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A Study of the Effect of Empathy on Public Opinion on Immigration

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Political Science

by

Chris Stephen Haynes

August 2013

Dissertation Committee:
Dr. Karthick Ramakrishnan, Chairperson
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The Dissertation of Chris Stephen Haynes is approved:

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents Stephen and Sandra Haynes. Without their unyielding love and guidance, this would have never been possible. I would like to personally thank my mom for the strength, humility, and confidence that she instilled in me to be able to reach for my dreams and practice the empathy that I preach. I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my father whose love, work ethic, and resolve enabled me to forge ahead through difficult times and overcome any barrier standing in my way.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

A Study of the Effect of Empathy
on Public Opinion on Immigration

by

Chris Stephen Haynes

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in Political Science
University of California, Riverside, August 2013
Dr. Karthick Ramakrishnan, Chairperson

With his January 29, 2013 immigration speech, President Obama made his bold and confident case for comprehensive immigration reform. Yet, the likelihood that an acceptable immigration bill passes Congress is not at all certain. Much could depend on which side is able to most effectively frame the debate and win over public opinion. What is clear is that proponents of immigration reform are making significant use of a particular emotional appeal…empathy. Will the gamble on an emotion-heavy, empathetic strategy be able to sway public opinion and thus, members of Congress? Previous research finds that inducing empathy can improve intergroup attitudes. But, little has been done on the connection between empathy and support for immigration policies. In my research, I analyze news coverage on immigration policy to see how empathetic framing varies across news sources. I also

conduct experiments to test whether empathetic news coverage increases support for permissive immigration policies (i.e. path to citizenship). In short, I find empirical support for my expectations. Most striking, I find that empathetic effects increasing support for these permissive policies are substantial especially among individuals with no contact with undocumented immigrants and among those predisposed to empathize in general.

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> "Hiu Lui Ng arrived in New York City as a teenager in 1992. He went on to become a computer engineer, got married and started a family. He also overstayed his visa. Because his wife is a U.S. citizen, he applied to legalize his status. Unbeknownst to Ng, he had been ordered deported to Hong Kong. When he went to interview for a green card, he was sent to immigration detention, where he died last summer.
>
> On Jan. 15, Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials issued a report of Ng's death at the Wyatt Detention Facility in Rhode Island. ICE found that Ng had died of untreated cancer and a fractured spine. His requests for an outside medical evaluation had been repeatedly denied. ICE has since removed all detainees from that facility.
>
> ICE opened its inquiry into Ng's death shortly after The New York Times conducted its own investigation[1]."
>
> (Raul Reyes, USA Today, March 13, 2009)

The excerpt from the USA Today in March of 2009 illuminates the central focus of this dissertation---empathy. In it, Raul Reyes recounts the harrowing, sad, and frustrating story of undocumented immigrant, Hiu Liu Ng who died in the hands of our immigration system. The writer uses an episodic or concrete rhetorical frame to illustrate this shocking episode too common in our country's history-long struggle with the issue of undocumented immigration. After reading this news article, the audience cannot help but empathize with Mr. Ng and think about how he felt while in detention and near death. Whether intended or not, the likely result of this news article and many just like it is to induce the public into the emotional state of empathy.

This episode was not just an outlying occurrence. Rather, the public discourse is replete with news stories, speeches, lectures, chatter, and other accounts which harness

[1] Reyes, Raul, "ICE Needs to Upgrade Care for Detainees," USA Today, March 13, 2009.

and deploy the power of empathetic rhetoric to shape public attitudes about immigration and many other issues. And perhaps to the surprise of the legions of academicians, who often ignore the epiphenomenal effects of emotion in favor of more cogitative or reason-based explanations, not only has such rhetoric been used throughout history, but it can be argued that it has consequentially affected the course of public opinion in our country (Brader 2005, Brader et.al 2008, Marcus et.al 2000, Huddy et.al 2005, 2007).

Among a number of important implications, the power to shape public opinion carries with it the ability to shape the behavior of our elected officials and with it, the course of public policy and decision making. For at the very foundation of our representative democracy are mechanisms put in place to ensure that elected officials follow the will of the people. While some may complain that our government is not only out of touch with, but also indifferent to the wishes of the people (Hayes 2012), most evidence supports the idea that politicians are, by and large, responsive (Stimson et.al 1995, Miller & Stokes 1963, Page et.al 1984, Bartels 1991). When the public will shifts decisively, it is often the case that politicians follow their lead either by placing an issue on the political agenda or by changing their issue position. Consequently, the is a significant research tradition explaining why people opine the way they do and which factors can cause these opinions to change (Zaller 1992, Chong & Druckman 2007).

To answer these questions, a rich literature attributing changes in preferences to factors such as learning additional information, framing, priming, and emotion has developed in political science. Regarding emotion, the research has primarily focused on fear, threat, anxiety, enthusiasm, and, anger and their effects on candidate evaluation (Merolla & Zechmeister 2009), candidate preferences (Marcus et.al 2000), and issue attitudes (Brader et.al 2008, Huddy et.al 2005). And for good reason---each of these factors and outcomes has very important political implications. For example, Brader and colleagues (2008) find that the mechanism triggering more negative immigration attitudes when different group cues were presented was anxiety. Additionally, Merolla and Zechmeister (2009) find that feelings of threat can induce more support for incumbents by increasing the emphasis that individuals place on more leadership qualities as opposed to longstanding orientations such as partisanship. Finally, using nationally-representative survey experiments, Marcus and colleagues (2000) find that anxiety appears to induce more effortful processing and a reconsideration of a person's existing preferences.

However, while experiencing a great deal of growth, the literature on the political implications of emotion is still in its relative infancy. One result is that scholars have yet to explore another important emotion with consequential and important political implications---empathy. However, as exemplified by President Obama's immigration 2013 address, the use and appearance of empathy has been and continues to be an enduring theme in our immigration and political discourse.

However, not all scholarship has ignored this potentially powerful emotion. In social-psychology, scholars have long been interested in the attitudinal and behavior implications of empathy (Batson et.al 1997, Vescio et.al 2003, Stephan & Finlay 2002, Davis 1983, Shih et.al 2009, Todd et.al 2011). While most research has focused on how empathy induces helping behavior (Batson 1991, Davis 1996, Oswald 1996), a number of studies have explored empathy's effect on intergroup attitudes such as prejudice (Todd et.al 2011, Shih et.al 2009, Clore & Jeffrey 1972, Dovidio et.al 2004, Batson at.al 1997, Vorauer & Sasaki 2013) and stereotypes (Vescio et.al 2003). Social-psychologists have understood empathy as multi-dimensional concept composed of two different conceptual states, empathic concern (affective) and perspective-taking (cognitive)[2].

However, previous empathy research has focused primarily on the implications of artificially prompted perspective-taking empathy (see Batson 2009 for a review). However, in the world of immigration and politics, empathetic messages come in many forms and styles that do not resemble previous operationalizations of this complex emotion. Moreover, prior attempts at understanding empathy have only touched upon its implications on public opinion, not yet looking at public policy preferences in general and immigration preferences more specifically.

[2] *Perspective-taking empathy* is defined as either imagining how one would think and feel in another's situation (imagine-self) or imagining how another person thinks or feels given one's situation (imagine-other) (Batson & Ahmad 2009). Separate and distinct from this concept is *affective empathy* which is feeling as another person feels (emotional matching) or feeling for another person in need (empathic concern) (Batson & Ahmad 2009).

Recognizing that this is just an initial foray into the role of empathy in politics, my objective is to contribute to the scholarship by providing research which not only studies empathy's attitudinal implications in the context of undocumented immigration, but also does so in a way that shifts the focus from the empathy itself to empathetic framing.

Thus, I propose the following research questions: First, how does empathy appear in the real world? Second, how does empathy relate to public opinion on immigration? And finally, how does the way that empathy is induced (content, priming) affect changes in immigration policy preferences? In short, I argue that empathy is a complex, multi-dimensional emotion composed of two primary constructs: empathic concern and perspective-taking. Continuing, I claim that these responses can be evoked by exposure to empathetic content and/or prompts to empathize. However, the nature of those empathetic experiences is critical in terms of the chances for opinion change. In this dissertation, I build upon previous research and focus on the role that empathetic content and empathetic primes have on people's immigration preferences.

In the chapters which follow, I present content-based and experimental evidence supporting the following claims: First, empathetic stimuli can be lead to large permissive shifts in immigration preferences when empathetic content is combined with instructions to perspective-take. And second, these permissive shifts in immigration preferences can still materialize even if empathy in two other empathetic scenarios

(empathetic content only, empathetic content with affective empathy prime). Moreover, I also find that empathy's persuasive effects are moderated by trait empathy and immigrant (social) contact.

2013 DREAM Act Support and Empathy

I begin this exploration of empathy and its potential impact on immigration policy preferences with the case of one of those permissive policies, the DREAM Act. The DREAM Act stands for the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors. It was a piece of legislation that was introduced August 1, 2001 by Senators Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Dick Durbin (D-IL)[3]. This version of the DREAM Act was similar to the legislation offered by Representatives Chris Cannon (R-UT) and Howard Berman (D-CA) called the Student Adjustment Act of 2001[4]. The main provisions of the DREAM Act were to cancel deportation proceedings and offer permanent residence to undocumented immigrants who were of good moral character, were enrolled in higher education, and had not yet attained the age of 21. More recent offerings of the DREAM Act have introduced this piece of legislation as a stand-alone bill from comprehensive immigration reform proposals from which it was subsumed in 2005-2007. Additionally, recent offerings have stipulated that only aliens entering the US illegally prior to the age of sixteen would qualify for its benefits. However, even given the many previous

[3] See http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d107:S1291:
[4] See http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d107:HR01918:

attempts to enshrine this into law by both Republicans and Democrats, the DREAM Act has yet to become law.

However, the failure to become law has not been because the DREAM Act has not enjoyed majority support. In fact, dozens of polls since it was first introduced show a public that has consistently registered support levels between 50% and 60%. A brief glance at the recent plight of this significant piece of immigration legislation reveals public support levels hovering near this 60% mark since mid-2012. However, since mid-January 2013, support spiked up to 74%. This is an increase of over fourteen percentage points, well above the 3 ½ point margin of error. Yet, which factor(s) were responsible for this spike in support? What we do know is that President Obama gave a highly publicized speech outlining his proposal for comprehensive immigration reform. And though he spoke a lot about policy details, his rhetoric also invoked a significant amount of empathy. In fact, Obama devoted more than thirty-five sentences to this empathetic story about the plight of undocumented immigrants:

> "When we talk about that in the abstract, it's easy sometimes for the discussion to take on a feeling of "us" versus "them." And when that happens, a lot of folks forget that most of "us" used to be "them." We forget that. It's really important for us to remember our history. Unless you're one of the first Americans, a Native American, you came from someplace else. Somebody brought you."

In this first part of his speech, Obama does something very important. He establishes a link between the observer (reader/listener) and the target (undocumented immigrants). Previous research shows that perceived observer-target similarity is an important factor heightening empathy (Davis 1996). This linkage gives Obama access into the heart and

mind of the observer. Next Obama continues this theme by listing groups of people who should identify with undocumented immigrants.

> "Ken Salazar, he's of Mexican American descent, but he points that his family has been living where he lives for 400 years, so he didn't immigrate anywhere. The Irish who left behind a land of famine. The Germans who fled persecution. The Scandinavians who arrived eager to pioneer out west. The Polish. The Russians. The Italians. The Chinese. The Japanese. The West Indians. The huddled masses who came through Ellis Island on one coast and Angel Island on the other. All those folks, before they were "us," they were in "them."

In this part of his speech, Obama attempts to gain access to his audience. Additionally, he drives home his empathetic plea by using content (see words in bold) that evokes sympathy, concern, commonality, and sadness. In short, he gets the audience to empathize with the undocumented.

> "And when each new wave of immigrants arrived, they **faced resistance** from those who were already here. They **faced hardship**. They faced racism. They faced ridicule. But over time, as they went about their daily lives, as they **earned a living**, as they **raised a family**, as they **built a community**, as their **kids** went to school here, they did their part to **build a nation**. They were the Einsteins and the Carnegies. But they were also the millions of women and men whose names history may not remember, but whose actions helped make us who we are; who **built this country hand by hand, brick by brick**. They all came here knowing that what makes somebody an American is not just blood or birth, but allegiance to our founding principles and the faith in **the idea that anyone from anywhere can write the next great chapter of our story**."

President Obama next follows this ode to traditional American values and storied American people with a concrete story about one of those immigrants who just happens to be undocumented, "Dreamer" Allan Aleman.

> "And that's still true today. Just ask Alan Aleman. Alan is here this afternoon — where is Alan? He's around here — there he is right here. Alan was born in Mexico. He was brought to this country by his parents when he was a child. Growing up,

> Alan went to an American school, pledged allegiance to the American flag, felt American in every way — and he was, except for one: on paper.
>
> In high school, Alan watched his friends come of age — driving around town with their new licenses, earning some extra cash from their summer jobs at the mall. He knew he couldn't do those things. But it didn't matter that much. What mattered to Alan was earning an education so that he could live up to his God-given potential. Last year, when Alan heard the news that we were going to offer a chance for folks like him to emerge from the shadows — even if it's just for two years at a time — he was one of the first to sign up. And a few months ago he was one of the first people in Nevada to get approved. In that moment, Alan said, "I felt the fear vanish. I felt accepted."
>
> So today, Alan is in his second year at the College of Southern Nevada. Alan is studying to become a doctor. He hopes to join the Air Force. He's working hard every single day to build a better life for himself and his family. And all he wants is the opportunity to do his part to build a better America."
>
> (President Barrack Obama (D), January 29, 2013)

This empathetic speech typifies my January-March 2013 content analysis findings. Namely, that since the beginning of the year, much of the public discussion about undocumented immigration and the DREAM Act in particular, has been dominated by empathetic frames. For example, I find that while on average (2009-2011), 25% of all news stories on immigration include at least one empathetic frame, this number spikes in early 2013 to about 40% (see figure 2).

However, most interesting is that it is not only people like President Obama who are using empathetic lingo to support their positions on immigration, it is also those on the conservative right like Fox Anchors Sean Hannity and Bill O'Reilly, House Majority Leader Republican Eric Cantor, Senator Rand Paul (R), and former Vice-Presidential nominee Paul Ryan (R). These are the same conservatives whose previous commentary on immigration was dominated by anger, fear, and threat. The following is an excerpt

of Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA) who did an about-face earlier this year on his stance on the DREAM Act.

> "I think a good place to start is with children. Here's the difficulty in this issue, I think. And it is because we've got families who are here that have become part of the fabric of our country. And we want to make sure that we're compassionate and sensitive to their plight. These kids know no other place as home. On the other hand, we are a country of laws. We have a situation of border security that we have to get straight. We have to secure our borders. There is a balance that needs to take place. But the best place to begin, I think, is with the children. Let's go ahead and get that under our belt. Put a win on the board. And so we can promise a better life for those kids who are here due to no fault of their own."
>
> (Majority Leader Representative Eric Cantor (R-VA), February 10, 2013)

Moving forward, the relevant question is: Could this spike in DREAM Act support be the result of a concurrent jump in the appearance of empathetic frames in media coverage and political rhetoric? It is this puzzle and many others like it (i.e. the 2007 Elvira Arellano deportation episode) to which I seek to provide answers. But first, I turn to a discussion of the concept of empathy as a starting point.

What is Empathy?

In short, although empathy has a long and varied history stretching back to the beginning of the 20th century, current scholars have begun to push a definition of empathy as multi-dimensional and process-oriented (Davis 1996, Morrell 2010). Essentially, recent scholarship argues that empathy is an individual's affective-cogitative response to a target which can be induced via explicit empathetic priming or by

interacting with empathetic content about the target which can be moderated by key individual differences.

A virtual reality is that everyone knows what empathy is and has their own definition of what this concept encompasses. Some view it as a cognitive process of role-taking. While others think of empathy as an affective, emotional reaction. Still there are others who would say that empathy is a little bit of both. It is no wonder why previous researchers and theorists have been unable to settle on a single conceptual definition for this amorphous phenomenon. Yet, if we scan the literature on empathy, we find that it has gone through different phases since its importation from Germany into the English language at the beginning of the 20th century (Davis 1996). Definitions of empathy alternated between more affective conceptions emphasizing emotive outcomes (Titchener 1909, Stotland 1969, Batson et.al 1997) to more cognitive definitions viewing empathy as a cognitive process (Borke 1978, Dymond 1950). Moreover, recent researchers have tried to advance a more integrated definition that encompasses both (Davis 1996, Morrell 2010).

The concept of empathy draws its origins from the German word "einfuhlung" which means "the tendency of observers to project themselves into that which they observe." In the early 1900's, psychologist Lipps introduced this concept into the field of psychology where he used it to study optical illusions and the process by which we get to know others (Lipps 1903, 1905). However, it was Titchener (1909) who was

credited with coining the term in English a few years later. Both Lipps and Titchener defined the concept of empathy as an inner imitation of the observed person or object and that "witnessing another's emotional state can prompt an individual to imitate the target's emotional cues (Lipps 1926)." As later empathy researchers note, this conceptualization of empathy involved more than just a passive emotional reaction to that of another. Rather, this definition of empathy implied a more active role of the individual in perspective-taking and cogitating.

This new strand of empathy researchers focused on the cognitive (as opposed to affective) aspect of empathy. *Cogitative empathy* is taking the perspective of another person or imaging one's self in the position of an individual or group (Borke 1978, Dymond 1949). Yet, in the latter half of the 20th century, new empathy theorists took empathy research in a new affective direction (Stotland 1969). *Affective or reactive empathy* includes feeling as another person feels (emotional matching) or feeling for another person in need (empathic concern) (Batson & Ahmad 2009).

While early researchers tended to define empathy in as either cognitive or affective, more recent research tends to use a integrated and multidimensional approach (Davis 1996, Morrell 2010). These scholars theorize that empathy should not be thought of in such narrow terms. Rather, they argue that empathy is an interconnected set of affective and/or cognitive processes/outcomes between an individual and a target that depending on a number of antecedents can systematically

affect a variety of intra and inter-personal outcomes. While a few theorists have attempted to improve upon Davis' (1996) Organizational Model, it remains the most comprehensive and accepted understanding of empathy. In it, Davis (1996) conceptualizes empathy as composed of four different parts: Antecedents, Processes, Intrapersonal Outcomes, and Interpersonal Outcomes (see figure 1).

Antecedents are the "characteristics of the observer, target, or situation." Antecedents are divided up between those related to the person and the situation. *Personal antecedents* include empathic capacity, learning history with empathy, and individual differences in the tendency to engage in empathy related processes or experience empathy related outcomes. On the other hand, *situational antecedents* refer to the strength of the situation and observer-target similarity (Davis 1996).

Processes are "the mechanisms by which empathic outcomes are produced." Davis (1996) divides empathetic processes into three separate types: non-cognitive, simple cognitive, and advanced cognitive. *Non-cognitive processes* include primary circular reaction and motor mimicry. *Simple cognitive processes* are comprised of classical conditioning, labeling, and direct association. Finally, *advanced cognitive processes* consist of language mediated association, elaborated networks, and perspective-taking.

Intrapersonal outcomes are "the cognitive and affective responses produced in the observer that are not manifested in overt behavior toward the target." Here Davis

(1996) divides this construct into affective and non-affective outcomes. Affective outcomes include *parallel outcomes* and *reactive outcomes. Parallel outcomes* are observer reproductions of the emotions felt by the target. Alternatively, *reactive outcomes* are affective reactions to the experiences of the target that are different from the observed affect (Davis 1996). Reactive emotions outcomes can consist of empathic concern, personal distress, and anger/frustration. On the other hand, non-affective are comprised of the accuracy of interpersonal assessments and attributional judgments.

Finally, *interpersonal outcomes* are "the behavioral responses directed toward the target." These can consist of helping behavior, aggression, and pro-social behaviors. This integrated and multi-dimensional conceptualization of empathy is critical to understanding empathy's impact on immigration policy preferences. Thus, I adopt this integrated conception of empathy (Davis 1996) to explore empathy in the real world public discourse and its more fine-grained effects within a lab setting. The following is the empirical outline of this dissertation.

In chapter 2, I ask: What does empathy look like in the real world and how prevalent is it? If the stimuli and manipulations that we use to assess empathetic effects do not resemble what appears in the political world, our findings would be less relevant and important. Consequently, I present the findings of a content analysis describing different ways in which empathy appears in the media discourse. In short, empathy can be evoked either as an empathetic preface or lead in (prime) OR by the

inclusion of empathetic content. While I find that empathetic content is a much more natural fit for the media discourse on immigration, empathetic priming none-the-less does indeed occur and more importantly could be enveloped into coverage and messaging quite easily.

Given the real nature of empathetic priming and content, I then turn to exploring empathy's potential role in immigration preference formation. Thus, in chapter 3, I apply previous findings from the empathy and attitudes literature to test three claims.

First, I argue that increases in empathy for the undocumented resulting from exposure to empathetic stimuli should be associated with increases in support for permissive immigration policies. And while my empirical case may be thin due to a lack of relevant data, I lay out my theoretical case that these permissive shifts in immigration preferences result from two primary processes. Namely, that empathy serves both as new affective information which tilts a person's balance of considerations toward support of permissive policies and it increases the salience of pro-immigrant considerations to maintain existing empathetic affect.

Second, I hypothesize that permissive movement should be more likely under instructions to both perspective-take and emotionally empathize as compared to only empathize emotionally. And third, I also predict that permissive movement should be more likely when participants are exposed to empathetic content under instructions to perspective-take as opposed to those just exposed to the content without the empathy

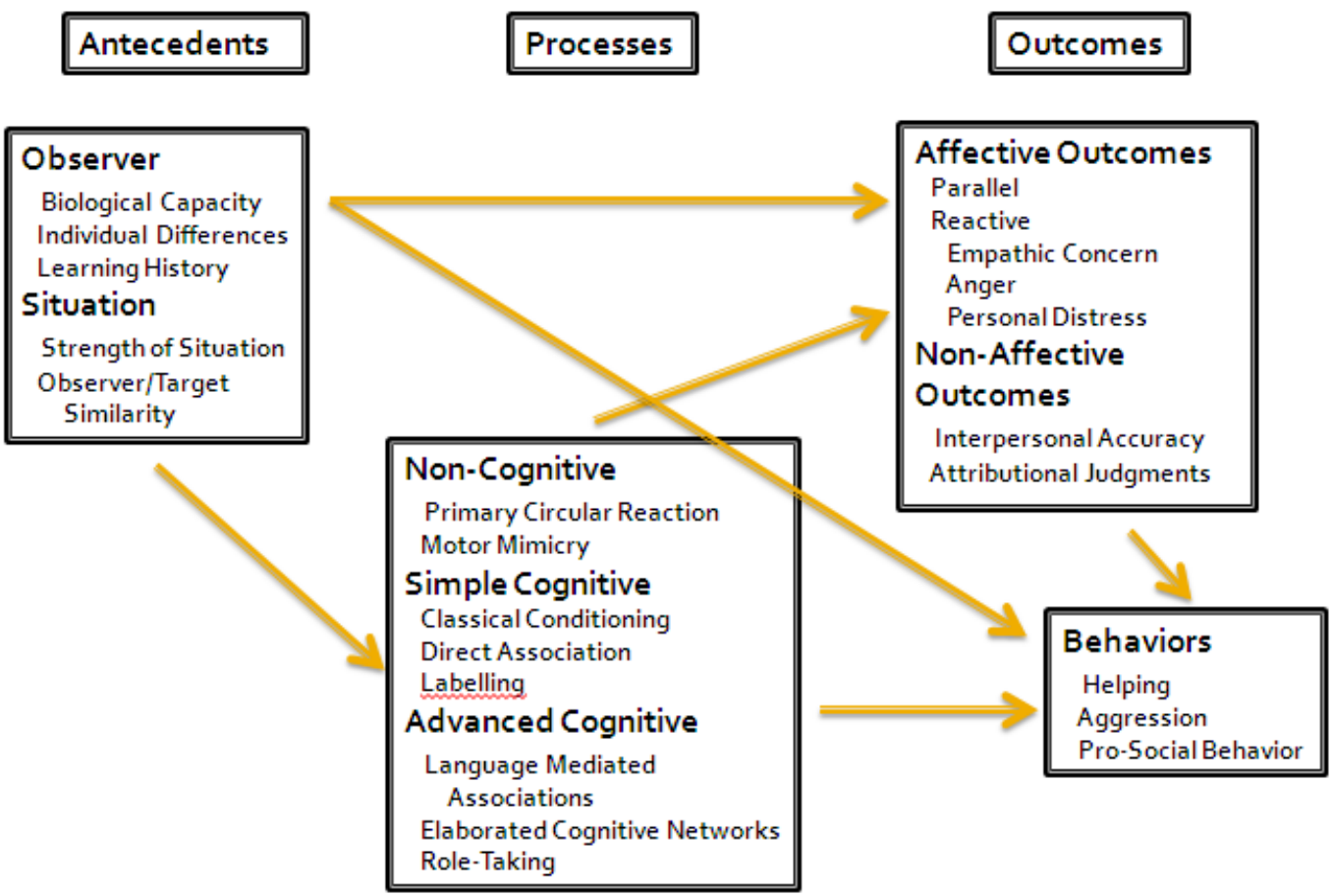
instructions. In short, using experimental evidence I find the following: First, empathetic stimuli (content, priming) do indeed increase support for permissive policies. Second, that perspective-taking instructions produce more permissive movement than instructions to only focus on feeling empathic concern. Finally, I find that permissive differences are more substantial when participants are instructed to empathize prior to exposure to empathetic content as opposed to only being exposed to the content.

In chapter 4, consistent with previous findings on trait empathy, I argue that individuals with higher levels of trait empathy will be more likely to support permissive immigration policies than those lower in trait empathy. Again, I use experimental data interacting Davis' (1983) measure for trait empathy with the experimental condition. In short, I find a statistically significant interaction term where individuals who are more predisposed to empathize in general, appear to experience more permissive movement than those who have low trait empathy.

Next, in chapter 5, similar to previous survey findings that individuals with more social contact with racial minorities report higher levels of support for racialized policies like Affirmative Action, I argue that individuals with no contact with the undocumented should experience larger positive shifts in support for permissive immigration policies given exposure to the empathy treatment than those with contact. Again, I use experimental data interacting an adapted measure of social contact (Pettigrew 1997)

with the experimental condition. In short, I find support for my contention that lack of social contact heightens the empathy's permissive effects on support for permissive immigration policies. Finally, I end by emphasizing the implications of this research and share a few of my thoughts on avenues for future research.

Figure 1: Organizational Model of Empathy (Davis 1994)



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Chapter 2 – Empathetic Framing and Priming in the News and Beyond

To recap, empathy is an individual's affective-cogitative response to a target which can be induced via explicit empathetic priming or by interacting with empathetic content about the target which can be moderated by key individual differences. Using this conception of empathy, I draw on my own exploratory content analyses to describe the different types of stimuli that can induce empathy and its prevalence in the public discourse. In short, empathy can be evoked either as an instruction set (empathetic prime) OR by the inclusion of empathetic content. While I find that empathetic content is a much more natural fit for the media discourse on immigration, empathetic priming still occurs and more importantly could easily be incorporated into coverage and messaging.

> "Raudel Sanchez's American dream was so strong that he tied a few possessions around his waist in 1967 and swam across the Rio Grande into Texas. "I wanted to make a better life in America," says Sanchez, 63. "My dream was bringing my family here and working together." Sanchez, now a U.S. citizen, joined a brother in Chicago after crossing the border near Laredo, Texas. He worked as a butcher, making $1.85 an hour, and took a second job at a candy factory. He often worked 14 hours a day. He saved his earnings and eventually brought his wife, siblings and parents -- who are now in their 90s -- to Chicago. Eventually, he opened several small businesses and

> built a comfortable life for himself and his family. Many immigrants started with nothing and built businesses that support them and their extended families and communities. They epitomize the American dream: Work hard and you can build a good life." (Judy Keen, *USA Today*, June 16, 2009)[5]

This 2009 *USA Today* excerpt is a prime example of how empathetic content and rhetorical frames have become a permanent part of the public discourse on undocumented immigration. Similarly, my introductory examples of President Obama's story about "Dreamer" Allan Aleman and news articles about Jose Antonio Vargas illustrate how empathetically-framed messages about undocumented immigrants are trending in the public discourse. This might surprise political science scholars because most previous accounts of the effect of political discourse on immigration preferences (Brader et.al 2008, Albertson and Gadarian 2010) have focused on frames invoking negative emotions such as fear, anxiety, anger, and threat. Yet, little is known about the different types of empathetic frames used in the media and the extent to which they pervade our public discourse.

In the following chapter, I would like to gage the relative frequency of empathetic framing. To further this inquiry, I produce results from a content analysis of a representative sampling of news articles about immigration from two of the most

[5] Keen, Judy, "For immigrants, living the dream is getting tougher; Business failures may 'have an effect for generations'," News Desk, *USA Today,* June 16, 2009.

widely circulated newspapers (*USA Today* and *New York Times*) from 2009-2011. In all, I find a wide variety of frequently appearing empathetic *content frames* (i.e. *want best for their family*) and *rhetorical frames* (episodic vs. thematic) throughout the period. Moreover, consistent with expectations, I find suggestive evidence that both empathetic *content* and *rhetorical* frames affect empathetic response.

Additionally, I argue that empathetic *primes* (instructions or prefaces prompting the audience to empathize) can also be instrumental in inducing persuasive levels of empathy especially in television interviews, news articles, political speeches, classroom lectures, conflict resolution, and deliberative democracy. Here as well, few in political science have examined the nature of and the effect that *priming* empathy prior to presenting empathetic content has on policy preference persuasion. In the latter half of this chapter, I assert that empathetic priming similar to what occurs in the experimental research context is something that can and does naturally occur in everyday discourse on immigration. To this end, I detail and illustrate what empathetic priming could look like in a variety of message conveying media (i.e. political speeches, news articles leads, television segment leads, and classroom lectures) with real world examples from recent political speeches and newsprint. Here, the evidence suggests that empathy primes used here and in previous research do have import into the real world. Finally, I find suggestive evidence that news stories which prime the reader to empathize are associated with a higher empathetic response than those that do not.

The Rhetorical Underpinnings of Empathy

Indeed, political scientists are well aware of the existence and consequences of framing on public opinion (Druckman 2001, Chong & Druckman 2007, Jacoby 2000, Kinder & Sanders 1990, Nelson, Clawson, & Oxley 1997). Moreover, others find that the framing of immigration can have substantial effects on the public's preferences on undocumented immigration (Brader et.al 2008, Merolla, Ramakrishnan, Haynes 2013). For example, Merolla and colleagues (2013) find that altering the content frames ("DREAM Act" versus "amnesty") of different immigration policies (i.e. DREAM Act) can drastically shift public support. Framing has long been understood as "a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events weaving a connection among them. The frame suggests what the controversy is about, the essence of the issue" (Gamson & Modigliani 1989). And while these studies establish a basic understanding of the effects of content framing, there are other ways to frame an issue which have political implications.

In fact, Gross (2008) argues and finds that *rhetorical structure* of media stories can systematically affect emotional response and policy preferences. *Rhetorical* framing can be defined as different "ways of telling a story to make it more understandable, accessible, and/or compelling to the audience" (Gross 2008). In her 2008 study, Gross finds that episodic framing can heighten emotional response, specifically that of sympathy and pity, and lead to more favorable attitudes toward the subject of the

policy (here a convicted woman subject to minimum sentencing). While such studies have looked into the political impact of rhetorical framing, its effects on the public's immigration preferences are unknown. In this section, I fill part of this void by identifying and illustrating empathetic framing of undocumented immigration in the mainstream media.

What is clear is that the media's empathetic framing of undocumented immigration comes in many forms based on both *content* and *rhetoric*. I use results from a content analysis of immigration news stories from 2009-2011 to evaluate the following claims: First, the media's presentation of undocumented immigration varies by rhetorical framing. Second, this framing can systematically affect empathetic emotional response.

First, I turn to rhetorical framing. The two types of rhetorical frames of interest are *episodic* and *thematic* frames. These *rhetorical* frames deal with the concreteness of a message, story, segment, or article. An *episodic* frame is a way of presenting "an issue by offering a specific example, case study, or event oriented report" (Gross 2008). In contrast, a *thematic* frame is a different way of presenting an issue "into a broader context" (Gross 2008) using generalities and abstractions instead of more concrete, real life examples. For example, the next passage is an example of a more episodically-framed article. Pay attention to the mention of the immigrant's name and the particulars of his situation.

> "The tale of **Luigi and Rita Bragaloni** is an immigrants' love story. But so is that of **Luigi and America**. It merits telling amid the caustic policy debate exacerbated by the new immigration law in Arizona. **Rita and Luigi met as teenagers** in a small Italian town 50 miles south of Rome. **She was 13; he was 15.** A year later, in 1960, **her family moved to suburban Chicago Heights**. Then, in a wonderful happenstance, he moved to the same neighborhood to live with two uncles and enrolled at Prairie State. **They were engaged in 1965 and married in 1967 at San Rocco Oratory, a Roman Catholic church in Chicago Heights**. **She** was a full-fledged citizen, and he was on a student visa. To gain permanent residency status, **Luigi** enlisted in the United States Army and fought in Vietnam, winning several medals, including the Bronze Star." (*New York Times*, May 16, 2010)[6]

By personalizing a story with more vivid language and imagery, episodic articles remind the reader of similar situations that they have experienced or of people they know, engaging their hearts and minds in the immigrant subject's plight. This story also emotionally connects the audience with the "American Dream" narrative. Alternatively, here is an example of a more thematically-framed article:

> "**About four million American children** have at least one parent who lacks legal immigration status, the group found. And 73 percent of all children of illegal immigrants are American citizens. **In 2003, 2.7 million American children** had parents without legal status. The increase stems from the relatively young age of the immigrants, who have children soon after they settle in the United States, the report said. **Children of illegal immigrants are more than twice as likely to live with two**

[6] Warren, James, "An Immigration Story, And A Love Story," National Desk, *New York Times,* May 16, 2010.

> **parents than children of United States citizens**, according to the report. In all, about **8.8 million people** in the United States are in families that include parents who are illegal immigrants and children who are American citizens. **About three-quarters of the nation's illegal immigrants** are Hispanic… In the last two years of the Bush administration, immigration authorities stepped up raids in factories and immigrant communities, and **a record 349,000 immigrants were deported in 2008**." (*New York Times*, April 15, 2009)[7]

Notice how the article discusses more generalities reducing the discussion of illegal immigration to mere statistics such as "73 percent of all children" and "a record 349,000 immigrants were deported in 2008." These types of statistical evidence are more cognitive in nature, which for most do not lead to emotional engagement such as empathizing.

Previous work in political science finds that episodically-framed articles are more likely to induce sympathy[8] for convicted felons than those which are more thematic (Gross 2008). Additionally, in related work examining the media's coverage of the DREAM Act in 2007 and 2010, Merolla, Ramkrishnan, and Haynes (2013) produce similar findings. Using t-tests to analyze a representative sample of 468 news articles and cable news transcripts on the DREAM Act, they find that episodically-framed (percentage with

[7] Preston, Julia, "Study Sees More Young Citizens With Parents in the U.S. Illegally," National Desk, *New York Times,* April 15, 2009.

[8] Previous research (Batson et.al 1997) and current factor analyses reveal that sympathy is closely connected and indeed one of the factorial elements of empathy.

empathy=78%) stories were significantly (p=.000) more likely to evoke feelings of empathy than those framed thematically (percentage with empathy=25%). These findings indicate that the concreteness or rhetorical structure of a news story can affect the degree to which it evokes empathy.

Given these findings, we should expect news articles about immigrants that are more episodic (as opposed to thematic) to be more empathetic, all else equal. To test this expectation, I use the results of my qualitative content analysis of a representative sample of news articles on immigration from the *USA Today* and *New York Times* during the period from 2009 to 2011. The data collection for this content analysis took place in three parts: identification of emotional frames, coding for *rhetorical* and *content* framing, and coding for summary empathy.

First, to produce the list of *content* frames capable of inducing empathy, four undergraduates read through ninety articles on immigration from the *USA Today* and *New York Times* appearing from 2009-2011[9]. They were tasked with identifying any and all content frames of undocumented immigration capable of producing an empathetic response. A few additional frames were added to this list generated from previous readings of other immigration articles. Using this list of empathetic frames, two additional sets of research assistants coded a representative sampling of immigration stories (N=480) from the *USA Today* (N=314) and *New York Times* (N=166) from 2009-

[9] I drew a random sample of thirty articles from the combined sample (NYT, *USA Today*) for each year; fifteen articles per year from the *USA Today* and fifteen from the *New York Times*.

