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The "We-ness" and Empathy of Liberalism

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Abstract

Most research in social and political psychology focuses on the psychological antecedents to conservatism; the primary aim of this work was to investigate antecedents to liberalism. This led to an examination of we-ness and empathy as underlying mechanisms to liberal attitudes. Using perspective taking as a cognitive process common to both we-ness and empathy, I tested a model of we-ness and empathy as serial mediators of the effect of perspective taking on political attitudes. Results suggested that we-ness and empathy serially mediated the association between perspective taking and liberalism (and its social and economic sub-attitudes), and empathy independently mediated the association between perspective taking and liberalism (and its social and economic sub-attitudes; Study 1). Causal evidence for this model was less supportive; directly manipulating perspective taking revealed no causal effect on political attitudes in any regard (Study 2). Distinctions between two forms of we-ness (interpersonal vs. collective) and their relationship to liberalism and conservatism are discussed.

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Introduction

Decades of research in political psychology have yielded considerable knowledge regarding the differences between liberals and conservatives and the function of ideology. Most research to date, however, has focused on one side of this ideological spectrum: conservatism. The preoccupation with political conservatism likely stems from the foundational work of Adorno and colleagues on the authoritarian personality (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950), which intrigued researchers after a wave of radical political governments swept the globe during World War II. Knight (1999) indicates the greater interest in conservatism as reflected by the larger number of conservative ideology scales relative to liberal ones, including the Right-wing Authoritarianism Scale (Altemeyer, 1998), the Conservatism Scale (Wilson & Patterson, 1968; Wilson, 1973a), and the Swedish Conservatism Scale (Sidanius, 1976). A major theoretical work in political psychology has been the motivated social cognition approach to ideology, but it, too, is primarily focused on conservatism (Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003). Very little research to date has investigated factors that specifically lead to liberalism; the primary aim of this work is to bridge the gap in the literature.

Liberalism: A Brief Political History

The word *liberal* is defined as being "favorable to progress or reform" and "free from prejudice or bigotry; tolerant" (Dictionary.com, n.d.). Historically, this term was adopted to express a political ideology and worldview spanning back to the era of classical liberalism, promoted by political philosophers Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, among others. This philosophy suggested that individuals can free themselves from the uncertainty and insecurity of life by entering into a social contract with society. In exchange for entering into a social contract and transferring one's natural rights to a sovereign state, individuals receive protection of their

liberty and private property while altogether limiting the reach of government (Hobbes, 1651; Young, 2002). Classical liberalism espoused a decidedly negative view of humanity: all individuals were motivated by self-interest, and the human condition could be characterized by ineluctable suffering. Modern liberalism, beginning around the late nineteenth century, embraced a more humanistic vision of society in that individuals could work together to promote the common good (Adams, 2001). Included in this common good philosophy are notions of *equality, tolerance* (Rawls, 1993), and *neutrality* (Larmore, 1990). All stem from the acknowledgement that there are a variety of ways one can pursue "the good life," and because there is such variety, the government should remain neutral when enforcing life constraints on its citizens (Young, 2002). In the beginning of the twentieth century and spanning into the 1960s, policies of President Franklin Roosevelt's "New Deal" and President Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society" reflected the pursuit of the common good in more modern political liberalism; they promoted increased government spending, economic fairness and opportunity, and equality among groups through the expansion of civil rights (Alterman, 2008; Milkis & Mileur, 2005).

Liberalism and Conservatism: Psychological Definitions and Dimensions

While political psychologists generally echo these notions in their own conceptualizations of liberalism, it is important to note that ideology is typically defined by psychologists as reflecting a unidimensional continuum. Liberalism is on the left of this continuum ("left-wing") and its opposite, conservatism, is on the right ("right-wing"). Thus, liberalism and conservatism are often contrasted, such that more of one necessarily means less of the other. A fundamental distinction between liberalism and conservatism has been said to be societal change, in which liberals tend to accept change and conservatives tend to resist it (Conover & Feldman, 1981; Nosek, Banaji, & Jost, 2009; Stone & Schaffner, 1988). Preferences

for change or stability in society have consequences for equality, such that liberals prefer changes to society that reduce inequality, whereas conservatives prefer keeping society the same, which perpetuates inequality (Anderson & Singer, 2008; Bobbio, 1996; Giddens, 1998; Jost et al., 2003; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Stone & Schaffner, 1988).

Other researchers have echoed these general theoretical distinctions while going deeper. A large area of research has linked conservatism with Right-wing Authoritarianism (Adorno et al., 1950; Stone, 1980), which is the tendency to submit to authority figures that punish social deviants and resist radical changes in society (Altemeyer, 1981; 1998). Stone and Schaffner (1988) also see attitudes toward authority as a central aspect of ideology. They state that liberals are more aversive to authority and keen on protecting social freedoms, whereas conservatives are inclined to prefer traditionalism, submit to authority figures, and enforce social norms. Similarly, other scholars have noted the relationship between conservatism and liberalism and the tendency to either maintain social norms or violate them, respectively (Kerlinger, 1984; Loye, 1977; Tomkins, 1963; 1965; 1987; 1995).

A considerable amount of research and scholarship falls in line with a unidimensional conceptualization of ideology. Many ideology scales only measure conservative tendencies (e.g., Right-wing Authoritarianism, Altemeyer, 1998; Social and Economic Conservatism Scale, Everett, 2013; Wilson-Patterson C-Scale, Wilson & Patterson, 1968; Wilson, 1973a); specific liberal tendencies or factors, they argue, need not be assessed if ideologies are merely opposites. Thus, those scoring highly on one of these measures are conservative, and therefore those scoring low are necessarily liberal (see Knight, 1999 for a review). It is further argued that orthogonality is rare in terms of ideological beliefs because even a moderate amount of political sophistication has been shown to engender unidimensional attitudes (Sidanius & Duffy, 1988;

Sidanius & Lau, 1989; Luskin, 1987). Other scholars, too, indicate that those with high exposure to political discourse tend to have more unidimensionally consistent attitudes (Malka et al., 2014). Unidimensionality is also easier to interpret and makes individual voters less prone to information overload. This has practical value, and helps individuals reduce a broad range of issues onto a single left-right dimension to see if politicians' views match their own (Jost et al., 2009). This has especially been shown to be the case for those with the motivation and adequate political knowledge to do so (Federico, 2007; Federico & Schneider, 2007; Lau & Redlawsk, 2001).

A smaller group of scholars, however, argue that liberalism and conservatism are not unidimensional, but dualistic or orthogonal; one's place along one dimension is independent of their place along the other. Kerlinger (1984) and Conover and Feldman (1981) support this latter position, suggesting liberals and conservatives are not merely opposites of one another. Although they may have opposing tendencies, they also have unique attitudes toward objects in the world, and these attitudes generate unique perspectives of how the world should function. Kerlinger (1984) calls these attitudes *criterial referents*, and argues that, "what is relevant or salient for one individual is not relevant or salient for another individual" (p. 32). When measuring these attitudes, defining liberalism as the antithesis of conservatism constrains liberal attitude items. To get a more accurate measurement of each ideological pole, an array of items should be used to form two discrete subscales, one liberal and one conservative (Kerlinger, 1984).

Scholars have confirmed the orthogonal nature of Kerlinger's subscales by showing that the liberal and conservative items load on independent factors (Baggaley, 1976; Marjoribanks & Josefowitz, 1975; Ziegler & Atkinson, 1973) and are often "stubbornly" negatively correlated around $r = -.20$ (Jost, Federico, & Napier, 2009). Kerlinger's (1984) orthogonal subscales have

also been supported by research with feeling thermometers, such that liberals and conservatives both tend to feel more "warmly" than "coldly" toward political figures (Conover & Feldman, 1981; Green, 1988; Knight, 1984). If ideology is unidimensional, it is argued, a conservative would necessarily have more positive feelings toward conservatives and more negative feelings toward liberals. Kerlinger (1984) is not the only scholar whose theory supports an orthogonal view of political ideology. *Polarity theory* (Tomkins, 1963, 1965, 1987, 1995) suggests that a *humanistic-normative* orientation underlies the liberal-conservative dimension, and these orientations have been found to be both orthogonal and not significantly correlated (De St. Aubin, 1996; Thomas, 1976, 1978).

An even more complex conceptualization of dimensionality comes from the suggestion that ideology is dually orthogonal, that is, not only are liberalism and conservatism independent, but the social and economic factors that make up these ideologies are independent (Duckitt, 2001; Duckitt & Sibley, 2009; Duckitt, Wagner, du Plessis, & Birum, 2002; Evans, Heath, & Lalljee, 1996; Feldman & Johnston, 2014). In general, social (or cultural) attitudes can be thought of as one's perspective on the structure of society, the interaction of its members (e.g., social roles and relationships), and needs for collective security. Economic attitudes can be thought of as one's perspective on how the government should be involved in economic enterprise, intervention, and the redistribution of wealth for welfare policies (Malka et al., 2014; Treier & Hillygus, 2009). Research suggests only 40% of a representative sample in the United States self-identifying as liberal or conservative endorsed ideologically consistent social and economic attitudes. The majority of social and economic attitudes were not unidimensional, but variable and independent (Feldman & Johnston, 2014). Corroborating these findings is work by Duckitt and colleagues (2001, 2009), who argue that underlying ideology are two motivational

value dimensions that are orthogonal to one another: *conservation-openness* and *self-enhancement—self-transcendence*. The conservation-openness dimension is significantly correlated with one's orientation toward social conformity, submitting to authority, and punishing social deviants (i.e., right-wing authoritarianism; Altemeyer, 1998), which is argued to be a more social-cultural dimension of ideology. Those high on this dimension tend to be more conservative, and those low more liberal (Stangor & Leary, 2006). The self-enhancement—self-transcendence values dimension is significantly correlated with one's orientation toward intergroup competition (i.e., social dominance orientation; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999), a dimension argued to represent both social *and* economic factors of ideology (Malko, Soto, Inzlicht, & Lelkes, 2014). Likewise, those high on this dimension are more conservative and those low more liberal. Overall, the perspective of Duckitt and colleagues (2001, 2002, 2009) represents a dual-process model of ideology, in which individuals can be high on one dimension but low on another because each dimension represents fundamentally discrete perspectives of the world.

At least for the purposes of this work, ideology will be conceptualized as orthogonal, with liberalism and conservatism being composed of social and economic subfactors. But as can be seen, the scope of scholarly definitions of liberalism and conservatism are broad, as are their suggested structures. Along similar lines, scholars have debated what, exactly, a political ideology *is*. These conceptualizations are varied, and include viewing ideology as a general value system constructed from the environment, a personality variable that influences reactions to stimuli in a particular way, and the mediator between one's personality and values (Jost et al., 2009). These conceptualizations have given rise to debates regarding the proposed function of ideology.

The Function of Ideology and the Motivated Social Cognition Approach

The notion that ideology is a value system constructed from the environment is commonly promoted by political scientists. They argue that ideology is a function of top-down processes, developed by political parties and elites who craft values for consumption by individual voters (Feldman, 1988; Fiorina, Abrams, & Pope, 2005; Poole & Rosenthal, 1997). In other words, political ideology is a socially or environmentally constructed value system that is distributed from political elites to individuals through discourse, and the ideas carried within the discourse are either supported or rejected (Sniderman & Bullock, 2004; Zaller, 1992).

Political psychologists, however, view ideology as a function of more bottom-up processes, in which cognitive and motivational factors influence the development of belief systems that are adaptive for those factors (Jost, 2006; Judd & Krosnick, 1989; Lavine et al., 1997). Theorists such as Adorno and colleagues (1950), Wilson (1973b), and Tomkins (1963, 1965, 1987, 1995) take this position, and argue that ideology is not picked up haphazardly from the environment (or any system of political elites). Ideology is functional, and its development within the individual serves to manage chronic motivational tendencies.

The most influential—and dominant—theoretical work in political psychology stems from this debate. In their motivated social cognition approach, Jost and colleagues (2003) suggest that the adoption of a conservative ideology is due to a desire to manage inherent psychological needs; because individuals are inclined to perceive the world in ways that satisfy certain needs (Abelson, 1995; Kruglanski, 1996), it is argued that a variety of deep-seated epistemic, existential, and ideological motives drive conservative behavior and perception.

Among the epistemic motives for conservatives are desires to think and process stimuli in ways that are rigid or dogmatic (Altemeyer, 1981; 1998; Christie, 1991; Frenkel-Brunswick, 1949; Rock & Janoff-Bulman, 2010; Rokeach, 1960; Smithers & Lobley, 1978; Stone, 1980;

Wilson, 1973b), clear and final (Kruglanski, 1989; Kruglanski & Webster, 1996; Webster &

Kruglanski, 1994), unambiguous (Furnham & Ribchester, 1995), and generally with less

cognitive complexity (Tetlock, 1983; Tetlock, Bernzweig, & Gallant, 1985; cf. Gruenfeld, 1995).

Existential motives include a relationship between conservatism and a desire to manage the fear

of death (Greenberg et al., 1990; Rosenblatt, Greenberg, Solomon, Pyszczynski, & Lyon, 1989;

Wilson, 1973b; see Burke, Kosloff, & Landua, 2013 for a meta-analytic review) and perceptions

of threat and a threatening world (Altemeyer, 1998; Lavine, Burgess, Snyder, Transue, Sullivan,

Haney, & Wagner, 1999), as well as a greater tendency for conservatives to experience emotions

such as contempt and disgust (Tomkins, 1963, 1965, 1987, 1995; Inbar, Pizarro, & Bloom, 2009;

Inbar, Pizarro, Iyer, & Haidt, 2012; Terrizzi, Shook, & Ventis, 2010; Williams, 1984).

Conservative ideology consists of the motive to justify existing systems after instances of

instability or threat (Jost, 1995; Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004; Jost, Burgess, & Mosso, 2001; Jost

& van der Toorn, 2012; McCann, 1997), and minimize group conflict by perpetuating

hierarchical societies, in which some groups are legitimized as more superior than others (Pratto,

1999; Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999).

