Mobilizing Empathy: From *Einfühlung* to *Homo Empathicus*

Marissa E. Barnes

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Abstract

This dissertation traces the movements of empathy across and within diverse contexts. Empathy is shown to be conceptually amorphous with significant degrees of variation in its applications. With an analytic lens focused on *use* (conceived of as the mobilization of empathy) heterogeneous conceptions of empathy are examined, illuminating the different psychological and social realities that are created when empathy functions in different ways. This systematic reconstruction is facilitated through an analysis of empathy's moral, relational, epistemic, natural, and aesthetic conceptual foundations, and its quantitative, gendered, pathological, political, educational, commodified, and professional uses. It is argued that at the core of empathy is a moral valence; specifically, that empathy is irreducibly connected to ethical questions and, thus, there is always a moral dimension inherent in its applications. Based on the reconstruction an ontology of empathy is derived that includes the individual, the other, and its moral valence. The dissertation concludes with considerations of the consequences of this ontology. Challenging empathy exclusively construed as a matter of individual intentionality, it is argued that socio-political, economic, and societal structures create, shape, and maintain much of what individuals have access to and experience empathically. For this critical understanding, the notion of empathy avoidance, arm-chair empathy, and regulated empathy, are introduced.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to empaths of every variety.

Acknowledgements

I write this acknowledgement with gratitude in heart and mind. There are several friends and angels who have lit my path along the way. Patti Perry, Dr. Kathy Abrishami, David Murray, Anne-Marie DePape, Laura Mansueti, Guila Scott, Chad Chin, Monica Horvath, and many others, thank you for filling my heart with joy, hope, and laughter.

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Academically and intellectually, I have had the fortune to meet many scholars along the way; however, my mentor, Dr. Thomas Teo, has seen me through rough patches and pulled me out of some thorny times with this work. Thank you, Thomas (although thanks do not sound like enough). In 2008, when Dr. Teo became my supervisor, I had stars in my eyes. I could study anything I wanted. I kept coming back to my experience of "feeling understood." One day while describing this to Thomas he stated that this "sounded like empathy," and my dissertation topic was hatched. Thomas, thank you for gently keeping me going and stepping into help when it really mattered. Thank you to Dr. Alexandra Rutherford and Dr. Ronald Sheese; your support was just what I needed to see this work to completion.

In preparing to write this acknowledgment I was taken to the beginnings of my academic journey. My undergraduate honours thesis supervisor, Dr. John J. Furedy (1940-2016). John saw past my outward appearance and saw that spark in my eyes; he might have referred to this as a "curiosity drive" (in line with the work of Dr. Daniel E. Berlyne, 1924-1976). My honours undergraduate thesis was on metatheory in psychology and my master's thesis was on the life and career of Daniel Berlyne. John was pivotal in making sure I went down the history and theory route in psychology.

Last, I wish to express gratitude to all the sentient beings who know what it is like to experience empathy. Observing, connecting, and feeling alongside others is the unwavering vision guiding this work.

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Mobilizing Empathy: From *Einfühlung* to *Homo Empathicus*

According to Jeremy Rifkin (2009), human evolutionary progression has arrived at the genesis of what he calls "*Homo Empathicus*," and it is no longer feasible to talk about human nature without recognition that modern civilization is comprised of individuals who are highly attuned to the mental states of many others; this attunement is a result of modern societies advanced communication technologies and globalization. Rifkin's statements might be described as a contemporary commentary on how empathy is and has become an inherent part of our evolved nature, or, alternatively, Rifkin's statements might best serve to exemplify how empathy has become a central feature of contemporary popular science discourse on human nature (i.e., the dissemination of information about what we are as a human species).

There is little doubt that empathy is a concept of considerable importance in most areas of information construction, dissemination and inquiry—scientific, literary, and civic. Empathy's prominence in both academia and public discourse is supported by listing a few observations that demonstrate its import: the proliferation of popularized scientific writing on mirror neurons and empathy (e.g., Goleman, 2006; Iacoboni, 2009; Ramachandran, 2006, 2011); the initiative to facilitate empathy and perspective-taking in middle school classrooms in order to teach specific subject-matter such as history (e.g., Davis, Yeager, & Foster, 2001); empathy fostered through schooling-based programs (e.g., roots and seeds of empathy, Gordon, 2005)[1] and used as an indicator of healthy social and emotional development in early childhood but also adult education too (Levine, 2005; Schonert-Reichl, Smith, Zaidman-Zait, & Hertzman, 2012; Shanker, 2014)[2]; attention given to empathy in fiction and non-fiction novels (e.g., Jamison, 2014; Keen, 2007); writings that suggest that cultivating empathy in all citizens (young and old)

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[1] See http://www.rootsofempathy.org/

[2] see Ashoka's initiative for the cultivation of empathy across the life span: http://empathy.ashoka.org/

will assist in alleviating some of what ails modern society (e.g., Krznaric, 2014; Trout, 2009; Zaki, 2019); and last, empathy's foray into political-civic discourse, for example used as central moral concept in the campaign and agenda of notables such as U.S. President Barak Obama (e.g., 2006, p. 67, on the need to address U.S. citizens' "empathy deficit"). As aptly questioned by Aarssen (2013) "Will Empathy Save Us?" Some believe so.

Empathy is a 21st century global "phenom"[3] ; it has become a beacon and buzz word for how we understand the experience of others, how to engage reciprocally and respectfully in relationships, and how we come to feel tender-hearted and compassionate feelings towards others. More telling is that in recent discourse (the last decade) there is a substantive discourse on "being an empath" (see McLaren, 2013).[4] Empathy is not only coveted as a prized way to experience others but it is also claimed to be a "way of being" (analogous to a personality trait).

Empathy's elevated status has been promulgated by Euro-North American discourse; however, its traction has led to its import into international contexts and discourse. Empathy is officially a concept of global concern. This concern takes several forms in terms of its political significance and what it means to use a word synonymously across the board without considering its interdisciplinary capital (Weigel, 2017). Knowledge that is amorphous is dangerous. This danger can be unpacked through feminist, post-colonial/decolonial, critical race, and indigenous lenses. Empathy is good for certain people in certain contexts. It is not good for certain people, perhaps across all contexts (specifically by exploring the experience of marginalized peoples

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[3] The term phenom refers to something or someone of remarkable ability or promise ("Phenom," n.d.). Empathy is referred to as a phenom because of its purported ability to alleviate all that ails human societies (i.e., if humans would be more sensitive and understanding when faced with the plight of the "other" things would be better). Empathy as a "cure all" is part of Western neoliberal discourse. The idea that empathy can "fix" structural and societal inequities is an example of the neoliberal hegemony. This idea has been mobilized and transported outside of the origins of its invocation; it is currently part of a globalized discourse on alleviating "world problems."

[4] Karla McLaren (2013) claims to be responsible for introducing the notion that people can be "empaths" in the late 1970s (p. 5) And there is no shortage of popular culture and op-ed commentaries on how to "manage your empathy" (i.e., your heightened awareness and attunement to the experience and feelings of others).

who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, plus other persons who do not identify as cisgender or heteronormative [LGBTQQIA+], racialized, indigenous, disabled, or disenfranchised).

Three recent examples (from the second decade of the 21st century) demonstrate the pinnacle of empathy's increased cultural significance.

The first is the Age Gain Now Empathy System (AGNES). AGNES is a suit created to simulate the experience of being a person in their mid-70s to late-80s. Developed in MIT's AgeLab, it is suggested that when one wears AGNES they experience the physical effects of aging (increased fatigue, reduced flexibility and strength, difficulty with vision and balance, and impaired dexterity). This system is supposed to allow one to experience the normal challenges of aging. According to Singer (2011) AGNES was designed "to help product developers, researchers and marketers empathize with their target audience: older adults" (p. 1). The developers suggest that people who are responsible for designing products and delivering services to the aging demographic in North America will benefit from experiencing what it is like to be "older"; this is intended to translate back into improved products and services.[5]

The second is the emergence of "a new breed of highly personal videogames on topics including depression, autism and cancer [that] are changing what it means to play videogames" (Dougherty, 2013, image1 caption). And in particular Dougherty draws attention to *That Dragon, Cancer*, a videogame developed by Ryan Green, Josh Larson, and other team members. It is a video game that serves as an interactive narrative: the game puts "players" in the role of a father unable to "beat" his terminally ill son's cancer. Ryan and Amy Green's son Joel (2009-2014), who was four years old at the time of the game's development, was fighting his third year

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[5] MIT's AgeLab and a description of the research on AGNES can be found at http://agelab.mit.edu/.

of terminal cancer. Ryan Green is an "indie game developer" and the game allowed him to deal with his experience and players learn how Christian faith helped him cope.[6] As described by Ryan Green "players relive memories, share heartache, and discover the overwhelming hope that can be found in the face of death."[7] According to Dougherty (2013) these "empathy games" are allowing gamers to tackle deeper "emotional territory" and as many proponents as there are for going there, there are also those that don't want their video-gaming to do this sort of emotional work (i.e., gaming is about escapism). Nonetheless the argument is made about the source of emotional charge in gaming—one produced through the vicarious experience of violence and aggression or one produced because of love, sadness, and frustration.[8]

The third example that points to empathy's cultural status within the second decade of the 21st century is in relation to public statements around its importance to humanity. At a recent media event Stephen Hawking (1942-2018) was discussing "threats to humanity," when asked what human shortcoming he'd most like to alter, he replied "human aggression" as it threatens to destroy us all." Hawking followed this sentiment with a call for increased empathy (Lewis, 2015). At the center of media buzz right now given the recent biopic, *The Theory of Everything*,

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[6] The term "indie game developer" refers to an individual who works on developing a video game not tied to a publisher. Indie developers could be connected to a small studio, but the work is considered "indie" if it is independent of one the major mainstream producers of video games. This analogous to the notion of "indie films" that are relatively small-scale and low on production costs when contrasted with the Hollywood blockbuster movie industry (see http://factor-tech.com/feature/so-you-want-to-be-an-indie-game-developer/)

[7] See the videogame website: http://thatdragoncancer.com/

[8] In relation to technology and empathy (e.g., to simulate the experience of age-related health changes, i.e., AGNES, or a father's experience with a terminally ill child, i.e., *That Dragon, Cancer*), artificial intelligence (AI) has become an increasingly popular area of exploration. One example of AI in relation to empathy is demonstrated in "Raising Devendra." Devendra is the name given to an AI chatbot by Sheila Chavarría. Chavarría downloaded a "therapy bot" and started research on how this AI chatbot worked. The bot is said to function via a "recurrent neural network"—meaning it learns as you talk to it and the more you interact with it the deeper and more complex that learning becomes. Chavarría did not want Devendra to become a robot replica of herself; therefore, she decided to take a rather unique approach and "raise" the bot and treat it with unconditional love (see https://www.npr.org/programs/invisibilia/788681319/raising-devendra). Within the context of this particular project AI and panhuman applications are not a focal point; however, the reader is encouraged to consult the following resources for additional information on empathy and AI in general, and within the context of business, education, and health care, see Asada (2015), Dial (2018), Rossi and Fedeli (2015), and Tanioka, Smith, and Zhao (2019). The *International Journal of Social Robotics* in particular covers the topic of empathy and AI extensively.

Hawking's words speak to a wide audience and surely build on the already existing foundation that empathy is something "we all need more of."

Of course, there are plenty of outlets for getting into the world of others—we do it through reading, imagining, dreaming, the theatre arts, etc. But what is so compelling about the first two examples (AGNES and the empathy video game) is that these out-of-my-body and into-other-body experiences are orchestrated and intended to facilitate empathy. That is, they have been created because empathy is viewed as the vehicle for understanding another person's experience or seeing things from their perspective—walking in the shoes of another. Likewise, there are a number of different words we could use to describe nonviolent, respectful, and humane engagement with others—compassion, kindness, caring, thoughtfulness etc. Hawking, however, selects empathy as a direct counter to aggression. And he elevates its status to the feature he believes is most important to cultivate in order to offset humanity's impending doom.

Despite empathy's widespread use however, there is also widespread discrepancy as to how to define and describe what it is. What is empathy? It is unlikely that you will find two people that share exactly the same definition. Although, there may be some common themes across some contexts (e.g., empathy refers to a "subject's" perception of another subject/object), there is little agreement about what exactly this means on a definitional, experiential, or practical level (e.g., does empathy refer to *feeling for* or *feeling like* someone/something, or is it merely comprehending the state of another person/thing without necessarily experiencing an emotional response or the same emotion you are attributing to them).

