

Roses in the Concrete:

Activism and Ethics of Care in Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give*

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Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give* comes at a time of heightened awareness of police brutality, entering into a conversation about how we work to dismantle systemic racism. 16-year-old Starr lives in the economically disenfranchised neighborhood of Garden Heights while going to the wealthy, predominantly white Williamson High preparatory school. After watching her friend's death at the hands of police, she struggles with how to balance her own need for safety with her desire to make a difference in her community. This binary between the individual and the community can be subverted with feminist ethics of care, a theoretical framework that asks us to explore relationality and empathy in both public and private spheres. In this paper, I argue that *The Hate U Give* serves as a model for how feminist care ethics is essential to effective civic engagement. Thomas provides examples of how to enact care within ourselves, our families, and our communities. In doing so, she dispels myths surrounding Black youth, promotes empathy towards Black communities, and empowers young people to think about how they, too, can enact an ethic of care within their private and public communities. In this way, the book itself serves as a means of enacting an ethic of care.