2011. The primary codes of interest were those of the specific content frames[10] themselves (which were not identified as empathetic in nature) and summary measures of empathetic response[11] to each article. After reading through the ninety articles, research assistants met with the principal investigator to reveal, discuss, and merge the various lists of frames. The result was a list of fourteen separate empathetic *content* frames. This list of empathetic content frames was then used to populate a drop down list of empathy frames to be used in the next phase of data collection.

In this second part, two RA's (RA1, RA2) were instructed to report the appearance of any listed *emotional content frames*[12] in the sampling of articles[13]. Additionally, RA's were asked to write in new emotional *content frames* which were not listed[14] and to code for *rhetorical framing*.

Finally, in the third part, two other RA's (RA3, RA4) were asked to read through the same news articles coding only for the following items: article identifying information and *emotional response* including empathy, anger, frustration, anxiety, and

[10] Coders were instructed to report up to six content frames capable of inducing an emotional response (empathy, anger, frustration, anxiety, or hope).
[11] Empathetic response was a 4 point measure where 0=no empathy, 1=low empathy, 2=medium empathy, and 3=high empathy.
[12] A fuller discussion of *content* framing appears in the next section. However, for now, *Content* framing can be understood as systematic differences in messages based upon words, phases, topics, and themes.
[13] Inter-coder reliability for identification of specific empathetic frames was acceptable at 85%. However, more importantly for my analyses, ICR for identification of articles containing at least one empathetic frame was 93%.
[14] RA1 and RA2 were also instructed to code for a number of other measures including anger at immigrants, anxiety from immigrants, anxiety for immigrants, hope, and frustration at government frames, word count, article identifying information, relevance to undocumented immigration, whether the article appeared in the front page or not, and whether the article was a news story or an opinion piece.

hope[15]. The priming of emotional response was avoided by enlisting different RA's to compile the empathetic content frames and code for empathetic response. This provided data which reliably estimate the empathetic nature of articles with empathetic content frames.

First, descriptively, results indicate that 42% of the news stories on immigration were episodically-framed while 58% were thematically-framed (n=480). In terms of how this breaks down by year, 2009 seemed to be the most episodically-framed year of the three. The percentage of immigration stories that were episodically-framed were 49%, 38%, and 37% for 2009, 2010, and 2011, respectively[16] (see table 1).

Additionally, by source, the *New York Times* (61%) used more episodic frames in their coverage of the issue of immigration than the *USA Today* (23%) (p-value=.000). The *USA Today* could be less episodic because of its more national focus and the fact that its more limited space availability for stories resulting in shorter immigration articles (word count mean: USA =691, NYT=768) of the *USA Today* (difference sig, p=.05). The *New York Times*' more episodic tendency could be attributed to its more progressive political bent encouraging more human interest stories which are almost entirely episodically-framed.

[15] Inter-coder reliability for emotional response overall (including anger, frustration, empathy, hope, anxiety) was 93%. ICR for identification of articles deemed to induce an empathetic response was 88%.
[16] There is no reason that jumps out as to why 2009 was a more episodically-framed year in terms of immigration. It could be that in 2010 and 2011, issue of immigration became less salient with the public and politicians and therefore news editors consequently devoted less news space to it forcing a more thematic take.

Beyond this descriptive look, more interesting is the question: Are episodically-framed immigration stories more empathetic than thematic stories? To speak to this question, t-tests were used to analyze a representative sample of 480 immigration news articles. Results indicate that a (difference sig, p=.001) larger percentage of episodically-framed stories (percentage with some empathy=67%) produced at least some empathy compared to their thematic counterparts (some empathy=53%)[17] (see figure 1).

Furthermore, a significantly (difference sig, p=.000) larger percentage of episodic stories (percentage with medium-high empathy=36%) were found to induce a medium to high degree of empathy compared to thematic ones (medium-high empathy=19%).

However, the overall empathetic nature of an immigration story is also affected by the co-occurrence of emotional *content* frames including text which can induce empathy, hope, anxiety, anger, and frustration (to be discussed in the next section). Thus, to further test the previous assertion that episodic frames heighten empathetic responses, two measures of empathetic response (some empathy, medium to high empathy) were regressed separately on episodic articles and five measures indicating the presence of an empathy, frustration, anger, hope, and anxiety frame. The multivariate regression results are presented in table 2.

First, I turn to the model using the broader measure of empathetic response (some empathy). Consistent with previous t-test results, results show that the measure

[17] Inter-coder reliability for empathy coding was 90% while coding for rhetorical framing was 94%.

for episodically-framed articles is significant (p=.01) and positive (.592). This indicates that controlling for a variety of emotional content frames, including empathetic content frames, episodically-framed articles are 13% more likely to induce some empathy than non-episodic articles (see figure 2).

The results of the second measure of empathetic response which identifies stories which induce medium to high empathy remain the same. Here, findings indicate that the episodic measure is significant (p=.000) and positive (.895). Controlling for emotional content frames, episodically-framed articles are 15% more likely to evoke a medium to high degree of empathy than non-episodic articles (see figure 2). Thus, in terms of rhetorical framing, findings demonstrate that episodically-framed articles are indeed more empathetic than thematically-framed articles. I now turn to *content* framing.

Empathetic Content Frames in the Media

In addition to rhetorical framing, the media uses different types of *content* frames to present the issue of undocumented immigration. While the empathetic effects of these different content frames probably varies, this dissertation is primarily concerned with shining light on empathetic affects in general. Thus, in this chapter, I focus on two primary questions. First, what are the different types of empathetic content frames used in our public discourse? And second, do they actually induce empathy? Thus, I claim that articles containing "empathetic" content frames should

result in substantially larger empathetic emotional response than those immigration articles that do not contain them.

Content framing can be understood as systematic differences in messages based upon words, phases, topics, and themes. Most importantly, in order for a frame to be empathetic, a frame should trigger *personal engagement* with the immigrant subjects, *imaginary insertion into their lives (perspective-taking)*, and a *visceral empathetic reaction*[18] to their circumstance. In all, content analyses reveal the existence of at least fourteen different frames with which media accounts of undocumented immigration can induce empathy. These content frames can be divided into two general categories: values frames and victims' frames. In all there are five values frames and eleven victims' frames (see table 3 for list of content frames).

In descriptive terms, 31% of the sample of immigration articles included an empathy frame. By year, results indicate that 2011 articles included the most empathetic content frames of the three. The percentage of immigration stories including an empathetic frame were 27%, 31%, and 39% for 2009, 2010, and 2011, respectively (see table 4). By source, the *New York Times* (37%) was found to employ more empathetic frames than the *USA Today* (20%) (difference sig, p=.000). This is not surprising given the previous finding that the *New York Times'* coverage (66%) is demonstrably more episodically-framed than the *USA Today*'s (29%) (p=.000).

[18] Empathy here is composed of four emotions including empathy, sympathy, sadness, and concern which previous factor analyses show compose the empathy factor.

Turning to the sub-categories of *content* frames, *values* frames were found to be more prevalent than *victims'* frames. While values frames accounted for 76% of all empathy content frames, *victims'* frames made up about 24% of that total (difference significant, p=.000) (see figure 3). Among all frames, the most frequently appearing frame by far was the *They Are Just Like Us* frame which is used in almost 38% of all immigration news articles with an empathy frame in my sample. Thinking in more general terms, this frame appeared in 14% of all immigration news stories. In contrast, the second most frequently appearing frame was the *Diversity* frame which appeared in about 17% of all empathy frames and just over 6% of all immigration articles. Other than these two frames, no other empathy content frame accounted for more than 10% of the entire sample of empathetically-framed immigration articles (see figure 4).

According to the content analysis, of the six most frequently appearing empathy content frames, five were *values* frames compared to only one *victims'* frame. The only *victims'* frame was the *Dealing with Racism/Nativism* frame which appeared in 8.5% of empathetically-framed and 3.2% of all immigration news articles. These findings highlight the importance of assessing the differential effects of each of these six frames on empathetic response.

Empathetic Content Frames – Immigrants as Victims

Victims' frames portray the undocumented immigrant subjects as victims of some external entity or force including: government, society, circumstance/life, and

business entrepreneurs. The helpless victim element of these frames both *engage* and *insert* the audience member into the real life of undocumented immigrants. Commonalities are identified as most Americans have been victimized, seen a victim, or heard about victimization before. By triggering a recall of these memories, the reader is taken into an imaginary state where perspective-taking with the immigrant subject can occur. The negative outcomes of the victimization then trigger a *visceral empathetic emotional response*. In all, there are nine separate victims' frames capable of producing empathy. Furthermore, these nine frames can be organized into four different sub-categories based upon the "perpetrator" of the victimization including: government, society, circumstance/life, and business entrepreneurs.

First, immigrants, like many Americans, have been helpless *victims of our government*. Frames in which immigrants are the victims of our government or bureaucracy make up three different content frames. One such frame is the *Harsh Tactics in Deportation* frame. In this frame, undocumented immigrants are mistreated by government agents typically from the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency during raids on businesses and homes to arrest and deport suspected undocumented immigrants. Often, this means using excessive force and over the top tactics. The following *New York Times* excerpt is an example of such a frame[19]:

[19] This empathy content frame is the primary frame used in the experimental portion of this dissertation to evoke empathy for undocumented immigrants.

> "Hiu Lui Ng arrived in New York City as a teenager in 1992. He went on to become a computer engineer, got married and started a family. He also overstayed his visa. Because his wife is a U.S. citizen, he applied to legalize his status. Unbeknownst to Ng, he had been ordered deported to Hong Kong. When he went to interview for a green card, he was sent to immigration detention, where he died last summer. On Jan. 15, Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials issued a report of Ng's death at the Wyatt Detention Facility in Rhode Island. ICE found that Ng had died of untreated cancer and a fractured spine. His requests for an outside medical evaluation had been repeatedly denied. ICE has since removed all detainees from that facility." (*USA Today,* March 13, 2009)[20]

Another frame which depicts immigrants as the victims of government is the *Separating Families* frame. In this frame, government is implicated in the breaking up of family units either due to deportation, denial of family visas, or holding suspected undocumented immigrants in jail away from their families. These depictions can often be heart-wrenching as they go to the core of our primary social unit. Here is an example of this frame:

> "Federal immigration agents were searching a house in Ohio last month when they found a young Honduran woman nursing her baby. The woman, Saida Umanzor, is an illegal immigrant and was taken to jail to await deportation. Her 9-month-old daughter, Brittney Bejarano, who was born in the United States and is a citizen, was

[20] Reyes, Raul, "ICE needs to upgrade care for detainees," News Desk, *USA Today,* March 13, 2009.

> put in the care of social workers. The decision to separate a mother from her breast-feeding child drew strong denunciations from Hispanic and women's health groups. Last week, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency rushed to issue new guidelines on the detention of nursing mothers, allowing them to be released unless they pose a national security risk." (*New York Times*, November 17, 2007)[21]

The third type of frame implicating government as victimizing undocumented immigrants is the *Crushing their Dreams* frame. Typically in this frame, government is identified as the reason that "Dreamers" or undocumented children brought to the US before they were young are denied the same opportunities as other kids to pursue higher education, employment opportunities, and their dreams because they are not citizens. Often the media describe depressing accounts of Dreamers who discover their undocumented status only as they are denied drivers licenses, entrance into college, or a full-ride scholarships. Here is an example of such a frame:

> "The student, Hector Lopez, 21, was deported to Mexico in August after having lived with his family in Oregon since he was an infant. After two months of trying to find his bearings and a job in Mexico City, Mr. Lopez, who does not speak Spanish, traveled to the border last month and turned himself in to the immigration authorities, requesting asylum in the United States…
>
> Mr. Lopez's parents brought him to the United States when he was 6 weeks old. In his senior year at Rex Putnam High School, he was student body president, graduating in

[21] Preston, Julia, "Immigration Quandry: A Mother Torn From Her Baby," National Desk, *New York Times,* November 17, 2007.

> 2008. Mr. Lopez would have been eligible for legal status under the student bill, since he was a child when he was ordered deported, his lawyer, Siovhan Sheridan-Ayala, said. With no immediate relatives in Mexico, Mr. Lopez traveled by bus from the border to Mexico City, to stay in the home of distant family friends in Iztapalapa, a working-class district.
>
> Speaking by telephone from the detention center in Florence, Ariz., Mr. Lopez said he always felt out of place in Mexico. ''I felt like everything was far from home, just a completely new world for me,'' he said. ''Not knowing the language well, I wasn't ready for it all. It was almost too much to handle.'' He said that a local gang of drug dealers harassed him, trying to drive him out of the neighborhood. For several weeks he did not leave his residence, until he decided to try to return to the United States." (*New York Times,* December 8, 2010)[22]

A second sub-category of victims' frames involves <u>*general society*</u> as the villain. This sub-category is composed of only a single frame dubbed the *Dealing with Racism/Nativism* frame. In this frame, undocumented immigrants are the victims of the element in our society acts out its feelings of group threat by targeting undocumented immigrants, most often Latinos in crimes and actions intended to intimidate, belittle, drive off, and/or hurt. The following is an example of such a frame:

> "In 2008, Ramirez, a 25-year-old undocumented worker from Mexico, was confronted by a group of white high school football players, including one who shouted ethnic slurs. After a screaming match, Ramirez fought with the teenagers. He was kicked in

[22] Preston, Julia, "Illegal Immigrant Students Await Votes on Legal Status," National Desk, *New York Times,* December 8, 2010.

> the head and left foaming at the mouth in the street in Shenandoah, Pa. He died two days later. One defendant pleaded guilty to violating Ramirez's civil rights and was sent to prison. But in May 2009, an all-white jury found the two other defendants not guilty of all serious charges, convicting them only of assault, a misdemeanor." (*USA Today*, January 22, 2010)[23]

The third sub-category of victims' frames identifies or implies <u>*circumstances*</u> beyond anyone's control as the cause. This sub-category is composed of three frames including the *Political Oppression* frame, the *Poverty/Hunger* frame, and the *Death in the Desert Crossing* frame. The *Political Oppression* frame describes undocumented immigrants who came to America to escape the political and social oppression of their homelands. It often implies that immigrants had no choice but to come to America illegally or face certain death or hostility. The following is an example of such a frame:

> "My father escaped from communist China to Hong Kong in the 1960s. Knowing that Hong Kong would one day become communist territory, he left his family behind in 1977 and immigrated to the USA, hoping to pave a way for his wife, son and daughter. Speaking no English, he worked various restaurant jobs during the day and studied English by night. Finally, he saved up enough money to send us airline tickets. We waited until approved by immigration and, in 1983, we finally were reunited with Dad in San Francisco. Our family has worked hard, very hard, to achieve a dream. That

[23] Reyes, Paul, "Justice Get Tough on Hate Crimes," News Desk, *USA Today*, January 22, 2010.

> dream is not to own a fancy car or a big house. It is simply freedom and the ability to pursue happiness in our own way." (*USA Today*, September 1, 2010)[24]

Another frame where immigrants are victims of circumstance is the *Poverty/Hunger* frame. In this frame, immigrants are described similarly as having little choice but to come to America, the land of opportunity to escape extreme poverty and famine back home. These depictions touch on such a basic need (i.e. food, water, shelter) that every reader can identify to some extent with this plight and circumstance. This next excerpt is a good example of one such frame:

> "The Department of Homeland Security has said it will continue deporting illegal Haitian immigrants, despite appeals by the Haitian government, which says deportations could destabilize a country where food, water and housing have been in extremely short supply since major storms last summer. A Feb. 25 letter to lawyers in Florida from Susan Cullen, the Homeland Security director of policy, said the department intended ''to continue to coordinate the removal of Haitian nationals to Haiti.'' Cheryl Little, a lawyer who has represented Haitian immigrants for more than 20 years, expressed disappointment at the response, which she characterized as ''status quo.'' Some 30,000 Haitians face deportation." (*New York Times* March 4, 2009)[25]

The third frame talking about immigrants as the victims of circumstance is *Death in the Desert Crossing* frame. In this frame, media accounts describe how many

[24] McColligan, Ching, "We All Share the American Dream," New Desk, *USA Today*, September 1, 2010.
[25] Thompson, Ginger, "Haitian Deportations to Continue," National Desk, *New York Times*, March 4, 2009.

immigrants die of dehydration, starvation, heat stroke, and criminal elements on their treacherous trek through the southwest desert. Often such articles include striking commentary from ranchers or residents who describe the enormity and gravity of the situation. Here is an example of such a frame:

> "According to the organization's website, which lists locations, dates and causes of death, most victims perished from exposure -- heat, cold or thirst. Some suffered gunshot wounds. In many cases, Rodriguez said, remains were too damaged to determine cause of death. Roberts and Colleen Agle, a Border Patrol spokeswoman, cite several reasons for the grim statistics. Roberts says tighter enforcement has pushed smugglers and undocumented immigrants to make longer treks deeper into the desert. She added that this summer was especially brutal. Extreme nighttime heat saps energy and depletes fluids, even from immigrants who hike after dark, she says. Not among the remains so far is a missing 13-year-old, Nelson Omar Chilel Lopez, whose mother, Fermina Lopez Cash, refuses to believe her son died in the desert after crossing the U.S. border near Sonoita, Ariz., more than two months ago. "I am afraid, yes," she says. "But I won't believe my son died that way. I can't."" (*USA Today*, September 23, 2010)[26]

The final category of *victims'* frames includes the two frames explaining how undocumented immigrants are being taken advantage of by ***business entrepreneurs***. The first frame is the *Taken Advantage of by Employers* frame. Here, immigrants are often portrayed as helpless victims of employers who will do anything to pay immigrant

[26] Wagner, Dennis, "Near-record 236 Bodies at Mexico-Arizona Border in Year," News Desk, *USA Today*, September, 23, 2010.

workers as little as possible or get away with sub-standard working conditions or benefits. The majority of these stories involve undocumented workers in the construction and trade industry where work is often so temporary that it is difficult to hold employers accountable for their actions. This next excerpt is a perfect example of such a frame:

> "Undocumented immigrants make up only about one-twentieth of the work force but are overwhelmingly represented in the most dangerous, dirty and low-paying jobs. Driving out every undocumented worker, a temptation in hard times, clears the way for laid-off Americans to pick lettuce, wash dishes and cars, and wait all morning outside Home Depot for a contractor to drive up. That doesn't sound terribly smart. There is a better strategy that hews to core American values and common sense. It is to support workers -- documented or not. It is to fight back against abuses that make wages and job conditions worse for everyone. It is to throw light on off-the-books labor, and on the tax-cheating businesses that have exploited it for too long." (*New York Times, February 15,* 2009)[27]

The second frame where immigrants are victims of business entrepreneurs is the *Taken Advantage of by Cayotes or Smugglers* frame. Cayotes are private, black market mercenaries who charge a steep fee to willing immigrants to smuggle them into America. Many times, immigrants who pay coyotes have to endure deplorable and even life-threatening conditions. For example:

[27] Preston, Julia, "Helping Wokers in Hard Times," Editorial Desk, *New York Times*, February 15, 2009.

> "In the eight years since Congress allowed 5,000 special visas annually for human-trafficking victims to remain in the USA, immigration officials have issued fewer than 1,500 total. The federal government estimates that 14,500 to 17,500 men, women and children are smuggled into the U.S. each year and forced into illegal labor. Yet victims have sought fewer than 4% of the available special permits, called the T visa, that protect them from deportation. Victims must cooperate with police to get the visa. Many victims distrust law enforcement, can't navigate the legal and immigration systems or fear former captors will retaliate against family in their home countries if they work with the U.S. government, advocacy groups and U.S. authorities say. "People who have been in this situation are so traumatized and beaten up that it's hard to have the strength to apply" for the visa, says Rep. Carolyn Maloney, D-N.Y., who co-sponsored the bill establishing it. Attorneys from the Justice Department's civil rights division… explain how the victims are smuggled into the U.S. under false pretenses, such as a promised job, and then forced to work in sweatshops, as prostitutes or as underpaid farm laborers or maids." (*USA Today, January 16,* 2009)[28]

Empathetic Content Frames – Immigrants Exemplifying Our Values

Separately, *values frames* portray undocumented immigrants as exemplars of some human, American, moral, or religious value. In these types of frames, the *personal engagement* necessary for empathy is derived from the widespread acceptance among Americans of what de Toqueville called the *American Creed* (de Tocqueville and Frohnen 1835). These shared values with which many Americans

[28] Leinwand, Donna, "Special Visas Offered, But Few Issued: Human Trafficking Victims Fail to Apply out of Fear and Distrust," News Desk, *USA Today*, January 16, 2009.

identify personally connect the reader with undocumented immigrants by establishing a sense of commonality. The *imaginary mental insertion* comes by way of these established common linkages and contextually-induced sympathy, concern, and understanding. For example, beyond the common linkage shared by reader and immigrant of the family value of taking care of one's family, the implication that the "illegal" action of the undocumented immigrant is necessary to avoid his/her family members starving or to give them a better chance at life can cause the reader to perspective-take. Finally, visceral empathetic responses are the consequences of both the perspective taking itself and the challenging context in which the immigrants find themselves. In total, there are five separate victims' frames. These five frames touch on a number of values including: *universal human* and *traditional American* values.

First, undocumented immigrants are often depicted as examples of universal human values. The first of which is the human value of commonality and unity. The reason humans value commonality and shared purpose is probably because our instinct to favor individuals we consider part of our in-groups and disfavor or denigrate those who are not (Tajfel and Turner 1987). Regardless of why we like people who are like us, this value certainly satisfied all of the elements required to produce empathy. In one such frame, immigrants are described using the *They Are Just Like Us* frame. In this frame, undocumented immigrants are described as doing the same things, wanting the same things, believing in the same things, and feeling the same emotions that Americans do. The following is an example of such a frame:

> "What our citizens need to remember most of all as we celebrate Independence Day is tolerance. Many of our ancestors came to this country from other parts of the world with the common goal of finding personal freedom. It is unfortunate that a mind-set is now thriving in America that brings out the worst in us all. The need to be correct seems to outweigh the need for tolerance. If we as a nation are unable to get away from political and personal bickering over "right" vs. "wrong," we are doomed. All Americans should begin a new outlook of patience and tolerance. If each of us will make this commitment, we will not only honor our nation, we will honor ourselves." (*USA Today, July 2,* 2010)[29]

A second frame using immigrants as exemplars of universal human values is the *They Want Best for their Family* frame. In this frame, the media describes immigrants as doing what any human would do if the welfare of their family was threatened. These depictions touch on such a basic human instinct which is to care for one's family that it is easy to see how engagement, commonality, and empathic concern are established between the reader and the undocumented subject. This next excerpt is good example of one such frame:

> "This story is about the lengths a parent will travel literally and figuratively to provide his child the best opportunities. Carlos (Demian Bichir) is a hard-working Mexican-born gardener who does his best to fly under the radar of the authorities, living in fear

[29] Byrd, John, "Remember on this July 4; As many prepare to celebrate the nation's independence, reflections on what the holiday should mean to us all," Letters, News Desk, *USA Today*, July 2, 2010.

> of being stopped for a minor offense and facing deportation. In every other sense, he's law-abiding and staunchly ethical. Laboring long hours on a Los Angeles gardening crew, Carlos has singlehandedly raised his only son, Luis (Jose Julian), 14. His wife left when Luis was very young, and Carlos has quietly carried on. We see the daily rigors of Carlos' job, tending lawns and risking peril to trim the towering palm trees of people far more fortunate. Meanwhile, Luis has begun to drift away, drawn to a local gang. He looks down on his father, regarding his work as servile. Nevertheless, Carlos sleeps on the couch in their one-bedroom apartment so Luis can have the bed and get enough rest to do well in school." (*USA Today,* October 17, 2011)[30]

The final type of values frame deals with traditional American values such as the *hard work ethic*, *celebrating diversity*, and *striving for the American Dream*. First, the American value of the *hard work ethic* is put front and center in portrayals of immigrants who come to America to find work, who do not complain, work long hours, and often for minimal compensation. One way many journalists put it is that undocumented immigrants often work the hard, thankless, low-paying jobs that Americans refuse to work. These are jobs such as working the agricultural fields picking crops, cleaning hotel rooms, bussing restaurant tables, and building our nation's infrastructure. While some Americans may not exemplify this value themselves, this American value is deeply ingrained in our culture as something that is "good". Thus, it can establish commonality between reader and immigrant necessary for empathy. Here is a prime example of the *hard work ethic* frame.

[30] Puig, Claudia, "'Better Life' Tackles Human Side of Immigration; 'Father-Son Story' Plumbs Emotions Instead of Politics," Life Desk, *USA Today*, October 17, 2011.

Good work ethic translates

> ”Reading High valedictorian Noe Cabello's father left his family in their small town of Lobera, Mexico, to find work in Texas. After a few months, Victor Cabello says he came to Reading because friends told him there was more work here. After 13 years, he saved enough money to bring his wife and five children, including 8-year-old Noe, to Reading. This fall, Noe will attend Johns Hopkins University on a full scholarship. Noe attributes some of his educational success to the English Language Acquisition courses he took for 2 years when he first moved to the USA. His greatest motivation, he says, comes from his parents: "They try to do their best to sustain us and give us the best life they can provide. "Even if it might not be a lot, they try their best. Sometimes I feel I'm not only doing this for me, but for them."” (*USA Today*, June 28, 2011)[31]

Another American value frame is the *celebrating diversity* frame. In this frame, undocumented immigrants are used as examples of another tradition described by de Tocqueville as *diversity.* The idea is that undocumented immigrants fit in perfectly with the American story. This is one in which people from all over the world come to America creating a melting pot of different language, food, cultures, and traditions. The following is an example of such a frame:

> “Mayor Thomas Menino, who often invokes his heritage as the grandson of an Italian immigrant, was one of the first local leaders in the country to embrace a federal

[31] Anthony, Jillian, “In Reading, PA, Hispanic Majority is Transforming the City’s Culture; Latino Population Follows Jobs to Regions with Little Diversity with Little Diversity a Generation Ago,” News Desk, *USA Today*, June 28, 2011.

> program intended to improve community safety by deporting dangerous immigrant criminals.
>
> But five years after Boston became a testing ground for the fingerprinting program, known as Secure Communities, Mr. Menino is one of the latest local officials to sour on it and seek to withdraw. He found that many immigrants the program deported from Boston, though here illegally, had committed no crimes. The mayor believed it was eroding hard-earned ties between Boston's police force and its melting-pot mix of ethnic neighborhoods." (*New York Times*, August 13, 2011)[32]

The final American values frame is the *Striving for the American Dream* frame. In this frame, immigrants are described as believing and doing what so many successful Americans have done over our history… that is, come here with nothing, work hard, be resourceful, and find success. This next excerpt is good example of one such frame:

> "It was his application for United States citizenship that derailed the American life of Qing Hong Wu, an information-technology executive who had risen from poverty and street crime in Chinatown. He had fulfilled the promise he made to the judge who sentenced him for teenage muggings, but immigration authorities jailed him for mandatory deportation to China, a country he had left at age 5. It took a governor's pardon to free him. And on Friday, with his mother at his side and the judge cheering him on, Mr. Wu, 29, was sworn in as a citizen with the approval of the same immigration authorities who had tried to expel him from the country. ''I can now officially say I'm an American,'' said Mr. Wu, who immigrated legally to the United

[32] Preston, Julia, "Resistance Widens to Obama Initiative on Criminal Immigrants," National Desk, *New York Times,* August 13, 2011.

> States as a child, in a prepared statement he read at a news conference outside a federal courthouse in Lower Manhattan. ''I can finally have peace that I am safe and won't be forced to leave my home and my family.''" (*New York Times*, May 29, 2010)[33]

To recap, there are fourteen separate empathy content frames which appear quite frequently in the media's depiction of undocumented immigrants. And while most empathy frames deal with shared values, victimization frames also make up a significant portion of the media's empathetic portrayal of undocumented immigration.

How Content Frames Affect Empathy

Thus far, I have presented evidence detailing a variety of content frames that are capable of evoking empathy and the frequency with which they appear in the mass media. However, this also implies that articles including these empathetic content frames should evoke a substantially higher empathetic reaction than those without them. To assess this claim, I refer again to the results of the content analyses of immigration articles in the *USA Today* and *New York Times* from 2009-2011. T-tests comparing those articles with and without empathy frames provide support for my claim that articles with empathetic frames induce greater empathetic responses.[34]

[33] Bernstein, Nina, "After Governor's Pardon, an Immigrant is Sworn in as a Citizen," Metro Desk, *New York Times*, May 29, 2010.

[34] Recall again that separate coders were responsible for coding these two measures: presence of an empathetic frame; empathetic response.

First, results suggest that a significantly (p=.000) higher percentage of articles with at least one empathetic frame (95%) produces at least *some empathetic response*[35] than those with no empathy frame (43%). Moreover, the results remain the same even when using a second more restrictive measure of empathetic response-- *medium to high empathetic response*[36]. Again, tests indicate that there was a significantly (p=.000) higher percentage of articles with at least one empathetic content frame (45%) producing a *medium to high empathetic response* than those with no empathy frame (17%). Not only are these findings consistent with expectations, but they also offer validation for the list of empathetic content frames (see table 3).

Again, these t-test results do not reveal the whole picture. To uncover a more complete answer to the question, I control for alternative explanations which could also affect empathetic response including rhetorical framing and the presence of other emotional content frames (i.e. hope, frustration, anger, anxiety). To do this, both empathetic response variables (some empathy, medium to high empathy) were regressed separately over dummy variables for empathy frames, anger frames, anxiety frames, hope frames, frustration frames, and episodic framing. The regression results are presented in table 2.

[35] Empathetic emotional response was coded by RA3 and RA4 using a 4 point scale where 0=no empathy, 1=low empathy, 2=medium empathy, 3=high empathy. The measure *some empathetic response* was a dichotomous variable where 0=no empathy, 1=low, medium, or high empathy.
[36] The measure *medium to high empathetic response* was another dichotomous variable where 0=no empathy or low empathy, 1=medium or high empathy.

First, I examine the dichotomous measure for those articles including at least one empathy content frame. Consistent with previous t-test results, results indicate that the empathy frame measure is significant (p=.000) and positive (β=3.15). This suggests that controlling for a variety of emotional content frames and episodic framing, articles with at least one empathy content frame are 51% more likely to induce some empathy than non-episodic articles (see figure 5).

Turning to the analysis of the second measure of empathetic response which identifies stories which induce medium to high empathy, the results remain the same. Here, the evidence suggest that the empathy frame measure is significant (p=.000) and positive (β=1.70). Controlling for emotional content frames, articles with at least one empathy frame are 32% more likely to evoke a medium to high degree of empathy than those without an empathy frame (see figure 5). Indeed the evidence does suggest that the list of empathetic content frames does carry with it empathetic punch.

However, as the prior section describing the fourteen empathy content frames suggests, not all immigration empathy frames are the same. Some involve stories invoking shared American values, while others discuss how undocumented immigrants deal with everyday racism. This begs the question: does empathetic response vary by empathy frame? To assess this question, I analyze empathic response data by empathetic content frame. One limitation is that the empathetic effects of only a few

frames can be estimated due to the fact that most frames appear in small numbers.[37]. Given this constraint, I only present t-tests examining the mean differences in empathetic response for each of the six most prevalent empathy content frames. They include: *they are just like us*; *celebrate diversity*; *they want best for their family*; *they have good American values*; *dealing with racism/nativism*; and *separating families.* These six frames appear in 64% of all articles with empathetic content frames. In short, it appears that empathetic response varies slightly depending on content frame. Table 5 presents the results of six t-tests on the differences in percentage of articles including each empathy frame evoking an empathetic response[38].

Looking at results from the broader measure of empathetic response, the data indicates that 95% of all articles including at least one empathy frame induce at least some empathy. Upon closer inspection, articles including five of the six most frequently used empathetic content frames reveal similar levels of empathetic response. Of note, the only empathetic content frame to vary significantly from this overall proportion is the *celebrate diversity* frame (67%).

Now, turning to the more fine-grained measures of empathetic response, the results show a little more variation. In descriptive terms, 45% of all immigration articles containing an empathy content frame induce a medium to high level of empathy.

[37] I evaluate these claims using 2-tailed t-tests comparing articles containing each empathy frame to all articles containing an empathy frame.
[38] Comparison group is the percentage of all articles including an empathetic content frame evoking some empathetic response.

Turning to analyses of comparative differences, articles containing the *celebrate diversity* frame are less empathetic (20%) than this overall number (p=.000). Additionally, the *separating families/harsh gov't tactics* frame seems to be the most effective at inducing a medium to high level of empathy (p=.045). Eighty percent of immigration articles containing this frame were coded as highly empathetic. On the other hand, the four other frames have percentages that are very similar to that of the overall sample at 41%, 50%, 50%, and 45% for *they are just like us*, *they want best for their family*, *dealing with racism/nativism*, and *they have good American values* respectively. This suggests there appears to be some variation among empathy content frames in terms of their empathetic effects.

Also striking is the finding that the percentage of articles with the least effective empathy frame (diversity=20%) to evoke a medium to high empathetic response does not differ statistically ($p_{diversity} = .17$) from all articles not including an empathy frame (non-empathy articles=12%). Summarizing, there is some subtle variation in empathetic response by specific empathy content frame. The data suggests that the *celebrating our diversity* seems to be least empathetic, while the *combined separating families/harsh tactics* frames seems to be most empathetic. This implies that the choice of empathy frame could determine whether or not persuasion occurs. However, we must be cautious not to over-interpret these results given the small frequencies for each frame. Overall, while the data supports my assertion that empathetic frames do induce a more

empathetic response than non-empathetic frames, I also find that there may be some variation among specific empathy frames.

Priming Empathy

As relevant as empathetic framing is to the empathetic nature of immigration stories and messages, so too is the way in which this empathetic content is presented or introduced to the public. In other words, empathetic *primes* (instructions or prefaces) are just as instrumental in inducing persuasive levels of empathy as the *content* and *rhetorical structure*. Empathetic *primes* can be especially important in political speeches, classroom lectures, conflict resolution, and deliberative democracy. Given my theory that both elements are crucial to inducing empathy and its persuasive effects on immigration opinions, I first describe the different ways in which empathetic priming could appear in the immigration discourse. Then, using data from a content analysis of *USA Today* and *New York Times* immigration stories, I present examples from the media discourse and evidence showing that controlling for *rhetorical* and *content* framing, that stories including an *empathetic prime* are more likely to evoke an intense *empathetic response*.

In terms of empathetic priming, there is little prior research in political science examining the nature of and effect that priming empathy has on policy preference persuasion. However, what we do know comes primarily from social-psychology where a number of researchers find that priming empathy not only increases empathetic

response, but also improves intergroup attitudes (Batson et.al 1997, Stephan & Finlay 1999, Vescio et.al 2003, Shih et.al 2013). In their research, Batson and colleagues (2002) find that prefacing audio interviews with a named, drug addict with instructions to empathize increases empathic feelings for the addict, increases funding allocations to help drug addicts, and improves a range of attitudes about addicts. Empathy induced in this way has also been used to improve attitudes toward people with AIDS, the homeless, and minorities (Batson et.al 1997; Dovidio et.al 2010; Finlay & Stephan 2000; Stephan & Finlay 1999). However, no one has yet examined the effect of empathetic primes on the public's immigration policy preferences. And while this is partly the task of this section, I am primarily interested in whether and how these empathetic primes might appear in the real world.

At first glance, it might seem that instructions to empathize with the undocumented might seem out of place in most messages, news accounts, or speeches about undocumented immigration. However, empathetic primes could be seamlessly integrated into a number of different contexts (i.e. conflict resolutions, deliberative democratic discussions, and classroom lectures). For example, one might easily see how prior to a session in which two parties were attempting to settle a dispute regarding Hispanic day laborers who gather on the public sidewalk in front of a private business, a mediator trying to build common ground would instruct both the business owner and the day laborers to attempt to take the other's perspective or feel how they would have felt if they were in the other's situation. Additionally, one could also imagine a

classroom lecture in which a professor interested in bridging group divisions asks his/her students prior to a lecture on undocumented immigration to imagine themselves in the shoes of those immigrants and to feel how they would feel if their kids were about to starve because of extreme poverty in their homeland. It is not difficult to imagine a number of situations in which empathetic primes would be both unsurprising and even the norm.

The Effects of Empathetic Priming

Yet, if one is interested in how empathy affects the public opinion on immigration, do these more small scale situations really matter? Of greater importance to this question is if these types of primes appeared with some regularity in our national newspapers and on television news where the audience is much broader and the potential to shape public opinion is greater. In short, do empathetic primes appear in mass media accounts of undocumented immigration?

To assess this question, I content analyzed 480 immigration articles from the *New York Times* and *USA Today* from 2009 to 2011 for the appearance of an empathy prime. Conceptually, an *empathy prime* is an instruction set or language separate from the empathetic *content* frame itself which cues the reader, listener, or viewer to empathize with the subject (undocumented subject) or his/her extended group of people (undocumented immigrants).

