

## “Put Yourself in Their Shoes”: Testing Empathy’s Ability to Motivate Cosmopolitan Behavior

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*Political theorists have long contemplated the concept of cosmopolitanism, yet almost no empirical studies have investigated how individuals can be encouraged to act as ethical cosmopolitans in practice. This article reports the findings of an experiment designed to investigate the effect of empathy on cosmopolitan-helping behavior. The extent to which empathy may be useful in motivating cosmopolitan behavior has been the subject of substantial debate among political theorists. Empathy was manipulated using a perspective-taking technique adapted from social psychological research, and the extent to which individuals were willing to engage in cosmopolitan helping was measured. Results showed that perspective taking increased cosmopolitan helping and that empathy mediated that effect. Furthermore, empathy was found to predict cosmopolitan helping even after controlling for several related constructs. Overall, results indicate that increasing empathy by encouraging people to take the perspective of distant individuals is a promising way to foster cosmopolitan helping.*

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**KEY WORDS:** cosmopolitanism, empathy, experiment, international relations, emotion

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Cosmopolitans have long sought to foster the development of a global community encompassing all humanity. At a general level, cosmopolitanism is the idea that all humans can, or should, view themselves belonging to a universal group that includes every person and should treat all persons as having equal moral standing (Jones, 2003; Kleingeld & Brown, 2009; Linklater, 1999; Nussbaum, 1996, 1997; Shapcott, 2010). This general requirement is often interpreted to mean that cosmopolitan individuals must engage in a variety of specific behaviors. One such behavior that is commonly considered by political theorists to be essential to cosmopolitanism involves helping people who are suffering in distant parts of the globe from natural or man-made disasters, irrespective of racial, national, religious, or other differences (Beitz, 1988; Caney, 2000; Kleingeld & Brown, 2009; Lu, 2000; Pogge, 2002; Van Hooft, 2009).

Cosmopolitanism holds promise in addressing a range of contemporary problems in global politics and international relations, including problems of global injustice and development and human rights (Van Hooft, 2009). Yet, despite cosmopolitanism’s potential benefits, the question of how to encourage individuals to act as cosmopolitans has only recently been given serious attention by political theorists and philosophers (e.g., Dobson, 2006; Erskine, 2008; Kymlicka & Walker, 2012). Although early theorists of cosmopolitanism did not entirely ignore this question, they typically treated it as a secondary concern rather than as a central part of the cosmopolitan package (Dobson, 2006, p. 165). Instead, their focus was on elaborating and debating what it meant to be a

cosmopolitan, leaving a “motivational vacuum” within cosmopolitanism (Dobson, 2006). Currently, there remains little empirical evidence about how to effectively motivate individuals to act as cosmopolitans.

Increasing empathy is a prominent, but not uniformly accepted, proposal for motivating cosmopolitan behavior that has been advocated by theorists of cosmopolitanism (e.g., Beck, 2006; Nussbaum, 1997, 2001). Nussbaum (1997, 2001) defined empathy as an imaginative process in which the experience of another person is reconstructed (i.e., cognitively “putting yourself in someone else’s shoes”). She argued that empathy is essential for achieving cosmopolitanism because it allows individuals “to comprehend the motives and choices of people different from ourselves, seeing them not as forbiddingly alien and other, but as sharing many problems and possibilities with us” (1997, p. 85). According to this approach, empathy increases individuals’ awareness of need and disadvantage, which can promote cosmopolitan action by giving “substance to the abstract desire for justice” (p. 97; Coeckelbergh, 2007). Another prominent cosmopolitan, Beck (2006) argued that empathy is a key constitutive principle of the cosmopolitan outlook. According to Beck, empathy breaks down ingroup-outgroup distinctions by expanding individuals’ “emotional imagination” beyond national borders (p. 6; Kyriakidou, 2009). Similarly, moral philosophers have argued that empathy is essential to altruism, benevolence, and morality (Carse, 2005; Sherman, 1998; Song, 2015).

Against these proponents, critics have argued that empathy is not ideally suited for motivating moral behavior such as cosmopolitan helping. Prinz (2011), for example, argues that empathy is partial, in the sense that it tends to be felt more for ingroups than outgroups and is thus incapable of motivating moral action to the extent of other emotions, such as anger or indignation. Similarly, communitarian critics of cosmopolitanism argue that national bonds are essential for solidarity and concern for others’ well-being (Walzer, 2002). According to these critics, empathy may be useful for motivating helping of ingroups, but it is unlikely to be useful in motivating the kind of broad outgroup helping required for cosmopolitanism.

