

**Compassionate Policy Support:
The Interplay of Empathy and Ideology**

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Abstract

Empathy, and the compassion it can arouse, are basic human responses that undergird altruistic behavior. But do they also motivate support for government social welfare programs? Drawing on data from two studies, we examine the power of empathic ability to shape compassion and support for social welfare policies across the ideological spectrum, and examine instances in which empathy and political ideology converge and conflict. We assess empathic ability with Baron-Cohen and colleagues' (2001) "Reading the Mind in the Eyes" task and find that it powerfully *increases* support for an individual welfare recipient and social welfare policies among political liberals. In contrast, conservatives high in empathic ability are *less* compassionate than less empathic conservatives towards someone in need of government assistance and less supportive of a range of government social welfare policies. This compassion gap between liberals and conservatives high in empathic ability only occurs when a needy individual requires government but not charitable assistance. When empathic ability and ideological principles clash, conservatives high in empathic ability seem to suppress and excessively down regulate their compassion. In contrast, when charities provide assistance to a needy individual, conservatives high in empathic ability have no need to suppress empathy and express greater compassion than less empathic conservatives. Our findings shed light on the ideological divide in support of government social welfare policy in the United States.

Some 45 years ago, Free and Cantril invoked the image of a psychological pathology to describe the state of American public opinion on matters of social welfare policy. In their words, public opinion displayed a "schizoid combination of operational liberalism with ideological conservatism" (Free and Cantril 1967: 37). This apparent conflict disappears, however, if public support for social welfare policies is viewed as less a product of abstract political ideology and more a reaction to program beneficiaries. In the U.S. and Western Europe, support for social welfare programs varies quite sharply with the nature of program recipients (Goren 2003; Lawrence et al 2013; Schneider and Ingram 1993; van Oorschot 2006). Programs that provide benefits to the elderly are broadly popular, as seen in widespread support for Social Security and Medicare programs in the U.S., whereas programs targeted for single mothers in the United States or the unemployed in Western Europe receive far less public support (Gilens 1999; Huddy Jones, and Chard 2001; Larsen 2007; Petersen et al 2011; Roosma et al 2014; van Oorschot 2006).

For many researchers, this patchwork support for social welfare programs can be traced to judgments about social welfare recipients' deservingness (van Oorschot 2006; Petersen 2012). In numerous studies, three characteristics emerge as crucial to the perception of a deserving social welfare recipient: someone who needs assistance (*need*), is not responsible for their negative circumstances (*lack of control*), and who contributes or is willing to contribute to the societal good (*reciprocation*) (Skitka and Tetlock 1993; van Oorschot 2000; Petersen 2012). From this perspective, an elderly person is far more deserving of social welfare benefits than a young single mother because old-age cannot be avoided, is accompanied by a series of well-known needs for income, health care, and so on, and occurs at the end of a long life in which someone has likely paid their dues in terms of work, taxes, and societal contributions. Such judgments can explain opposition to social welfare policies that benefit immigrants, and ethnic and racial minorities who are often regarded as less deserving than members of majority groups (Gilens 1999; Larson 2008; Roosma et al 2014). Petersen has suggested that such deservingness

judgments are linked to an ancestral evolutionary psychology that helped to distinguish cheaters from reciprocators in order to assess who does and does not deserve our collective assistance.

This description of social welfare program support grounded in recipient deservingness is missing a key ingredient, however. An incapacitated older person, a homeless vet, and a starving child tug at the heart strings in ways not captured by a relatively “cold” account of deservingness (Gross 2008; Sirin et al 2016). Consider the widely disseminated and powerful image of the Syrian child who drowned while fleeing with his family from Turkey to Europe in early September 2015. This image aroused world-wide consternation and shifted the European conversation about refugees from their geographic movement and legal status to a far more compassionate consideration of the difficulties they faced entering Europe and their inhumane treatment at the hands of smugglers, border guards, and other entities. In this instance, “hot” reactions grounded in empathy and related emotions of sympathy and compassion dominated “cold” judgments of refugee deservingness to shape governmental response to the refugee crisis, at least initially.

The inclusion of empathy in research on public social welfare attitudes is illuminating for several reasons. First, it underscores the importance of individual differences in empathic ability in shaping public opinion. Some people are more affected than others by highly emotive stories about individuals or families in dire need and these well- documented individual differences have powerful consequences for who is, and is not, willing to lend compassionate assistance (Baron-Cohen and Wheelwright 2004; Batson et al 2002; Davis 1980). This point is obscured by a singular focus on program recipient deservingness which is judged on the basis of a program beneficiary’s need, effort, and reciprocation. From this perspective, compassionate support for the elderly and children is not thought to differ dramatically among individuals (Petersen et al 2012). This contravenes evidence, however, that individual differences in humanitarianism and the principle of care (linked to empathy) account for

substantial variation in public support for social welfare policies (Feldman and Steenbergen 2001; Newman et al 2014; Wilhelm and Bekkers 2010).

Second, the addition of empathy lays bare two competing bases of support for government social welfare policies: political principles and compassionate support for welfare recipients (Batson et al 1995). The two do not always go together. For example, Feldman and Steenbergen (2001) find that support for humanitarianism (akin to a compassionate response to human need) is only modestly correlated with broad political principles that shape support for social welfare policy such as Democratic partisanship ($r=.205$), liberal ideological self-placement ($r=.142$), and individualism ($r=-.116$). The disjuncture between compassion and political ideology raises critical questions about their interplay. Do liberals and conservatives differ in empathic ability? Do principles and empathic ability reinforce each other when convergent? Or does one dominate the other when they clash?

The degree to which empathy and ideology drive support for social welfare policies sheds light on the “hot” or “cold” nature of such judgments, an important normative concern. On one hand, empathy is part of the social glue that holds human societies together and allows us to care for others both among our closest social connections as well as outside our immediate context. It promotes concern and compassion for the less fortunate and helps to mitigate some of the inequalities endemic to a globalized world. On the other hand, the compassion aroused by empathy can generate biased and parochial assistance that favors a graphically depicted single individual over larger groups, and one’s ethnic and racial ingroup over outgroups (Decety & Cowell 2015; Gleichgerrcht & Young 2013).

In this paper we examine the link between empathy and political principles as dual bases of public support for social welfare policies. Before we proceed, however, we need to clarify several key concepts. First, we define empathy as something that “... allows one to quickly and automatically relate to the emotional states of others” (de Waal 2008, p. 282). For reasons explained later, we focus in this research on *empathic ability* to gauge individual differences in the capacity for empathy. Simply feeling

what another feels is insufficient, however, to drive support for assistance. We therefore include *compassion* as a crucial outcome of empathy that drives sympathy and support for assistance to someone in need. There is considerable variation in empathic ability, as we discuss at length below, and we believe that such differences powerfully shape support for social welfare policies. We draw on research from the burgeoning field of social neuroscience and social emotions to investigate the complex interplay of empathic ability, ideology, and compassionate support for government social welfare policies (Decety 2011; Decety and Ickes 2009; Hein and Singer 2008).

Empathy and its Regulation

There has been marked growth in research on empathy within the social sciences over the last decade which has generated considerable consensus, along with some disagreement, on its nature and consequences. There is widespread research consensus that empathy involves a complex mix of affect and cognition (Blair 2005; de Waal 2008; Decety 2011; Hodges and Wegner 1997; Singer and Lamm 2009; Zaki & Ochsner 2013). Empathy scales include a cognitive facet called *perspective taking* and an affective component referred to as *empathic concern* (Davis 1980; Baron-Cohen & Wheelright 2004). Both cognitive and affective components of empathy predict who is most likely to share another's emotional state, help a person in need, and support humanitarian values (Batson et al 2002; Barr & Higgins-D'Alessandro 2007; Feldman and Steenbergen 2001; Laurent & Hodges 2009).¹ Many researchers suggest that perspective taking — in particular, the recognition of another's emotional state — may occur rapidly and, perhaps, automatically (see de Waal 2008).

Even among those with high levels of empathic concern, and well developed perspective taking skills, however, empathic responses, such as compassion or support for public social welfare, are far from automatic (Zaki 2014). Preston and de Waal (2002) suggest that humans must be able to inhibit

¹ Feeling personally upset or distressed about the plight of another is also often included in measures of empathy but can be regarded as more self than other-regarding and is less likely than empathic concern or perspective taking to generate compassionate assistance.

and control emotion to prevent emotional contagion and dampen empathy when it conflicts with social rules or norms. Such emotional control is learned in childhood and is commonly referred to as emotional regulation. Zaki (2014) discusses at length motivations that stimulate and dampen empathy. The cognitive regulation of empathy can be readily elicited in lab settings (Cheng et al 2007; Decety et al 2010; Lamm et al 2007), and social neuroscientists have identified areas of the brain involved in the top-down cognitive control of emotional empathy (Kalisch et al 2005; Ochsner and Gross 2005).