To measure *empathetic priming*, each immigration news article was coded for the way in which the author of the article characterizes, treats, or approaches the undocumented subject in the ensuing story (1=affirm, 2=neutral, 3=challenging). Articles in which the writer affirmed or indicated support for the undocumented immigrant portrayed in the ensuing story were coded as *primes (1)*. While the reader taking an affirmative stance toward the story of the undocumented immigrant may not be the ideal measure, at its core an empathetic prime is an endorsement cue which encourages the reader to take a favorable stance toward the undocumented immigrant subject. On the other hand, articles in which the writer was neutral toward or challenged the story of the undocumented immigrant were coded as *no prime (0)*.

First, comparing the percentage of stories which did and did not include an empathy prime on empathetic response, a significantly (p=.01) larger percentage of primed articles (78%) induce *some empathy* than un-primed articles (52%) (see figure 6). These differences become even starker when you examine the second measure for empathetic response (medium to high empathy). In this case, 30% of primed articles evoke significant empathizing compared to only 17% of non-primed articles (p=.05). This indicates that primed articles induce a much larger empathetic response.

Conclusion

What becomes more apparent is that the framing and priming of empathetic messages has not only been a substantial part of the American immigration discourse, but that they have played a significant role in shaping the public's emotional response

and immigration preferences. Additionally, while the explanatory findings are not irrefutable, they do suggest that empathy by way of *rhetorical framing*, *content framing*, and *priming* should have substantial effects on public opinion. These findings provide us a better understanding of how empathetic stimuli naturally occur in the mainstream media discourse. However, the more suggestive explanatory findings on empathetic effects only signal the possibility that empathy can persuade people to become more supportive of permissive immigration policies. It does not squarely and confidently address the question: How does empathy impact immigration preferences? To better assess this question, I now pivot to my next chapter which discusses my argument and experimental findings regarding how and why empathetic stimuli might increase support for permissive immigration policies.

Table 1 - Rhetorical Framing of Immigration Stories by Year

	Type of Rhetorical Frame	
	Episodic	Thematic
2009	49.0%	51.0%
2010	38.0%	62.0%
2011	37.0%	63.0%
2009-2011	42.0%	58.0%

Table 2 - Empathetic Response Model

	Empathetic Response Measures	
DV → IV ↓	**Some Empathy Coef (SE)**	**Med-High Empathy Coef (SE)**
Episodic	0.596**	0.900***
	(.231)	(.234)
Empathy Frame	3.073***	1.725***
	(.422)	(.278)
Anger Frame	0.344	0.885**
	(.310)	(.306)
Hope Frame	0.476	-.260
	(.295)	(.292)
Anxiety Frame	-1.819***	-2.678**
	(.447)	(1.029)
Frustration Frame	-- # --	0.477
	-- # --	(.848)
constant	-0.747*	-2.957**
	(.345)	(.993)
N	480	480

*** *p<.001,* ** *p<.01,* * *p<.05*

 # Dropped by Logit due to perfect collinearity

Table 3 - List of Empathetic Content Frames

Value Frames

They are Just Like Us
Striving for American Dream
Celebrate Diversity
They Want Best for Family
Hard Work Ethic

Victims' Frames

Taken Adv of by Employers
Taken Adv of by Cayotes
Political Oppression
Poverty/Hunger
Death in the Desert Crossing
Harsh Tactics in Deportation
Separating Families
Crushing the Dreams of Immigrants
Dealing with Racism/Nativism

Table 4 - Percentage of Immigration Stories with an Empathetic Content Frame

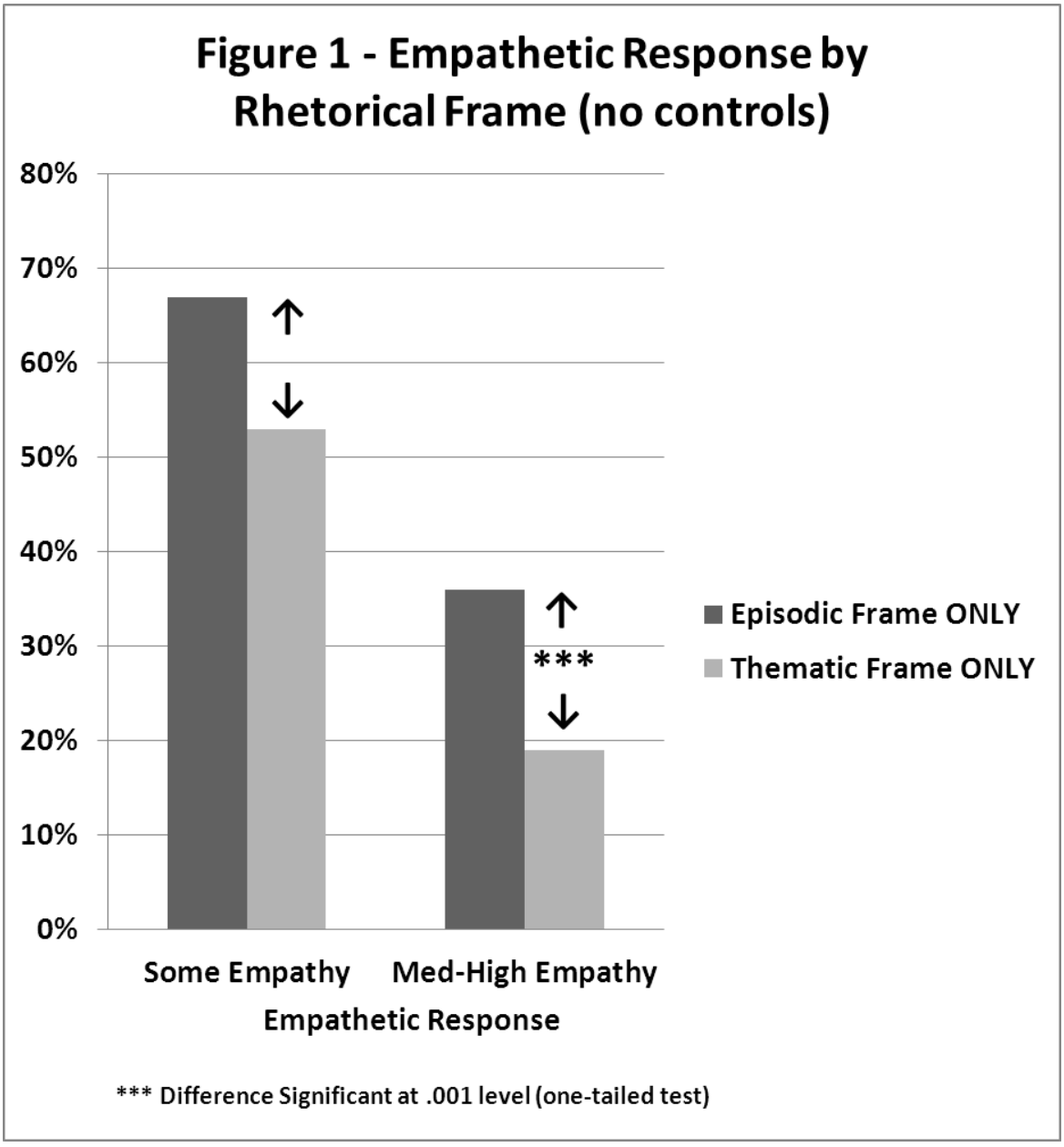
	USA Today	New York Times	Combined
2009	15.7%	34.5%	27.0%
2010	22.0%	34.3%	31.0%
2011	23.9%	50.9%	39.0%
2009-2011	20.0%	37.0%	31.0%

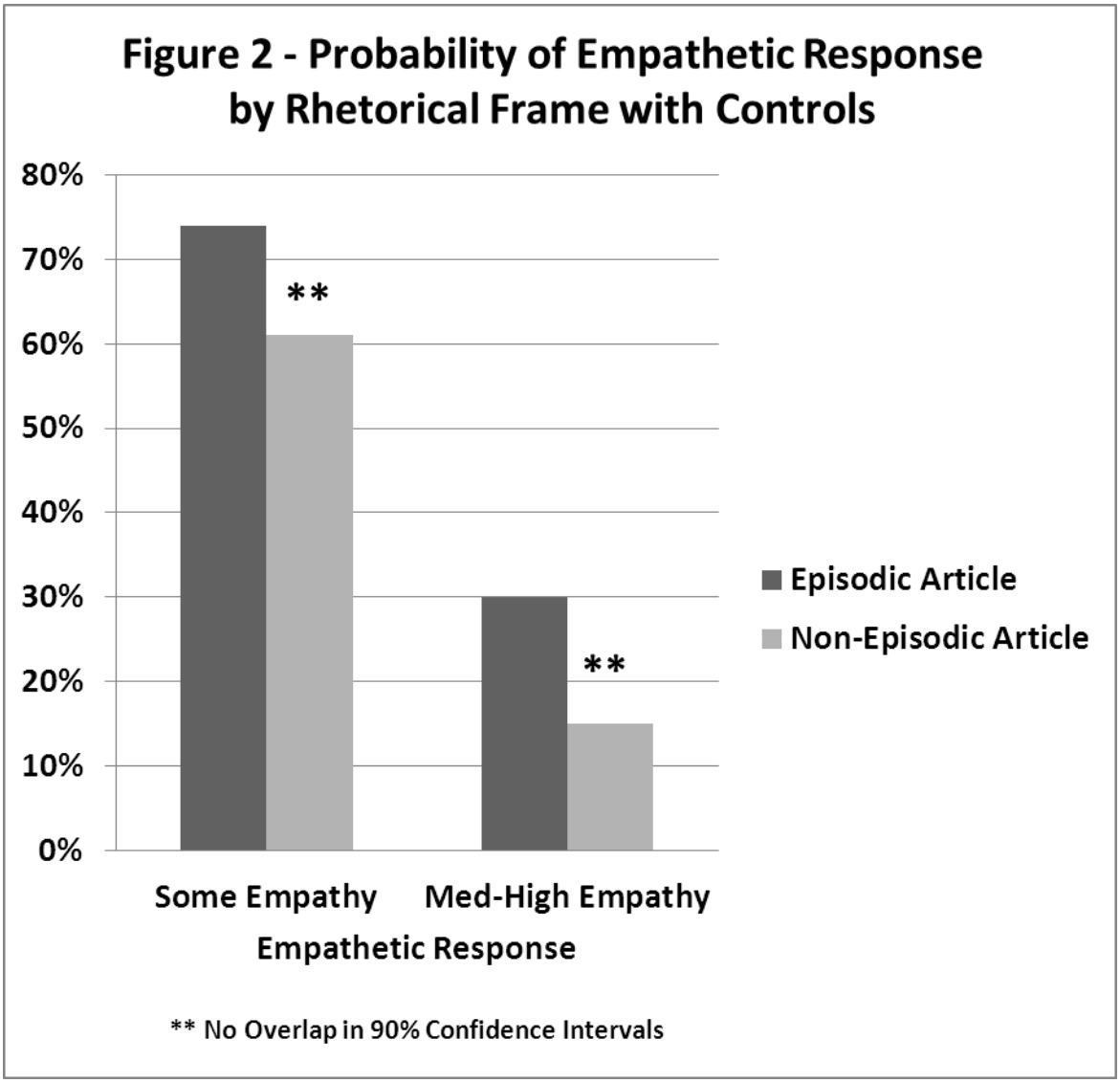
Table 5 - Mean Differences in Some Empathetic Response Comparing Each Empathy Frame to All Empathy Frames

	Percentage of Articles with Some Empathetic Response		Percentage of Articles with Medium to High Empathetic Response		N
All Other Empathetically-Framed Articles (Comparison Group)#	95%		45%		179
Value Frames					
They are Just Like Us	100%		41%		49
Celebrate Diversity	67%***		20%*		15
They Want Best for Family	100%		50%		12
They Have Good American values	91%		45%		11
Victims' Frames					
Separating Families/Harsh Tactics	100%		80%*		10
Dealing with Racism/Nativism	95%		50%		22

Two-Tailed Difference Tests
** p<.05; ** p<.01; ***p<.001*

 # While comparisons vary depending on content frame, statistics presented are for ALL empathetically framed articles


Figure 1 - Empathetic Response by Rhetorical Frame (no controls)
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
***
Episodic Frame ONLY
Thematic Frame ONLY
Some Empathy
Med-High Empathy
Empathetic Response
*** Difference Significant at .001 level (one-tailed test)


Figure 2 - Probability of Empathetic Response by Rhetorical Frame with Controls
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
**
**
Episodic Article
Non-Episodic Article
Some Empathy
Med-High Empathy
Empathetic Response
** No Overlap in 90% Confidence Intervals

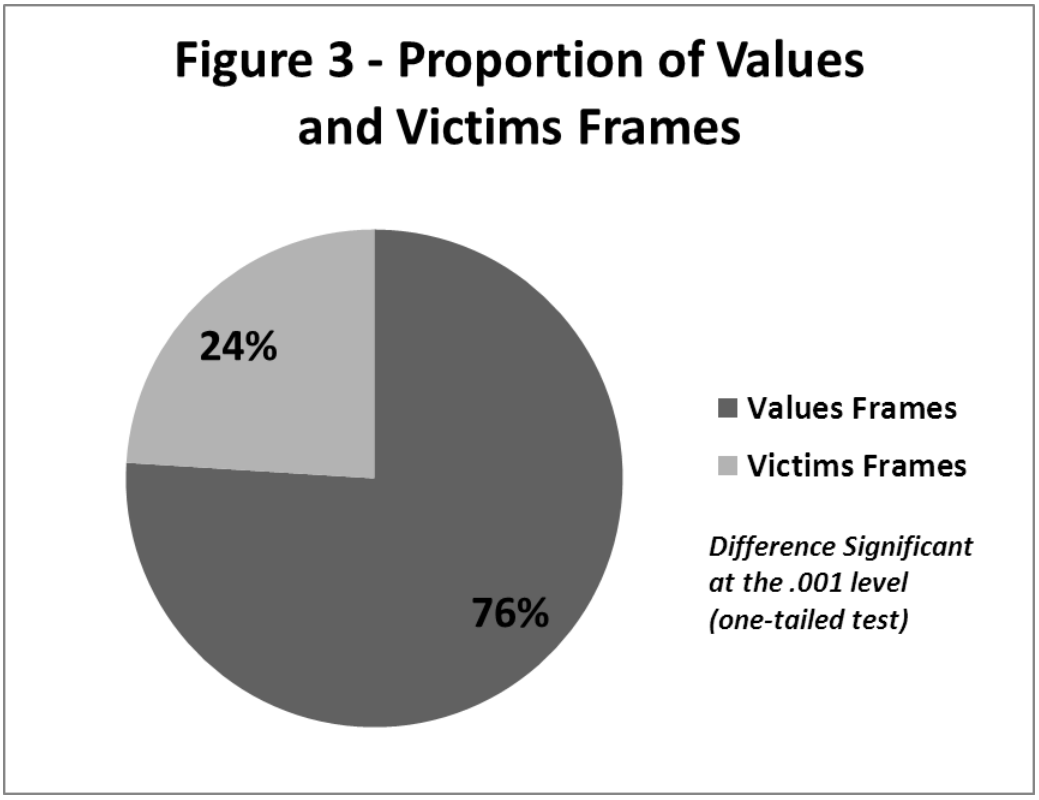
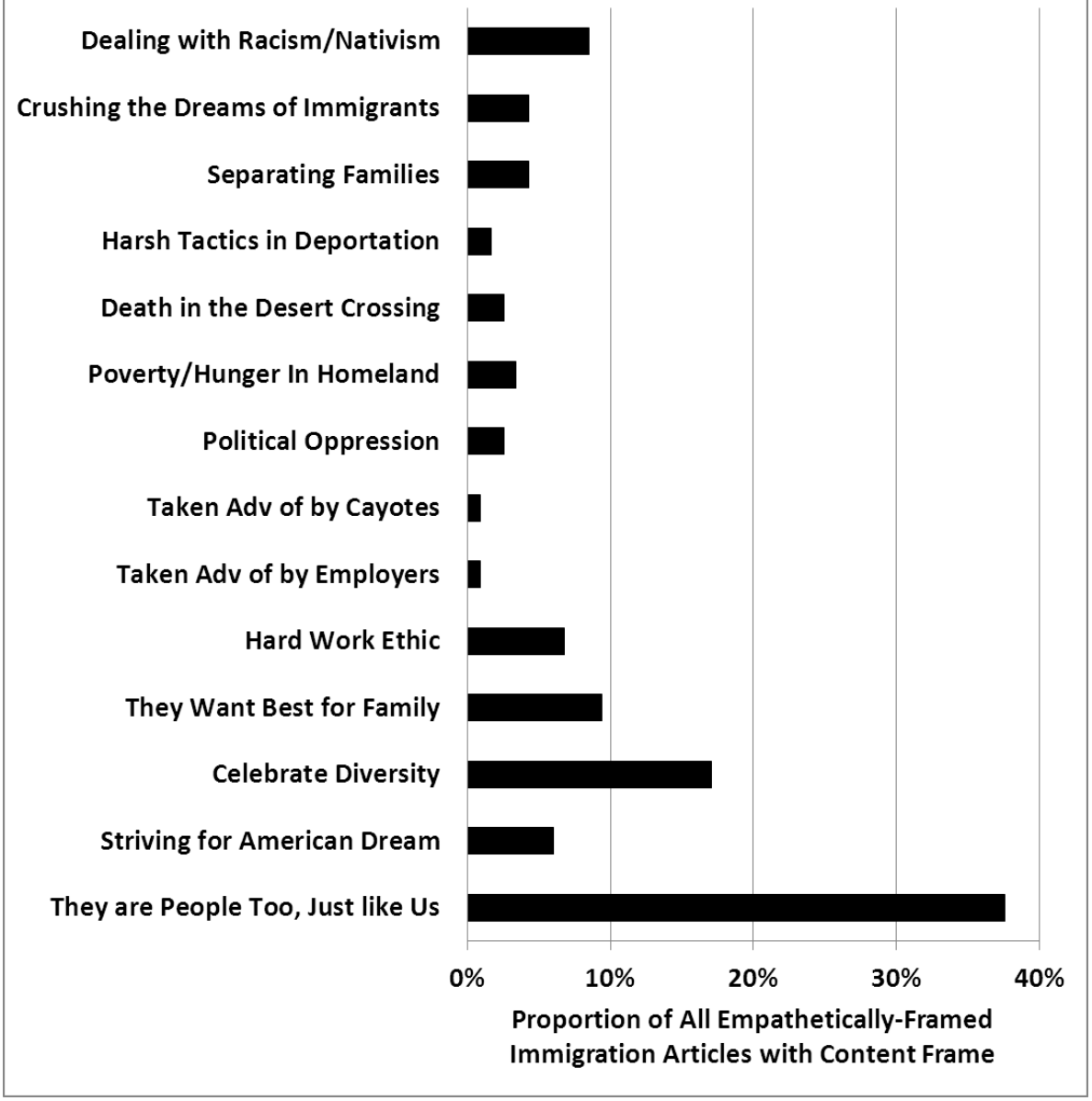
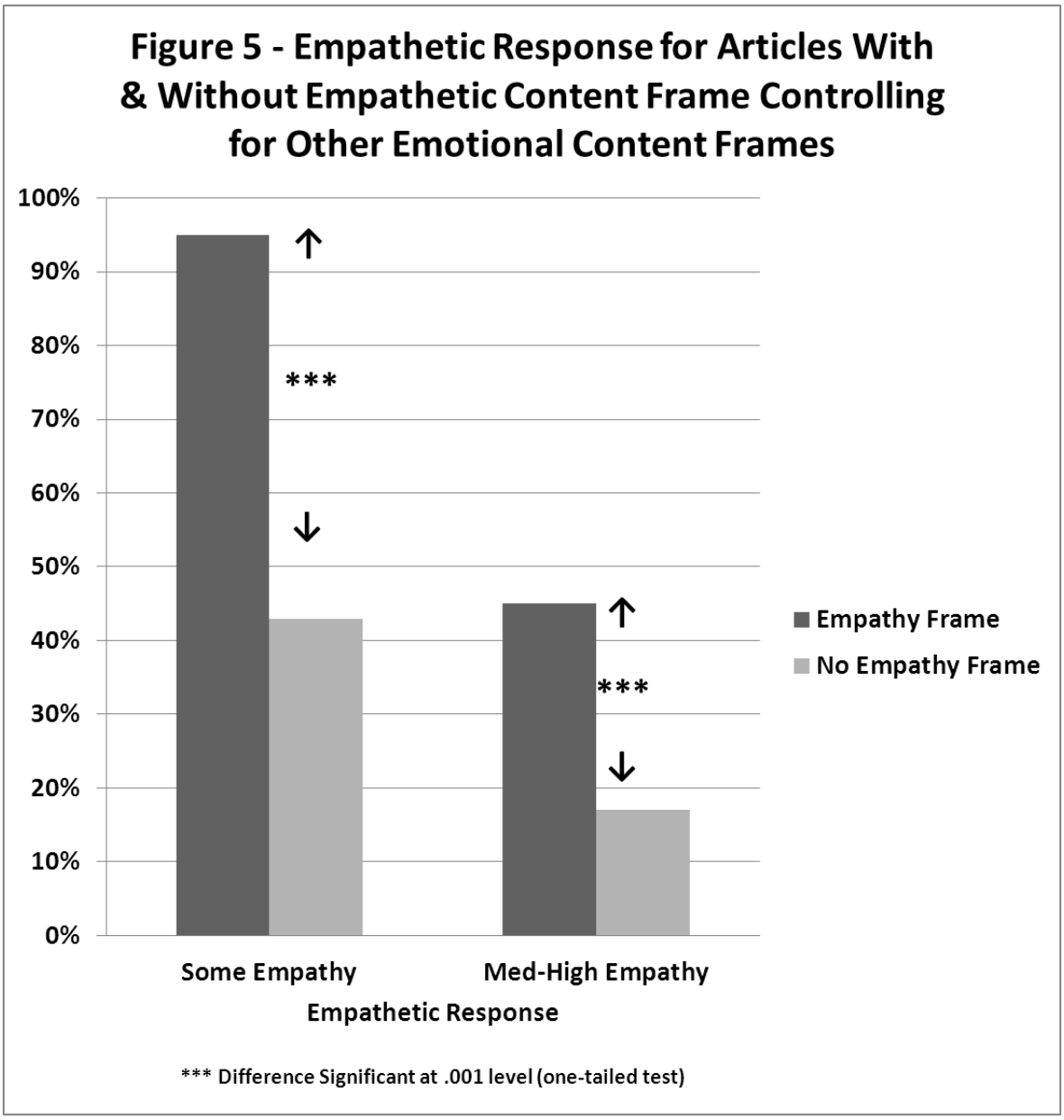
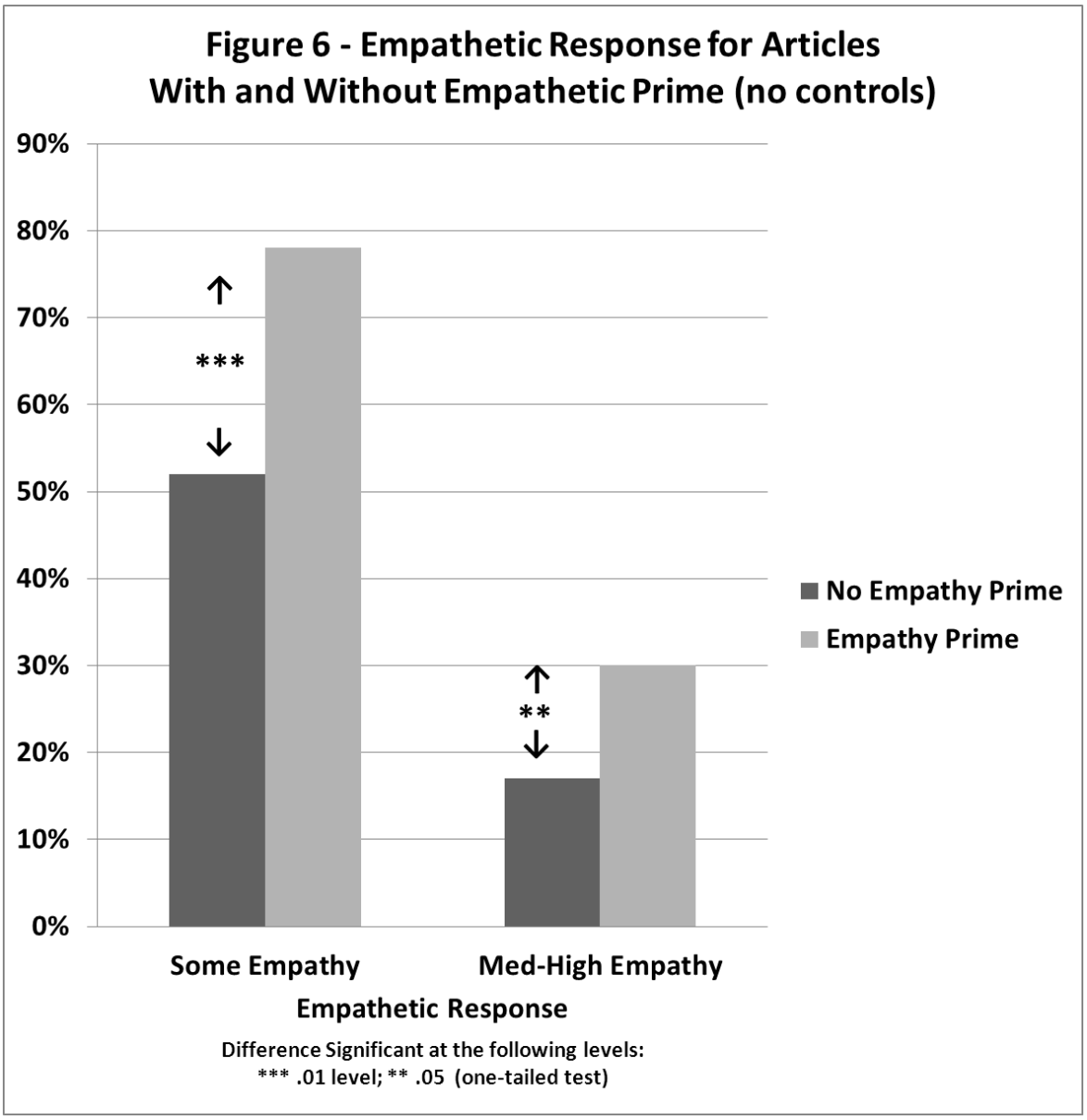

Figure 3 - Proportion of Values and Victims Frames
24%
76%
Values Frames
Victims Frames
Difference Significant at the .001 level (one-tailed test)

Figure 4 - Proporation of All Empathetically Framed Articles Containing Frame




Figure 5 - Empathetic Response for Articles With & Without Empathetic Content Frame Controlling for Other Emotional Content Frames
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
***
***
Some Empathy
Med-High Empathy
Empathetic Response
Empathy Frame
No Empathy Frame
*** Difference Significant at .001 level (one-tailed test)


Figure 6 - Empathetic Response for Articles
With and Without Empathetic Prime (no controls)
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
***
**
No Empathy Prime
Empathy Prime
Some Empathy
Med-High Empathy
Empathetic Response
Difference Significant at the following levels:
*** .01 level; ** .05 (one-tailed test)

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Chapter 3 – Empathy and Immigration Preferences

The primary purpose of this dissertation is to understand the role of empathetic framing on policy preferences. Accordingly, in the previous chapter, I integrated both previous research and exploratory content analyses to typologize the different ways empathy can be evoked by the mainstream media. To recap, empathy can be induced by explicit calls to empathize (prefaces to classroom lectures, instructions prior to conflict resolution sessions, lead-ins to news stories) and/or by the production and consumption of empathetic content (empathetically framed news accounts of undocumented immigrants).

Given this empathetic reality, I ask the following question. First, how does empathy relate to immigration preferences? And second, which empathetic condition (empathetic prime, content, or both) leads to the largest shifts in support of permissive immigration policies? To the first question, I argue that empathetic stimuli should increase the permissiveness of an individual's immigration preferences because it increases learning and processing of empathetically-congruent information and it serves as information itself. To the second question, I argue these permissive shifts should be most likely to occur when a person is primed to perspective-take and exposed to an empathetic story. This can be explained primarily because empathetic intensity is

greatest in this condition which heightens learning and processing of similarly-valenced information and increases empathic affect for the target.

Emotion as Information Itself & as Biasing Agent in Information Processing

The attitude change literature provides initial support for my theory on how empathy influences immigration preferences. Two theoretical traditions undergird my understanding of empathy's role in preference reporting. The first strand of research suggests that emotion can serve as information itself in the process of opinion formation (Schwarz & Clore 1988, 1983). Schwarz & Clore (1988) argue that in the opinion formation process, individuals think about the opinion target and then ask themselves how they feel. If they feel good, they evaluate the object positively; if they feel bad they report a negative evaluation. For example, in one particular study, Schwarz & Clore (1983) find that participants who were asked to think about negative events from their past were more likely to report being in a negative mood and dissatisfied with their lives currently. Later, in their "online processing model," Lodge, McGraw and Stroh (1989) argued that individuals take the affective content of information and use it to update their affective tag of the target. Additionally, they contend that individuals forget the cognitive content at an exponential rate. Using experiments, they then find that participants asked about evaluations of political figures tend to consult their most readily available affective considerations about the target (McGraw et.al 1990). Thus, people are left with a cumulative affective tag to construct

opinions about the target. These scholars argue and find that affect or emotion can serve as information itself on which people base their opinions.

However, a second strand of research suggests that emotion can also act to bias information processing in a way that maintains existing emotional affect (Petty & Cacioppo 1986, Chaiken 1987). In their elaboration likelihood model, Petty & Cacioppo (1986) argue that intense affect toward a target can bias the processing of new information to ensure that existing affect is maintained. And while these scholars argue that this is often conditioned on information processing capacity, they argue that an emotional response tends to alter information processing in a way that sustains current affect (Petty & Cacioppo 1986). Thus, in this case, similar to the "hot cognition" processes identified by David Redlawsk (2002) and Lodge & Taber (2005), emotion serves as a biasing agent in the construction and reporting of opinion statements.

While these two strands of literature on opinion change may differ in terms of the their view on the primacy of emotion and cognition, it is very likely that people use both affective tags (affective considerations) and target/policy relevant information (cognitive considerations to construct their opinions. In total, the opinion change literature suggests that affect or emotion can exact some very consequential effects on the opinion formation process. Not only can emotion serve as information itself, but it can trigger information processing with the express intent of maintaining the existing

affect. In the case of empathy, both of these effects should result in more favorable preferences for the empathy target.

Zaller's RAS Model and Immigration Preferences

Much of this research on information processing and opinion formation was later encapsulated in the most influential piece of public opinion research in the last half century, Zaller's (1992) *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. In it, Zaller (1992) combined insights from both cognition and emotion literatures to offer his theory of attitude change. He explained opinion statements as the result of simple reporting and averaging of relevant considerations at the top of a person's head. Most relevant to this discussion, he defines considerations as "any reason that might induce an individual to decide a political issue one way or the other. Considerations are a compound of both *cognition* and *affect*." In other words, considerations can either be emotional or cognitive in nature. Given this understanding, he would probably argue that attitude change occurs when an individual's salient mix of target-relevant considerations shifts in one direction (i.e. conservative/restrictive) or another (i.e. liberal/permissive) (Zaller 1992). These shifts can result from exposure to stimuli that can serve both as the basis from which new cognitive or affective considerations are incorporated and/or that which can stimulate information search and processing. Additionally, Zaller (1992) argues that more intense stimuli or messages are more likely to penetrate the public consciousness and thus, more likely to initiate attitude change.

In all, previous research finds that both cognition and emotion have critical roles to play in the process of opinion formation and change. Here, most find that attitude shifts occur when new affective or cognitive considerations are incorporated or when current affect triggers a complete or biased reconsideration of an opinion.

Empathy and Preference Change

Given the plethora of previous findings suggesting that emotions do indeed relate to the formation and change of opinions, we now turn our attention more specifically to the impact of one specific emotion--empathy. In political science, a new, but burgeoning literature has developed which attributes shifts in preferences to emotion. However, much of the emotion-based attitude research focus on fear, threat, anxiety, enthusiasm, and anger and their effects on candidate evaluation (Merolla & Zechmeister 2009), candidate preferences (Marcus et.al 2000), and issue attitudes (Brader et.al 2008, Huddy et.al 2005). And for good reason---each of these factors and outcomes has very important political implications. For example, Brader and colleagues (2008) find that the mechanism triggering more negative immigration attitudes when different group cues were presented was anxiety. Merolla and Zechmeister (2009) find that worry about terrorism leads to more restrictive preferences on immigration policy. Finally, using nationally representative survey experiments, Merolla, Ramakrishnan, and Haynes (2013) find that mentions of "children," a term that can induce empathy, increases support for the DREAM Act. However, while experiencing a great deal of

growth (Lerner et.al 2003, Small et.al 2006, Nabi 2003, Small & Lerner 2008, Gadarian 2010, Reifen-Tagar et.al 2011), the literature on the political implications of emotion is still in its relative infancy. One result is that scholars have yet to explore another important emotion with consequential and important political implications---empathy.

However, in social-psychology, scholars have long been interested in the attitudinal and behavior implications of empathy (Batson et.al 1997, Vescio et.al 2003, Campbell & Babrow 2004, Nabi 2003, Stephan & Finlay 2002, Davis 1983, Shih et.al 2009, Todd et.al 2011). While most research examines empathy's role in inducing helping behavior (Batson 1991, Davis 1996, Oswald 1996), a number of studies have explored empathy's effect on intergroup attitudes such as prejudice (Todd et.al 2011, Shih et.al 2009, Dovidio et.al 2004, Batson at.al 1997, Vorauer & Sasaki 2013) and stereotypes (Vescio et.al 2003). However, two separate traditions have developed operationalizing empathy in different ways and resulting in separate findings.

On one hand, some researchers have concentrated on the attitudinal implications of process-based *perspective-taking* (Stotland 1969, Davis et.al 2004, Batson et.al 1997b, Todd et.al 2011, Vescio et.al 2003, Regan & Totten 1975, Galinsky & Ku 2004, Davis 1996). Scholars find that perspective-taking encourages situational rather than dispositional attributions of blame (Regan and Totten 1975) and leads one to see the other as more self-like, producing a more positive view of the "other" group (Davis 1996, Galinsky & Ku 2004).

Concurrently, others have focused more on the effects of the outcome-oriented *affective empathy* or what Batson and colleagues (1997) call *empathic concern* (Batson 1991, Stephan & Finlay 2002, Batson 1991). Many find that affective empathy can produce altruistic motivation (Batson et.al 1989, 1991), improve inter-group attitudes (Batson et.al 1997, Finlay & Stephan 2000), and increase the persuasiveness of messages (Campbell & Babrow 2004, Aaker & Williams 1998, Bae 2008, Bagozzi & Moore 1994, Foubert & Newberry 2006, Shen 2010).

In one study examining the effects of empathy on attitudes, Batson and colleagues (1997) employ a series of experiments to find that feeling affective empathy for a member of a stigmatized group (someone with AIDS, homeless person, convicted murder) can improve attitudes toward the group as a whole. Stephan & Finlay (2002) produce similar findings. In one of their experiments, they ask white students to read a series of first person essays about the lives of black students prefaced by similar instructions to empathize. They find that white students in the empathy condition reported more positive evaluations of African-Americans than those in the control (Finlay and Stephan 2000).

Campbell and Babrow (2004) use a series of experiments to find that empathy can increase the persuasiveness of health-related appeals on the dangers of risky behaviors when related to the contraction of HIV-AIDS. Specifically, they find that inducing state empathy using testimonials from individuals who are HIV positive ca increase personal risk perceptions about such behaviors (Campbell & Babrow 2004).

More recently, Shen (2010) finds that state empathy has a unique contribution to predicting changes in attitudes (i.e. support for the message) above and beyond the individual's affective (i.e. anger, fear, happiness) and cognitive (i.e. depth of processing, number of thought units) responses to the messages.

While findings from those focusing on perspective-taking differ slightly from those examining empathic concern, they describe the same underlying concept. That is, a construct leading to outcomes which suggest that empathy should increase support for policies associated with the target.

Returning to the first question I posed, how does empathy affect support for permissive immigration policies, combining theoretical insights and empirical findings from the empathy (Batson et.al 1997, Finlay & Stephan 2000) and persuasion literatures (Zaller 1992, McGraw et.al 1990, Petty & Cacioppo 1986, Shen 2010, Campbell & Babrow 2004), we could infer that empathizing for a target should lead to positive changes in attitudes toward the target. More specifically for this dissertation, increases in empathy for undocumented immigrants should be associated with increases in support for immigration policies which benefit them (i.e. path to citizenship, DREAM Act).