Debates about how to define and conceptualize empathy have occupied scholars interested in this concept since it first entered into the English vernacular (and prior to this).[9] To

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[9] Most credit E. B. Titchener's (1909, p. 21) translation of the German term *Einfühlung* ("feeling-into")—specifically, a rendering of Lipps's (1903/1979) theory of *Einfühlung*—as empathy's English-language birth. The

state that there are many varieties of empathy is far from a radical statement (see Decety & Ickes, 2009; Lanzoni, 2018). Empathy has come to include the sharing of emotions, perspective-taking, imagining, projecting, even having a bodily and visceral experience: it can be and is many things as long as one indicates their construal of choice (Batson, 2009). Given the breadth of possibilities empathy has become the object of interdisciplinary collaborations (e.g., Coplan & Goldie, 2011; Decety, 2012; Engelen & Röttger-Rössler, 2012; Lux & Weigel, 2017; Maibom, 2014, 2017)

In the contemporary scientific and academic discourse the popularized version is that empathy is a broad multilevel phenomenon consisting of increasing levels of complexity—the development of advanced forms (biologically, socially, and psychologically) from non-humans to humans (Carter, Harris, & Porges, 2009; Decety & Ickes, 2009; Preston & de Waal, 2002). And it may come as no surprise that despite its interdisciplinary reach empathy has been largely taken up as a central topic to be explained by those affiliated with psychology.[10]

According to Preston and Hofelich (2012) in a paper published in a special issue of *Emotion Review* on empathy "Most agree upon the existence of multiple overlapping but distinguishable empathic phenomena, including emotional contagion, sympathy, empathy, compassion, empathic accuracy, and cognitive empathy" (p. 24). In their article, "The Many Faces of Empathy," the authors suggest that primary issue of contention is related to what is meant by the term "self-other overlap"; that is, to what degree does the self and the other overlap at both a

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word empathy is derived from the Greek word *empatheia* (em "in" + pathos "feeling"); thus, the English term is a double translation from German to Greek to English. Interestingly, empathy has been re-translated back into German not simply as *Einfühlung* but as *Empathie* (Lux, 2017). Obviously, this connotes that the term empathy has taken on new meanings above and beyond those that would be consistent with *Einfühlung*. Questions remain about the precise origin of empathy: there is uncertainty about the date of its first use in English, and likewise, who should be attributed for the first translation (Lanzoni, 2012a).

[10] Noting that areas such as social neuroscience, social cognition, etc., are all construed to fall under the umbrella of psychology.

neural and subjective level? In disagreement with the authors I would urge that the problem is not only one of distinguishing "self-from-other," but also the role of "other-than-self" in constituting empathy. Specifically, what is meant by "other"? In this dissertation I constitute other as being more than another human being (i.e., the other is society, it is social structures and institutions, it is the concrete realities of everyday life) and empathy as being more than a matter of individual subjectivity. Empathy is a social phenomenon, and by this, I mean to suggest that it has both a socio-cultural and historical ontology, and it is a social construction, which in turn creates and re-inscribes particular forms of subjective reality. Rather than attempting to resolve debates about empathy by relegating it as either a psychological or a social phenomenon, this dissertation will look toward what might be construed as an intersection of both the psychological and the social—that is how does empathy get used by individuals discursively, and through these uses how can we better understand how certain social and psychological realities are created and recreated.

This dissertation reconstructs heterogeneous and various conceptions of empathy with an analytic lens which focuses on *use*—how is empathy mobilized. This analysis provides insight into how empathy operates in praxis. It illuminates the different possible psychological and social realities that are created when empathy functions in different ways. Ontologically and epistemologically evidence of how empathy works in everyday life would need to appeal to either concrete realities (e.g., empathy is linked to a decrease in the number of violent acts that occur in elementary school classrooms) or subjective experience (e.g., I experienced empathy for the victims of the crime I read about in the newspaper). In this dissertation, I rely on discourse as representative of both of these aspects. Discourse is taken to be social praxis (and social praxis includes both the subjective and the material conditions for action). My aim is to apply a novel

lens to the construal of empathy. Exploring the literature with an eye to its pragmatics, I reconstruct the concept in use both within and across contexts, this in turn demonstrates how empathy moves and operates in praxis (see e.g., Burman & Parker, 1993/2017).

The strategies of inquiry (methodology and methods) guiding this work include (1) a general hermeneutic approach used in history, the humanities, and philosophy, with attention to pragmatics and (2) a discourse analytic and social constructionist approach, with attention to "empathy language" (and a focus on the features and specific contexts in which this language is operative).

My work is akin to a hermeneutic text analysis and reconstruction. I provide a systematic examination of empathy conceptualized and mobilized. I analyze how empathy is theorized and used (written about, spoken about, and contextually applied) in scientific and public discourse. I have derived 15 non-discrete discursive "categories."[11] Five of these are considered foundational conceptions and include moral, relational, epistemological, natural, and aesthetic. Of these foundational conceptions a *moral valence* is construed as the core or centerpiece concerning ideas about empathy. Seven categories are application-based and include quantification, gendering, pathologizing, commodification, political, educational, and professionalism.[12] The last of these seven—professionalism—is further deconstructed and three specific professional contexts or fields of action are described (the health care field, e.g., doctors, nurses, therapists; the human services field, e.g., policing officers, social workers, customer service reps; and, industry, i.e., media and business, e.g., journalism, film-makers). Specifically, empathy is used to

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[11] The term category was determined the most appropriate label to describe my findings. In this context, categories do not refer to discrete entities (i.e., you are either in this box or not) rather it is quite the opposite. There are often times when one and the same discourse exemplify two categories simultaneously. The 15 discursive categories might best be thought of as keyword descriptors and they represent the major themes that emerged in my analysis.

define what it means to be a professional in three broad fields—health care, human services, and industry. The case of professionalism is provided as one example of how this analytic approach could be further developed.

The different conceptions and uses are organized based on prevalence and salience within the literature. In some cases, it is clear that foundational conceptions have combined to produce a particular application; for example, moral, relational, and epistemic conceptions are viewed as a precursor to therapeutic uses. In other cases, the foundational conceptions do not hold equal weight but are nonetheless present within certain applications of empathy; for example, aesthetics in art and the media. Likewise, several conceptions and uses operate concurrently within particular contexts; for example, the use of empathy within the political context is simultaneously imbued with moral and relational ideas and the concept of empathy as a form of interpersonal understanding share both epistemic and relational features. Last, several uses of empathy are at work simultaneously; for example, educational and political or quantitative and pathological etc. Notwithstanding the complexity of how the term is used, it is evident that these categories of use constitute a substantive contribution to the literature on empathy such that they cannot simply be subsumed as an exemplar of another use.

The penultimate analytic applied to the use of empathy relates to questions concerning its core ontological features. I have observed three core features that appear without waver in the literature on this concept. The first is that empathy emanates from the individual and it is construed as psychological process from the perspective of some subject. Second, empathy is always about the "other," and third, the discourse on empathy always has a moral valence. Following out of the recognition of these three core features, I have developed different pathways that the summation of these features can take (both positive, e.g., caring, and negative,

e.g., othering, ignoring etc.). I offer a suggestion that empathy as a psychological concept needs to be unpacked in terms its mobilization—how is it used and what are the possible consequences of its use. Empathy is construed as neither the doomsday nor the savior for humanity. Empathy is important, and it can be good; however, we can do better than we have been.

Viewing this concept as an "object" that people do things with and use in certain ways is empathy in action. Tracing the mobilization of empathy allows us to pull back from the precedent debates that have marred the concept and explore it from a unique vantage point. Focusing on the uses of words is not a unique approach; however, viewing empathy as a concept that people "do things with" (homage to Austin's, 1962/1975, *How to do Things with Words*) is novel. The central claim governing this dissertation is that empathy is used in a variety of ways towards a number of ends. I argue that these uses create possibilities for psychological and social realities. By altering the lens through which to construe empathy (i.e., from the vantage point of its linguistic and sociological functions) a contour not strongly represented in the literature is brought into focus—the societal and socio-cultural nature of this concept and its implications. Therefore, my exploration into how empathy is mobilized sheds light on areas that warrant further inquiry.

My approach differs from foregoing reconstructions of empathy: it focuses on discourse as action. It draws inspiration from classic works on language as action and as social theory (e.g., Wittgenstein, 1951/2001), landmark discourse analytic foundations (e.g., Foucault, 1969/1972), contemporary critical discourse analysis (e.g., Billig, 2003; Burman & Parker, 1993/2017; Fairclough, 2010; Parker, 2013; Wodak & Meyer, 2009; van Dijk, 2001), and general and critical hermeneutics (e.g., Gadamer, 1960/1989; Teo, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2014, 2015a, 2018). It also draws inspiration from scholarly writings about the socio-historical ontology and epistemology

of scientific and psychological objects (e.g., Danziger, 1985, 1997, 1999; Daston, 2000; Hacking, 1995, 2002; Smith, 1988, 2005, 2007). And last but certainly not least the social constructionist approach (e.g., Gergen, 1985, 2015a). This work serves in support of my construal of empathy as a human-kind object—it has historical and socio-cultural ontological and epistemological foundations; it is also consistent with my view of discourse and language as action (and social praxis). The approach exemplified in this dissertation aims to circumvent an essentialist narrative of this concept;[13] rather, this analysis illuminates how empathy is mobilized. How is empathy used to do things and what is its pragmatic function? This has important implications for understanding how empathy is put in action via text and in face-to-face communications, how does it circulate in public and popular culture discourses, and last, how is it used as a means towards certain ends. The strategies of inquiry adopted in this dissertation are inspired by hermeneutic and discourse analytic approaches; this allowed me to make sense of the vast literature on empathy.[14] This work is also grounded in critical historical and philosophical epistemology. The result is a theoretical reconstruction of a concept in action: A system of empathy.

This dissertation consists of five chapters. Chapter one introduces the problem of empathy and describes the aims and methodological approach adopted in this dissertation. Chapter two outlines empathy's connection to morality; this is construed as a core foundational

[13] The term essentialism is a philosophical term that suggests that there are certain natural features of an object or a person which can be used to distinguish one from another; the notion of essentialism was rhetorically used to justify racism, slavery, and negative eugenics (Livingstone Smith, 2011). In this dissertation my analysis does reveal a "core" moral "feature" that underlies empathy; however, this feature is not construed as natural, it is situated, and is consistent with my overall constructionist approach to the topic of empathy.

[14] This should be qualified by specifying my strategy of inquiry. I organized my "data," (i.e., different forms of scholarship and literature—text and talk) into different categories and then into overarching themes. I interpreted meaning with an eye to how empathy is being mobilized across and within diverse contexts. In addition, I attended to the consequences or impact of these mobilizations; for example, in what way does this illuminate the societal dimensions and the moral valence associated with empathy.

feature. Chapter three describes four other foundational conceptions of empathy (relational, epistemological, natural, and aesthetic). Chapter four introduces mobilizations of empathy (quantitative, gender, pathological, political, educational, commodified, and professionalism). Chapter five details emergent themes in the discourses on empathy, and three ontological features and possible outcomes following from a standard course to theorizing empathy.

