

## EMOTIONAL CALLOUSNESS AND VICARIOUS EMOTIONAL REACTIONS TO THE MISFORTUNE OF OTHERS

By Steven W. Steinert

Agnello & Lishner (2013) suggests that when presented with a person in need, psychopathy is positively related to feeling positive emotion (amusement, joy, humored) and negatively related to feeling empathic concern. Miller et al. (2015) conceptually replicated that study and again found a negative association between emotional callousness and empathic concern. They also employed an outcome manipulation and found that emotional callousness was positively associated with positive affect, but only in a condition where the ostensible person's need was unlikely to improve. The current study (N=179) provided a direct replication of those findings while also examining whether psychopathy is positively associated with desire for additional exposure to the person in need, whose situation is unlikely to improve. After reading an article about an ostensible person whose need situation was likely or unlikely to improve, participants rated their emotional reactions and then chose to either read more about that person, or about someone new. Consistent with previous studies, results indicated a negative association between emotional callousness and empathic concern. However, results also indicated little association between emotional callousness and positive affect, regardless of need outcome. Additionally, there was no association between emotional callousness and selection of the second article when controlling for gender and other psychopathic traits. The results suggest that psychopathic emotional callousness reflects low care about those in need as opposed to sadistic enjoyment at the suffering of others.

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REACTIONS TO THE MISFORTUNE OF OTHERS

By

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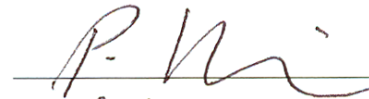
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## Introduction

Koch (1891) first coined the term “psychopath” to describe an individual with characteristics that defy social norms. Koch’s (1891) idea of the *born killer* differentiated between those who adopted a criminalistic and antisocial lifestyle and those who clearly had a biological disposition for antisocial and morally absent behavior. However, following the establishment of a new construct referred to as “psychopathy,” the conceptual ambiguity and lack of empirical support in favor of the construct resulted in challenges to diagnoses of mental illness. In particular, diagnosing someone as psychopathic became a fallback diagnosis when symptoms failed to unambiguously reflect established criteria for diagnosis of a particular mental disorder (Skeem, Polaschek, Patrick & Lilienfeld, 2011).

Eighty years later, Cleckley (1941) proposed a new perspective on psychopathy that continues to influence modern personality and forensic theory and practice (Skeem, Polaschek, Patrick & Lilienfeld, 2011). He proposed that psychopathic individuals are those who outwardly exhibit normal and socially acceptable behavior, yet privately engage in persistent maladaptive behavior. According to Skeem et al. (2011), Cleckley argued that individuals identified as psychopathic often showed initial confidence and charm, but when observed over time revealed severe underlying psychological pathology. One important element of psychopathy was a lack of care for the well-being of others. Contemporaries of

Cleckley, however, advocated that lack of care for others reflected a colder, emotionally callous orientation toward others (McCord & McCord, 1964; Robins 1966, 1978). As new research emerged, it became evident that psychopathy consists of a unique affective-interpersonal element that appears to differentiate it from other apparently similar personality disorders such as Antisocial Personality Disorder or Narcissistic Personality Disorder (Vitacco, Neumann, & Jackson, 2005).

Distinct from many clinically diagnosed personality disorders, psychopathy is more difficult to assess (Skeem et al., 2011). Whereas individuals with personality disorders may seek professional assessment and treatment to address the symptoms of their disorders, people high in psychopathy often do not feel discomfort or recognize a problem that requires attention. Hare (1985 1991), however, devised the Psychopathy Checklist-Revised (PCL-R), a clinical instrument designed to assess psychopathy in forensic and clinical settings. Clinicians can use the PCL-R to assess core attributes thought to encompass psychopathy: manipulative tendency and grandiosity, emotional callousness, impulsivity, and antisocial behavior. More recently, the Psychopathic Personality Inventory (PPI; Lilienfeld & Andrews, 1996) and the Self Report Psychopathy Scale (SRP-III; Paulhus, Neumann, & Hare, 2015) were devised to assess variation in psychopathic tendencies among individuals in non-clinical and community settings (Lilienfeld & Fowler, 2006).

### **Four-Factor Model**

Early perspectives viewed psychopathy as a personality construct that a person either did or did not possess. More contemporary research suggests psychopathy consists of several interrelated characteristics that can vary in degree. According to Vitacco, Rogers, Neumann, Harrison, and Vincent (2005), a dimensional trait view of psychopathy more accurately represents the nature of the construct than does the more traditional dichotomous perspective. This newer perspective of psychopathy is generally accepted, but debate centers on which dimensional traits define the core of psychopathy (Cooke & Michie, 2001; Walters, 2015). Vitacco et al. (2005) examined previous trait models of psychopathy and concluded that most assume at least a two-factor model that consists of an interpersonal-affective trait dimension and an impulsive-antisocial trait dimension. More recent models have further distinguished among different interpersonal-affective traits and impulsive-antisocial traits, although some have questioned whether the antisocial trait reflects a core aspect of psychopathy or an outcome of psychopathy (Walters, 2015). Perhaps the most popular model of psychopathy is the four-factor model (Vitacco, Neumann, & Jackson, 2005). The four-factor model includes an interpersonal component, which reflects a general tendency toward manipulation and grandiosity; an affective component, which reflects a general emotional callousness toward others; an impulsive-erratic lifestyle component; and a component that reflects a tendency to engage in socially deviant or antisocial behavior.

## **Emotional Callousness and Affective Empathy**

Contemporary researchers consider empathy as a multi-component construct (Batson, 2009). Affective empathy refers to the subjective experience of emotions of others, whereas cognitive empathy is the *ability* to understand others' emotional scales and states (Eres, Decety, Louis, Molenberghs, 2015).

Researchers argue that the cognitive experience of empathy is inherently distinct from an affective experience. However, cognitive and affective empathy, though separate constructs, do not necessarily work completely independently from one another (Pfabigan et al., 2015). Instead, they can work in tandem to produce more complex responses. For example, to respond to another in need, an individual must have the ability to cognitively identify another person's emotional state (cognitive empathy). That may, in turn, produce vicarious emotional reactions that would motivate approach or avoidance of the person. Conversely, cognitive and affective empathy can occur independently, such that individuals can display deficits in one or both types. Whereas an individual might display the knowledge and understanding of the emotions of others, that same individual might lack in ability to share in or appreciate another person's emotional state. Decety and Jackson (2004) elaborate further to discuss that affective empathy involves the ability to experience empathic concern for another person as well as vicariously share the emotions of the other person. Additionally, there has been widespread debate regarding the interplay between cognitive and affective empathy. In a

paper that examines different theories on cognitive and affective empathy, Van Lissa, Hawk, de Wied, Koot, van Lier, and Meeus, (2014) explain that although some researchers argue that cognitive empathy develops first, from which cognitive maturation leads to affective empathy, others suggest that empathy develops in layers of increasing complexity that rely upon more primitive layers. The authors argue that affective empathic processes likely have earlier phylogenetic origins than higher-order, cognitive processes (van Lissa et al., 2014).