While the empathy literature provides the empirical preface for my expectations of positive attitude change, the attitude change literature provides a theoretical grounding for how this change might occur (Campbell & Babrow 2004, Zaller 1992). Given that opinion change occurs when the balance of considerations (affective and

cognitive) at the top of one's head changes in one direction or the other, I argue that we should expect empathy to increase support for permissive policies for two primary reasons. First, when individuals are exposed to empathetic frames about undocumented immigrants, the empathy serves as new pro-immigrant affective information which can tilt considerations in support of policies like the pathway to citizenship. Second, empathy also serves as an agent which biases information processing in a way that maintains existing pro-immigrant empathetic affect. Thus, while empathy may not increase the overall depth of information processing, it should place a greater emphasis on particular considerations which are more likely to increase support for permissive immigration policies (see figure 1 for theoretical model). In this case, both learning and shifting the importance of immigration policy considerations are integral to the ultimate shift in immigration preferences.

Thus, in the most generic sense and controlling for other moderators of attitudinal differences (i.e. observer-target similarity, social contact, trait empathy), I argue that empathy should trigger increases in support for permissive policies (see figure 1).

Differentiating the Attitudinal Effects of Perspective-Taking versus Affective Empathy

A separate question that has not garnered enough attention is: What are the attitudinal implications of simple empathic concern compared to the more cognitively demanding perspective-taking? This might be important to know for two reasons. First, if empathy is a continuous construct, running from affective reactive empathy on the

low end to perspective-taking on the high end as some might suggest (Davis 1983), it would be instructive to know what type or level of empathy would be sufficient to cause movement in policy positions. Second, given previous findings that empathetic messages in the immigration discourse (media, political speeches) tend not to include perspective-taking instructions (see chapter 2), estimating the effects of affective empathy would give us a better sense of political reality.

Along this vein, there is broad agreement that the more cognitively demanding task of perspective-taking can induce people to adopt more favorable attitudes toward the target (Batson et.al 1997, Finlay & Stephan 2000, Vescio et.al 2003). However, it is less clear whether experiencing simpler, more visceral, affective empathy (empathic concern) sans perspective-taking has similar effects. One example of this prior focus on the effects of perspective-taking is the experimental study of Batson and colleagues' (1997). To produce their finding that empathy can lead to improvement in a variety of intergroup attitudes, they gave participants a perspective-taking instructional prompt prior to listening to an interview with an empathy target. Specifically, participants were asked to "imagine how the woman who is interviewed feels about what has happened and how it has affected her life. Try to feel the full impact of what this woman has been through and how she feels as a result." Additionally, in their study producing similar findings, Stephan & Finlay (2002) employed the same perspective-taking prompt. However, no known study has attempted to induce simple visceral, affective empathy without priming participants to perspective-take.

It remains to be seen whether the much less cognitively demanding response of just feeling empathic concern would be any more or less persuasive than experiencing more effortful perspective-taking (see figure 2). However, research from other empathy scholars might suggest that the immigration preferences of those primed just to experience affective empathy may be less affected than those primed to experience the perspective-taking prompt. Recall that while perspective-taking can lead both to increases in reactive empathy and changes in intrapersonal outcomes (i.e. preferences), simple affective empathy should not trigger perspective-taking (Davis 1996). And while this question has not yet been tested, we could infer? that perspective-taking induces more cognitive processing and the generation and learning of more cognitive considerations resulting in a higher likelihood of permissive movement.

Differentiating the Attitudinal Effects of Empathetic Primes and Content

Another question deserving of more attention is: What are the attitudinal implications of sole exposure to an empathetic message (content) compared to that of an empathetic message preceded by instructions to empathize? Its relevance stems from content analyses which reveal that most empathetic messages in the public discourse at least as it pertains to undocumented immigration are not accompanied by instructions to empathize or perspective-take (see chapter 2). If external validity is important, then it is incumbent upon researchers to estimate persuasive effects using empathetic stimuli readily found in the real world.

To this point, previous studies have focused almost exclusively on explaining the combined effect of empathy instructions (prime) and empathetic content on intergroup attitudes (Batson et.al 1997, Finlay & Stephan 2000, Vescio et.al 2003). No known piece has examined the solitary effect of empathetically-framed content on attitudes. Addressing this gap, Haynes (2011) uses two experiments to gauge the effect of an empathetically-framed article about an undocumented immigrant separated from her newborn child on Dream Act support. Although results were not always significant, he finds that exposure to empathetic content without empathy instructions increases support for five permissive immigration policies (Haynes 2010, 2011).

It remains to be seen whether exposure to both perspective-taking instructions and the empathetic content is any more or less persuasive than the more realistic exposure to just the empathetic content (see figure 3). However, we do know that previous research does suggest that empathetic content without prior instructions to perspective-take may be less persuasive than the combined prompt-content alternative. I argue that we should expect less permissive movement for those exposed only to empathetic content because for these individuals, perspective-taking is less likely to occur. This has the effect of decreasing the overall empathetic intensity of the episode which results in less intense feelings of empathetic concern and a less biased reconsideration of one's immigration preferences. Conversely, I argue that by priming perspective-taking, participants are induced to feel more affective empathy and directed to focus on pro-immigrant considerations so to maintain the existing affect.

Hypotheses & Predictions

Summarizing, regarding the relationship between empathy and immigration policy preferences, I offer the following three primary hypotheses:

H1: Empathy inducing messages about undocumented immigrants should be associated with higher levels of support for permissive immigration policies.

H2: Individuals primed to both perspective-take and empathize emotionally with undocumented immigrants will report higher levels of support for permissive immigration policies than those primed only to empathize emotionally.

H3: Individuals exposed to empathetic content under instructions to empathize will report higher support for permissive immigration policies than those exposed to empathetic content who do not receive the empathy instructions.

Why Undocumented Immigrants?

I focused on empathy for undocumented immigrants for several reasons. First, there may be no group in America except for African Americans or Muslims who suffer from as much of a negative social stigma as undocumented immigrants. This difficult case would test the potential limits of empathetic effects. Second, the issue of undocumented immigration is as important and divisive today as it was during the last debate over Comprehensive Immigration Reform in 2005-6. More importantly, Americans and their leaders are still uncertain as to how this "broken" system should be

fixed. This research on empathy and immigration preferences could offer ideas on how to resolve this issue which directly affects at least eleven million undocumented immigrants who reside within America. Third, previous content analyses of immigration media coverage and political rhetoric (2000-2013) reveal that approximately 25%-35% include empathetic content or frames. Beyond the potential policy implications, studying such a group could also reveal clues as to the fluctuations of public opinion on immigration over the last decade.

Data & Methods

To test these expectations, an online experiment using Mechanical Turk was conducted in the summer of 2012 consisting of four separate conditions: Perspective-Taking primed empathy (PP), affectively-primed empathy (AP), unprimed empathy (UP), and a true control condition.[39]

Participants

The participant sample was drawn from a US national pool of subscribers to Amazon.com's Mechanical Turk service in July of 2012 (population>300,000). Subjects were randomly assigned to one of four groups: a control group (N=107), an unprimed empathy group (N= 103), an affectively primed empathy group (N=103), and a

[39] While using online experiments such as Mechanical Turk are just a recent phenomenon, a number of published studies find that in many instances online experiments can produce samples that are more representative than the traditional lab sample (Amir et.al 2012, Paolacci et.al 2010, Crump et.al 2013). Moreover, previous concerns about the heterogeneity of effects, the prevalence of habitual survey takers, and subject attentiveness are not as problematic as once feared (Berinsky et.al 2012).

perspective-taking primed empathy group (N=108)[40]. Post-tests reveal that randomization appear to have been somewhat successful (see Table 1 for sample composition) with a few exceptions. Specifically, with respect to primary dyadic comparison (perspective-taking primed condition to the control condition), only four out of fifteen dimensions were different at the .05 level including income, parent's US born, liberal, and Democrat. While some of these dimensions are particularly relevant to immigration policy preferences, follow up analyses for all regression models including these balance checks reveal no substantive differences in findings.

For the overall sample, the average age was 39 and 58% were female. On more immigrant-related measures, 92% were born in the U.S, and 12% had parents who were foreign-born, 81% had parents who were US born, and 7% had one parent foreign born and the other US born. Although this was not a representative sampling, it was generally reflective of the US population in terms of race. 77% of the sample identified as white, 4% as Hispanic, 10% as Black, and 9% as other. This sampling was very similar to figures gathered by the US census. As of 2011, the census estimates that about

[40] While balance tests indicate that randomization may not have worked perfectly, a growing literature finds that including post-test controls may skew and distort effects and are not theoretically nor empirically grounded (Mutz & Pemantle 2011, Mutz 2011). Siding with this previous research, I chose not to control for inter-condition differences in the regression analyses reported in the results section. In terms of inter-condition balance, only four measures were imbalanced including Democrat, US born, parents foreign born, and dispositional empathy (see Table 1 for sample composition by condition). However, additional regression analyses reveal that inclusion of balance measures do not significantly alter these findings. In other words, although the size of the effects may diminish slightly, almost all relevant expectations remain statistically significant and correctly signed. Additionally, I report final sample sizes after dropping all participants who did not take the treatment or did not complete the full experiment and survey. See Appendices 3A-3D for regressions including unbalanced variables.

78.1% of Americans are non-Hispanic whites, 13.1% black, 5% Asian, and 16.7% Hispanic (US Census 2011). On political predispositions, the subjects were ideologically diverse and overall slightly more liberal than the US population (mean ideology of -0.39 where a true moderate is 0, extreme liberal is -3 and extreme conservative is +3). 30% identified as conservative, 47% liberal, 19% moderates. In terms of partisan affiliation, the sample was 47% Democratic, 14% Independent, and 27% Republican. Relatedly, current data from Gallup indicate that the M-Turk sample resembles this partisan composition. For example, a January 13, 2013 report by Gallup finds that about 47% of Americans affiliate as Democrats, 42% affiliate as Republicans, and 11% as pure independents (Jones 2013). While the primary aim of this project was not to draw a representative sampling of Americans, the final sample appears to closely resemble the US public at large.

Procedure

Participants were recruited through Amazon.com's Mechanical Turk which posts a variety of HIT's for potential workers to complete in exchange for a specified compensation. An incentive of $0.35 was offered in exchange for participation in the study. Once workers agreed to participate, they were instructed to click on a web link taking them to a Qualtrics-hosted, online survey. Participants were first asked to read and agree to a consent form. Once consented, participants then proceeded to the study. First, participants were administered a pre-test questionnaire of socio-demographic (i.e. gender, age, education, income, race), political predispositions (i.e.

ideology, party identification), personality questions (authoritarian personality, social dominance orientation, need for affect and cognition) and the trait empathy IRI battery of twelve questions (Davis 1983).

Next, participants were asked to read an instruction set and/or a news article depending on the condition they were assigned. This involved three different manipulations, two different news articles and two different instruction sets. The perspective-taking primed empathy, affectively-primed empathy, and unprimed empathy conditions were asked to read the same empathetic news article about an undocumented woman who was separated from her newborn child by federal immigration authorities. Alternatively, the control group received a non-empathetic news article on the health benefits of red wine. A separated article was used in this case to establish a true baseline from which to compare empathic effects (see appendix 1 for excerpts from each article).

Second, similar to previous research on empathy (Batson et.al 1997, 2002, Stephan & Finlay 2002), the instruction set given to participants prior to reading the news article was varied. Participants in the unprimed empathy group and true control group were given the following *objective, detached instruction set*: "Try not to get caught up in how the subject of the news article feels. Just remain as objective and detached as possible. Please be sure to keep these instructions in mind when you read the article." Participants in the perspective-taking primed group were given the

following *perspective-taking instruction set*: "Specifically, free yourself to empathize with the woman in the article. Try to feel the full emotional impact of what this woman has been through. Additionally, please put yourself in her position. Try to imagine what she is going through and how it has affected her life as if it were your own."[41] Finally, participants in the affectively primed group were given the following *affective empathy instruction set*: "Specifically, free yourself to empathize with the woman in the article. Try to feel the full emotional impact of what this woman has been through."

In summary, one can think of my experiment as consisting of six comparative dyads, perspective-taking primed-control, perspective-taking primed-affectively primed, perspective-taking primed-unprimed empathy, affectively primed-control, affectively primed-unprimed empathy, unprimed empathy-control, where the perspective-taking primed-control dyad estimates the combined effects of the *empathy article and perspective-taking instructions*; the perspective-taking primed-affectively primed dyad the difference between effects of the *perspective-taking and purely affective instructions*; the perspective-taking primed-unprimed empathy dyad the effects of the *perspective-taking instructions only*; the affectively primed-control dyad the effects of the *empathy article and purely affective instructions*; the affectively primed-unprimed

[41] The labeling of the perspective-taking instructions might confuse some as it is borrowed from previous work in social-psychology (Batson et.al 1997). These researchers intend these instructions to prime perspective-taking empathy in addition to affective empathy. Thus, in the perspective-taking prime, there is both a cogitative and affective component. Many researchers view cogitative empathy as a higher order extension of affective empathy. Thus, while affective empathy can occur without perspective-taking empathy, perspective-taking cannot occur without experiencing affective empathy. I adopt this theoretical argument in constructing these different primes. This is the primary reason why I cannot include a purely cogitative prime (without affective empathy).

empathy dyad the effects of the *purely affective instructions only*; and the unprimed empathy-control dyad the effects of the *empathy article only*.

Next, subjects completed a longer post-test questionnaire, including questions on state emotions, manipulation checks, immigration issue importance, willingness to help immigrants', beliefs about immigrants, immigrant contact, and immigration policy preferences. Upon completion, participants were debriefed and released.

Measuring Immigration Policy Preferences

Immigration policy preferences were measured by constructing a permissive policy factor from a larger battery of immigration policy items. Principle components factor analysis revealed the emergence of two factors (permissive, restrictive[42]) with Eigenvalues > 1.00. Loading highly on the *permissive factor* were three policies: Dream act, pathway to citizenship, and temporary guest worker program (Cronbach's Alpha=.83, Range=5.9, High=2.5, Low=-3.4, Mean=-1.08, SD=-1.61). Each policy preference was measured using a 5 point oppose/support scale. *DREAM Act* ("Giving undocumented/illegal immigrant children the ability to earn legal status if they graduated from a US high school, have stayed out of trouble, and have enrolled in college or the military"); *Pathway to citizenship* ("Providing a path to citizenship for all undocumented/ illegal immigrants"); *Temporary worker program* ("Providing a

[42] Policies loading highly on the restrictive factor include: English only policy, border fence funding, deportation, SB1070. Interestingly, preferences on these policies did not appear to be affected by the empathetic stimulus. For this reason, in this dissertation, I focus on empathy's significant effects on permissive immigration policies.

temporary guest worker program to undocumented/illegal immigrants"). Higher scores indicate more support for these policies.[43] For a second set of analyses, each policy preference was recoded into a dichotomous measure indicating individuals who supported each policy (1=strongly support, somewhat support; 0=neither support/oppose, somewhat oppose, strongly oppose).

Measuring Situational State Empathy

Situational state emotions, including reactive empathy, were measured using a battery of 16 different emotions. For each emotion, participants were asked to report how much (1 = *not at all,* 7 = *extremely)* they had experienced that emotion while reading an article (Batson et.al 1997). Similar to Batson et.al 1997 and Stephan & Finlay (2000), empathy is measured as a factor composed of various related emotions. Principle components factor analysis of all emotion-related responses revealed the emergence of four factors (empathy, aversion, anxiety, enthusiasm) with Eigenvalues > 1.00. Loading highly on the *empathy factor* were four different emotions: empathy, sympathy, concern, and sadness (Cronbach's Alpha=.92, Inter-item covariance=3.18, Range=6.87, Low=-3.43, High=3.44, Mean=0.26, SD=1.84). A higher empathy factor indicates a higher level of self-reported empathy (see figures 2, 3 for distribution

[43] Results using each of the three policy preference items as separate dependent variables were almost identical to those using the permissive policy factor.

Measuring Perspective-Taking

Perspective-taking responses/processes were measured using a single self-report, imagine-self perspective-taking question immediately following the administration of the stimulus. Participants were asked to report the extent to which they imagined themselves in the position of the subject in the news article (1 = *not at all,* 7 = *extremely)*.[44] A higher response indicates a higher level of perspective-taking. This measure is particularly relevant in distinguishing the perspective-taking primed from the AG. I expect participants in the perspective-taking primed condition to report more perspective-taking than those in the AG indicating that the perspective-taking prime worked as intended. Moreover, I also expect the level of perspective-taking in the perspective-taking primed to be higher than in the unprimed empathy and the control condition.

Manipulation Checks

First, I argue that all empathy conditions (perspective-taking primed, affectively primed, unprimed empathy) should report higher levels of reactive empathy than the control condition (H1). More specifically referring to H2 and H3, I expect mean empathy in the perspective-taking primed condition to be higher than in that of the affectively primed and the unprimed empathy conditions facilitating higher levels of support for permissive immigration policies in the perspective-taking primed condition.

[44] An imagine-other type role-taking question was not included in this series of experiments.

Descriptively, I report mean levels of reported empathy by condition: perspective-taking primed condition = .80, affectively primed condition = .27, unprimed empathy condition = .38, control condition = -1.78 (empathy factor scores ranged from -3.43 to +3.44) (see figure 4). As expected, all empathy groups (perspective-taking primed condition = +.80, affectively primed condition = +.27, unprimed empathy condition = +.38) reported higher mean levels of reactive empathy than the control group (mean = -1.78). Additionally, a series of t-tests indicated that empathy in each of the three empathy conditions was significantly higher than that in the control condition ($p_{PP\text{-}CG}$ =.000, $p_{AP\text{-}CG}$ =.000, $p_{UP\text{-}CG}$ =.000)[45]. Second, as expected, the mean empathy factor score was significantly ($p_{PP\text{-}AP}$ =.02) higher in the perspective-taking empathy condition (mean=.80) than in the affectively-primed empathy condition (mean=.27). Finally, as anticipated, mean empathy was significantly ($p_{PP\text{-}UP}$ =.04) higher in the perspective-taking condition (.80) than in the unprimed empathy condition (.38). In total, these results indicate a successful manipulation of reactive empathy.[46]

Second, I also expect to find more perspective-taking to occur in the perspective-taking primed condition as compared to the affectively primed, unprimed empathy, and control condition. To evaluate this expectation, I present the raw means for each group on the perspective-taking measure. As expected, the mean level of perspective-taking in

[45] All p-values reported are those for one-tailed tests. This is appropriate since they relate to directional hypotheses.

[46] The only finding that does not hold statistically when inserting statistically unbalanced indicators is the comparison between the perspective-taking primed and the unprimed empathy condition (two tailed p-value=.17). I attribute this to an issue of smaller overall sample sizes (approximately 105 per cell).

the perspective-taking primed condition (5.43) was higher than in the affectively primed (4.82), unprimed empathy (3.63), and the control condition (3.50). However, while we can be confident that perspective-taking was successfully manipulated in the perspective-taking primed condition given that differences were statistically significant in comparison to the unprimed empathy ($p_{PP\text{-}UP}$ = .00) and the control condition ($p_{PP\text{-}CG}$ = .00) (two tailed tests), the same conclusion cannot be reached in comparison to the affectively primed condition. For this dyad (perspective-taking primed-affectively primed condition), while participants indicated more perspective-taking in the perspective-taking primed condition than in the affectively primed condition, this difference (+.61) was not statistically significant ($p_{PP\text{-}AP}$ = .17, two tailed test). I argue that these differences would be significant in a larger sample. These results indicate a relatively successful manipulation of perspective-taking.

Results

Effects of Empathy on Immigration Policy Preferences

I now report my experimental results assessing empathy's effects on various immigration policy preferences including the DREAM act, pathway to citizenship, and temporary worker program. I employ both a permissive policy factor and its highly-loading, component policies (recoded dichotomously) to measure permissive policy support. First, I focus on mean differences in support for permissive policies between each of the three empathy conditions (perspective-taking primed, affectively primed,

unprimed empathy) and the control condition. Referring to results presented in table 2, permissive policy factor scores are significantly higher in each of the empathy conditions ($mean_{PP}$ = .44, $mean_{AP}$ = -.07, $mean_{UP}$ = -.06) than in the control (mean = -.33). However, two tailed t-tests reveal that only the difference between the perspective-taking primed and the control condition is statistically significant at conventional levels ($p_{PP\text{-}CG}$ = .00, $p_{AP\text{-}CG}$ = .12, $p_{UP\text{-}CG}$ = .12).

I now turn to more closely examining the individual component policies making up the policy factor, where we see very similar results to those using the policy factor as the measure of permissive support. The percentage of participants reporting support for all three policies is higher in each of the empathy conditions than in the control (see table 3). However, these differences are only significantly higher for the perspective-taking empathy condition. For example, percentage support for the pathway policy, DREAM Act, and temporary worker program of 62%, 65%, and 69% for those in the perspective-taking primed condition compared to 37%, 52%, and 49% for those in the control condition. Moreover, each of these differences between the perspective-taking primed and the control condition is statistically significant with p-values of .00, .03, and .00, respectively. Alternatively, while the percentage of participants indicating support for the DREAM Act is higher in the affectively primed (58%) and the unprimed empathy (56%) as compared to the control condition (52%), these differences are not statistically significant ($p_{AP\text{-}CG}$ = .20, $p_{UP\text{-}CG}$ = .28). Recapping, while results indicate that support for permissive immigration policies is higher in all three empathy conditions in comparison

to the control, this difference is only significant for the perspective-taking empathy condition (perspective-taking primed).

Affective Empathy's Role in Attitude Change

Next, I turn to assessing whether these permissive changes can be attributed in part to the introduction of empathic affect. Does the empathy (induced by the empathetic prime and/or content) indeed bias processing in favor of maintaining the new empathic affect resulting in more permissive immigration preferences? If so, we could expect exposure to the empathy stimulus to moderate support for permissive policies among high empathizers. More specifically, we would expect self-reported empathic concern to become more important in predicting permissive support moving from the control to the empathy condition. To assess the role that the introduction of empathy plays in permissive movement in preferences, the permissive policy factor was regressed over affective empathy[47], the perspective-taking empathy condition[48], and their interaction for those participants in the perspective-taking primed and control condition.[49] Regression results reveal a statistically significant interaction between

[47] Here I measure affective empathy using a new dichotomous measure of empathy where participants scoring above 0 on the empathy factor were coded as "1" (high empathizers) and those scoring below 0 were coded as "0" (low empathizers). In another model, I use the raw empathy factor scores as a continuous measure of affective empathy. Results do not change.

[48] While I choose to examine the perspective-taking empathy condition in line with most prior research on empathy (Batson et.al 1997, Finlay & Stephan 2000), results looking at the affectively primed and unprimed empathy conditions are almost identical.

[49] For these analyses, I choose to focus solely on the perspective-taking primed empathy condition as it showcases the strongest empathic effects on immigration policy preferences. However, other tests examining the effects of the affectively primed and unprimed empathy conditions also indicate permissive movement in preferences. However, these higher levels of support for permissive immigration policies in

affective empathy and the perspective-taking condition (p=.000). Additional tests indicate that while being a high empathizer appears unrelated (p=.318) to permissive policy support in the control, it does become highly significant (p=.000) and positive (β=2.02) in the perspective-taking condition (perspective-taking primed). Substantively, on the permissive policy factor (range=5.87, SD=1.57), high empathizers in the perspective-taking primed condition score a little over one standard deviation higher on the permissive policy factor than high empathizers in the control.

Alternatively, examining pathway policy support[50], regression results again return a significant interaction between affective empathy and the perspective-taking condition. Further tests indicate that while affective empathy does not appear related to pathway support for those in the control (p=.221), it does become highly significant and positive in the perspective-taking condition (p=.000, β=2.55) (see figure 6). Astonishingly, the probability that a person who reports feeling very empathetic toward undocumented immigrants will support the pathway policy spikes from 20% in the control condition to 79% in the perspective-taking primed condition. Results for DREAM Act and temporary guest worker program support are similar. Specifically, these same

these other two conditions do not rise to conventional levels of statistical significance. I provide these results in Appendices 3A-3D.

[50] Pathway policy support is a dichotomous measure coded as 1=strongly support and support, 0=neither support nor oppose, oppose, and strongly oppose.

probabilities increase 20% and 54% for the DREAM Act and temporary guest worker program, respectively.[51]

Yet, some may claim that these results cannot discount the possibility that participants are simply learning new information. The question is, does empathy still matter even after controlling for the informational content of the empathy stimulus? To evaluate this question, I regress the permissive policy factor over affective empathy, the perspective-taking empathy condition, and their interaction for participants in the perspective-taking primed and unprimed empathy condition. This compares groups of participants who read the same empathetic news article. The only difference is that those in the perspective-taking primed condition receive perspective-taking instructions prior to reading the article while those in the unprimed empathy condition do not. Results indicate only a marginally significant (p=.13) interaction between affective empathy and the perspective-taking condition. Additional tests show that while being a high empathizer does increase support for permissive immigration policies for both conditions (perspective-taking and unprimed empathy), the permissive effect is greater in the perspective-taking condition. More specifically, high empathizers in the

[51] While in this dissertation I focus solely on empathy induced for undocumented immigrants. I recognize that empathy can also be felt for the Americans and legal immigrants who may suffer economically or socially because of the presence of undocumented immigrants. However, I choose to limit this inquiry in this way primarily because of the infrequency with which empathy of the conservative or restrictive variety appears in the national media (refer to chapter 2). In other related research, I find that such frames (i.e. illegal immigration hurts American job seekers) appear very infrequently and primarily framed by conservative-leaning anchors, commentators, and politicians using language evoking fear and anxiety rather than empathy. However, I do intend on conducting future research that examines this realtedand important question.

perspective-taking condition score about a third of a standard deviation higher (β=2.02, p=.000) on the permissive policy factor than those in the unprimed empathy condition (β =1.44, p=.000).

However, regression results examining the pathway policy do return a statistically significant interaction between affective empathy and the perspective-taking condition (p=.04). Similarly in this case, high empathizers are more supportive of permissive immigration policies than non-high empathizers for both conditions (perspective-taking and unprimed empathy). However, for the pathway policy, the permissive effect is much greater in the perspective-taking condition. More specifically, high empathizers in the perspective-taking condition (p(support)=79.4%) were on average about 26 percentage points more likely to support the pathway policy than those in the unprimed empathy condition (p(support)=52.9%) (see figure 7). In other words, the empathy manipulation takes the average participant from being somewhat indifferent to strongly supporting the pathway policy. The thrust of the results for support of the DREAM Act and the temporary guest worker program are similar. Specifically, these same probabilities rise 11%[52] and 22% for the DREAM Act and temporary guest worker program, respectively (see table 4). To recap, results indicate that the introduction of empathy activates the effect of high empathy on policy evaluations.

[52] Main interaction is not significant (p=.27).

Comparing the Effects of Perspective-Taking and Affectively-Primed Empathy

Next, I report differences between the perspective-taking primed and the affectively primed condition in terms of their effect on support for permissive immigration policies. On the first measure of immigration preferences, the mean permissive policy factor score was higher in the perspective-taking primed condition (mean score = +.44) than in the affectively primed condition (mean score = -.07) (see figure 8). Additionally, this difference was statistically significant (p-value=.008).

Moreover, percentage support for each of the permissive policy factor's component policies revealed very similar results (see figure 8). For the pathway policy, support in the perspective-taking primed condition (62%) was over 18 percentage points higher than in the affectively primed condition (44%). Alternatively, for the DREAM Act, support in the perspective-taking primed condition (65%) was 7 percentage points higher than in the affectively primed condition (58%). Finally, for the temporary worker program policy, support in the perspective-taking primed condition (69%) was 7 percentage points higher than in the affectively primed condition (55%). Each of these differences was statistically significant (pathway p-value = .004, TWP p-value = .02) except for that of the DREAM Act ($p\text{-value}_{PP\text{-}AP} = .16$).

Comparing the Effects of Primed Empathy and Unprimed Empathy

Next, I report similar differences between the perspective-taking primed empathy condition and the unprimed empathy condition on support for permissive

immigration policies. On the mean permissive policy factor indicator, scores were higher in the perspective-taking primed condition (mean score = +.44) than in the unprimed empathy condition (mean score = -.06). Moreover, these differences were statistically significant (p-value=.01).

Results for the percentage supporting each individual policy factor were largely in line with the first indicator (see Figure 9). For the pathway policy, support in the perspective-taking primed condition (62%) was over 19 percentage points higher than in the affectively primed condition (43%). Alternatively, for the DREAM Act, support in the perspective-taking primed condition (65%) was 9 percentage points higher than in the affectively primed condition (56%). Finally, for the temporary worker program policy, support in the perspective-taking primed condition (69%) was 15 percentage points higher than in the affectively primed condition (54%). Each of these differences was statistically significant (pathway p-value = .002, temp program p-value = .01) except for the DREAM Act which was only marginally significant ($p\text{-value}_{PPAP}$ = .10).

Discussion

In this chapter, my primary expectation was that inducing empathy for undocumented immigrants would result in more support for permissive immigration policies. Overall, the evidence largely comports with this expectation. While the effect sizes differ depending on how empathy was induced, each of the empathy conditions reported significantly higher levels of support for permissive immigration policies than

the control condition. In other words, I find supportive evidence that whether empathy is induced using empathetic content or both empathetic content and an empathetic prompt, it can play a persuasive role in convincing the public to support policies like the pathway to citizenship.

However, I also argue that empathy can produce permissive movement by both changing the relative balance of pro-immigrant considerations at the top of a person's head and by biasing processing toward these same considerations to maintain existing empathetic affect. Unfortunately, my evidence cannot directly speak to the first mechanism because I did not include the types of measures necessary to more precisely evaluate this claim that empathy changes the balance of a person's immigration policy considerations. To this point, I have an experiment that is about to be in the field that will provide a better test of this claim.

However, in regards to the second claim, I do provide some evidence consistent with this argument that empathy acts as a biasing agent in the opinion formation process to maintain existing affect. If true, we might expect that of those individuals who report high levels of empathy in the perspective-taking condition would be more likely to support permissive immigration policies than similar subjects in the control condition. And while this evidence is not irrefutable, this is indeed what I find. Specifically, I find that high empathizers in the perspective-taking condition are much more likely to support the three different permissive immigration policies than those in

the control. This suggests that the empathetic stimulus seems to be doing much of the heavy lifting here in inducing this permissive movement. Moreover, even controlling for the informational content of the news article, I find that the perspective-taking prime still has a positive and large impact on the probability of supporting these permissive policies. In other words, there is more to this story than just learning new information. These results suggest that empathic affect is consequential as well.

Second, I hypothesized that priming perspective-taking would be more persuasive than priming only affective empathy primarily because the higher empathetic intensity resulting from the perspective-taking prime would trigger a more biased processing and cause the observer to acquire more affective empathetic considerations. And although the evidence I provide is largely suggestive, that which is there is consistent with these claims. Specifically, I find that those in the perspective-taking primed condition experienced significantly more permissive movement than those in the affectively primed condition on the permissive policy factor, pathway policy, and temporary worker program policy.

Additionally, that results for the DREAM Act did not rise to the level of statistical significance (p=.17) could be a result of the much higher level of baseline DREAM Act support instituting a ceiling effect for permissive change. This ceiling effect would probably decrease the differences between the two empathy groups and thus, make a significant result less likely. And while the differences between the perspective-taking

primed and the affectively primed condition for the DREAM Act did not reach conventional levels of statistical significance, similar to changes on the other three indicators, participants in the perspective-taking primed condition indicated more support for the DREAM Act than those in the affectively primed condition. Thus, it seems that those primed to engage in perspective-taking did exhibit more permissive movement in their immigration policy preferences than those in the affectively-primed empathy condition.[53]

Finally, I hypothesized that consuming empathetic content by itself would be less persuasive than consuming empathetic content prefaced by instructions to empathize. Recall the rationale for this argument is that empathetic primes (instructions) increase the intensity of the empathetic episode which could lead both to more biased processing to maintain the higher level of empathetic affect and increased acquisition of pro-immigrant considerations. Here again, I find evidence supportive of this hypothesis. Similar to results for H2, I find that those in the perspective-taking primed condition experienced significantly more permissive movement than those in the unprimed empathy condition in terms of the permissive policy factor and support for

[53] This analysis must include the caveat that although individuals in the perspective-taking primed condition did report more perspective-taking than those in the affectively-primed condition, this difference fell outside the traditional levels of statistical significance. Additionally, I must note that the perspective-taking primed group had both a cognitive and affective prime- in essence, a double prime. Thus, the longer prompt may in part be driving the difference. Moreover, while these results examining the effect of the perspective-taking prime are significant, I must recall previous findings from chapter 2 suggesting that such occurrences in the news discourse are rather infrequent. Regardless, there are a variety of other forums (i.e. classroom settings, conflict negotiation, public speeches) in which such a empathy prime would not be surprising.

the pathway policy and temporary worker program policy. Again, while support for the DREAM Act was higher in the perspective-taking primed than in the unprimed empathy condition, this difference was only marginally significant (p=.10). In addition to ceiling effects, this lack of statistical significance could be the result of a small sample size. Had cell sizes been a little larger because of the smaller effect size, results on the DREAM Act would have probably been significant as well. Therefore, it appears that exposure to both an empathetic message and prime is more persuasive than sole exposure to empathetic content.[54]

In total, these results provide strong support for my argument that not only should the empathetic stimulus increase support for permissive immigration policies, but this permissive movement is likely a result of increases in affective considerations and empathetically-triggered, biased processing. Additionally, as expected, I find that not only is priming empathy lead to more permissive shifts than not doing so, but also more specifically that affective-only primes are less impactful than the traditional perspective-taking primes used in previous research. These findings suggest that those interested in gaining the most persuasive leverage should not only employ empathetic prefaces to prime people to empathize, but also that these primes should emphasize taking the perspective of the empathetic target.

[54] To the contrary, results comparing the affectively primed condition to the unprimed empathy condition indicate that while permissive policy support is higher in the former, the difference is not statistically significant (see Appendices 3A-3D). This suggests that while priming affective empathy may induce permissive movement in immigration preferences, more work needs to be done using larger cell sizes to speak more definitely to this point.