Chapter 1: The Problem of Empathy

The definition of empathy found in one of the most common English-language dictionaries defines empathy as "the ability to understand and share the feelings of another" (Stevenson, 1998/2010, p. 574).[15] The term empathy is an abstract noun (an emotion, an ideal, an idea), similar to a concept such as justice; it refers to something that we cannot identify *prima facie* or perceive through our five physical senses (in contrast to a concrete noun or object such as a table).[16] Empathy is typically used in reference to persons—an attribute that human beings possess or demonstrate—although not always. Yet, unlike other abstract nouns (such as justice) empathy has morphed into more than the abstract noun to which it refers. The term empathy can be used in an active verb-like fashion, for example, one may be "empathizing," or "empathize"; it can also be used as an adverb, for example, in characterizing the mode in which a person might approach another (e.g., "empathically") or as an adjective to describe the disposition of a person

[15] There are however problems with this definition. Does the understanding of another necessitate that one shares the *same* feelings? This is just one question among a myriad of questions and points of clarification which crop up as we look closer at what empathy is? This question in particular, however, is one of extended debate prevalent among scholars ensconced in empathy discourses. For example, it is a point of clarification emphasized by Daniel Batson, who differentiates different forms of empathy in relation to its role in producing prosocial motivations (e.g., the empathy-altruism hypothesis, Batson, 1991, 2011). Batson (2011, p. 11) uses the term "empathic concern" to refer to "an *other-oriented* emotion elicited by and *congruent* with the perceived welfare of a person in need" (emphases added). The term congruent in this context refers to the valence of the emotion-response (positive or negative): is the response reasonable given the circumstances? For example, it is congruent to feel sadness for your friend who is crying because they have a lost a loved one (your sadness is felt for the other's situation and it may elicit sympathy or a consolatory response). The experience of sadness in this case is still other-oriented (e.g., as opposed to catching their sadness which would result in personal distress) and it is not the same emotion as the one experienced by your friend. In contrast Spinrad and Eisenberg (2014) would explain the feeling of sadness when your friend is sad as empathy (i.e., empathy involves feeling the same or a similar affective state) and sympathy is explained as an "other-oriented" response that does not involve feeling the same emotion as the other. This issue is also a point of debate among those involved in describing the role of empathy from the vantage point of "theories of mind" (ToM) (e.g., as it relates mind-reading and simulationist accounts) and also in relation to the cognitive social neuroscience and the neurophenomenology of empathy (e.g., as it relates to shared affective neuronal networks; see de Vignemont & Jacob, 2012; de Vignemont & Singer, 2006; Gallagher, 2012; Jacob, 2011; Michael & Fardo, 2014b; Zahavi, 2008, 2011; Zahavi & Overgaard, 2012 for a review of the ongoing debates among these scholars as it pertains to a first-person emotional experience in contrast to the perceived emotional state of another; the suggestion is that a personal emotional experience is not isomorphic with the perception of another's emotional state). This is one among several nuances emergent in the different debates about how to construe and conceptualize what empathy is.
[16] The issue of terms and words and their associated meanings and definitions is a point to be addressed in proceeding sections (e.g., epistemology and methodology).

(e.g., as "empathic" or "empathetic"), and more recently, as a specific type of person (i.e., the "empath")—these are among the most common forms in which the term is used.[17]

Empathy has been described as constitutively an emotion or feeling while also as primarily an activity of the rational mind; it has been suggested to occur at an unconscious level (without awareness and with automaticity and spontaneity) but also as something that can be taught as a skill (indicating that it can be cultivated deliberatively and with awareness); it has been used to describe a process (an experiencing of another person or inanimate object) but also as a personality characteristic or a quality inherent in a person's disposition (e.g. the "empath" or the "empathic practitioner"); it has been described as precondition for moral action (empathy leading to helping behaviour) and as an action itself (empathically engaging the other).

Can empathy be all these things? Yes, as there are many empathies. Therefore, it may be stated from the outset that my aim is not to uncover the "true" empathy, to refute one definition over another, and declare one to get at the "real" empathy more accurately than another. Each variety of empathy is true as a function of its socio-historical context (both recent and distant).

***On the Problem of Empathy* (1917/1989)**

One of the earliest critiques of Theodor Lipps's (1851-1914) theory of *Einfühlung* came from Edmund Husserl's (1859-1938) student, Edith Stein (1891-1942). The title of Stein's dissertation, *On the Problem of Empathy* (1917/1989), is self-explanatory—Lipps's inaugural theory of empathy was problematic; noteworthy, however, Stein's critique centers on and addresses reconstruction from the vantage point of phenomenology. Stein is critical of Lipps's theory of *Einfühlung* in a number of ways. Stein's dissertation is in part engaged in analytical

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[17] There continues to be ongoing debate about whether one should construe empathy as a process behaviour (*empathizing* with you); or as a description attached to a behaviour (I am empathically *listening)*; or as an emotion state in-and-itself (I *feel empathy* for you when I listen); or as a precursor to an emotion (I *have empathy* for you and *I feel sad* about your situation); or as a motive for behaving (I *have empathy* for you which *leads me to help* you).

dialogue with Lipps (Moran, 2004). Stein (1917/1989) provides a general statement about what empathy is from the outset: empathy "is the experience of foreign consciousness in general, irrespective of the kind of the experiencing subject or of the subject whose consciousness is experienced" (p. 11). In a nutshell empathy is about the consciousness (living subjectivity) of another person (the subject whose consciousness is experienced) being brought into the personal consciousness of the experiencing "I" (the experiencing subject). Stein expands on the notion that "empathy is a kind of act of perceiving *sui generis*" (p. 11); it is a specific type of experience in its own right that although like perception is unlike perception.[18]

Derivatively, one can conclude from Stein's critique that the problem of empathy is not just a critique about Lipps's theory; it is about the uniqueness of empathy, it is about how to properly explain and classify the phenomenon of empathy (an experience) in all its complexity (see Jardine & Szanto, 2017; Zahavi 2014b).[19]

Suffice it to say scholars had problems with "empathy" from the get-go. The problem of empathy, as situated within this dissertation, can be construed as both conceptual and historical. This is not to suggest there needs to be greater conceptual clarity with the intent to homogenize or unify its meaning; rather, the problem with the concept of empathy that is defended in this

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[18] Additional explanation is required to unpack what is meant by "like perception" but "unlike perception"; these details are provided in proceeding portions of this chapter (chapter one) and in chapter two.

[19] Stein proceeds to develop her thesis by attending to a number of issues with Lipps's theory. First, she argues that Lipps's theory does not do an inadequate job of explaining the phenomenon of interest: she contends that Lipps mixes a description of what happens with empathy with an attempt to explain why it happens (Jardine & Szanto, 2017; Zahavi, 2014b). Second, Stein challenges Lipps's theory of *Einfühlung* with respect to empathy as a "full experience" (p. 12) and as a "feeling of oneness" (p. 16). These points of critique can be understood by appealing to Stein's statements about primordial versus non-primordial experience: primordial experience is one that originates with the "I" (I am joyful) and a non-primordial experience is (the other's joy, even if experienced as an act of imagining or remembering of the "I"): "empathy . . . as the experience of foreign consciousness can only be a non-primordial one which announces a primordial one" (p. 14). According to Moran (2004), the subjective I (the experiencing subject) is "led" by and "follows" experientially the other's joy but this (is not a primordial experiencing of joy) is always the other's joy. The key to understanding this statement is that empathy is always about the other's experience, the experience is ascribed to the other and so it cannot merge or fuse with the other's and become one.

dissertation sidesteps this traditional approach (this approach will be detailed in the proceeding). The conceptual problem that is highlighted in this dissertation concentrates on the (almost) exclusive construal of empathy as an object of psychology (i.e., a phenomenon that happens within individual minds) at the expense of neglecting its socio-cultural genesis and the societal implications borne out of its social construction.[20] The problem is also an historical one, in so far as there is no one history of empathy to tell: just as there are multiple empathies, there are likewise multiple histories.

The concept of empathy is marred by contentious historical discourse. The quagmire that surrounds the concept has invoked debate, criticism, and rejection of its use among some academicians. Empathy's descriptions vary so widely as to render it elusive and the ambiguity about its meaning has led some to disdain its reification and reject it as a concept of value altogether.[21] As described by Verducci (2000, p. 78) "the definition and meaning of empathy remain recondite and its value disputed" and this has, as remarked by Stephen and Finlay (1999, p. 730), led to "definitional morass." The problematic of empathy's amorphous meaning was written about and identified as early as Reik (1948):

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[20] I am by no means the first to recognize the broader societal and systemic problems of "neoliberal hegemony" and "brain ideology" in relation to how empathy is constructed within academic and public discourses (e.g., Bloom, 2017; Chaudry & Slaby; Olson, 2013; Mostafanezhad, 2014; Pedwell, 2012a, 2012b; Slaby, 2013, 2014; Tucker, 2015; Wolfe, 2014; Young, 2012). A strong critical voice in exploring the broader socio-political functions of empathy discourses is academic and cultural critic Gary Olson. Olson (2007, 2008, 2009, 2010) published his writing in *Z Magazine*, which is available and online via *ZNet* (website: http://zmag.org). The culmination of Olson's work is now in book form *Empathy Imperiled: Capitalism, Culture, and the Brain* (2013). There has also been attempts to shift the conception of empathy to include the consideration of structural problems and inequities and its impact on an individual's circumstances (e.g., in social work); this is a move in the right direction, although it still remains tied to a certain conception of empathy that involves one person (social worker) understanding another's situation (the service user). And an assessment of the impact of structural problems on a client's wellbeing has become part of an inventory (e.g., social empathy index (SEI); Segal, Wagaman, & Gerdes, 2012) which has distinct epistemological disadvantages. I consider this work in chapter two, three, and again, in chapter five.

[21] Critics of empathy as a "cure-all" concept range from contemporary popular science writers such as Stephen Pinker (2011) to Amy Shuman (2005) professor of English, anthropology, and women's studies. There are a number of authors writing "critically" on the topic of empathy in politics, science, and education; although this a minority position (e.g., Blakeslee, 2006; Bloom, 2017; Boler, 1997; Brooks, 2007; Carey, 2006; Chabot Davis, 2004, 2014; Hess, 2016; Hickok, 2017; Olson, 2013; Pedwell, 2014; Shuman, 2005; Strauss, 2004; Solomon, 2003; Throop 2010).

> To speak of empathy has on occasion been as senseless as to discuss sitting in a box without distinguishing whether one means a compartment in a theater, the driver's seat, or a big case. The word empathy sometimes meant one thing, sometimes another, until now it does not mean anything. (pp. 356-357)

Although not all view this feature as necessarily negative, for example as suggested by Shlien (1997, p. 63) when he states that "[e]veryone who experiences empathy is entitled to propose a definition"; and many have embraced empathy's multiplicity.[22] Moreover, despite its status as "shape-shifter," empathy is considered by many a central concept through which to study the human condition.[23]

The Historical Record: Selective and Multiple Histories

A substantive of body of literature has amassed exploring the historical origins of empathy (see Agosta, 2010, 2011, 2014; Bridge, 2010; Coplan & Goldie, 2011; Edwards, 2013; Gladstein, 1984; Hunsdahl, 1967; Jahoda, 2005; Koss, 2006; Lanzoni, 2009a, 2009b, Lanzoni 2012b, 2018; Morgan, 1996; Pigman, 1995; Shaughnessy 1995: Stueber, 2006, 2008/2019; Wispé 1986, 1987, 1991; Zahavi, 2014b). There are variations: (a) in the type of history presented (e.g., "conceptual history," Edwards, 2013); (b) the extent of training in historical research methods by the authors of these different histories (e.g., Koss, 2006, identifies as an art

[22] Some write about the varieties of empathy *not* as something that we need to remedy. The solution is being more specific about how we use the term (e.g., see Batson's, 2009, book chapter entitled "These things called empathy: Eight related but distinct phenomena"). Moreover, there is a general movement towards what might be called an "integrative approach" to empathy (e.g., Decety & Jackson, 2004; see also Coplan & Goldie, 2011 for a discussion of the different ways one could approach empathy given the diversity and different definitions found in the literature; see also, Decety, 2012, for a collection of papers dealing with empathy from a number of different perspectives, which focuses on specific empathy-related issues relative to these perspectives).

[23] There are authors who suggest that empathy *is* the most important concept through which to recognize our "humanness" (e.g., Agosta, 2010). Although, it must be noted that empathy is not considered by all to be a uniquely human quality (e.g., Grenier & Lüthi, 2010, a neuroscience article that indicates that the neuronal substrates of empathy can be found in particular animals' brain structures and viewed in their brain's neuronal activities, in this article it is the brains of mice).

historian, whereas Zahavi, 2014b, identifies as a phenomenologist); (c) the epistemological and ontological positioning of writers of histories of empathy (e.g., Lanzoni, 2012a, p. 303 fn6 makes explicit, that "I frame my approach in the tradition of historical epistemology and ontology, defining a concept as a word to be understood in its sites"); and, (d) in the foci or points of emphasis in each source (e.g., Pigman, 1995; Shaughnessy, 1995, focus on Freud and empathy, whereas, Bridge, 2010; Morgan, 1996, focus on art theory and empathy). Despite disparate and varied content and foci, all of these accounts are important resources and aid in historicizing the conceptualizations and uses of empathy.