Preliminary results of a meta-analysis of over forty fMRI studies indicate that affective empathy is associated with increased activity in the insula. Cognitive empathy, conversely, is associated with activity in the midcingulate cortex and dorsomedial prefrontal cortex. Further, Eres et al., (2015) shows that individual differences in gray matter density in those locations are associated with levels of affective and cognitive empathy. Specifically, higher scores on a particular component of empathy are associated with higher density of gray matter in respective brain regions. Current trends in the literature indicate impairment in affective empathy among those who register high on psychopathy tests but offer less conclusive evidence for an association between cognitive empathy and psychopathy (Wai & Tiliopoulos, 2012). Therefore, the current research will focus on the affective component of empathy.

Until recently, it has been generally assumed that affective empathy is negatively associated with psychopathy (Lishner, Vitacco, Hong, Mosley, Miska,

& Stocks, 2012). It might even be intuitive to assume that an individual high in psychopathic traits would have an impaired capacity for empathy, particularly affective forms of empathy. However, the extent of that assumption has been questioned. Lishner et al. (2012) used a task-based measure of affective empathy in which affective empathy was covertly manipulated and measured. Lishner et al. (2012) found that most psychopathic traits did not have negative associations with state changes in affective empathy among college undergraduates when such associations were evaluated sequentially. The one exception, however, was emotional callousness, which did reveal some evidence of a negative association with affective empathy.

In follow-up research, Lishner, Hong, Jiang, Vitacco, and Neumann (2015) replicated the aforementioned research and re-analyzed the findings provided by Lishner et al. (2012), this time while simultaneously evaluating the association between psychopathic traits and affective empathy in a multiple regression analysis. The data from the two studies were aggregated and the researchers found consistent evidence of a negative association between emotional callousness and affective empathy, most notably emotional contagion of negative emotion and experience of empathic concern toward those in need.

### **Emotional Callousness, Empathic Concern, and Positive Affect**

To further investigate the link between emotional callousness and empathic concern, Frankowski and Lishner (2012) examined emotional

callousness and empathic concern when people are presented with an individual in need. In that study, undergraduate participants read an ostensible pilot article for the student newspaper that described the plight of a fellow student whose parents had recently died in an automobile accident. Frankowski and Lishner (2012) found that emotional callousness was negatively associated with empathic concern, but not with positive affect. In another study, Agnello and Lishner (2013) used a similar procedure and need situation, and successfully replicated the association between emotional callousness and empathic concern, but this time also found a positive association between emotional callousness and positive affect.

To further examine the possibility of a positive association between positive affect and emotional callousness toward a person in need, Miller, Pionk, Kelso, Steinert, Hanson, Lishner, Hong, and Vitacco (2015) and Steinert, Hanson, Kelso, Miller, Pionk, and Lishner (2015) used a procedure similar to the two previous studies but employed a different need situation. Moreover, need outcome also was manipulated, such that approximately half the participants were led to believe that the individual's need was likely to continue or likely to be eliminated in the immediate future. When aggregated across both studies, the results indicated that once again participant emotional callousness was negatively associated with empathic concern, and this association was unaffected by the likelihood of need improvement manipulation. However, emotional callousness was positively associated with positive affect when the need was unlikely to

improve, but was not associated with positive affect when the need was likely to improve. The pattern of results suggested that those lower in emotional callousness are relatively unaffected by the potential future outcome of the person in need, whereas those higher in emotional callousness feel lower positive affect when the ostensible character's situation is likely to improve in the immediate future and higher positive affect when the situation is unlikely to improve in the immediate future. However, caution is warranted given the interactional pattern was not consistent across studies. When examined by individual study, the results of Miller et al. (2015) does not produce the interaction effect, but those of Steinert et al. (2015) do.

### **Present Study**

The goal of the present study was to replicate Miller et al. (2015) and Steinert et al. (2015) while including a behavioral measure of desire for additional information about the person in need. As in the two previous studies, undergraduate participants read the same ostensible pilot newspaper article about a student in need at their school and need outcome was manipulated. Participants completed measures of empathic concern and positive affect and were then given an opportunity to select whether to read a second follow-up article about the person in need or an article about a different person. Finally, individual differences in emotional callousness were then measured. The added behavioral element offered clearer insight into whether participants desire additional

exposure to the person in need. Depending on the outcome of the findings, the present research should help identify which of the previous findings (those of Miller et al. (2015) or those of Steinert et al. (2015) should be the basis for generating theoretical conclusions.

### **Hypotheses**

Two sets of hypotheses were evaluated. First, consistent with Miller et al. (2015) and Steinert et al. (2015), it was hypothesized that emotional callousness would be negatively associated with empathic concern. Second, two competing hypotheses regarding the association between emotional callousness and positive affect were evaluated. If the association reflects lack of care or possible association with desire for an additional article about the person, then emotional callousness should be unrelated to the choice of the second article. Alternatively, if the association reflects enjoyment at the suffering of others, then those higher in emotional callousness should be more likely to experience positive affect and desire the follow-up article, but only if the need is unlikely to improve for the person in the article.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

One hundred seventy-nine participants from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh Department of Psychology Participant Pool completed the present study. Participants received partial credit (2 credits) toward a course research requirement in return for their participation. Although previous studies used gender homogeneity between participants and researchers, there were too few female researchers involved in the present study, which prevented the current study from paralleling that element of previous work. Participants were assigned to either a low likelihood of need improvement condition or a high likelihood of need improvement condition using randomized controlled blocks of four. The use of randomized blocks yielded 50.9% of the sample placed in the positive-outcome condition and 49.1% of the sample placed in the negative-outcome condition.

### **Procedure & Measures**

Participants completed the study independently in one-hour sessions. Researchers were blind to experimental conditions to avoid researcher effects on differential participant responses. Upon arrival, participants first provided written consent to participate in the study (Appendix B). Each participant was also provided with a “confidentiality envelope” where they placed all questionnaires to ensure and provide participants assurance of confidentiality. Researchers

explained that the purpose of the additional envelope (confidentiality envelope) was to keep participant responses private and not linked to their names. All participants read and answered questionnaires without the researcher present.

Next, participants independently read an introduction (Appendix C) to the study, which presented the cover story. The introduction explained that the study was conducted through the Department of Psychology in conjunction with the university newspaper. Ostensibly, the university newspaper was interested in adding a new column about students on campus and asked faculty supervisor, Dr. Lishner, to gauge student opinions about the proposed columns. The introduction explained that although the articles presented would only be used within the study and never actually published, the stories were about actual students on campus. Participants were then told that time permitted them to evaluate two articles sequentially and provide their reactions on several questionnaires for each article. The introduction explained to participants that once one article was completed, they would then read another article.

Following the introduction, participants signaled for the researcher to re-enter the room. The researcher clarified any logistical questions and asked participants to randomly choose a number between one and eight to determine which article they would read first. Unbeknownst to participants, there were only two article possibilities dictated by the need improvement manipulation. Once the participants chose an article number, the researcher left the room to retrieve the article. For the sake of appearances, the researcher placed the materials into a

folder that depicted the number chosen by participants. The researcher returned with a folder that contained a short introduction about the article (Appendix D), as well as the article itself (Appendix E or F). The folder also contained a measure of empathic concern and positive affect (Appendices G and I) disguised as a reactions questionnaire. The researcher then left the room to allow participants to read the introduction and article.