Table 1 - Sample Composition

Category	Control condition	Perspective-taking Primed condition	Affectively Primed condition	Unprimed empathy condition
Male	43%	36%	45%	40%
White	76%	75%	81%	80%
Latino $	4%	6%	4%	1%
Black	7%	12%	8%	11%
Other race	13%	7%	3%	8%
Median US Inc and Higher *	39%	38%	38%	44%
Bachelors Degree or More	53%	51%	50%	41%
Married #^	53%	44%	34%	40%
Foreign Born	11%	5%	5%	6%
Both Parents Foreign Born	16%	8%	14%	10%
Both Parents US Born *^	72%	85%	82%	86%
Republican	28%	23%	27%	30%
Democrat *	43%	56%	50%	44%
Conservative	28%	23%	27%	30%
Liberal *	44%	52%	49%	44%
Dispositional Empathy Score	38	40	38	40

2-tailed tests of significance

** Differences between perspective-taking-control at the .05 level*

 # Differences between affectively primed-control at the .05 level

^ Differences between unprimed empathy-control at the .05 level

$ Differences between perspective-taking-unprimed at the .05 level

~ Differences between perspective-taking -affectively primed at the .05 level

Table 2 - Regressing Permissive Policy Factor on Each Empathy Condition

Variable	Perspective-taking primed Coef (SE)	Affectively primed Coef (SE)	Unprimed empathy Coef (SE)
Empathy Treatment	0.770***	0.258	0.267
	(.213)	(.220)	(.222)
Constant	-.330*	-.330*	-.330*
	(.151)	(.154)	(.155)
N	215	210	210

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Control condition serves as the comparison group

2-tailed tests of significance

Table 3 - Percentage Support for Permissive Immigration Policies by Condition

	Control Condition	Perspective-taking primed condition	Affectively primed condition	Unprimed empathy condition
Percent Supporting Pathway	**37.4%**	**62.0%*** **	**43.7%**	**42.7%**
Upper Bound	45.1%	69.9%	51.8%	50.8%
Lower Bound	29.6%	54.3%	35.5%	34.5%
Percent Supporting DREAM	**52.3%**	**64.8%***	**58.3%**	**56.3%**
Upper Bound	60.4%	72.5%	66.3%	64.5%
Lower Bound	44.3%	57.2%	50.1%	48.2%
Percent Supporting Temp	**48.6%**	**68.5%*** **	**54.4%**	**54.4%**
Upper Bound	56.7%	76.0%	62.6%	62.6%
Lower Bound	40.5%	61.1%	46.2%	46.2%
N	107	108	103	103

*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05

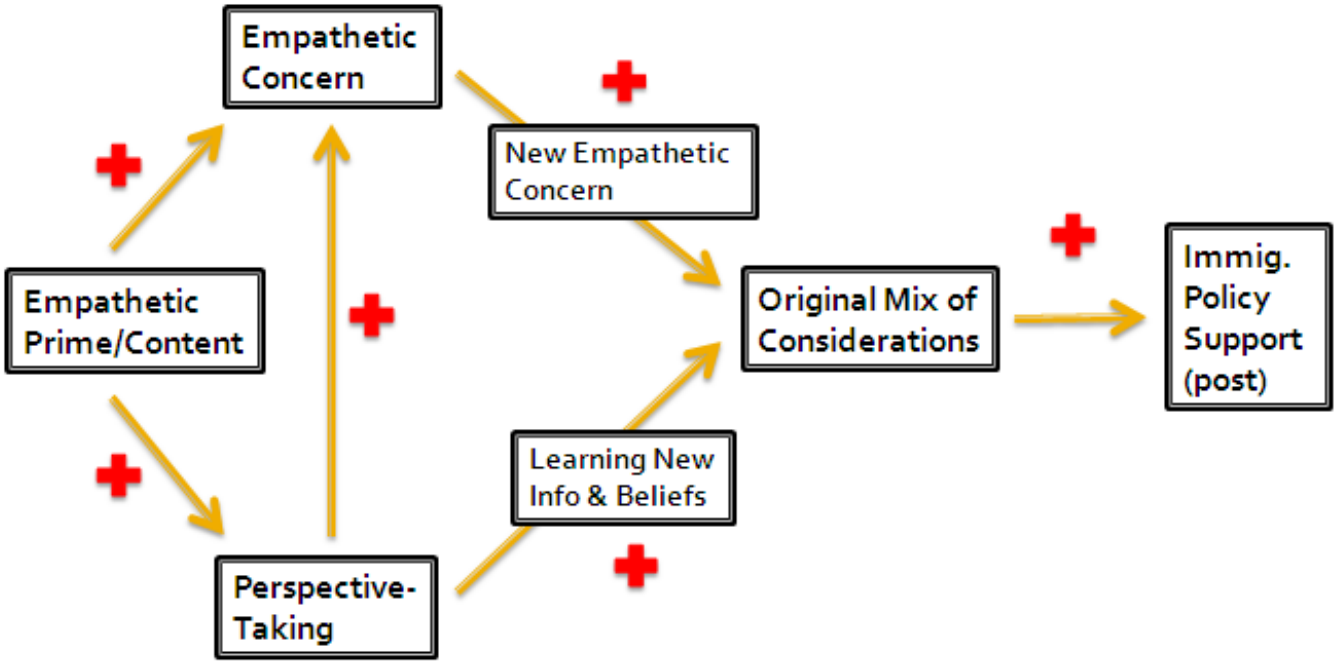
Control condition serves as the comparison group

90% confidence

Table 4 - Support for Permissive Policies Among High Empathizers by Condition

	UP Condition	PP Condition
Percent Supporting Pathway	**52.9%**	**79.4%**
Upper Bound	62.8%	86.2%
Lower Bound	43.2%	71.0%
Percent Supporting DREAM	**65.3%**	**76.7%**
Upper Bound	74.4%	83.9%
Lower Bound	55.7%	67.9%
Percent Supporting Temp	**60.8%**	**83.3%**
Upper Bound	50.2%	89.5%
Lower Bound	70.9%	75.6%
N	103	108
90% confidence		

Figure 1 - Empathy & Persuasion



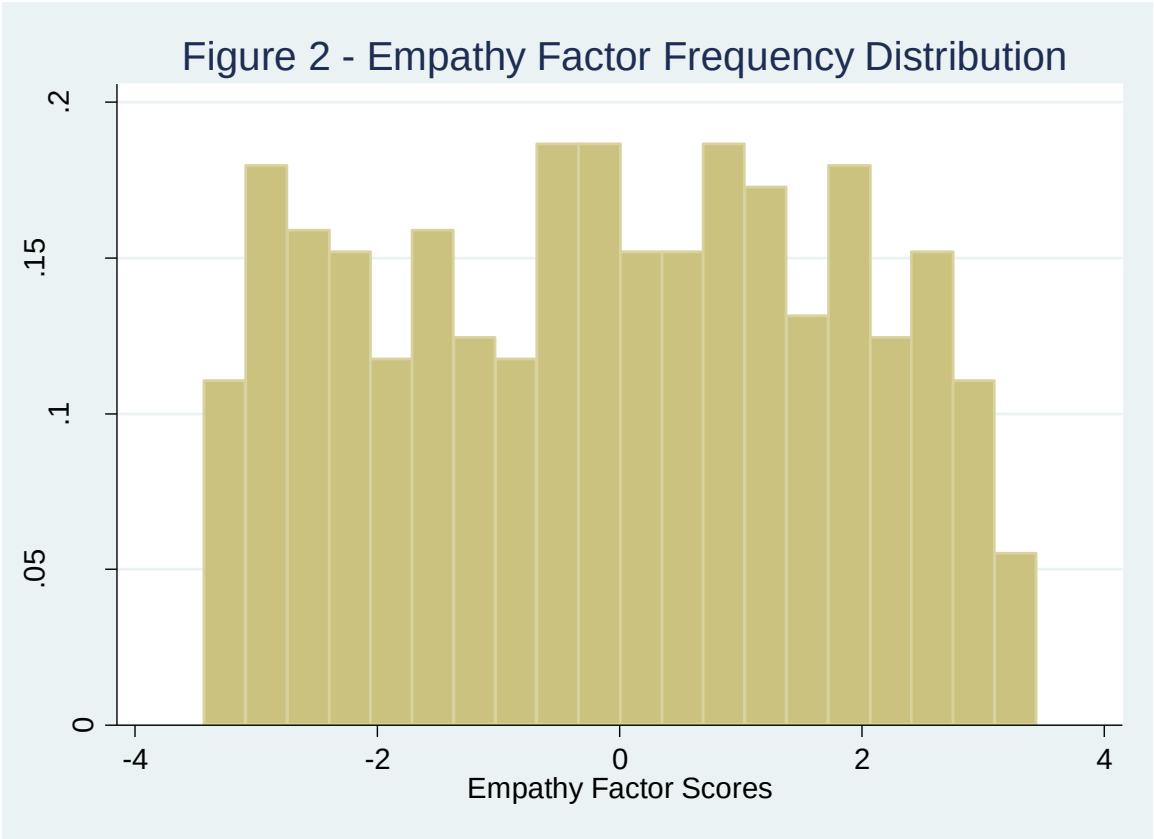
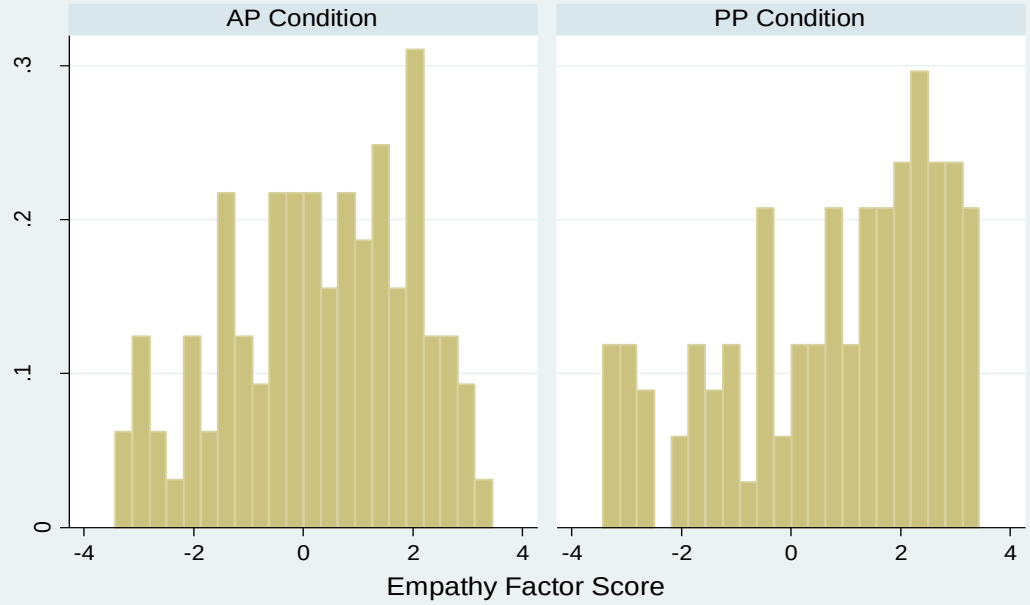
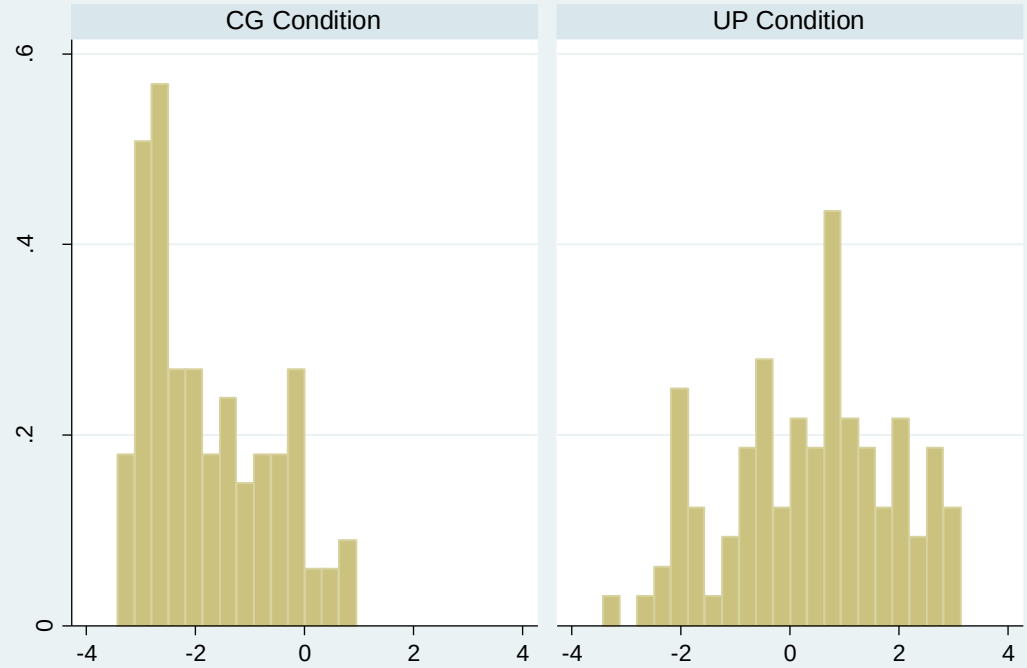

Figure 2 - Empathy Factor Frequency Distribution
0
.05
.1
.15
.2
-4
-2
0
2
4
Empathy Factor Scores

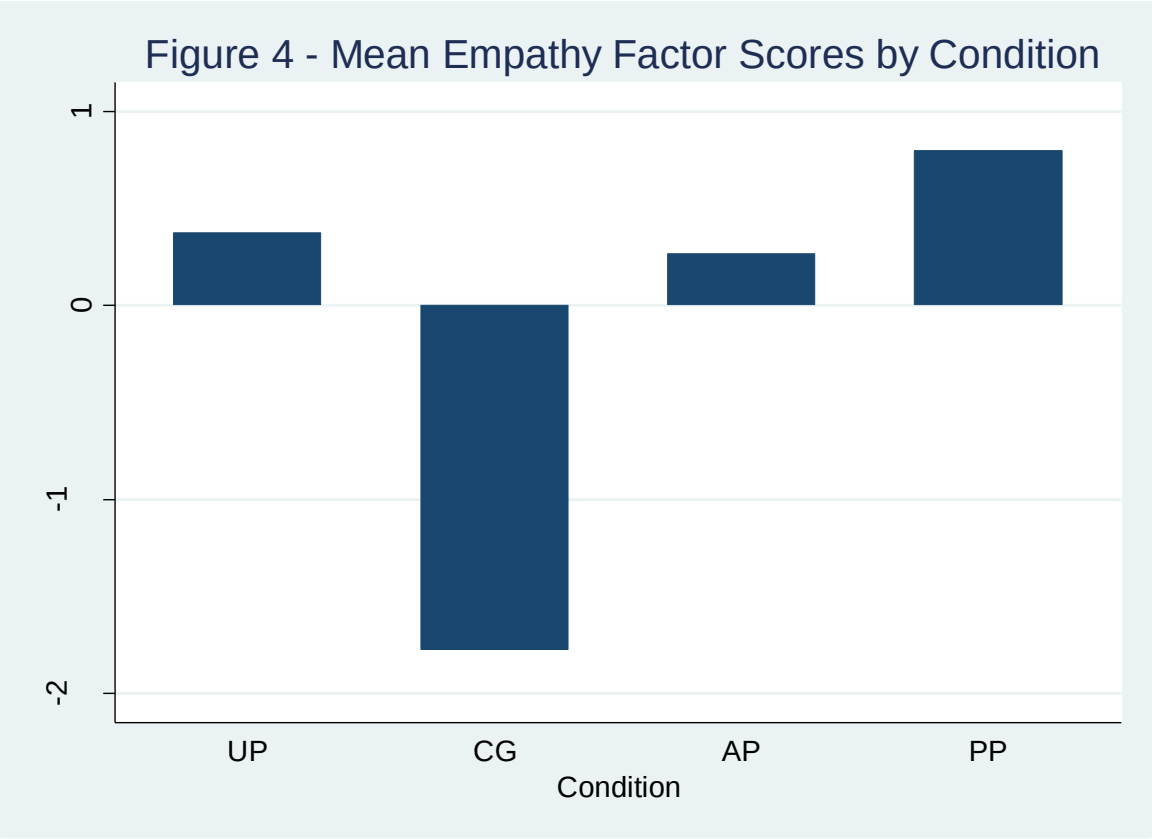
Figure 3 - Empathy Factor Frequency Distribution by Condition



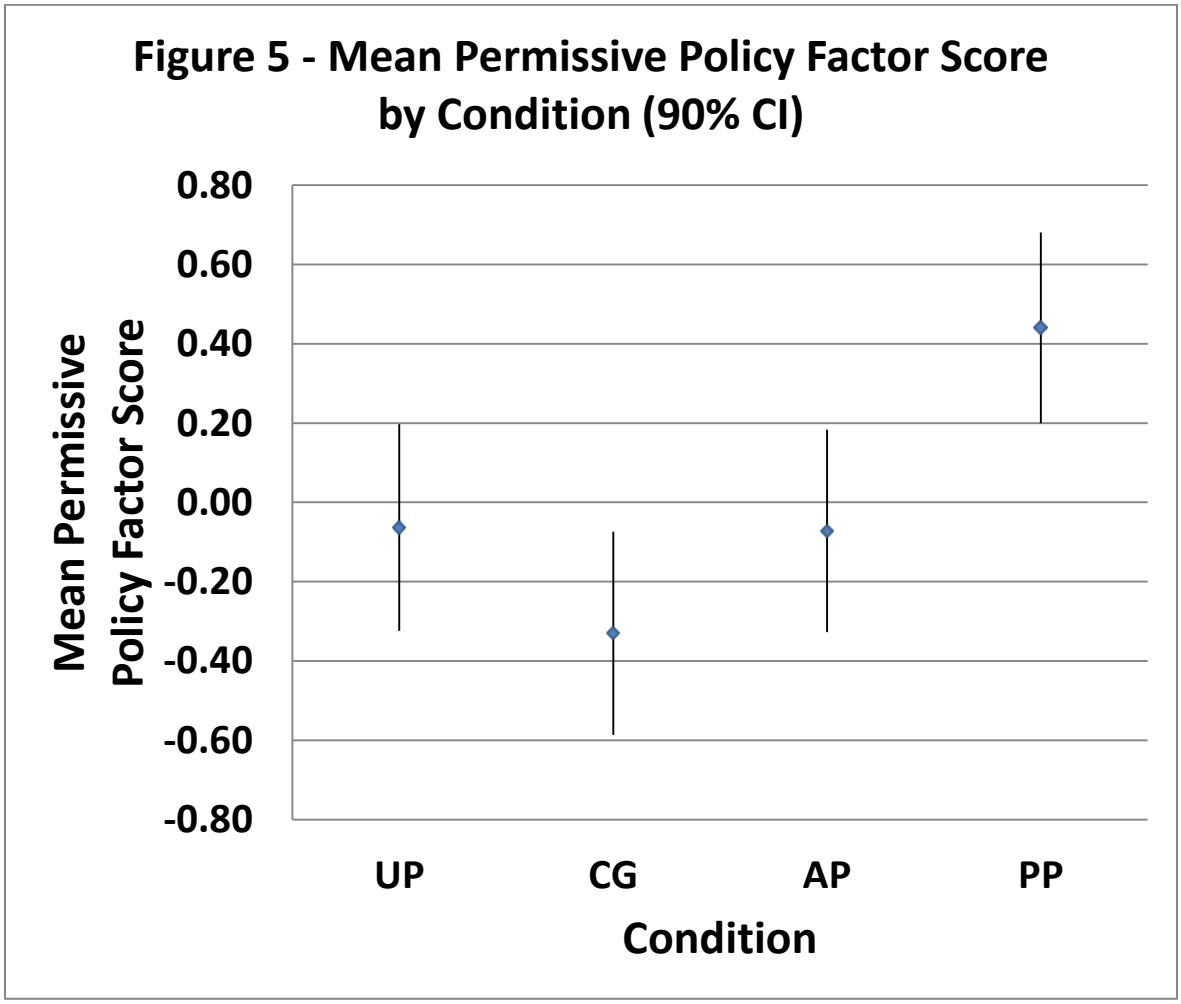
Graphs by botheg



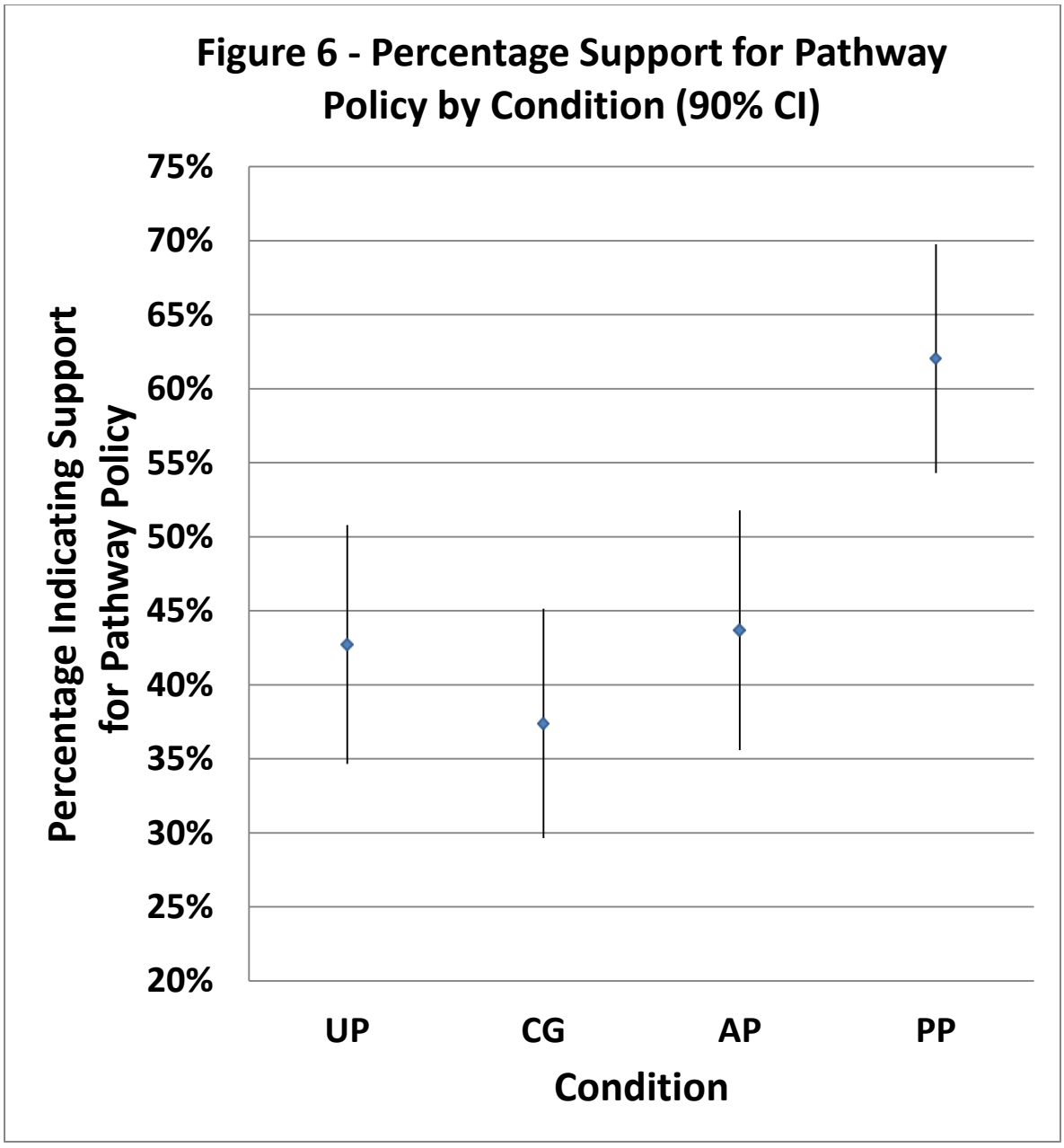
Graphs by mbwine



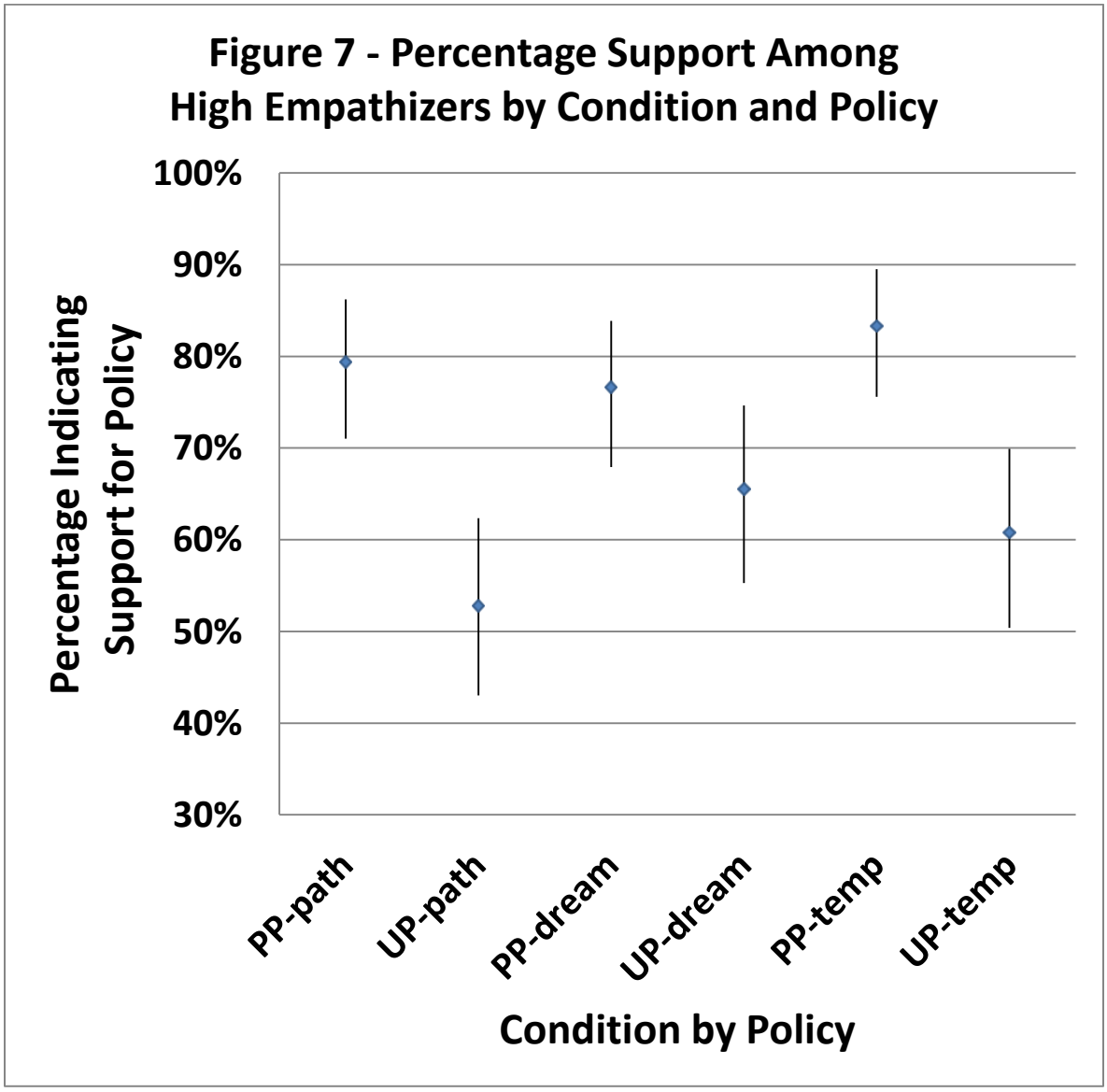
UP = unprimed empathy condition
CG = control condition
AP = affectively primed condition
PP = perspective-taking primed condition



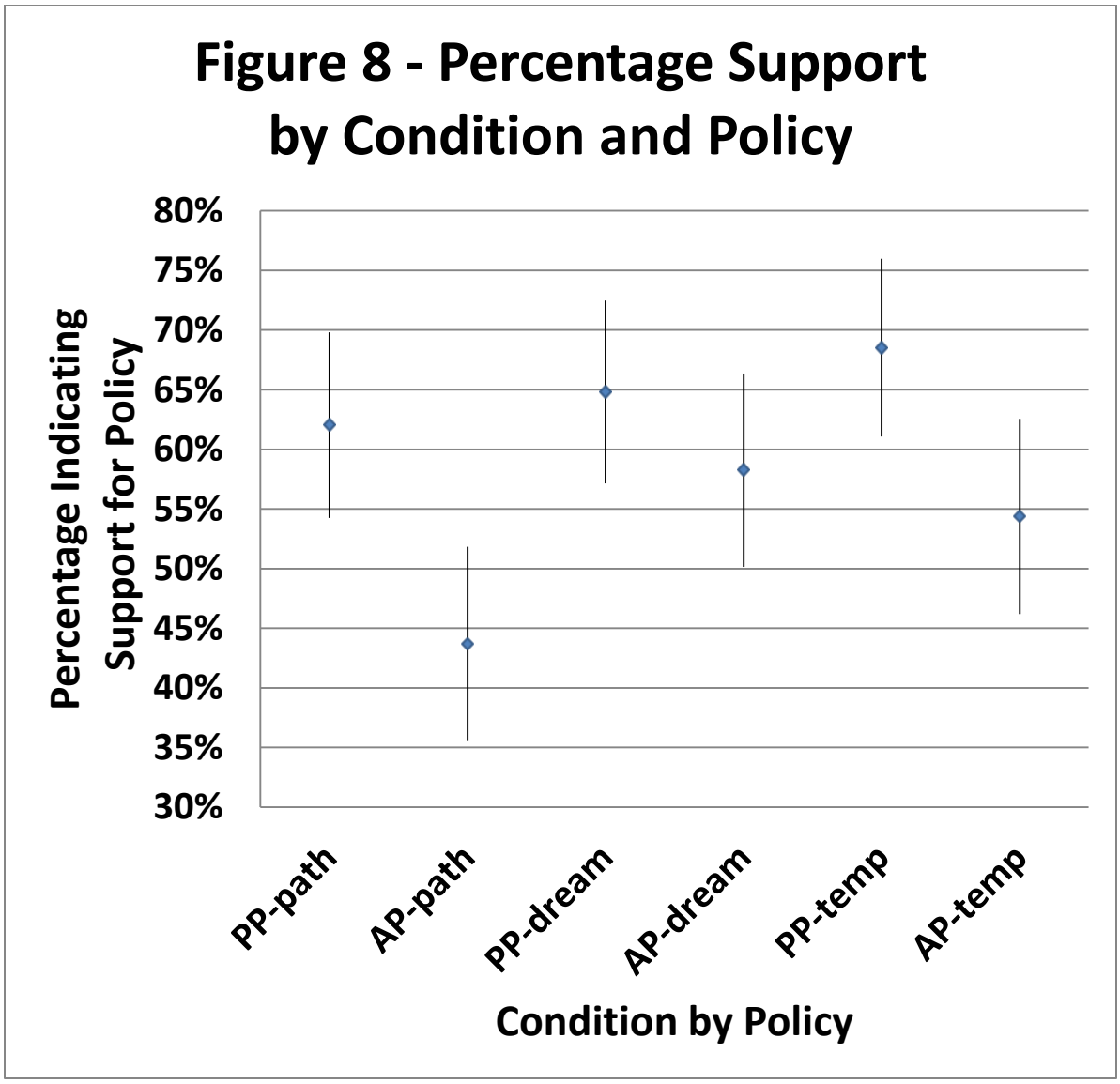
UP = unprimed empathy condition
CG = control condition
AP = affectively primed condition
PP = perspective-taking primed condition



UP = unprimed empathy condition
CG = control condition
AP = affectively primed condition
PP = perspective-taking primed condition



UP = unprimed empathy condition
PP = perspective-taking primed condition



CG = control condition
AP = affectively primed condition
PP = perspective-taking primed condition

Appendix 1 – The Treatments

Subjects were either assigned to read the Empathic immigration article or the Control article. Both articles were taken from the New York Times 2007. In this study, the unprimed empathy condition and perspective-taking primed groups received the empathy immigration article while the Control group (control condition) received the wine article.

Empathy Immigration Article Excerpt:

> *Federal immigration agents were searching a house in Ohio last month when they found a young Honduran woman nursing her baby. The woman, Saida Umanzor, is an illegal immigrant and was taken to jail to await deportation. Her 9-month-old daughter, Brittney Bejarano, who was born in the United States and is a citizen, was put in the care of social workers. The decision to separate a mother from her breast-feeding child drew strong denunciations from Hispanic and women's health groups. Last week, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency rushed to issue new guidelines on the detention of nursing mothers, allowing them to be released unless they pose a national security risk.*

Control Wine Article Excerpt:

> *Can you have your cake and eat it? Is there a free lunch after all, red wine included? Researchers at the Harvard Medical School and the National Institute on Aging report that a natural substance found in red wine, known as resveratrol, offsets the bad effects of a high-calorie diet in mice and significantly extends their lifespan. Their report, published electronically yesterday in Nature, implies that very large daily doses of resveratrol could offset the unhealthy, high-calorie diet thought to underlie the rising toll of obesity in the United States and elsewhere, if people respond to the drug as mice do.*

Appendix 2 – The Manipulations

Of those participants randomly assigned to the empathic article stimulus, each received 1 of 2 manipulations. These manipulations came by way of differing instructions sets.

Objective-Detached Instruction Set (control condition and unprimed empathy condition condition):

This part of the survey involves reading a news article. Try not to get caught up in how the subject of the news article feels. Just remain as objective and detached as possible. Please be sure to keep these instructions in mind when you read the article.

Combined Empathy Instruction Set (Perspective-taking primed condition):

This part of the survey involves reading a news article. Specifically, free yourself to empathize with the woman in the article. Try to feel the full emotional impact of what this woman has been through. Additionally, please put yourself in her position. Try to imagine what she is going through and how it has affected her life as if it was your own.

Appendix 3A - Regressing Permissive Policy Factor on Each Empathy Treatment Dummy With & Without Balance Checks

Variable	Persp-Taking Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Persp-Taking Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Balanced Coef (SE)
Empathy Treatment	.770***	.707***	.258	.252	.267	.321
	(.213)	(.213)	(.154)	(.225)	(.222)	(.220)
US Born		-.172		-.624		-.366
		(.391)		(.406)		(.393)
Democrat		.741***		.333		.749***
		(.211)		(.222)		(.220)
Liberal		omitted		omitted		omitted
		omitted		omitted		omitted
Married		.269		-.134		.247
		(.220)		(.235)		(.228)
Median Inc or Higher		-.024		.153		-.141
		(.225)		(.516)		(.230)
Constant	-0.330*	-.630	-.330*	.092	-.330*	-.404
	(.151)	(.422)	(.154)	(.437)	(.155)	(.426)
N	215	215	210	210	210	210

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Control condition serves as the reference group

Appendix 3B - Regressing Pathway Policy Support on Each Empathy Treatment Dummy With & Without Balance Checks

Variable	Persp-Taking Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Persp-Taking Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Balanced Coef (SE)
Empathy Treatment	1.007***	.991***	.262	.293	.222	.308
	(.281)	(.296)	(.282)	(.292)	(.282)	(.295)
US Born		.326		-.304		-.135
		(.545)		(.520)		(.514)
Democrat		.880**		.431		.766**
		(.294)		(.287)		(.291)
Liberal		omitted		omitted		omitted
		omitted		omitted		omitted
Married		.657*		.156		.508
		(.312)		(.305)		(.291)
Median Inc or Higher		-.138		.177		-.102
		(.312)		(.303)		(.307)
Constant	-.516**	-1.513*	-.516**	-.594	-.516**	-.981
	(.200)	(.603)	(.200)	(.564)	(.200)	(.566)
N	215	215	210	210	210	210

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Control condition serves as the reference group

Appendix 3C - Regressing DREAM Act Support on Each Empathy Treatment Dummy With & Without Balance Checks

Variable	Persp-Taking Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Persp-Taking Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Balanced Coef (SE)
Empathy Treatment	.517	.475	.240	.279	.160	.215
	(.279)	(.294)	(.278)	(.288)	(.278)	(.287)
US Born		.062		-.138		.059
		(.541)		(.526)		(.512)
Democrat		.878**		.303		.412
		(.293)		(.285)		(.286)
Liberal		omitted		omitted		omitted
		omitted		omitted		omitted
Married		.554		.224		.490
		(.307)		(.302)		(.296)
Median Inc or Higher		.179		.340		.225
		(.312)		(.303)		(.299)
Constant	.094	-.695	.094	-.164	.094	-.482
	(.194)	(.584)	(.194)	(.564)	(.194)	(.557)
N	215	215	210	210	210	210

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Control condition serves as the reference group

Appendix 3D - Regressing Temp Worker Program Support on Each Empathy Treatment Dummy With & Without Balance Checks

Variable	Persp-Taking Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Persp-Taking Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Balanced Coef (SE)
Empathy Treatment	.834**	.795**	.231	.218	.231	.312
	(.283)	(.292)	(.277)	(.287)	(.277)	(.286)
US Born		.159		-.726		-.242
		(.526)		(.539)		(.505)
Democrat		.593*		-.210		.412
		(.290)		(.284)		(.285)
Liberal		omitted		omitted		omitted
		omitted		omitted		omitted
Married		.343		-.416		.334
		(.305)		(.301)		(.296)
Median Inc or Higher		-.172		.229		-.447
		(.310)		(.301)		(.299)
Constant	-.056	-.568	-.056	.811	-.056	-.022
	(.193)	(.570)	(.193)	(.578)	(.193)	(.548)
N	215	215	210	210	210	210

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Control condition serves as the reference group

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Chapter 4: Rallying the Predisposed:

Trait Empathy, Empathy, and Immigration Preferences

In the next two chapters, I draw upon other literatures in sociology and psychology to argue that the persuasive effect of exposure to empathetic primes and content should be moderated by individual differences including trait empathy and social contact. In this chapter, I examine the personality trait of dispositional empathy (Davis 1983) and the following research questions: First, how does trait empathy moderate the shifts in immigration support cause by the empathetic stimulus? And second, if trait empathy does in fact play a moderating role, why does this occur? I hypothesize that individuals higher in trait empathy should experience larger permissive shifts in their immigration preferences than those lower in trait empathy. In short, drawing on previous findings on trait empathy, I derive expectations for how trait empathy moderates the relationship between empathetic frames and support for permissive immigration policies. Addressing my second research question, I argue that trait empathy plays a heightening role primarily because it intensifies the empathetic experience.

To evaluate this argument, I use data from the online experiment used in the previous chapter. I analyze this experimental data by comparing the effects of perspective-taking empathy (perspective-taking primed condition) to a control

condition.[55] Overall, I find evidence that largely supports my expectations. In short, I find that trait empathy heightens the permissive effects of the empathetic stimulus on immigration policy preferences.

The chapter will proceed as follows. First, I review previous work on empathy and its effects on opinion change. Using previous theories of emotion, I explain how perspective-taking empathy and trait empathy together shape our immigration policy preferences. I then present the procedures, measures, and findings in succession. I end with a discussion of some research and policy implications.