Whether a historical account is given towards an end, such as providing a theoretical contribution (e.g., Stueber, 2006), or whether one historicizes empathy through more traditional historical methods (e.g., Lanzoni, 2018), choices are made, and pathways selected. Historical scholarship always involves including some things and leaving other things out. As noted by Teo (2013) "histories of psychology are written from particular perspectives that privilege certain players and outcomes for specific reasons" (p. 3). Different vantage points yield different historical perspectives and thus to exclude a historical narrative because it does not conform to a particular convention in "doing history" seems counterproductive. In keeping with this, no one account can provide "the" history of the concept of empathy (Smith, 1988).[24] There are multiple histories that can be told. Keeping in sight the perspective and interests embedded in particular historical narratives I use history to understand and construct theory (Teo, 2015b).

The Germanic aesthetics theory context (e.g., Vischer, 1873/1994, and later Lipps's, 1903/1979) is most often considered the "site" of empathy's birth (although this has been

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[24] Note. Lanzoni (2018) appropriately titles her book *Empathy: A History*. Susan Lanzoni's has developed a research program and established robust scholarship on the topic.

contested, e.g., Curtis, 2014; Edwards, 2013).[25] The term *Einfühlung* in the mid to late 19th century *was used* in the Germanic aesthetic tradition and was often described as a feeling coupled with a sensation or physiological component. For example, when used by Robert Vischer (1873/1994) to refer to an optical sensing of form in the perception of an object, whereby an aesthetic viewing depended on the stimulation of muscles and nerves in the eyes, and this invoked a pleasurable sensation. According to this conceptualization, these bodily sensations evoked feelings, which were in turn projected into and felt in the object (a sort of merging of one's bodily sensations and feelings with the object), yet the initial physiological aspects of the sensation were a precondition for the experience.[26] For Lipps *Einfühlung* was the highest level of feeling, and it was primarily a *feeling* activity rather than a muscular sensation.[27]

From the late 19th to early 20th century, within the context of the German aesthetic tradition, some of the predominant issues included debate about *Einfühlung* as a theory of perception, questions about the role of motor movements and the relative contributions of "organic" sensations and "mental" factors, and discussion on the merits (or problems with) Lipps's theory of *Einfühlung* (see Gladstein, 1984; Hunsdahl, 1967; Jahoda, 2005; Lanzoni, 2009b; Morgan, 1996). Yet the response from European continental (both Anglo-Western and non-Anglo) aesthetic philosophers and experimentalists with regards to Lipps's (1903/1979) theory in particular was significant: psychological-aesthetic and empirically-focused perspectives emerged to augment (e.g., Prantl, 1910; Volket, 1905 as cited in Jahoda, 2005; Worringer,

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[25] Edwards (2013) describes the use of the terms "*fühlen*" (to feel) and "*Gefühl*" (feeling) within the German language in the 18th century. Edwards reviews the historical evidence and suggests that, although Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1804) may not have "self-consciously coined" the term *Einfühlung*, he used variations on the term that connote the same meaning (e.g., *hineinfühlung* [to feel yourself into]), and therefore may be thought of as the first to develop the concept (p. 3). For a review and interpretation of Herder's work, see Forster, 2002. See also Curtis (2014) as it pertains to theories of *Einfühlung*.
[26] Mallgrave and Ikonomou (1994) provide a fuller account of the contributions from Robert Vischer (1847-1933) and his father Friedrich Theodor Vischer (1807-1887) who also made a contribution to theories of *Einfühlung*.
[27] Lipps's theory of *Einfühlung* is expanded in more detail in Chapter 3.

1908/1967) or outright reject (e.g., Lange, 1901 as cited in Jahoda, 2005) Lipps's theory in the early 1900s (see also Curtis, 2014; Koss, 2006; Lanzoni, 2018; Morgan, 1996).

In terms of refining *Einfühlung*-theories within the context of German aesthetic traditions: Hunsdahl (1967) provides a listing of some of the German scholars whose affiliated traditions, broadly conceived, involved theorizing *Einfühlung* from 1900-1925; Lanzoni (2009a) focuses specifically on Violet Paget's (1856-1935, pseudonym Vernon Lee) involvement with *Einfühlung*-theory debates (see Lee & Anstruther-Thomson, 1897, 1912). Bridge (2010) attempts to place art historian Heinrich Wöfflin's (1864-1945) work within the context of theories of *Einfühlung* and aesthetics; and, Jahoda (2005), in addition to describing the position of a number of other scholars involved in theorizing *Einfühlung*, notably refers to an experiment to test Lipps's "sympathetic *Einfühlung*," which is placed within the context of Lipps's theory of aesthetic experience and/or aesthetic pleasure (e.g., Külpe, 1900, as cited in Jahoda, p. 158).[28]

Debates about *Einfühlung* were part of both the philosophical and empirical aesthetics movement; however, it is clear that *Einfühlung* although debated within the field of aesthetics in relation to the perception of art extended into to what might be referred to as a "broad field of aesthetics." This broad conception of aesthetics includes theories of perception in relation to *animate* beings and things, as well as the sensations and emotions involved in said experience. For example, Volkelt (1905) commented that *Einfühlung* is "by no means confined to the perception of art, but happens all the time in everyday life" (as cited in Jahoda, 2005, p. 155).

There is little debate, based on the historical record, that discussion, reconstruction, and

[28] Zahavi (2014, p. 103) provides an illustrative example of the adoption and co-optation of empathy by experimental psychologists in the early 20th century by quoting a remark made by an attendee at the Fourth Congress of Experimental Psychology in 1910. In summary what the remark illuminates is by the turn of the 20th century it was no longer acceptable for philosophers (i.e., phenomenologist Moritz Geiger, 1880–1937, in this context) to speak of empathy without attaching their theories to confirmation via experimental evidence (see also Curtis, 2014).

critique of Lipps's theory of *Einfühlung* constitutes a central position in continental European and Western philosophical and experimentalist discourses of the late 19th to early 20th century. Most histories of empathy deal with Lipps's (1903/1979) theory of *Einfühlung* emerging out of aesthetics as a starting point; however, pathways seem to diverge from there. Where emphasis is placed depends on what conception of empathy one wants to trace—a moral, aesthetic, epistemological, natural, or relational one.[29]

There are certainly competing narratives. And despite questions about the origination story (e.g., who was the first scholar to really describe empathy or *Einfühlung*)[30] there are a number of general insights that can be gleaned through a review of the historical scholarship. One general insight is that these narratives shed light on why empathy is often conflated or closely aligned with the concepts sympathy and understanding. These two concepts have their own associated traditions and historical narratives.

Sympathy and Understanding

Sympathy

The connection of sympathy and empathy originates out of late 18th-century British moral philosophy (and Scottish Enlightenment in the case of Hume). Sympathy ("fellow-feeling" or "feeling-with") was discussed by several moral philosophers, for example, Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) (see Schopenhauer, 1840/2010; see also Cartwright, 1999).[31] Within the academic literature, however, David Hume (1711-1776) and Adam Smith (1723-1790) are the ones most

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[29] I provide additional context in Chapters 2 and 3 as it pertains to these different conceptions of empathy.
[30] For example, within the German aesthetics context, it is suggested that Rudolf Hermann Lotze (1871-1881) played a role in Robert Vischer's development of *Einfühlung* (Bridge, 2010; Depew, 2005; Curtis, 2012; Malgrove & Ikonomou, 1994; Nowak, 2011b; Stueber, 2006). Likewise, as mentioned in the preceding, Johann Gottfried von Herder's (1744-1803) philosophical work has also been reinterpreted in terms of his founding contributions to the development of the notion of "feeling into" (Currie, 2011; Edwards, 2013). And, as described in the proceeding, the issue still remains open regarding who was the first to translate *Einfühlung* as empathy (Lanzoni, 2012b).
[31] See "On the Basis of Morals," which is the primary essay wherein Schopenhauer (1840/2010) discusses sympathy and compassion. This essay can be found in *The Two Fundamental Problems of Ethics* (Schopenhauer, 1840/2010).

commonly associated with the narrative around how sympathy and empathy came into conceptual contact.

Jahoda (2005) discusses the overlap in the use of the word sympathy and *Einfühlung* in Lipps's work. Consistent with this connection between Hume's (1739-40/2000) notion of sympathy and a number of modern-day uses of the term empathy, it is clear that to an extent Hume's notion of sympathy was integral to the development of Lipps's theory of *Einfühlung*. According to Agosta (2011) the point of intersection is clear: Lipps was responsible for translating Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature* into German (see also Zahavi, 2014, p. 103 fn2). It has also been documented that *Einfühlung* was referred to as an "aesthetic sympathy" by a number of German aesthetic philosophers of the 19th and early 20th century (Lanzoni, 2009a, 2009b). Aside from making a decision about whether Hume's use of the term sympathy (and its associated meanings) "matches" some definition of empathy—and by extension means that conflation is appropriate—the conceptual intermingling and evidence of the interchangeability of these terms is undeniable and the debate, as well as the conflation, has continued into the 21st century (see Bloom, 2017; Pinker, 2011).[32]

Lanzoni (2009a), Wispé (1991), and Boddice (2016) constitute valuable resources for reviewing various conceptions of sympathy. Wispé's (1991) *The Psychology of Sympathy* devotes significant space to describing some of the historical beginnings of the concept of sympathy. Wispé discusses Schopenhauer, in addition to Hume and Smith, under the heading "philosophers of sympathy" (pp. 18-26). Wispé also describes Charles Darwin (1809-1882) and

[32] There is a rich body of scholarship devoted specifically to exploring Hume (and Smith's conceptions of sympathy (Darwal, 1998; see also Dixon, 2003, 2012; Frazer, 2010; Turco, 1999 on British moral sentimentalism in the 18th century; see also Bohlin, 2009; Cohon, 2004/2010; Debes, 2007a, 2007b; Postema, 2005; Vitz, 2014 on Hume and sympathy; see also Darwall, 1999; Haakonssen, 2002; Heath, 1995 on Smith and sympathy; and, this is just a sampling of literary resources—a drop in the deep well of the scholarship).

William McDougall's (1871-1938) views on sympathy, under the heading "sympathy in biological context" (pp. 31-55; see also Batson, 2011, pertaining to McDougall and Darwin on sympathy). Both Darwin and McDougall construed sympathy as matter of "social instincts," and as one of the "tender emotions" in the evolution of sociality in the animal kingdom—from lower organisms to humans (see also Swanson, 2013).[33]

Boddice (2016), however, focuses exclusively on the impact of Darwin's use of the term sympathy within the context of Victorian scientific naturalism. Boddice's account addresses how Darwin's (1871/1899) treatment of sympathy was significant in the creation of a "moral economy" among Darwinians. Boddice demonstrates that, despite diverse uses, sympathy "after Darwin" was reinvigorated and became a central feature in defining morality within Victorian Britain. More will be said about Darwin (1871/1899) as it pertains to the moral discourse and the

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[33] According to Wispé (1991), Darwin viewed sympathy as an instinct, and grouped it together with other emotions (e.g., love) as forming the basis of the social instincts (love, sympathy, parental and filial affections). Wispé states that Darwin was less than comprehensive about the exact nature of sympathy. Sympathy in McDougall (1908/1960) was categorized as a "social instinct" (a non-specific innate tendency). Social instincts included suggestion, imitation, sympathy, and play; the common feature among these was their invocation in interaction (i.e., when one agent is interacting with another whether it be directly or through imagination). Sympathy in McDougall's system was largely centered on the transfer, sharing, and communication of emotions between sentient beings. His theory posited two forms of sympathy: passive and active. Passive sympathy was construed as a basic tendency to be sensitive and receptive to the emotions of others, and was about the communication of emotions in a group (McDougall also referred to this as "emotional contagion"). According to McDougall (1908/1960), this primitive form of sympathy is "the cement that binds animal societies together, renders the actions of all members of a group harmonious, and allows them to reap some of the prime advantages of social life in spite of lack of intelligence" (pp. 79-80). This instinct-based tendency to receive the emotion-states of others did not necessarily lead to a motivation to relieve, for example, the distress of another: a sympathetic induction of emotion and feeling is without an awareness of the meaning or significance of the emotion. Active sympathy, however, referred to a "higher-level" instinct, wherein there is a self-conscious desire to be in emotional harmony with others and thus active sympathy largely connoted that there is a strong motivational pull for groups to establish social unity, which may be achieved by helping another or resolving relational discord. McDougall's theory of passive and active sympathy denotes that sympathy at a basic level involves a basic receptivity to the emotion-states of others and in more advanced forms contributes to the demonstration of socially motivated actions on their behalf (e.g., responding to the need of another in context in order to maintain social harmony). Shortly after the publication of McDougall's *An Introduction to Social Psychology* (1908/1960), George Herbart Mead (1863-1931) provided a critique of McDougall's theory of social instincts. Mead (1908) characterized McDougall's system as one wherein action is a derivative of instincts, and through the combination of instincts with emotions, other more complex sentiments and notions such as self-consciousness and social consciousness emerge (p. 386). Mead is primarily critical of McDougall's treatment of self and social consciousness, asserting that McDougall endows the most primitive acts (or the lowest form of instinct) with both perception and emotion. Mead questions McDougall's treatment of *how* a basic instinct (i.e., McDougall's sympathy) develops from a rudimentary form into a phenomenon of self and social consciousness.

biological and natural science discourse on empathy in Chapter three.[34] Notwithstanding the recognition that Darwin was not using the term empathy, the impact of Darwinian thought on current moral and natural science discourse on empathy cannot be excluded.