To date, no quantitative studies have directly tested empathy’s ability to motivate cosmopolitan helping. However, empathy’s ability to motivate other, noncosmopolitan, forms of helping has been investigated. The empirical research on noncosmopolitan forms of helping has mostly been conducted by social psychologists, who have defined empathy several ways, each of which are slightly different from the definition Nussbaum (1997, 2001) uses. According to one approach in the social psychological literature, empathy refers to “an other-oriented emotional response elicited by and congruent with the perceived welfare of someone else” (Batson, 2009, p. 8; Batson, 2012). If another person is perceived to be in need, empathic emotional responses include feelings such as compassion, softheartedness, and sympathy (Batson, 2012). Researchers who define empathy in this way typically refer to the process of imagining how one would think and feel in another persons’ situation (i.e., the imaginative process Nussbaum calls “empathy”) as perspective taking (e.g., Batson, 1991; Bilewicz, 2009). According to a separate approach from psychology, empathy is posited to be a multidimensional construct encompassing perspective taking (i.e., attempts to see things from another persons’ point of view), fantasy (i.e., the tendency to identify with characters in movies and fictional stories), empathic concern (i.e., feelings of warmth and compassion), and personal distress (i.e., anxiety and discomfort experienced after observing another persons’ distress) (Davis, 1980, 1983a, 1983b, 1994; Morrell, 2010). The purpose of the current article is not to determine which definition best describes empathy. However, for clarity, from this point the term “perspective taking” is used to describe the imaginative process of putting oneself in another’s position (i.e., what Nussbaum calls empathy), and the term “empathy” is used to describe the other-oriented emotional response (i.e., what Nussbaum calls “compassion” and Davis calls “empathic concern”). These definitions have been chosen for convenience because they are broadly consistent with the terms used in much experimental research on empathy (e.g., Batson, Early, & Salvarani, 1997; Batson, Polycarpou, et al., 2007; Bilewicz, 2009), but this choice does not imply an endorsement of one approach over another.

Many studies have found that empathy increases interpersonal helping, which refers to helping that occurs in contexts where an individual, rather than a group, is in need of help (for reviews see Batson, 1991; Batson & Shaw, 1991; Davis, 1994; Dovidio, Piliavin, Schroeder, & Penner, 2006; Eisenberg & Miller, 1987; Penner, Dovidio, Piliavin, & Schroeder, 2005). However, empathy's ability to motivate intergroup helping—which refers to help offered in contexts where outgroups or outgroup-members need help—has received less attention (Stürmer, Snyder, Kropp, & Siem, 2006). Of the relatively few studies that have examined empathy's effect on intergroup helping, some have found that empathy increases help given to outgroups (Batson, Chang, Orr, & Rowland, 2002; Bilewicz, 2009; Levy, Freitas, & Salovey, 2002; Mallet, Huntsinger, Sinclair, & Swim, 2008), while others have found that empathy only increases help offered to ingroups and has no effect on outgroup helping (Cikara, Bruneau, Van Bavel, & Saxe, 2014; Stürmer, Snyder, & Omoto, 2005; Stürmer et al., 2006).

More research is needed to test whether empathy motivates cosmopolitan behavior for several reasons. First, there remains substantial debate among political theorists on the topic, yet there are few if any experimental studies that have directly tested empathy's effect on cosmopolitan behavior. Second, there remains substantial ambiguity in the findings of research that has examined empathy's effect on intergroup helping, as noted above. Third, research indicates that it is more difficult to motivate helping of large, distant outgroups than it is to motivate helping of smaller, closer outgroups (Dickert, Västfjällb, Kleberd, & Slovic, 2015; Dunn & Ashton-James, 2008). Accordingly, even if research on intergroup helping uniformly indicated that empathy was effective in motivating helping of outgroups that share a common national superordinate identity with an ingroup, it is not obvious that such findings would apply to cosmopolitan helping, where the outgroups in need of help are often large and distant. As such, the following hypotheses were identified for testing in the current study:

*H1:* Perspective taking will increase empathy and cosmopolitan helping.

*H2:* The effect of perspective taking on cosmopolitan helping will be mediated by empathy.

*H3:* Empathy will predict cosmopolitan helping independently of other constructs.