In sum, Jost and his colleagues' (2003) motivated social cognition approach to

conservatism integrates previously disparate areas of political psychology research (e.g., theories

related to personality, ideology, and general situational or dispositional factors) to suggest that

conservatism is an ideology based on a collection of psychological needs. With this integration,

they argue more broadly that conservatism offers a psychological platform to quell experiences

of fear and uncertainty, primarily by endorsing attitudes, behaviors, and policies that perpetuate

the status quo and inequality among groups. This is indeed the dominant perspective in the

political psychological literature, but it is not without its issues and critics. Although the

perspective of Jost and colleagues (2003) primarily addresses conservatism, it does so at the expense of a more nuanced and complex investigation of not only liberalism, but ideology in general. The motivated social cognition approach takes a decidedly unidimensional stance on ideology, to which a growing number of scholars have disagreed (e.g., Duckitt, 2001; Duckitt & Sibley, 2009; Feldman & Johnston, 2014; Greenberg & Jonas, 2003; Malka et al., 2014). Some argue that unidimensionality is too reductionistic, and that researchers must measure individuals' social and economic attitudes (at the very least) to appreciate the complexities of ideology (Feldman & Johnston, 2014). If conservatism and liberalism are independent ideological poles, Jost and colleagues' (2003) emphasis on conservatism cannot speak to the psychological factors underlying liberalism. Thus, in the present work, I investigate psychological antecedents to liberalism, and emphasize a more nuanced conceptualization of ideology by examining social and economic sub-attitudes. This notwithstanding, a discussion of the motivated social cognition approach is for good reason; some of the findings of Jost and colleagues (2003) allude to interesting—and largely underappreciated—components of liberalism that are relevant to the work at hand.

Ideology: A Basis for Openness and Group Boundaries

One of the best predictors of political orientation is Openness to Experience, a personality trait in which more liberal and egalitarian individuals have been found to score consistently higher than conservatives (Carney, Jost, Gosling, & Potter, 2008; Jost, 2006; McCrae, 2002; McCrae & Sutin, 2009; McCrae, Terracciano, et al., 2005; Van Hiel & Mervielde, 2004). These findings are couched in the thinking of Rokeach (1960), who noted, "to the extent that the cognitive need to know is predominant and the need to ward off threat is absent, open systems should result… But as the need to ward off threat becomes stronger, the cognitive need to know

should become weaker, resulting in more closed belief systems" (p. 67). Thus, because liberals are less inclined to perceive threat (Carraro, Castelli, & Macchiella, 2011; Jost & Amodio, 2012), they are more open to experiences, sensation seeking, and exploration (Carney et al., 2008; Levin & Schalmo, 1974; Looft, 1971). Conservatives' tendency to experience threat and uncertainty in the world (Jost et al., 2003; Jost & Amodio, 2012), however, is associated with closed belief systems and an aversion to exploration, including an avoidance of sensation seeking (Kish, 1973) and external stimulation (Wilson, 1973b).

The differentiation between liberals and conservatives regarding open- and closed-mindedness is related to conceptualizations of political ideology as having either an approach or avoidance motivation (Janoff-Bulman, 2009). Using regulatory focus theory (Higgins, 1997, 1998) and behavioral activation/inhibition systems (Carver & Scheier, 2008) as a framework, Janoff-Bulman (2009) argues that liberal ideologies are more approach-oriented and focus on *providing* support and welfare to others through incentives, goals, and rewards; in other words, liberals are activation based. Conservatives, however, are said to be avoidance-oriented, focusing on *protecting* individuals from negative outcomes and threats (i.e., more inhibition based). These distinctions are also reminiscent of the "nurturing parent" attachment style of liberals and "strict father" style of conservatives (Lakoff, 2002; Rohan & Zanna, 1998), as well as Tomkins' ideo-affective polarity theory (1963, 1965, 1987, 1995), which suggests that affective motivations underlying ideology range from one's belief in the individual as either inherently good and benefitting from nurturance, or inherently bad and requiring regulation.

Janoff-Bulman, Sheikh, and Hepp (2009) extend the approach-avoidance motivations of liberalism and conservatism and suggest that these motivational orientations are related to moral values. Liberals, who focus on behavioral activation and positive outcomes, are said to have a

prescriptive morality, or a view of "what we should do." Conservatives, focusing on behavioral

inhibition and negative outcomes, are said to have a *proscriptive morality*, or a view of "what we

should not do." Janoff-Bulman, Sheikh, and Baldacci (2008) suggest that these moral motives

are independent social factors, one being liberal "equity" issues (e.g., stronger approval for

affirmative action and welfare) and the other conservative "lifestyle" issues (e.g., stronger

disapproval of gay marriage, abortion, and stem cell research).

Liberals, as evidenced by their preoccupation with welfare and equity (Anderson &

Singer, 2008; Giddens, 1998; Janoff-Bulman et al., 2008; Kerlinger, 1984), value community by

sharing resources across groups. Conservatives, who tend to support more hierarchical societies

(Altemeyer, 1998; Giddens, 1998; Jost et al., 2003; Pratto et al., 1994; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999)

and social norms (Loye, 1977; Kerlinger, 1984) value community by advancing social order.

While liberals and conservatives have been found to score similarly on the Individualism-

Collectivism scale (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998), they differ in their emphasis on either horizontal

or vertical community orientations (but see Talhelm, Haidt, et al., 2015 for a more cultural

conception of ideology). Cooperation across groups (i.e., horizontal perspectives) was associated

with greater liberalism, but hierarchical order between groups (i.e., vertical perspectives) was

associated with greater conservatism (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013). In other words, liberals

are motivated to support interdependence across groups, in which all individuals are members of

a much more inclusive society of human beings, whereas conservatives are motivated to support

intergroup boundaries and exclusivity (Janoff-Bulman, 2009).

A fundamental facet of liberalism, then, may be its focus on the boundaries among

individuals in society (Janoff-Bulman, 2009). Tendencies toward openness and inclusion rather

than exclusion suggest that liberals may perceive group boundaries that are less rigid and more

open compared to conservatives (Rock & Janoff-Bulman, 2010; Adorno et al., 1950; Carney et al., 2008; Kruglanski & Webster, 1996; Van Hiel & Mervielde, 2004). Indeed, when people are primed with inclusive "we" terms, liberal attitudes increase, which in turn increases support for human rights (van der Toorn, Napier, & Dovidio, 2014). In other words, thinking about people in more inclusive terms leads to greater endorsement of liberalism; this, in turn, leads to increased concern for the welfare of others. Recent evidence also suggests that, relative to conservatives, liberals are more motivated by affiliation, which is defined in terms of social connectedness with others (Fettermen, Boyd, & Robinson, 2015).

If liberals are more open and inclusive in their perception of boundaries among people, it should also affect the inclusivity of their care and concern for others. A large literature shows that liberals perceive the world as more cooperative and nurturing (compared to competitive and ruthless); these perceptions engender motivational values to care for and help one's fellow neighbors (Duckitt, 2001; Duckitt & Sibley, 2009; Schwartz, 1992). The cooperative/nurturing dimension of liberalism has been linked to one's orientation toward intergroup competitiveness, or social dominance (SDO; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Stangor & Leary, 2006). SDO is negatively correlated with concern for others (Pratto et al., 1994). Because liberals perceive a nurturing world and are motivated to help others, it is no surprise that liberals (compared to conservatives) are more likely to engage in actions of welfare and public compassion, even when targets are personally responsible for their plight[1] (Skitka & Tetlock, 1992; Skitka & Tetlock, 1993; Skitka, 1999).

Although this research provides some basic support for the relationship among liberalism, inclusivity, and concern for others, little research to date has investigated these findings in the

context of (1) perceived interconnectedness, or "*we-ness*," with others, and (2) empathy toward

others.

The "We-ness" and Empathy of Liberalism

> We Democrats believe we must be the family of America, recognizing that at the heart of the matter we are bound one to another, that the problems of a retired school teacher in Duluth are *our* problems; that the future of the child in Buffalo is *our* future; that the struggle of a disabled man in Boston to survive and live decently is *our* struggle; that the hunger of a woman in Little Rock is *our* hunger; that the failure anywhere to provide what reasonably we might, to avoid pain, is *our* failure. – Mario Cuomo, 1984 Democratic National Convention

The above national convention passage includes key examples of we-ness and empathy in

liberalism. Inclusionary "we" and "our" terms suggest a focus on reducing boundaries and

recognizing the interconnectedness of all people. The passage also highlights statements of

compassion and being emotionally "in tune" to the struggles of others. In this work, I propose

that *we-ness* and empathy are fundamental—and underappreciated—components of liberalism,

and argue that increasing *we-ness* and empathy can lead to the adoption of liberal attitudes.

The perception of "*we-ness*" with others can be conceptualized at two different levels of

abstraction: interpersonal and collective. Interpersonal we-ness typically refers to those dyadic

relationships between partners, family, or close friends (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). The literature

on intimate relationships suggests that, over time, the characteristics of close others begin to

"merge" with the self-concept (Aron, Aron, Tudor, & Nelson, 1991). Merging between self and

other has been described as a cognitive process in which the mental representation of the self and

another becomes increasingly intertwined and indistinguishable (Davis, Conklin, Smith, & Luce,

1996; Lauren & Myers, 2011). A measure has been developed to tap into the concept of self-

other merging, asking people to choose one of seven increasingly overlapping circles to represent

their perception of "self" and "other" (Aron, Aron, & Smollan, 1992). The area that overlaps between the "self" and "other" can be characterized as the shared perception of we-ness (e.g., Cialdini, Brown, Lewis, Luce, & Neuberg, 1997[2]).

Scholars have also defined "*we-ness*" at a more collective level. Collective we-ness is more abstract and impersonal, and can be characterized as the symbolic perception of the interconnectedness of individuals based on some social or group membership (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). In other words, personal or intimate contact need not occur to experience a sense of collective we-ness. While interpersonal and collective forms of we-ness have been argued to be distinct social representations, they are typically fluid and coexist within all individuals (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Turner, 1987). I conceptualize we-ness quite broadly to incorporate both interpersonal and collective forms of we-ness, and therefore focus on interpersonal self-other merging as well as the more collective perception of interconnectedness among people.

Empathy is defined broadly as any vicarious emotion experienced in relation to how another person is feeling (Batson & Coke, 1981; Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987; Krebs, 1975; Stotland, 1969). These emotional reactions have primarily been characterized as other-oriented feelings of compassion, tenderness, softheartedness, sympathy, and warmth, and are based on perceptions of attachment and "*we-feeling*" (Batson, Duncan et al., 1981; Batson & Shaw, 1991). Empathic arousal often leads to non-egoistic helping behaviors when another is perceived to be struggling or in need. This relationship has been called the empathy-altruism hypothesis, and while it has wide support (Batson et al., 1981; Batson, 1991; Dovidio, Allen, & Schroeder, 1990; Schroeder, Dovidio, Sibicky, Matthews, & Allen, 1988), debate still abounds (see Batson, 1997; Batson, Sager, et al., 1997; Cialdini et al., 1997).

One route to both we-ness and empathy is by taking the perspective of a target (i.e.,

perspective taking), which can be done by imagining how another person thinks or feels in a situation (Batson, 2011; Batson & Shaw, 1991). This is distinct from imagining how the self would feel in a situation, which engenders personal distress (Batson, Early, & Salvarani, 1997; Batson & Shaw, 1991). Batson, Early, Salvarani, and others (1997) indicate that, when perspective taking, "what is perceived is not yourself; what is perceived is the other's situation" (p. 751). Research suggests that perspective taking directly brings about a nonconscious merging of the self and other, causing the target to appear more self-like (Batson, Sager, et al., 1997; Cialdini, Brown, Lewis, Luce, & Neuberg, 1997; Davis, Conklin, Smith, & Luce, 1996; Laurent & Myers, 2011). Perspective taking also directly increases empathy by allowing the perspective taker to be in tune to the emotional state of another (Batson & Shaw, 1991).

In terms of the sequence of perceived we-ness and empathy, it has been argued that empathy stems from the ambiguous boundary between self and other (Wegner, 1980), that is, we-ness precedes empathy. While Batson and colleagues' (1981, 1991) coining of the term "*we-feeling*" suggests a close relationship between we-ness and empathic feelings, we-ness and empathy, along with perspective taking, are distinct processes (e.g., Coke, Batson, & McDavis, 1978; Davis, 1994). Imagining how another thinks or feels in a situation (i.e., perspective taking) is a cognitive process that merges a once-distinct cognitive representation of "self" and "other" into a more ambiguous perception of "we." A more inclusive boundary between "self" and "other" (or people more generally) causes the perspective taker to have an empathic reaction that is based on the cognitive representation of we-ness. In the current proposal, I interpret "*we-feeling*" to represent this sequence: an affective reaction that stems from the cognitive representation of we-ness (cf. Cialdini et al., 1997).

Research indicates liberalism is related to both perceived we-ness and empathy in distinct

ways. For example, recent evidence suggests that, relative to conservatives, liberals are more

motivated by affiliation, which is defined in terms of social connectedness with others

(Fettermen, Boyd, & Robinson, 2015). Priming individuals with collective "we-ness" terms (e.g.,

we, our) increased liberal self-identification and support for human rights (van der Toorn et al.,

2014). Other research shows that having one's behaviors mimicked increased support for liberal

policies (Stel & Harinck, 2011) because mimicry causes us "to view the self as being more

connected with others" (p. 83). Viewing individuals as more interconnected is consistent with

other scholars' notions that liberals see fewer boundaries between individuals (Janoff-Bulman,

2009) and categories more generally (Rock & Janoff-Bulman, 2010). Thus, perceiving people as

"being bound one to another" should increase liberal attitudes.

Regarding empathy, scholars have indicated a link between liberalism and tender-

mindedness, sympathy, and compassion (Duckitt, 2001; Duckitt & Sibley, 2009; Hirsh,

DeYoung, Xu, & Peterson, 2010; Schwartz, 1992); human warmth and feeling (Kerlinger, 1984),

and empathy as a fundamental lesson to learn in life (McAdams et al., 2008). Many of these

terms have been identified by Batson and colleagues (1981, 1991) as the core of the empathy

construct itself. Additional research shows perspective taking increases the extent to which you

value others' welfare (Batson et al., 1995); concern for the welfare of others is a fundamental

aspect of liberalism (Duckitt, 2001; Duckitt & Sibley, 2009; Janoff-Bulman, 2009; Janoff-

Bulman et al., 2008) and liberals' behavior toward the needy (Skitka & Tetlock, 1992; Skitka &

Tetlock, 1993; Skitka, 1999).