Once participants indicated to the researcher that they were finished, the researcher entered and explained that the participant would read another article and complete the same questionnaire about that article. The researcher gave participants a form (Appendix H) where participants could indicate whether they would like to read an article about the individual in the first article or a completely new article. After participants chose an article to read, the researcher indicated that the participant should fill out another questionnaire packet while the researcher retrieved the second article. The reaction packet included the SRP-III measure of psychopathy and a demographics questionnaire (Appendix J).

Following completion of the questionnaire packet, the researcher re-entered the room and indicated that he or she would like to get the participant's reactions to the study so far. The researcher then conducted a semi-structured debriefing to assess for suspicion and inform participants about the true purpose of the study (Appendix K). Specifically, participants were informed that the researchers were interested in personality characteristics and how their emotions

and the choice to read more about people in need could be influenced by those characteristics.

## Results

### Exclusion and Participant Demographics

From the initial 179 participants, five were excluded due to suspicion, and one because of failure to record the participant's condition assignment. Upon analysis, two more participants were excluded due to failure to complete the positive affect items. Forty-five males (26%) and one hundred twenty-eight females (74%) comprised the remaining analyzed sample (N = 171). Of these participants, 69.4% identified as freshman college students, 86.7% identified as Caucasian, 1.2% identified as African American, 4.0% identified as Asian, 3.5% identified as Hispanic/Latino, 0.6% identified as Native American, and 4.0% identified as an "other" ethnicity. Table 1 displays correlations between all non-demographic measures.

### Variable Computation

Likelihood of need improvement was coded using a binary scale (0 = *low likelihood*, 1 = *high likelihood*). Self-reported empathic concern was computed by averaging ratings to the six empathic concern items (*warm, sympathetic, compassionate, tender, softhearted, moved*; Cronbach's alpha = .677). Self-reported positive affect was computed by averaging rating responses to the positive affect items (*joyful, happy, cheerful*; Cronbach's alpha = .826). Four SRP-III trait subscale scores were computed for Callous Affect (CA),

Interpersonal Manipulation (IM), Erratic Lifestyles (EL), and Criminal Tendencies CT) by averaging all subscale SRP-III items after reverse coding negatively worded items (Cronbach's alphas were .783, .825, .804, and .721, respectively). Additionally, an interaction variable between CA and the likelihood of need improvement condition variable was created by multiplying the two measures. Finally, the desire for additional information dependent measure was coded using a binary scale (0 = *participant selected a second article about the same ostensible person*, 1 = *participant selected a second article about a different person*).

### **Empathic Concern**

Multiple regression was used to evaluate the prediction of empathic concern (unstandardized) from sex, likelihood of need improvement condition, CA, IM, EL, and CT (Model 1). Given participant sex has been found to covary with psychopathic traits and some affective outcome variables, sex was included as a covariate in a manner similar to previous studies (c.f., Lishner et al., 2012, Lishner et al., 2016; Miller et al., 2015, Steinert et al., 2015). A second model that also contained the interaction between CA and the likelihood condition was also evaluated. Unstandardized and standardized regression coefficients for both models are displayed in Table 2.

Results of the omnibus test indicated that Model 1 significantly predicted empathic concern,  $R^2 = .091$ ,  $F(6,164) = 2.75$ ,  $p = .014$ . The inclusion of the

interaction term in Model 2 did not significantly increase prediction,  $R^2 \text{ Change} = .017$ ,  $F(1, 163) = 3.15$ ,  $p = .078$ . Thus, only the regression coefficients in Model 1 were examined. An examination of Model 1 regression coefficients indicated that CA significantly predicted empathic concern,  $\beta = -.251$ ,  $t(164) = -2.28$ ,  $p = .024$ . None of the other psychopathic traits, sex, or likelihood of need improvement condition predicted empathic concern ( $-.09 < \beta_s < .14$ ,  $p_s > .12$ ). These results successfully replicate the findings of Miller et al. (2015) and Steinert et al. (2015), and are consistent with the findings of Lishner et al. (2015), Agnello and Lishner (2013), and Frankowski and Lishner (2011). Specifically, when considered simultaneously with other psychopathic traits, emotional callousness is the only psychopathic trait that significantly predicts empathic concern.

### **Positive Affect**

A similar regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the prediction of the positive affect measure. Specifically, sex, empathic concern, likelihood of need improvement condition, CA, IM, EL, and CT were all used to predict positive affect (Model 1). A second model that included the interaction between CA and the likelihood of need improvement condition also was evaluated. Empathic concern was included as a covariate given previous research that suggests empathic concern for those in need is related to mood depending on whether the need is eliminated (Batson & Weeks, 1996). Thus, to fairly evaluate the association between CA and positive affect as a function of likelihood of need

improvement, it is necessary to rule out the possibility that any interactive effect on positive affect observed is due to variation in empathic concern.

Unstandardized and standardized regression coefficients predicting positive affect are displayed in Table 3.

Results of the omnibus test indicated Model 1 significantly predicted positive affect,  $R^2 = .447$ ,  $F(7, 163) = 18.86$ ,  $p < .001$ . The inclusion of the interaction variable in Model 2 did not significantly improve prediction,  $R^2 \text{ Change} = .001$ ,  $F(1, 162) = 16.43$ ,  $p = .716$ . Examination of the regression coefficients revealed that empathic concern significantly predicted positive affect,  $\beta = .218$ ,  $t(163) = 3.59$ ,  $p < .001$ , as did the experimental manipulation of likelihood of need improvement,  $\beta = -.043$ ,  $t(163) = 10.94$ ,  $p < .001$ . Specifically, feelings of empathic concern were positively related to feelings of positive affect, and those assigned to the high likelihood of improvement condition reported feeling more positive affect than did those assigned to the low likelihood of need improvement condition. Importantly, CA did not significantly predict positive affect,  $\beta = .042$ ,  $t(163) = .481$ ,  $p = .63$ . Additionally, EL, CT, and IM did not significantly predict positive affect,  $.008 < \beta_s < .080$ ,  $ps > .22$ .

Results failed to replicate those of Miller et al. (2015), but successfully replicated those of Steinert et al. (2015). Specifically, no general association between emotional callousness and positive affect was found, nor was an association between emotional callousness and positive affect found as a function

of likelihood of need improvement. The results suggest that the interaction finding of Miller et al. (2015) was likely a Type I error.

### **Choice Measure**

Finally, using an analysis that paralleled that used to predict positive affect, a logistic multiple regression was conducted to predict the binary article choice measure. Model 1 included sex, empathic concern, CA, IM, EL, CT, and the likelihood of need improvement condition. In Model 2, the interaction between CA and likelihood of need improvement condition also was included. Unstandardized regression coefficients predicting the choice measure are displayed in Table 4.