The current study contributes to knowledge on cosmopolitanism in several ways. First, in contrast to existing research that has argued that empathy is important for cosmopolitanism (Beck, 2006; Nussbaum, 1997, 2001), the current study empirically tests this claim using an experiment. Specifically, it tests whether encouraging individuals to take the perspective of a person who is suffering in a distant country (i.e., what Nussbaum calls empathy) increases the extent to which those individuals are willing to help people suffering in similar situations. Additionally, the study tests whether empathy (i.e., what Nussbaum calls compassion) mediates this effect. Experiments can provide reliable information about cause and effect (Druckman, Green, Kuklinski, & Lupia, 2011; Kittel, Luhan, & Morton, 2012), thus allowing the efficacy of hypothesized causes of cosmopolitan behavior to be tested. Additionally, the use of experiments is consistent with calls for more empirical research on cosmopolitanism (Phillips & Smith, 2008). Second, the current study provides a more direct test of the effect of empathy on cosmopolitan helping than previous research, which has investigated only intergroup helping. Although similar, intergroup helping is not identical to cosmopolitan helping. Cosmopolitan helping involves helping of distant groups far outside individuals' local communities (e.g., British people helping Cambodian individuals, Americans helping Tanzanians). In contrast, existing research on the effect of empathy on intergroup helping has focused on helping of subgroups within the same nation (e.g., heterosexual Americans helping homosexual Americans, White Americans helping Black Americans). Conceivably, empathy may be capable of motivating helping of outgroups that share a common national identity but be incapable of motivating helping of outgroups that do not share a

common national bond. Finally, this study builds on existing research on empathy by statistically controlling for factors which may confound the positive relationship that has been found to exist between empathy and helping in past studies (see Cialdini, Brown, Lewis, Luce, & Neuberg, 1997). Specifically, this study measures and statistically controls for anger, guilt, and identification with all humanity.

## Method

In the current study, empathy was manipulated using perspective-taking instructions that directed half of the participants to cognitively take the perspective of an individual who was suffering in a distant nation and directed the other half of the participants to remain objective and detached. This empathy-manipulation technique had been developed and implemented in several earlier studies (see Dovidio et al., 2006; Penner et al., 2005). Measures of empathy and a series of control variables were collected, and participants were subsequently given an opportunity to engage in a form of cosmopolitan helping by offering to volunteer their time.

### *Participants*

Participants were 240 Americans recruited online using Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk; Berinsky, Huber, & Lenz, 2012; Buhrmeister, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011; Goodman, Cryder, & Cheema, 2012). Of these participants, 124 (51.7%) were male, and 116 (48.3%) were female. Participants had a mean age of 33.9 ( $SD = 12.8$ ). Furthermore, 42 (17.5%) participants reported that their highest level of education was high school or less; 94 (39.2%) reported having completed an associate degree or some college; and 104 (43.4%) reported having a Bachelor degree or higher. Although demographically diverse, this sample was not representative of any national population, meaning that sample means cannot be generalized to a wider population. However, because the purpose of experiments is to establish causality by comparing the outcomes of different treatments (Bass & Firestone, 1980; Morton & Williams, 2010), a nonrepresentative sample is acceptable for this study. Additionally, previous research has indicated that MTurk participants may not be naïve to common experimental paradigms (e.g., the trolley problem, prisoner's dilemma; Chandler, Mueller, & Paolacci, 2014) and that nonnaivety can reduce effect sizes (Chandler, Paolacci, Peer, Mueller, & Ratliff, 2015). We did not anticipate substantial nonnaivety in the current study—in part because the written articles used here had not been used in any previous study. However, if some participants had seen the same or similar manipulations, it would likely bias against finding support for the hypotheses under investigation (Chandler et al., 2015).

### *Procedure*

After responding to an advertisement placed on the MTurk website, participants were directed to an online study that was described as being interested in how individuals react to news articles. To minimize experimental demand, participants were told that they would read an article that was randomly chosen from a pool of articles about a variety of current events before answering a series of questions about themselves, their attitudes, and their emotions.

*Perspective-taking manipulation.* After reading the plain language statement, participants were told that the article that had been randomly selected for them involved “a true story about a person who was subjected to child labor.” They were also told that “One factor that has been found to be especially important in determining reactions to news articles is ‘reading perspective’.” The perspective-taking manipulation occurred at this point. Participants in the perspective-taking condition were asked to:

Imagine how the man in the story feels about what has happened and how it has affected his life. Try not to concern yourself with attending to all the information being presented. Instead, try to feel the full impact of what this person has been through and how he feels as a result.