The emotional regulation of empathy can take different forms. One common pathway involves the transformation of empathy into sympathy and compassion, emotional responses that are grounded in empathy but go further to translate it into a desire to help (Batson 1998; Eisenberg 2000; Goetz, Keltner, and Simon-Thomas 2010).² Goetz and colleagues (2010) conclude that compassion represents a fleet of emotions (including caring and sympathy) that generate distinct cognitive appraisals, prosocial behavior, and physiological responses. Empathy is commonly up-regulated into compassion to motivate helping behavior, serving to undercut the distress that empathy might otherwise elicit (Eisenberg 2000).

Empathy does not automatically generate compassion, however. Inhibition or the down-regulation of empathy is a common alternative that is especially likely to occur when empathy extracts a high emotional or economic toll. Although possible, research suggests that empathy is not easy to turn off and efforts to do so tend to overshoot by generating a marked decrease in sympathy, physical avoidance, and reappraisal of an individual's level of need. Cameron and Payne (2011) refer to this as the collapse of compassion. Paradoxically, the collapse of compassion tends to be most marked among those highest in empathic ability who may need to steel themselves against the high personal toll of compassion. Research on reactions to large-scale humanitarian disasters and crises underscore the difficulties entailed in the down-regulation of empathy (Slovic 2007; Small et al 2007).

² Sympathy and compassion are closely related but can be distinguished. Sympathy involves feelings of concern for another whereas compassion involves the desire to diminish another's suffering (Goetz et al 2010).

Cameron and Payne (2011) find, for example, that respondents exposed to images and information about several needy children felt less compassion and were less upset than those exposed to images and information about a single needy child. Moreover, the collapse of compassion was most pronounced among those most skilled at emotional regulation or who were explicitly instructed to dampen their emotional response. This is consistent with evidence that emotional suppression involves some effort and skill (Gross 2015). Cameron and Payne's findings also suggest that the inhibition of empathy may involve an excessive level of control, leading to reduced sympathy for several than just one victim.

Lebowitz and Dovidio (2015) further underscore the negative effects of empathy suppression on compassion. In their research, subjects read about a high school student who suffered from mental illness. One third were assigned to a suppression condition in which they were instructed to "control your emotions by not expressing them"; other subjects were assigned to either a control or a positive reappraisal condition. Subjects in the suppression condition reported significantly less concern for the person than those in the control condition. This was also true for those who habitually engaged in emotional suppression. Moreover, empathy suppression (both manipulated and dispositional) led to a desire for greater social distance from the ill person, largely mediated by lower levels of empathic concern. A second study replicated these results and found that those instructed to suppress empathy (as compared to those in a control and reappraisal condition) were less likely to provide assistance.

Finally, Cameron, Harris, and Payne (2015) extended this research to examine the link between dispositional empathy, the anticipated cost of compassion, and its down-regulation. They presented subjects with vignettes about a homeless person who was either a drug addict or suffering from an uncontrollable illness. Those high in dispositional empathy believed that helping the homeless addict would be more emotionally taxing than helping the ill homeless person, and this led them to dehumanize the addict. This generates the counterintuitive situation that those highest in empathy

were most likely to dehumanize a needy individual to avoid the potential cost exacted by compassion. In a second study, the researchers told respondents that watching a video of the homeless person would either be emotionally exhausting or inspiring and found greater dehumanization of the addict in the high emotional exhaustion condition. These findings confirm Zaki's (2014) view that the high costs of empathy are a major motive for its suppression.

The difficulties involved in cognitively regulating empathy bring us back to our central interest in the origins of social welfare policy support. To the extent that government programs are paired with examples of needy, deserving individuals, they should arouse empathy and compassion. The question is what happens when empathy and political beliefs conflict? Research on the up and down-regulation of empathy suggest that the concordance of empathy and ideology should lead to compassion whereas their conflict generates empathy suppression that can paradoxically foster victim vilification.

When Empathy and Political Ideology Collide

When confronted with a sympathetic recipient of social welfare programs, empathic liberals are likely to up-regulate empathy to compassion and intensify their support for welfare programs whereas empathic conservatives are likely to suppress empathy and compassion and oppose social welfare assistance. Conservatives are placed in a situation in which "hot, emotion-driven response tendencies threaten to interfere with cool, more cognitively driven response tendencies" (Koole, Van Dillen, and Sheppes 2011, p. 28), a situation that fosters the down-regulation of empathy. The evidence reviewed above suggests that it may not be easy, however, for conservatives to simply suppress empathy.

One tantalizing glimpse of this process arises from research on belief in a just world (Lerner 1980), a belief that is linked to various aspects of conservatism including individualism, authoritarianism, and social dominance orientation (Christopher et al 2008; Furnham 2003). Correia et al (2012) found that individuals who strongly believed in a just world were more likely to derogate an ingroup than an outgroup member who had been the victim of an uncontrollable negative event. Empathy is typically,

greater for an ingroup than an outgroup member, but in this instance increased empathy for an ingroup victim has the added negative effect of challenging one's view of the world as a just place. As a consequence, empathy in this research was strongly down-regulated resulting in even less compassion for the ingroup than outgroup member, a clear overshooting. Correia and Vala (2003) find that those who believe in a just world are also more likely to derogate innocent victims whose suffering is long lasting.

Gubler and colleagues (2016; Gubler 2013) provide further intriguing evidence on what happens when beliefs and empathy clash. Gubler (2013) found that Israelis with the most negative attitudes towards Arabs felt the most discomfort when exposed to a humanitarian, pro-Jewish message from a Palestinian Israeli. In a second study, Gubler and colleagues (2016) randomly assigned voters, activists, and elected officials in Utah to a video humanizing illegal immigrants. The humanizing message actually decreased feelings of empathy among those with anti-immigrant views (when compared to anti-immigrant individuals in the control condition), intensifying their support for anti-immigrant policies. In other words, attempts to humanize illegal immigrants backfired among those with anti-immigrant views. Both studies underscore that the suppression of empathy results in markedly reduced compassion.

Psychological theory and empirical evidence underscore the potential backlash involved in the suppression of empathy. If the conflict between compassion and ideology motivates highly empathic conservatives to suppress empathy toward someone in need of government assistance, they may overcompensate and be inclined to vilify needy individuals to a greater degree than less empathic conservatives. In contrast, government assistance to needy individuals should motivate political liberals towards greater compassion and government program support. In that sense, highly empathic liberals and conservatives will disagree more on the provision of government social welfare benefits than their less empathic but politically like-minded counterparts. In essence, the capacity for empathy widens not narrows the ideological divide in support of government social welfare assistance.

Hypotheses

In this research, we expect empathic ability and political ideology to have interactive effects on support for someone in need of government assistance. We test several hypotheses. First, we expect individuals high in empathic ability to be more supportive of social welfare policies than those low in ability. This is qualified, however, by the effects of political ideology. Empathic ability will enhance compassion and support for government assistance among political liberals but will backfire among conservatives, leading to decreased sympathy and less support for social welfare policies. We contrast these expectations with the influence of empathic ability and ideology on support for charitable assistance. In this instance, we expect highly empathic liberals and conservatives to feel compassion for the person in need and support assistance because conservatives are not conflicted and have no need to suppress empathy. We conducted two studies to test these hypotheses.

Data and Methods

Measuring individual differences in empathic ability via self-reported survey responses arouses some concern among researchers. This concern derives, in part, from the potential social desirability pressures and gender biases that are produced when individuals are asked about their ability and willingness to feel the pain of others. Consider the Davis (1980) Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI). It is one of the most popular measures of empathy and is divided into cognitive perspective taking, empathic concern, and affective personal distress subscales. But items in the empathic concern subscale, which has been linked to compassionate assistance, hint at gender-linked desirability pressures, including items that ask men and women to agree that they have “tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate”, and describing themselves as “pretty soft-hearted.” As a general rule, women score higher than men on self-report empathy measures although women do not necessarily exhibit greater nonverbal empathy when it is measured unobtrusively (Eisenberg and Lennon 1983; Baron-Cohen and Wheelwright 2004). In addition, self-report empathy measures may be entwined with political ideology.

A self-described conservative may reject a self-image as tender-minded because it is at odds with a conservative philosophy whereas a liberal may feel obliged to describe herself as soft-hearted. This introduces endogeneity into the measurement of empathy.

In response to these concerns, researchers have developed behavioral measures of empathy. One of the most important tests of *empathic ability*, “Reading the Mind in the Eyes” (MIE), has been developed by Baron-Cohen and colleagues (2001). It has been used to successfully differentiate those with and without Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).³ Individuals with ASD have considerable difficulty on the test and score poorly. The test measures an individual’s ability to correctly label an emotion expressed by someone else. Respondents are shown a picture of a pair of eyes, and then asked to choose the emotion being conveyed by the person, selecting from one of four emotion words in a multiple choice format. While the test does not indicate an empathic desire to help, feel what another is feeling, or take someone else’s perspective, it does identify differences in basic empathic ability. As other researchers have noted, it is very difficult to react with empathy to someone if you cannot decipher what they are feeling (de Waal 2008).