As indicated, there were a number of "thinkers" (philosophers, psychologists, phenomenologists, scientific naturalists etc.) that attended to the concept of sympathy in the late 19th and into the early 20th century). By the late 19th century, the concept of sympathy functioned in a number of ways: as a cornerstone of theories of tender emotions, as an epistemological and moral faculty, as well as an aesthetic mode of appreciation. As demonstrated by Lanzoni (2009b) one method for understanding the diverse conceptualizations of sympathy is to review the contents of *Mind*, which, founded in 1876, serves a bridging point, in the sense that it included both philosophical and scientific treatments of psychology. The journal aimed to publish on physiological and scientific psychology and broad philosophical issues related to human mental life: this included an overlapping in scientific and philosophical discourses, and thus can provide an overview of sympathy through multiple lenses. Lanzoni (2009b) reviewed the contributions to *Mind* from 1876-1900 on the concept of sympathy and grouped the discourses as evolutionary ethics, epistemology, and aesthetics.

After a review of the primary sources cited in Lanzoni (2009a, 2009b) and Wispé (1991) it is evident that the construal of sympathy was broad: from Baldwin's (1894, 1897) reference to sympathy relative to a child's development of self (specifically, the social self and ethical self) to McDougall's (1908/1960) description of sympathy as a social instinct.[35] However, it was not just

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[34] Darwin (1871/1899) devotes two chapters to morality in *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* (i.e., Chapter IV on the moral sense, pp.97-127 and Chapter V on moral faculties, pp. 127-145).

[35] James Mark Baldwin (1861-1934) described the development of social awareness and social mores (e.g., sympathy) as a logical progression in the development of self; whereas others like McDougall construed sympathy in the language of graduated levels of instinct. Baldwin (1894, 1897) refers to an "ejective" process of self into others as a developmental feature—the self-aware child ejects his sense of self to others. This is part of his overall theory of personality development, wherein social feelings are described as "ejective." This is in relation to a child's

psychologists attending to the concept of sympathy and the like, so too were phenomenologists such as Max Scheler (1874-1928; see Scheler, 1913/1970). Stueber (2006, pp. 29-31) extends this observation to suggest that in psychology, and in social psychology in particular, empathy was merged with sympathy and it should therefore be no surprise that psychologists reproduced the multidimensionality of sympathy that had been currency with earlier psychologists and philosophers.

Lanzoni (2012a) unpacks a migration process—from *Einfühlung* within the context of German aesthetics at the close of the 19th century into American psychology as the term empathy in the early 20th century. And it is clear based on Lanzoni's review that part of the impetus for proposing the term empathy, as opposed to continuing to use sympathy, was to distinguish empathy from sympathy's "baggage."[36] Lanzoni (2012a) describes that "[Edward Bradford] Titchener [1867-1927] along with other English-speaking psychologists at the turn of the twentieth century, was in the business of translating major German psychological and psychophysiological texts for the English-speaking world" (p. 305). *Einfühlung* had been translated most often as sympathy or aesthetic sympathy; however, Titchener (1909) in an

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development of a sense of self and sense that others are "like or equal to himself" (Baldwin, 1894, p. 279). Baldwin (1894, 1897) uses the term "eject," which followed from Clifford's (1845-1879) use of the term. Clifford (1879 refers to ejects as "social objects." Clifford characterizes "belief in ejects" as ". . . . the belief in the existence of other men's consciousness" (pp. 74-75); this description connotes that human beings recognize other humans as like-minded beings. It suggests we have an ability to symbolically represent social objects/ejects. It is not clear from Clifford's writings what exactly an eject is (i.e., an emotion or a thought about and/or the object itself)? Ambiguity in defining an eject means it can refer to an infinite number of social objects (including other minds).

[36] Although there is evidence that Titchener (1867-1927) was not the first to translate *Einfühlung* into empathy; in the same year that Titchener's (1909) *Experimental psychology thought-processes* was published, James Ward (1843-1925) University of Cambridge, is credited by his colleague Charles S. Myers (1873-1946), as offering this same translation. Myers describes *Einfühlung* as "living into" the experience of an object (see Lanzoni, 2012a, p. 307). Moreover, Lanzoni (2012b) also points out that even the exact date of when the word empathy was put into circulation as translation is debatable (e.g., there is the suggestion that perhaps Titchener had been in discussion with his colleagues on this matter in 1908). Moreover, it is also evident that within the context of 19th century aesthetics there was debate about *Einfühlung*: specifically, was it simply a variety of sympathy (Lanzoni 2009a)? Lipps's construal of *Einfühlung* suggested that it was relevant to aesthetic perception as well as to the experience of other living beings; this likewise opened up debate about Lipps's theory within the context of phenomenology (see Zahavi, 2014b).

attempt to distance empathy from sympathy and make this a new technical term to be used in his laboratory opted to propose a new term. Although it is less apparent how—based on Titchener's construal of empathy as a broad kinaesthetic imaginative and projective capacity, an imaginative movement of mind into perceived objects—this translated into the laboratory without a more thorough discussion of Titchener's experimental psychology (see Jahoda, 2005; Lanzoni, 2012a, p. 309). It is noteworthy that Titchener differentiated empathy felt into situations and objects, from sympathy construed as together with another. Distinguishing sympathy from empathy is point of debate that has extended well into the 21st century.[37]

The debate regarding how empathy and sympathy differ reached an apex in the 1980s within developmental, social, and personality psychology. Wispé's article (1986) "The Distinction Between Sympathy and Empathy: To Call Forth a Concept, A Word is Needed" spoke to the conflation of sympathy and empathy. At this time the issue was salient—how do sympathy and empathy differ? Are there topics that were once the providence of sympathy now simply ought to be described as empathy?

Wispé (1986) argues that sympathy and empathy are distinct psychological states. Wispé is not alone in this assertion; however, where it begins to get thorny is when scholars are explicitly refuting one another on which term is the right one to use. For example, Nancy Eisenberg (b.1950) and colleagues have spent roughly four decades making a point of distinguishing empathy from other prosocial behaviours and concepts (see e.g., Eisenberg, 1986, 2007; Eisenberg & Fabes, 1990; Eisenberg, Huerta, & Edwards, 2012; Eisenberg & Lennon, 1983; Eisenberg & Miller, 1987; Eisenberg-Berg & Mussen, 1978; Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987). It is not uncommon to read in Eisenberg's work how another scholar's work might be called empathy

[37] Additional commentary on sympathy and empathy is detailed in Chapter 2.

from their vantage point, but she would define it as sympathy (see e.g., Eisenberg & Eggum, 2009, p. 72).

Eisenberg (2007) in particular differentiates empathy from sympathy: empathy is an "affective response that stems from the apprehension or comprehension of another's emotions state or condition, and which is similar to what the other person is feeling or would be expected to feel" (p. 72). For example, if you see a sad person and you feel sad you are experiencing empathy. Whereas sympathy is an "emotional response stemming from the apprehension or comprehension of another's emotional state or condition that is not the same as the other's state or condition, but consists of feelings of sorrow or concern for the other" (Eisenberg, 2007, p. 72). For example, you see a person in distress and feel concern for this person you are experiencing sympathy. Eisenberg comments that sympathy is often based on empathy but further differentiates that it may also be as a result of "cognitive perspective taking" (here we see Eisenberg further differentiating empathy as an emotion rather than a concept which includes both cognitive and affective components. Over the years Eisenberg continues to clarify how others' definitions of empathy is consistent with her definition of sympathy (see e.g., Eisenberg et al., 2012, p. 148).

Notwithstanding, this continued sparring on definitional distinctions, much of the general public now think of sympathy as "feeling sorry for" and empathy "as feeling with," as exemplified by popular, mainstream, and Euro-Western cultural writings and outlets of information dissemination, e.g., Stern & Divecha, 2015). It appears that Eisenberg's version of sympathy is much closer to popular conceptions (although the definitions of empathy proper are another issue altogether, see e.g., Morrell, 2010).

It would be incorrect to state the use of the term sympathy has disappeared altogether;

there are instances when a search on empathy will shore up results wherein the authors have used the term sympathy to describe the phenomenon of interest (c.f., Church, 1959 to Decety & Chaminade, 2003). This interchangeability often takes place in research on rodents and on the topic of the social perception of pain, within this context terms such as sympathy and empathy as well as sharing, transfer, and pro-social-related behaviours are used quite generally and interchangeably (see Smith, Hostetler, Heinricher, & Ryabinin, 2016). Consistent with this continued conflation the concept of sympathy will make reappearances throughout this dissertation; however, only in so far as it has featured central in the discourse on empathy proper (e.g., within the developmental psychology of Eisenberg and colleagues as well as the philosophical discourse on the distinction between the sympathy and empathy).

Understanding

As it pertains to historicizing the connection between empathy and understanding, one of the primary obstacles is that there are two strong German-language traditions associated with understanding: hermeneutics and phenomenology. Stueber (2006) provides a useful heuristic by couching the empathy and understanding relationship on epistemic grounds: "understanding other minds" or "other-person perception" (e.g., Husserl, 1912/1989, Stein, 1917/1989; Scheler, 1913/1970, and other phenomenologists)[38] and "understanding as method in the human sciences" (e.g., Dilthey, 1976).[39] Although this distinction could be contested, in so far as sympathy may

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[38] Within the phenomenological rendering of "empathy" there was also a likewise point of critique and reappraisal in relation to sympathy (e.g., Scheler, 1913/1970; see also Darwall, 1998; Schloßberger, 2016; Zahavi, 2014b).
[39] "Empathy" in this context is often a translation from *Hineinverstezen* or *Verstehen* (interpretive understanding; see Mueller-Vollmer, 1985). In the hermeneutic tradition the focus is on *interpretive understanding*, and there are a number of terms that could connote empathy (or be translated as empathy or understanding); this is done at the discretion of the translator in light of their interpretation of authorial meaning. This noted, the concept of empathy, in terms of an interpretive process, has been connected to hermeneutics (as might be suggested in the idea of understanding authorial intention through empathy or putting oneself in the mind-set of the author, which *may* be viewed as an empathic process). Most hermeneuts tended to avoid using the term empathy; it is found spattered in translations. It is suggested that the process of psychologizing the authorial intent as part of the interpretive process began with Schleiermacher (e.g., Schleiermacher, 1819/1990, see Ormiston & Schrift, 1990; Stueber, 2006).

not be construed as conceptually different in this regard (i.e., as void of epistemic components); it has been suggested that sympathy, as developed by Adam Smith (1759/2002), has an epistemic component (i.e., as a means of coming to an appreciation of another's viewpoint through a form of "perspective-taking"; see Haakonssen, 2002; see also Zahavi, 2014b, p. 103 fn2).[40] This has also been suggested in relation to Hume's writings on sympathy as well (see Waldow, 2009).