In contrast, participants in the objective condition were asked to “take an objective perspective toward what is described. Try not to get caught up in how the man in the story feels; just remain objective and detached.”

The perspective-taking manipulation asked participants to imagine how another person felt, rather than to imagine how they would feel if they were in the other person’s situation. Previous research indicates that imagine-other instructions like those used here induce empathy, whereas imagine-self instructions induce both empathy and personal distress (Batson, Early, & Salvarani, 1997). The wording used was an affective instruction (Oswald, 1996) adapted from previous research (Batson, Polycarpou, et al., 1997). To ensure that all participants had understood these instructions correctly, participants had to correctly answer a multiple-choice question about their assigned reading perspective before being allowed to proceed to the article.

Participants read an article based on a publication by international humanitarian organization World Vision (2007) about a child laborer named Almayo who had run away from home with his brother to work in the weaving industry. Their plan was to return home with lots of money to surprise their parents. Unfortunately, however, they ended up being trapped in child labor for seven years. During this time, they were forced to work in terrible conditions for 16 hours per day, seven days a week. After detailing Almayo’s story, the article quoted a representative of the “Universal Humanity Foundation,” who spoke briefly about the extent that child labor occurs, what type of work is typically performed by child laborers, and why child labor occurs. Almayo was described as being from Ethiopia, but the “Universal Humanity Foundation” representative spoke more broadly about child labor “in the world’s poorest nations.” To reinforce the perspective-taking manipulation, participants in the perspective-taking condition were asked to write “one thought [they] had as a result of imagining how Almayo felt, and what his life must be like.” Participants in the objective condition were not given this instruction.

After reading the article, to further obfuscate the purpose of the study, all participants answered several distractor questions about how well they perceived the article to be written (e.g., “The article I just read was well written”; “The article used appropriate vocabulary”). These questions were included only to distract participants from the purpose of the study and were not included in any analysis.

### Measures

*Empathy.* Participants were presented with a series of emotion labels from the Emotional Response Questionnaire (Batson, Polycarpou, et al., 1997) and asked to indicate the extent to which each emotion label described their feelings towards child laborers (from 1 = “not at all” to 7 = “extremely”). Six items (sympathetic, soft-hearted, warm, compassionate, tender, moved) were summed to form a measure of empathy with a possible range between 6 and 42,  $\alpha = .92$ .

*Cosmopolitan helping.* After completing the emotional-response questionnaire, participants were reminded that the article they read previously had mentioned that the “Universal Humanity Foundation”—which was described as “an international agency whose aim is to reduce poverty and injustice for all people, irrespective of nationalities or religions”—had started a campaign to end child labor. To measure cosmopolitan helping, participants were asked how many hours they would be willing to volunteer in the Universal Humanity Foundation’s campaign (from 0 = “None” to 9 = “9 or more”). Although volunteering represents only one possible form of cosmopolitan helping—other forms may include, for example, making donations or engaging in collective action—it was chosen

for inclusion in the current study for three reasons. First, it is consistent with cosmopolitan theorists' conceptualizations of cosmopolitan helping, which suggest that this type of helping is central to cosmopolitanism (e.g., Beitz, 1988; Caney, 2000; Kleingeld & Brown, 2009; Van Hooft, 2009). Second, it is adapted from measures of helping used in previous experimental studies (e.g., Batson, Polycarpou, et al., 1997; Maner et al., 2002). Finally, willingness to volunteer time has been shown to correlate positively with other forms of helping behavior, such as making donations and engaging in collective action (Iyer, Schmader, & Lickel, 2007), suggesting that willingness to volunteer may also imply a willingness to engage in other forms of helping.

*Control variables.* Three variables that had been shown in previous research to be correlated with perspective taking, helping, or both were measured to control for their effects. These controls were anger (Brown, González, Zagefka, Manzi, & Čehajić, 2008; Faulkner, 2014; Leach, Iyer, & Pedersen, 2006), guilt (Faulkner, 2016; Leach et al., 2006; McGarty et al., 2005), and identification with all humanity (McFarland, Webb, & Brown, 2012).

