal concerns.

However, what has also been made clear is that legal protections and ethical debates do not convince everyone to respect each other's inalienable rights. We need to continually ask what the expected and lasting meanings of our associated relationships are in terms of ongoing problems, amidst persistence prejudices and oppressions. I find we need to highlight our common aspirations as felt values, embodied with collective meanings. Addams' evocation of the feminist values of nurturing one another, as a globally progressive resource, is especially pertinent in terms of an ongoing process of value analysis.

Throughout her writings, Addams told of people's everyday experiences, highlighting their emotions in action, as proof for our ability for intuitive value analysis. She avoids dividing our personal and social interests, enlarging our emotional experiences globally, emphasizing our feeling and understanding of values. She puts forth a powerful approach to our most complex situations in terms of shared values of nurturing.[5] In her 1906 text *Newer Ideals of Peace,* she offers what I understand as

[3] It is not the purpose of this essay to supplant or solve the problems of an ethics of care. However, because such ethics is based on the value of love and nurturing, it's problems can be transposed to a value theory. For more information, see Nancy J. Crigger, "The trouble with Caring: A Review of Eight Arguments Against an Ethic of Care.", *Journal of Professional Nursing,* Vol. 13, Issue 4, 1997, pp. 217-221.

[4] Maurice Hamington 2001, "Jane Addams and a Politics of Embodied Care", *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy,* 2001, New Series, Vol. 15, No. 2, On Pragmatism and Feminism, p. 105-122.

[5] See: Addams, *Newer Ideals of Peace*, Guttenberg Press, eBook #69879, Release date Jan. 2023. Original publication: United State: The Macmillan Company, 1906, p. 9. "It is difficult to formulate the newer dynamic peace, embodying the later humanism, as over against the old dogmatic peace. The word, "non-resistance" is misleading, because it is much too feeble and inadequate. It suggests passivity, the goody-goody attitude of ineffectiveness. The words "overcoming," "substituting," "re-creating," "readjusting moral values," "forming new centres of spiritual energy" carry much more of the meaning implied. For it is not merely the desire for a conscience at rest, for a sense of justice no longer outraged, that would pull us into new paths where there would be no more war nor preparations for war. There are still more strenuous forces at work reaching down to impulses and experiences as primitive and profound as are those of struggle itself. That "ancient kindliness which sat beside the cradle of the race," and which is ever ready to assert itself against ambition and greed and the desire for achievement, is manifesting itself now with unusual force, and for the first time presents international aspects."

her definition of pragmatic sympathetic values (Addams 1906, p. 9),

> Moralists agree that it is not so much by the teaching of moral theorems that virtue is to be promoted as by the direct expression of social sentiments and by the cultivation of practical habits; that in the progress of society sentiments and opinions have come first, then habits of action and lastly moral codes and institutions. Little is gained by creating the latter prematurely, but much may be accomplished to the utilization of human interests and affections."[6]

But it is with her book *Peace and Bread in Time of War* (Addams 1922), as she details the women's pacifist movement, that her value theory becomes clearly integral to feminist cosmopolitanism. For Addams nurturing values are central to securing everyone's health, and well-being, as well as women's empowerment in general. Her thoughts on values can be read in the context of other axiology of her time. Both Addams and Max Scheler had ideas of combining life-affirming emotions with praxis to make universal changes. Scheler's insights about universal values of love and sympathy (as he decides in late writings sympathy is more important than empathy), as presented by our individual emotions, creativity, and sense of purpose, are akin to Addams' insights about women's intuitive knowledge.

Today, a critical approach to cosmopolitan feminism makes it imperative we recognize, that Addams did not fully understand the importance of varied cultural norms, the deep resentment of the male patriarchy, and the disastrous practices and politics arising from eugenics (Kennedy 2008) .[7] Her misconceptions included a limited knowledge of evolution in terms of human personhood, as she employed biological technology as a generic ethical tool, hoping for social, moral progress. As well, Addams was unwittingly complicit with a longstanding trend to criminalize sex workers, as she conflated such work with the era's fears of White Slavery (Blackmore 2017).[8] She fervidly advocated for those social changes, as she fought to liberate women and protect children.

Although she did at times reflect upon some missteps, her contradictions present us with another reason to re-interpret her writings with feminist values in mind. Specifically, in respect to sympathy we can think of nurturing as both vital to our individual lives, and to our purposes in a collective sense of enhancing other people's lives, rather than formal moral duty to others. Upon close reading of Addams and contemporary philosophers interested in pragmatism, we can discern three values which present us with normative practices of sympathy, constituting a cosmopolitan feminist axiology. By pragmatic I assume, persons being forward looking by employing melioristic analysis and practices. By feminist I assume, nurturing and caring as experiential and inspiring means to assuring our creative conjoined futures without prejudice, oppression, abuse, and poverty. By cosmopolitanism I assume political and state institutional institutions which are open to analysis on emotional basis of an enlarged sense of love for everyone.

Three values of pragmatic feminism are: Value I: Nur-

[6] Ibid. "…The Advocates of Peace would find the appeal both to Pity and Prudence totally unnecessary, could they utilize the cosmopolitan interest in human affairs with the resultant social sympathy that now is developing among all the nations of the earth."

[7] See A.C. Kennedy 2008, p. 28. "Eugenics, "Degenerate Girls," and Social Workers During the Progressive Era. *Affilia*, *23*(1), 22-37. https://doi.org/10.1177/0886109907310473 **.** "Furthermore, feeblemindedness was understood in distinctly gendered terms. For example, William Snow, the president of the American Social Hygiene Association in 1916, was also concurrently the vice president of the American Eugenics Society, while Jane Addams was an honorary vice president of the American Social Hygiene Association (Haller, 1963; Pivar, 2002). The goals of the association included encouraging education on heredity for youths, minimizing "marriage between the generally sick and the well," preventing "reproduction of defectives," and "safeguarding children" (Haller, 1963, p. 131; Pivar, 2002).". Also See, Thomas C. Leonard 2016, *Illiberal Reformers: Race, Eugenics and American Economics in the Progressive Era* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016).

[8] See: By: Erin Blakemore 2010, Jane Addams's Crusade Against Victorian "Dancing Girls", October 11, 2017, https://daily.jstor.org/jane-addams-crusade-victorian-dancing-girls/ Accessed March, 2025, CST: 20:00. "The association of "white slavery"—the favorite bugaboo of the age—with dance halls underlines the ways in which freely mixing working-class men and women stoked wealthier Americans' fears of immigration, race, and sex. Prostitution rings did exist at the time, and both prostitutes and procurers could be found at dance halls. But the term elicited fears of innocent white women preyed on by immigrant pimps who forced them into lives of vice." See also: Victoria Bissell Brown, "Sex and the City: Jane Addams Confronts Prostitution", *Feminist Interpretations of Jane Addams,* edited by Maurice Hamington, The Pennsylvania State University, 2010, p 125-158.

turing the world is our entry into a world of fair, productive, and life affirming values. Value II: Our purposes and meanings as persons are consolidated into values by us playing an active part in the world's progress. Value III: Participatory, worldwide compassion, i.e. sympathy for the poor and children, is central to securing everyone's equity and freedom from oppression.