Initial analyses of Model 1 indicated a non-significant model fit,  $\chi^2(7) = 9.203, p = .238$ . Examination of the regression coefficients indicated that empathic concern did not predict participant Article 2 choice,  $b = -.15, X^2(1) = .74, p = .39$ , and CA did not predict Article 2 choice,  $b = .20, X^2(1) = .15, p = .70$ . Additionally, EL, CT, and IM did not significantly predict Article 2 choice,  $.07 < bs < .58, ps > .21$ . Nor did likelihood of need improvement predict participant choice of Article 2,  $b = .17, X^2(1) = .24, p = .62$ . The addition of the interaction variable in Model 2 did not significantly improve prediction,  $\Delta\chi^2(1) = .06, p = .81$ .

## Discussion

The present findings are consistent with findings originally reported by Lishner and colleagues (2012). First, the results confirm previous conclusions made by Lishner et al. (2012) and Lishner et al. (2015) that emotional callousness is the single psychopathic trait from the four-factor model negatively associated with empathic concern. Several follow-up studies suggested a positive association between emotional callousness and positive affect (Agnello & Lishner, 2013; Miller et al., 2015), whereas several follow-up studies suggested no association (Fankowski & Lishner, 2012; Steinert et al., 2015).

The current study, which conceptually replicated Frankowski and Lishner (2012) and Agnello and Lishner (2013) and directly replicated Miller et al. (2015) and Steinert et al. (2015), aimed to resolve the apparent discrepancy between those studies. Additionally, the present study included a behavioral measure that assessed whether emotionally callous individuals actually prefer exposure to suffering individuals over non-suffering individuals. Rather than a reliance solely on participant self-reports of their positive affect as in previous studies, the present behavioral measure was designed to assess behavioral approach versus withdrawal. No matter which measure was examined, psychopathic emotional callousness was not associated with positive affect in response to the need of another, nor was emotional callousness associated with desire for additional exposure to the person's need situation. Instead, when these associations were

tested concurrently, the results suggest emotional callousness is linked to a lack of care about others, but not necessarily enjoyment in their suffering. Thus emotional callousness appears to result in apathy as opposed to sadism in response to the needs of others.

### **Replication**

There is an increasing indication of the importance of direct replication in psychology (Schmidt, 2009; Stanley & Spence, 2014; Lishner, 2015). Although studies are routinely published with no follow-up direct replication, the present study, in conjunction with related preceding studies as well as extension and conceptual replication, illustrates the importance of direct replication.

Specifically, Agnello and Lishner (2013), as well as Miller et al. (2015) found statistically significant results suggesting that positive affect is in fact related to emotional callousness when people are presented with suffering individuals. The conclusions provided by those early studies suggest a convincing and publishable argument in favor of a connection between sadism and psychopathy. However, direct replication and extension data from Lishner and Frankowski (2012), Steinert et al. (2015), and the present study indicates that initial findings were likely Type I errors. The present study is yet another example of the particular importance of direct replication. As discussed in Lishner (2015), direct replications can uncover false-positive and false-negative findings that could otherwise undermine the information quality within the literature pool. The

present study should serve as encouragement for researchers to directly replicate their findings and to ensure dependable results form the basis from which to build theoretical understanding.

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

Results of the current study suggest no link between psychopathy and sadism. However, aspects of the study design may have failed to assess a true effect. For example, the participant choice measure could have been driven by factors other than the desire to see others suffer. Specifically, the manipulation used in the present study may not have addressed a potentially critical element of sadism. Wright (2010) includes in her definition of sexual sadism not only the arousal achieved through seeing another person suffer, but also the direct participation of the sadist in causing the harm to another. One could argue that the current study failed to find an effect of the manipulation on the interaction between callousness and positive affect, because more highly callous individuals were not given the opportunity to inflict the need upon the other. Further research should examine the instrumental component of sadism. If there is an inherent necessity for the opportunity of sadists to inflict suffering in order to become positively aroused, studies that expand on the present study should employ manipulations that give participants the opportunity to not only witness the suffering of others, but also to inflict that suffering. Other sadism research has already employed successful methodology that allows participants to inflict

suffering. For example, Buckels, Jones, & Paulhus, (2013) gave participants the opportunity to partake in the killing of bugs. The researchers designed a machine that would produce a crunching sound when participants placed bugs in the top of the machine. Although the bugs were not actually harmed, participants were led to believe they actively killed the bugs. They found that more highly sadistic participants were more willing to kill the bugs. Additionally, Buckels et al. (2013) found that more highly sadistic participants were more likely to put in extra effort for the opportunity to inflict harm on another person. Specifically, they found that more highly sadistic individuals were willing to work through an excessively boring task for the opportunity to kill the bugs.

Given psychopathic emotional callousness may be low to moderate in a student population, callousness within that population might not have been high enough to detect the point at which it shows a link to positive affect toward a person in need. Specifically, callousness may not relate to positive affect toward those in need in a linear fashion. Instead the relationship between positive affect and psychopathic callousness might be better described as curvilinear, such that as callousness increases, positive affect toward those in need initially remains level, and then increases more drastically once an inflection point is reached. Future research should examine the possibility that callousness relates to sadistic inclination in such a manner.

One other possible limitation is that the description of the follow-up article may have led participants to believe the student's need would be resolved in the

follow-up article. If participants believed the problem in the story would be resolved, callous individuals should be no more likely than non-callous participants to choose a follow-up article or a new article. That could explain the current results and still support initial hypotheses. Although the results of the present study indicate that positive affect varies as a function of need likelihood, one could argue that the differential nature of each article stimulus still evoked unique emotional responses to the stimuli even if they believed that the follow-up article included a resolution to the need situation. In other words, it is conceivable that the choice measure eliminated the effects of the initial article stimulus. Retrospectively, a pilot test that examines the validity of the choice measure would have helped depict participant motivations for the Article 2 choice.

The nature of the need presented in the article may not have been attractive to a sadistic individual. The initial article indicates that the ostensible student currently and will/will not continue to endure the difficulties associated with living with a disability. Callous participants may have been more highly motivated to seek exposure to suffering individuals if the suffering situation was more severe than the one depicted. One other possibility is that the need situation does not involve physical suffering. Although the inability to see correctly is undoubtedly an unfavorable situation, one could argue that the suffering actually depicted by the article is minimal. Were the article to include details of a physical injury where behavioral stress cues were emitted, the article might be more enticing to a sadistic individual. Future studies could employ materials that

involve more descriptive or overt stress situations. Use of video stimuli may also be more effective than use of text. Additionally, future studies should consider conceptualizations of sadism, such as that of Wright (2010), who argue for the importance of sadist participation in harmful activities to attain satisfaction. In her review, which aimed to distinguish between unusual sexual paraphilias and paraphilic disorders, Wright (2010) calls attention to the direct role highly sadistic individuals play in inflicting the harm or pain to which they seek exposure. The notion that sadistic enjoyment follows participation in the cause of harm should be addressed in future research that examines sadistic enjoyment to the suffering of others.

Finally, the results might not have the statistical power to reflect an accurate effect. As indicated in the previous section, meta-analytic analyses are arguably the more powerful method to detect and estimate a true effect. Previous studies revealed different results after aggregation (i.e. Miller et al., 2015; Steinert et al., 2015). Initial analyses of Steinert et al. (2015) indicate no interaction between callousness and the need outcome condition on positive affect. However, when aggregated with Miller et al. (2015), Steinert et al. (2015) found a smaller, but significant effect of the interaction between callousness and need outcome condition. The researchers should consider a complete data aggregation across all three studies. That would allow for a better evaluation the magnitude of the true interaction effect.