Importantly, we-ness and empathy might differentially affect social and economic sub-

attitudes of liberalism. We-ness, which is a cognitive representation in which people are

perceived to be more similar and connected to others (and the self), should predict attitudes about

the equal rights shared among all human beings. Preference for equality represents a primary component of social liberalism (e.g., Anderson & Singer, 2008; Kerlinger, 1984). Empathy has been shown to increase concern for others, which leads to valuing another's welfare (Batson, Polycarpou et al., 1997; Batson, Turk, Shaw, & Klein, 1995). Empathic concern and valuing another's welfare engender a pro-social motivation to help a target perceived to be in need (Batson, 1991; Batson, Sager, et al., 1997; Cialdini et al., 1997; Davis, 1994). For instance, research suggests taking the perspective of a disabled student caused individuals to support using university funds to develop facilities for other disabled students (Clore & Jeffery, 1972). Similarly, taking the perspective of a heroin addict (which led to empathic concern) increased support for using community funds to open counseling addiction services (Batson, Chang, Orr, & Rowland, 2002). These findings can be conceptualized as having influenced political attitudes in that empathic concern led individuals to distribute public resources to help those in need. As such, empathic concern should predict attitudes about the government's role in providing social welfare programs for the needy and disadvantaged, which is a primary component of economic liberalism (e.g., Janoff-Bulman et al., 2008; Kerlinger, 1984).

Overall, we-ness and empathy should predict liberalism, but for different reasons and in distinct attitude dimensions. We-ness should independently mediate the relationship between perspective taking and social liberalism, and empathy should independently mediate the relationship between perspective taking and economic liberalism. Importantly, these relationships should not be as strongly related to conservatism. However, conservatives have been shown to be less sympathetic or empathic toward others (Eisenberg-Berg & Mussen, 1980; Skitka & Tetlock, 1992; Skitka & Tetlock, 1993; Sidanius et al., 2013; Williams, 1984), and to use beliefs in self-reliance as justification for not helping individuals in need (Janoff-Bulman et

al., 2008; Sniderman et al., 1986). Thus, it is possible that empathy may independently mediate the relationship between perspective taking and lower economic conservatism. Because the social-cultural factor of conservatism is more related to beliefs in social conformity, submission to authority, and security from threat (Duckitt, 2001; Duckitt & Sibley, 2009; Malka et al., 2014) rather than perceived we-ness and empathy, the constructs of interest should not be associated with social conservatism. Using two studies, one correlational and the other experimental, I explore the relationships among perspective taking, we-ness, empathy, and political attitudes.

Study 1

Research has shown that ideological self-identification is correlated with empathy (McAdams, 2008), compassion, and sympathy (Duckitt, 2001; Duckitt & Sibley, 2009; Hirsh, DeYoung, Xu, & Peterson, 2010). Reid and Foels (2010) measured the relationship between ideological self-identification and perspective taking and empathy, but found no significant relationships. Other research indicates that empathy or compassion is correlated with indirect proxies for liberal and conservative ideology, such as social dominance orientation (Sidanius et al., 2013) and Tomkins' ideo-affective orientations (Williams, 1984). These findings, however, do not assess how empathy is associated with a more complex conceptualization of the social and economic attitude structure of liberal and conservative ideology. Furthermore, no research has examined this relationship when other consequences of perspective taking are included, such as perceived we-ness. The primary aim of this study is to test a correlational model of the relationship between perspective taking and the social and economic attitudes of liberalism and conservatism and, in particular, examine the explanatory power of we-ness and empathy as serial mediators of this relationship (see figure 1 for a representational model).

To analyze this model, serial mediation will be used. Serial mediation is a regression-based analytic technique in Hayes' (2013) PROCESS macro for SPSS, and allows for the testing of more than one mediator in a causal-chain model. When two mediators are designated, as in the present work, PROCESS provides three indirect effects: the indirect effect of *X* on *Y* through mediator 1 (M_1), the indirect effect of *X* on *Y* through mediator 2 (M_2), and the serial indirect effect of *X* on *Y* through M_1 and then M_2. In the context of the present work, serial mediation will test if (1) perspective taking has an effect on political attitudes through we-ness, (2) perspective taking has an effect on political attitudes through empathy, and (3) perspective has an effect on political attitudes through we-ness and, in turn, through empathy.

Predictions

The serial mediation model generates nine predictions for liberalism: 3 mediators (we-ness, empathy, we-ness × empathy) × 3 dependent variables (liberalism, social liberalism, economic liberalism). Because we-ness and empathy have both been shown to be linked to liberalism as a whole (e.g., van der Toorn et al., 2014; McAdams et al., 2008), I predict that we-ness and empathy will each independently mediate the relationship between perspective taking and liberalism. Because serial mediation stipulates that it is ultimately M_2 (empathy) that affects the dependent variable (liberalism) (see Hayes, 2013), I also predict that the serial process of we-ness and empathy will mediate the relationship between perspective taking and liberalism. Next, I predict that we-ness will independently mediate the relationship between perspective taking and social liberalism, whereas empathy will not. In other words, social liberalism should be reached, at least in part, through we-ness. Thus, I predict that the serial effect of we-ness on empathy will mediate the relationship between perspective taking and social liberalism. Finally, empathy will independently mediate the relationship between perspective taking and economic liberalism,

whereas we-ness will not; economic liberalism should be reached, at least in part, through empathy. Thus, the serial effect of we-ness on empathy will mediate the relationship between perspective taking and economic liberalism. This model should be less consistently related to social conservatism in particular and conservatism more generally. However, because economic conservatism stems from a lack of empathy to help those in need (e.g., Sidanius et al., 2013; Janoff-Bulman et al., 2008) it is possible that empathy will independently mediate the relationship between perspective taking and lower economic conservatism, and therefore the serial effect of we-ness on empathy will mediate the relationship between perspective taking and lower economic conservatism.

Because I conceptualize ideology in this proposal as orthogonal, with liberal and conservative attitudes further being composed of orthogonal social and economic items (Duckitt, 2001; Duckitt & Sibley, 2009; Duckitt et al., 2002; Evans, Heath, & Lalljee, 1996; Feldman & Johnston, 2014; Kerlinger, 1984), a political attitudes scale representing this conceptualization was needed for the present work. The factors outlined by Kerlinger's (1984) Social Referents Scale (SRS) provide orthogonal liberalism and conservatism subscales, but do not break these down into social and economic subfactors. Furthermore, Kerlinger's factors may be out of date and based on more exploratory structuring of political attitudes. Thus, a new factor analysis on both the SRS and an alternate set of political attitude items was done as a preliminary analysis in Study 1.

Method

Participants and Procedure. Two hundred seventy-six undergraduates completed an online study about public opinion and social perception in exchange for partial fulfillment of a course requirement (see Appendix K for research compliance approval). Fifteen participants

were excluded for failing an attention check item ("This is an attention check item. Please select '3' for this answer."), as well as four participants for giving responses three standard deviations from the mean on the perceived we-ness, liberal, and conservative ideology subscales.[3] This left a final sample of 257 participants for analyses (62% female, $M_{age} = 19.87$, $SD = 3.78$). After providing informed consent, participants completed randomized measures of perspective taking, perceived we-ness, empathy, and two scales of liberal and conservative political attitudes. After finishing the study, participants were thanked and debriefed.

Perspective taking. Perspective taking was measured using the 7-item perspective-taking subscale (Appendix A) of the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1983; e.g., "Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place" and "I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the 'other guy's' point of view" [reverse-scored]; α = .81). Responses were scored on a 1 (*not at all like me*) to 5 (*very much like me*) scale.

We-ness. Perceived we-ness was measured in two ways: interpersonal and collective we-ness. The first was assessed by using Aron and colleagues' (1992) IOS measure (Appendix B), which asks individuals to choose an option among seven increasingly overlapping dyadic circles between "Self" and "Other." The instructions for this measure were reframed to assess dispositional interpersonal we-ness: "In general, choose the circle below that best represents how you usually see yourself in relation to others."

The second measure was a six-item scale created to investigate one's preference for "we" relative to "me" terms (Appendix C); the more one prefers "we" terms, the more collective-oriented they should be (e.g., van der Toorn et al., 2014). The instructions for this scale read, "For each term below, please choose the number (1 = *very unpleasant*, 7 = *very pleasant*) that best represents your feelings toward the word." The items *we*, *our*, *us*, *I*, *me*, and *mine* were each

rated on this scale. Other terms were included to disguise the scale (e.g., *went*, *for*, *then*). The we- and me-terms were averaged to form we-ness ($\alpha = .84$) and me-ness ($\alpha = .78$) composites. A difference scale was generated by subtracting the we-ness from the me-ness subscale, providing participants' preference for we- relative to me-terms. Because the interpersonal we-ness scale and the collective we-ness scale were positively correlated, $r = .13$, $p = .03$, each scale was *Z*-transformed and combined to form an index of *we-ness*.

Empathy. The empathy construct was devised from two scales. The first was the 7-item empathic concern subscale (Appendix D) of Davis' Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1983; e.g., "I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me"; $\alpha = .79$). The second scale was six adjectives (*sympathetic, softhearted, warm, compassionate, tender,* and *moved*) taken from Batson and colleagues (1981, 1991), which have been argued to represent the core of the empathy construct (Appendix E). These adjectives were reframed as dispositional items (e.g., "I see myself as a *warm* person," and "I do not often feel *moved* by the struggles of others" [reverse-scored]), and formed a reliable scale ($\alpha = .83$). Both measures were scored on a 1 (*not at all like me*) to 5 (*very much like me*) scale. Because the empathic concern subscale and the empathy adjectives subscale were positively correlated, $r = .80$, $p < .001$, they were each combined to form a reliable index of *empathy* ($\alpha = .89$).

Political attitudes

Kerlinger's Social Referents Scale. Participants' liberal and conservative political attitudes were measured using Kerlinger's (1984) Social Referents Scale (SRS, Appendix F). The SRS is an orthogonal scale of political attitudes, containing 25 items measuring political liberalism (e.g., *equality*, *social change*, *socialized medicine*) and 25 items measuring political conservatism (e.g., *private property*, *church*, *patriotism*). Six additional terms were added to the

scale: *social welfare*, *intergroup cooperation*, and *diversity* for liberalism (α = .88); *tradition*, *ingroup loyalty*, and *conformity* for conservatism (α = .90). Items were answered on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) scale.

  Alternate political attitude items. An alternate political attitudes scale (Appendix G) was developed for the purpose of this project, and reflects a broad range of perspectives on the conceptual structure of political attitudes (e.g., Altemeyer, 1998; Duckitt, 2001; Kerlinger, 1984; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Stone & Schaffner, 1988). The alternate measure is a 20-item scale representing social and economic attitudes for both liberal and conservative ideology. The liberalism subscale is ten items (α = .70), and is composed of 5 social (e.g., "Making sure all humans have equal rights is important for society to work") and 5 economic attitude items (e.g., "The government should provide welfare programs to care for the needy and disadvantaged"). The conservatism subscale is also ten items (α = .72), and is structured similarly: social (e.g., "People get it wrong when they look to government for authority; we should look to God for authority") and economic (e.g., "The government has no right to take hard-earned money from some people and redistribute it to others"). All items were answered on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) scale.

Results

  Preliminary Exploratory Factor Analyses (EFA)

  Kerlinger's Social Referents Scale. Using principal axis factoring in SPSS, two separate exploratory factor analyses—one for the liberalism and one for the conservatism subscale—were conducted on the 56-item SRS. Each subscale was constrained to a two-factor solution (see details below) in an attempt to discriminate between social and economic subfactors. Because social and economic factors of ideology have been argued to be independent (Duckitt et al.,

2002; Feldman & Johnston, 2014; Malka et al., 2014), an orthogonal rotation seemed appropriate for the data. Tabachnick and Fiddell (2007), however, suggest that oblique rotations should first be used to examine the raw correlations among factors; if factors correlate below .32, an orthogonal rotation is warranted. When examining factor loadings, items were deemed to adequately load on a factor if the item-factor correlation was .32 or above (at least 10% overlapping variance), and *marker variables* (i.e., items that make up the core of a factor) were determined by factor loadings of .50 or above.

Inter-item correlations on the liberalism subscale suggested the *government price controls* item was weakly correlated with roughly half of all subscale items and was therefore removed from analyses. *World government*, *economic reform*, *labor unions*, *collective bargaining*, and *economic equality* did not load onto any factor; these items were removed iteratively from the scale and the analysis was re-run. Eigenvalues suggested that the two-factor extraction on the liberalism subscale was adequate. Factor 1 explained 30.42% of the overall variance, and Factor 2 explained an additional 11.31% of the variance. Each subsequent factor explained 6.50% of the variance or less. However, a scree plot suggested the possibility that a third factor could be retained to better explain variability in the data, but conceptually there was a compelling case to limit the extraction to two factors: social and economic. Because Factors 1 and 2 correlated ($r = .36$), there was enough overlapping variance between each factor to presume that an orthogonal rotation was an inappropriate fit to the liberalism subscale; the oblique rotation was retained.

Examination of the marker variables and other item loadings suggested that the core of Factor 1 was *sensitivity and equality toward others*, which represents a strong relationship to social liberalism. However, two items, *federal aid to education* and *social welfare*, also loaded

highly on this factor; compared to the overall structure of Factor 1, these were the only items that seemed out of place. Further examination of the factor loadings indicated a poorly defined structure for Factor 2. Four marker variables (*free abortion*, *sexual freedom*, *liberalized abortion laws*, and *birth control*) suggested that the core of Factor 2 was *women's sexual and reproductive rights*, which is also strongly related to social liberalism. However, two other marker variables of Factor 2 (*socialized medicine, social welfare*) were clearly liberal economic policies. While the structure of Factor 1 was generally consistent with social liberalism, Factor 2 was split between one aspect of social liberalism (women's rights) and economic liberalism. Finally, the overall factor loadings failed a simple factor structure because seven items (*women's liberation*, *sexual freedom*, *social equality*, *birth control*, *social change*, *equality of women*, and *social welfare*) loaded highly onto more than one factor; this is what's called a complex factor structure and makes interpretation of factors more ambiguous (Tabachnick & Fiddell, 2013).