Section I: Addams as Value Theorist: Emphasis on Sympathetic Knowledge

"Peace and Bread in Times of War" (Addams 1922), is an account of Addams' launch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. She makes an ontological, yet socially progressive claim that women's nurturing of children and community offers more spiritual and practical value than male heroism in war; "Bread and milk came earlier in evolution than weapons and war" (Addams 2002, p.1).[9] As a public philosopher, particularly fighting for women's rights for the franchise in democratic countries, she assumes women as originators and frontline activists of a global ethos of nurturing. Sympathy, as an emotional/intellectual approach to life's problems, is her value orientation. She integrated practices born out of necessary interests with broadly meaningful ideas of caring for others. She developed this concept, sympathetic knowledge, throughout her writings.[10]

She begins to work through her understanding of sympathetic knowledge in "A New Consciousness and an Ancient Evil" (Addams 1912), as she attempted to solve social problems of the criminalization of women, with an enlarged understanding of social responsibility.[11] In the early part of the twentieth century, White Slavery, became a moral preoccupation in the United States of America, and Addams found such criminality as intersected with prostitution (Diffee 2005).[12] Addams was caught up with the fervor of those times, calling for the eradication of White Slavery was for her a social justice issue. Even so, that issue was also an inflated advisory for those who were against immigration. Confusingly, we know by her work with Hull House in Chicago, Ill., such fearmongering was converse to Addams' purposes to include immigrants in the social life of the larger community. We will return to her misunderstandings of the value of individual persons' decision making and an autonomy of women's sexuality, latter in this discussion.

I would argue her value orientation of help and nurturing, is more important than her moralizing against the associative or moral "evils" of prostitution. We want here to discern what she meant by sympathetic knowledge, as an epistemology of understanding, and helpful to making present, each other's innate capacity to love and act on life affirming ideas. Such ideas accord with Addams' unique respect for human beings, because of our tendencies to highlight ontological ideas in our everyday lives. Our emotions are embodied in our understandings, as being the "organic preparation for action" and as presentations of transformative human values, in the sense we become ever more expansive with our loving of one another. She wrote, "All of this emotion ought to be made of value, for quite as a state of emotion is invariably the organic preparation for action, so it is certainly true that no profound spiritual transformation can take place without it."(Addams 1902)[13]

[9] Addams 1922, p. 1, *Peace and Bread in Time of War*, University of Illinois Press, 2002, p. 1.

[10] For further reading see, Hamington, "Jane Addams and a Politics of Embodied Care", 2001 and Delysa Burnier, "Embracing Others with 'Sympathetic Understanding' and 'Affectionate Interpretation:' Creating a Relational Care-Centered Public Administration," *Administrative Theory & Praxis* 43 (1): 42–57, 2019. doi:10.1080/10841806.2019.1700460.

[11] Addams 1912, *A New Consciousness and an Ancient Evil,* https://www.gutenberg.org/files/15221/15221-h/15221-h.htm , Chapter 1, "After all, human progress is deeply indebted to a study of imperfections, and the counsels of despair, if not full of seasoned wisdom, are at least fertile in suggestion and a desperate spur to action. Sympathetic knowledge is the only way of approach to any human problem, and the line of least resistance into the jungle of human wretchedness must always be through that region, which is most thoroughly explored, not only by the information of the statistician, but by sympathetic understanding."

[12] See: Christopher Diffee 2005. "Sex and the City: The White Slavery Scare and Social Governance in the Progressive Era." *American Quarterly* 57, no. 2 (2005): 411-437. https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/aq.2005.0025. Acessed March 20th, CST: 21:00.

[13] Addams 1902, *A New Consciousness and an Ancient Evil*, The Macmillan Company, 1912. For "organic preparation for action"

I understand sympathetic knowledge here as an emotional presentation of the prime value of love, as an intelligence opened by our ideas in action. Individuals strive to be givers and recipients of love, even amongst their personal and social strife, so we admire and empower them, not pity them. We can think as an example of self-actualization, not in terms of a lesser sense of personhood, of children who although they feel we are helping them with love, want to act on their own. Sympathetic knowledge offers us a realization of a difference between "fellow feelings" and meaningful, purposeful understandings, as we find solidarity through our shared values while making plans together (Addams 1902 Chapter III). [14] In this respect we replace feeling sorry for some else, i.e. that "I share your pain" moment, with being involved in making our lives and the world better (Addams 1906).[15]

Sympathetic knowledge is value knowledge, as we believe in and act on love. Our knowledge finds us thinking not in terms of invariable information, nor moral platitudes. For Addams, sympathetic knowledge has historically been carried forward by women, especially when caring for children, and specifically as a matter of strengthening, listening, and responding *with* them to surmount challenges.[16] Addams stresses women as the forebearers of this radically different approach to problem solving, as we feed, listen, learn, and assist others, rather than the male championed approaches of didactic calculation, aggression, financial competition, war, and privation. She claims an expansion of women's practices is necessary (Addams 1906, p. 11),

> A great world purpose could not be achieved without woman's participation founded upon an intelligent understanding and upon the widest sympathy, at the same time the demand could be met only if it were attached to her domestic routine, its very success depending upon a conscious change and modification of her daily habits.[17]

Clearly, examples of our global nature of nurturing are the world food programs of the United Nations. Contemporarily, there remains a universal value of food and nurturing within the global political and secular culture, with international projects, such as the 'World Central Kitchen' and US Aid. One of the core values listed on the WCK website is empathy, explained as "We meet people where they are with dignity and respect, building connections through openness and awareness. We are intentional and mindful of the impact of our words and actions on others."[18]

Such an interpretation of Addams' suggestions about women's intuitive loving orientation to life is comparable to Scheler's view of love as the most life affirming value, by which we find our purposes entwinned with our spiritual pursuits (such as philosophy, the arts, sciences with are life affirming). I think such a comparison helps alleviate Addams's philosophy of some of the class, cul-

see page 11. https://www.gutenberg.org/files/15221/15221-h/15221-h.htm Accessed March 21, CST: 23:00. For quote "All of this emotion…" See Chapter 1: "After all, human progress is deeply indebted to a study of imperfections, and the counsels of despair, if not full of seasoned wisdom, are at least fertile in suggestion and a desperate spur to action. Sympathetic knowledge is the only way of approach to any human problem, and the line of least resistance into the jungle of human wretchedness must always be through that region which is most thoroughly explored, not only by the information of the statistician, but by sympathetic understanding."

[14] Addams 1902, *Democracy and Social Ethics,* Chapter III, See: https://standardebooks.org/ebooks/jane-addams/democracy-and-social-ethics/text/, p. 70, Accessed March 19th, CST: 22:00. "The scene is a clear statement that after all, life does not consist in wealth, in learning, in enterprise, in energy, in success, not even in that modern fetich, culture, but in an inner equilirbriaum, in the "agreement of soul." As well from *Democracy and Social Ethics*, "I'm a good person"", is not adequate to attain individual morality in an age demanding social morality, to pride oneself on the results of personal effort when the time demands social adjustment, is utterly to fail to apprehend the situation". As well as from *Democracy and Social Ethics*, "But at bottom we distrust a little a scheme which substitutes a theory of social conduct for the natural promptings of the heart, even although we appreciate the complexity of the situation. The state of mind which an investigation arouses on both sides is most unfortunate; but the perplexity and clashing of different standards, with the consequent misunderstandings, are not so bad as the moral deterioration which is almost sure to follow."

[15] Addams 1906, p. 11, *Newer Ideas on Peace*. "If we accept this statement when we must assume that the new social morality, which we do dadly need, will of necessity have its origin in the social affections – we must search in the dim border land between compassion and morality for the beginning of that cosmopolitan affection, as it is prematurely acalled."

[16] Once again for further reading see Hamington, 2001, as cited above.

[17] Addams 1922, *Peace and Bread in Times of War*, p. 80-81.

[18] World Central Kitchen, Accessed March, 2025, https://wck.org/mission-vision-values, CST 20:00.

tural prejudice she professed. Segueing to this topic, I can quote Scheler, as he defines love as a central value (Scheler 1922, p. 16),

> … love is that movement wherein every concrete individual object that possesses value achieves the highest value compatible with its nature and ideal vocation; or wherein it attains the ideal state of value intrinsic to its nature.[19]

Section II: Addams, Scheler, and Feminist Sympathetic Values

Presented to us via our emotions and actions, ideas spring forth from our experiences. When our ideas are imbued with successful actions, as meaningful to our life affirming purposes, they become normative. Pragmatic ideas in action resonate through our experiences as values.[20] Sympathetic knowledge, as a mode of understanding and/or analysis, enlarges this process.