## **Conclusions**

The present study indicates no association between psychopathic callous affect and a sadistic enjoyment regarding the suffering of others. Although there are some data available and a viable theoretical rationale in favor of a predictive relationship between those variables, use of replication studies suggest the assumed relationship is overstated. The present study contributes to the extant literature on psychopathy by extending the understanding of the relation between psychopathy and empathic concern. Moreover, the finding that psychopathic callous affect was not related to sadism will hopefully convince future researchers to evaluate claims of a psychopathy-sadism link more critically.

Appendix A  
Tables

## Appendix A

Table 1  
*Correlations Among Multiple Regression Variables*

	Sex	Condition	Article 2 Choice	Empathic Concern	Positive Affect	Callous Affect	Interpersonal Manipulation	Erratic Lifestyle	Criminal Tendency	CA X Condition
Sex	.74 (.44)									
Condition	.04	.51 (.50)								
Article 2 Choice	-.11	.03	.30 (.46)							
Empathic Concern	.17*	-.06	-.10	3.72 (1.03)						
Positive Affect	.01	.63*	.06	.17*	2.30 (1.42)					
Callous Affect	-.50*	-.12	.18*	-.22*	-.05	2.16 (.49)				
Interpersonal Manipulation	-.38*	-.05	.21*	-.15*	.00	.67*	2.28 (.53)			
Erratic Lifestyle	-.33*	-.03	.14	-.11*	.04	.53*	.53*	2.52 (.55)		
Criminal Tendency	-.12	-.01	.11	.06	.10	.28*	.33*	.35*	1.39 (.42)	
CA X Condition	-.07	.95*	.06	-.14	.59*	.09	.09	.07	.02	1.07 (1.11)

*Note.* N = 171. \* Correlation is significant at 0.05 (2-tailed). Means (SD) along diagonal. Sex (0 = Male, 1 = Female). Article 2 Choice (0 = Continuation, 1 = New). Condition (0 = Low Likelihood, 1 = High Likelihood).

Table 2  
*Regression Analysis for Empathic Concern*

Model	Statistic			
	$R^2$	b	$\beta$	p
Model 1	.09 (.09)			
Constant		4.08	.00	
Sex		.18	.08	.38
Erratic Lifestyle		.27	.14	.13
Criminal Tendency		.29	.12	.15
Interpersonal Manipulation		-.14	-.07	.50
Callous Affect		-.54	-.25	.02
Condition		-.19	-.09	.23
Model 2	.11 (.02)			
Constant		3.55		
Sex		.17		.41
Erratic Lifestyle		.27		.13
Criminal Tendency		.25		.22
Interpersonal Manipulation		-.13		.55
Callous Affect		-.28		.31
Condition		1.03		.22
CA X Condition		-.57		.08

Note. N = 171.  $R^2$  Change in Parentheses. Sex (0 = Male, 1 = Female). Condition (0 = Low Likelihood, 1 = High Likelihood).

Table 3  
Regression Analysis for Positive Affect

Model	Statistic			p
	R <sup>2</sup>	b	$\beta$	
Model 1	.45 (.45)			
Constant		-.40	.00	.78
Sex		-.06	-.02	<.01
Empathic Concern		.30	.22	.91
Erratic Lifestyle		.02	.01	.22
Criminal Tendency		.26	.08	.99
Interpersonal Manipulation		.00	.00	.63
Callous Affect		.18	.04	<.01
Condition		1.83	.65	
Model 2	.45 (.00)			
Constant		-.50		.77
Sex		-.07		<.01
Empathic Concern		.30		.91
Erratic Lifestyle		.02		.23
Criminal Tendency		.26		.99
Interpersonal Manipulation		.00		.55
Callous Affect		.18		<.01
Condition		2.10		
CA X Condition		-.13		.72

Note. N = 171. R<sup>2</sup> Change in Parentheses. Sex (0 = Male, 1 = Female). Condition (0 = Low Likelihood, 1 = High Likelihood).

Table 4  
*Logistic Regression Analysis for Article 2 Choice*

	<i>Chi Square</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Wald</i>	<i>Odds Ratio</i>	<i>p</i>
Model 1	9.20 (9.20)					
Constant		-2.66	.44	.03	.93	.87
Sex		-.07	.18	.74	.86	.39
Empathic Concern		-.15	.40	.03	1.07	.87
Erratic Lifestyle		.07	.43	.35	1.29	.55
Criminal Tendency		.26	.46	1.57	1.78	.21
Interpersonal Manipulation		.58	.53	.15	1.23	.70
Callous Affect		.20	.35	.24	1.19	.62
Condition		.17				
Model 2	9.26 (.06)					
Constant		-2.82	.44	.03	.93	.86
Sex		-.08	.18	.79	.85	.38
Empathic Concern		-.16	.40	.03	1.07	.86
Erratic Lifestyle		.07	.44	.31	1.28	.58
Criminal Tendency		.24	.46	1.60	1.79	.21
Interpersonal Manipulation		.58	.63	.20	1.33	.65
Callous Affect		.28	1.63	.12	1.74	.61
Condition		.55	.72	.06	.84	.81
C.A.X Condition		-.17				

Note: N=171. R<sup>2</sup> Change in Parentheses. Sex (0 = Male, 1 = Female) Article 2 Choice (0 = Continuation, 1 = New) Condition (0 = Low Likelihood, 1 = High Likelihood)

Appendix B  
Consent Form

## APPENDIX B

**Student Newspaper Pilot Articles Study: Informed Consent  
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh**

The Department of Psychology supports the practice of protecting human participants in research. The following information is provided so that you can decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. Your participation is solicited but is strictly voluntary. We assure you that your name and responses will remain confidential.

If you decide to participate in this study, you will be asked to read pilot news articles. You will then be asked to complete questionnaires that assess your thoughts about and reactions to each article you read.

Some articles contain content that may create strong emotion for some readers. Although participation in this study will not directly benefit you, we believe that the information you provide will be useful in furthering our understanding of how people react to news articles.

If you agree to participate, you will be free to withdraw at any time and will still receive credit for the amount of time spent in the study. If you decide not to participate in this study, please let the researcher know and he or she will excuse you from the study. You do not need to tell the researcher your reasons for choosing not to participate. If you do decide to withdraw from the study, any information collected from you up to that point will then be destroyed.

All results will be recorded confidentially. We will not release information about you in any way or form that could identify you.

If you have any questions, please ask us or contact:

**David A. Lishner, Ph.D.**  
**Department of Psychology**  
**University of Wisconsin Oshkosh**  
**Oshkosh, WI 54901**  
**lishnerd@uwosh.edu**  
**920-915-2014**

If you have any complaints about your treatment as a participant in this study, please call or write:

**Chair, Institutional Review Board for  
Protection of Human Participants  
c/o Grants Office  
UW Oshkosh  
920-424-1415**

Although the chairperson may ask for your name, all complaints are kept in confidence.