In the past, most studies using MIE were conducted among abnormal, autistic, and schizophrenic populations. But that is beginning to change as the test is used increasingly among normal populations (Baker et al 2014; Kidd and Castano 2013; Norenzayan et al. 2012; Wooley et al 2010). This endeavor is still in its early stages, but the effects of MIE are impressive. For example, Engel and colleagues (2014) report that MIE predicts successful cooperation and task completion among work groups and does so in contrast to average team member IQ which does not boost team success. Others find that MIE is linked to positive social qualities such as a prosocial orientation and lower levels of

³ Baron-Cohen and colleagues (2001) refer to MIE as an advanced theory of mind (TOM) test which assesses how well a person can put themselves into the mind of another. There is some dispute as to whether MIE is a purely cognitive test or also involves emotion. Baron-Cohen et al note that MIE has also been referred to as social intelligence and overlaps with empathy. We refer to MIE as a test of empathic ability because it provides one foundation for the development of empathy.

spitefulness (Declerck and Bogaert 2008; Ewing et al 2016). We employ the MIE scale in the current research to avoid the social desirability pressures commonly associated with self-reported empathy. To date, no published research has examined the link between empathic ability and social welfare attitudes using the MIE test.

In the following studies we use MIE scores to estimate variance in empathic ability. We do not claim that MIE encompasses all meaningful differences in empathy; only that we can use it to observe some of that variance using a well validated instrument.

Study 1: Amazon Mechanical Turk Sample

Participants were recruited through MTurk and were paid \$1.00 for completing a survey that took between 15 and 20 minutes. To improve the demographic diversity of the MTurk sample, a pre-stratification filter was employed to screen MTurk workers. This filter was designed to select predetermined quotas of respondents in fixed ideology, age, education, race, income, and gender categories. Even though we were not able to completely fill the quotas (we obtained a somewhat greater number of liberals than conservatives), the sample exhibits substantial demographic and political variation. A total of 511 respondents completed the survey; 97 respondents were eliminated because they took less than 11 minutes to complete it, leaving a sample of 414.⁴ The study was conducted over several weeks in January and February of 2014. Descriptive statistics for this sample are shown in Table A1 in the Appendix.

Study 2: YouGov National Sample

Participants in this study came from the YouGov online subject pool and included 400 non-

⁴ The experiment in Study 1 included another condition that is not analyzed in this paper but that we return to in the conclusion. We analyze the half of the sample that was given exactly the same material to read as in Study 2. The other half read a more extreme version in which the needy individual had a dying child (described in an additional sentence). This elicited strong support across the board regardless of condition or respondent characteristics, a finding that might have reflected powerful social desirability pressures or compassion. We do not use those assigned to this condition, reducing the sample size by half.

Hispanic, non-Asian whites. As might be expected, YouGov respondents reflect greater diversity than the MTurk sample. They are older, less Democratic, and more politically moderate (a group largely filtered out of the MTurk sample). The study was in the field during October 2014. Descriptive statistics for this sample are shown in Table A1 in the Appendix.

Measuring Empathy: Reading the Mind in the Eyes

Respondents in both studies began the survey by completing 18 items from the Mind in the Eyes (MIE) test.⁵ The test was preceded by the following instructions:

“For each set of eyes, choose which word best describes what the person in the picture is thinking or feeling. You may feel that more than one word is applicable but please choose just one word, the word you consider to be most suitable. Before making your choice, make sure that you have read all 4 words. You should try to do the task as quickly as possible but you will not be timed.”

Two sample MIE items are presented in Figure 1. The correct answer for the female set of eyes is “desire,” and “uneasy” is the correct answer for the male set of eyes. The items vary in difficulty as seen in these two examples.

The test produced very similar distributions in the two studies as shown in the kernel density plots shown in Figure 2. In both samples the range of correct answers was 4 to 18 and the distributions were quite skewed. The mean was 13.3 (md = 14) in Study 1 and 13.0 (md = 13) in Study 2. The 1st, 5th, and 10th percentiles were 7, 9, and 10 in Study 1 and 5, 8, and 10 in Study 2. As expected, most people are fairly good at recognizing emotions in peoples’ eyes. As these two studies show, however, there is a substantial amount of variance in empathic ability in normal populations. Some people are exceptionally good at this task whereas others barely identify half of the appropriate emotions.

⁵ Our 18-item MIE items are drawn from the original 36-item scale (Baron Cohen et al 2001). Items in the original scale displayed either a positive, negative, or neutral emotion. We chose six items from each emotional valance category to obtain items that ranged in difficulty (based on percent accuracy).

Figure 1: Sample Items from the Mind-in-the-Eyes Test

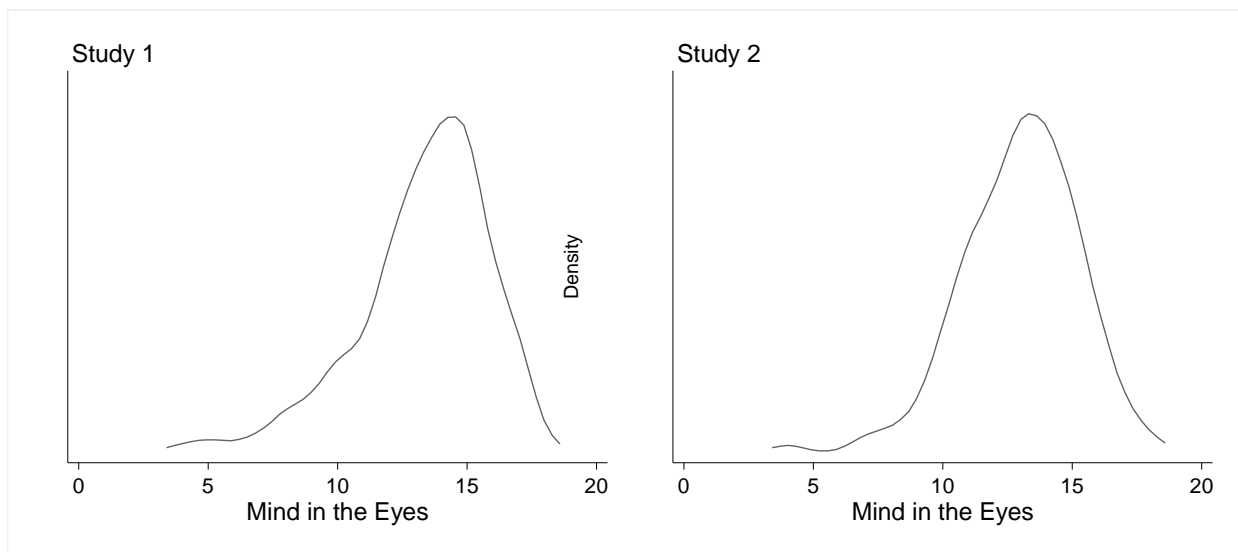


1. joking
2. flustered
3. desire
4. convinced



1. apologetic
2. friendly
3. uneasy
4. dispirited

Figure 2: Distributions of Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test



The distribution of MIE scores is skewed and scores were rescaled (to vary from 0 to 1) and squared to bring them somewhat closer to a normal distribution (the long lower tail of each distribution remains to some extent). The means of the squared scores are .57 ($md = .60$) in Study 1 and .56 ($md = .58$) in Study 2. The 1st, 5th, and 10th percentiles are .08, .20, and .31 in study 1 and .12, .28, and .34 in study 2.

To assess the effects of empathy on attitudes toward those in need, respondents in each study read a description of a white male, high in deservingness, who had lost his job after the 2008-9 recession. The full text, which was accompanied by a photo of a somewhat dejected-looking white male

in his late 30s, his wife, and two boys, read:

Mark Sperling lost his job in 2011 when his company laid off some of their workers because their business had not recovered from the recession. Mark has had some part-time work over the past few years and has been actively looking for work but because of continuing high unemployment in the country has not been able to find a good full-time job. A former civil engineer, he has since been focused on updating his skills through local seminars, in hopes of increasing his chances of getting a new job. His wife Janine had been a stay-at-home mother since her two children were born but has had to get a job at the local library to help cover expenses while Mark looks for a job. He is very worried that without a job he will not be able to make payments on his home or support his family.

We randomly assigned respondents to one of two conditions that involved reading a short introduction immediately before the description of Mark Sperling. To *maximize* conservatives' conflict, respondents in the government condition read the following introduction:

During the recent recession, government programs played a major role in providing assistance to those in need. Please carefully read the following profile of a person who needed this type of assistance.

Respondents in the charities condition, designed to *minimize* conservatives' conflict read the following introduction:

During the recent recession, charities and volunteer organizations played a major role in providing assistance to people in need. Please carefully read the following profile of a person who needed this type of assistance.

We expected conservatives high in empathic ability to experience greater conflict, suppress empathy, and be more likely to denigrate Sperling in the government than in the charities condition. In contrast, we expected conservatives high in empathic ability to translate empathy into compassion for Sperling and support charitable assistance for him. With no expected conflict between empathy and values among liberals we expect those high in empathic ability to be more compassionate and more supportive of government and charitable assistance for Sperling.