Written about widely during the Social Progressive Era, sympathy (and empathy,) were concepts which some Western philosophers and early sociologists, considered as integral to cosmopolitan ethics. Yet, Scheler writes about value theory to replace formal ethics. He finds our individual natures enlarged by our knowledge of love, not by a separate state of experience, such as Kant's sensus communis. He took a sympathetic view of our experiences, offering an alternative to subjective, legalistic, duty-based, and pleasure-oriented ethics. In the final edition of "The Nature of Sympathy", he explains sympathy as a thoughtful and emotional experience, and the primary source of all value knowledge (i.e. factual, self-identity, others, good and bad, right and wrong) (Scheler 1922).[21]

Scheler, a contemporary of Addams, was skeptical of American pragmatism. He critiqued the pragmatism of his time, as a philosophy which is overly Darwinian, and obsessed with material outcomes. Yet, alike to Addams, he presents us with an integrating experience-based view of reality and human/social consciousness, affording human persons imaginative and value-oriented knowledge (Addams 1906, p. 8).[22] Addams' value theory is alike to Scheler's in many ways, as she connects sympathetic knowledge, as individually understood, and felt, yet shared with others via values, through our far-reaching nurturing practices.

Before elucidating how feminist values supersede what is considered by these interlocutors as male values, I want to briefly address critiques of Scheler's writings on phenomenology and ethics, in terms of sexism. At the outset, I need to reiterate, our current discussion is focused on value philosophy explicated in terms of sympathy, and more focused on Addams' views than Scheler's. Accordingly, in "The Nature of Sympathy" Scheler's categories of non-formal ethics of values and his understanding of evolutionary levels of consciousness and feelings, are explicated in terms of experiential phenomenology, as a source of sociology of knowledge. He eases up on his hierarchical approach to values, to find our lives expanded when we are inspired by and acting on our sympathy and love. He makes it clear he is writing about our lived experiences (Scheler 1922, p. xlix),

> Love and Sympathy can also be of significant, indeed crucial interest to *metaphysics,* the central discipline of philosophy; but only *if* it can be assumed that their manifestations are *intrinsic* to our psycho-somatic and cognitive-cum-spiritual life, and incapable of further analysis in empirical or genetic terms.[23]

[19] Scheler 1922, p. 161, *The Nature of Sympathy,* Edition, trans. By Peter Heath, Routledge & Kegan Paul LTD, 1970, p. 161.
[20] See Addams 1906, *New Ideals of Peace,* p. 8. "Moralists agree that it is not so much by the teaching of moral theorems that virtue is to be promoted as by the direct expression of social sentiments and by the cultivation of practical habits; that in the progress of society sentiments and opinions have come first, then habits of action and lastly moral codes and institutions. Little is gained by creating the latter prematurely, but much may be accomplished to the utilization of human interests and affections."
[21] Scheler 1922, *The Nature of Sympathy,* Preface to 1922 Edition, trans. By Peter Heath, Routledge & Kegan Paul LTD, 1954, p. xiviii.
[22] See Scheler 1926, *Cognition and Work*, trans. Zachary Davis, Northwestern University Press, 2021. Specifically, to my point see: Rebecca L Farinas, "Art and Soul: James and Scheler on Pragmatic Aesthetics", *Classical American Philosophy: Poiesis in Public,* Bloomsbury, 2021. Also: Some contemporary pragmatists find Scheler's thoughts on the eternal and transcendental prominence of love, as the value supreme, incongruent with his emphasis on our ongoing philosophical anthropology. See Hans Joas, *The Genesis of Values,* The University of Chicago Press, 2000, p. 101-102.
[23] Scheler 1922, *Nature of Sympathy,* p. xlix.

So, while we cannot dispute hierarchical structures in terms of his work on ethics, which can read as reinforcing a patriarchal authority, positing a superior (to our experience) divine echelon of morality, we can discern his writings on sympathy as more focused on how to increase our understanding and caring for other people.[24] Also, Scheler has been thought of as a phenomenologist who thinks "the ultimate destiny of women is matrimony and reproduction", and he writes that abortion and planned parenthood should become obsolete. [25] As well, the very division of a human condition, as a split between our vital urges and our creative spirit, is dubious to feminists and pragmatists, as we will explore in the fourth section of this paper. Undoubtedly such critiques remain extremely problematic among pragmatic feminists, and while I cannot offer a full rebuttal here, I can offer points of clarification, which I think justify our use of his value theory in terms of contemporary feminist philosophy.

We should keep in mind, by adding to his book, *The Nature of Sympathy*, late in his life, Scheler shifted his thinking away from conceptualizing our spirit and autonomous will as the shining and dominate mode of persons, to a more synthetic experiential condition of our everyday experiences. He envisioned an ever more cosmic purpose in terms of our spiritual achievements (Hein 1978, pp. 42-55).[26] Nonetheless, in all of his writings he clarifies feminine values as paramount, to the world's current complacence with a masculine imbalance of values, i.e. rationality, power, ego, and competition over love and sympathetic understanding. He envisions a time when feminist values of love, which are embodied in the struggles and meaningful lives of women, will replace anti-value actions and institutions.[27] His conclusions in this respect, align with Addams' pursuits for the values of peace and nurturing over war.

Contemporarily, Sandra Lee Bartky, takes a deep dive into *The Nature of Sympathy,* finding Scheler's insistence on the personal, individual advent of sympathetic knowledge and on "emotional distance" (Bartky's words) as a source of women's empowerment. Our emotional distance is not the objectification of our desire to use other people, but can be a source of genuine fellow feeling, as we acknowledge each other as unique persons with our own feelings. Thereby, women find a lasting solidarity, in terms of our personalized practices of care for each other, as people who are different than each other (Bartky 2002, pp. 79-83). [28]

Importantly for our discussion of Addams' value theory, Scheler proposes the need for an investigation of "patterns of sympathetic attitude" in his 1924, treatise on a sociology of knowledge (Scheler 1924).[29] He notes how our life affirming value knowledge progresses outwardly, expansively, never enforcing political or national divisions, and never relying on our punitive natures. Scheler's ideas of such a sympathetic knowledge can help us contemporarily with global problems. Although he did not include a critique of male patriarchy, he insightfully writes (Scheler 1922, p. 232),

> The various systems of exacting vengeance, for example, which culminate in the statutory penalties of the criminal law, are all based upon different patterns of sympathetic attitude. Their history is a continuous dissolution of earlier states and finally into indifference. The 'expansion' of sympathies, and their qualitative sublimation and spiritualization (positively, in love, and negatively in hate), always implies a further forma-

[24] For a discussion of employing his more hierarchal axiology to dissolve value imbalance bought on by male oppression, see Ruggeri, C., " A criticism of Young's 'Throwing Like a Girl' through Scheler's understanding of motor action", *Cont Philos Rev* 52, 335–359 (2019). https://doi.org/10.1007/s11007-019-09475-8.
[25] See Hilde Hein 1978, "Comment on Max Scheler's "Concerning the Meaning of the Feminist Movement", 1978 (Fall), Philosophical Forum, 9: 42–54.
[26] See: E. Kelly 1997, "Metaphysical Horizons: Spirit and Life In: Structure and Diversity", *Phaenomenologica*, vol 141. Springer, 1997. Dordrecht. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-3099-0_13. Accessed March, 2025, 20:00.
[27] See Manfred S. Frings 1965, *Max Scheler: A Concise Introduction into the World of a Great Thinker,* Marquette University, 1965. Chapter 10: "The Age of Adjustment", p. 145-156.
[28] Sandra Lee Bartky 2002, *Sympathy and Solidarity, and Other Essays,* Rowman and Litttlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002. See pp. 69-89. Specifically, pp. 79-83.
[29] See, Scheler 1924, *Problems of a Sociology of Knowledge,* Translated by Manfred Frings, Intro. Kenneth Stikkers, Routledge, 2021.