**Consent Statement:** By signing the statement below, I am confirming that I am at least 18 years old and have received an explanation of the study. I agree to participate. I understand that my participation in this study is strictly voluntary, and that I may withdraw at any time.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Appendix C  
Study Introduction

## APPENDIX C

**Student Newspaper Pilot Articles Study: Introduction**

This study is being conducted by Dr. Lishner in the Department of Psychology, as a service for the student newspaper. The newspaper staff is thinking about adding a new column to the paper: "News from the Personal Side." For the past few years, Dr. Lishner, whose research interests deal with audience response to mass media, has pilot-tested various news columns for the student newspaper.

As a participant in this study, you will be asked to randomly select one of eight brief pilot news articles. Your reactions to the article will be assessed using questionnaires. You will then be asked to select one more article to read so we have as much input as possible about potential articles. Although the news articles used in this study are pilot articles, their content is factual. These articles have not and will not be printed in the newspaper; they will only be read by participants in this research.

At this time, please open the door to let the research assistant know you are ready to continue.

Appendix D  
Article Instructions

## APPENDIX D

**Student Newspaper Pilot Article Instructions**

On the next page is the pilot article you selected. Please open the folder, read the article and fill out the reactions questionnaire provided to you.

Appendix E  
Article: Positive Outcome

## APPENDIX E

**News from the Personal Side:  
Living with Optic Aphasia  
by Molly Green**

“It is certainly challenging at times,” states Hannah Philips, a senior at UWO. Hannah recently tested positive for a rare condition that causes adult-onset of Optic Aphasia, which produces improper functioning of the optic nerves. For Hannah, her symptoms began about 2 weeks ago. She describes her condition in a nutshell: “It’s like being blind to anything on my left side.”

Given that she can only see things in her right visual field, many everyday activities that most people take for granted can pose problems for Hannah. For example, she doesn’t drive because she has trouble seeing cars on the left side. Instead, she must ride the bus or get rides from friends and family in order to get around to important places like school or the grocery store. Even watching television or a movie is difficult if the screen is too big.

There is a surgical procedure that can treat optic aphasia. The good news is Hannah’s insurance has finally agreed to cover the cost of the procedure. Hannah is scheduled to have to surgery soon, after which she should no longer suffer from any vision problems. Hannah says she is excited: “It will be great when I can see normally again.”

Appendix F  
Article: Negative Outcome

## APPENDIX F

**News from the Personal Side:  
Living with Optic Aphasia  
by Molly Green**

“It is certainly challenging at times,” states Hannah Philips, a senior at UWO. Hannah recently tested positive for a rare condition that causes adult-onset of Optic Aphasia, which produces improper functioning of the optic nerves. For Hannah, her symptoms began about 2 weeks ago. She describes her condition in a nutshell: “It’s like being blind to anything on my left side.”

Given that she can only see things in her right visual field, many everyday activities that most people take for granted can pose problems for Hannah. For example, she doesn’t drive because she has trouble seeing cars on the left side. Instead, she must ride the bus or get rides from friends and family in order to get around to important places like school or the grocery store. Even watching television or a movie is difficult if the screen is too big.

There is a surgical procedure that can treat optic aphasia. The bad news is Hannah’s insurance will not cover the cost of the procedure. Unfortunately, Hannah cannot afford to pay for the surgery at this time. Presently, she is planning to seek financial assistance from state and national agencies to help raise enough funds to pay for the surgery. Hannah says she tries to remain optimistic: “With luck, maybe someday I will be able to see normally again.”

Appendix G  
Reactions Questionnaire

## APPENDIX G

**News from the Personal Side: Reactions Questionnaire**

**Directions:** Please indicate by circling a number the degree to which you experienced each of the feelings listed below for the person you read about in the article. Do not worry if you were not experiencing many of these feelings; only a few may apply to a particular article. Please be sure to circle a response for each item.

	not at all			moderately			extremely
1. happy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. alarmed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. sympathetic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. sad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. troubled	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. soft-hearted	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. warm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. joyful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. annoyed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. distressed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. compassionate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. envious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. upset	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. tender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. worried	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. disturbed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. entertained	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. moved	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. frustrated	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. sorrowful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. jealous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

22. amused	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. cheerful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. angry	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix H  
Article 2 Choice Form

**Second Article Choice Form**

One important question we are interested in examining is whether readers would like the proposed news columns to present new stories each week, or whether they would like to read "continuation articles."

Continuation articles are follow-up articles that offer readers an update on individuals and their situations that readers have previously read about. Thus, we are giving participants the option to choose which type of article they would like to read for the second story.

If you choose to read a continuation article as your second article, then you will be given an article that deals with the same person and events you read about in your first article. All continuation story articles provide an update on the person and his or her life approximately 1 to 2 months after the events described in the first article.

Alternatively, if you choose to read a new article for your second article, then you will be given an article that deals with a different person and events than what you read about in the first article. In this case, which article you read will be determined randomly.

At this time, please indicate which type of article you would prefer to read for your second article by selecting one of the two options below:

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to read a continuation article that deals with the same person and events I read about in the first article.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to read a new article that deals with a different person and events than what I read about in the first article.

Appendix I  
Article Evaluation Form

## APPENDIX I

**News from the Personal Side: Article Evaluation Form**

**Directions:** Please answer each of the following questions.

1. What was discussed in your article? \_\_\_\_\_

2. How interesting was the news article?

Not at all						Extremely
1	2	3	4	5	6	Interesting
						7

3. How likely would you be to read an article like this from the student newspaper?

Not at all						Very Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4. How worthwhile are articles of this nature?

Not at all						Extremely
1	2	3	4	5	6	Worthwhile
						7

5. How likeable did you find the person in the article?

Not at all						Extremely
1	2	3	4	5	6	Likable
						7

6. To what extent do you value the person in the article?

Not at all						Very Much
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

7. How much do you value the welfare of the person in the article?

Not at all						Very Much
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

8. To what extent did the person in the article seem vulnerable?

Not at all						Extremely
1	2	3	4	5	6	Vulnerable
						7

9. How great was the current need of the person in the article?

Not at all						Very Great
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

10. To what extent do you think the person in the article is to blame for causing his or her situation?

Not at all to blame 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Entirely to blame

11. How responsible is the person in the article for causing his or her situation?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely

12. To what extent did you imagine the thoughts and feelings of the person in the article?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Much

13. To what extent did you imagine yourself in the situation of the person in the article?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Much

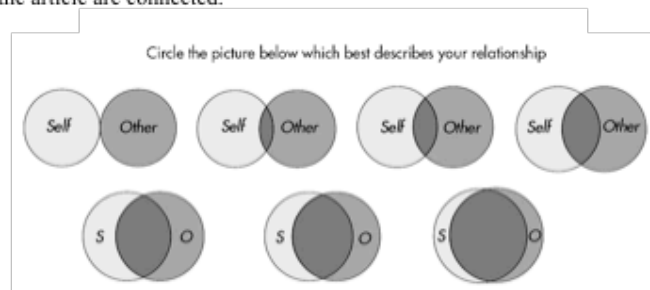
14. To what extent were you objective and detached while reading the article?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Much

15. How similar to yourself did you perceive the person in the article to be?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Similar

16. Below are seven pictures that depict possible ways of viewing the relationship between two people. Please circle one of these seven pictures that best indicates the extent to which you feel that you and the person in the article are connected.