Notwithstanding the aforementioned remarks, Stueber (2006, 2008/2019) has structured his two most well-known works on this topic by first providing a brief consideration of *Einfühlung* within the context of aesthetics (discussing Vischer, 1873/1994, as the pre-ground for Lipps's, 1903/1979 theory). Stueber then proceeds by describing two different features connected to the concept of empathy: concern for others (broadly, e.g., connected to moral obligation and norms) and epistemological (or *knowledge of other minds* and *understanding* as a method for the human sciences). To this end Stueber connects empathy and sympathy through the lens of moral philosophy and traces its development into moral psychology; he draws attention to the sentimentalist and normative features of British moral philosophy and describes this tradition as less concerned about knowledge of other minds and more concerned with normativity.

Following a discussion of the moral discourse on empathy, Stueber (2006, 2008/2019) then traces the problem of "other minds" through the lens of phenomenology, specifically as a reaction to Lipps's (1903/1979) theory of *Einfühlung* (e.g., Husserl, 1912/1989, Stein, 1917/1989; Scheler, 1913/1970). The problem of "understanding" in the human sciences is traced through a discussion of Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) accompanied via connection to the hermeneutic tradition (interpretation and *understanding* [*Verstehen*], see also Makkreel, 1996).[41]

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[40] Haakonssen (2002) describes sympathy in Smith's moral theory as being used in two senses: (1) as approval and (2) as means of appreciating another's viewpoint; Haakonssen notes that sympathy is primarily important in the latter sense—that is, as a means of coming to understand or appreciate the viewpoint of others.

[41] In juxtaposition to Lipps's (1903/1979) theory of *Einfühlung*, Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) described *Einfühlung*

The distinction of empathy as primarily about feeling or thinking/comprehending or as both emotion and cognition is one among several debates in the literature (as are the variations in translations, and interpretation). Despite what might be contested distinctions, in addition to issues of historicism, as a heuristic Stueber's (2006, 2008/2019) organization serves as a useful starting point.[42]

The Phenomenological Critique

Approaching the empathy and understanding relationship via the phenomenological critique is an appropriate place to begin as this critique is situated as a direct response to Lipps's (1903/1979) theory. Scheler's, *The Nature of Sympathy* (1913/1970) provides (in addition to be about emotional life in general) a phenomenological account of empathy and broaches questions concerning experiential access to "other minds."

One of the primary obstacles in an attempt to distill Scheler's (1913/1970) take on "empathy," however, is that he uses a number of terms to refer to empathy-like experiences. He uses the term *Einfühlung* mostly in relation to a critique of Lipps's theory; however, Scheler also uses the term *Nachfühlen* (reproduction of feeling), *Nachleben* (reproduction of experience) and *Fremdwahrnehmung* (perception of others).[43] Zahavi (2010, p. 178) selects *Nachfühlen* to render as the closest translation to empathy.

For Scheler (1913/1970) empathy is a basic perceptually-based understanding of others, and he goes so far as to term his theory "a perceptual theory of other minds" (as cited by Zahavi, 2014b, p. 118). Scheler also distinguishes *Mitgefühl* (sympathy) as different from empathy in so

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(albeit he often used the term *mitfühlen* [to feel for] and/or [feeling with]) as the highest form of *understanding* (see also Gallagher, 2019; Harrington, 2001; Makkreel, 1996; Woodward, 2015).

[42] Stueber's personal area of expertise is the philosophy of mind. Stueber's (2006) account provides an historical review as a foreground towards developing his theory of basic and reeneactive empathy.

[43] A similar term, *Fremderfahrung*, is used by Husserl with increased frequency in his later years (as cited in Zahavi, 2014b).

far as it adds an emotional response. Empathy can be emotionally neutral, whereas sympathy (although connected because in order to feel sympathy one needs to perceptually recognize the other) adds the additional element of an emotional responsiveness. Scheler also stresses that *Nachfülen* (reproduction of feeling) should not be confused with *Mitfühlen* (emotional sharing), yet he later introduces the term *Einsfühlung* (emotional identification) as precondition for empathy (*Nachfühlen*). All of this amounts to some confusion about the interaction between empathy and sympathy (Zahavi, 2010, 2014b). From Scheler's vantage point empathy does not presuppose sympathy (i.e., as form of basic perception) yet sympathy as mentioned above, in part, depends on empathy.

It is useful to understand Scheler's (1913/1970) work as directed towards clarifying the experience of the emotional expressiveness of the other; the project seems to be functioning doubly on the personal-experiential level—the "my" (an individual's personal experience) of "your" (another individual's personal expressiveness)—which are both personal. Based on the double duty consideration of first-person and second-person experience ("mine" and "yours") Scheler's work has come to be connected to what is referred to as "varieties of togetherness" or "collective affective intentionality" (Schloßberger, 2016). Yet his emphasis on this shared experience ("we-intentionality") was theorized (phenomenologically) primarily from the first-person perspective or on the personal level (i.e., the bulk of Scheler's work focuses on individual subjectivity—how is the other and their expressiveness perceived and experienced personally by "me").[44]

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[44] The notion of "we-hood," "shared intentionality," and collective intentionality has been established as a topic unto itself within the contemporary phenomenological and philosophical discourse (see Brinck, Reddy, & Zahavi, 2017; Salice & Schmid, 2016). This discussion typically takes place under the banner of social ontology; for example, as found in the work of Tuomela (2013), as well as notables such John Searle (1995) (see also Schmid, 2009). Moreover, there is a richness of philosophical interpretation abound within the field; for example, some writers such Szantos (2016) suggest that Husserl was in fact the first to use the term "social ontology." Often within the context of writing on social ontology there is an explicit address regarding how "empathy" factors into the phenomena of

As mentioned in the preceding, Lipps's (1903/1979) theory of empathy served as a prompt and a point of critique for Scheler's (1913/1970) work. One of the primary objections that Scheler had with Lipps's empathy theory concerned the suggestion that projection and a matching of emotion is involved in the perception of the other. For Scheler, in order to understand the other one does not need to match the other's emotion state (e.g., I do not need to feel angry to recognize the anger in the other) nor does one need to project oneself into the other's experience (the distinction between self and other remains intact). According to Zahavi (2014b, p. 150) among Scheler and other phenomenologists there were points of disagreement; however, on this matter they agreed. The phenomenological critique of empathy rejected the suggestion that this process involved matching (imitation, simulating, mimicry) and projection (one does need to take on the other's experience as one's own in order to understand). The phenomenological critique suggests that experiential access to the other is much more direct and unmediated than is suggested by a projection- and simulation-type explanations.

Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) spent most of his career (from 1905 to 1937, just one year before his death in 1938) working on the topic of intersubjectivity. Husserl's views are expressed in a number of his works, published in his lifetime or authorized for publication posthumously (Shum, 2014). Dan Zahavi's (1996/2001) doctoral dissertation *Husserl and Transcendental Intersubjectivity* [*Husserl und die transzendentale Intersubjektivität*] explored Husserl's transcendental philosophy in relation to his theory of intersubjectivity (as cited in Zahavi, 2014b). The lion's share of Zahavi's ensuing research on the topic of empathy serves to make accessible (for English-language speakers) what the phenomenological proposal amounts to

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interest. I will revisit these ideas (i.e., other-oriented perception, shared intentionality, we-hood, and social ontology) and the contemporary discourse on this issue in Chapter 3. And discussion regarding the construal of empathy within this discourse will be attended to.

within continental philosophy (with Husserl, 1859-1938, as the starting point). A large proportion of the proceeding description is credited to Zahavi's research on this topic.

As it pertains to Husserl's theory of empathy and intersubjectivity, Zahavi specifies the complexity as "Husserl's investigation of empathy, by contrast [to Stein], is not restricted to a few select publications . . . . empathy was a topic that he worked on during most of his philosophical career" (Zahavi, 2014b, p. 124). Zahavi indicates that it is not surprising to find snippets of his views on empathy sprinkled throughout most of his work. Additionally, much of Husserl's work on intersubjectivity still exists in manuscript and handwritten-note form, this archived material is referred to as the Husserlian *Nachlass*.[45]

Within the public domain the most extensive translated coverage on intersubjectivity is found in *Ideas II and Cartesian Meditations* (see Haney, 2002; Hermberg, 2006; Shum, 2014); however, as already mentioned this by no means does justice to Husserl's reflections on the topic of empathy. Zahavi also suggests looking for sprinklings of Husserl's take in other works as well. There is a consortium of scholars attempting to reconstruct Husserl's treatment of intersubjectivity and empathy (see e.g., Depraz, 2001, 2012; Szanto, 2016; Thompson, 2001; Zahavi, 2001). As mentioned, Stein (1917/1989) without a doubt provides a direct link to Husserl's work on empathy and intersubjectivity (which is suggested to a certain extent to reflect Husserl's views on the topic). Zahavi (2014b) notes that Stein's dissertation is actually one of the most succinct and organized phenomenological renderings on the topic. And Stein directs much of her critique not only to Theodor Lipps (1851-1914) but to Max Scheler (1874-1928) too (see

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[45] The *Nachlass* consists of 400, 000 handwritten and catalogued papers. According to Zahavi (2014b, p. 124) the most important insights into Husserl's work on empathy and intersubjectivity are found in a set of research manuscripts that span three volumes (Husserliana, 13-15). These papers contain Husserl's phenomenology of intersubjectivity. Zahavi completed his doctoral dissertation on Husserl in 1996 (German language) and has spent time exploring these unpublished manuscripts as well as letters written by Husserl.

also MacIntryre, 2005; McDaniel, 2016; Moran, 2004; Svenaeus, 2016).[46]

The Tradition of *Verstehen* and Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics concerns theories of interpretation and understanding. At the foundation of hermeneutics are questions concerning how we make sense of and grasp the meaning of what others say (most often the focus is on text exegesis or verbal forms of communication, but it can also be placed on the actions of others). Given that understanding (perhaps, of another person's intended meaning) forms the bedrock and is in large part the subject-matter of the art and science of hermeneutics, it comes as no surprise that empathy (in the form of understanding the other) is closely connected to this practice. However, it also clear that the notion of understanding as conceptualized in the hermeneutic tradition differs in a number of significant ways from empathy theory (along the lines suggested by Lipps, 1903/1979 within this context; see, Harrington, 2001; Makkreel, 1996, 2000).

There are a number of early hermeneutic thinkers whose work has been connected to the proposition that there is a "psychological" component to the interpretative process: for example, Schleiermacher (1819/1990) and understanding authorial intention (cf. a more systematic interpretation of words and text as entities in and of themselves; see Grondin, 1994, 1995, Mueller-Vollmer, 1994; Palmer, 1969). Dilthey (1833-1911) has been associated with the "psychologization" of the interpretative process (Stueber, 2006, pp. 10-12; cf. Dilthey, 1976, p. 169). Dilthey, along with other hermeneutic philosophers, however, were not concerned with questions of how or to what extent we are aware of the contents of other-minded persons (i.e.,

[46] In relation to the movement of phenomenology (experiencing oneself and the other) into the realm of social ontology the work Alfred Shütz (1932/1967) *Phenomenology of the Social World* merits comment. In Shütz's work the notion of interpersonal understanding and intersubjectivity moves explicitly towards the social and collectivity (see Backhaus, 2002; León & Zahavi, 2016). A phenomenological rendering of social ontology will be addressed in chapter two as it pertains to the relational discourse on empathy.

how we describe this experience, cf. the phenomenological approach). Rather Dilthey's aim was to establish *Verstehen* (understanding) as primary method used in the human sciences; thus, the focus was directed towards how we come to justify and evaluate one interpretation over another (Makkreel, 2000). For example, a hermeneutic interpretation of a particular text must be situated within a larger historical narrative, wherein, a particular passage may be an example of or illustrate a larger narrative than what is found in the particulars of each line or utterance. Thus, it must be emphasized that hermeneutics is not about the inner workings of a particular individual's mind, rather, authorial intention constitutes one piece of the interpretative process as one attempt to distill the meaning and significance of a particular work within historical context (Harrington, 2001; Makkreel, 1996).

Dilthey's (1976) vision for understanding went beyond authorial intention (i.e., the individual or psychology). In brief, Dilthey rejected the idea that psychology could or should make use of methods used in the natural sciences (aimed at *Erklären* [explanation], and including such things as hypotheses, causal accounts, and prediction). Dilthey specified that psychology was a human science (emphasizing *Erlebnis* [experience], *Nachfülen* [re-feeling], *Nacherleben* [re-experience] and *Verstehen* [understanding]) (Feest, 2007, 2010; Galbraith, 1995; Harrington, 2001). This human science was descriptive rather predictive.