Anger was computed by summing responses to four items (angry, shocked, offended, irritated),  $\alpha = .79$ , giving the scale a possible range between 4 and 24. Guilt was computed by summing responses to two items (guilty, regretful),  $r = .42$ , giving the scale a possible range between 2 and 8. Identification with all humanity was measured using a shortened version of McFarland and colleagues' (2012) identification with all-humanity scale. This scale consisted of seven three-part items, such as "How close do you feel to each of the following groups? (1) People in my community; (2) Americans; and (3) People all over the world." As per McFarland (2011), the scale was computed by calculating separate raw measures of identification with community, nation, and all humanity ( $\alpha = .88$ ) by summing the relevant response to each item, then calculating "the unique variance associated with identification with all humanity by regressing it onto the other two identifications and using the residual score as the measure of identification with all humanity" (McFarland, 2011, pp. 13–14). The standardized residual—which indicated the difference in standard-deviation units between the level of identification with all humanity predicted by identification with community and nation and the actual reported level of identification with all humanity—was used here. In the current sample, this measure ranged from  $-3.05$  to  $3.20$ . This approach ensured that the measure did not merely reflect a tendency to identify with groups in general but instead uniquely captured identification with all humanity.

## Results

### *Manipulation Check*

To ensure that participants in the perspective-taking condition tried harder than those in the objective condition to consider how the child laborer felt, an independent-samples *t*-test was computed on a measure which asked participants to indicate their agreement with the statement "When reading the article, I tried to imagine how the person must have felt" (from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 8 = "strongly agree"). The mean score on this measure was significantly higher in the perspective-taking condition ( $M = 7.2$ ,  $SD = 1.2$ ) than the objective condition ( $M = 3.6$ ,  $SD = 2.1$ ),  $t(165.25) = 16.30$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = 2.21$ . The perspective-taking manipulation was thus deemed successful.

### *Differences Between Conditions*

Table 1 reports the means and standard deviations of cosmopolitan helping, empathy, anger, identification with all humanity and guilt, in both experimental conditions. As hypothesized, a MANOVA



**Table 1.** Means and Standard Deviations of Measures in Each Experimental Condition

Measure	Objective Condition	Perspective-Taking Condition
Cosmopolitan Helping	2.94 (2.81)	3.75 (2.99)
Empathy	26.37 (9.93)	29.10 (10.01)
Guilt	6.50 (3.22)	7.02 (3.42)
Anger	14.61 (6.45)	17.62 (6.67)
Identification With All Humanity	-.03 (0.93)	.01 (1.07)

Note. Standard deviations are in parentheses.

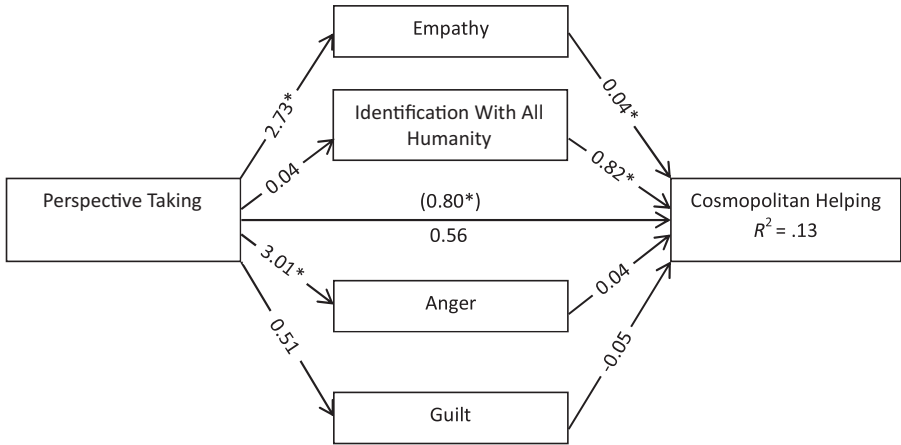
showed that perspective taking had a significant multivariate effect, Pillai's Trace = 0.07,  $F(5, 209) = 3.29$ ,  $p = .007$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .07$ . Univariate tests showed that perspective taking significantly increased cosmopolitan helping,  $F(1, 213) = 4.10$ ,  $p = .044$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .02$ , empathy,  $F(1, 213) = 4.02$ ,  $p = .046$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .02$ , and anger,  $F(1, 213) = 11.29$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .05$ . No significant effect of perspective taking on guilt,  $F(1, 213) = 1.28$ ,  $p = .259$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .01$ , or identification with all humanity  $F(1, 213) = 0.10$ ,  $p = .749$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .00$ , was found.