I next turned to an initial look at the inter-item correlations among items in the conservatism subscale. *Conformity* was weakly correlated with roughly half of all subscale items and was removed from further analyses. *Freedom* and *family* did not load onto any factor; these items were removed iteratively and the analysis was re-run. Eigenvalues suggested that the two-factor extraction on the conservatism subscale was adequate. The first factor explained 29.58% of the overall variance, followed by 11.73% of the variance explained by Factor 2; each subsequent factor only explained an additional 6.47% or less of the overall variance. However, a scree plot suggested that a third factor could potentially be retained to explain greater variability in the data. Still, there was a compelling case to limit this extraction to a two-factor method. Factors 1 and 2 correlated negatively ($r = -.38$), again suggesting the factors shared enough overlapping variance to warrant retaining the oblique rotation. However, the negative correlation

between factors was not anticipated and suggested that the conservatism subfactors described opposing attitudes.

Examination of the marker variables and other item loadings for Factor 1 indicated a poorly defined structure. Ten marker variables (*real estate*, *business*, *corporate industry*, *law and order*, *private property*, *capitalism*, *money*, *profits*, *competition*, and *free enterprise*) suggested the core of Factor 1 was *private business and capitalism*, which relates to economic conservatism (e.g., Kerlinger, 1984; Malka et al., 2014). The exception was *law and order*, which appears to be more social in nature. While the marker variables of Factor 1 related to economic conservatism, ten other variables (*social stability*, *discipline*, *authority*, *obedience of children*, *morality*, *social status*, *moral standards*, *patriotism*, and *ingroup loyalty*) that also loaded adequately onto Factor 1 were related to a more social-cultural domain. Further examination of factor loadings indicated a clearer structure for Factor 2. Five marker variables (*Faith in God*, *respect for elders*, *church*, *religious education*, *religion*, and *tradition*) were also strongly—but *negatively*—correlated with Factor 2, suggesting the core of this factor was in opposition to the marker variables. I therefore characterized this factor as *religious secularism and non-traditionalism*, with which social conservatism is negatively correlated (e.g., Kerlinger, 1984; Malka et al., 2014). In other words, instead of both factors being congruent in social and economic conservatism, the negative loadings for Factor 2 suggested it is in opposition to social-cultural conservatism. Finally, the overall factor loadings for the conservatism subscale possessed a simple structure, with all variables loading on no more than one factor.

Alternate political attitude items. An alternate 20-item political attitudes measure was also subjected to two separate factor analyses for liberalism and conservatism. A two-factor extraction was used to discriminate between social and economic subfactors. Oblique rotations

were first generated to assess the raw factor correlations, and analyses were re-run if an orthogonal rotation was warranted. The same criteria as in the previous section were used to determine factor loadings and inter-factor correlations.

Eigenvalues suggested that the two-factor extraction on the liberalism subscale was adequate. Factor 1 explained 28.75% of the variance, followed by 14.09% of the variance in Factor 2. A scree plot corroborated the two-factor extraction, showing that variance explained leveled off after Factor 2. Factors 1 and 2 were only correlated at .30, suggesting each factor shared less than 10% of overlapping variance. Thus the oblique rotation was rejected and the analysis was re-run using an orthogonal rotation (SPSS' varimax rotation) to best characterize the independence between factors. Examination of the factor loadings suggested a poorly defined structure for both factors. Factor 1 had two marker variables about welfare programs and taxing the wealthy (i.e., economic liberalism) along with adequately loading items about universal health insurance and economic regulation. However, more social liberalism items (social change, interconnected world governments, sexual freedom) also loaded onto Factor 1. Factor 2 had three marker variables about personal responsibility, social intolerance, and social equality. The two items about personal responsibility and social intolerance, however, were reverse-scored items, but still correlated positively with Factor 2. Overall, the factor structure of the liberalism subscale was complex rather than simple (two items loaded highly on more than one factor), and the factor loadings suggested poorly defined factors.

I next turned to the conservatism subscale. Inter-item correlations suggested that a reverse-scored item about the harmfulness of a free market economy was weakly correlated with the other items and failed to load highly on any factor; this item was removed from analyses. Eigenvalues indicated that the two-factor extraction for the conservatism subscale was adequate.

Factor 1 explained 34.20% of the overall variance, followed by 13.33% of the variance for Factor 2. A scree plot also indicated the two-factor extraction was appropriate, showing a steep reduction in variance explained after the second factor. Factors 1 and 2 were *negatively* correlated ($r = -.48$); because this was stronger than .32, the oblique rotation was retained. An examination of the factor loadings indicated both factors had poorly defined structures. Five marker variables created the core of Factor 1; two were about economic policies (anti-redistribution of wealth, just-world financial success), and three were about social-cultural conservatism (morality/traditionalism, perceptions of a dangerous world, Faith in God). The only items that loaded highly on Factor 2 were marker variables, but they were incompatible with one another; one was about businesses and profits, the other about being loyal to one's ingroup and rejecting social deviants. All items loaded onto only one factor, indicating the conservatism subscale possessed a simple structure.

In sum, two separate measures of political attitudes assessing liberalism and conservatism failed to provide converging factor analytic evidence indicating a two-factor extraction was appropriate. Scree plots for liberalism and conservatism in the SRS suggested that more than two factors would be appropriate in explaining variance among the factors. While there was a compelling conceptual case to limit this extraction to two factors, doing so still did not yield a well-defined factor structure for the SRS. Though the alternate political attitude items consistently showed that a two-factor extraction was appropriate for the liberalism and conservatism subscales, the factor structures were poorly defined and failed to resemble a coherent social-economic delineation. Thus, a purely data-driven approach to the factor structure of both political attitudes measures yielded unclear results. In the next section, I take a purely theory-driven approach to the factor structure of both measures of political attitudes, and present

findings in the context of this theoretically predicted factor structure.

Theory-Driven Factor Structures

First, the 56-item SRS and the 20-item alternate measure were each broken down into social and economic subfactors of liberalism and conservatism to conduct individual reliability analyses (for predicted factor structures, see Appendix H and Appendix G, respectively). Internal consistency for the social and economic subfactors of the SRS was between acceptable and good: social liberalism ($\alpha = .85$), economic liberalism ($\alpha = .68$), social conservatism ($\alpha = .87$), and economic conservatism ($\alpha = .81$). Reliability for the full subscales was excellent (liberalism, $\alpha = .88$; conservatism, $\alpha = .90$), although surprisingly liberalism and conservatism were positively correlated, $r = .23$, $p < .001$. Internal consistency for the social and economic subfactors of the alternate measure was generally poor: social liberalism ($\alpha = .46$), economic liberalism ($\alpha = .69$), social conservatism ($\alpha = .67$), and economic conservatism ($\alpha = .36$). Reliability for the full subscales was acceptable (liberalism, $\alpha = .70$; conservatism, $\alpha = .72$), and liberalism and conservatism were negatively correlated, $r = -.53$, $p < .001$.

Because several of the social and economic subfactors had poor internal consistency, I investigated the option of creating an inter-scale composite in which the social and economic subfactors of both the SRS and the alternate measure were combined. To justify this combination, I first examined the inter-scale correlations between social and economic subfactors. The two social liberalism subfactors were positively correlated, $r = .55$, $p < .001$, and were combined to form a reliable composite of *social liberalism* ($\alpha = .86$). The two economic liberalism subfactors were also positively correlated, $r = .56$, $p < .001$, and combining all items created an acceptable composite of *economic liberalism* ($\alpha = .79$). Both social conservatism subfactors were positively correlated, $r = .61$, $p < .001$, and combining all items created a reliable

composite of *social conservatism* (α = .89). Finally, both economic conservatism subfactors were also positively correlated, $r = .35$, $p < .001$, and formed an acceptable composite of *economic conservatism* (α = .76). Because both liberalism and conservatism subscales were positively correlated, $r_{lib} = .59$, $p < .001$; $r_{con} = .56$, $p < .001$; they were also combined to form a composite of liberalism and conservatism; their reliability was excellent (liberalism, α = .89; conservatism, α = .90), and the liberalism and conservatism composites were negatively correlated, $r = -.32$, $p < .001$.

Primary Analyses

Descriptive statistics and zero-order correlations among all variables are provided in Table 1. Hayes' (2013) PROCESS macro for SPSS was used, and all analyses were conducted with bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals based on 1000 bootstrap samples. I tested a serial mediation model in which greater perceptions of we-ness and empathy toward others mediated the relationship between perspective taking and liberal and conservative attitudes.[4] Results provided mixed support for my hypotheses.

Liberalism composite. The indirect effect of perspective taking on liberalism through we-ness was not significant, $\beta = -0.01$, $SE = 0.02$, 95% CI [-0.04, 0.03] (see Figure 2). The indirect effect of perspective taking on liberalism through empathy was significant, $\beta = 0.10$, $SE = 0.04$, 95% CI [0.03, 0.18]. The indirect effect of perspective taking on liberalism through the serial mediators of we-ness and empathy was significant, $\beta = 0.02$, $SE = 0.01$, 95% CI [0.01, 0.05]. When applying the serial indirect effect of we-ness and empathy on liberalism, the direct effect of perspective taking on liberalism was fully reduced, $\beta = 0.06$, $SE = 0.07$, 95% CI [-0.08, 0.19], $p > .41$, suggesting serial mediation.

Social liberalism. The indirect effect of perspective taking on social liberalism through

we-ness was not significant, β = -0.01, SE = 0.02, 95% CI [-0.05, 0.02] (see Figure 3). The indirect effect of perspective taking on social liberalism through empathy was significant, β = 0.09, SE = 0.04, 95% CI [0.02, 0.18]. The indirect effect of perspective taking on social liberalism through the serial mediators of we-ness and empathy was significant, β = 0.02, SE = 0.01, 95% CI [0.01, 0.05]. When applying the serial indirect effect of we-ness and empathy on social liberalism, the direct effect of perspective taking on social liberalism was fully reduced, β = 0.08, SE = 0.07, 95% CI [-0.06, 0.23], p > .27, suggesting serial mediation.

Economic liberalism. The indirect effect of perspective taking on economic liberalism through we-ness was not significant, β = -0.002, SE = 0.02, 95% CI [-0.05, 0.05] (see Figure 4). The indirect effect of perspective taking on economic liberalism through empathy was significant, β = 0.09, SE = 0.04, 95% CI [0.01, 0.18]. The indirect effect of perspective taking on economic liberalism through the serial mediators of we-ness and empathy was significant, β = 0.02, SE = 0.01, 95% CI [0.004, 0.05]. When applying the serial indirect effect of we-ness and empathy on social liberalism, the direct effect of perspective taking on social liberalism was fully reduced, β = 0.05, SE = 0.09, 95% CI [-0.12, 0.22], p > .53, suggesting serial mediation.

Conservatism composite. The indirect effect of perspective taking on conservatism through we-ness was not significant, β = -0.01, SE = 0.02, 95% CI [-0.04, 0.03] (see Figure 5). The indirect effect of perspective taking on conservatism through empathy was significant, β = 0.07, SE = 0.04, 95% CI [0.001, 0.14]. The indirect effect of perspective taking on conservatism through the serial mediators of we-ness and empathy was significant, β = 0.01, SE = 0.01, 95% CI [0.001, 0.04]. Because perspective taking had no total effect on conservatism to begin with, β = 0.05, SE = 0.06, 95% CI [-0.07, 0.18], p > .39, taking into account the indirect effect of both we-ness and empathy still showed no direct effect on conservatism, β = -0.02, SE = 0.07, 95% CI

[-0.16, 0.12], $p > .76$.

Social conservatism. The indirect effect of perspective taking on social conservatism through we-ness was not significant, $\beta = 0.001$, $SE = 0.02$, 95% CI [-0.04, 0.05] (see Figure 6). The indirect effect of perspective taking on social conservatism through empathy was significant, $\beta = 0.12$, $SE = 0.05$, 95% CI [0.04, 0.22]. The indirect effect of perspective taking on social liberalism through the serial mediators of we-ness and empathy was significant, $\beta = 0.02$, $SE = 0.01$, 95% CI [0.01, 0.05]. Because perspective taking had no total effect on social conservatism to begin with, $\beta = 0.06$, $SE = 0.08$, 95% CI [-0.10, 0.21], $p > .47$, taking into account the indirect effect of both we-ness and empathy still showed no direct effect on social conservatism, $\beta = -0.09$, $SE = 0.09$, 95% CI [-0.26, 0.09], $p > .32$.

Economic conservatism. The indirect effect of perspective taking on economic conservatism through we-ness was not significant, $\beta = -0.02$, $SE = 0.02$, 95% CI [-0.06, 0.01] (see Figure 7), nor was the indirect effect of empathy, $\beta = -0.01$, $SE = 0.03$, 95% CI [-0.08, 0.05], or the serial indirect effect of we-ness and empathy, $\beta = -0.002$, $SE = 0.01$, 95% CI [-0.02, 0.01]. The total effect of perspective taking on economic conservatism was also not significant, $\beta = 0.05$, $SE = 0.06$, 95% CI [-0.06, 0.17], $p > .37$.

Discussion

These data suggest that perceptions of we-ness and empathy toward others are important mechanisms leading to greater endorsement of liberalism. Using perspective taking as a common antecedent to both we-ness and empathy, these data show that the more people perspective take, the more likely they are to perceive inclusive and interconnected boundaries between themselves and others (and people more generally). This we-ness orientation, in turn, leads to feelings of being "in tune" to the emotional states of others, which ultimately leads to stronger liberal

attitudes (construed broadly). When theoretically delineating liberalism into social and economic sub-attitudes, this pattern of findings remained: we-ness and empathy serially mediated the relationship between perspective taking and both social and economic liberalism.