17. To what extent do you see yourself and the person in the article as part of the same group?



Appendix J  
SRP-III & PPI

## APPENDIX J

**Self Perception, Demographics, and Beliefs****Questionnaires**

This packet contains several self-perceptions and demographic questionnaires that will give us a sense of what you are like as an individual. This type of information is useful because it helps us better understand people's reactions to different articles and better understand what types of articles they may find interesting. Please answer each question as honestly as possible and keep in mind that there are no correct or incorrect answers to these questions. When you are finished answering all the questions, just put the packet in the confidentiality envelope and open the door a crack to let the research assistant know you are finished.

## Self Perceptions Questionnaire 1

**Directions:** Please rate the degree to which you agree with the following statements about you using the scale below. You can be honest because your name will not be associated with your answers.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I'm a rebellious person.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I'm more tough-minded than other people.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I think I could "beat" a lie detector.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I have taken illegal drugs (e.g., marijuana, ecstasy).
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I have never been involved in delinquent gang activity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I have never stolen a truck, car or motorcycle.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Most people are wimps.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I purposely flatter people to get them on my side.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I've often done something dangerous just for the thrill of it.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I have tricked someone into giving me money.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. It tortures me to see an injured animal.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. I have assaulted a law enforcement official or social worker.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. I have pretended to be someone else in order to get something.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. I always plan out my weekly activities.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. I like to see fist-fights.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. I'm not tricky or sly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. I'd be good at a dangerous job because I make fast decisions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. I have never tried to force someone to have sex.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. My friends would say that I am a warm person.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. I would get a kick out of 'scamming' someone.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. I have never attacked someone with the idea of injuring them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. I never miss appointments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. I avoid horror movies.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. I trust other people to be honest.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. I hate high speed driving.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. I feel so sorry when I see a homeless person.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 27. It's fun to see how far you can push people before they get upset.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 28. I enjoy doing wild things.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 29. I have broken into a building or vehicle in order to steal something or vandalize.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30. I don't bother to keep in touch with my family any more.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 31. I find it difficult to manipulate people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 32. I rarely follow the rules.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 33. I never cry at movies.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 34. I have never been arrested.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 35. You should take advantage of other people before they do it to you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 36. I don't enjoy gambling for real money.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 37. People sometimes say that I'm cold-hearted.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 38. People can usually tell if I am lying.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 39. I like to have sex with people I barely know.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 40. I love violent sports and movies.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 41. Sometimes you have to pretend you like people to get something out of them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 42. I am an impulsive person.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 43. I have taken hard drugs (e.g., heroin, cocaine).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 44. I'm a soft-hearted person.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 45. I can talk people into anything.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 46. I never shoplifted from a store.

\_\_\_\_\_ 47. I don't enjoy taking risks.

\_\_\_\_\_ 48. People are too sensitive when I tell them the truth about themselves.

\_\_\_\_\_ 49. I was convicted of a serious crime.

\_\_\_\_\_ 50. Most people tell lies every day.

\_\_\_\_\_ 51. I keep getting in trouble for the same things over and over.

\_\_\_\_\_ 52. Every now and then I carry a weapon (knife or gun) for protection.

\_\_\_\_\_ 53. People cry way too much at funerals.

\_\_\_\_\_ 54. You can get what you want by telling people what they want to hear.

\_\_\_\_\_ 55. I easily get bored.

\_\_\_\_\_ 56. I never feel guilty over hurting others.

\_\_\_\_\_ 57. I have threatened people into giving me money, clothes, or makeup.

\_\_\_\_\_ 58. A lot of people are “suckers” and can easily be fooled.

\_\_\_\_\_ 59. I admit that I often “mouth off” without thinking.

\_\_\_\_\_ 60. I sometimes dump friends that I don’t need any more.

\_\_\_\_\_ 61. I would never step on others to get what I want.

\_\_\_\_\_ 62. I have close friends who served time in prison.

\_\_\_\_\_ 63. I purposely tried to hit someone with the vehicle I was driving.

\_\_\_\_\_ 64. I have violated my probation from prison.

## Perceptions of Self Questionnaire 2

**Directions:** The items below inquire about what kind of person you think you are. Each item consists of a *pair* of characteristics, with the letters A-E in between. For example:

Not at all artistic      A.....B.....C.....D.....E      Very artistic

Each pair describes contradictory characteristics—that is, you cannot be both at the same time, such as very artistic and not at all artistic. The letters form a scale between the two extremes. You are to choose a letter which describes where you fall on the scale. For example, if you think you have no artistic ability, you would choose A, if you think you are pretty good, you might choose D. If you are only medium, you might choose C, and so forth.

1. Not at all independent      A.....B.....C.....D.....E

Very independent

2. Very submissive      A.....B.....C.....D.....E

Very dominant

3. Very passive      A.....B.....C.....D.....E

Very active

4. Very rough      A.....B.....C.....D.....E

Very gentle

5. Very home oriented      A.....B.....C.....D.....E

Very worldly

6. Gives up very easily      A.....B.....C.....D.....E

Never gives up easily

7. Never cries      A.....B.....C.....D.....E

Cries very easily

8. Not at all self-confident      A.....B.....C.....D.....E

Very self-confident

9. Feels very inferior      A.....B.....C.....D.....E

Feels very superior

10. Little need for security      A.....B.....C.....D.....E

Strong need for security

11. Fragile	A.....B.....C.....D.....E
Strong	
12. Not at all confident	A.....B.....C.....D.....E
Very confident	

### Self Perceptions Questionnaire 3

**Directions:** This test measures different personality characteristics – that is, the ways in which people’s personality styles make them different from each other. Starting on the next page, read each statement carefully and decide how false or true it is as a description of you. Then mark the best choice in the space provided.

1) False          2) Mostly False          3) Mostly True          4) True

Even if you feel that a statement is neither false nor true about you, or if you are not sure which answer to choose, select the answer that is the closest to describing you.

Try to be as honest as you can. Please be sure to give your own opinion about whether each statement is false or true about you.

1) False	2) Mostly False	3) Mostly True	4) True
----------	-----------------	----------------	---------

- \_\_\_ 1. Dangerous activities like skydiving scare me more than they do most people.
- \_\_\_ 2. I have always seen myself as something of a rebel.
- \_\_\_ 3. I am easily flustered in pressured situations.
- \_\_\_ 4. I would find the job of a movie stunt person exciting.
- \_\_\_ 5. I might like to hang out with people who "drift" from city to city with no permanent home.
- \_\_\_ 6. A lot of people have tried to “stab me in the back.”
- \_\_\_ 7. I get mad if I don’t receive special favors I deserve.
- \_\_\_ 8. I am hardly ever the center of attention.
- \_\_\_ 9. It might be exciting to be on a plane that was about to crash but somehow landed safely.
- \_\_\_ 10. A lot of times, I worry when a friend is having personal problems.
- \_\_\_ 11. I tend to get crabby and irritable when I have too many things to do.
- \_\_\_ 12. I get mad when I hear about the injustices in the world.
- \_\_\_ 13. I don’t let everyday hassles get on my nerves.