#### *Mediators of the Effect of Perspective Taking on Cosmopolitan Helping*

To test whether empathy mediated the effect of perspective taking on cosmopolitan helping and to examine whether empathy predicted cosmopolitan helping independently of other constructs, a bootstrapped multiple-mediation model (using 5,000 resamples) was computed (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). Bootstrapped multiple mediation provides a robust way to estimate mediated effects and allows multiple possible mediators to be included in a single model (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). The model tested is presented in Figure 1. Results revealed that, controlling for all other variables in the model, empathy,  $b = .043$ ,  $SE = .020$ ,  $p = .035$ , and identification with all humanity,  $b = .815$ ,  $SE = .191$ ,  $p = .000$ , significantly predicted cosmopolitan helping. This finding suggests that, controlling for other variables in the model, a change from the lowest to the highest observed empathy score was associated with a 1.55-hour (17.2% of the scale range) increase in cosmopolitan helping on average. Similarly, a change from the lowest to the highest observed score on the identification with all humanity measure was associated with a 5.09-hour (56.5% of the scale range) increase in cosmopolitan helping on average. After controlling for other variables in the model, guilt,  $b = -.056$ ,  $SE = .064$ ,  $p = .388$ , anger,  $b = .039$ ,  $SE = .031$ ,  $p = .198$ , and perspective taking  $b = .559$ ,  $SE = .389$ ,  $p = .152$ , did not significantly predict cosmopolitan helping. Direct effects of the variables in the model on cosmopolitan helping are shown in Table 2.

Results also revealed that empathy significantly mediated the effect of perspective taking on cosmopolitan helping, Specific Indirect Effect = .118, 95% CI = .003; .405. No significant indirect effects operating via anger, guilt, or identification with all humanity were found, indicating that only empathy significantly accounted for the effect of perspective taking on cosmopolitan helping. After controlling for other variables in the model, the effect of perspective taking on cosmopolitan helping was reduced to nonsignificance, thereby indicating that empathy completely mediated the effect of perspective taking on cosmopolitan helping, according to Baron and Kenny's (1986) approach to mediation.<sup>1</sup> Indirect effects operating via each mediator are reported in Table 3.

<sup>1</sup> A reviewer suggested including a measure of the substantive importance of this indirect effect. Unfortunately, research on effect-size measures for indirect effects in multiple-mediation models is not yet fully developed (Preacher & Kelley 2011; Wen & Fan 2015). Current recommendations suggest that the ratio of the indirect effect to the total effect ( $P_M$ ) is the best available measure for multiple-mediation models (Wen & Fan 2015). However, simulation studies show that this ratio is unstable unless the sample size is very large ( $n < 500$ ) (MacKinnon, Warsi, & Dwyer, 1995). Consistent with this claim, the  $P_M$  in the current study had a very large confidence interval, suggesting that it was inappropriate here,  $P_M = .15$ , 95% CI = -.02; 1.81.



**Figure 1.** Mediation of the effect of perspective taking on cosmopolitan helping. Listwise deletion was used to remove all participants with missing data. Perspective taking was manipulated and coded as 1 = objective and 2 = perspective taking. Values represent unstandardized coefficients. The value shown in parenthesis represents the direct effect of perspective taking on cosmopolitan helping without controlling for any mediators.  $n = 215$ . \* $p < .05$ .

Discussion

Testing the effect of empathy on cosmopolitan helping is important and necessary given the utility of empathy in motivating cosmopolitanism continues to be debated by political theorists and philosophers (e.g., Nussbaum, 2001, 2002; Prinz, 2011), and empathy is often assumed to be a central part of what it means to be a cosmopolitan (e.g., Beck, 2006). Although prior experimental research had established that empathy was positively associated with interpersonal helping, its effect on cosmopolitan helping had not been directly studied.

Results of the current experiment provide evidence that empathy increases cosmopolitan helping. Specifically, having participants take the perspective of a distant suffering individual increased cosmopolitan helping, and empathy was found to mediate this effect. As shown in Table 1, perspective taking increased cosmopolitan helping by 27.6% (0.81hrs), from 2.94 to 3.75 hours. Furthermore, empathy was found to predict cosmopolitan helping independently of identification with all humanity, anger, and guilt. Results are thus consistent with the claim that empathy is an effective motivator of cosmopolitan helping.