While the proposed model examined the serial impact of we-ness and empathy in the context of perspective taking and liberalism, it also provided a more refined test of the independent meditational roles of we-ness and empathy. Contrary to predictions, the extent to which one perceives we-ness with others did not independently mediate the relationship between perspective taking and liberalism in any regard. Empathy, however, did independently mediate, suggesting that social and economic liberalism (and liberalism more generally) can be reached entirely through empathic feelings of care and concern for others. To be clear, this does not suggest that perceived we-ness is an unimportant underlying mechanism to liberalism. Indeed, the serial mechanism indicates that it is initially the effect of we-ness that leads to empathy, which, in turn, leads to greater liberalism.

Quite unexpectedly, a similar relationship was found for conservatism. Not only did we-ness and empathy serially mediate the relationship between perspective taking and *greater* conservatism, but empathy independently mediated this relationship as well. Closer examination of the correlations between empathy and conservatism indicate they are positively—rather than negatively—correlated; this relationship is even stronger for social conservatism. Many of the attitude items in the measure of social conservatism are related to Faith in God, religion, and church. Because religiosity is positively associated with empathy (Watson, Hood, Morris, & Hall, 1984; Watson, Hood, & Morris, 1985) and Christianity is based, at least in part, on having compassion toward others (Blowers, 2010), it is not surprising that conservatism and empathy were positively correlated.

Superficially, these findings would suggest that liberals and conservatives are both capable of empathizing with others, and indeed they might be. It is more likely that conservatives engage in intragroup (i.e., within group) empathy, whereas liberals engage in more intergroup (i.e., within *and* between group) empathy (Janoff-Bulman, 2009; Janoff-Bulman et al., 2008; van der Toorn et al., 2014). In other words, conservatives may empathize with ingroups and similar others; liberals empathize in a more generalized fashion. It stands to reason that if conservatives empathized in a more generalized fashion, it might reduce their preference for ingroup similarity and the perpetuation of social norms (Altemeyer, 1998; Loye, 1977; Kerlinger, 1984) and moral foundations of loyalty and respect for the ingroup (Graham, Haidt, & Nosek, 2009; Haidt, 2008; Haidt & Graham, 2007), but see Pliskin, Bar-Tal, Sheppes, & Halperin (2014).

The current operationalization of conservatism may not have allowed for this more refined distinction to surface. For instance, the attitude items of the Social Referents Scale were represented disproportionately high in the inter-scale composite compared to the alternate attitude items. Potential problems with the SRS include general ambiguity of attitude items (i.e., single words are provided without context) and the absence of reverse-scored items to control acquiescence bias. The alternate political attitude items were devised to represent a broad conceptualization of liberalism and conservatism, and contrary to the SRS, these questions are presented as statements within context and possess several reverse-scored items. A measure of social conservatism from the alternate items focuses broadly on attitudes toward traditionalism, perceptions of a dangerous world, God, and distrust of minorities and social deviants.[5] As such, this measure was not significantly correlated with empathy, $r = .10$, $p > .12$. When examining the proposed serial mediation models with the alternate liberalism and conservatism items only (i.e., excluding SRS items), we-ness and empathy serially mediated the relationship between

perspective taking and liberalism but not conservatism,[6] and empathy independently mediated this relationship for liberalism but not conservatism as well.[7]

While these data provide some preliminary support for we-ness and empathy as underlying mechanisms to liberalism, they cannot assess the directionality of effects. For instance, do liberals tend to take the perspective of others because they are more likely to be empathic and perceive we-ness with others? Or does perspective taking directly lead to perceptions of we-ness, which in turn increases empathic feelings toward others, and ultimately leads to greater liberal attitudes? To provide a stronger test of causality, perspective taking was manipulated in Study 2 to investigate its direct effect on we-ness, empathy, and political attitudes.

Finally, Study 2 focuses on a narrower operationalization of we-ness. The interpersonal and collective measures of we-ness in the present study were only modestly correlated with one another, suggesting they are rather distinct. Perhaps, then, we-ness did not independently mediate any relationships because it was far too broad in scope. Study 2, in part, aimed to refine the operationalization of we-ness and examine its potential role in independently mediating the relationship between perspective taking and political attitudes.

Study 2

Although Study 1 was the first to establish a relationship among perspective taking, we-ness, empathy, and their associations to political ideology, causality is difficult to assess. The aim of Study 2 was to establish causal evidence between perspective taking and liberal attitudes, focusing on the mechanisms of we-ness and empathy. Participants were instructed to either take the perspective of six different targets, or remain objective and unattached when learning about the targets. Because perspective taking has been shown to only produce effects relevant to the

target of one's perspective taking (Todd & Galinsky, 2014), participants sequentially took the perspective of multiple targets to generalize effects beyond a single social identity group. Thus, sequentially taking the perspective of a diverse range of targets should instill a general perspective-taking orientation. Perspective taking is primarily being utilized in this study as an effective way to manipulate we-ness and empathy, as has been shown in a variety of research programs (e.g., Batson, Sager, et al., 1997; Cialdini et al., 1997; Davis et al., 1996; Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000). Finally, because this manipulation of perspective taking involves considering the dyadic relationship between "self" and "other," the operationalization of we-ness in Study 2 is less broad, focusing specifically on interpersonal (i.e., dyadic) self-other merging rather than collective we-ness. This distinction allows for a more refined test regarding the type of we-ness implicated in changes to political attitudes.

An additional consideration of Study 2 is to assess the boundaries of this effect. Because much of the literature on perspective taking, we-ness, and empathy is part of the pro-social behavior and altruism literature, targets who are explicitly in need are of primary theoretical interest to the research. In order to broaden the potential effects of we-ness and empathy on political attitudes, participants will take the perspective of targets in need, as well as those more neutral in this regard. In other words, must a target be struggling to cause changes in social and economic liberalism? Or is it possible that the mere act of exploring how another is feeling, or how individuals are more similar and connected to ourselves and others than we typically realize, could be sufficient enough to cause changes in political attitudes? In Study 2, I tested these questions.

Predictions

I predict that (compared to the objective-focus condition; see below) participants instructed to take the perspective of others will show greater overlap between themselves and the targets (i.e., greater we-ness), feel greater empathic emotions toward the targets, and more strongly endorse liberal social and economic political attitudes. Perspective taking may also weaken endorsements of economic conservatism, but should have little effect on social conservatism. Using the same serial mediation model from Study 1, I predict that we-ness and empathy will each independently mediate the causal effect of perspective taking on liberalism, and also that the serial effect of we-ness on empathy will mediate the causal effect of perspective taking on liberalism. Next, I predict that we-ness will independently mediate the causal effect of perspective taking on social liberalism, whereas empathy will not. In other words, social liberalism should be reached, at least in part, through we-ness. Thus, I predict that the serial effect of we-ness on empathy will mediate the causal effect of perspective taking on social liberalism. Next, I predict empathy will independently mediate the causal effect of perspective taking on economic liberalism, whereas we-ness will not; economic liberalism should be reached, at least in part, through empathy. Thus, the serial effect of we-ness on empathy will mediate the relationship between perspective taking and economic liberalism. Finally, empathy may independently mediate the causal effect of perspective taking on lower economic conservatism, and therefore the serial effect of we-ness on empathy may mediate the causal effect of perspective taking on lower economic conservatism.

Relative to the objective-focus and perspective-taking conditions, participants in the perspective-taking/suffering condition will show greater empathic emotions toward the targets, but not necessarily greater perceptions of we-ness. Because the addition of the suffering manipulation was an attempt to explore the boundaries of this phenomenon, I do not make any

strong predictions regarding the effect of the perspective-taking/suffering condition on political attitudes.

Method

  Participants. Ninety eight undergraduates participated in exchange for partial fulfillment of a course requirement (see Appendix L for research compliance approval). One participant was excluded for giving a response three standard deviations above the mean on the perceived we-ness measure, leaving a final sample of ninety seven participants for analyses (60% female, M_{age} = 19.13, SD = 1.21).

  Procedure. After providing informed consent, participants were told that the experiment was a collaboration with the Walter J. Lemke Department of Journalism, and that they would be providing feedback for real profiles (Appendix I) created by journalism students. The targets varied in age, gender, and race, and each profile included a black and white photograph of the target along with a short description of the target's location (city, state), age, fondest memory, and current occupation.

  Participants were instructed to pay attention to certain aspects of the profiles; these instructions manipulated an objective or perspective-taking focus (e.g., see Batson, Sager, et al., 1997). To manipulate an objective focus, one third of participants were told to focus on the technical aspects of the profile, such as the quality of the photograph and the clarity of the profile description. Further instructions were as follows, "Stay as objective as possible and do not get caught up in what the person has experienced or how they feel as a result. Just remain objective and focus on the technical aspects of each profile." To manipulate perspective taking, two-thirds of participants were told to "imagine how the person feels about their experiences and how certain events have affected their life. Really try to feel the full impact of what each person has

been through and how he or she feels as a result." Half of perspective-taking participants received the same perspective-taking instructions, but they were given an additional sentence in the target's profile indicating that they were struggling with a difficult life situation (e.g., homelessness, illness, or discrimination). Overall, these manipulations represented three conditions: (1) an objective focus, no suffering condition; (2) a perspective taking, no suffering condition; and (3) a perspective taking, suffering condition.

To increase the salience of the manipulation, participants were asked to type out their thoughts and reactions to the target profiles. Question prompts that reiterated the experimental manipulation of being objective ("Remember to comment on the technical aspects of the profile. For example, how is the quality of the photograph, the resolution of the picture, or the clarity of the description?") or perspective taking ("Really try to imagine how [target] is feeling. For example, is [target] happy? How does [target] feel about the events in his/her life?") were presented next to each text box. After typing out their thoughts and reactions, participants were asked for additional "feedback" information in the form of emotional reactions and perceived we-ness toward the targets (described in the measures section). Participants completed all feedback for one target profile before moving on to the next profile. This ensured that participants were providing their reactions to targets shortly after experiencing them, and reduced the possibility that a delay in time would alter target perceptions. After being exposed to the target profiles, participants were told that as a final part of the collaboration, they would be asked to provide feedback about their attitudes and opinions (i.e., political attitudes). After completing some final demographic and manipulation check items, participants were thanked and debriefed.

We-ness. To measure perceived we-ness, a self-other merging scale asked the extent to

which participants saw overlap between themselves and each of the six targets. The scale was modified from Aron and colleagues' (1992) IOS measure (Appendix D) and asked, "Considering yourself as *Self* and [target] as *Other,* please choose one of these seven circles that best describes the way you see the relationship between you and [target]." The six self-other overlap ratings were averaged to form an overall composite of *we-ness* (α = .76).

Empathy. Empathy for the targets was measured using an emotional response scale listing 11 adjectives (Appendix J). The adjectives of primary interest were the six terms suggested to represent the core of the empathy construct: *sympathetic, softhearted, warm, compassionate, tender,* and *moved* (see Batson et al., 1991). The five remaining adjectives (angry, sad, outraged, bored, concerned) were measured to determine if additional emotions were elicited (e.g., anger, personal distress).[8] The six empathy adjectives were averaged for each target, creating six composites of empathy; these target-specific composites were then averaged to form an overall empathy score for each participant (α = .91).

Political attitudes. Social and economic political attitudes for both liberalism and conservatism were measured using the same inter-scale procedure from Study 1.[9] Both social liberalism subfactors were positively correlated, $r = .53$, $p < .001$, and were therefore combined to form a reliable index of *social liberalism* (α = .85). The economic liberalism subfactors were also positively correlated, $r = .57$, $p < .001$, and were combined to form a reliable index of *economic liberalism* (α = .81). The social conservatism subfactors were positively correlated, $r = .68$, $p < .001$, and were combined to form an index of *social conservatism* with excellent reliability (α = .91). The economic conservatism subfactors were also positively correlated, $r = .50$, $p < .001$, and were combined to form a reliable index of *economic conservatism* (α = .82). Finally, both liberalism and conservatism subscales were positively correlated, $r_{lib} = .66$,

$p < .001$; $r_{con} = .63$, $p < .001$; they were combined to form an overall composite of *liberalism* ($\alpha = .90$) and *conservatism* ($\alpha = .92$), which were negatively correlated, $r = -.21$, $p = .04$.

Manipulation check. To ensure participants followed instructions, two items asked the extent to which they focused on being objective and unattached (1 = *not very much*, 7 = *very much*) and imagining the feelings of the target (1 = *not very much*, 7 = *very much*). A third item assessed the effectiveness of the suffering manipulation ("How much did you think the individuals you read about were struggling in a difficult life situation?;" 1 = *not very much*, 7 = *very much*).

Results

Manipulation check. The objective-focus manipulation check was marginally significant, $F(2, 94) = 2.39$, $p = .097$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$. Pairwise comparisons suggest participants in the objective-focus condition ($M = 4.91$, $SD = 1.79$) focused more on remaining objective and unattached toward the targets than those in the perspective-taking condition ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 1.59$), but this difference only approached marginal significance, $p = .11$. There was no difference in participants' objective-focus between the objective and the perspective-taking/suffering condition ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 1.68$), $p = .21$, or between the two perspective-taking conditions, $p = .92$.

The perspective-taking manipulation check was significant, $F(2, 94) = 6.03$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .11$. Pairwise comparisons suggest participants in the perspective-taking condition ($M = 5.73$, $SD = 1.29$) focused more on the feelings of the targets than those in the objective-focus condition ($M = 4.34$, $SD = 1.89$), $p < .01$. Participants in the perspective-taking/suffering condition ($M = 5.31$, $SD = 1.62$) also focused more on the feelings of the targets than those in the objective-focus

condition, $p = .04$. Participants in both perspective-taking conditions focused on the feelings of the targets equally, $p = .56$.

Finally, a check on the effectiveness of the suffering manipulation was also significant, $F(2, 94) = 18.87$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .29$. Participants in the perspective-taking/suffering condition ($M = 5.74$, $SD = 0.89$) thought the targets were struggling in a difficult life situation more than both the objective-focus ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 1.51$) and perspective-taking conditions ($M = 3.77$, $SD = 1.91$), both $ps < .001$. The objective-focus and perspective-taking conditions did not differ in the amount of suffering perceived, $p = .93$.