The greatest clash between empathic ability and ideology occurs for those who endorse individualism, an aspect of conservative ideology that is especially germane to the provision of government benefits. Study 1 contained six individualism items in agree/disagree format and Study 2

included four of those items. Items tapped the importance of hard work as a condition for success and scaled well ($\alpha = .86$ in study 1 and $.77$ in study 2). The scale distribution was relatively symmetric, and scores were distributed across the entire range (recoded to range from 0 to 1) of the scale in both studies.⁶

To test our hypotheses, we estimate simple analytic models that include the MIE measure, individualism, and their interaction and, where appropriate, the interaction with experimental condition. The majority of the dependent variables are categorical and thus most models were estimated with ordered probits. In addition to these simple models, we also estimated models that included controls for gender, age, education, race/ethnicity (study 1 only), and ideological self-identification (see the Appendix). In no case did the joint effects of empathy and individualism change significantly with these additional statistical controls.

Results

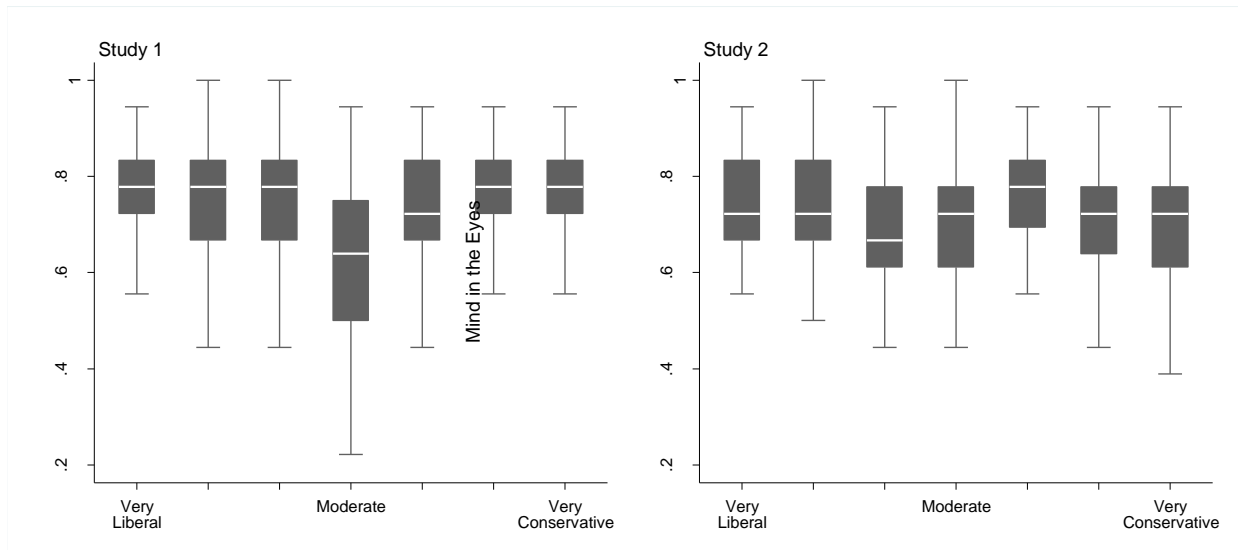
Is there a relationship between ideology and empathic ability? If empathic ability drives support for social welfare policy uncomplicated by ideology, we would expect liberals to score more highly than conservatives. We plot mean empathic ability across levels of ideological self-identification measured on a 7-point scale ranging from very liberal to very conservative. The box plots for the two studies are shown in Figure 3.

It is clear in Figure 3 that there is no direct relationship between ideology (self-identification) and empathic ability. There is a suggestion in Study 1 that moderates may be somewhat lower in empathy than liberals and conservatives but that finding is not replicated in Study 2. The lack of relationship between empathic ability and ideology extends to other measures of ideology. In particular,

⁶ Sample items are drawn from standard individualism scales and include items such as “Even if people try hard they often cannot reach their goals,” “Any person who is willing to work hard has a good chance of succeeding,” and “If people work hard they almost always get what they want.”

individualism has a weak negative relationship with MIE in Study 1 (-.12) and virtually no relationship in Study 2 (-.04). Empathy is also unrelated to a measure of belief in limited government in Study 1 (-.03) and a measure of egalitarianism in Study 2 (.03).

Figure 3: Relationship between Mind in the Eyes and Ideology



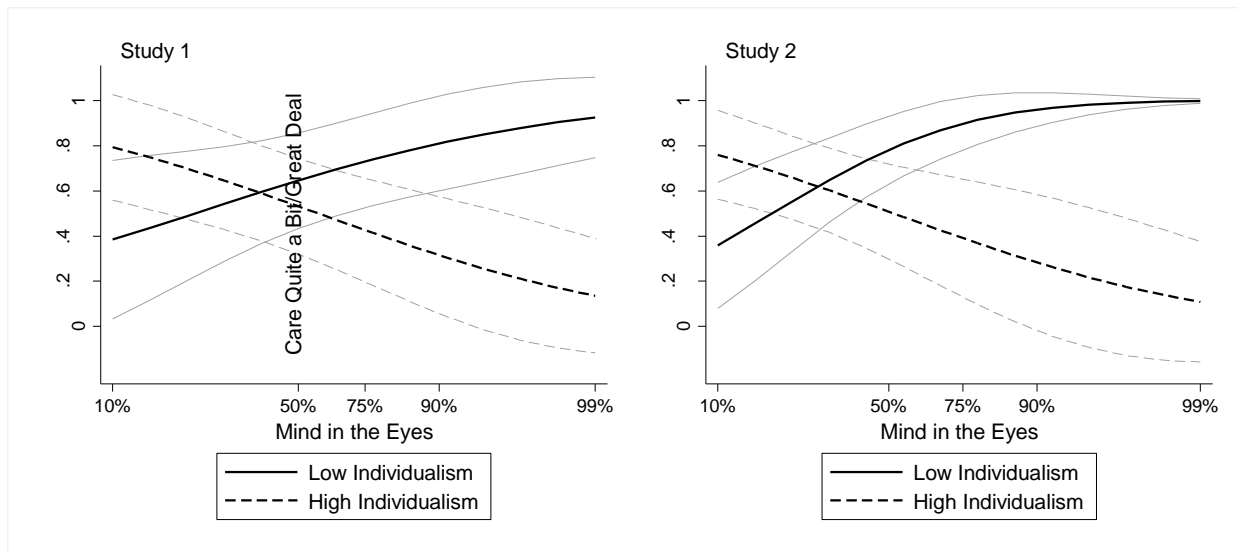
Responses to a Needy Individual

We begin by analyzing the joint effects of empathic ability (MIE) and individualism on expressions of sympathy for Mark Sperling in the government condition. This condition was designed to heighten the conflict between compassion and individualism. Immediately after reading about him, respondents were asked “How much do you care about what happens to Mark Sperling?”⁷ In Figure 4 we plot the predicted probability that respondents cared “a great deal” or “quite a bit” about Sperling

⁷ The response categories for this question were “don’t care at all,” “care a little,” “care somewhat,” “care quite a bit,” and “care a great deal.” Diagnostics showed strong violations of the proportional odds assumption for the ordered probit model with those five response categories. The diagnostics indicated that “don’t care at all” and “care a little” were relatively indistinguishable as were “care quite a bit” and “care a great deal.” Combining those response categories resulted in a three category variable that was more consistent with the proportional odds assumption. The estimates are very similar when we use the original 5-point response categories as the dependent measures in the ordered probit models.

across the range of MIE as it varies from the 10th to 99th percentile⁸ for those who strongly reject and strongly support individualism. This relationship is plotted separately for the two studies, based on ordered probit analyses shown in Table A2 which include a significant three-way interaction between condition, MIE, and individualism.

Figure 4: Predicted Probabilities of Care, Government Condition



The estimates are very similar across the two studies. Among those who reject individualism, greater empathic ability increases concern about Spierling. But among those with lower levels of empathic ability those who reject individualism express only modest concern for Mark Spierling. In contrast, those high in MIE are very likely to say that they care a great deal or quite a bit about him. In both studies, increasing levels of empathic ability among those who reject individualism generates substantially greater sympathy and compassion for Spierling. In this situation political liberals directly translate empathy into compassion.

⁸ We exclude those below that 10th percentile since they are very far from the mean and, in these samples, close to abnormal psychologically. The predicted probabilities are plotted with 90% confidence intervals.

In contrast, the relationship between MIE and sympathy toward Sperling is sharply negative for those who embrace individualism. The greater their empathic ability, the *less* they say they care about him. If highly empathic conservatives simply ignored their feelings of empathy there would be no relationship between empathy and concern. Instead, the negative relationship strongly suggests that as empathic ability increases among conservatives they feel even less compassion for Sperling than their less empathic ideological counterparts. It appears that conservatives suppress their potential compassion for Sperling and overshoot as they do so.

