

# From Brooklyn to Kuwait: Female Identity and the Ethics of Care in Contemporary Fiction

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## Abstract

This paper conducts a comparative analysis of two protagonists from *The Book of V* by Anna Solomon and *The Pact We Made* by Layla AlAmmar applying Carol Gilligan's Care Ethics theory. Grounded in feminist moral theory, Care Ethics emphasizes the significance of empathy, responsibility, and interpersonal relationships. This study explores how the novels' representations of American individualism and Arab collectivism shape women's social roles, standards, and their approaches to care, autonomy, and identity within two distinct cultural contexts. Employing a qualitative textual analysis informed by Care-Focused Feminist theories, the research investigates the influence of care, pain, and gender roles on the moral and emotional development of female characters. The analysis reveals several cultural and situational disparities including variations in religious influence, family structure, and social mobility. Nonetheless, the findings indicate that both women grapple with fundamental ethical and emotional challenges. These challenges include the tensions between personal freedom and social obligation, the responsibilities associated with caregiving, and the moral implications of conforming to or defying societal norms. The results demonstrate that literature, despite cultural differences, addresses universal ethical dilemmas, offering a multinational perspective on identity, duty, and resistance within the framework of Care Ethics.

**Keywords:** Care Ethics, *Book of V*, *The Pact We Made*, Moral Feminism, Comparative Literature, Care-focused Feminism, Carol Gilligan, Social Role.