Two remarks are required about scholarship on Dilthey in relation to empathy and understanding. First the concept of *Nachfülen* (albeit a feeling) was suggested to be of a rather distanciated tone (Harrington, 2001). Second, the feature of *Erlebnis* (experience) within Dilthey's work has a phenomenological tone to it; however, the level of description and the ascription of meaning and significance to a particular expression of experience (text, word, action) would be placed within a larger socio-historical narrative. It was hermeneutic process

(Makkreel, 1975/1992).[47]

Much of the same obstacles encountered with other German-language works on empathy are encountered with hermeneutic texts; as mentioned in the preceding, one has to rely on the translator's interpretation and also question whether the translators' use of certain terms has the same meaning as one's own construal of said terms. It appears that the challenges of presenting a chronology and history of the traditions associated with hermeneutics and *Verstehen* are of the exact nature of those one wants to describe: A hermeneutic obstacle in creating an account of hermeneutics in connection to the term "empathy" (Malpas, 2015).

Notably there is much overlap in the literature on the problem of other minds and the hermeneutics of interpretation. Likewise, the discourse on epistemology and empathy is closely connected to and at times intertwined with the relational discourse (e.g., knowledge of other minds and *interpersonal* understanding). Consistent with this overlap in the discourses, a number of hermeneuts are also considered phenomenologists (e.g., Heidegger).[48] Theories of intersubjectivity and phenomenology (i.e., experiences between persons and the perception of other-minded persons) are found within writings coming out of the hermeneutic tradition (e.g., there is overlap in writing on Wilhelm Dilthey, 1833-1911, Edmund Husserl, 1859-1938, Martin Heidegger, 1889-1976, and Hans-Georg Gadamer, 1900-2002, and others; see Agosta, 2010, Galbraith, 1995; Makkreel, 1996; Owen 1999, 2000; Theunissen, 1986; Zahavi, 2001). These

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[47] The corpus of Dilthey's writings represent his broader aims: he was concerned with more than the inner (consciousness, mind) versus outer (materiality) debate. As is the case with most philosophical writings, "early Dilthey" differs from "later Dilthey" in their aims and scope (Makkreel, 1975/1992).

[48] For example, Lou Agosta (2010) describes Heidegger's (1927/1962) "hermeneutic of empathy" (see also Owen, 1999, 2000). And although Agosta acknowledges that Heidegger's writings ultimately lend towards his rejection of empathy (as primordial), he aims to augment Heidegger's fundamental ontology and complete what he sees as incompleteness in the development of *Miteinandersein* (being-with-one-another). In contrast to Heidegger (1927/1962) he suggests that empathy *is* primordial, authentic being-with-one-another is possible, and that *Dasein* (human being) attains its humanness from *Miteinandersein*. Agosta's claim is that empathy is a precondition and a means for the recognition of humanness.

points of intersection are also notwithstanding the other continental philosophers (e.g., Emmanuel Levinas, 1905-1995; see Goodman, 2012) that address questions concerning experiential access to the other and what this entails.

It is clear that hermeneutics and phenomenology are closely connected, if not, explicitly intertwined (e.g., hermeneutic phenomenology).[49] As mentioned in relation to phenomenology the issue of translation and interpretation remains an obstacle—does one have sufficient justification to translate German-terms such *Nacherleben* (re-experiencing, which for Dilthey was the highest hermeneutic task; Harrington, 2001) as taking place through means such as empathy (c.f., Bulhof, 1980, p. 27). Answers to questions of this nature, are firmly tied to one's definition of empathy (as well as one's interpretation of Dilthey's writings; see also Gallagher, 2019; Woodward, 2015). Thus again, the polymorphous nature of what empathy entails looms in attempts to resolve how these concepts are connected.

Family-Resemblance Conceptions

Within this context it also seems fitting to address religious, existential, and social philosophical writings such as Martin Buber's (1923/1958) *I and Thou*. Consideration of the theological and existential bases of empathy is beyond the scope of this work. These writings are historically relevant to the conceptual bases of empathy (e.g., moral, relational, epistemic) yet categorically it is a challenge to place these works in among the other discourse traditions aforementioned.[50]

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[49] Evidence of a putting the hermeneutics of understanding into the domain of human relationships is evidenced by works such as Martin and Dawda (1999), who provide a Gadamerian-hermeneutic approach to interpersonal understanding in psychotherapy. Likewise, Orange (2011) integrates psychoanalytically-based intersubjectivity theories (i.e., neo-Freudian and relational psychoanalysis) with hermeneutics. See also Rossi (2002) on phenomenology in relation to hermeneutics.

[50] For example, the notion of a compassionate god or communion with an "absolute other" can be connected with the notion of empathy, or a sort of connection to someone greater than oneself through transcendence or an act of imagination. I briefly touch on some of the theology-based ideas that have been connected to the concept of empathy (e.g., in a connectedness and communion with a higher power), as well as on transcendental, metaphysical or

There are a number of broad traditions with rich histories that play a part in empathy's history: aesthetics, moral philosophy hermeneutics, phenomenology, theology, and then to add more fish to the pot we also have evolutionary theory (Darwin, 1809-1882; see e.g., 1871/1899). Moreover, there are debates within these traditions as to who said what first, for example, it has been suggested that prior to Vischer (1873/1994), it was actually Rudolf Hermann Lotze (1817-1871) who first introduced the notion of *Einfühlung*, whereas others suggest that it was Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803) as it pertains to "feeling one's way into" (see Currie, 2011; Edwards, 2013; Frazer, 2010; Nowak, 2011b). And part of the problem with tracing a conceptual history in another language is a matter of appropriate interpretation, if there are variations in translation and word form, then, there appears to be an opening for a multiplicity of hermeneutic questions to emerge. In addition, in so far as an historical analysis includes tracing the use of words in context, there are also ahistorical yet philosophically and theoretically grounded works engaged in the interpretation of this scholarship; for example, Agosta (2010, 2014) on Heidegger (1927/1962). There are a number of historical narratives one could trace, yet even if one selects a specific narrative to tackle, linearity in these narratives is often absent (perhaps a counter-factual history would be the better approach).

Perhaps a naive approach to understanding the fluid meanings of the term empathy might include tracing the histories of the particular terms, so one would trace empathy through the term "sympathy," or "understanding," noting points of translation into "empathy." Or one could move from non-English language discourse and trace from *Mitgefühl* (sympathy) or *Verstehen* (understanding) in relation to *Einfühlung*, and then to empathy. The historical record reveals,

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totalizing philosophies that suggest that attempts to understand the "other" through empathy is an act of "violence" to the "absolute otherness" of the other (e.g., Emmanuel Levinas; see Goodman, 2012; Goodman & Severson, 2016; Sugarman, 2002; Todd, 2003).

however, that terms (as well as multiple variations on their use in the German-language) were often used interchangeably within historical context. Additionally, German terms must be situated within a Germanic language context, and without context for each varying use, an accurate and word-to-word translation is beyond the scope of this work.

There appears to be significant discontinuity and a lack of explicit rationale (i.e., we would be historicizing and interpreting for each particular scholar) for why certain terms are used less frequently than others, or why one term is abandoned and replaced by another. This appears true across the language spectrum and the traditions mentioned (moral philosophy, phenomenology, and hermeneutics). Last, in view of the plethora of other terms that are also closely connected to empathy, one might ask why the use of these terms are not also considered as possible sites for suggesting a place of origin for empathy? Some of the assorted descriptive features one might consider include identification, projection, imitation, mimicry, imagination, emotional contagion, and interpersonal understanding. Or one could focus on German-language terms like *Mitsein* (being with), *Nachfühlen* (reproduction of feeling/re-feeling), *Fremdwahrnehmung* (perception of others), and *Nacherleben* (re-experience). One could even focus on other "tender" emotions such as compassion, caring, altruism, benevolence, etc.

The problem of empathy is historical; however, despite the often-cited disclaimer that empathy has a "short history," where this history begins is less than straight-forward.

Approaches to Dealing with Empathy's Multiplicity: Ahistorical Approaches, Models, Theorizing, or Creating New Variants and Terms

Pinker (2011) locates the origins and associates the original sense of the term empathy with the aesthetic tradition of *Einfühlung*. He notes that most trace the English-term empathy to. Titchener's (1909) translation but notes that in 1904 "Vernon Lee" (i.e., Violet Paget, 1856-

1935) was using the term. Pinker, therefore, views the origination of empathy within the tradition of aesthetics—a feeling associated with the perception of inanimate object.

Pinker (2011, pp. 574-577) argues that the dramatic rise in empathy's popularity coincides with the term taking on a meaning that is closer to sympathy or compassion; empathy has come to be equated with an altruistic (or sympathetic) concern for others.[51] Pinker suggests that this moral overtone isn't necessarily a component of thinking about what another is thinking or feeling. Pinker outlines four *different* mental states for which the term empathy has become synonymous: projection, perspective-taking, mind-reading (also referred to as theory of mind, mentalizing, or empathic accuracy), and emotional contagion. Pinker notes that the catch-all of the buzz word empathy, in the sense that it is construed as a moral concept associated with sympathy and compassion, is manifested in "the meme that uses *mirror neurons* as a synonym for sympathy, in the sense of compassion" (p. 576). Pinker is spot on with this characterization, as Ramachandran, one amongst a number of poignant examples, refers to mirror neurons as "Dalai Lama neurons."

Apart from an accurate depiction of the "empathy craze" characterizing the last decade of the 20th and the first two of the 21st century, what is notable is the attempt to once again parse off different conceptions of empathy and then pinpoint the sense in which one uses them(in the case of Pinker, 2011, he refers most often to the notion of sympathetic concern as synonymous with empathy throughout the weight of this book). This is a common practice of scientists, philosophers, and academicians using the term empathy. Yet there are competing narratives.

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[51] The "sentimental" turn evident in the recent moral discourse on emotions and in particular the science of emotions has been historicized by a number of scholars. For example, see Dixon (2003, 2012) for an historical account of how the passions and sentiments were replaced by contemporary terms like emotions, primarily from the 18th into the 19th century; see also Dwyer, 1999; Frevert, 2011). Whereas Ley (2011) discusses what she calls the "turn to affect," which she situates relative to the science of emotions (e.g., work on reading emotions in the others facial expressions and neuron activation patterns).

When it comes to specifying how empathy differs from other concepts, the formula is as follows: list the different meanings of the term and then specify your choice. This formula is modified to a greater extent within the context of the discourse community wherein each scholar is engaged. Some scholars attempt to provide argumentation and evidence that they are getting to what empathy really is (e.g., Wispé, 1986; see de Vignmont & Singer, 2006, who sets out four conditions of empathy). Another approach is to provide a theoretical basis that attempts to encompass all the diverse concepts (emotional contagion, perspective-taking etc.) associated with the term (e.g., Preston & de Waal, 2002, c.f., McLaren, 2013).