> tion and dissolution of solidarity in individual groups.[30]

For Scheler, our propensity to love is a perception of values, preceding understanding of empirical facts or logical, rational understanding.[31] We are truly value-soma, as our love is not just a feeling but an emotional act with embodied meanings. We do not pity people, when loving those in distress, we act to help because we love the person suffering, as we find their genuine value as also a loving person. Values *are* factual, while we individually experience them as emotions, as we conceptualize our experiences. Values also help us objectify our life purposes. For Scheler, analyzing values is finding our values in motion as attached and presented by objects in our world. For example, art and rituals as expressive and relative to our metaphysical thinking and to our historical meanings, are value oriented. We are ultimately decision makers, as we are continually drawn to objectify ourselves, as relative to our values. Surely, we identify ourselves politically through our conjoined circumstances. We present ourselves as value oriented, as well as integrated with our ethical reality.

We can affirm a universal value of love as a life affirming orientation and indispensable to our identities. Amidst post WWI international peace efforts, Scheler revised his book on sympathy, (1922), adding ideas on our understanding of others as reciprocal and creative. Love in terms of "crowds, the communal unit, and society at large", retains our most vital and purposeful sense of who we are as reflective, thoughtful individuals.[32] Scheler writes (Scheler 1922, p. 164),

> With this state of things, we may conjoin the (non-empirical) postulate that all love (once it is somehow perceived), evokes a loving response, and thereby brings a new moral value into being – for a loving response also possesses moral goodness, as an instance of love; and hence there emerges a principle which we propose to call the *'principle of the solidarity of all moral beings'...*[33]

Furthermore, Scheler answers questions of how we solve social problems, as he claims that we are all responsible for each other's moral decisions. We share, emotionally, thoughtfully, and in actions, our love for one another, and we share the guilt for our transgressions.[34] In his preface to that late edition, he criticizes the deterministic and biological nature of Western science, in terms of people's understanding of one another.[35] Surely, he did not approve of pro-eugenic movements, such like Addams' involvement in terms of social constructivism.[36]

Evidently, both Addams' and Scheler did not think of sympathy as pity. Addams' was involved with her own philosophical anthropology, offering thoughts on modern communities as only beginning to realize our cosmopolitan affections, as we experience new and differing moral practices. She was optimistically looking forward to the advent of value solidarity of peace and liberation for women, as she writes (Addams 1907, p. 11),

> If we accept this statement when we must assume that the new social morality, which we do badly need, will of necessity have its origin in the social affections – we must search in the dim bor-

[30] Scheler 1922, *Nature of Sympathy,* p. 232.
[31] See: Max Scheler 1913-1916, *Formalism in Ethics and Non-formal Ethics of Values*, trans. Manfred S. Frings and Roger L. Funk, Northwestern University Press,1973, p. 40.
[32] Scheler 1922, *The Nature of Sympathy,* Preface to 1922 Edition, trans. By Peter Heath, Routledge & Kegan Paul LTD, 1954, p. xiviii.
[33] Scheler 1922, *The Nature of Sympathy*, p. 164.
[34] Ibid. "…It implies that with regard to their respective moral values, each is answerable, in principle,
'or all, and all for each; that were it is a question of mankind as bearers of all moral values, in collective responsibility of the Idea of the morally perfect Being, all stand proxy for one and one for all; so that each must share the blame for another's guilt, and each is party from the outset to the positive moral values of everyone else."
[35] See for reference and more information: John G. Gunnell, "Max Weber in America", *Journal of American History*, Volume 98, Issue 3, December 2011, Pages 870–871, https://doi.org/10.1093/jahist/jar484. Accessed March 20th, CST: 23:00. Although Scheler does not mention American philosophers in his second edition, it is possible he had knowledge of Jane Addams. Scheler was close friends and colleague of Max Weber. Addams was a collaborator and friend of Marianna Weber, who was married to Max. Interestingly, they did have a profession connection. Max Weber, who knew Scheler and who profoundly influenced Scheler's phenomenology in respect to social relationships, met with Addams in Chicago in 1904. Marianne Weber was at that meeting, and both she and Addams were mutually impressed by each other's work in terms of feminism and social work. Addams and Marianne Weber shared an understanding of how approaches to ethical situations and our social world in general is unfairly gendered.
[36] Scheler 1922, *The Nature of Sympathy,* p. 118.

> der land between compassion and morality for the beginning of that cosmopolitan affection, as it is prematurely called.[37]

Summarily, Addams, along with Scheler, understands love as uplifting the self-worth of each other (for Addams, especially uplifting women and children), and the inspiration for making social change. So, with love we can consolidate our progressive, creative solidarity. Upon close reading of both value theories of sympathy, we can discern three basic values, presenting us with normative practices, and constituting a cosmopolitan feminism: Value Practice I: Nurturing the world is our entry into a world of good and universal values. Value Practice II: Our purposes and meanings as persons are consolidated into loving values by us playing a mindful part in the world's progress. Value Practice III: Participatory compassion, especially for caring for the poor and children, is key to everyone's personhood.

In this section, we have emphasized the vital importance of love and nurturing to our future understanding of how to live happy correlational lives. Scheler has contributed by deepening the phenomenological notions of our perception and expression of values and sympathetic knowledge, while Addams' stresses accomplishing objective aims. We will leave Scheler's axiology here, yet we keep in mind, he was critical of pragmatism and Western positivist approaches to people's understanding of one another. So, it seems to me, that to fulfill an overview of sympathetic, feminist value analysis, we must address Addams' mistaken ideas on eugenics, and social constructivism, as she has unwittingly contributed to the oppression and criminalization of women.

Section III: Feminist Value Solutions to the Ongoing Criminalization and Oppression of Women.

As said, Addams' approaches to sympathy and values are melded with her advocacy for women, hoping to embolden us as members of socio/political life. However, contemporarily for us to fully embrace feminist cosmopolitanism based on sympathy, we must address Addams digressions. For us to understand how privileged social status, as a matter of economic self-interest, and how our legalistic and morally judgmental cultures, stop us from more strongly presenting feminist value solidarity, is particularly important. So, I will point out in more detail Addams' missteps, then revaluing what I have understood in terms of the basics of her value theory.

Value 1: Nurturing each other is our entry into a value-oriented world.

Addams forefronts individual creativity finding women more self-aware of their individual worth and purposes, while born to nurture each other. Likewise, we can enlarge our values when assisting with global needs. The advent of a change in women's consciousness, as possessing human resources greater than weapons, coincides with women's imaginative spirit of freedom as social equity. As well she presents values in action as our initial orientation, without first thinking in terms of financial concerns or geo-political interests.

Addams thought of the post WWI world food challenge, as an opportunity to change the capitalization of human resources in terms of profits by men, as well as how to achieve world peace. Of course, the male patriarchy has intensified financial interests involving many nurturing fields of human endeavor, such as medical care, education, and food. White male capitalists are currently the richest people in the world, and their practices are minimally philanthropic in terms of alleviation of the oppression of women, feeding the world's starving, and lifting the misery of racism.[38]

[37] Addams 1907, *Newer Ideas of Peace,* p. 11.

[38] See: Addams 1922, *Peace and Bread in Time of War, p. 47.*"A great world purpose could not be achieved without woman's participation founded upon an intelligent understanding and upon the widest sympathy, at the same time the demand could be met only if it were attached to her domestic routine, its very success depending upon a conscious change and modification of her daily habits….But it was possible that as women entered into politics when clean mild and the premature labor of children became factors in political life, so they might be concerned

However, women also become value disoriented. Stacy Lynn reports that in 1899, Addams' wrote an apology to her friend Ida B. Wells. Wells had called Addams out on writing offensively about African Americans, in an address protesting lynching. Addams criminalized Black people taking a position of White middle class emotional superiority. [39] She said Black men were "bestial" and "uncontrolled". Addams also suggested Black women were naturally easy prey to disastrous social conditions. Although we should keep in mind her apology, she faltered when thinking of how everyone uniquely presents values to the world, and that this understanding takes precedent over our own genteel circumstances, and our anti-sympathetic understanding of other people's experiences (Lynn 2018). [40] We can think of how much more expansive our nurturing is as a 'joining with' and 'sharing of', rather than a detached, cool handed, socially acceptable, reconstruction of a persistent prejudice.