Contrary to existing research on the role of empathy in motivating cosmopolitan behavior—which had relied primarily on either philosophical argumentation or on research conducted on interpersonal, rather than cosmopolitan, helping—the experimental approach used here allows causal conclusions to be confidently made about the role of perspective taking and empathy in motivating cosmopolitan behavior (Druckman et al., 2011; Kittel et al., 2012). In this way, this method allows

**Table 2.** Direct Effects on Cosmopolitan Helping

Predictor	Direct Effect	Lower 95% CI	Upper 95% CI	Standardized Direct Effect
Perspective Taking	0.56	−0.21	1.33	0.10
Empathy	0.04*	0.00	0.08	0.15
Identification With All Humanity	0.82*	0.44	1.19	0.28
Anger	0.04	−0.02	0.10	0.09
Guilt	−0.06	−0.18	0.07	−0.06

*Note.* Results are from the bootstrapped multiple-mediation model shown in Figure 1. \* $p < .05$ .



**Table 3.** Specific Indirect Effects of Perspective Taking on Cosmopolitan Helping Operating Via Empathy, Identification With All Humanity, Anger, and Guilt

Mediator	Indirect Effect	Lower 95% CI	Upper 95% CI
Empathy	0.12*	0.00	0.40
Identification With All Humanity	0.04	−0.17	0.27
Anger	0.12	−0.09	0.43
Guilt	−0.03	−0.24	0.04

*Note.* Results are from the bootstrapped multiple-mediation model shown in Figure 1. \* $p < .05$ .

researchers to better adjudicate between competing arguments about empathy's ability to motivate cosmopolitan helping.

These findings have substantial implications for research on cosmopolitanism. This study shows that, even if individuals feel more empathy for ingroups than outgroups, empathy is still capable of motivating the sort of helping of distant outgroups that is required by cosmopolitan helping. Therefore, rather than dismissing empathy on the basis that it may be less able to motivate cosmopolitan helping than ingroup helping (e.g., Prinz, 2011), it may be more important to focus on developing interventions that effectively increase empathy for distant groups and individuals. This study paves the way for research aiming to develop such techniques.

Although empathy significantly increased cosmopolitan helping, results also indicate that many other factors play a role in predicting such behavior. Results showed that perspective taking, empathy, identification with all humanity, anger, and guilt together explained just 13% of the variance in cosmopolitan helping. This finding is consistent with Song's (2015) suggestion that although empathy may be useful in increasing moral behavior (such as cosmopolitanism), proponents should be careful not to exaggerate empathy's contributions to such behavior; other factors and emotions may also be useful. Indeed, results showed that identification with all humanity was a stronger predictor than empathy of cosmopolitan helping. This finding supports previous research showing that identification with all humanity is positively associated with cosmopolitan helping (Faulkner, 2016; Hamer & Gutowski, 2009; McFarland et al., 2012) and that manipulations of identification with all humanity can increase charitable behavior (Reese, Proch, & Finn, 2015). Importantly, however, the current findings indicate that empathy increases cosmopolitan helping independently of identification with all humanity.

The findings reported here are subject to some limitations. First, although the measure of helping used here was consistent with measures used in previous research (e.g., Batson, Polycarpou, et al., 1997; DeWall, Baumeister, Gailliot, & Maner, 2008; Maner et al., 2002) and required individuals to promise their time, the participants who promised help did not actually have to provide that help after being debriefed at the conclusion of the study. Although participants were not made aware of this fact until the conclusion of the study, future research may benefit from inclusion of immediate behavioral measures, such as clicking on a link to make a donation. Second, it is possible, but not yet known, if perspective-taking instructions have a different effect on helping when the story describes a child rather than adult. However, because there is evidence that empathy may be felt more strongly for victims who are not responsible for their plight than victims who are responsible (Decety, Echols, & Correll, 2010), future research could investigate this possibility.

In sum, the current study provided a direct test of the claim that empathy increases cosmopolitan helping. Findings support the claim that empathy increases cosmopolitan helping, but they also indicate that other factors, including identification with all humanity, also explain such behavior. Together, these findings provide evidence that empathy is capable of partially filling the "motivational vacuum" (Dobson, 2006) that has lain for millennia at cosmopolitanism's core.

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