We-ness and empathy. The perspective-taking manipulation, however, did not increase overall we-ness with the targets, $F(2, 94) = 1.06$, $p = .35$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$ (for means and standard deviations of all dependent measures, see Table 2). Perspective taking did increase feelings of empathy, $F(2, 94) = 5.86$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .11$. Participants in the perspective-taking/suffering condition ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 1.33$) felt more empathy toward the targets than those in both the perspective-taking ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 0.92$), $p < .01$, and objective-focus conditions ($M = 3.36$, $SD = 1.17$), $p = .02$. Empathy did not differ between the objective-focus and perspective-taking condition, $p = .97$, suggesting that merely taking the perspective of another did not cause increased empathic feelings; targets needed to be suffering for empathy to occur.[10]

Political attitudes. Perspective taking had no effect on the liberalism, $F(2, 94) = 0.03$, $p = .97$, $\eta_p^2 = .001$, or conservatism subscales, $F(2, 94) = 0.19$, $p = .83$, $\eta_p^2 = .004$. When analyzing political attitudes by social and economic subfactors, perspective taking still showed no effect on any of the measures: social liberalism, $F(2, 94) = 0.10$, $p = .91$, $\eta_p^2 = .002$; economic liberalism, $F(2, 94) = 0.08$, $p = .92$, $\eta_p^2 = .002$; social conservatism, $F(2, 94) = 0.34$,

$p = .71$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$; economic conservatism, $F(2, 94) = 0.04$, $p = .97$, $\eta_p^2 = .001$. Thus, the manipulation did not cause changes to political attitudes in any regard.

Serial mediation. There was no evidence that perspective taking had an effect on any of the primary outcome measures. Although there was evidence that empathy was affected, this was because participants perceived the targets to be struggling in the perspective-taking/suffering condition. Because serial mediation assumes that the independent variable has at least some effect on mediator 1, mediator 2, and the primary outcome variable, carrying out the serial mediation analysis would likely reveal null findings. Thus, no further analyses were conducted.

Discussion

Study 2 aimed to demonstrate causal evidence of the effect of perspective taking on greater liberalism, focusing specifically on we-ness and empathy as underlying mechanisms. Although participants who took the perspective of struggling targets felt more empathic, there was no evidence to suggest differences in the extent to which they perceived a sense of interpersonal we-ness with the targets. The manipulation of perspective taking—either toward neutral or struggling targets—did not cause changes to political attitudes. It must be noted that these null findings were not necessarily due to a failure of the manipulation itself. As anticipated, participants reported being more objective in the objective-focus condition, and more target-focused in both perspective-taking conditions.

The manipulation of perspective taking in the present study was a novel experimental endeavor. Most of the published research on perspective taking asks participants to take the perspective of only one target (e.g., e.g., Batson, Sager, et al., 1997; Cialdini et al.; Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000), whereas this study had participants take the perspective of six. The decision to do this was for good reason. Manipulations of perspective taking do not allow for the effect to

transfer across multiple social identities (Todd & Galinsky, 2014). Thus, if participants took the perspective of an elderly homeless man, any affected political attitudes (e.g., social welfare) would be confined to this target and his/her situation (see Todd, Bodenhausen, & Galinsky, 2012). In order to ensure that a multitude of relevant attitudes could be affected, participants were asked to take the perspective of a diverse group of targets. Ultimately, the aim was for this manipulation to produce a general perspective-taking orientation, but the use of multiple targets may have thwarted the overall effectiveness of the manipulation. Research suggests perspective taking activates the self-concept, which is then used as a cognitive anchor to make hypotheses about the perspective of another (Davis et al, 1996; Epley, Keysar, Van Boven, & Gilovich, 2004). It is possible that this process becomes disrupted when more than one target's perspective is considered in a sequential fashion, as was done in the present study.

On a more conceptual basis, the manipulation of perspective taking may not have engendered changes to political attitudes because its first consequence, we-ness, was quite limited in scope. The type of we-ness most relevant to the manipulation of perspective taking is interpersonal (or dyadic), emphasizing cognitive merging between the self and other. This manipulation should not have affected the more impersonal and symbolic form of collective we-ness. Perhaps, then, perspective taking showed little effect on political attitudes because interpersonal we-ness is a process weakly related to broad changes in political attitudes. Extant research provides mixed support for this conclusion. Being primed with collective we-terms (e.g., we and our) increased liberal self-identification measured on a 1-7 Like-type scale (van der Toorn et al., 2014). Behavioral mimicry, however, was shown to increase support of government regulation (conceptualized as "liberal attitudes"), but for reasons related to perceptions of the self in another (Stel & Harinck, 2011). Respectively, these studies provide some evidence for the

effect of both collective and interpersonal forms of we-ness on liberal attitudes. It must be noted that these studies measured political attitudes unidimensionally, opening the argument to alternative interpretations: that is, if liberalism was increased, it necessarily means conservatism was decreased. Future studies should test the merits of both interpersonal and collective forms of we-ness in the same design, comparing their relative impact on liberal and conservative attitudes.

General Discussion

Across two studies, I investigated if perceiving inclusive and interconnected boundaries between people and feeling "in tune" to the emotions of others were underlying mechanisms to liberal attitudes. In Study 1, results suggested that inclusive and interconnected perceptions of "we-ness" with others led to greater feelings of empathy toward others, and this serial process mediated the link between perspective taking and liberalism in general, as well as social and economic liberalism in particular. Notably, feelings of empathy toward others was shown to independently mediate the link between perspective taking and social and economic liberalism, suggesting that liberalism can be reached entirely through empathic feelings. Liberal attitudes, however, cannot be reached through perceived we-ness independent of empathy. A similar pattern of findings was also discovered for conservatism, though closer examination revealed that this was likely due to a strong correlation between empathy and social conservatism; when an alternate (and arguably more representative) set of political attitude items were used, these effects disappeared.

Whereas Study 1 tested a correlational model of the relationship among perspective taking, we-ness, empathy, and political attitudes, Study 2 tested this model directly: can taking the perspective of others cause increased perceptions of we-ness and, in turn, empathic emotions? And finally, can the effect of perspective taking through we-ness and empathy lead to

greater social and economic liberalism? The proposed causal model revealed null findings. Perspective taking showed no effect on political attitudes, and this held whether participants took the perspective of neutral targets or targets struggling in difficult life situations.

It is worth mentioning the distinct operationalizations of we-ness between studies. Study 1 measured perceived we-ness more broadly, asking participants to indicate the extent to which they perceive we-ness in an interpersonal context typical of close relationships (e.g., Aron et al., 1992), as well as the extent to which they preferred more symbolic, collective-oriented we-terms. Study 2 focused more specifically on the former, asking participants to make dyadic, self-other merging judgments after taking the perspective of six targets. Conceptually, the primary distinction between these two forms of we-ness involves the self. Interpersonal we-ness is largely based on the cognitive representation between "self" and "other" (or others), whereas collective we-ness is more impersonal and does not necessarily require representations of the self as a unique being (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Though these two forms of we-ness were positively correlated in Study 1, it was only modestly so.

Liberals and conservatives both empathize with others, but in distinct ways. Liberals empathize in a more intergroup fashion, whereas conservatives empathize with their ingroup (Janoff-Bulman, 2009; Janoff-Bulman et al., 2008; van der Toorn et al., 2014). Though this explicitly only references empathy, they are affective reactions that stem from distinct cognitive representations of others. Because interpersonal we-ness typically includes dyadic self-other relationships with ingroup members (e.g., partners, family, close friends, and regular social acquaintances; Brewer & Gardner, 1996), conservatives may be higher in interpersonal we-ness. Liberals, on the other hand, who are more broad and inclusive in their cognitive representations of others, may be higher in impersonal, collective forms of we-ness. Indeed, data collected from

Study 1 confirm this distinction. Interpersonal we-ness was positively correlated with the inter-scale composite of conservatism, $r = .16$, $p = .01$, but not liberalism, $r = .02$, $p > .75$. Collective we-ness was positively correlated with liberalism, $r = .13$, $p = .03$, but not conservatism, $r = -.10$, $p > .11$. This distinction is corroborated by other work suggesting that liberals are more empathic toward broader, more diverse, and more inclusive social groups, whereas conservatives are more empathic toward smaller, more familiar, and more homogenous social groups (Waytz, Iyer, Young, & Graham, 2014).

An ancillary aim of this work was to take an existing scale of political ideology and examine its stability as a measure of social and economic political attitudes. Although Kerlinger (1984) has analyzed these items and discovered multiple factors within the liberalism and conservatism subscales, the two-factor solution of social and economic attitudes in Study 1 was poorly defined. More recently scholars have argued that social and economic attitudes should be the minimum number of dimensions needed to account for political ideology (Feldman & Johnston, 2014); the focus on social and economic attitudes in the present work stemmed from this call. However, this does not necessarily suggest that more varied dimensions of ideology are inappropriate or even improbable (see Kerlinger, 1984). Future work should develop a reliable and more modern scale that captures the complexity of political attitudes, measuring (at the very least) the social and economic dimensions of *both* liberalism and conservatism.

Conclusion

The findings from this work provide new insights in the area of political psychology by advancing research on liberalism, an all-too-often ignored dimension of ideology. Consistent with predictions, perceptions of we-ness with others and feeling "in tune" to the emotions of others were found to be underlying mechanisms leading to social and economic liberalism. In

sum, it can be argued that liberalism is an ideology rooted in the perception of "being bound one to another," and feeling the struggles of others as "ours."

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Footnotes

[1] This tendency has been shown to be the case under situations of no scarcity. However, when available resources are scarce, the difference between liberals and conservatives in providing public assistance disappears.

[2] Though Cialdini and colleagues (1997) were interested in the shared representation between self and other, they termed this concept "oneness" instead of "we-ness," and indicated that "oneness" reflected a focus on a dyadic rather than collective orientation.

[3] Keeping these participants in did not influence the interpretation of results.

[4] A reverse serial mediation model, in which empathy (M_1) first leads to we-ness (M_2), was also tested. When empathy preceded we-ness, the serial indirect effects were no longer significant, suggesting the importance of the hypothesized sequence of we-ness (M_1) first leading to empathy (M_2).

[5] Social and economic subfactors for the alternate political attitude items were initially merged with the SRS due to poor internal consistency. On its own, the social conservatism subfactor had a fair reliability index ($\alpha = .67$).

[6] The indirect effect of perspective taking on liberalism through the serial mediators of we-ness and empathy was significant, $\beta = 0.02$, $SE = 0.01$, 95% CI [0.01, 0.06], whereas the indirect effect of perspective taking on conservatism through the serial mediators of we-ness and empathy was not, $\beta = 0.01$, $SE = 0.01$, 95% CI [-0.01, 0.03]. When applying the serial indirect effect of we-ness and empathy on liberalism, the direct effect of perspective taking on liberalism was fully reduced, $\beta = 0.02$, $SE = 0.09$, 95% CI [-0.15, 0.19], $p > .82$.

[7] The indirect effect of perspective taking on liberalism through empathy was significant, $\beta = 0.11$, $SE = 0.05$, 95% CI [0.03, 0.21], whereas the indirect effect of perspective taking on conservatism through empathy was not, $\beta = 0.05$, $SE = 0.04$, 95% CI [-0.03, 0.14]. The indirect

effect of perspective taking on either liberalism or conservatism through we-ness was not significant.

[8] Composite scores were also created for the non-empathy adjective words (angry, outraged, concerned, sad, bored).

[9] Due to an oversight, the SRS in Study 2 was 54 items instead of 56. *Diversity* and *conformity* were not included in the scale.

[10] The perspective-taking manipulation also affected the anger composite, $F(2, 94) = 42.73$, $p < .001$, and the personal distress composite, $F(2, 94) = 67.59$, $p < .001$. Participants felt more anger ($M = 2.94$, $SD = 1.32$) and personal distress ($M = 4.30$, $SD = 1.22$) for the targets in the perspective-taking/suffering condition compared to the perspective-taking (anger: $M = 1.29$, $SD = 0.54$; personal distress: $M = 2.32$, $SD = 0.68$) and objective-focus conditions (anger: $M = 1.17$, $SD = 0.35$; personal distress: $M = 1.87$, $SD = 0.67$), all ps $< .001$. Anger and personal distress did not differ between the perspective-taking and objective-focus conditions, all ps $> .13$, and boredom ratings did not differ among any conditions, $F(2, 94) = 1.10$, $p = .34$.

Tables

Table 1. *Descriptive statistics and zero-order correlations among variables in Study 1.*

Variable	M (SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Perspective taking	3.53 (0.65)	--								
2. We-ness	0.01 (0.75)	.24***	--							
3. Empathy	3.86 (0.60)	.49***	.44***	--						
4. Liberalism	5.12 (0.65)	.17**	.10	.27***	--					
5. Social liberalism	5.32 (0.69)	.18**	.09	.24***	.89***	--				
6. Economic liberalism	4.76 (0.80)	.13*	.08	.20**	.86***	.55***	--			
7. Conservatism	4.96 (0.66)	.05	.04	.14*	-.32***	-.26***	-.31***	--		
8. Social conservatism	4.91 (0.82)	.04	.09	.20**	-.32***	-.31***	-.26***	.94***	--	
9. Economic conservatism	5.01 (0.62)	.06	-.08	-.02	-.20**	-.07	-.29***	.80***	.56***	--

Note. ***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$. We-ness was Z-transformed.