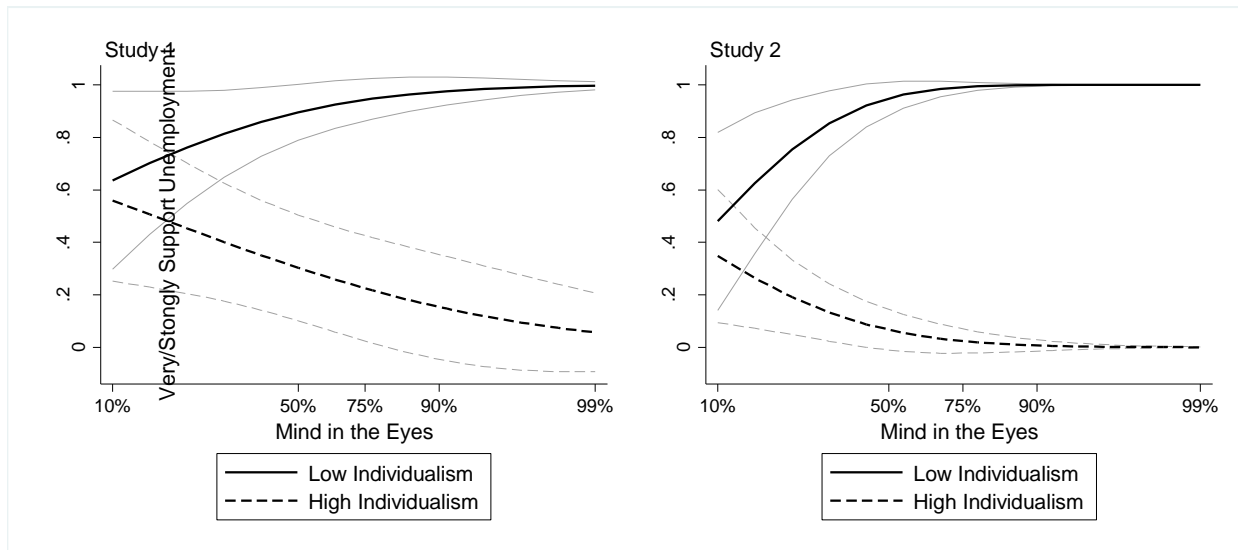
Reduced compassion for Sperling among strong individualists who are high in empathic ability also results in their opposition to his receipt of government assistance. Respondents in the government condition were asked “How strongly do you support or oppose extending government unemployment benefits for people like Mark Sperling who have been unemployed for a long period of time?”⁹ We examined support for unemployment benefits as a function of the interaction between MIE and individualism. The probit estimates shown in Table A3 include a significant interaction between MIE and individualism. Figure 5 depicts the predicted probability of supporting (strongly or very strongly) an extension of unemployment benefits across the range of MIE separately for those who reject and endorse individualism.

The relationship between empathic ability and support for unemployment insurance closely parallels that depicted for caring. Among those who reject individualism, there is only lukewarm support for the provision of government benefits among those low in empathic ability but support rises dramatically at higher levels of MIE. Just the opposite trend is seen for those high in individualism: At

⁹ The original response categories for this question were “very strong oppose,” “strongly oppose,” “somewhat oppose,” “somewhat support,” “strongly support,” and “very strongly support.” As with the caring question, diagnostics indicated severe violation of the proportional odds assumption in the ordered probit model. In order to overcome this it was necessary to dichotomize the categories by combining “very strongly support” and “strongly support” into one category and the other four response categories into a second category.

low levels of empathic ability, there is modest support for the extension of unemployment benefits. But this disappears completely as empathic ability increases. The divergent effects of empathic ability on support for the extension of government unemployment benefits among those low and high in individualism are clear in Figure 5. Indeed, individualism is not especially helpful in predicting support for extended unemployment benefits among those low in empathic ability but is powerfully predictive among those high in empathic ability.

Figure 5: Predicted Probabilities of Supporting Unemployment Insurance, Government Condition

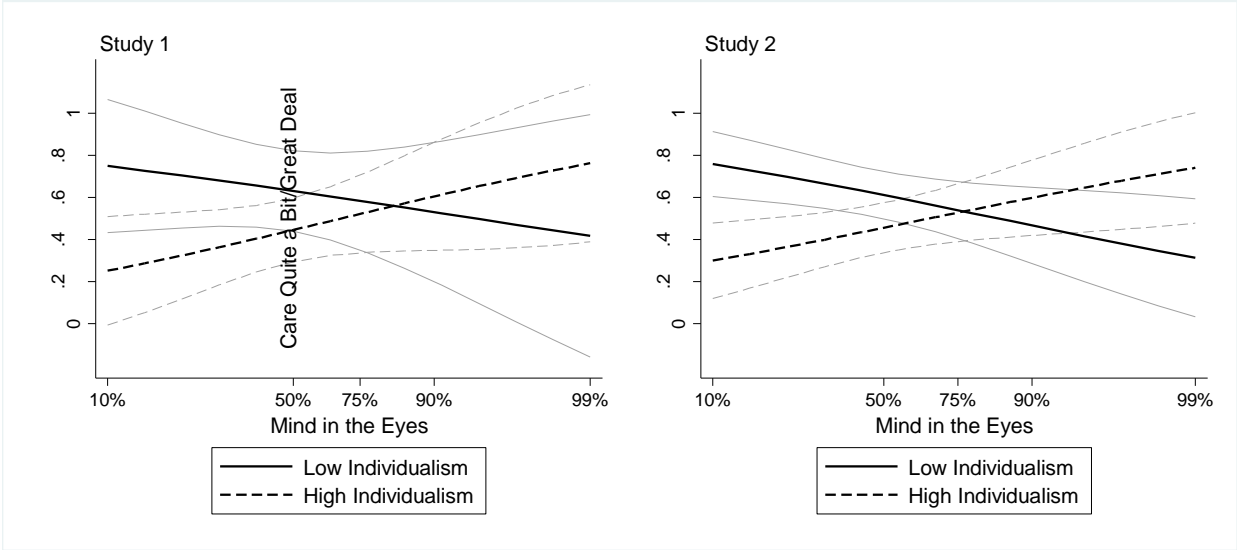


The government condition was designed to maximize conflict between empathy and conservative political beliefs whereas the charities condition was designed to eliminate (or at least reduce) conflict for conservatives. By framing assistance in terms of charity and private giving we should have removed the conflict between empathy and political ideology for conservatives.

Figure 6 depicts the predicted probabilities of caring a great deal or quite a bit about Sperling in the charity condition as a function of empathic ability among those high and low in individualism. These values are generated from ordered probit estimates in Table A2. In sharp contrast to the government

condition there is now a strong *positive* relationship between MIE scores and expressions of caring for Sperling among those high in individualism. This finding provides clear evidence that MIE captures individual differences in empathic ability equally well for liberals and conservatives. Based on this finding, the negative relationship between MIE and compassion, or MIE and support for government assistance, among those high in individualism in the government condition cannot be dismissed as a failure to assess empathic ability. Once an unemployed individual is described as someone in need of non-governmental assistance, empathic ability predicts expressions of sympathy for conservatives as it did for liberals in the government condition.

Figure 6: Predicted Probabilities of Care, Charities Condition



There is one unexpected result shown in Figure 6: the negative relationship between MIE and expressions of caring for those low in individualism in both studies. Liberals high in empathic ability are less sympathetic toward Sperling than those low in empathic ability when he requires charitable assistance. We had not predicted this finding and are hesitant to read too much into it. Nonetheless,

one interpretation is that liberals may experience conflict between compassion for Sperling and their political values which prioritize government over charitable assistance. This prospect requires further research attention but does suggest that liberals are just as likely as conservatives to try to resolve a conflict between empathy and ideology by attempting to suppress compassion.

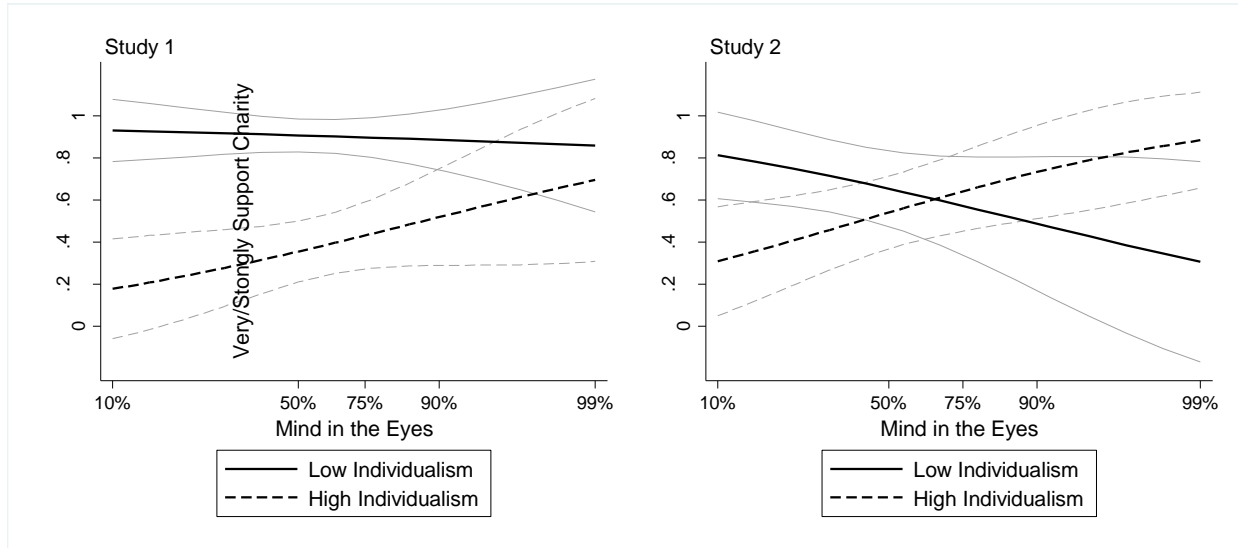
In the charities condition, respondents were asked about their support for charitable assistance to Sperling.¹⁰ Figure 7 shows the predicted probabilities of supporting (strongly or very strongly) this type of assistance to Sperling among those high and low in individualism (the probit estimates are shown in Table A4).¹¹ Consistent with evidence on who cares about Sperling in the charities condition, empathy boosts support for charitable assistance among those high in individualism (somewhat more strongly in the YouGov data than in the MTurk sample). This effect is opposite to the negative effect of empathic ability on support for unemployment assistance in the government condition among the same respondents (those high in individualism). This reinforces the conclusion that empathy is positively related to both caring and the desire to provide assistance to a needy individual among conservatives once conflict between compassion and ideology is removed. The results in Figure 7 also partly replicate the negative relationship between empathic ability and compassion for those low in individualism. In this case, support for charitable assistance declines among those who reject individualism as empathy