If we truly consider the limitations of our prejudices, while realizing the present-day problems of capitalizing off the degradation of women, brown, and black people, many of us must admit to being involved with blocking our value perceptions. Many of us continue to depend on and trade with capital made by means of taking advantage of people's needs. Many of us are limited, as we victimize people who struggle with financial problems, and as we prejudice others outside our 'normal' aesthetic understanding.

Value 2: Value Practice II: Our purposes and meanings as persons are consolidated into loving values by us playing a mindful part in the world's progress.

Addams' quest throughout her writings is how to attain women's liberation in an age of social morality? For Addams, our pragmatic tools are only as good as our creative intelligence, as we should not repeat past mistakes, by using outdated and inadequate solutions. It is beyond the scope of this essay to analyze how feminist philosophies, which harbor views on the agency and self-determination of women, allowed writers to critique women's abilities to care for others. We can say Addams did indeed neglect the importance of individual subjective sexuality and the freedoms entailed with private and personal emotions, as well as the global resistance to feminist equalities on such grounds. So, it is appropriate to briefly spotlight recent scholarship critiquing Addams, in terms of two persistence issues, eugenics and criminalizing prostitution.

Addams' mistaken generality of women's positive identity as 'morally pure', can be discerned early in her book, *A New Conscious and an Ancient Evil* (Addams 1912), as well as a late career book, *The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets* (Addams 1930). Her proposals which have been proven to be cruel and unhelpful to adding to personal happiness and social betterment, were segregating women, who were thought of as degenerate, from men so they would not have children. In terms of criminalizing such women, she singled out women who worked as prostitutes or committed crimes, and who possibly had learning challenges, or had difficult home lives, as essentially different than 'normal working' girls from good families who had lost their way (Lubove

with international affairs when these at last were dealing with such human and pognanant matters as food for straving peoples who could be fed only through international activities."

[39] Keeping in mind she helped organize the NAACP, forming the Woman's Peace Party, the International Committee of Women for Permanent Peace, and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and contributed tirelessly to the suffragette movement and acted as an advocate for children's rights.

[40] Stacy Lynn 2018, "Jane Addams, Ida B. Wells, and Racial Injustice in America", Jane Addams Paper Project. August 22, 2018. https://janeaddams.ramapo.edu/2018/08/jane-addams-ida-b-wells-and-racial-injustice-in-america/. Accessed March 19th, CST 19:00. As well see: Addams, *A New Conscious and an Ancient Evil,* Chapter 4. "The community forces the very people who have confessedly the shortest history of social restraint, into a dangerous proximity with the vice districts of the city. This results, as might easily be predicted, in a very large number of colored girls entering a disreputable life. The negroes themselves believe that the basic cause for the high percentage of colored prostitutes is the recent enslavement of their race with its attendant unstable marriage and parental status, and point to thousands of slave sales that but two generations ago disrupted the negroes' attempts at family life. Knowing this as we do, it seems all the more unjustifiable that the nation which is responsible for the broken foundations of this family life should carelessly permit the negroes, making their first struggle towards a higher standard of domesticity, to be subjected to the most flagrant temptations which our civilization tolerates."

1962).[41] Such stigmas of women who behave harshly in harsh environments, deters all mothers and daughters from finding their voices and unique talents, so as to change their environments.

As said, it is well known, Addams' literary techniques, which became embedded in feminist philosophy, elevate the personal stories of people who are experiencing hardship and injustice, so our common values can be felt through open, non-judgmental communication. She continually, throughout her career, elevates the stories of women who were robbed on their autonomy because of prostitution.[42] As noted, she was concerned with women who were driven into prostitution because of sex trafficking or poverty. Addams contribution to opening social analysis and activism for these challenges is significant. Confusedly, her leanings toward trusting evolutionary theories of biology and technological inventions over her value theory, diminishes the nurturing agency and sympathetic understanding abilities of women (Newman and Cohen 1993).[43] At the same time she was empowering women, she undermined women's agency as a matter of a lack of intelligence, claiming women were not able to fully make their own moral choices because they lacked not only social resources and in turn human intelligence because of their circumstances. In part, her social constructivism is dysfunctional because of her misconceptions.

Prostitution, during her time, as it remains in some respects today, a difficult and disappointing life, because of our male dominated society's usury and greed. Addams thought of prostitution as a moral evil, because of cycles of poverty and lack of education. Yet, how could Addams justify that women should be valued as workers with rights, but not as sex workers with rights? There is an argument to be made, that prostitution is no less value oriented than other jobs which are loveless, such as opportunistic insurance or real estate jobs, yet the former is unacceptable because of sex. Regardless of the validity of such a comparison, there seems to be a problem with Addams moral certitude, as she presumes prostitutes are not active moral agents, as they are victims, and thereby robbed of full intelligence. We might hear their stories, but not by them, only by moral translators. Contemporarily prostitution remains a practice impacted by poverty, slavery, emotionally disturbing practices, health problems, insecurity for individuals and families, and usury, but is it illegal for these reasons, or moral reasons? We do know when we victimize prostitutes, we do not put first most the value of the individuals involved, and therefore how can we find the subsequent criminalization of prostitutes helpful? [44]

However, we must now admit that societal fear mongering and the victimization of groups of underprivileged women as deviants, does not promote well-being, and denigrates basic values of individual creativity and societal nurturing. Yet, we have discussed how Addams' emphasis on civic action, is augmented by a deeper analysis of values, and includes the creation of new ideas through our sympathetic understanding. That these analytic practices are generally assumed as come about by a male faculty, is problematic.

Although Addams offers women a new, wide, global path for their aims, she narrowed women's value of caring for others by her restrictive views of each woman's

[41] See Roy Lubove 1962, "The Progressives and the Prostitute", *The Historian,* Taylor & Francis Group, Vol. 24, No. 3 (May, 1962), pp. 308 – 330. As well, White criminals signaled citizens to put more efforts into social resources, while Black culture or some women and poor white people, were criminalized as being inferior culturally, and therefore less important for social progress. See: Addams, *A New Conscience and an Ancient Evil.*

[42] See: Frances Newman and Elizabeth Cohen et all 2023, "Prostitution: Historical Perspectives on the Study of Female Prostitution", *History of Women in the United States,* Volume 9: Prostitution, DeGruyter Brill, 1993, pp. 99-105.

[43] Gerald O'Brien 2023, *The Eugenic Movement and the Social Work Profession Gerald O'Brien.* HQ 755.5.U5 037 2023. Oxford University Press., 2023.

[44] On the website, 'Jane Addams Peace Association', Accessed March 19, 2025, 20:00 CST. the previously mentioned critiques of her values, are pointed out, with caveats. It seems her turn away from biological determinism to cultural improvement was instrumental to the advancement of women yet flawed in at least two ways "Jane Addams and the White Supremacy of Her Time: Vision and Limitation", Newsletter, Jane Addams Peace Association. https://www.janeaddamschildrensbookaward.org/jane-addams-and-the-white-supremacy-of-her-time/ (Cited Jan. 23, 2025).

personal choices about her body and sexual practices. Scholars now turn to an integrated view of a prostitute's life and their decisions.[45] Yet, to redeem Addams, we can surmise our self-confidence is enhanced by our sympathetic knowledge, as a person is more aware of their value, while focusing on nurturing, not sacrificial aspects of their lives.

We can, however, turning once again to Addams' value conclusions, as she recognizes the need for people in general to value kindness and mutual affection amidst all mitigating circumstances, by their actions (Addams 1912, Chapter V).