Table 2. *Means and standard deviations for all dependent measures in Study 2.*

| Variable	Objective-focus *M* (*SD*)	Perspective-taking *M* (*SD*)	Perspective-taking/suffering *M* (*SD*)
We-ness	2.35 (1.06)	2.58 (0.89)	2.23 (0.99)
Empathy	3.36 (1.17)	3.29 (0.92)	4.16 (1.33)
Liberalism	5.02 (0.63)	5.04 (0.76)	5.07 (0.70)
Social liberalism	5.19 (0.61)	5.13 (0.75)	5.20 (0.68)
Economic liberalism	4.67 (0.87)	4.76 (0.95)	4.75 (0.87)
Conservatism	4.95 (0.67)	5.05 (0.87)	4.95 (0.71)
Social conservatism	4.93 (0.94)	5.09 (1.06)	4.90 (0.93)
Economic conservatism	4.87 (0.74)	4.87 (0.79)	4.91 (0.71)

Figures
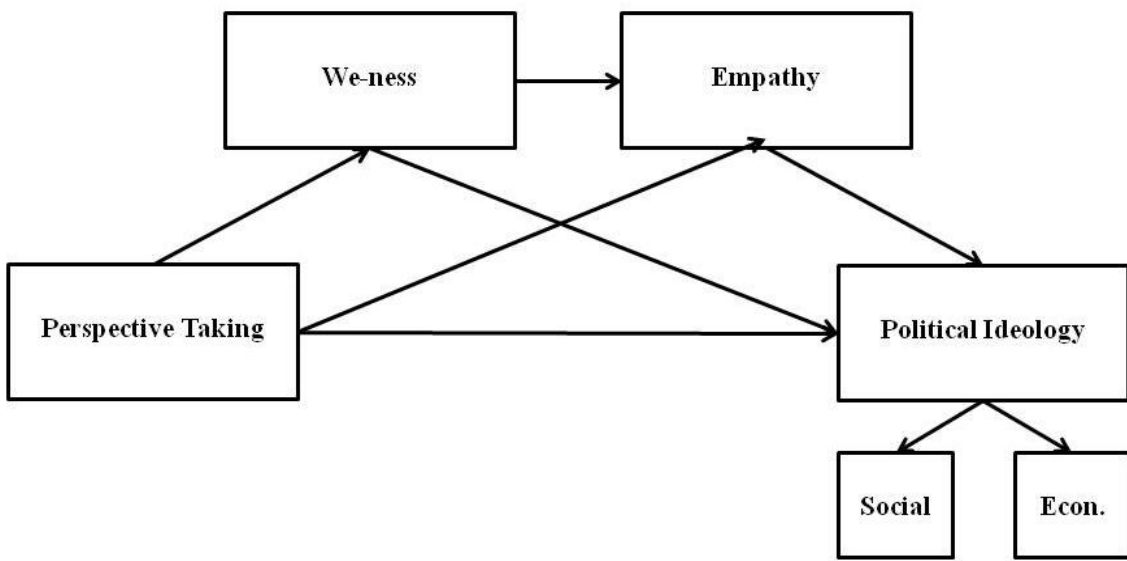
Figure 1. Representational model depicting we-ness and empathy as serial mediators of the relationship between perspective taking and political ideology (liberalism and conservatism), broken down by social and economic attitudes.
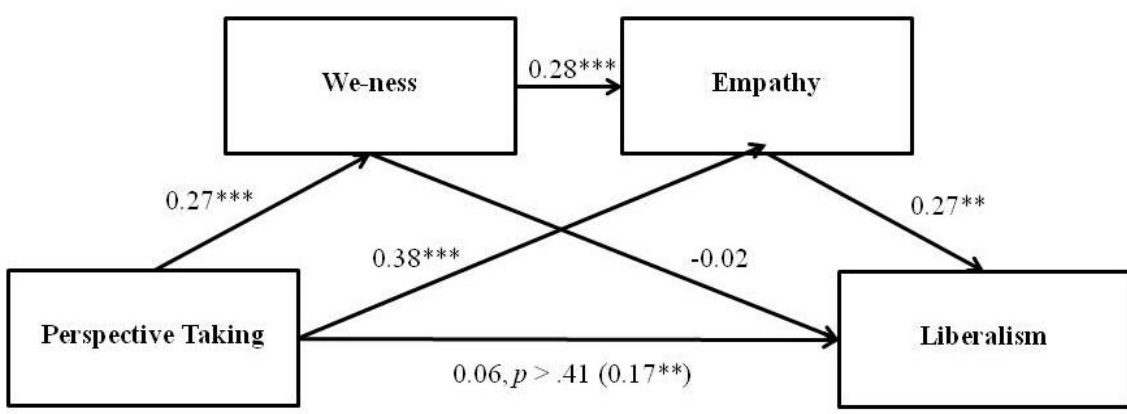
Figure 2. Serial mediation model depicting the effect of perspective taking on liberalism through we-ness and empathy. The total effect of perspective taking on liberalism is listed in parentheses.
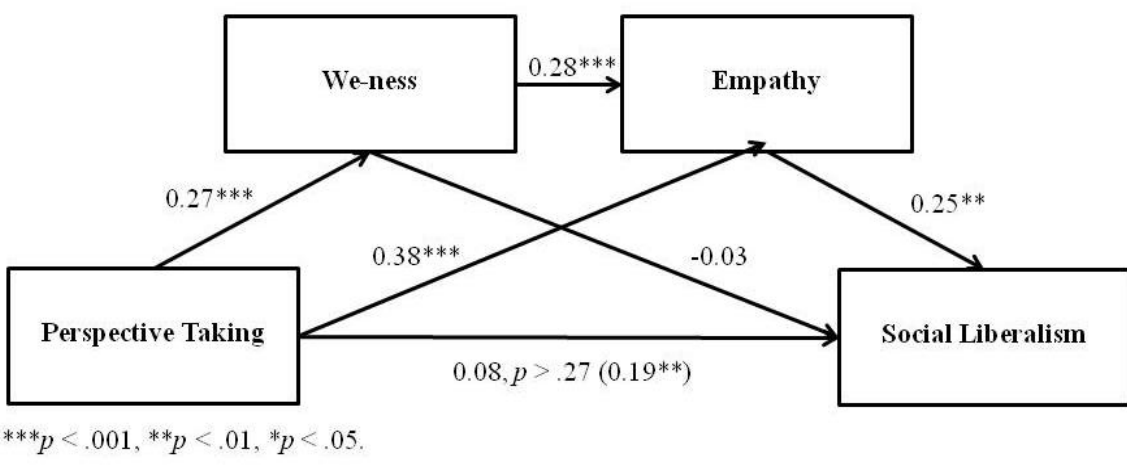
Figure 3. Serial mediation model depicting the effect of perspective taking on social liberalism through we-ness and empathy. The total effect of perspective taking on social liberalism is listed in parentheses.
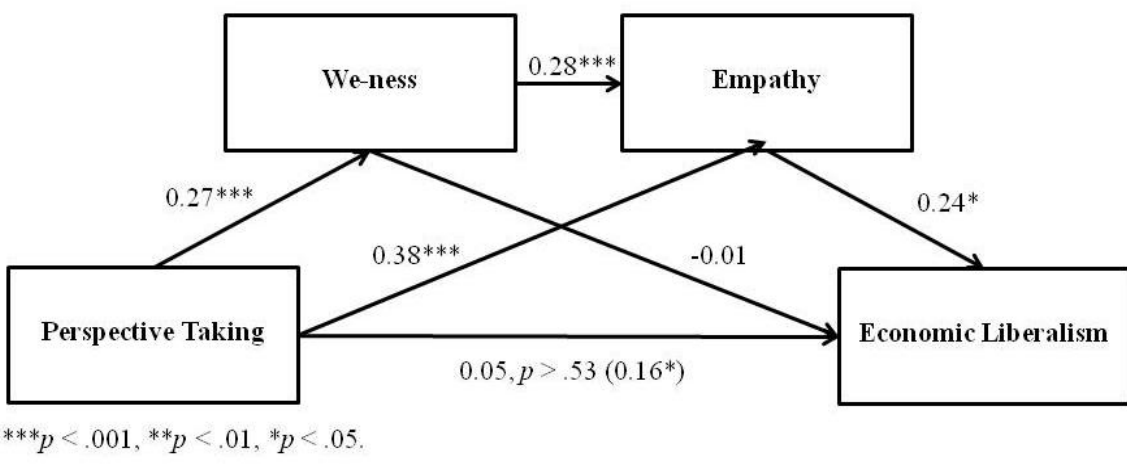

Figure 4. Serial mediation model depicting the effect of perspective taking on economic liberalism through we-ness and empathy. The total effect of perspective taking on economic liberalism is listed in parentheses.

Figure 5. Serial mediation model depicting the effect of perspective taking on conservatism through we-ness and empathy. The total effect of perspective taking on conservatism is listed in parentheses.

Figure 6. Serial mediation model depicting the effect of perspective taking on social conservatism through we-ness and empathy. The total effect of perspective taking on social conservatism is listed in parentheses.
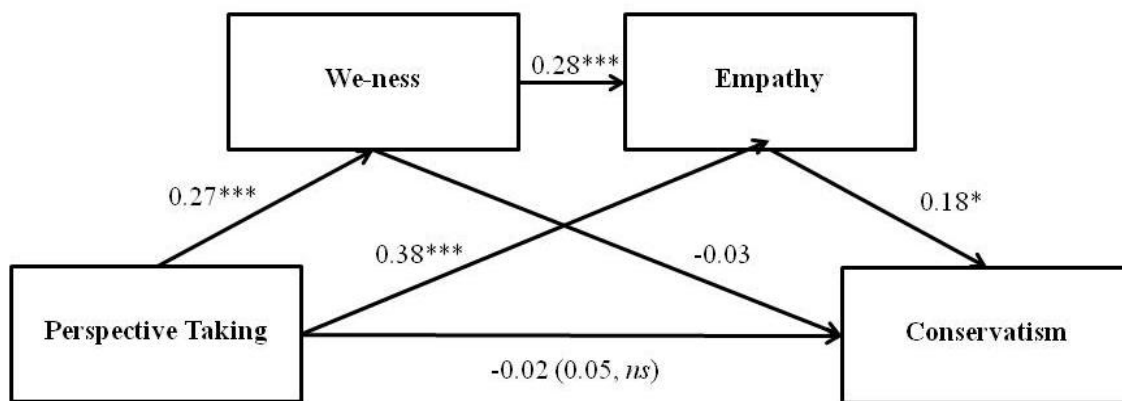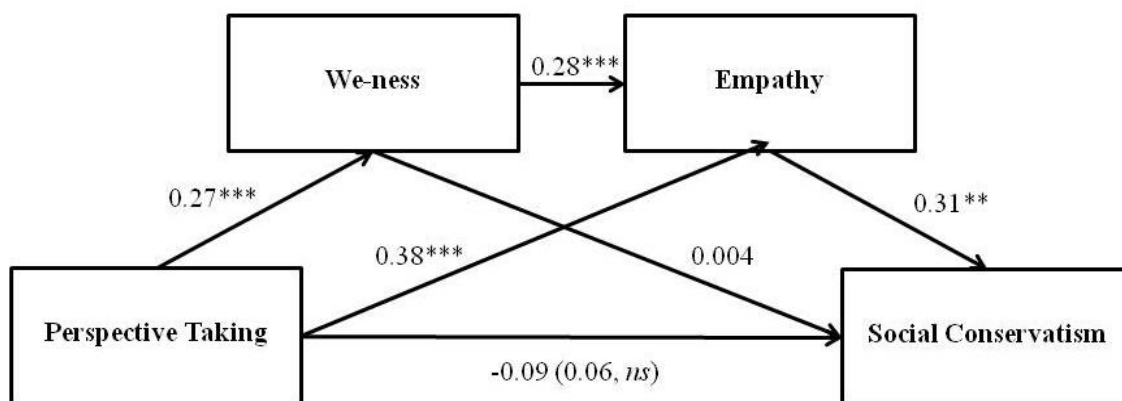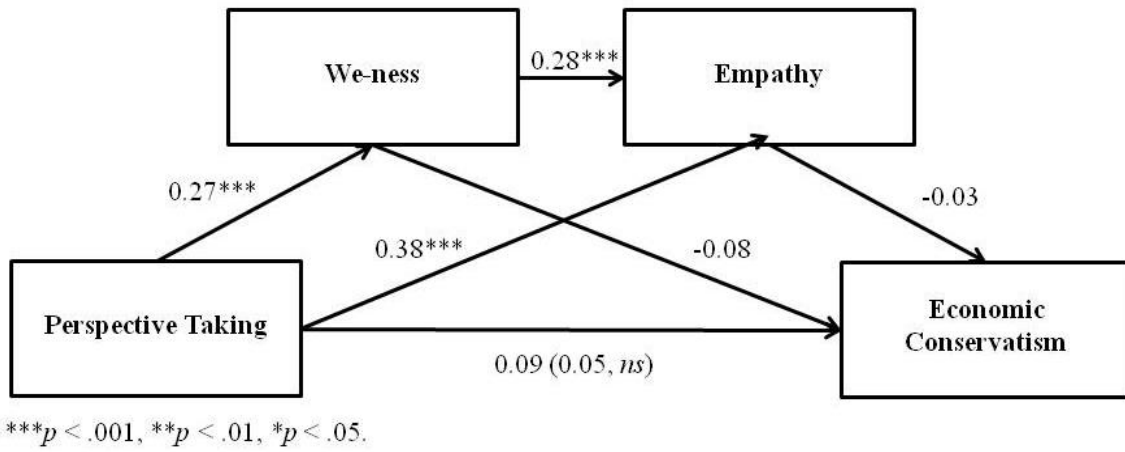
Figure 7. Serial mediation model depicting the effect of perspective taking on economic conservatism through we-ness and empathy. The total effect of perspective taking on economic conservatism is listed in parentheses.

Appendix A

Davis' (1983) Interpersonal Reactivity Index: Perspective-Taking Subscale

The following statements inquire about your thoughts and feelings in a variety of situations. For each item, indicate how well it describes you by choosing the appropriate letter on a 1-7 scale as seen at the top of the page. When you have decided on your answer, fill in the number next to the item. Read each item carefully before responding. Answer as honestly as you can. Thank you.

ANSWER SCALE:

NOT AT ALL LIKE ME   1   2   3   4   5   VERY MUCH LIKE ME

_____ 1. I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the "other guy's" point of view.

_____ 2. I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.

_____ 3. I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective.

_____ 4. If I'm sure I'm right about something, I don't waste much time listening to other people's arguments.

_____ 5. I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both.

_____ 6. When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his shoes" for a while.

_____ 7. Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place.

Appendix B

Aron and colleagues' (1992) Inclusion of Other in the Self (IOS) Scale

In general, choose one of the seven circles below that best represents the amount of "closeness" or overlap you see between yourself and other people. Choosing the first circle would suggest you see almost no overlap between yourself and other people. Choosing the seventh circle would suggest you see almost complete overlap between yourself and other people.