¹⁰ The question wording is “How undeserving or deserving is Mark Sperling of assistance from charitable organizations?” The response categories are “extremely undeserving,” “very undeserving,” “somewhat undeserving,” “somewhat deserving,” “very deserving,” and “extremely deserving.” To minimize violation of the proportional odds assumption, we recoded this variable into three categories: extremely and very deserving, somewhat deserving and somewhat underserving, and very and extremely undeserving.

¹¹ While the estimates shown in Table A4 appear imprecise, this is, in part, a function of the interaction terms and the coding of the individualism variable. The critical quantity in the charity condition is the marginal effect of MIE on support for charitable assistance for those high in individualism. In study 1, the estimated probability of a conservative saying Sperling was very deserving of charitable assistance increased by .55 (s.e. = .32) as MIE moved from the 10th to 99th percentile. In study 2 the estimated increase was .54 (s.e. = .29). If we pool the two data sets (N = 238) the estimated increase is .58 (s.e. = .24). The estimated marginal effects are consistently large in the two studies and the standard errors are reasonable given the sample sizes.

increases in Study 2 (YouGov) but not in the MTurk data in Study 1. Overall, conservatives high in empathic ability are far more willing to provide charitable assistance to Sperling than their less empathic like-minded political counterparts.

Figure 7: Predicted Probabilities of Supporting Charitable Assistance, Charities Condition

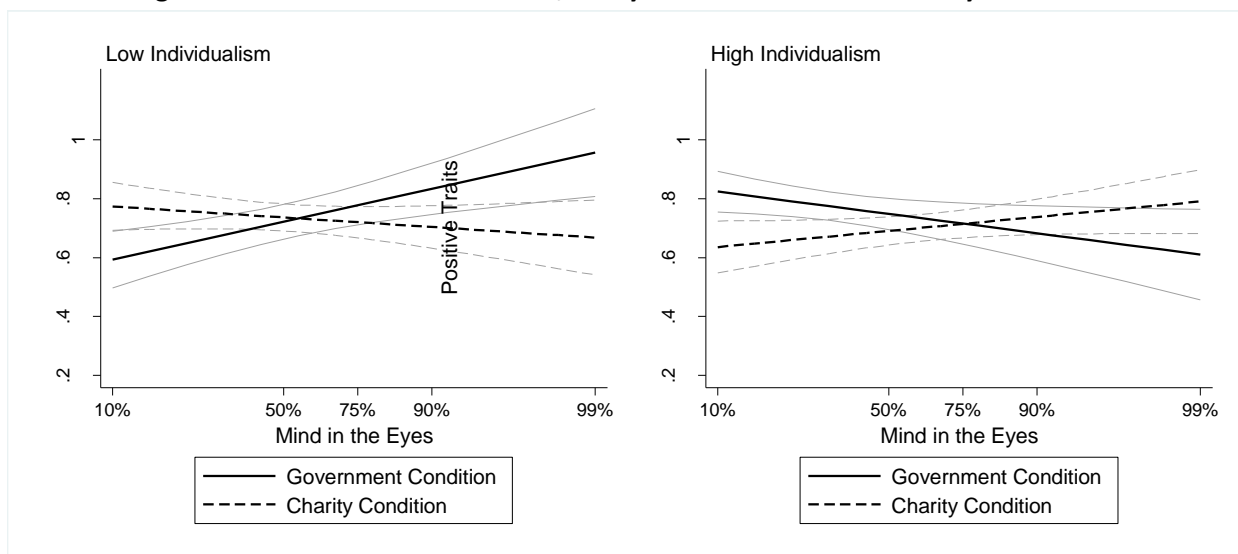


We have thus uncovered evidence that conservatives high in empathic ability feel greater compassion for Mark Sperling than less empathic conservatives when he needs charitable assistance but suppress compassion and are less willing to help him when he needs government assistance. This raises a question as to whether or not empathic conservatives need to denigrate Sperling in the government but not charities conditions. We analyze respondents' evaluations of Sperling on three traits assessed in Study 2. Specifically, respondents rated Sperling as competent or incompetent, intelligent or unintelligent, and talented or untalented (on 6 point balanced scales). This is a difficult test because Sperling was intentionally described as deserving: someone who lost his job through no fault of his own and was taking positive actions to find work. Not surprisingly, few respondents viewed him very negatively and most of the observed variation involved gradations in positive assessments. Responses to

the three questions were very highly correlated and were combined into a single measure that ranges from 0 to 1. The combined trait scale was regressed onto MIE, individualism, and their interaction as in earlier analyses. The regression estimates are provided in Table A5 and include a significant three-way interaction between condition, MIE, and individualism. Figure 8 depicts predicted values on the trait scale for those highest and lowest in individualism across the range of MIE.

The effects of empathic ability on assessment of Sperling’s traits depend on whether a respondent was in the government or charities condition. Among those high in individualism, empathic ability has a negative effect on ratings of Sperling in the government condition but a positive effect in the charities conditions, consistent with the findings of earlier analyses. In other words, conservatives seem to distance themselves from Sperling and view him less positively when he needs government than charitable assistance. Just the opposite is seen for those low in individualism. As with caring and government assistance, empathic ability boosts positive assessments of Sperling in the government condition and may lead to more negative assessments of him in the charities condition, although the marginal effect of empathic ability is not statistically distinguishable from zero.

Figure 8: Predicted Values of Traits, Study 2: Government and Charity Conditions

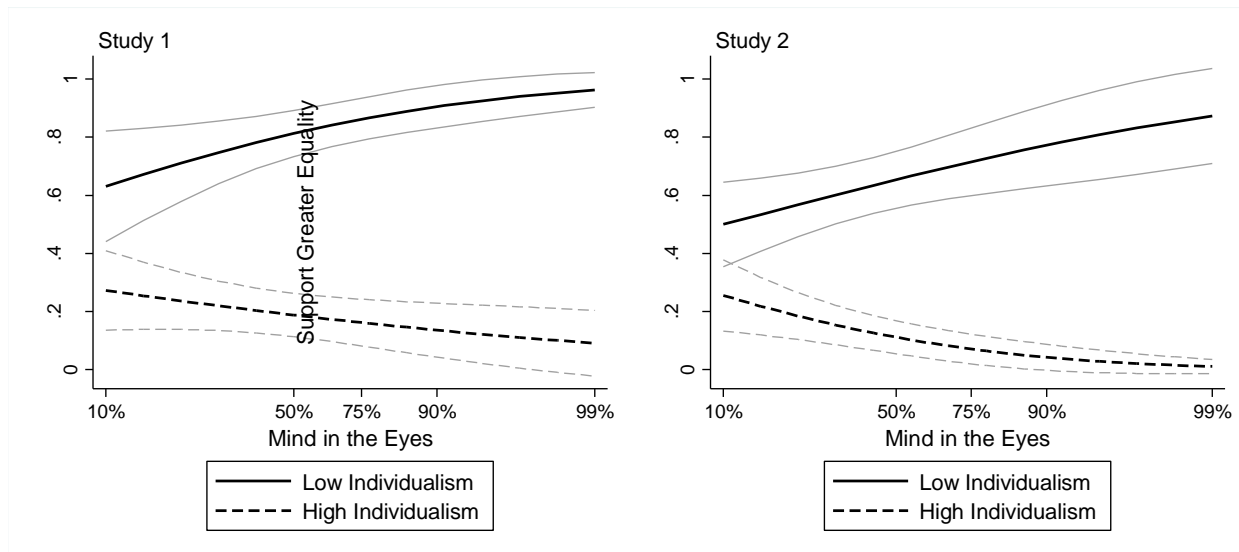


Long-Term Effects of Empathy and Ideology

To this point we have focused on the effects of empathic ability on compassion for a single individual in need. But is the effect of empathic ability limited to an individual case or does it extend to policy judgements more generally? The consequences of empathy, and its emotional regulation, are likely to accumulate over time. For liberals, exposure to those in need generates sympathy and a desire to provide government assistance. With repeated exposure these responses should reinforce liberal values. We therefore expect support for liberal policies to increase with greater empathic ability among people low in individualism. But repeated exposure to individuals in need of government assistance should have a different effect among conservatives. In order to resolve the conflict between empathic ability and ideology they appear to distance themselves from individuals in need, suppress compassion, and oppose government assistance. Over time these processes should result in greater opposition to government social welfare programs than found among less empathic conservatives.