Trait Empathy, State Empathy & Preference Change

Building on findings from previous research and those from Chapter 3 that empathy can induce permissive movement in immigration preferences, in this chapter, I now explore the role of trait empathy or empathic capacity in the process of preference formation. In short, previous research finds that not only does trait (dispositional empathy) condition an individual's empathic response to the empathetic stimulus, but it can also thereby affect the persuasiveness of messages.

[55] In this chapter, I choose to focus on the differences between the perspective-taking primed condition and the true control because this demonstrates empathy's greatest potential to shapes our policy preferences. And while evidence from chapter 2's content analysis finds that the media may not employ this type of empathetic stimulus frequently, the dual use of an empathetic prime and content can and does appear quite often in a number of other relevant situations (i.e. conflict resolution sessions, speeches, classroom lectures). Despite this purpose, I provide the expanded findings in Appendices 4A-4D examining the differences in effects for the affectively primed and the unprimed condition as well. Here, I find that while each of these other empathy conditions appears to induce permissive movement in preferences, these differences are smaller and less statistically significant than those of the perspective-taking primed group.

Mark Davis (1983) is credited with identifying and measuring the concept of trait empathy. His argument was simple—that some individuals are more predisposed to empathize than others. To test his argument, Davis (1983) developed and validated a measurement scale for trait empathy composed of sub-scales tapping into empathic concern, perspective-taking, personal distress, and fantasizing. In his series of experiments, Davis (1983) found that trait empathy was a significant predictor of reactive empathy (empathic concern). More specifically, he finds that most of this variation is attributed to the empathic concern or affective subscale (Davis 1983). Others who have followed Davis' (1983) lead also find an important link between trait empathy and reactive empathy (Shen 2010, Stiff et.al 1988).

Moreover, while numerous studies look into trait empathy's effect on pro-social, helping behavior (Davis 1983, Archer et.al 1981, Eisenberg & Miller 1987, Davis et.al 1999, Batson et.al 1988, 1989, McNeely & Meglino 1994, Stiff et.al 1988) and relevance to more practical health/hospice related tasks (Bylund & Makoul 2005, Egbert & Parrot 2003, Williams 1990, Shen 2010), researchers have yet to extend this line of research to its significance as a moderator of policy preference change.

However, given my argument and findings that empathetic intensity is positively related to permissive movement in immigration preferences, we could imply that individuals higher in trait empathy should be more permissively affected than those lower in trait empathy (refer to Chapter 3). In short, because "high trait empathizers" are more likely to experience more intense empathetic episodes when subjected to an

empathetic stimulus (i.e. news story about undocumented immigrants in this case), they should incorporate more affective and cognitive empathetic considerations and be more likely to engage in biased, pro-immigrant information processing to maintain the existing empathetic affect. Both of these effects should result in increases in support for immigration policies seen to benefit the empathy target (undocumented immigrants).

Hypotheses & Predictions

Summarizing, regarding the relationship between trait empathy, situational state empathy, and immigration policy preferences, I present my hypotheses and predictions. First, if it is the case that empathy's permissive effects on immigration preferences are moderated by trait empathy, then we should expect "high trait empathizers" who experience empathy (perspective-taking primed condition) to report higher levels of support for these policies than "low trait empathizers" in the same condition (perspective-taking primed condition).

H1: Trait empathy will heighten empathy's increase in support for permissive immigration policies.

Second, to the question of why this permissive change occurs, I argue that trait empathy heightens empathy's persuasive effects because "high trait empathizers" should experience more intense episodes of empathy (empathic concern) for the undocumented increasing the likelihood of permissive changes. If true, we should

expect “high trait empathizers” experiencing empathy to exhibit not only much higher levels of support than “low trait empathizers” in the empathy condition (H1), but also higher levels of empathic concern. This would provide some support for the contention that larger increases in empathic concern are driving the permissive movement among “high trait empathizers”. Thus:

H2: Of those participants who are subjected to the empathy manipulation, those high in trait empathy will report higher levels of empathic concern than those low in trait empathy.

However, there is another way to test my claim that increased reliance on empathetic affective considerations is driving the permissive movement in participant’s immigration preferences. This would be to compare the significance of empathic concern in predicting immigration preferences among “high trait empathizers” in the control condition and the perspective-taking primed condition. I expect that empathic concern as a predictor of immigration preferences among “high trait empathizers” would be significant in the perspective-taking primed condition and not significant in the control condition. Thus:

H3: High trait empathizers will rely more on empathetic affective considerations in constructing their immigration preferences in the perspective taking condition than in the control condition.

Data and Methods

To test these expectations, I use the same experimental data gathered through Mechanical Turk participants from the previous chapter. Regression and difference in means analyses were employed to evaluate hypotheses.

Measures

Measuring Immigration Policy Preferences

Immigration policy preferences were measured by the same permissive policy factor and dichotomous individual policy support measures used in the previous chapter. Results using both sets of measures are presented to show the overall relationship of empathy with permissive policy preferences and some of the subtle variation by policy indicated by the data.

Measuring Trait Empathy

Trait (dispositional) empathy was measured using a pre-validated, twelve item sub-set of Davis' (1983) Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) composed of three questions for each of the four sub-scales (fantasy, perspective taking, empathic concern, personal distress) (see Appendix 2 for instructions and list of items). Items selected were those which had the highest factor loadings reported by Davis (1983). The twelve scores were then added together to compose an overall dispositional empathy scale (Cronbach's Alpha = .76, inter-item covariance = .224). Higher scores indicate higher trait empathy or

a greater likelihood to empathize in general. A second dichotomous measure for trait empathy (0=low trait empathizer, 1=high trait empathizer) was created to evaluate hypotheses referring to high and low trait empathizers (H3). The cut point was set at the median score (median=38, high=56, low=12, range=44). Thus, "high trait empathizers" included participants scoring 38 and higher and "low trait empathizers" consisted of those scoring below 38 on this additive trait empathy scale.

Measuring Situational State Empathy

Situational state emotions, including reactive empathy, were again measured using a battery of 16 different emotions. As was the case in the previous chapter, empathy is measured as a factor composed of various related emotions.

Results

Trait Empathy as a Moderator of Permissive Change in Immigration Preferences

First, we turn to the results examining trait empathy as a moderator of differences in immigration policy preferences. To assess this relationship, the empathy treatment dummy was interacted with the dichotomous measure of trait empathy (high trait empathizers). This interaction, the treatment dummy (perspective-taking primed condition), and the high empathizer dummy were regressed over the permissive policy

factor[56]. Results indicated a significant high trait empathizer-empathy treatment interaction (p=.016). Next, the empathy treatment's effect (perspective-taking primed condition) at different levels of trait empathy (0,1) was estimated using secondary tests. These tests revealed that the effect produced by the perspective-taking primed condition treatment was positive (□=+1.14) and significant (p=.000) only for high trait empathizers (refer to table 2 for regression results). Substantively, this equates to about a seventeen percentage point increase in support for "high trait empathizers" compared to the main effect from the model not including the empathy-contact interaction which registers only an eight point increase.

This finding remained consistent even when examining empathy's effect on each of the individual permissive immigration policies composing the policy factor. For this analysis, the responses to each policy (DREAM Act, pathway to citizenship, temporary worker program) were recoded to construct three dichotomous variables coded as: support=1 {strongly support, somewhat support}; do not support=0 {strongly oppose, somewhat oppose, neither support nor oppose}. We now turn to Logit results modeling each policy dummy with the treatment dummy, trait empathy, and their interaction. In short, results indicate that trait empathy (high trait empathizers)

[56] Results for affectively primed and unprimed empathy condition appear in Appendices 4A-4D. Similar to the results from chapter 3, I find that there appears to be more permissive movement among high trait empathizers than non-high trait empathizers in both the unprimed and affectively primed conditions. However, these differences fall short of statistical significance.

moderates the relationship between empathy and permissive immigration policy support (see table 2 for Logit results).

For the pathway policy, the interaction between the perspective-taking primed condition treatment and trait empathy (p=.08) was marginally significant. However, further tests demonstrated that while the effect of the empathy stimulus was not statistically different among "low trait empathizers" (p=.467), it was significantly different (p=.005) and positive (+1.16) among "high trait empathizers." Further tests indicated that the likelihood of "high trait empathizers" to support the pathway policy increased by 26 points moving from the control to the perspective-taking primed condition (see figure 3 for pathway results). Thus, whereas 47% of "high trait empathizers" in the control condition indicated support for the pathway policy, 73% were likely to do so in the perspective-taking primed condition. Not only did this signal a large increase in support for the pathway policy, but it also changed "high trait empathizers" from opposing to supporting this policy. Results were similar for the temporary guest worker program. For example, while "high trait empathizers" in the control condition were only 43% like to support the temporary guest worker program. They were overwhelmingly 82% likely to support it in the perspective-taking condition. The only difference when examining DREAM Act support results is that while those in the perspective-taking group were found to be much more likely to support this policy than those in the control group, the empathetic stimulus in this case was not decisive in that control condition support levels were already over 50%.

Thus, results reveal the somewhat similar relationships for each of the three permissive policies composing the permissive policy factor---trait empathy moderates the relationship between empathy and permissive policy support. Additionally, for two policies it does so in a way that is decisive.[57]

Increase in the Importance of Empathy in Explaining Immigration Preferences

Finally, we turn to presenting the results regarding the importance of empathetic affect in explaining the increases in support for permissive immigration policies among "high trait empathizers" (H2, H3). I show mean levels of reported empathy (empathy factor score) for high and low empathizers in the perspective-taking condition in figure 4. T-tests reveal that while empathy factor scores do not differ significantly (p=.58) between high (mean empathy score = -1.84) and low (mean empathy score = -1.72) trait empathizers in the control condition, large differences appear in the perspective-taking primed empathy condition (p=.001) (see figure 4). Specifically, results show that "high trait empathizers" had a mean empathy factor score of +1.34 as compared to "low trait empathizers'" score of +.10. Substantively, this equates to "high trait empathizers" scoring about a fifth of the empathy factor's range of 6.87 higher than "low empathizers." Put another way, "high trait empathizers" score a little less than one standard deviation (SD=1.87) higher on the empathy factor than "low empathizers."

[57] These findings are robust as results are consistent even when using the unprimed empathy condition as the control and when including balance measures.

Additionally, we can examine how important self-reported empathic affect was in predicting permissive policy support between "high trait empathizers" in the control and empathy conditions (H3). To assess this claim, two models were created. Model 1 regressed the permissive policy factor over the empathy factor (empathic concern) and a host of well-known alternative explanations including partisanship, race, parental nativity, nativity, and immigrant contact for "high trait empathizers" in the *control condition*. Alternatively, Model 2 regressed the permissive policy factor over those same predictors only for "high trait empathizers" in the *empathy condition* (perspective-taking primed condition). In the case of Model 1, results indicated that empathic concern was not related to immigration preferences for high trait empathizers (p=.317). However, for those "high trait empathizers" in the empathy condition, results indicate that empathic concern becomes statistically significant (p=.004) (refer to table 3). Furthermore, results analyzing each of the three component policies were almost identical. In summary, results indicate that empathic affective considerations became much more relevant to the immigration preference calculus for "high trait empathizers" upon exposure to the empathy treatment.

Discussion & Conclusions

In this chapter, I argue that trait or dispositional empathy heightens the positive movement in support of permissive immigration policies caused by the empathetic stimulus because of its primary impact on the intensity of the empathetic experience. I

argue that because of these more intense empathetic episodes, individuals higher in trait empathy acquire more empathetic affective considerations and tend to engage in more biased information processing to maintain the existing affect. Conversely, individuals lower in trait empathy experience less intense empathetic episodes which in comparison, make for the acquisition of fewer empathetic affective considerations and require much less in terms of biased processing to maintain what little empathetic affect is there.

To test this theory, I used the same online experimental data to estimate whether trait empathy was indeed moderating empathy's permissive effects on immigration preferences. Although expected, given previous findings (Davis 1983, 1996), these findings are still somewhat striking and robust.

First, evaluating hypothesis 1 using the permissive policy factor as the dependent variable, I find that for "high trait empathizers," the increase in permissive policy support significantly exceeds that of the main treatment effect. While the empathy treatment accounts for a .77 point boost on the permissive policy factor (13%), for "high trait empathizers", this number is 1.18 factor points (17%). Conversely, I find that "low trait empathizers" do not appear to experience an increase in score on the policy factor.

Further buttressing this finding are the nearly identical results from the individual components policies (i.e. pathway to citizenship, DREAM Act, and the temporary guest worker program). This includes significant trait empathy - empathy

treatment interactions, significant slopes for "high trait empathizers" in the empathy condition, and substantively large and decisive effects on participant preferences for each policy. For the DREAM Act, while "high trait empathizers" in the control condition were only 49% likely to support the DREAM Act, they were 77% likely to do so after receiving the empathy treatment. Similarly, while "high trait empathizers" in the control condition were only 47% likely to support the pathway policy, in the empathy group they were 73% likely to do so. Finally, for the temporary worker program, I find that "high trait empathizers" support rises from only 51% in the control condition to 81% in the empathy group.

Additionally, I attribute this moderating effect to "high trait empathizers'" higher likelihood of experiencing more intense empathetic feelings. I argue this more intense empathy has two primary effects which both increase and favor permissive movement in immigration preferences. First, I argue that higher empathetic intensity for "high trait empathizers" triggers a more biased processing of information to maintain existing empathetic affect (H3). Second, I argue that the more intense empathizing experienced by "high trait empathizers" leads to the acquisition of more empathetic affective considerations which can tilt the balance of policy relevant considerations in favor of permissive immigration policies (H2).

Specifically, I find not only that "high trait empathizers" in the perspective-taking empathy condition report more intense feelings of empathy for undocumented

immigrants compared to those in the control condition (H2), but also that empathy also becomes a much better predictor of immigration preferences for "high trait empathizers" in the empathy group (H3). In fact, self-reported empathy goes from being insignificant in the control to highly significant in the treatment condition. Together, these findings indicate a very prominent role for the new empathic affect introduced by the perspective-taking empathy treatment.

In conclusion, while these findings could still benefit from study, I argue that this dataset provides ample support for my expectations on how trait empathy heightens the permissive effects of the empathy stimulus on immigration policy preferences.

Implications

Overall findings were consistent with my argument that the effects of the empathetic inductions are moderated by trait empathy or empathic tendency. Using this online experimental dataset, I find that permissive movement over a range of immigration policies is much more pronounced for "high trait empathizers". In fact, for the pathway policy and DREAM Act, results indicate that empathy seemed to have the effect of turning "high trait empathizers" who were initially opponents into supporters.

Most importantly, these findings suggest that empathetic messages meant to persuade the public should be directed at "high trait empathizers". According to the data, these high trait empathizers tend to be more Democratic, female, more educated, and they tend to place a high value on religion (see table 4).

While these statistics are just preliminary in nature, they are a starting point in terms of the types of individuals that those interested in using empathy to alter the public's opinions may want to target.

Interestingly, one of the characteristics of those more likely to be high trait empathizers is attaining a higher level of education. This suggests that the process of attaining more education, particularly a college education may assist in the development of empathetic capacity. This may particularly be the case for the more demanding cognitive process of perspective-taking. These assertions are consistent with a number of findings from developmental and political psychology suggesting that educational attainment promotes cognitive-reasoning skills (Bruner et.al 1966, Rosenberg 1988). Perhaps, the collegiate experience by promoting the development of reasoning and thinking skills gives individuals the ability to empathize (perspective-take). These findings may explain why individuals with more education report a greater propensity to empathize in general. However, more must be done to unlock which processes and experiences of a higher education are responsible for this empathetic development.

One of the more interesting findings is the positive relationship that religiosity or religious importance has with trait empathy. In fact, further analyses reveal that the finding still holds even when controlling for race (whites) and partisanship (Republican). However, this finding may not be completely surprising given the fact that a basic tenet

of Christianity and for most religions is the emphasis on compassion and caring for the weakest among us. This suggests that immigration proponents might want to target large religious communities including those of the Catholic Church and the larger evangelical community. This is especially important since these communities are composed of individuals who are unsupportive of permissive immigration policies. To this point, the average permissive policy factor score for whites and Republicans were -0.41 and -0.70, respectively. Compare these means to the sample mean of 0.00.

Table 1 - Sample Composition

Category	Control Condition	Perspective-taking primed Condition	Unprimed empathy Condition
Male	43%	36%	40%
White	76%	75%	80%
Latino $	4%	6%	1%
Black	7%	12%	11%
Other race	13%	7%	8%
Median US Inc and Higher *	39%	38%	44%
Bachelors Degree or More	53%	51%	41%
Married ^	53%	44%	40%
Foreign Born	11%	5%	6%
Both Parents Foreign Born	16%	8%	10%
Both Parents US Born *^	72%	85%	86%
Republican	28%	23%	30%
Democrat *	43%	56%	44%
Conservative	28%	23%	30%
Liberal *	44%	52%	44%
Trait Empathy Score	38	40	40

2-tailed tests of significance

** Differences significant between perspective-taking primed & control condition at the .05 level*

^ Differences significant between unprimed empathy-control condition at the .05 level

$ Differences significant between perspective-taking primed-unprimed empathy at the .05 level

Table 2 - Regressing Permissive Policies over Perspective-Taking Empathy Treatment, Trait Empathy & Their Interaction

	Permissive Policy Factor		Pathway Policy		DREAM Act		Temporary Worker Program	
	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)
PP Empathy Treatment	-.649*	-.535	-.731	-.659	-.560	-.492	-.606	-.521
	(.281)	(.282)	(.453)	(.466)	(.406)	(.424)	(.411)	(.425)
High Trait Empathizers	-.554	-.657	-1.344	-1.378	.208	.112	-.916	-1.025
	(.554)	(.553)	(1.099)	(1.114)	(.790)	(.812)	(.860)	(.883)
PP-HTE Interaction	2.572***	2.489***	3.893**	3.744**	1.482	1.494	3.165***	3.131**
	(.142)	(.631)	(1.207)		(.907)	(.944)	(.984)	(1.018)
Ideology		-.208***		-.183*		-.209*		-.182*
		(.056)		(.092)		(.087)		(.089)
Latino		.356		.403		.606		.201
		(.490)		(.780)		(.793)		(.771)
Foreign Born		-.169		-.505		-.411		-.500
		(.461)		(.757)		(.718)		(.716)
Parents Foreign Born		.648		-.062		.495		.343
		(.377)		(.615)		(.585)		(.584)
constant	-.294*	-.464**	-.447*	-.488*	.080	-.045	1.32e-16	-.083
	(.142)	(.152)	(.205)	(.228)	(.200)	(.223)	(.200)	(.222)
N	215	203	215	203	215	203	215	203

**** pvalue < .001; **pvalue < .01; * pvalue <.05*

Table 3 - Explaining Permissive Policy Support by Condition

	Model 1 (Control condition) β (SE)	**Model 2 (Perspective-taking primed condition)** β (SE)
Empathy Score	-.042	.521***
	(.158)	(.059)
Immigrant Contact	.617	-.715**
	(.380)	(.235)
Partisanship	.078	-.192**
	(.124)	(.073)
Ideology	-.276*	-.021
	(.142)	(.077)
Latino	.213	.039
	(.889)	(.528)
Foreign Born	.442	-.828
	(.928)	(.529)
Parents Foreign Born	.625	.421
	(.672)	(.480)
constant	-1.146	.876**
	(.619)	(.303)
N	90	94

*** p-value < .001
**p-value < .01
* p-value <.05

Table 4 - Explaining Permissive Immigration Policy Support Among High Trait Empathizers

	β (SE)
Partisanship	-158**
	(.081)
Ideology	-.156
	(.094)
White	.429
	(.298)
Latino	-.480
	(.669)
Income	.024
	(.021)
Education	-.174**
	(.080)
Religious Importance	.287***
	(.081)
Female	.409
	(.227)
constant	-.262
	(.560)
N	371

*** p-value < .001
**p-value < .01
* p-value <.05

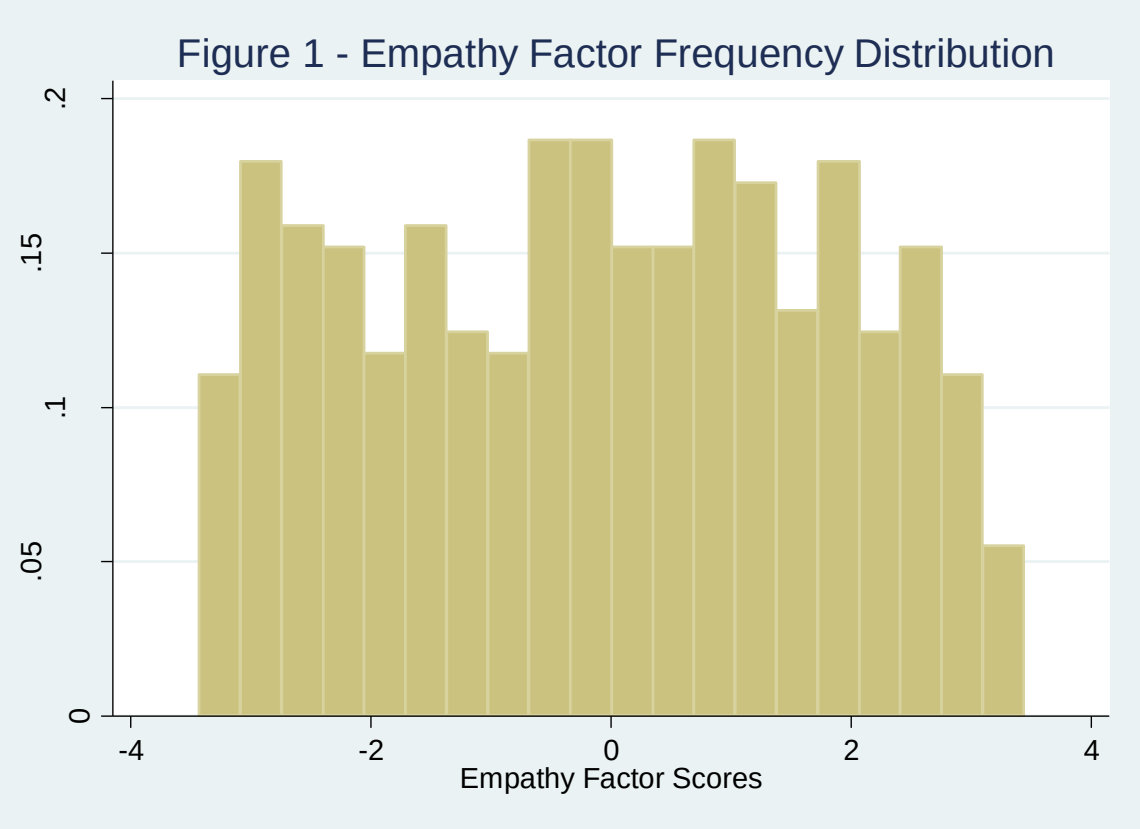

Figure 1 - Empathy Factor Frequency Distribution
0
.05
.1
.15
.2
-4
-2
0
2
4
Empathy Factor Scores

Figure 2 - Empathy Factor Distribution by Condition

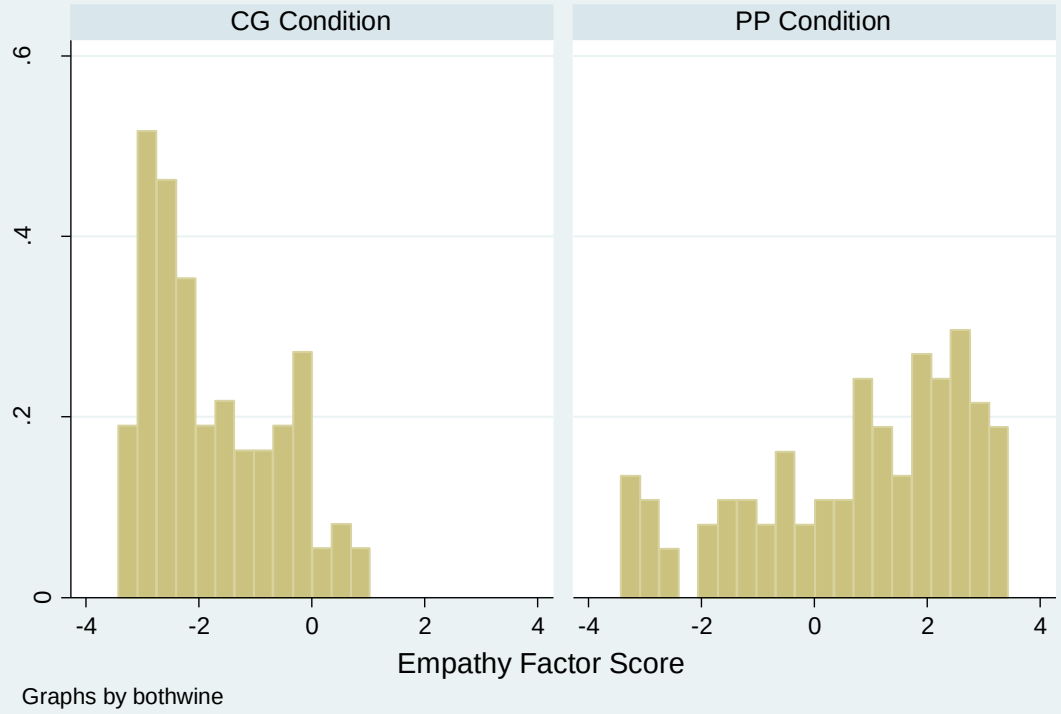
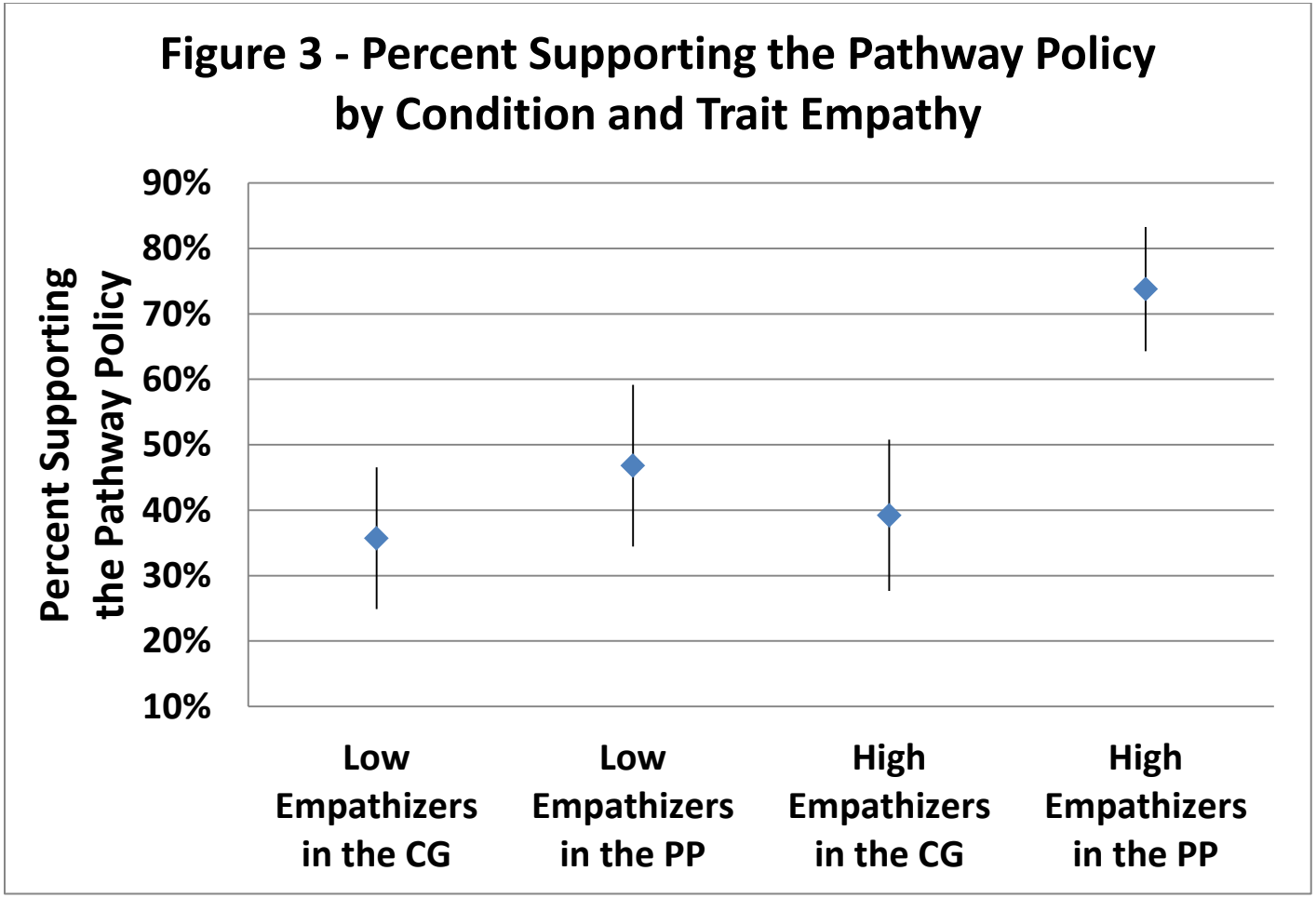
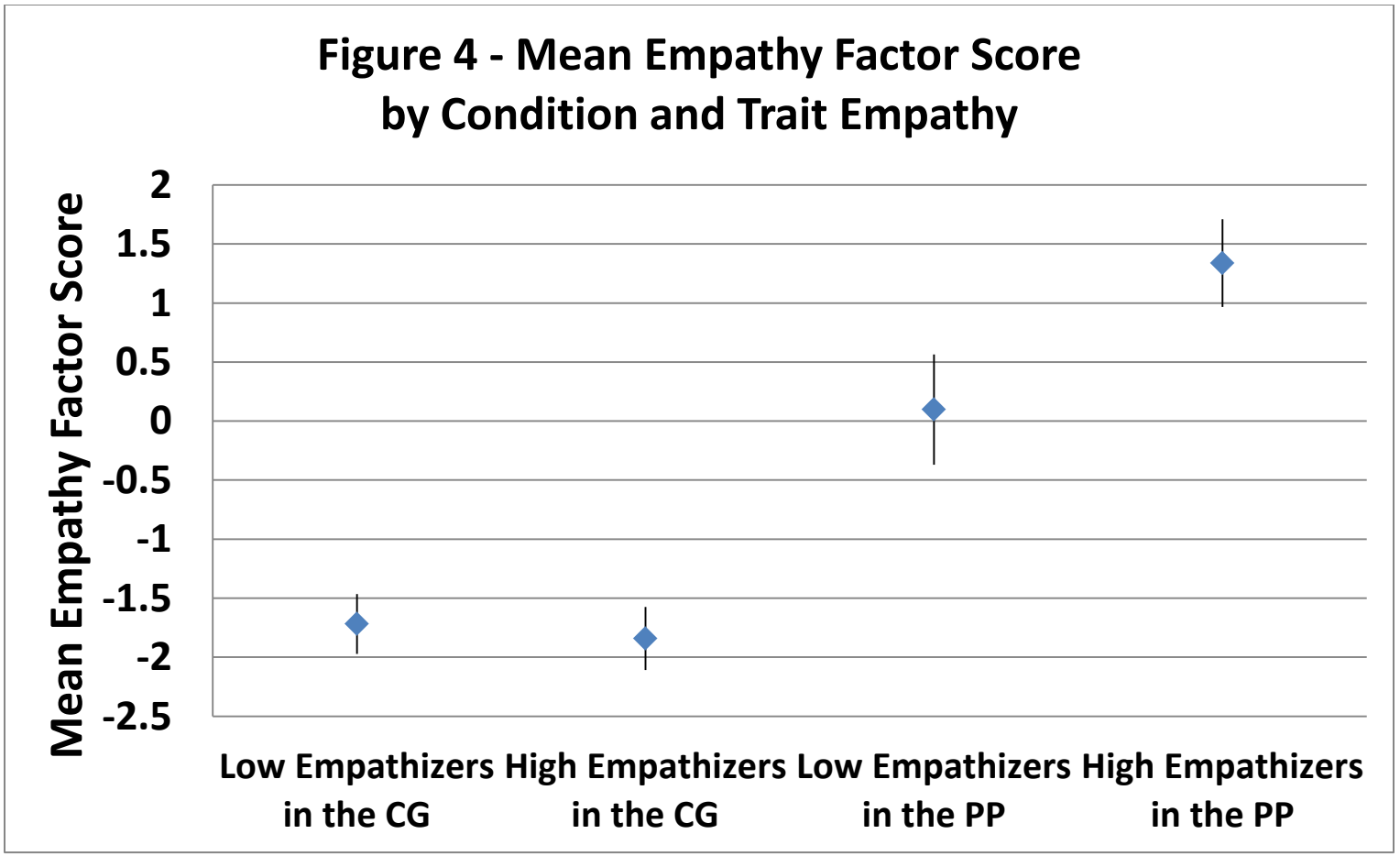


Figure 3 - Percent Supporting the Pathway Policy by Condition and Trait Empathy



CG = Control condition
PP = Perspective-taking primed condition



CG = Control condition
PP = Perspective-taking primed condition

Appendix 3 – Trait Empathy (Davis 1994)

The following statements deal with different traits and characteristics that can be used to describe you. How well do the following statements describe YOU? On a 5 point scale, where (1) means that the statement does not describe you well... to (5) means that the statement describes you very well, please indicate which of the 5 choices most accurately describe you.

Item	Statement
EC1	I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me.
EC2	I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person.
EC3	When I see someone who badly needs help in an emergency, I go to pieces.
PT1	I sometimes find it difficult to see things from "the other guy's" point of view.
PT2	I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.
PT3	I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both.
PD1	Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal.
PD2	I am usually pretty effective in dealing with emergencies.
PD3	I tend to lose control during emergencies.
FAN1	After seeing a play or movie, I have felt as though I were one of the characters.
FAN2	When I watch a good movie, I can very easily put myself in the place of a leading character.
FAN3	When I am reading an interesting story or novel, I imagine how I would feel if the events in the story were happening to me.