> Certainly, no philanthropic association, however rationalistic and suspicious of emotional appeal, can hope to help a girl once overwhelmed by desperate temptation, unless it is able to pull her back into the stream of kindly human fellowship and into a life involving normal human relations. Such an association must needs remember those wise words of Count Tolstoy: "We constantly think that there are circumstances in which a human being can be treated without affection, and there are no such circumstances."[46]

Value 3: Peace and love are prime values by which we are ever expanding and realigning our individual and collective objective aims and value pursuits.

The suffragette movement made progress towards world peace through securing the franchise and influencing governments in many democracies around the world, although in our world today we are still experiencing oppression, war, and violence against women.

Yet, for Addams, an individual moral triumph is nonplus if our society and environments remain unaffected by our sympathetic knowledge of others and our nurturing practices. Her philosophy therefore presents us with a phenomenology of reaching out to other people because we want to care for them, presenting us with a key aspect of our value of love, but such is an ongoing process as our ends and means when changing our environmental and social conditions.

Today there are political movements which are returning to science and technology as means for social constructivism. We are reminded by sociologists and scholars of the history of philosophy, Addams held misguided views on biological re-conditioning and social constructivism. A.C. Kennedy, Erin Blake, and Gerald O'Brien have all written, in their respective fields, about the social harm done by Addams' philosophy in this respect. She was very much involved in the pro-eugenics movement of her time (O'Brien 2023).[47] Kennedy (Kennedy 2008, p. 29) does consider that Addams' pro-eugenics stance was "positioned within her broader focus on the prevention of social ills, the merits of a scientific approach, and advocacy for children's rights."[48] However, the harm done was far-reaching, as we now understand that the pro-eugenics, social progressive movement of the Unites States, during the nineteenth to mid-twentieth century, was a model for Nazi Germany. As heinous,

[45] Frances Newman and Elizabeth Cohen et all 2023, "Prostitution: Historical Perspectives on the Study of Female Prostitution", *History of Women in the United States,* Volume 9: Prostitution, DeGruyter Brill, 1993, p. 104.
"Current perspectives on prostitution are concerned with the experience of the prostitute and with the meaning of the activity for those who engage in it, as well as with the social institutions, forces, and supports that influence the life and choices (and lack of choices) of the prostitute. The combination of these two perspectives has important implications for intervention and remediation. Respect for the individual who has made a particular adjustment to the society in which she lives—as a devalued sexual object in a society which values women primarily as sexual objects—requires that attempts be made to demonstrate other ways to fulfill important needs and goals without violating and devaluing the integrity of her experience. In addition, an understanding of the social systems that influence and control the individual leads to a commitment to social change in the form of decriminalization of prostitution and of more enlightened attitudes toward women in general."
[46] Addams 1912, *A New Conscious and an Ancient Evil*, Chapter V.

[47] Lynn's research is cited above. Gerald O'Brien 2023, *The Eugenic Movement and the Social Work Profession,* HQ 755.5.U5 037 2023. Oxford University Press., 2023. See: Erin Blakemore 2017, Jane Addams's Crusade Against Victorian "Dancing Girls", October 11, 2017, https://daily.jstor.org/jane-addams-crusade-victorian-dancing-girls/ Accessed March, 2025, CST: 20:00. Angie C. Kennedy 2008, Eugenics, "Degenerate Girls," and Social Workers During the Progressive Era, "Feminist Inquiry in Social Work", Volume 23, Issue 1, online https://doi/10.1177/088610990731047, Accessed March, 2025, CST 20:00. Also Roy Lubove,"The Progressives and the Prostitute", *The Historian*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (MAY, 1962), pp. 308-330 (23 pages) https://www.jstor.org/stable/24437958.
[48] Kenney, 2008, p. 29.

was the mass (women and men) sterilization programs of the Twentieth Century. Despite legal changes, these institutionally sanctioned practices continue today, especially affecting women in prisons (Ladd-Taylor 2020).[49]

We will in the final section, investigate further, how Addams' instrumentation of science as a form of meliorism has been harmful, because of her failure to break down dualisms of modern science and society. Especially I point to Addams contradicting her theoretical assumptions with eugenic practices which are irreversible. She thought of moral tests as necessarily expansive, and was a proponent of re-valuation in accord with ethical progress. She wrote (Addams 1902, p. 2),

> But we all know that each generation has its own test, the contemporaneous and current standard by which along it can adequately judge of its own moral achievements, and that it may not legitimately use a previous and less vigorous test. The advanced test must indeed include that which has an already been attained but it includes no more, we shall fail to go forward, thinking complacently that we have "arrived" when in reality we have not yet started.[50]

But we have learned throughout this discussion, that reaching out to others, elevating their stories, and taking their part through activism, means accepting that our expectations for others, and the consequences of our actions can be falsely plotted and authoritatively misguided. Surely, we must love by not merely elevating people's stories, and taking up their causes with our norms and cultural bias, but by sharing our expressions and presentations of loving values. Love needs to be a way of freeing ourselves and others to live more harmoniously, not masking their futures with our own intentions.

Section IV: The Ongoing Struggle of Feminist Criminology and the Value of Love

M. Joan McDermott, in the early part of this century, wrote poignantly for our purposes here, about value theory and feminist criminology. I think Addams' disclosures of values of love bridge the dualisms which McDermott gleamed from Dewey's notes in *Unmodern Philosophy and Modern Philosophy* (McDermott 2002).[51] Dewey's thoughts seem to be stated as opposite to Scheler's axiology, but our purpose here is not to realign the former to the later, as we want to discern a pragmatic synthesis of epistemological schisms, in terms of feminist values. Citing four main dysfunctional characteristics of modern society which denigrate values, McDermott highlights Dewey;

> (a) the depreciation of doing and making and the over-evaluation of pure thinking and reflection, (b) the contempt for bodies and matter and praise of spirit and immateriality, (c) the sharp division of practice and theory, and (d) the inferiority of changing things and events and the superiority of a fixed reality.

I align these four problematic dualisms with 4 major global injustices of the criminalization and victimization of women, which Meda Chesney-Lind and Syeda Tonima Hadi (Chesney-Lind and Hadi 2016) write about in their chapter, "Criminalizing Women: Global Strategies for Denying Female Victimization". Throughout this section, I focus on a way forward by sympathetic knowledge and feminist value practices.[52]

Firstly, the abolishment of reproductive rights, correlates with the dualistic fallacy of the depreciation of

[49] See Molly Ladd-Taylor 2020, *Fixing the Poor: Eugenic Sterilization and Child Welfare in the Twentieth Century,* John Hopkins Press, 2020.

[50] See: Addams 1902, *Democracy and Social Ethics,* p. 2. "But we all know that each generation has its own test, the contemporaneious and current standard by which along it can adqueately judge of its own moral acheivements, and that it may not legitimately use a previous and less vigorous test. The advanced test must indeed include that which has a already been attained but it includes no more, we shall fail to go forward, thinking complacently that we have "arrived" when in reality we have not yet started."

[51] M. Joan McDermott 2002, "On Moral Enterprises, Pragmatism, and Feminist Criminology" in Crime and Deliquency, Volume 48 Issue 2, April 2002, pp. 283–299.Such values orient us towards a world without litigious punitive systems and towards better educational, community and cultural enrichment, and more fruitful and secure social programs and institutions. Accordingly, such institutions will be value oriented as well as value-making, being based on our loving interpersonal and world-oriented relationships.

[52] Meda Chesney-Lind and Syeda Tonima Hadi 2016, "Criminalizing Women: Global Strategies for Denying Female Victimization", *Women and Children as Victims and Offenders: Background, Prevention, Reintegration*. Eds, H. Kury, S. Redo, E. Shea, Springer, 2016. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-08398-8_23.

doing and making and the over-evaluation of pure thinking and reflection. Surely, concerns for, women's well-being, global over-population, and the prioritized valuation of our ongoing relationships, are practical reasons for changing abortion restrictions.