To test this prediction, we analyze the effects of empathic ability and individualism on general political orientations and social welfare policy attitudes. We begin with an analysis of responses to the following question asked in both studies: “Which is more important: Insuring that each individual has as much opportunity as possible, even if that means some people enjoy far more success than others OR insuring greater equality of income, even if that limits individual opportunities.” The question contrasts greater equality with individual opportunity and responses could be driven solely by the value placed on individualism. This is not the case, however. The predicted probability of choosing equality over individual opportunity is a function of both empathic ability and individualism as shown in Figure 9 (based on the probit estimates in Table A6 which include a significant interaction between MIE and individualism in both studies).

Figure 9: Predicted Probabilities of Choosing Equality over Opportunity

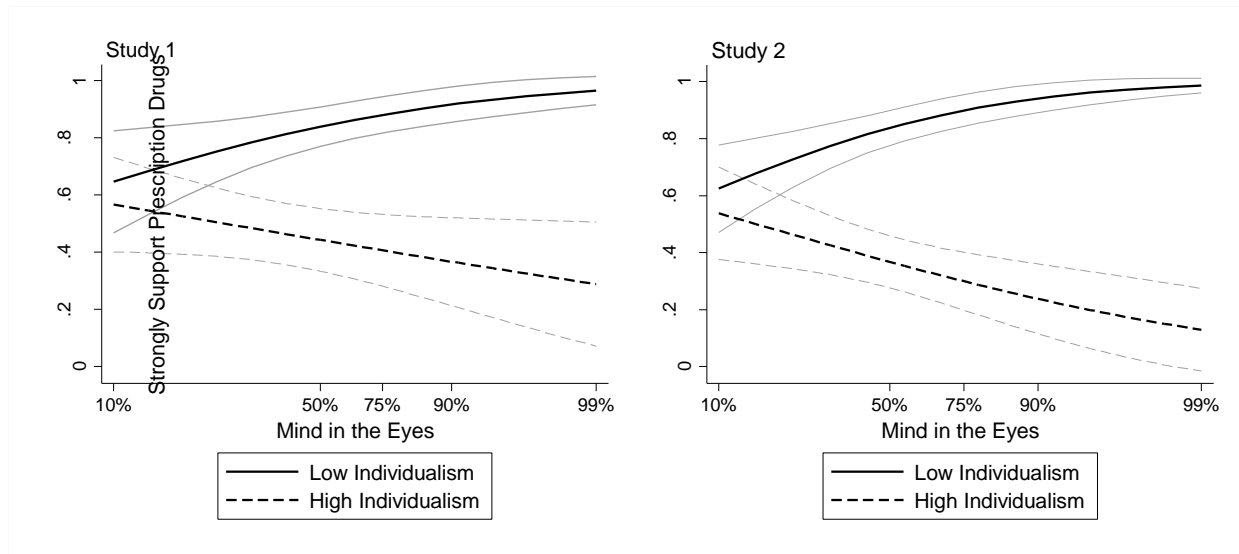


Individualism decreases support for greater equality and increases support for opportunity in both studies. However, individual differences in empathy also matter. Among those low in individualism, support for greater equality increases with higher scores on the MIE measure. Highly empathic liberals are more supportive of equality than less empathic liberals. This means that there is only modest support for greater income equality among those who reject individualism and are low in empathic ability. Empathic ability has the exact opposite effect for those high in individualism. They generally oppose greater equality and this opposition increases with empathic ability. Conservatives highest in empathic ability are thus least willing to trade opportunity for greater income equality.

The divergent effects of empathic ability on support for government social policy among liberals and conservatives can also be seen on questions concerning assistance to seniors, a group seen as generally deserving. In Study 1 respondents were asked “The U.S. government recently changed the way Social Security benefits are calculated so that the annual cost of living raises are smaller than in the past. How strongly do you support or oppose this change?” And in Study 2 respondents were asked “How strongly do you support or oppose the U.S. government paying for all of the cost of prescription drugs for senior citizens who are living on very little income?” If support for government assistance rested

solely on “cold” deservingness judgments it should not vary by values or empathic ability. Figure 10 depicts the predicted probability of support for government assistance to seniors as a function of MIE and individualism (based on ordered probit estimates in Table A7 which includes a significant interaction between MIE and individualism in both studies).

Figure 10: Predicted Probabilities for Social Security Benefits



Once again, empathic ability significantly increases support for government assistance, in this case government benefits for the elderly, among liberals. Among those low in individualism, empathic ability is associated with stronger opposition to cuts in social security benefits (Study 1) and increased support for prescription drug benefits for the elderly (Study 2). Empathy has substantial effects for conservatives as well but they are in the opposite direction. For those who support individualism, empathic ability is associated with greater support for cuts in social security benefits and decreased support for prescription drug benefits for seniors. Even in a situation where “cold” deservingness considerations should dominate policy preferences for needy senior citizens, we find that “hot” empathic reactions act as a backlash against government assistance when they come into conflict with conservatives’ individualistic values.

Robustness

We considered a number of alternative explanations for these findings. The models presented so far were based on the most parsimonious specification: The MIE measure, individualism, and an interaction term. We also estimated all models with controls for gender, age, education, and (in Study 1 race/ethnicity). None of the results change significantly in this expanded model. We also added liberal-conservative self-identification to the models and it did not alter the estimated effects of empathic ability, individualism, or their interaction on any of the dependent variables (estimates are shown in the Appendix).

The moderating effect of empathic ability on individualism in these models looks superficially like those typically found when measures of political sophistication (knowledge) are used to examine the conditional effects of predispositions such as individualism on policy preferences or candidate support. However, there is no evidence that empathy acts as a proxy for sophistication. First, there is no significant correlation between MIE and political knowledge in either study. Second, we included a measure of political knowledge and its interaction with individualism in all of the models (not shown here). The interaction term was frequently significant, as predicted by Zaller (1992). But this had no effect on the results; any interaction between knowledge and individualism is independent of the joint effects of empathy and individualism.

It is also possible that conservatives high in empathic ability have other unmeasured attributes that might account for the trends observed in our analyses. For example, the negative effects of empathic ability on support for benefits to the elderly may reflect an ability to read others' emotional states combined with a willful disregard for their welfare as might typify a classic Machiavellian. Study 2 included a six item measure of Machiavellianism (Christie and Geis 1970) that taps a negative view of human nature and a willingness to manipulate people for self-interest. As has been documented in other research (Lyons, Caldwell, and Shultz 2010) we find a *negative* relationship between empathic

ability and Machiavellianism, indicating that Machiavellians are less adept at reading the emotional states of others. This does not vary by ideology (individualism); even among conservatives, increasing empathy is associated with significantly lower levels of Machiavellianism.¹² In addition, we examined the possibility that variation in empathic ability among conservatives is related to religiosity. Once again, we found no evidence of any link between religiosity and empathic ability.

Conclusions

In the analyses reported in this paper empathic ability, as measured by the Mind in the Eyes test, had strong positive effects on support for government assistance to the needy and aroused increased support for social welfare programs among liberals (those who reject individualism most strongly). Importantly, increasing empathic ability among liberals was strongly associated with greater compassion for an individual who had fallen on hard times. While the MIE measure taps empathic ability — the capacity to accurately read emotions in other people — the results from these studies show that people who score highly on this measure report feeling greater sympathy for someone in need and express a desire to provide assistance when compassion does not conflict with political principles. This is consistent with research suggesting that empathic ability is an important precursor to compassion.

It is easy to believe that empathy works the same way for all humans. Shouldn't someone who is especially attuned to the feelings of others feel sympathy and concern for another human being in need? We have shown, however, that empathy can conflict with conservative beliefs concerning work ethic and individual responsibility. In this case, we have argued that conservatives high in empathic ability experience a conflict between compassion and conservatism, motivating them to suppress empathy. Theory and research on emotional suppression predicts that conservatives will resolve this conflict by reducing compassion and potentially distancing themselves from those in need. As seen in

¹² In another sample we also found a strong negative relationship between empathy and social dominance orientation.

the charity condition in this research, conservatives high in empathic ability do feel sympathy and care for those in need of assistance. When compassion and political beliefs cohere there is no conflict and higher scores on MIE generate greater compassion among liberals and conservatives alike. But when conservatives' beliefs and empathy conflict, compassion is substantially reduced and effectively suppressed. The negative effects of empathic ability on support for egalitarianism and assistance to seniors suggest that empathic conservatives, who like others are regularly confronted with news media stories about the needy, bolster their conservative beliefs over time by paradoxically becoming even more opposed to social welfare programs than less empathic conservatives.