Appendix 4A - Regressing Permissive Policy Factor on Each Empathy Treatment, High Trait Empathizers & Their Interaction With & Without Balance Checks

Variable	Persp-Taking Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Persp-Taking Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Balanced Coef (SE)
Empathy Treatment	-.649*	-.653*	-.496	-.517	-.663*	-.484
	(.281)	(.280)	(.280)	(.284)	(.290)	(.299)
High Trait Empathizers	-.554	-.340	-.554	-.374	-.554	-.439
	(.554)	(.551)	(.601)	(.607)	(.600)	(.603)
ET*HTE Interaction	2.572***	2.317***	1.786**	1.644*	1.992**	1.658*
	(.626)	(.620)	(.675)	(.678)	(.677)	(.684)
US Born		-.343		-.690		-.419
		(.358)		(.393)		(.382)
Democrat		.591**		.315		.523*
		(.194)		(.214)		(.221)
Liberal		omitted		omitted		omitted
		omitted		omitted		omitted
Married		.090		-.188		.144
		(.202)		(.227)		(.222)
Median Inc or Higher		.169		.166		-.054
		(.210)		(.229)		(.227)
Constant	-.294*	-.371	-.294	-.207	-.294	-.210
	(.142)	(.387)	(.154)	(.423)	(.154)	(.417)
N	215	215	210	210	210	210

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Control condition serves as the reference group

Appendix 4B - Regressing Pathway Policy Support on Each Empathy Treatment, High Trait Empathizers & Their Interaction With & Without Balance Checks

Variable	Persp-Taking Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Persp-Taking Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Balanced Coef (SE)
Empathy Treatment	-.731	-.680	-.747	-.727	.617	-.368
	(.453)	(.467)	(.415)	(.425)	(.420)	(.438)
High Trait Empathizers	-1.344	-1.174	-1.344	-1.154	-1.344	-1.221
	(1.099)	(1.117)	(1.099)	(1.112)	(1.099)	(1.112)
ET*HTE Interaction	3.893***	3.643**	2.875*	2.710*	2.534*	2.144
	(1.207)	(1.219)	(1.186)	(1.196)	(1.186)	(1.203)
US Born		.172		-.368		-.151
		(.573)		(.535)		(.519)
Democrat		.795*		.428		.602*
		(.317)		(.298)		(.303)
Liberal		omitted		omitted		omitted
		omitted		omitted		omitted
Married		.505		.096		.439
		(.337)		(.316)		(.309)
Median Inc or Higher		.045		.171		-.078
		(.342)		(.317)		(.315)
Constant	-.447*	-1.265*	-.447*	-.444	-.447*	-.799
	(.205)	(.630)	(.205)	(.579)	(.205)	(.572)
N	215	215	210	210	210	210

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Control condition serves as the reference group

Appendix 4C - Regressing DREAM Act Support on Each Empathy Treatment, High Trait Empathizers & Their Interaction With & Without Balance Checks

Variable	Persp-Taking Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Persp-Taking Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Balanced Coef (SE)
Empathy Treatment	-.560	-.560	-.808*	-.777*	-.443	-.324
	(.406)	(.423)	(.382)	(.393)	(.382)	(.402)
High Trait Empathizers	.208	.565	.208	.500	.208	.436
	(.790)	(.813)	(.790)	(.805)	(.790)	(.805)
ET*HTE Interaction	1.482	1.120	1.710*	1.466	.802	.479
	(.908)	(.925)	(.907)	(.916)	(.894)	(.914)
US Born		-.134		-.304		-.006
		(.560)		(.552)		(.518)
Democrat		.817**		.315		.261
		(.304)		(.300)		(.299)
Liberal		omitted		omitted		omitted
		omitted		omitted		omitted
Married		.439		.153		.421
		(.319)		(.317)		(.301)
Median Inc or Higher		.402		.461		.335
		(.331)		(.324)		(.309)
Constant	.080	-.559	.080	-.063	.080	-.395
	(.200)	(.601)	(.200)	(.588)	(.200)	(.566)
N	215	215	210	210	210	210

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Control condition serves as the reference group

Appendix 4D - Regressing Worker Program Support on Each Empathy Treatment, High Trait Empathizers & Their Interaction With & Without Balance Checks

Variable	Persp-Taking Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Persp-Taking Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Balanced Coef (SE)
Empathy Treatment	-.606	-.594	-.523	-.597	-.258	-.069
	(.411)	(.420)	(.374)	(.387)	(.380)	(.398)
High Trait Empathizers	-.916	-.832	-.916	-.824	-.916	-1.002
	(.860)	(.876)	(.860)	(.876)	(.860)	(.872)
ET*HTE Interaction	3.165***	3.019**	2.133*	2.136*	1.619	1.511
	(.984)	(.993)	(.956)	(.971)	(.954)	(.973)
US Born		.003		-.794		-.238
		(.543)		(.547)		(.507)
Democrat		.482		-.246		.311
		(.308)		(.292)		(.296)
Liberal		omitted		omitted		omitted
		omitted		omitted		omitted
Married		.179		-.493		.296
		(.324)		(.311)		(.300)
Median Inc or Higher		-.007		.240		-.455
		(.333)		(.313)		(.305)
Constant	1.81e-16	-.308	2.66e-16	.974	-1.11e-16	.104
	.200	(.588)	(.200)	(.588)	(.200)	(.554)
N	215	215	210	210	210	210

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Control condition serves as the reference group

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Chapter 5: Going Beyond Who You Know:

Social Contact, Empathy, and Immigration Opinion

Thus far, the evidence I have presented suggests that empathy can indeed increase public support for permissive immigration policies. However, as the previous debate on comprehensive immigration reform demonstrated and as the current 2013 debate seems to be suggesting in the House, changing public opinion on an issue does not guarantee that a bill will become law. In fact, as in the 2013 "Background Checks for Guns'" debate demonstrated, this does not even guarantee that the issue will receive an up or down vote. More importantly, for a message, frame, or factor to be consequential, it must be able to persuade key constituencies depending on which party controls each congressional chamber and the presidency. Currently, while immigration-friendly Democrats control the US Senate and the presidency, resistant Republicans are firmly entrenched in the US House. Thus, in terms of the prospects for the 2013 version of comprehensive immigration reform, this means that for empathy to be consequential and substantively important, it would need to be able to persuade core constituencies of the Republican party. These tend to be citizens from the heartland who are on average more conservative, white, male, and rarely if ever come into contact with undocumented immigrants. Permissive movement among any of these groups would

certainly be interpreted as consequential and potentially enough to move a sufficient number of congresspersons to support immigration reform efforts.

To this end, this chapter builds on previous findings from Chapter 3 showing that empathy can positively affect support for permissive immigration policies (i.e. DREAM Act, pathway to citizenship) (Haynes 2011, also see chapter 3). In this chapter, I explore another moderator of change, social contact with undocumented immigrants. Complementing previous work, I hypothesize that permissive effects of the empathetic stimulus will be moderated by lack of social contact with the undocumented. I argue that lack of contact with the undocumented should heighten these permissive effects on immigration preferences because those who do and do not interact with the undocumented differ in terms of their previous empathic experiences for the undocumented, their initial immigration-related preferences, and the nature and strength of these preferences.

To test my expectations, I use data from the primary online M-Turk experiment comparing the effects of combined empathy (perspective-taking prime with empathetic content) to a true control group (CG).[58] Overall, I find strong evidence that supporting my theoretical expectations. First, I find that lack of contact with the undocumented

[58] [58] As stated previously, for these analyses, I choose to focus on the perspective-taking primed empathy and control condition as it showcases the strongest empathic effects on immigration policy preferences. However, other tests examining the effects of the affectively primed and unprimed empathy conditions also indicate permissive movement in preferences. However, these higher levels of support for permissive immigration policies in these other two conditions do not rise to conventional levels of statistical significance. I provide these results in Appendices 4A-4D.

heightens the positive effects of the empathetic stimulus on support for permissive immigration policies. Second, I find that "no contacts'" lack of a ceiling effect and the malleability of their preferences are driving this effect. While not surprising, this suggests that opposition to permissive immigration policies may not be as firmly entrenched as some think.

The chapter will proceed as follows. First, I review previous work on immigration preferences. I then identify social-psychological insights on the implications of empathy for opinion change on immigration. Third, I highlight findings from the social contact literature and explain how it relates to empathy in the context of immigration. Next, using these insights I explain why one might expect individuals who lack social contact with the undocumented to experience larger increases in support for permissive immigration policies after experiencing empathy for the undocumented. I then present the procedures, measures, and relevant findings. I end with a discussion of research and policy implications.

Empathy, Social Contact and Preference Change

Building on the results of the two previous chapters, in this chapter I address another gap in the literature. Specifically, researchers have yet to explore factors which moderate empathy's effect on our attitudes in general, and immigration preferences in particular. Here, my dissertation builds upon empathy's long and distinguished

literature and my previous research on empathic effects by exploring a potential moderator of permissive change in immigration preferences---*social contact*.

The primary notion behind the *social contact thesis* is that increased contact improves attitudes toward the "other." Moreover, the mechanism for such change relies on empathy and understanding to produce positive effects on intergroup attitudes and behavior. In his foundational piece introducing the inter-group contact hypothesis, Allport (1954) argued that positive effects (i.e. reduction of prejudice and increase of positive affect) can occur when there is meaningful interaction between individuals of different groups. Initially, Allport (1954) argued that the positive effects of intergroup contact should occur only in situations satisfying four key conditions: equal group status within the situation; common goals; intergroup cooperation; and the support of authorities, law, or custom.

While Allport's four condition seem sensible and important on the face, each suffers from its share of problems. Allport's first condition necessary for positive intergroup contact effects is for there to be equal group status within the situation. And while this may seem easy to distinguish, many argue that equality can be very difficult to define given that relative and complex nature of "status" (Cagle 1973, Riordan 1978). Just a few factors that can affect status are economic, social, employment, gender, and race. Additionally, even if status appears equal to an outside source, this does not guarantee that perceived equality is such as well.

The second condition stipulates that positive effects are also conditional on all parties sharing the same operative goals. And while both parties can share the same goal, others have pointed out that this does not mean that each party attributes the same amount of importance to this goal.

The third condition states that the attainment of these goals must be independent of intergroup competition. And while some of the most convincing evidence stems from this condition, its limited nature seems to limit the practical effect of intergroup contact.

Finally, the fourth condition specifies that positive intergroup contact effects should be more likely when social norms and political institutions specifically sanction and accept such intergroup contact. Again, because some of the most pressing problems in which social contact could be helpful concern situations where intergroup contact may not be socially acceptable, this condition also limits the applicability of the contact thesis.

However, research since has questioned the necessity and exclusivity of all four conditions (see Pettigrew 1998 for a review). Some find that not all conditions are necessary to produce these positive effects (Riordan 1987, Ford 1986, Jackman & Crane 1986, Pettigrew 1997, Robinson 1980; Sigelman & Welch 1993, Dixon et.al 2007, Cook 1978) while others find that lacking a condition or two may actually produce negative effects (Brooks 1975, Bradburn et.al 1971, Meer & Freedman 1966).

A primary reason why contact research has produced such varied findings since Allport (1954) first came out with his contact hypothesis is that Allport never specified the processes by which these positive effects are produced (Pettigrew 1998). However, future scholars have attempted to do so (see Pettigrew 1998 or Brown & Hewstone 2005 for a review). A number of scholars began to either implicitly or explicitly identify empathy as a primary link between meaningful social contact and positive attitudinal and behavioral changes (Reich & Purbhoo 1975, Batson et.al 1997). They argue that face to face interaction can break down barriers of misunderstanding and mistrust and the meaningful exchanges that result can induce a person to empathize. It is in this context, in the presence of empathic concern and new perspectives where preference change can occur. For example, examining the effects of cross-cultural contact on role-taking and intergroup attitudes, Reich and Purbhoo (1975) find evidence that students in more diverse school settings engage in more cross-cultural role-taking in addition to scoring higher on tolerance measures.

Research also finds that contact may not even need to be face to face to produce these positive effects on attitudes (Cook 1978). In other words, the effects of social contact can be produced even when the nature of the contact is artificial or superimposed (i.e. watching a television news clip or program). For example, using a series of experiments, Cook (1978) finds that being subjected to situational treatments can simulate the effects of face-to-face social contact on attitudes related to that group. Similarly, in their series of experiments, Batson and colleagues (1997) find that exposing

participants to an empathy manipulation and news article treatment simulated many of the same positive attitudinal effects of social contact.

These findings have two primary implications. First, they imply that individuals who lack social contact with the "other" group should be ripe for the positive effects of contact and empathy. Second, Batson's (1997) findings that empathic effects persist even two weeks after the empathy treatment imply that individuals with social contact with the "other" group may experience smaller positive changes in attitudes. For these individual with social contact, empathy may have less of an impact preference change because many of these individuals have already undergone positive preference change from this previous empathic experience(s). These previous positive shifts in support will have already brought these individuals closer to their support ceiling. Thus, due to this "ceiling effect", additional changes may not result. All told, this suggests that we should expect social contact to moderate empathic effects on related policy preferences.

How Social Contact Moderates the Effect of Empathy on Immigration Policy Preferences

Building on previous research showing that increasing situational empathy can improve intergroup attitudes and reduce prejudice (Batson et.al 1997) I now turn to an exploration of how social or immigrant contact can moderate empathic effects on immigration preferences. In terms of the impact of social contact, numerous previous findings suggest that positive empathic effects may be more pronounced among

individuals with less social contact (Pettigrew & Tropp 2008, Batson & Ahmad 2009). Thus, to broaden our understanding of empathic effects in the context of undocumented immigration, I explore the following *research question*: How does lack of immigrant contact moderate empathy's effect on immigration preferences? To this question, I *hypothesize* that the effect of empathy on support for permissive policies will be more pronounced among those with low (compared to high) social contact with the undocumented. Next, I argue that "contacts" and "no contacts" differ in terms of their meaningful interaction with the undocumented which can shape the restrictiveness of their immigration preferences which in turn all affect the likelihood of preference change.

At its core, *meaningful social contact* is the face-to-face interaction between two individuals significant enough to form some type of relationship. Meaning can be created by repeated verbal, physical, or emotional contact sufficient enough to create a lasting bond or memory between individuals. Examples include friendships that develop between co-workers because of repeated conversations or relationships between family members. This should be differentiated from *superficial social contact* which is interaction between two individuals that does not create a lasting relationship or memory. Some examples include seeing a stranger on the street or randomly bumping into a friend of a friend during a social gathering. The key difference is that meaningful contact is repeated and creates a lasting bond while superficial contact is infrequent and fails to forge a lasting bond. The meaningfulness and repetition of the contact is critical

in that it creates the opportunity for both individuals to empathize with and develop a deeper, more personal understanding for each other. According to previous research, both empathy and gaining a deeper understanding between individuals can improve interpersonal and intergroup attitudes (i.e. policy preferences, prejudice) (Batson et.al 1997, Stephan & Finlay 2000). Conversely, those who do not share in this type of meaningful interaction are much less likely to empathize with the "other," resulting in more restrictive preferences.

However, it is important to note that empathy, like many other emotions (i.e. fear, anxiety) is a situational response to an emotional trigger and thus, ebbs and flows depending on situation. Consequently, even if a person has previously empathized with the undocumented sans the empathetic situation, empathy levels for the undocumented should slowly regress back to previous levels. While overall increases in empathy may result, the point is that the immediate spike in empathy stemming from an encounter with an empathetic stimulus should subside.

A number of relevant implications for immigration policy preferences follow. First, it implies that individuals who do come into meaningful contact with the undocumented (contacts) have probably already empathized with, learned more about, and developed an understanding for the undocumented. And while this previous empathizing should not cause an increase in underlying empathy, its influence should appear in the changed immigration preferences left in its wake. In other words,

increased contact should result in prior empathizing with the undocumented and initially, higher levels of support for permissive immigration policies.

While it is probably correct to attribute the absence of additional increases in support from future empathetic experiences to a "ceiling effect" of support, there are additional reasons why we might expect this to be the case. Just as important in terms of inhibiting further permissive movement as the "ceiling effect" imposed on "contacts" is the very nature and strength of these preferences. The same interactions which produce more permissive preferences should also produce preferences that are more crystallized, with a plethora of considerations, and which are more resistant to permissive changes. Because of their personal connection with the undocumented, "contacts" should be more motivated to learn more about, be invested in, and be more interested in the issue of undocumented immigration. This higher level of motivation should push "contacts" to form immigration preferences based on numerous considerations sustained not only by trusting what others say (cues), but on their personal experiences. Thus, persuasive resistance to preference change should also be attributed to the more mature and robust nature of their immigration preferences.

In contrast, individuals who do not come into meaningful contact with the undocumented (here referred to as "no contacts,") are less likely than "contacts" to have previously empathized, learned more about, and developed an understanding for the plight of the undocumented. If state empathy is largely temporary, this implies that

even though “no contacts” have probably not empathized with the undocumented, their underling levels of empathy should not differ significantly from those of “contacts” prior to experiencing an empathy-inducing stimulus.

Additionally, while empathy can be fleeting, this is not the case for the preferences that are affected by its absence or presence. Put simply, “no contacts” immigration preferences should be more restrictive than for “contacts” primarily because they have not been subject to the permissive influence of contact and empathy. Left unaffected by empathy, “no contacts” may derive their immigration preferences from the negative immigration context (media, social circle, party leaders, political elites). If this is the case, due to lack of previous empathizing with the undocumented we might expect “no contacts’” preferences to be more restrictive than “contacts.” In terms of policies such as the pathway to citizenship, all else equal, “no contacts” should be less supportive than “contacts.”

We might expect larger permissive changes in the immigration preferences of “no contacts” not only because they have more room for their support levels to rise, but also because of the more malleable nature of their preferences. In contrast to the preferences of “contacts,” those of “no contacts” should be thinner (composed of fewer cognitive and affective considerations) and less important. Specifically, the lack of personal contact and experience with undocumented immigrants does not provide “no contacts” the chance to form the amount and types of considerations that “contacts”

can[59]. Thus, there is a high likelihood that "no contacts" will not have encountered or learned the various considerations included in a news article on immigration. This is not the case for "contacts" for whom the information from such a news article would probably already be familiar to them. There is good reason to suspect that because of the novelty of this information, "no contacts" would be more likely to experience permissive shifts in their immigration policy preferences. For example, previous research finds that group attitude changes depends largely upon whether the individuals in the group actually know the arguments (considerations) that they are exposed to (Burnstein & Vinokur 1973, Vinokur & Burnstein 1978).

One might also expect "no contacts" may hold weaker attitudes than their "contact" counterparts. In other words, "no contacts" probably view immigration attitudes as less important than "contacts" primarily because the issue and individuals involved are less central to their lives. On this point, previous research finds that attitude importance is strongly related to the probability of attitude change. More specifically, they find that individuals who hold an attitude more important are less likely to be persuaded than others (Krosnick 1988, 1989). Thus, we might expect "no contacts" to be more susceptible to permissive shifts in their preferences.

[59] Affective considerations are the positive, neutral, and negative feelings they have for the undocumented. On the other hand, cognitive considerations are beliefs, stereotypes, and judgments about undocumented immigrants.

In summary, while previous findings may directly imply that empathy should increase support for permissive immigration policies, the role of social contact is not as obvious. Citing previous findings from my research and various literatures, I argue that we should observe larger positive effects on support among "no contacts," because of their initially more restrictive and malleable immigration preferences in comparison to "contacts." Less supportive initial preferences will afford them more room to increase their support, and preferences which are composed of fewer considerations and held as less important will make empathy's permissive effects more persuasive. I now turn to the empirical portion of this chapter.

Hypothesis & Prediction

Summarizing, regarding the relationship between immigration contact, empathy, and immigration policy preferences, I present my hypotheses and predictions. First, if it is the case as I argue that empathy's permissive effects on immigration preferences are moderated by lack of immigrant contact, then we should expect "no contacts" experiencing empathy (perspective-taking primed condition) to report higher levels of support for these policies relative to their counterparts not exposed to empathy.

H1: Lack of contact with undocumented immigrants will heighten empathic concern's increase in support for permissive immigration policies.

Second, I argue that immigrant contact heightens empathy's persuasive effects because "no contacts" have thinner, more malleable immigration preferences which are more susceptible to permissive movement. If true, we should expect "no contacts" experiencing empathy to exhibit much higher levels of support than "no contacts" who do not empathize (H1).

H2: There should be no difference between the immigration attitudes of "no contacts" and "contacts" who are subject to the empathy manipulation.

Third, I argue that immigrant contact heightens empathy's positive effect on permissive policy support because "no contacts" have probably not empathized with immigrants prior to the experiment and thus, in line with previous findings from the empathy and social contact literatures (Pettigrew and Tropp 2006, Batson et.al 1997), "no contacts" should have more negative attitudes relating to undocumented immigrants. If correct, we should find the following: first, that "no contacts" in the CG (initially) have lower support for permissive policies and are less willing to offer assistance of various types to the undocumented.

H3: "No contacts" who are not subjected to the empathy manipulation should report more negative attitudes relating to undocumented immigrants than their counterparts in the perspective-taking condition.

Finally, I argue that the moderating effect partially results from a "ceiling effect" which may artificially constrain "contacts" support from rising. Because "contacts" have presumably already contacted and empathized with the undocumented, we should expect "contacts" to hold initial preferences which are supportive of policies that could benefit undocumented immigrants. Additionally, many of these "contacts" already have a reservoir of considerations on immigration via the media, conversations with family and friends, and most importantly through personal experience with the undocumented. Given this assumption, the effect of a single empathetic episode could be minimized by this sea of existing considerations. Thus, a second expectation relating to the "ceiling effect" is that their immigration attitudes should remain virtually unchanged even after experiencing the empathy stimulus.

H4: Contacts should report strong support for policies benefitting undocumented immigrants.

H5: There should be no difference between the immigration attitudes of "contacts" who are subject to the empathy manipulation and "contacts" who are not.

Data, Measures, and Methods

To evaluate these expectations, I use the same experimental data gathered through Mechanical Turk participants from chapter 3. Regression and difference in means analyses were employed to evaluate hypotheses.

Measuring Immigration Policy Preferences

Immigration policy preferences were measured by the same permissive policy factor and dichotomous individual policy support measures used in last two chapters (see chapter 3).

Measuring Situational State Empathy

Situational state emotions, including reactive empathy, were again measured using a battery of 16 different emotions. As was the case in the previous chapter, empathy is measured as a factor composed of various related emotions.

Measuring Immigrant Contact

Contact with undocumented immigrants was measured using two separate response items. The first item asked participants to report how often (never, rarely, sometimes, often) they come into contact with undocumented/illegal immigrants who speak little or no English? The second indicator asked participants to report "how many undocumented/illegal immigrants do you know that are at least friends or acquaintances or yours?"[60] I recoded the second item into a dichotomous measure where 0=no undocumented friends or acquaintances and 1=one or more undocumented friends or acquaintances (mean=.32, SD=.47).

[60] Results were slightly stronger for the second item perhaps because it was a more specific measure.

Results

Lack of Immigrant Contact as a Moderator of Permissive Change

First, we turn to the results examining lack of immigrant contact as a moderator of permissive changes in immigration policy preferences. To assess this relationship, the empathy treatment dummy was interacted with the dichotomous measure of immigrant contact (perspective-taking primed condition-CG). This interaction, the treatment dummy (perspective-taking primed condition), and the contact dummy were regressed over the permissive policy factor. Regression results are presented in table 2.[61] Results indicated a significant contact-empathy interaction (p=.005). Next, the empathy treatment's effect (perspective-taking primed condition) at different levels of immigrant contact (0,1) was estimated. Subsequent tests revealed that effect produced by the perspective-taking primed condition treatment was positive (=+1.18) and significant (p=.000) only for individuals who have had no contact with the undocumented. Graphical representations of substantive differences between the perspective-taking primed condition and the control condition are presented in figure 1.

Substantively, "no contacts" permissive policy score was about twenty points higher in the perspective-taking primed condition (mean PPS= +.58) than the CG (mean PPS = -.60) (PPS range = 5.90, PPS sd = 1.61). Compare this effect to the main treatment

[61] A full table of results for all three empathy conditions compared to the control condition with and without balance checks can be found in Appendices 4A-4D.

effect in which participants in the perspective-taking primed condition had a permissive policy score that was only eight points higher than those in the control.

This finding remained consistent even when examining empathy's effect on each of the individual permissive immigration policies composing the policy factor. For this analysis, the responses to each policy (DREAM Act, pathway to citizenship, temporary worker program) were recoded to construct three dichotomous variables coded as: support=1 {strongly support, somewhat support}; do not support=0 {strongly oppose, somewhat oppose, neither support nor oppose}. We now turn to Logit results modeling each policy dummy with the treatment dummy, immigrant contact, and their interaction.

For the pathway policy, the main interaction coefficient between the perspective-taking primed condition treatment and contact was statistically significant (p=.001). Additional tests demonstrated that while the empathic effect was not statistically different among "contacts" (p=.467), it was significantly different (p=.000) and positive (□=+1.70) among "no contacts." Substantively, whereas 69% of "no contacts" in the perspective-taking condition were likely to support the pathway policy, this statistic was only 31% for "no contacts" in the control condition. This is a difference of 38 percentage points (see figure 2 for pathway results). Not only did this signal a large permissive empathic shift, but it also changed "no contacts" from a group in opposition to one that is supportive of the pathway policy. Results were nearly identical

for the DREAM Act and the temporary guest worker program (see figures 3 and 4 for DREAM Act and temp worker program results).

Thus, results reveal the similar relationships for each of the three permissive policies composing the permissive policy factor---lack of immigrant contact moderates the relationship between empathy and permissive policy support and it does so in a way that is decisive. In fact, in all three policy cases, I find that the percentage of "no contacts" supporting each policy is significantly higher than that for "contacts." [62]

Malleability of "No Contacts'" Preferences

First, if "no contacts" preferences are more malleable, the expectation is that immigrant contact should moderate empathy's effect on immigration preferences. Referring back to previous results, contact does indeed seem to moderate empathy's permissive effect on immigration preferences. Specifically, mean policy factor scores were 1.17 points higher for "no contacts" in the perspective-taking primed as compared to the control condition (p=.00). Conversely, for "contacts" differences were indistinguishable from zero (p=.79).

Second, malleability would also suggest that not only would contact moderate this relationship, but that "no contacts" preferences in the perspective-taking primed condition should be comparable to or higher than that of "contacts" in the perspective-

[62] These findings are robust as results are consistent even when using the UP group as the control and when including balance measures into the regression models.

taking primed condition. To evaluate this expectation, a t-test comparing the mean permissive policy scores among "no contacts" and "contacts" in the perspective-taking primed condition were performed. Results indicated that for those in the perspective-taking primed condition, mean support for "no contacts" (mean factor score=.58) was significantly higher (p=.05) than that for "contacts" (mean factor score= -.03). This finding is consistent across all three policies which compose the policy factor (see Figure 5).[63] 74% of "no contacts" were likely to support the DREAM Act compared to just 44% of "contacts" (p=.01). Additionally, "no contacts" register pathway policy support levels 22 percentage points higher than contacts (p=.03). While for the temporary worker program, this number is only slightly lower at 18 points (p=.056). Thus, not only does the data indicate that "no contacts" were less moored to their initial preferences, but that their support rose to levels even higher than "contacts" who we would expect to have already empathized with the undocumented.[64]

Floor Effect for "No Contacts"

Next, I present results regarding H3 which offers the following expectations first, that "no contacts" in the CG (initially) have lower support for permissive policies; and second, that "no contacts" are less willing to offer assistance of various types to the undocumented. The following results analyze immigration preferences by contact from

[63] It should be noted that only for the DREAM Act did confidence intervals not overlap.
[64] A much better test of this argument would be to ask participants to offer reasons for their opinions or to state their thoughts on immigration as an issue. This could directly assess my argument. Unfortunately, I did not include this as a measure in this study and must go with the related measures that I do have. However, I will include these additional measures in future iterations of this experiment.

the CG sample only. First, mean support for the permissive policy factor is significantly lower ($p<.05$) for "no contacts" (mean= -0.60) than for "contacts" (mean=0.06). Even examining this factor's three policy components, the overall thrust remains the same. In each case, "no contacts'" mean support for the DREAM Act, pathway policy, and temporary worker program is lower in the CG.[65]

Additionally, another proxy for attitudes toward undocumented immigrants is participants' willingness to provide economic, emotional, and political assistance to undocumented/illegal immigrants.[66] In this case, findings remain consistent with the prior set of results. In this case, mean willingness to provide economic ($p=.02$), emotional ($p=.00$), and political ($p=.02$) assistance to the undocumented is lower among "no contacts" (means=0.68, 1.22, 0.82 respectively) than for "contacts" (means=1.24, 2.03, 1.41 respectively). To recap, similar to previous findings on the policy factor and the individual policies, "no contacts'" initial preferences are more restrictive than "contacts."

Ceiling Effect for "Contacts'"

[65] While the mean difference is not conventionally significant for the DREAM Act, "no contact" (mean=0.50) support for it still appears lower than that for "contacts" (mean support=.056). DREAM Act support here is a 0-1 measure where 0=not supportive and 1=supportive. Similar means for the pathway and temporary worker program support are as follows: "no contact" (pathway support=0.29) (TWP support=0.44); "contact support" (pathway support=0.56) (TWP support=0.59).

[66] Willingness to provide (economic OR emotional OR political) assistance to undocumented/illegal immigrants is a 5-point measure placed in the post-test where 0=not at all willing to 4=extremely willing. Willingness to provide economic assistance had a mean=1.05 and standard deviation=1.20. Willingness to provide emotional assistance had a mean=1.83 and standard deviation=1.40. Willingness to provide political assistance had a mean=1.35 and standard deviation=1.38.

Finally, we turn to results regarding the potential ceiling effect for "contacts". The expectation is that there should be little difference in "contacts'" immigration preferences regardless of condition. Using data only from the CG, results indicate that mean attitudes for the policy factor, individual policies, and willingness to provide assistance are only slightly above each indicator's midpoints in terms of policy support. For the policy factor, the mean is .39 with range -3.39 to 2.50. The DREAM Act, pathway policy, and temporary worker program, which were all measured on a (0,1) basis had the following means respectively: .65, .62, .68. Economic, emotional, and political assistance measures which were all measured on a 0-4 scale had the following means respectively: 1.24, 2.29, 1.69.

Second, using the economic, emotional, and political assistance measures, results suggest no significant differences (p_{econ}= .26, p_{emo}=.15, p_{pol}=.07) between "contacts" in the CG and the perspective-taking primed condition. Finally, I refer back to table 2 and figure 1 which present difference of means test results comparing "contacts'" immigration preferences in the empathy (perspective-taking primed condition) and control (CG) conditions. What is clear from the figures is that there is not a ceiling effect. Rather, it is likely that high contact folks are resistant to the prime. In a sense, they are already pre-treated to empathize.

Discussion & Conclusions

In this chapter, I argue that lack of immigrant contact heightens the positive effects of the empathetic stimulus on permissive immigration policy support primarily because of this group holds thinner, more malleable immigration preferences which are more susceptible to empathy's permissive effects. Additionally, while "contacts" have presumably already empathized with the undocumented resulting in higher initial support and more mature, crystallized preferences, "no contacts" have not. Thus, empathy should have its greatest permissive effects for "no contacts."

To test this theory, I ran an online experiment to compare the effects of situational empathy for the undocumented with a control group. The results are both striking and robust. First, examining immigration policy support as a combined factor and consistent with hypothesis 1, I find that only for "no contacts" does the increase in support significantly exceed that of the main effect. While the overall group exposed to the empathy treatment (perspective-taking primed condition) exhibits a level of support approximately .77 factor points or thirteen percentage points larger than the control group (CG), for "no contacts" in the perspective-taking primed condition, this number is 1.18 factor points or about twenty points higher.

Second, separating the policy factor into its component parts, I find that results for the DREAM Act, pathway to citizenship, and temporary guest worker program are almost identical to those of the policy factor. This includes a significant

contact/empathy interaction, a significant coefficient for "no contacts," and substantively large and decisive effects on participant preferences for each policy. For the DREAM Act, while "no contacts" in the control group are only 26% likely to support the DREAM Act, they are 74% likely to do so after receiving the empathy treatment. Similarly, while "no contacts" in the control group are only 31% likely to support the pathway policy, in the empathy group they are 69% likely to do so. Finally, for the temporary worker program, I find that "no contact" support rises from only 26% in the control group to 74% in the empathy group. Most striking is the finding that for each policy, "no contacts" who are induced to empathize exhibit higher levels of support than "contacts." Together these findings are clear, individuals who lack immigrant contact are a primary driver of empathy's permissive effects on immigration preferences.

Additionally, I explain that this moderating effect exists due to the softer, more malleable immigration preferences and the lower, more restrictive starting point of "no contacts." I then presented numerous findings consistent with these explanations. Supporting the claim of malleability, I show that initially, "no contacts" think immigration is less interesting and less important of an issue than "contacts." Additionally, I also find that "no contacts" exhibit more positive movement in support on a range of permissive policies and immigration attitudes than "contacts." And while these measures may not have been ideal in terms of evaluating this claim, these findings are consistent with what one would expect for individuals who are less set in their policy preferences. Future versions of this manuscript will include data from another follow up

experiment including indicators measuring the number of considerations participants hold on the issue of undocumented immigration, reasons for their immigration opinions, and how much they think about the issue of undocumented immigration.

To the second claim regarding "no contacts'" more restrictive initial preferences, I found strong evidence in support of both hypotheses 2 and 3. First, with respect to H3, I find that for each indicator, "no contacts" held significantly more restrictive immigration attitudes than "contacts." This lower, more restrictive starting point does artificially allow "no contacts" more room to increase their support for these policies than "contacts" and could partly explain the existence of immigrant contact's moderating effect. However, I argue that it is misleading to attribute all of the credit for this moderating effect to the lack of a ceiling effect explanation. If it were the case that some artificial ceiling of support limited the positive movement of "contacts," "no contacts" should be similarly affected (H2). Following this logic, we might expect the preferences of "contacts" to be at least on par with or more permissive than those of "no contacts" in the empathy condition. Regarding hypothesis 2, the evidence shows that this is clearly the case. In fact, "no contact" preferences are significantly more positive and permissive than those of "contacts" in the perspective-taking primed condition.

This discussion dovetails nicely with my two final claims. First, consistent with a ceiling effect, I expect "contacts" to hold very supportive initial immigration policy

preferences (H4). On this expectation, the evidence is not very solid. While I find that almost all indicators operationalizing immigration preferences reveal that "contacts" are supportive of permissive policies, this support is just lukewarm and often very near the midpoint of each indicator. In short, I find that there is still ample room for support to rise. This could be because the makeup of this group of "contacts" not only includes true permissive believers, but also staunch immigration opponents.

Relatedly, I also argue that we should not expect significant permissive movement to occur between contacts who are induced to empathize and those who are not. In other words, I did not expect to find significant differences in immigration attitudes between "contacts" in the control and perspective-taking primed conditions (H5). My reason is that rather than a ceiling effect being responsible for inhibiting preference change, it is the tendency for "contacts" to have more mature, saturated preferences to which a single new empathic consideration may be inconsequential. Again, consistent with hypothesis 5, I do not find differences between "contacts" in the CG and perspective-taking primed condition for the permissive factor, the DREAM Act, pathway policy, worker program, and support for assistance to the undocumented. This is consistent with my theory that "contacts" have previously already empathized and thought deeply and frequently about their preferences on immigration. This prior engagement produces more crystallized preferences formed from a multitude of considerations.

In conclusion, while these findings could still benefit from replication and the inclusion of additional measures, I argue that this dataset provides ample support for my theory on how social contact amplifies the permissive effects on immigration policy preferences caused by the empathetic stimulus and that these results should stand alone.

Implications

My primary finding that lack of immigrant contact heightens the permissive effects of empathy on immigration policy preferences has a number of relevant *political and practical implications*. First, one obvious takeaway from this finding is that empathic effects are *uneven*. In other words, empathy can have tremendous effects on some people and null effects on others. In this case, I focus on the factor of *immigrant contact*. This implies that those interested in the more practical uses of this research should factor in moderating factors like immigrant contact and target their efforts at individuals who are persuadable. In so doing, these efforts may have a greater chance at actually achieving their desired outcome. If this desired outcome is passage of a pathway policy, then this translates into flipping those initially opposed to being supportive of it after being exposed to an empathic message.

Second, this research implies that public opposition to more permissive immigration policies may not be as entrenched as some might think. Perhaps, many who oppose a pathway may be doing so almost reflexively, by repeating the opinions of

their political party, representative, relatives, or friends. It follows that if proponents of CIR would organize a sustained, broad effort to disseminate empathy-inducing messages, they might succeed.

Third, this research suggests that the places and people that are most susceptible to empathetically-prompted movement in immigration preferences live in areas where undocumented immigrants do not. Up until just recently, most of these rural areas in the interior US were represented by Republicans who oppose immigration reform. Given the fact that Republicans currently control the US House, persuading them to support immigration reform is necessary if any such change is to transpire. This suggests that not only could empathy matter in terms of inducing permissive changes in opinions, but it could matter in terms of permissive policy changes that have up until this point eluded our government.

These findings also offer some important *research implications*. First, they point out the importance of *how material is presented*. I focus on the semantic presentation or framing of empathic stimuli in the context of a negatively stigmatized group (undocumented immigrants). This calls for further exploration of how differences in the nature of such primes or prompts can affect permissive or positive effects on attitudes and policy preferences. Additionally, the question of whether these findings also apply when we change the types of individuals included in the empathic stimulus arises. For

example, what if the individual were an undocumented man? Or a white man? How do these differences alter empathy's persuasive effects?

Second, we should also explore the extent to which empathy is context-specific. Do empathic effects generalize to other groups not related to the empathic stimulus? How does empathy evoked toward undocumented immigrants spill over into other non-immigration policy preferences such as the death penalty or tolerance or health care? Additionally, we should also explore the extent to which generic empathy evoked for a non-immigrant affects immigration and non-immigration related policy preferences. Initial results suggest that empathy is somewhat context-dependent and does not spill over into unrelated policy preferences.

Finally, immigrant (social) contact is but one factor that could moderate the effects of empathy on immigration preferences. Preliminary findings also suggest that partisanship, particularly among Democrats and not Republicans can also heighten the permissive effects of empathy on immigration opinion. This implies that inducing empathy could activate or prime Democratic partisan-leanings producing more permissive immigration preferences than in the absence of empathy. However, they also suggest that these types of empathic messages may not also have the counter-effect of priming Republican partisan leanings which might nullify permissive gains among Democrats.