Criminalizing abortion needs to be rethought as an interdisciplinary problem, across value fields of science, personal experience, social relationships, and most importantly for our purposes here in terms of loving value practices, instead of moral, legal, or political judgements. Reinstating women's 'right to choose', we will be able balance assessments based on certain views of science, such as a right to life, with the inspiring value of individual women's emotional experiences and approaches to problem solving. To continue with what we have discussed so far, the value of our personhood lies with our individual sense of purposefulness to nurture others. In today's culture wars 'My body, my choice' is at odds with "The right to life movement". With such rights coming from societal, theoretical political movements, taking precedence over the doings and makings of our personal experience. Surely understanding the context of a mother's life is lost in a generic understanding of the priority of an unborn person, so the later movement is specifically prone to generalizing people rather than to understanding their uniqueness.

Criminalizing abortion frustrates aims of protecting women from unsafe abortions or preventing unneeded abortions. Anti-abortion laws for adults, can weaken human rights for all individuals, especially regarding a right to health, right to privacy, right to work. Such criminalization lessens the prowess of our communities in terms of practical and symbolic freedoms. It puts a theoretical commanding law of science or God, above our empathy for each other's situations and circumstances.

This brings us to our second area of injustice as the merging of religion and law to criminalize female sexuality and sexual expression. This form of abuse correlates with Dewey's dualism (b) the contempt for bodies and matter, and praise of spirit and immateriality. It is beyond the scope of this essay to disclose problems and search for solutions of gender in the value field of religion. As well, Addams did not write specifically on religious matters, in terms of ethics or values.

She did however relate spirituality with an adjustment between family and social claims as a matter of our "enlarged interest in life" (Addams 1902, pp. 38-39).[53] For Addams such a basic principle relates to our spirituality, and with passages in *Democracy and Social Ethics* she makes a pragmatic move, by including our emotions and actions with our plans of broadening our relationships in terms of cosmopolitan pursuits. She references St. Francis of Assisi, when clarifying that the social claim, as a purposive force for meaningful individual action, involves spiritual love, such as what we often feel in terms of family values. Such values include 1) the love of mercy 2) to do just acts 3) and to walk humbly with God. Her main point at this juncture, is that there is a phenomenologically transcendence of personal virtues, which is emotional, and charitable towards our wide-ranging humanity.[54]

Addams thoughts of family and honor codes, as a matter of keeping women from actualizing their social contributions; can be thought of as an affront to Dewey's dualist division of our bodies and our spiritual values. Patriarchal led families often include punitive praise and blame measures, which in turn are sanctioned by legal decisions. We can think here of father's making marriage decisions and being guaranteed by law material compensation for consummating the marriage of a daughter. Addams wrote a chapter 'Filial Relations", as she was concerned with the dangers of private sanctioned justice, which restricts women from a more public life (Addams 1902).[55] Codes of family honor can still be seen

[53] Addams 1902, *Democracy and Social Ethics, pp. 38-39.*
[54] For further reading see: Fischer, Marilyn 2013, "Reading Addams's *Democracy and Social Ethics* as a Social Gospel, Evolutionary Idealist Text." *The Pluralist* 8, no. 3 (2013): 17–31. https://doi.org/10.5406/pluralist.8.3.0017.
[55] Addams 1902, *Democracy and Social Ethics,* Chapter III.

as preventing women and men from participating with their public claim in mind. 'Civic Housekeeping' is Addams' value enlarged method of civic organization and development in terms of the feminist values of our homes. With such an orientation, we maintain our loving care for others and equal share economy with a pragmatic phenomenological approach to our communities' common projects and decisions. Building a sense of community values, means transforming the meaning of misconstrued values, in respect to oppressive family codes, by allowing everyone to guide their own lives, while participating with the transforming work of living together with life affirming value orientations. Surely, there is work to be done in terms of a comprehensive feminist value analysis of spirituality and sexuality.

Chesney-Lind and Hadi suggest a third major global strategy for denying female victimization is "the use of the courts to punish victims of sexual abuse who run away from their abusers". Such promotes a "legal abuse of women and enforcement of patriarchal privilege". This can be thought of as problematic as a dualistic chasm between practice and theory. Theory and clear-cut laws can be stated in cause-and-effect statements as a form of clarity, over value realization and analysis which can seem fuzzy. Punitive laws, taking away the parental rights or financial support of mothers, who are acting in self-defense or in defense of others are often upheld for the sake of the supremacy of law, or by judges because of future speculative applications. Such laws seem to address general circumstances and normative practices in terms of judicial theory and court practices. But the ability for someone to make a judgement on a law, without fully empathizing with someone accused of circumstantial wrongdoing, is to prioritize theory or the practices of that court over our vital value of understanding and caring for one another.

These dualisms of our modern consciousness seem to persist in our patriarchal dominated world today. To shake off the patriarchy once and for all, feminist pragmatic criminology has been re-interpreted by some contemporary feminists, into a discussion of feminist theory in post-human times. Such analysis is integral to our critical discussion, in that Addams' (and Scheler's) humanism could be understood as under theoretical attack. Post-humanism is antithetical to Addams' (and Scheler's) humanism, in that sympathetic knowledge by women is transformative to others, affording a prioritization of human love as the premiere value of personhood. Obviously, living creatures feel and present love, and non-living objects present love and illicit expression by living creatures, but for Addams and Scheler, only persons can elevate our loving intentions by conceptualizing and broadening those practices indiscriminately. Yet, there might be room to learn from some suggested post-human feminist practices, in terms of caring and nurturing for all life, regardless of rational intelligence or speciesism, in a more value driven world.

Emily Jones explains how we need to take on board, regarding our current laws; civic, federal, and international laws, that most are tainted by White male Western centrism, anthropocentric views of our lives and broader environments. Laws are a means for empowering the very people who place litigious theory over caring practices. On an international scale law generalizes all life in terms of male bias and prejudice. Emily Jones (Jones 2023), a post-human feminist writes,

> International law has played, in some instances, an important role in providing aspirational frameworks for those seeking to create a better future. However, international law is also based upon a series of normative underpinnings, including anthropocentrism and exclusionary humanism, i.e. the centering of the white male subject. International law subsequently plays a core role in structuring a maintaining an unequal global order. [56]

Civic and federal laws in the United States often reflect the criminalization of people for profit. Women are low hanging fruit for such profits, and although there are understanding and value-oriented lawyers, contemporarily laws propagate a punitive and for-profit system. How do

[56] Emily Jones 2023. *Feminist Theory and International Law: Posthuman Perspectives*, Routledge, 2023. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003363798. Accessed March 15, CST: 20:00.

we move away from laws which criminalize women who are thought of as victims, laws which are misconstrued as normative or theoretically true and right, when they uphold a punitive system. It is not surprising that there are a record numbers of women, involved with non-violent crimes being imprisoned in the United States. In terms of domestic violence, often women are in double jeopardy of being released on terms of restraining orders, which can entrap them to recidivism as they are kept from their kids and ostracized from regular employment opportunities. Laws should promote valuing the redeeming and nurturing qualities of each other, rather than punitive measures.

Finally, Chesney-Lind and Hadi alert us to another worldwide problem for women, as the demonization and sexualization of "enemy women as a justification for mass rape in wartime". There is a correlation with this form of oppression with Dewey's dualism, the inferiority of changing things and events and the superiority of a fixed reality. Again, turning to Addams' thoughts on the heroic spirit of war, as often thought of existing throughout human history and as an eternally lasting moral pursuit. War remains a practice acted on despite any other collective and individual moral concerns, or humanistic international laws. However, war is historically difficult for women, thinking here as brutality referenced by Chesney-Lind and Hadi, to the disclosures offered by Addams all those years and wars ago. Addams wrote of single parent households and emotionally broken soldiers and families. Surely, she assumed that by now we would have replaced war with caring for one another, by means of our public spirit founded on nurturing and our sense of inclusion in all our everyday and political practices. Acceptance of differing and changing norms, and pluralism of ideas is paramount for our shared success and progress. Co-shouldering our contemporary problems and anxieties, in our personal and interconnected social lives, replaces values of eternal heroism with primary values of nurturing.