It is important to emphasize that our results are not caused by straightforward ideological reasoning. In general, conservatives may believe that government programs cause harm to individual recipients and those higher in empathic ability may oppose programs out of concern for the affected individuals. But highly empathic conservatives not only oppose government assistance to needy individuals, they also feel less compassion for them, and view them more negatively than conservatives with the same political views but lower empathic abilities. This contradicts the argument that empathetic conservatives oppose government assistance out of a heightened concern about the harm caused by such assistance. Instead, these findings are consistent with the effects of the motivated suppression of empathy.

This brings us back to our earlier discussion of the normative value of ideology and empathy as competing bases of support for social welfare assistance. As noted, the parochial nature of empathy and its greater arousal in response to one rather than many victims raises concerns about it as a basis for the provision of assistance (Decety and Cowell 2014). It is normatively problematic if one vivid instance of someone in need generates greater compassion than a broad-scale humanitarian disaster, leading to a serious misallocation of societal resources. In a set of conditions not discussed in Study 1, we found that the addition of a seriously ill child in the Sperling family resulted in substantially higher levels of

compassion and support for assistance of all kinds for people high and low in individualism.¹³ This is the type of appeal often made by charities that show images of malnourished or disabled children in their fund-raising appeals. But this type of extreme example is less common within discussions of government social welfare policy. When it comes to support for government welfare assistance, empathy does not replace ideology but rather exacerbates ideological differences in a powerful teaming up of heart and mind. This may not be the rational ideal advocated by some normative theorists but it does help to explain the ideological divide and considerable emotional heat surrounding discussions of social welfare policy in the United States.

¹³ Specifically, we added the following two sentences to the Sperling story: “Mark’s 6 year old son, Justin, has just been diagnosed with a life threatening form of cancer and will need expensive medical care to have a chance of recovering. Without a full time job Mark is worried that he will not be able to pay his son’s medical bills.” As we noted earlier, further analysis is required to know whether the boost in reported compassion that we see in these conditions is a result of the powerful effect of a child in need on empathy or social desirability.

APPENDIX

Table A1: Sample Characteristics

	MTurk	YouGov			MTurk	YouGov
	%	%			%	%
Sex				Income		
<i>Male</i>	54.6	44.3		<i>20k or less</i>	17.6	15.0
<i>Female</i>	45.4	55.8		<i>21k-40k</i>	30.9	23.3
				<i>41k-60k</i>	19.6	26.3
Age				<i>60k-100k</i>	23.3	16.3
<i>18-25</i>	23.6	6.3		<i>100k+</i>	8.6	19.3
<i>26-40</i>	49.1	16.5				
<i>41-60</i>	24.2	43.3		Party ID		
<i>61+</i>	3.2	34.0				
				<i>Democrat</i>	42.8	30.3
Race				<i>Independent</i>	24.1	37.5
<i>White</i>	79.0	100.0		<i>Republican</i>	33.1	31.3
<i>Black</i>	8.6					
<i>Asian</i>	6.1			Ideology		
<i>Hispanic</i>	5.3			<i>Liberal</i>	52.2	29.0
<i>Other</i>	1.0			<i>Moderate</i>	6.1	26.5
				<i>Conservative</i>	41.8	44.5
Education						
<i>HS or Less</i>	12.7	33.0				
<i>2 yr. degree or less</i>	42.3	34.5				
<i>Bachelors</i>	34.4	22.3				
<i>Professional</i>	10.6	10.3				

Table A2: Cares About Sperling

	<u>Study 1</u>		<u>Study 2</u>	
Mind in the Eyes	2.67 (1.59)	2.23 (1.64)	5.41 (2.04)	5.43 (2.05)
Individualism	3.08 (1.68)	2.85 (1.74)	4.26 (2.05)	4.21 (2.04)
MIE x Individualism	-5.62 (2.71)	-5.56 (2.82)	-9.41 (3.73)	-9.67 (3.72)
Condition (charity)	2.38 (1.77)	2.73 (1.82)	3.45 (1.33)	3.71 (1.34)
Condition x MIE	-4.04 (2.86)	-4.99 (2.93)	-7.07 (2.33)	-7.33 (2.35)
Condition x Individualism	-5.65 (2.99)	-6.26 (3.07)	-6.95 (2.41)	-6.84 (2.41)
Condition x MIE x Individualism	9.11 (4.85)	10.83 (4.62)	13.03 (4.29)	12.45 (4.29)
Age		.016 (.008)		.024 (.004)
Gender (female)		.41 (.18)		.26 (.13)
College		-.07 (.18)		-.15 (.13)
Ideological Identification (Conservative)		.05 (.29)		-.34 (.22)
White		-.09 (.22)		
threshold 1	0.46	.74	1.13	2.42
threshold 2	1.23	1.54	2.11	3.47
N	204	203	396	396

Note: Entries are maximum likelihood ordered probit estimates with standard errors in parentheses.

Table A3: Support Extending Unemployment Insurance, Government Condition

	<u>Study 1</u>		<u>Study 2</u>	
Mind in the Eyes	3.64 (2.16)	4.76 (2.67)	7.35 (2.29)	8.10 (2.46)
Individualism	2.00 (2.02)	3.15 (2.34)	3.95 (2.11)	4.96 (2.25)
MIE x Individualism	-6.30 (3.53)	-8.58 (4.27)	-12.19 (4.14)	-12.61 (2.33)
Age		.016 (.013)		.005 (.009)
Gender (female)		.66 (.31)		.27 (.27)
College		-.90 (.31)		-.19 (.29)
Ideological Identification (Conservative)		-1.03 (.51)		-1.89 (.48)
White		-.51 (.40)		
threshold 1	0.92	1.04	2.62	2.72
N	99	98	128	128

Note: Entries are maximum likelihood probit coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.

Table A4: Support Charitable Assistance, Charities Condition

	<u>Study 1</u>		<u>Study 2</u>	
Mind in the Eyes	-1.47 (2.85)	-1.79 (2.95)	-2.08 (1.82)	-2.03 (1.96)
Individualism	-5.01 (2.90)	-5.51 (2.97)	-3.03 (1.92)	-2.66 (1.97)
MIE x Individualism	4.51 (4.67)	5.16 (4.77)	4.45 (3.24)	4.07 (2.27)
Age		.000 (.011)		.014 (.007)
Gender (female)		.08 (.27)		.05 (.22)
College		-.17 (.26)		.04 (.23)
Ideological Identification (Conservative)		.15 (.43)		-.42 (.40)
White		-.21 (.31)		
threshold 1	-4.57	-4.96	-3.17	-2.65
threshold 2	-2.58	-2.96	-1.69	-1.08
N	105	105	133	133

Note: Entries are maximum likelihood probit coefficients with standard errors with standard errors in parentheses.

Table A5: Positive Trait Assessments, Study 2

Mind in the Eyes	.55 (.19)	.54 (.21)
Individualism	.54 (.19)	.53 (.20)
MIE x Individualism	-.89 (.34)	-.82 (.36)
Condition (charity)	.43 (.16)	.44 (.17)
Condition x MIE	-.72 (.26)	-.71 (.27)
Condition x Individualism	-.82 (.27)	-.79 (.28)
Condition x MIE x Individualism	1.29 (.46)	1.21 (.48)
Age		.0004 (.0005)
Gender (female)		.03 (.02)
College		-.01 (.02)
Ideological Identification (Conservative)		-.02 (.03)
constant	.40	.38
N	395	395

Note: Entries are OLS regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses.

Table A6: Support for Greater Equality

	<u>Study 1</u>		<u>Study 2</u>	
Mind in the Eyes	2.22 (1.00)	2.41 (1.08)	2.26 (1.08)	2.13 (1.09)
Individualism	.23 (1.09)	.10 (1.11)	0.11 (1.19)	-.03 (1.21)
MIE x Individualism	-3.34 (1.81)	-3.38 (1.84)	-4.59 (2.11)	-4.59 (2.12)
Age		-.016 (.006)		-.007 (.004)
Gender (female)		.11 (.13)		.31 (.14)
College		.27 (.13)		-.17 (.15)
White		-.34 (.16)		
threshold 1	0.44	-.22	0.45	.07
N	413	412	391	391

Note: Entries are maximum likelihood probit coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.

Table A7: Support for Assistance to the Elderly

	<u>Study 1</u>		<u>Study 2</u>	
Mind in the Eyes	2.06 (.82)	1.49 (.83)	-2.93 (.91)	-2.85 (.92)
Individualism	.65 (.86)	.28 (.87)	-1.51 (.97)	-1.43 (.97)
MIE x Individualism	-2.81 (1.40)	-2.09 (1.42)	4.85 (1.67)	4.84 (1.68)
Age		.030 (.005)		-.007 (.004)
Gender (female)		.07 (.11)		-.37 (.11)
College		-.21 (.11)		.30 (.12)
White		-.05 (.13)		
threshold 1	-1.15	-.54	-1.22	-1.61
threshold 2	-0.50	.12	-0.72	-1.09
threshold 3	0.24	.88	0.14	-.20
threshold 4	0.92	1.61	0.65	.35
threshold 5	1.43	2.17	0.93	.65
N	413	412	395	395

Note: Entries are maximum likelihood ordered probit coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.

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