Table 1 – Sample Composition

Category	Control Condition	Perspective-taking primed	Unprimed Empathy
Male	43%	36%	40%
White	76%	75%	80%
Latino $	4%	6%	1%
Black	7%	12%	11%
Other race	13%	7%	8%
Median US Inc and Higher *	39%	38%	44%
Bachelors Degree or More	53%	51%	41%
Married ^	53%	44%	40%
Foreign Born	11%	5%	6%
Both Parents Foreign Born	16%	8%	10%
Both Parents US Born *^	72%	85%	86%
Republican	28%	23%	30%
Democrat *	43%	56%	44%
Conservative	28%	23%	30%
Liberal *	44%	52%	44%
Dispositional Empathy Score	38	40	40

2-tailed tests of significance

^ Differences significant between unprimed empathy & control condition at the .05 level

$ Differences significant between perspective-taking primed empathy & unprimed empathy condition at the .05 level

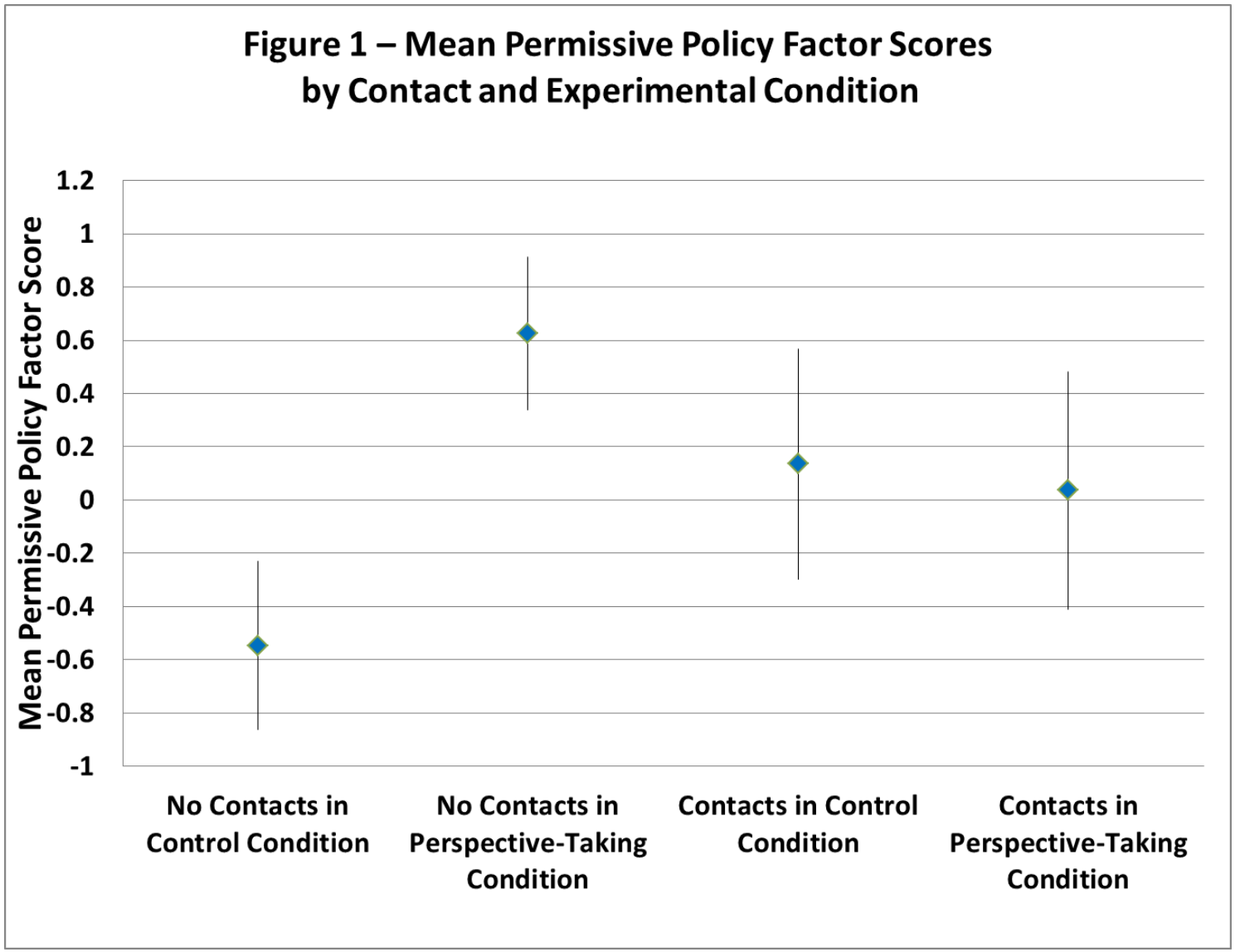
Table 2 - Regressing Immigration Policies & Permissive Factor on Treatment Dummy, Immigrant Contact, and Interaction

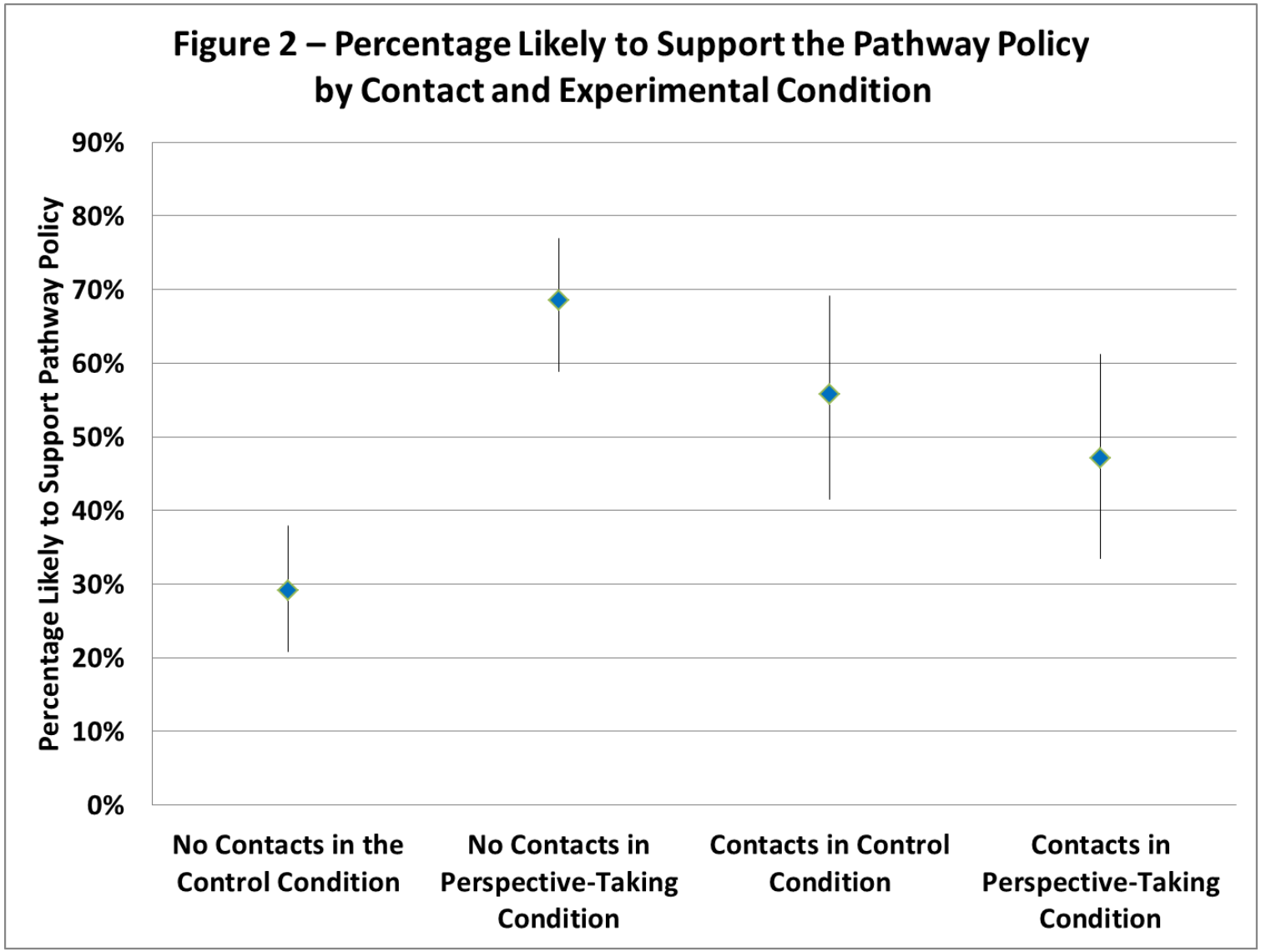
Variable	Permissive Factor Coef (SE)	DREAM Act Coef (SE)	Path to Citizenship Coef (SE)	Worker Program Coef (SE)
Empathy Treatment (PP)	1.179***	1.035**	1.703***	1.311***
	(.255)	(.417)	(.360)	(.356)
Immigrant Contact	0.666*	0.209	1.143**	0.605
	(.321)	(.417)	(.431)	(.421)
ET*IC Interaction	-1.279**	-1.508**	-2.057***	-1.431**
	(.454)	(.604)	(.606)	(.606)
Secondary Lincom Tests				
No Contacts	1.179***	1.035**	1.703***	1.311***
	(.255)	(.354)	(.360)	(.356)
Contacts	-0.099	-0.473	-0.354	-0.120
	(.375)	(.488)	(.487)	(.491)
N	215	215	215	216

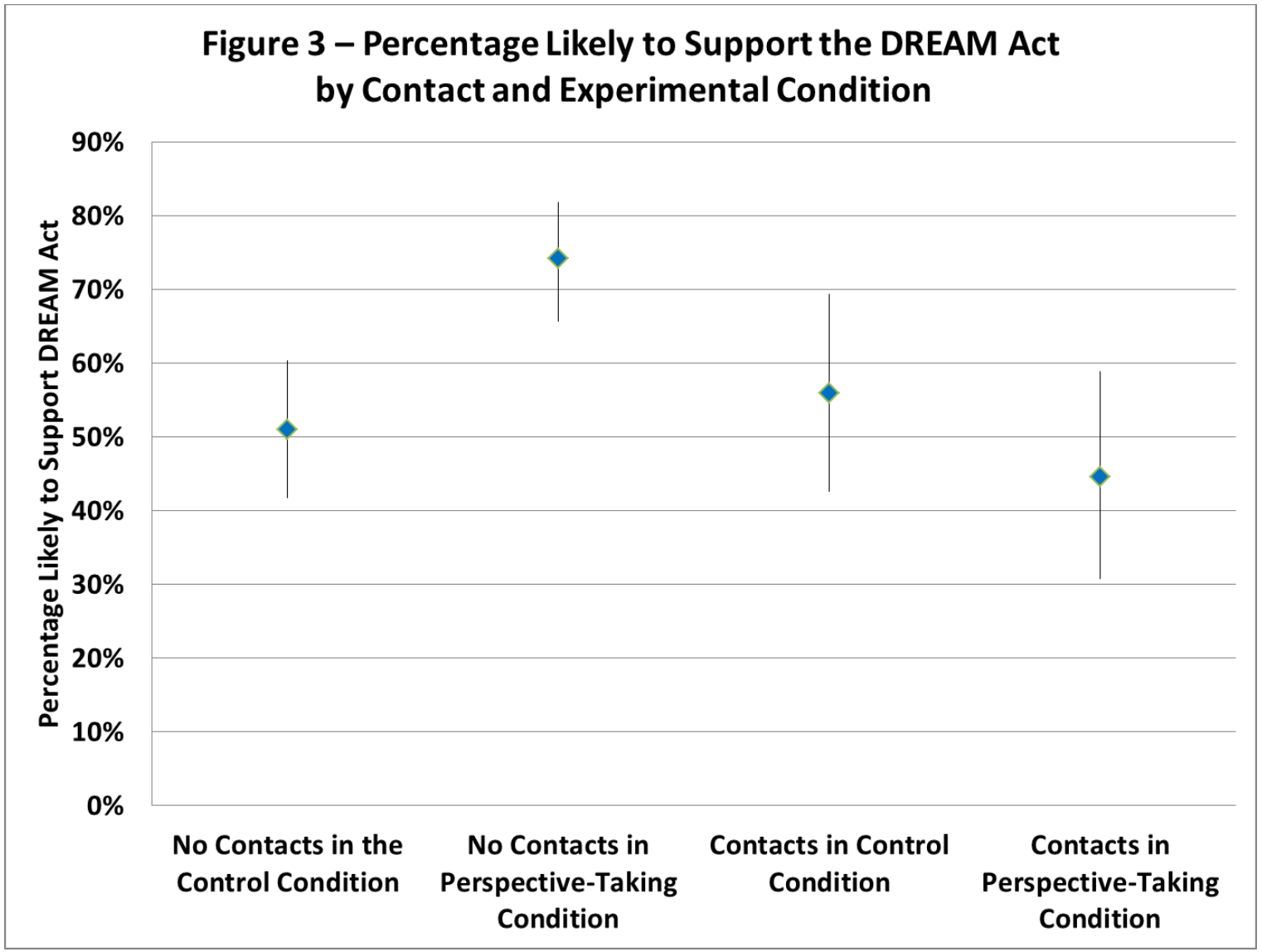
***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Comparing the PP to the CG condition

Figure 1 – Mean Permissive Policy Factor Scores by Contact and Experimental Condition




Figure 2 – Percentage Likely to Support the Pathway Policy by Contact and Experimental Condition
Percentage Likely to Support Pathway Policy
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
No Contacts in the Control Condition
No Contacts in Perspective-Taking Condition
Contacts in Control Condition
Contacts in Perspective-Taking Condition


Figure 3 – Percentage Likely to Support the DREAM Act by Contact and Experimental Condition
Percentage Likely to Support DREAM Act
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
No Contacts in the Control Condition
No Contacts in Perspective-Taking Condition
Contacts in Control Condition
Contacts in Perspective-Taking Condition

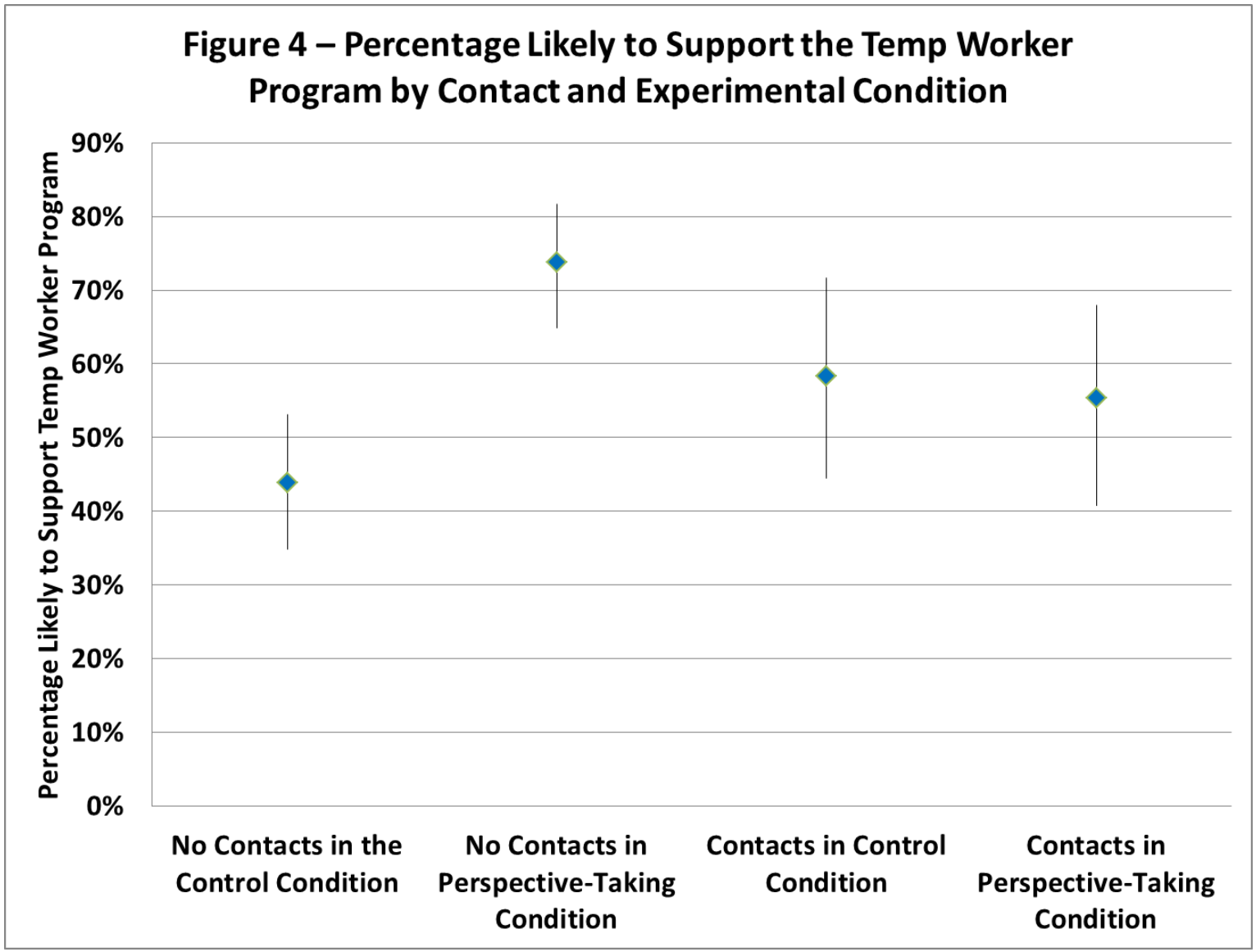
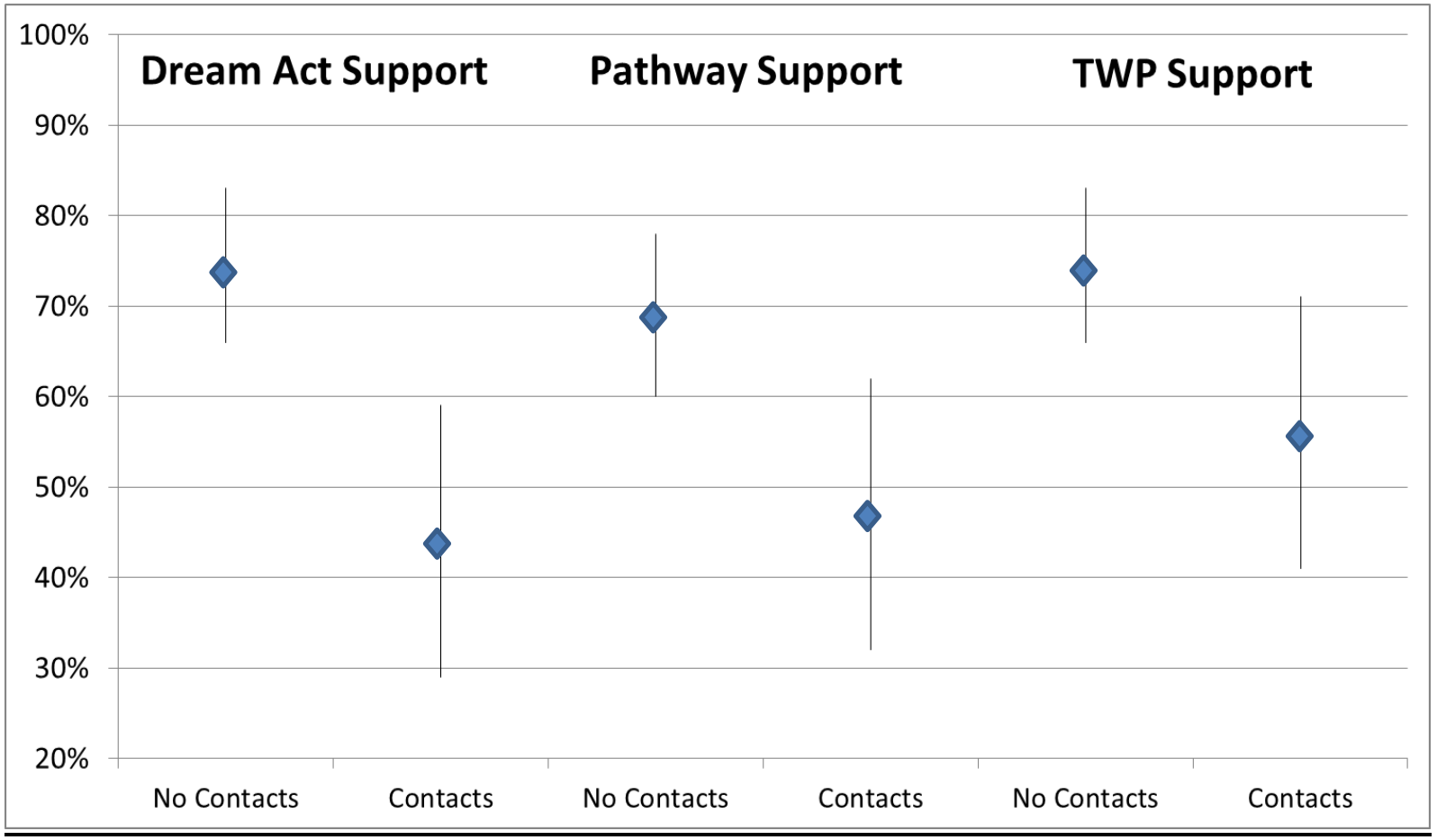

Figure 4 – Percentage Likely to Support the Temp Worker Program by Contact and Experimental Condition
Percentage Likely to Support Temp Worker Program
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
No Contacts in the Control Condition
No Contacts in Perspective-Taking Condition
Contacts in Control Condition
Contacts in Perspective-Taking Condition

Figure 5 - Immigration Policy Support by Contact in the Perspective-Taking Empathy Condition



Appendix 3 - Regressing Permissive Factor & Pathway Policy on Treatment Dummy, Immigrant Contact, and Interaction

	Perspective-Taking Primed & Affectively Primed Comparison		Affectively Primed & Control Group Comparison	
Variable	Permissive Factor Coef (SE)	Path to Citizenship Coef (SE)	Permissive Factor Coef (SE)	Path to Citizenship Coef (SE)
Higher Empathy Treatment	0.722***	1.128***	0.421	0.575
	(.272)	(.353)	(.262)	(.358)
Immigrant Contact	.116	.108	0.637*	1.143***
	(.333)	(.417)	(.322)	(.431)
ET*IC Interaction	-0.699	-1.022	-.562	-1.034
	(.197)	(.596)	(.182)	(.600)
Secondary Lincom Tests				
No Contacts	0.722***	1.128***	0.421	0.575
	(.272)	(.353)	(.263)	(.358)
Contacts	0.838	1.236	1.057*	1.718**
	(.512)	(.649)	(.489)	(.669)
N	211	211	210	210

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

For PP-AP comparison, the AP is the comparison group
For AP-CG comparison, the CG is the comparison group

PP-AP - Effect of empathy-inducing instructions
AP-CG - Effect of empathy article

Appendix 4A - Regressing Permissive Policy Factor on Each Empathy Treatment, Immigrant Contact & Their Interaction With & Without Balance Checks

Variable	Persp-Taking Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Persp-Taking Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Balanced Coef (SE)
Empathy Treatment	1.172***	1.131***	.267	.279	.452	.528*
	(.254)	(.250)	(.261)	(.262)	(.271)	(.266)
Immigrant Contact	.682*	.787*	.682*	.739*	.682*	.799*
	(.320)	(.314)	(.326)	(.326)	(.332)	(.325)
ET*IC Interaction	-1.271**	-1.364**	-.013	-.072	-.592	-.675
	(.452)	(.443)	(.466)	(.466)	(.468)	(.458)
US Born		-.214		-.640		-.372
		(.386)		(.400)		(.391)
Democrat		.789***		.388		.810***
		(.209)		(.219)		(.219)
Liberal		omitted		omitted		omitted
		omitted		omitted		omitted
Married		.224		-.123		.212
		(.217)		(.232)		(.227)
Median Inc or Higher		-.027		.107		-.165
		(.222)		(.232)		(.228)
Constant	-.547**	-.838	-.547**	-.140	-.547**	-.650
	(.180)	(.429)	(.183)	(.443)	(.187)	(.438)
N	215	215	210	210	210	210

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Control condition serves as the reference group

Appendix 4B - Regressing Pathway Policy Support on Each Empathy Treatment, Immigrant Contact & Their Interaction With & Without Balance Checks

Variable	Persp-Taking Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Persp-Taking Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Balanced Coef (SE)
Empathy Treatment	1.007***	.991***	.478	.526	.575	.727*
	(.281)	(.296)	(.354)	(.363)	(.358)	(.374)
Immigrant Contact	.795**	.795**	1.143**	1.236**	1.143**	1.325**
	(.292)	(.292)	(.431)	(.444)	(.431)	(.452)
ET*IC Interaction	.795**	.795**	-.589	-.659	-1.034	-1.242*
	(.292)	(.292)	(.608)	(.621)	(.600)	(.627)
US Born		.326		-.336		-.134
		(.545)		(.539)		(.538)
Democrat		.880**		.546		.902**
		(.294)		(.298)		(.303)
Liberal		omitted		omitted		omitted
		omitted		omitted		omitted
Married		.657*		.161		.475
		(.312)		(.313)		(.311)
Median Inc or Higher		-.138		.125		-.134
		(.312)		(.310)		(.313)
Constant	-.516**	-1.513*	-.907***	.125	-.907***	-1.465*
	(.200)	(.603)	(.259)	(.310)	(.259)	(.622)
N	215	215	210	210	210	210

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Control condition serves as the reference group

Appendix 4C - Regressing DREAM Act Support on Each Empathy Treatment, Immigrant Contact & Their Interaction With & Without Balance Checks

Variable	Persp-Taking Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Persp-Taking Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Balanced Coef (SE)
Empathy Treatment	1.035**	1.039**	.227	.267	.182	.267
	(.354)	(.359)	(.335)	(.341)	(.339)	(.350)
Immigrant Contact	.209	.318	.209	.221	.209	.229
	(.417)	(.438)	(.418)	(.426)	(.417)	(.428)
ET*IC Interaction	-1.508**	-1.656**	.047	.049	-.082	-.173
	(.603)	(.631)	(.604)	(.614)	(.591)	(.604)
US Born		-.046		-.145		.054
		(.552)		(.527)		(.517)
Democrat		.927**		.322		.431
		(.304)		(.287)		(.289)
Liberal		omitted		omitted		omitted
		omitted		omitted		omitted
Married		.511		.231		.479
		(.315)		(.303)		(.298)
Median Inc or Higher		.210		.326		.218
		(.319)		(.304)		(.300)
Constant	.027	-.709	.027	-.234	.027	-.550
	(.234)	(.615)	(.234)	(.582)	(.234)	(.580)
N	215	215	210	210	210	210

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Control condition serves as the reference group

Appendix 4D - Regressing Worker Program Support on Each Empathy Treatment, Immigrant Contact & Their Interaction With & Without Balance Checks

Variable	Persp-Taking Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Persp-Taking Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Affectively Primed Condition Balanced Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Base Model Coef (SE)	Unprimed Empathy Condition Balanced Coef (SE)
Empathy Treatment	1.311***	1.296***	.332	.321	.703*	.823*
	(.356)	(.364)	(.335)	(.341)	(.344)	(.354)
Immigrant Contact	.605	.713	.605	.606	.605	.692
	(.421)	(.431)	(.421)	(.429)	(.421)	(.430)
ET*IC Interaction	-1.431*	-1.521*	-.310	-.331	-1.396*	-1.519*
	(.606)	(.620)	(.603)	(.612)	(.595)	(.611)
US Born		.104		-.741		-.125
		(.534)		(.542)		(.514)
Democrat		.657*		-.166		.466
		(.297)		(.287)		(.291)
Liberal		omitted		omitted		omitted
		omitted		omitted		omitted
Married		.301		-.425		.379
		(.310)		(.304)		(.302)
Median Inc or Higher		-.176		.203		-.466
		(.314)		(.303)		(.304)
Constant	-.248	-.750	-.248	.628	-.248	-.384
	(.236)	(.600)	(.236)	(.594)	(.236)	(.576)
N	215	215	210	210	210	210

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Control condition serves as the reference group

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Chapter 6 – Conclusions and Implications

As bipartisan House negotiators struggle to forge a compromise that can satisfy both hardline Republicans wary of signing onto what they have previously called an "amnesty" and liberal Democrats, many of whom have been clamoring for comprehensive immigration reform free of punitive measures and vague triggers, it is becoming increasingly obvious that immigration policy change may have to emanate from the bottom up. In other words, perhaps the only way that our country will pass a comprehensive measure to address our immigration quandary is by convincing large majorities of Americans in particular areas of the country that such a fix is crucial. Not even the threat of political extinction seems to be enough to convince congressional Republican opponents that passing such reform is in their best interest. The "delay and dismember" strategy favored by key players such as House Judiciary chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) may catch on with enough House Republicans and conservative state Democrats to sink any hope of an agreement this year. This legislative reality is not a new phenomenon as a significant amount of research has been done explaining how majority support does not always guarantee policy passage (Krehbiel 1998, 2005, Cox & McCubbins 2005).

Given the current impasse and the reality that even the shocking results of the 2012 election may not be enough to enact CIR, some, including the President have

dabbled with the strategy of employing a forceful, albeit brief, empathetic offensive to motivate the public to pressure their representatives to move on immigration reform. Indeed, both anecdotal and systematic evidence in this dissertation suggests that these efforts were successful even though their effects were temporal in nature. The question that proponents must ask themselves is: Would an empathetic offensive be enough to beget comprehensive immigration reform? To a large extent, this was the question which motivated this dissertation. More specifically, I ask, how does empathy affect and relate to support for such permissive immigration policies? Additionally, are there any key sub-groups of Americans that are disproportionately affected by the use of empathy? My findings are both striking for their magnitude and relevance to this current debate.

First, in chapter 2, I find that empathetic framing of undocumented immigration has been both complex and prevalent in our public discourse. Using a sampling of news articles from the USA Today and New York Times I find that empathy can be invoked in three primary ways--- via the priming of empathy, the use of episodic framing, and/or the conveyance of empathetic content. Priming empathy could be done by prefacing a lecture, media segment, or speech with instructions to empathize. Episodic framing is conveying a message or story by using concrete details about real life people and events which brings more intimacy and realism to the story. Finally, empathetic content could include stories about undocumented immigrants which have the effect of getting us to feel sympathy, sadness, or concern towards the undocumented and which cause us to

see the world through the eyes of these undocumented immigrants. Additionally, the content analyses also indicate that each of these three empathetic factors appear quite frequently in our media discourse. That is, frequently enough to potentially exert significant effects on the nature of public opinion and politics. Finally, in this chapter of the dissertation, I also find suggestive evidence that each of these empathetic "triggers" do indeed have the effect of prompting reactive empathy.

Then, in chapter 3, using data from a national, online experiment, I build upon these content analyses results to provide some initial clues as to whether these different empathetic stimuli (primes, content) do indeed increase empathy, but also if they lead to higher levels of support for permissive immigration policies. In the first part of the chapter, I focus on differences in empathetic priming using both previous research and modern day reality as a backdrop. While previous researchers tend to induce empathy using a more sophisticated perspective-taking prime, I choose to also include a simpler, more visceral affective (emotion-giving) prime. Using results from my content analyses and prior experience, I argue that it is important to uncover and compare the attitudinal effects of simpler, more pervasive (in reality) inductions of empathy to those used by prior lab research (i.e. perspective-taking prime, no prime). In short, I find that while both empathy primes are successful at inducing empathy and increasing support for permissive immigration policies, only the more complex perspective-taking prime does so in a statistically significant way.

Second, I also examine the differential effects of empathetic priming and content by again, using prior research and the reality of today's immigration discourse as a backdrop. While previous empathy scholars tend to induce empathy by using a more sophisticated perspective-taking prime in combination with exposure to empathetic content, I also include a separate condition in which participants are only exposed to empathetic content. I argue that it is critical that researchers uncover the persuasive effects of more realistic inductions of empathy (empathetic content only) and compare them to those used by previous experimental research (i.e. empathy prime and content). In short, I find that while both empathy inductions are successful at manipulating empathy and increasing levels of support for permissive immigration policies, only the combined perspective-taking empathy stimulus does so in a statistically significant way.

Next, I address my second, larger question by taking a look at how certain factors might moderate the effects of empathy manipulations on support for permissive immigration legislation. In chapter 4, I take a look at one sub-group which has been the focus of prior research on empathetic effects and a sub-constituency which could prove critical to sustaining the momentum for permissive reform efforts--- individuals more predisposed to empathize in general. As is normally the case in midterm elections and in most policy debates, rallying the faithful or the predisposed is often critical to ultimate electoral and policy success. Decisively winning over and mobilizing this sub-group could be critical in sustaining the chances of passage. Hence, I examine whether

and to what extent trait empathy or the capacity to empathize affects both empathetic response and immigration preferences. Consistent with previous research, I find that individuals higher in trait empathy reveal larger positive differences in support for permissive immigration policies when comparing those in the perspective-taking empathy condition and control condition.

Finally, in chapter 5, I take a look at one sub-group which could have an important impact on the current and future debates on immigration reform--- individuals who do not come into social contact with the undocumented. I point out that most of the congressmen who are either undecided or slightly opposed to comprehensive immigration reform hail from districts or states which are composed of an overwhelming majority of constituents who have never interacted with undocumented immigrants. Winning over this sub-group could certainly prove decisive. More specifically, I examine whether and to what extent social contact with undocumented immigrants can affect both empathetic response and support for permissive immigration policies. Strikingly, I find that individuals with no contact with undocumented immigrants are much more supportive of permissive immigration policies when exposed to the perspective-taking empathy stimulus than similar individuals in the control condition.

Practical Implications

In all, the largest takeaway from this dissertation is while empathy and its attitudinal effects may only be somewhat temporary, they are powerful and persuasive. After all, what is most critical for bill passage is strong, targeted support from key groups of Americans in the few months prior to the final vote. Thus, one lesson from this dissertation is that if proponents can make a sustained, intense, and public empathetic push during this critical period targeting those key constituencies, their chances for success increase dramatically. In this case, key constituencies include Americans who generally are undecided or slightly opposed to comprehensive immigration reform living in districts or states represented by an undecided or opposed member of Congress.

Furthermore, a sustained push is crucial. One could simply recall the sequence of events during the failed push for universal background checks following the Newtown, Connecticut massacre. During the early parts of the debate, gun control advocates engaged in an empathetic strategy in which family members of victims were called to testify on behalf of the bill, public statements using empathetic content were voiced by members of Congress, and victims' families were urged to get involved with the policy push. This strategy was largely successful in swaying and energizing public support, placing this issue on the agenda, and convincing some reluctant members of Congress to support universal background checks (i.e. Senator Pat Toomey (R-PA)). In

response and at the behest of the National Rifle Association, opponents drew out the debate in the hopes that Americans' emotions would temper and their fervor for change would recede. Although evidence is primarily anecdotal, the empathetic push for gun control over the public airwaves seemed to subside. What followed is a not so surprising and resounding defeat of a measure that according to dozens of polls enjoyed almost unanimous public support. The lesson is clear. If an empathetic strategy pushing for policy adoption is to be successful, it is important that this emotional push be sustained over the public airwaves up until it is signed into law.

Whether this type of an intense, sustained empathetic strategy for immigration reform is realistic is another question. Can a bill's proponents including congressmen, the president, the media, and activists sustain this type of an effort? Like many questions in political science, this points to a collective action problem. One in which there needs to be strong, unified leadership from the top and organized, coordinated efforts from those below to stay on message, the empathetic message that is. As I write this dissertation, it remains to be seen whether the empathetic push that lasts all of a month in January through February 2013 can be revived and sustained throughout the long, drawn out process of bill consideration. But, this is American politics. This is the way that our founders intended the process to unfold. That is, slowly, incrementally, with numerous checks and balances, and many points at which individuals can erect barriers to policy change. However, what is certain from this research is that the use of

empathy can be an effective way of making the passage of legislation like comprehensive immigration reform that much more likely.

Future Research

In terms of future research, this dissertation certainly raises almost as many questions and it answers. Recalling some points made in previous chapters, future research should examine empathy's effect not only immigration policy preferences, but also on other political policies. Given empathic effects in this policy domain, one might expect consequential effects on policies which could logically be framed or argued in humanistic and values-oriented terms. Some include abortion, the death penalty, gay marriage, health care, health regulations, Mideast peace policy, and social welfare policy.

Additionally, this dissertation research also suggests that future empathy research should better understand and isolate the mechanism(s) by which empathetic effects are produced. In this dissertation, I only begin the inquiry with admittedly very weak and imprecise tests of potential mechanisms. Is it that empathy changes the balance of considerations at the top of one's head or is the change precipitated by empathy biasing the processing in favor or existing affect or might both be at work?

Third, under which conditions is empathy most and least effective? Future research employed various empathy primes could vary the way with which empathy is

induced and change the empathy targets of that empathy to measure differences in reactive empathy and opinion change and shifts.

Finally, there are numerous other politically and socially oriented questions that abound in this area of research including: How does empathy affect political mobilization, turnout, political engagement? How long to empathic effects endure? To what extent do empathic effects remain when subjects are induced to feel other negative or positive emotions? How does the medium with which empathy is induced matter? From this simple list, one realizes that the only certainty is that there is much research to be done on empathy. However, what is also obvious from this dissertation's research is the takeaway that not only is empathy research interesting for knowledge's sake, but it is also important for the potentially significant effects that it can have in reality.

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