So, a new sense of self-identity is entailed with our value orientations. A participatory, pluralistic approach, by which we analyze political and personal circumstances with those being oppressed, letting them find their vital sense of purpose amongst our common struggles. Women are key players in such efforts, as life-givers we embody the phenomenological values of enlarging, not closing in and destroying, our intertwined worlds.

However, contemporarily, cosmopolitan feminism has been defined by Niamh Reilly (Reilly 2007) as,

> a critical engagement with international human rights law; a global feminist consciousness that contests patriarchal, capitalist, and racist power dynamics in a context of neoliberal globalization; cross-boundaries dialogue that recognizes the intersectionality of forms of oppression; collaborative transnational strategizing on concrete issues; and the utilization of global forums as sites of cosmopolitan solidarity and citizen action.[57]

Surely, this critical approach to intersected oppression is derivative of Addams' thinking about cosmopolitan feminism, as we have discussed, however there are vast differences in respect to a *closed* subjective feminist consciousness or varied relationships and interests, and Addams' ideas of the value of our respect for each person and their circumstances and sympathetic knowledge. I think reinterpreting her ethics and practices of change, in terms of inherent feminist values of love, helps her redemption from past transgressions, as we boldly act to eradicate the criminalization and oppression of women.

References

Addams, Jane, *Democracy and Social Ethics.* New York, The Macmillan Company, London: Macmillan & Co.,LTD.,1902. https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/15487, Accessed May 2024.

A New Consciousness and an Ancient Evil, Macmillan Company. 1912. https://www.gutenberg.org/files/15221/15221-h/15221-h.htm. Accessed May 2024.

Newer Ideals of Peace. New York, The Macmillan Company, London: MacMillan & Co.,LTD., 1906. https://m.gutenberg.org/files/69879/69879-h/69879-h.htm. Accessed May 2024.

[57] Niamh Reilly 2007, "Cosmopolitan Feminism and Human Rights." *Hypatia* 22, no. 4 (2007): 180–98. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4640111. Accessed March 15th, CST: 18:00.

Peace and Bread in Time of War. University of Illinois Press, 2002.

"The Philosophy of a New Day". *Jane Addams' Essays and Speeches.* ed. Marilyn Fischer and Judy D. Whipps. Thoemmes Continuum: March, 2006.

Bartky, Sandra Lee. *Sympathy and Solidarity, and Other Essays.* Rowman and Littlefield Publishing Inc.. 2002.

Blakemore, Erin. "Jane Addams's Crusade Against Victorian "Dancing Girls". October 11, 2017. https://daily.jstor.org/jane-addams-crusade-victorian-dancing-girls/ Accessed March, 2025, CST: 20:00.

Brown, Victoria Bissell. "Sex and the City: Jane Addams Confronts Prostitution". *Feminist Interpretations of Jane Addams.* ed. Maurice Hamington. The Pennsylvania State University: 2010.

Chesney-Lind, M., Hadi. "Criminalizing Women: Global Strategies for Denying Female Victimization." Kury, H., Redo, S., Shea, E. (eds) *Women and Children as Victims and Offenders: Background, Prevention, Reintegration*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-08398-8_23. June 2016. Accessed May 2024.

Crigger, Nancy J.. "The trouble with Caring: A Review of Eight Arguments Against an Ethic of Care." *Journal of Professional Nursing.* Vol. 13, Issue 4 (1997).

Diffee, Christopher. "Sex and the City: The White Slavery Scare and Social Governance in the Progressive Era." *American Quarterly* 57, no. 2, 2005. p . 411- 437. https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/aq.2005.0025. Accessed March 20th, CST: 21:00.

Gunnell, John G. "Max Weber in America." *Journal of American History*. Volume 98, Issue 3, December 2011. p . 870–871. https://doi.org/10.1093/jahist/jar484. Accessed March 20th, CST: 23:00.

Hamington, Maurice. "Jane Addams and a Politics of Embodied Care." *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy.* Vol.15, No. 2, 2001.

Hein, Hein. "Comment on Max Scheler's "Concerning the Meaning of the Feminist Movement", 1978 (Fall), Philosophical Forum, 9: 42–54.

Farinas, Rebecca L. "Art and Soul: James and Scheler on Pragmatic Aesthetics." *Classical American Philosophy: Poiesis in Public.* Bloomsbury: 2021.

Marilyn, Fischer, "Reading Addams's *Democracy and Social Ethics* as a Social Gospel, Evolutionary Text." *The Pluralist.* Vol. 8. No.3, 2013.

Frings, Manfred S., *Max Scheler: A Concise Introduction into the World of a Great Thinker.* Marquette University, 1965.

Joas, Hans. *The Genesis of Values.* The University of Chicago Press, 2000, p. 101-102.

Jones, Emily. *Feminist Theory and International Law: Posthuman Perspectives*. Routledge, 2023. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003363798. Accessed March 15, CST: 20:00.

Kelly, E. "Metaphysical Horizons: Spirit and Life In: Structure and Diversity". *Phaenomenologica*, vol 141. Springer, 1997. Dordrecht. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-3099-0_13. Accessed March, 2025, 20:00.

Kennedy, A. C. Eugenics, "Degenerate Girls," and Social Workers During the Progressive Era. *Affilia*, Issue 23. (2008) P. 22-37. https://doi.org/10.1177/0886109907310473. Accessed May 30, 2004.

Leonard, Thomas C.. *Illiberal Reformers: Race, Eugenics and American Economics in the Progressive Era*. Princeton University Press: 2016.

Lubove, Roy. "The Progressives and the Prostitute". *The Historian.* Taylor & Francis Group, Vol. 24, No. 3, May, 1962.

Lynn, Stacy. "Jane Addams, Ida B. Wells, and Racial Injustice in America", Jane Addams Paper Project. August 22, 2018. https://janeaddams.ramapo.edu/2018/08/jane-addams-ida-b-wells-and-racial-injustice-in-america/. Accessed March 19th, CST 19:00.

Newman, Francis, and Elizabeth Cohen et all, "Prostitution: Historical Perspectives on the Study of Female Prostitution." *History of Women in the United States.* Volume 9: Prostitution, DeGruyter Brill: 1993.

McDermott, M. Joan, "On Moral Enterprises, Pragmatism, and Feminist Criminology", Volume 48, Issue 2 (2002). *Crime & Delinquency.*

O'Brien, Gerald. *The Eugenic Movement and the Social Work Profession.* Oxford University Press: 2023.

Scheler, Max. *Cognition and Work.* Originally published 1926. trans. Zachary Davis. Northwestern University Press: 2021.

--- *Formalism in Ethics and Non-formal Ethics of Values*. trans. Manfred S. Frings and Roger L. Funk. Northwestern University Press:1973.

--- *The Nature of Sympathy.* Originally published 1922London, Routledge & Kegan Paul LTD: 1954. Reprinted London, Redwood Press Limited: 1970,.

--- *Problems of a Sociology of Knowledge.* Translated by Manfred Frings. Intro. Kenneth Stikkers. Routledge: 2021.

Reilly, Niamh. "Cosmopolitan Feminism and Human Rights." *Hypatia.* 22, no. 4:2007. p. 180–98. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4640111. Accessed March 15th, CST: 18:00.

Sheldon, Sally, "The De-Criminalization of Abortion: An argument of The De-criminalization of Abortion: An Argument for Modernization". *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*, Volume 36, Issue 2, Summer 2016, Pages 334–365, https://doi.org/10.1093/ojls/gqv026.

Website:

Jane Addams Peace Association. "Jane Addams and the White Supremacy of Her Time: Vision and Limitation", Newsletter, Jane Addams Peace Association. https://www.janeaddamschildrensbookaward.org/jane-addams-and-the-white-supremacy-of-her-time/. Accessed March 19, 2025, 20:00 CST.