Appendix C

"We-ness" Scale

Given below are a variety of terms about which people feel differently. For each term, please choose the number that best represents your feelings toward the word, using the following scale.

ANSWER SCALE:

VERY UNPLEASANT   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   VERY PLEASANT

_____ 1. WENT

_____ 2. ME

_____ 3. OUR

_____ 4. MAN

_____ 5. THEM

_____ 6. US

_____ 7. SUN

_____ 8. FOR

_____ 9. IT

_____ 10. I

_____ 11. WE

_____ 12. THEN

_____ 13. MINE

Appendix D

Davis' (1983) Interpersonal Reactivity Index: Empathic Concern Subscale

The following statements inquire about your thoughts and feelings in a variety of situations. For each item, indicate how well it describes you by choosing the appropriate letter on a 1-7 scale as seen at the top of the page. When you have decided on your answer, fill in the number next to the item. Read each item carefully before responding. Answer as honestly as you can. Thank you.
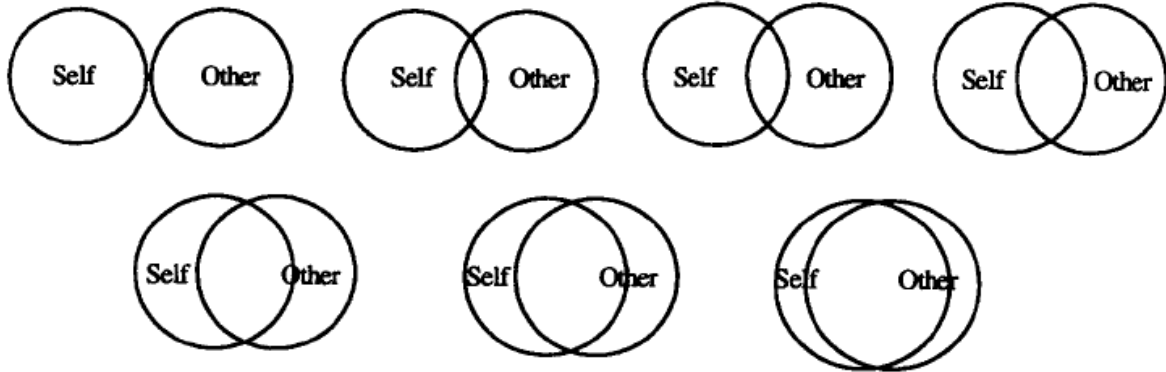
ANSWER SCALE:

NOT AT ALL LIKE ME   1   2   3   4   5   VERY MUCH LIKE ME

_____ 1. I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me.

_____ 2. Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems.

_____ 3. When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards them.

_____ 4. Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal.

_____ 5. When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them.

_____ 6. I am often quite touched by things that I see happen.

_____ 7. I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person.

Appendix E

Empathy Adjectives Scale, formed from Batson and colleagues (1981, 1991)

The following statements inquire about your thoughts and feelings in a variety of situations. For each item, indicate how well it describes you by choosing the appropriate number on a 1-7 scale as seen at the top of the page. When you have decided on your answer, fill in the number next to the item. Read each item carefully before responding. Answer as honestly as you can. Thank you.

ANSWER SCALE:

NOT AT ALL LIKE ME   1   2   3   4   5   VERY MUCH LIKE ME

_____ 1. I see myself as a warm person.

_____ 2. I see myself as someone who is not moved by the struggles of others.

_____ 3. I see myself as a compassionate person.

_____ 4. I see myself as a sympathetic person.

_____ 5. I see myself as someone with a "cold heart."

_____ 6. I see myself as someone who approaches others with a feeling of tenderness.

Appendix F

Kerlinger's (1984) Social Referents Scale

Given below are statements on various social problems about which we all have beliefs, opinions, and attitudes. We all think differently about such matters, and this scale is an attempt to let you express your beliefs and opinions. There are no right and wrong answers. Please respond using the following scale.

ANSWER SCALE:

Strongly Disagree   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   Strongly Agree

1. Economic reform.	29. United Nations
2. Social stability	30. Money
3. Feeling	31. Social status
4. Women's liberation	32. Religious education
5. Real estate	33. Social change
6. Discipline	34. Moral standards
7. Government price controls	35. Patriotism
8. Freedom	36. Profits
9. Business	37. Economic Equality*
10. Authority	38. Education as intellectual training
11. Faith in God	39. Federal aid to education
12. Racial integration	40. Social planning
13. Free abortion	41. Competition
14. Sexual freedom	42. Human warmth
15. Corporate industry	43. Family
16. Obedience of children	44. Free enterprise
17. Morality	45. Civil rights
18. Respect for elders	46. World government
19. Liberalized abortion laws	47. Religion
20. Social equality	48. Children's interests
21. Collective bargaining	49. Labor unions
22. Socialized medicine	50. Equality of women
23. Church	51. Social welfare*
24. Law and order	52. Diversity*
25. Racial equality	53. Intergroup cooperation*
26. Private property	54. Ingroup loyalty*
27. Birth control	55. Tradition*
28. Capitalism	56. Conformity*

*Items added to original scale.

Appendix G

Alternate Political Attitude Items

Given below are statements about which we all have beliefs, opinions, and attitudes. There are no right or wrong answers. Please respond to each of the items using the scale as follows.

ANSWER SCALE:

Strongly Disagree   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   Strongly Agree

Social Liberalism

_____ 1. Society should be quicker to throw out old ideas and traditions in order to make room for social change.

_____ 2. Countries should cooperate with each other to form a more interconnected world government.

_____ 3. Making sure all human beings have equal rights is important for society to work.

_____ 4. There are too many different people in this world to be tolerant toward all of them; sometimes doing so infringes on my own beliefs. (reverse-scored)

_____ 5. The government should have no say in regulating sex and personal relationships.

Economic Liberalism

_____ 1. The government should provide welfare programs to care for the needy and disadvantaged.

_____ 2. Millionaires and billionaires should be taxed at much higher rates than those who are in the middle or lower class.

_____ 3. The economy must be regulated so that large businesses and corporations do not take advantage of consumers.

_____ 4. Health insurance is an inalienable right of all human beings.

_____ 5. It is not the responsibility of government to help those struggling to get by; people should find a way to help themselves. (reverse-scored)

Social Conservatism

_____ 1. If civilization is to survive, there must be a turning back to traditional values and moral standards.

_____ 2. There is a lot of evil in this world, and we need a strong military to protect ourselves.

_____ 3. In order for society to work, people should remain loyal to their ingroup and cast out those threatening to disrupt the social order.

_____ 4. People get it wrong when they look to government for authority; we should look to God for authority.

_____ 5. Minority groups have been demanding more than they deserve in recent years.

Economic Conservatism

_____ 1. A free and unregulated market causes most of the ills in society. (reverse-scored)

_____ 2. Encouraging competition allows for the best businesses and individuals to "rise to the top."

_____ 3. The government has no right to take hard-earned money from some people and redistribute it to others.

_____ 4. The only thing industry and business should be concerned about is increasing profits at any cost necessary.

_____ 5. People get out of life what they put in; if you work hard, you will be rewarded with wealth and success.

Appendix H

Kerlinger's (1984) Social Referents Scale: Predicted Factor Structure

Liberalism

Social
Feeling
Women's Liberation
Racial Integration
Free Abortion
Sexual Freedom
Liberalized Abortion Laws
Social Equality
Racial Equality
Birth Control
Social Change
Education as Intellectual Training
Social Planning
Human Warmth
Civil Rights
World Government
Children's Interests
Equality of Women
United Nations
Diversity
Intergroup Cooperation

Conformity
Tradition
Ingroup Loyalty

Economic
Economic Reform
Government Price Controls
Collective Bargaining
Socialized Medicine
Economic Equality
Federal Aid to Education
Labor Unions
Social Welfare

Conservatism

Social
Social Stability
Discipline
Freedom
Authority
Faith in God
Obedience of Children
Morality
Respect for Elders
Church
Law and Order
Social Status
Religious Education
Moral Standards
Patriotism
Family
Religion

Economic
Real Estate
Business
Corporate Industry
Private Property
Capitalism
Money
Profits
Competition
Free Enterprise

Appendix I

Target Descriptions

<u>Target 1</u>

Harrold Mitchell is a 72-year-old man living in Pippa Passes, Kentucky. His fondest memory was the birth of his first daughter. Harrold was a coal miner for several decades, and now works part-time at a machine shop. [suffering condition, in place of working part-time at a machine shop: **but is now homeless and struggling to find regular access to food, water, and shelter.**]

<u>Target 2</u>

John Brucken is a 61-year-old man living in Clinton, Iowa. His fondest memory was backpacking across Europe in his twenties. He worked for an engineering consulting firm, and now he is retired and spending time with his wife and family. [suffering condition, in place of retired and spending time with his wife and family: **but is now trying to keep his health insurance after being diagnosed with a rare form of lung cancer.**]

<u>Target 3</u>

Hailey Smith is a 13-year-old girl living in Chandler, Arizona. Her fondest memory was seeing the Grand Canyon for the first time. She is currently in 8th grade and practicing to be the lead in her school play. [suffering condition: **but she is being bullied by her classmates for recently coming out as gay.**]

<u>Target 4</u>

Nzegwu Williams is a 26-year-old male living in Houston, Texas. His fondest memory was fishing with his father on the Ohio River. He is currently pursuing a master's degree in biochemistry and hopes to get a full-time job after his studies. [suffering condition: **but he is having trouble getting an internship because job recruiters say his name and appearance are too "ethnic looking."**]

<u>Target 5</u>

Freddie Martinez is a 38-year-old man living in Rockford, Illinois. His fondest memory was his family reunion last summer, where every member of his family was together for the first time in 15 years. He is currently working as a truck mechanic at a shipping and supply company, but looking to find a new job. [suffering condition: **because he is making far less than the minimum wage for being an undocumented worker**].

<u>Target 6</u>

Sharleen Moore is a 43-year-old woman living in Bangor, Maine. Her fondest memory was going on a week-long vacation to Miami with her best friend of 35 years. She has been working as a legal aid for 17 years and is wanting to open up her own firm. [suffering condition: **but she is frequently told by her boss that women shouldn't own their own legal practice**].

Appendix J

Batson and colleagues' (1991) Empathy Questionnaire

To what extent did you experience the following emotions while learning about the individuals you saw in the pictures?

	NOT AT ALL			MODERATELY			EXTREMELY
angry	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
concerned	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
sympathetic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
compassionate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
sad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
tender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
soft-hearted	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
moved	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
bored	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
outraged	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
warm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix K

Research Compliance Approval, Study 1

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

Office of Research Compliance
Institutional Review Board

March 11, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: David Sparkman
                             Scott Eidelman

FROM: Ro Windwalker
                             IRB Coordinator

RE: PROJECT MODIFICATION

IRB Protocol #:   15-01-460

Protocol Title: *Cognitive and Affective Correlates of Political Ideology*

Review Type: ☒ EXEMPT   ☐ EXPEDITED   ☐ FULL IRB

Approved Project Period: Start Date: 03/11/2015 Expiration Date: 02/17/2016

Your request to modify the referenced protocol has been approved by the IRB. **This protocol is currently approved for 500 total participants.** If you wish to make any further modifications in the approved protocol, including enrolling more than this number, you must seek approval *prior to* implementing those changes. All modifications should be requested in writing (email is acceptable) and must provide sufficient detail to assess the impact of the change.

Please note that this approval does not extend the Approved Project Period. Should you wish to extend your project beyond the current expiration date, you must submit a request for continuation using the UAF IRB form "Continuing Review for IRB Approved Projects." The request should be sent to the IRB Coordinator, 109 MLKG Building.

For protocols requiring FULL IRB review, please submit your request at least one month prior to the current expiration date. (High-risk protocols may require even more time for approval.) For protocols requiring an EXPEDITED or EXEMPT review, submit your request at least two weeks prior to the current expiration date. Failure to obtain approval for a continuation *on or prior to* the currently approved expiration date will result in termination of the protocol and you will be required to submit a new protocol to the IRB before continuing the project. Data collected past the protocol expiration date may need to be eliminated from the dataset should you wish to publish. Only data collected under a currently approved protocol can be certified by the IRB for any purpose.

If you have questions or need any assistance from the IRB, please contact me at 109 MLKG Building, 5-2208, or irb@uark.edu.

Appendix L

Research Compliance Approval, Study 2

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

Office of Research Compliance
Institutional Review Board

March 23, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: David Sparkman
                 Scott Eidelman

FROM: Ro Windwalker
                 IRB Coordinator

RE: PROJECT MODIFICATION

IRB Protocol #: 14-08-078

Protocol Title: *Perspective Taking, Empathy, and the Adoption of Liberal Attitudes*

Review Type: ☒ EXEMPT   ☐ EXPEDITED   ☐ FULL IRB

Approved Project Period: Start Date: 03/23/2015 Expiration Date: 09/09/2015

Your request to modify the referenced protocol has been approved by the IRB. **This protocol is currently approved for 400 total participants.** If you wish to make any further modifications in the approved protocol, including enrolling more than this number, you must seek approval *prior to* implementing those changes. All modifications should be requested in writing (email is acceptable) and must provide sufficient detail to assess the impact of the change.

Please note that this approval does not extend the Approved Project Period. Should you wish to extend your project beyond the current expiration date, you must submit a request for continuation using the UAF IRB form "Continuing Review for IRB Approved Projects." The request should be sent to the IRB Coordinator, 109 MLKG Building.

For protocols requiring FULL IRB review, please submit your request at least one month prior to the current expiration date. (High-risk protocols may require even more time for approval.) For protocols requiring an EXPEDITED or EXEMPT review, submit your request at least two weeks prior to the current expiration date. Failure to obtain approval for a continuation *on or prior to* the currently approved expiration date will result in termination of the protocol and you will be required to submit a new protocol to the IRB before continuing the project. Data collected past the protocol expiration date may need to be eliminated from the dataset should you wish to publish. Only data collected under a currently approved protocol can be certified by the IRB for any purpose.

If you have questions or need any assistance from the IRB, please contact me at 109 MLKG Building, 5-2208, or irb@uark.edu.

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