- \_\_\_ 14. I could be a good "con artist."
- \_\_\_ 15. I have a talent for getting people to talk to me.
- \_\_\_ 16. I might like to travel around the country with some motorcyclists and cause trouble.
- \_\_\_ 17. In conversations, I'm the one who does most of the talking.
- \_\_\_ 18. I feel sure of myself when I'm around other people.
- \_\_\_ 19. Parachute jumping would really scare me.
- \_\_\_ 20. When people lend me something, I try to get it back to them quickly.
- \_\_\_ 21. I like to stand out in a crowd.
- \_\_\_ 22. It would be fun to fly a small airplane by myself.
- \_\_\_ 23. In school or at work, I try to "stretch" the rules just to see what I can get away with.
- \_\_\_ 24. I've often been betrayed by people I trusted.

1) False	2) Mostly False	3) Mostly True	4) True
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- \_\_\_ 25. It would break my heart to see a poor or homeless person walking the streets at night.
- \_\_\_ 26. Some people say that I am a "worry wart."
- \_\_\_ 27. It bothers me a lot when I see someone crying.
- \_\_\_ 28. I get stressed out when I'm "juggling" too many tasks.
- \_\_\_ 29. It's easy for me to go up to a stranger and introduce myself.
- \_\_\_ 30. I don't care about following the "rules"; I make up my own rules as I go along.
- \_\_\_ 31. I've been the victim of a lot of bad luck.
- \_\_\_ 32. I'm hardly ever the "life of the party."
- \_\_\_ 33. I've thought a lot about my long-term career goals.
- \_\_\_ 34. Some people have gone out of their way to make my life difficult.

- \_\_\_ 35. I sometimes lie just to see if I can get someone to believe me.
- \_\_\_ 36. I like my life to be unpredictable and surprising.
- \_\_\_ 37. I get very upset when I see photographs of starving people.
- \_\_\_ 38. I might like flying across the ocean in a hot-air balloon.
- \_\_\_ 39. I worry about things even when there's no reason to.
- \_\_\_ 40. When I am doing something important, like taking a test or doing my taxes, I check it over first.
- \_\_\_ 41. People I thought were my "friends" have gotten me into trouble.
- \_\_\_ 42. I think long and hard before I make big decisions.
- \_\_\_ 43. I tell people only the part of the truth they want to hear.
- \_\_\_ 44. I get blamed for many things that aren't my fault.
- \_\_\_ 45. I feel bad about myself after I tell a lie.
- \_\_\_ 46. I quickly get annoyed with people who do not give me what I want.
- \_\_\_ 47. I would like to have a "wild" hairstyle.
- \_\_\_ 48. I'm the kind of person who gets "stressed out" pretty easily.
- \_\_\_ 49. I usually think about what I'm going to say before I say it.
- \_\_\_ 50. Some people have made up stories about me to get me in trouble.
- \_\_\_ 51. I watch my finances closely.
- \_\_\_ 52. I am a daredevil.
- \_\_\_ 53. I would like to hitchhike across the country with no plans.
- \_\_\_ 54. I try to use my best manners when I'm around other people.
- \_\_\_ 55. I often place my friends' needs above my own.

\_\_\_\_ 56. If I can't change the rules, I try to get others to bend them for me.

## Self Perceptions Questionnaire 4

**Directions:** On the following pages, there are phrases describing people's behaviors. Please use the rating scale below to describe how accurately each statement describes *you*. So that you can describe yourself in an honest manner, your responses will be kept in absolute confidence. Please read each statement carefully, and then write a number on the blank that corresponds to the number on the scale.

### Response Options

- 1: Very Inaccurate
- 2: Moderately Inaccurate
- 3: Neither Inaccurate nor Accurate
- 4: Moderately Accurate
- 5: Very Accurate

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Do a lot in my spare time.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Love to daydream.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Can't stand confrontations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Am easy to satisfy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. React quickly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Like to begin new things.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Demand quality.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Can manage many things at the same time.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Laugh aloud.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Willing to try anything once.

## Demographics and Beliefs Questionnaire

**Directions:** Please answer each of the following questions as truthfully as possible. Please keep in mind there are no right or wrong answers.

1. What is your gender? (check one)

Male  
 Female

2. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What year are you in school?

Freshman  
 Sophomore  
 Junior  
 Senior

4. How many credits are you taking this current semester? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you have a job?

Yes  
 No

If yes, about how many hours do you work per week?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What is your ethnicity?

Caucasian  
 African American  
 Asian  
 Hispanic/Latino  
 Native American  
 Indian/Pakistani  
 Other

Appendix K  
Debriefing Form

## APPENDIX K

**Student Newspaper Pilot Articles Study: Debriefing Information**

Thank you for participating in this study. The purpose of this form is to provide you more in-depth information about the study. The actual purpose of this study is not to study people's reactions to pilot news articles. Rather, the actual purpose of this study is to examine how differences in personality are associated with affect emotional reactions toward and desire for exposure to those in need.

To examine this issue, we randomly assign half of the participants to a read an article where Hannah Philips had a serious, unresolved problem. The other half of participants were assigned to read an article where Hannah Philips had the same serious problem, but it was going to be resolved in the future. All participants then were given a choice about whether to read more about Hannah or about a new random person and completed measures of emotional reactions and personality traits after reading the article.

As you may have guessed by now, there were a number of misleading things that you were told about this study. First, the study is not being conducted in collaboration with the student newspaper. The student newspaper is in no way affiliated with this study. Second, there was only one article (with two endings), not eight, and the person and event you read about were fictional. There was also no second article to read after the Hannah Phillips article. The purpose for giving you this misleading information was not to trick you. Rather, it was given to you to allow us to keep constant the person in need and the need situation that was described so that we could precisely determine whether or not the two experimental conditions we created were solely responsible participants' emotional and behavioral reactions to encountering a person in need. If we told participants the full truth about the purpose of the study in the beginning and that the other article is actually not real, then participants may experience the situation as fictional or as pretend. This could lead participants to react very differently from how they would react in real-life situations when encountering people in need. Also, in some circumstances, if participants know about the actual purpose of a study, then they may feel compelled to report their reactions in an untruthful manner. For these reasons, when psychologists examine certain psychological processes they may withhold some information about a study or provide participants with some information about

the study that is misleading. We realize that you may feel a bit uncomfortable about having been told misleading information, but we want to assure you that it only was done to ensure that your experience in this study was as realistic as possible. Furthermore, it is important to remember that there is no correct or incorrect behavior or response to any of the questionnaires or materials in this study. However, if you still have any concerns about this study, then please speak with the research assistant about your concerns or contact Dr. David Lishner (at [lishnerd@uwosh.edu](mailto:lishnerd@uwosh.edu)). Either of these individuals will be more than happy to talk with you about any concerns you may have.

Again, thank you very much for your participation. We value the time and energy you spent in this study and it is our hope that the data you have provided will help us to better understand human psychology.

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