Batson (2009, 2011) identifies eight meanings; Batson is a proponent of multifaceted conception of empathy; thus, in recognition that with "remarkable consistency, exactly the same [descriptive] state that some scholars have labeled empathy others have labeled sympathy" Batson comes to the conclusion that he knows "no clear basis—either historical or logical—for favoring one labeling over another" (Batson, 2011, pp. 19-20). In keeping with Batson's long-standing career and continued work on the topic his construal of empathy-related phenomena has become a prominent "go-to" source on the multiple uses of the term. Batson (2009, pp. 4-8) lists *eight psychological states* that are represented in the psychological literature on empathy.[52]

[52] The emphasis is added to draw attention to the fact that these different psychological states are by no means the only varieties of empathy that exist. Within social work practice, for example, empathy as described as a component of a social workers relationship with a service user was expanded to include social-structural dimensions (following from the work of Fook, 1993); this re-construal of empathy was intended to overcome empathy construed as a personal, psychological, and depoliticized concept. Jessup and Rogerson (1999, p. 173) list four different types of empathic responses within the context of an interpersonal context: emotional, social, structural, and post-structural. Karen Gerdes and Elizabeth Segal have developed a social work model of empathy that explicitly addresses "social empathy" (Gerdes, 2011; Gerdes & Segal, 2009; Gerdes, Segal, Jackson, & Mullin, 2011; Gerdes, Segal, & Lietz, 2010; Segal, 2007, 2008, 2011, 2018). There is also terms like "narrative empathy" (Keen, 2006, 2007) used within the context of literary scholarship; "historical empathy (e.g., Bryant & Clarke, 2006) used within the context of education; "kinetic empathy" (Foster, 2005) used within the context of dance choreography; "inclusive cultural empathy" (e.g., Pedersen, Crethar, & Carlson, 2008; Pedersen & Pope, 2010) and "cross-racial empathy" (Davis, 2004, 2014) used within the context of an inquiry into empathy, cultural consumption, and anti-racist reading; "cosmopolitan empathy" (Mostafanezhad, 2014) used within the context of critical media studies and tourism development. These different forms will be taken up in proceeding portions of this dissertation. In addition, the emphasis on the psychological also draws attention to the strength of psychology's strong hold on empathy. It is

1. Knowing the others thoughts/feels (e.g., cognitive empathy; empathic accuracy);

2. Adopting the posture or matching the neural response of another (e.g., motor mimicry; imitation);

3. Coming to feel as another feels (e.g., "sympathy"; affective empathy; emotional contagion);

4. Intuiting or projecting oneself into another's situation (e.g., *Einfühlung*; imaginative projection; reenactive empathy; aesthetic empathy);

5. Imagining how another is thinking and feeling (e.g., cognitive role taking; psychological empathy);

6. Imagining how one would think or feel in the other's place (e.g., perspective taking; vicarious introspection);

7. Feeling distress at witnessing another person's suffering (e.g., personal distress; sympathetic pain).

As one moves through the general descriptions of these *different* phenomena one begins to see how murky the distinctions are, for example, one might question how imagining differs from intuiting or projecting oneself into the other's situation?

Batson (2009) suggests that his "hope is to reduce confusion by recognizing complexity" (p. 8). He points towards two fundamental questions in relation to empathy: how do we know another person's thoughts and feelings, and what leads a person to respond with sensitivity and care to the suffering of another? Clearly, the latter question is related to his longstanding interest

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acknowledged that empathy is a concept of interdisciplinary interest but psychology's representation on the topic of empathy is by far among the strongest. For example, empathy is a topic of investigation in almost every area of psychology—from developmental psychology, to clinical psychology, to biological psychology etc. The focus on empathy as feature of an individuals' mind (i.e., the psychologization of empathy) of course makes it obvious why it would be a concept central to the discipline. This is addressed in proceeding portions of this dissertation.

in empathy and altruism; however, it is also evident that within the literature these are two primary topics related to empathy (i.e., knowing other minds and caring for others). Batson concludes by stating that although the distinctions are subtle there is little argument that these states are distinctly different, and he urges that the best one can do is recognize these different states and make clear the labeling scheme one is adopting.[53]

According to Amy Coplan, (2011a, p. 4), the most common ways that empathy is used by researchers include

(A) Feeling what someone else feels;

(B) Caring about someone else;

(C) Being emotionally affected by someone else's emotions and experiences, though not necessarily experiencing the same emotions;

(D) Imaging oneself in another's situation;

(E) Imaging being another in that other's situation;

(F) Making inferences about another's mental states;

(G) Some combination of the processes described in (A)–(F).

Uses A through F appear a relatively modest list, however, this modesty disappears in reference to G. Specifically, empathy may be construed as a combination of A through F in a manner of the researcher's choosing. This sets the stage for an exponential number of uses to emerge.[54]

It must be emphasized that the most common, and at first glance, least complex, distinction is to differentiate "emotional empathy" from "cognitive empathy"; this distinction has

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[53] The primary modes of differentiation, in Batson's (1991, 2011) model, centers around two features: motivation and degree of self-other overlap.

[54] Batson (2009) and Coplan (2011a) are only two among a number of reconstructions; for example, Battaly (2011) offers three different definitions in currency and de Vignemont and Jacob (2012) offer five conditions (see also Michael, 2014; Zaki, 2019; for a discussion of some other variations on "what empathy does or does not include" as proposed by some specific scholars.

the most historical traction and was initiated in the late 1960s and early 70s. For example, the Hogan Empathy Scale (Hogan, 1969) measured a cognitive form of empathy in contrast to another very popular empathy measure during this time period The Questionnaire Measure of Emotional Empathy (Mehrabian & Espstein, 1972); although notably the first explicit measures of empathy were initiated in the late 40s and early 50s (e.g., Dymmond, 1948, 1949, 1950; Kerr & Speroff, 1954, 1955) it is apparent that differentiating an emotional from a cognitive component was one of the first actions taken in pursuit of clarifying what empathy is.[55] The most common way of distinguishing affective varieties of empathy from cognitive varieties is to identify emotion-centric forms from thinking- imaginative- ascription of beliefs- forms. For example, phenomena such as “emotional contagion,” “personal distress,” “sympathy/empathic concern” or “affective empathy” (proper) would be considered affective empathy; these phenomena involve some form of emotion on the part of the empathizer. On the other hand, phenomena such as “perspective-taking” or “simulation” would be thought of as a cognitive form of empathy (Maibom, 2017, pp. 1-2).

Consistent with the aforementioned some scholars opt to explicitly distinguish the affective from the cognitive as their research focus (e.g., Shamay-Tsoory, 2009), while others opt to distinguish low-level mechanisms (e.g., emotional contagion) from higher-level processes (e.g., perspective-taking) (e.g., Leiberg & Anders, 2006) in their description of the multiple varieties of empathy. Further distinctions are made by differentiating basic from more advanced forms (e.g., reenactive; Stueber, 2006), and even “narrow empathy” (affect-based) from “broad empathy (epistemic-based) (Matravers, 2017).[56]

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[55] Although, noteworthy that Stoland (1969) developed a Fantasy-Empathy Scale. Issues concerning the measurement of empathy will be addressed in chapter four.

[56] Distinguishing low level/basic forms from higher level/complex forms is not unique to contemporary scholarship (i.e., Husserl, 1912/1989; Lipps, 1903/1979; Stein, 1917/1989 describe different variations/levels of empathy).

There are a number of scholars and researchers that are committed to construing empathy as a broad, all-encompassing, and inclusive concept (e.g., de Waal, 2009) while others believe that this takes us in the wrong direction (e.g., Coplan 2011b).[57] Finally, there are other empathy-interested academics and scientists that I think of as "mediators." They attempt to build bridges and do integrative work across divides in the empathy literature; for example, Jean Decety (b. 1960) brings a neuroscientific lens to empathy work in a diversity of academic areas and across professions (see e.g., Decety, 2010, 2011, 2012; Decety & Cowell, 2015; Decety & Grèzes, 2006; Decety, Michalska, & Akitsu, 2008; see also Decety & Batson, 2007).[58] Some scholars that are construed as mediators do deviate from their research focus to outline their construal of different empathic phenomena whilst circling back to their research foci (e.g., Daniel Batson, b. 1943).[59]

The diversity of meanings ascribed to empathy is a common thread debated in its history from Stein (1917/1989) to Reik (1948) through to the present. Peggy Mason and Inbal Ben-Ami Bartal (2010) report on a multidisciplinary conference that brought together experts in their

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[57] A reliance on the affective-cognitive bifurcation has become less prevalent; most researchers have embraced the notion that mental states include a mix of both thoughts and feelings and that these two things are in a process of dynamic interaction. Likewise, a predominant approach among many philosophers and psychologists is to adopt a "broad" construal of cognition, "one in which cognition, rather than being restricted to propositional knowledge and contrasted with perceptual and emotional experiences, covers and includes the latter" (Zahavi, 2014b, p. 97). The prevalent view concerning the neuroscience of social cognition is that "empathy operates by way of conscious *and* automatic processes that, far from functioning independently, represent different aspects of a common mechanism" (Decety & Lamm, 2009, p. 209; emphasis added). What this means is that empathy is associated with an automatic activation at the neuronal level (non-conscious), and empathy from the first-person perspective (conscious and at the level of awareness, i.e., meta-cognition) can be explained (in part) by the same mechanism which governs its automaticity—the "*common mechanism*." This common mechanism is a brain mechanism. The search to trace different neural networks and patterns of activation associated with varieties of empathic behaviour or experience is the current trend in neuroscience: the possibility of multiple brain mechanisms has been suggested and the updated version is that it is a situation of "*distinct and common*" (Lee & Siegle, 2012)

[58] Decety and Batson (2007) edited a special issue in *Social Neuroscience – Interpersonal Sensitivity: Entering Others' Worlds*. On the conceptualization of interpersonal sensitivity, see also Hall and Bernieri (2001).

[59] Noteworthy is that Daniel Batson (b. 1943) in social psychology and Jean Decety (b. 1960) in neuroscience have two of the most robust research programs on empathy that I have encountered. Dan Zahavi (b. 1967) in phenomenology and Fran de Waal (b. 1948) in primatology likewise contribute to the abundance of scholarship on empathy.

fields with very disparate viewpoints on empathy:

> While every speaker talked about empathy, no two speakers had precisely the same definition for either empathy or the related concepts of sympathy, prosocial behavior, altruism, and so on. . . . Certainly the behaviors associated with or triggered by what speakers called "empathy" were heterogeneous in the extreme, ranging from motor mimicry, emotional contagion, and imagination of others' feelings, to altruism, sympathy, cruelty, and so on. While the different disciplines' ideas of empathy clearly have something in common, one could justifiably question the heuristic or conceptual advantages of a monolithic concept of empathy. This serious reservation highlights the need for a more careful conceptualization of empathy. (p. 255)

Suggesting that there are many different conceptions or definitions of empathy is not new. An exemplar of this recognition is instantiated in a section on empathy's Wikipedia page, which lists several different definitions (Nowak, 2011a, pp. 13-15, lists 52 different definitions). Thus, the amorphous and multiplicative nature of empathy is undoubtedly a hallmark feature.

Recently, Zaki (2019) asserts that despite the definitional debates "most researchers agree on the big picture. . . . [Empathy] is an umbrella term that describes multiple ways people respond to one another, including *sharing*, *thinking about*, and *caring about* others' feelings" (p. 179). Zaki suggests these three different pieces go by several names; for example, the sharing piece might be called experience sharing, emotional empathy, or personal distress, the thinking about piece might be called mentalizing, cognitive empathy, or theory of mind, and the *caring about* piece might be called empathic concern, motivational empathy, or compassion.

To summarize, the different approaches to handling empathy's multiplicity have been taken up in a number of related ways: (1) define the concept narrowly, by specifying what it is

(descriptively) and what it is not (e.g., stipulating necessary and sufficient conditions; perhaps distinguishing cognitive from affective); (2) define the concept as consisting of levels or gradations of complexity (e.g., basic empathy versus advanced forms, moving perhaps toward integration); (3) theorize different routes through which to construe the concept (e.g., examining it in terms of motive and intention, viewing it as a process, or as exemplified by specific types of responding or behaviours); and last (4), create new terms altogether to sidestep the ambiguity associated with the concept.

The aforementioned last option brings forth another common response to empathy's multiplicity. Instead of clarifying the term by specifying it to fit within the framework of one's theory, some have opted to abandon the term altogether. This option often includes the invention of a new term or different language to describe "empathy-like" phenomenon. Some examples, include, "vicarious introspection" (Kohut, 1959) within the context of self-psychology psychoanalytic thought; "shared reality" (Echterhoff, Higgins, & Levine, 2009) within the context of social psychology; "emotional understanding" (Orange, 1995) within the context of contemporary intersubjectivity and relational psychoanalytic theory; "the space between" (Josselson, 1996); "other-directed intentionality" (Zahavi, 2014a) within the context of phenomenology on the topic of interpersonal understanding and direct-person perception. And these are only a few among a myriad of examples where authors have opted to used different language to discuss empathy-related phenomena and processes. Although these authors never completely dispose of the term empathy altogether, as the term is often coupled alongside this new terminology. Some examples of this latter approach might include "empathic accuracy" (Ickes, 1997), "mutual empathy" (Surrey, 1991), "primal empathy" (Panksepp & Panksepp, 2013) within the context of cross-species investigations into the neural foundations of empathy,

"motor empathy" or "empathic mimicry" (Decety & Meyer, 2008; see also), "empathic concern" (Batson, 1991) or "motivational empathy" (Zaki, 2019) within the context of social psychology and pro-sociality, as well as the others mentioned earlier (i.e., narrative, historical, social, kinesthetic, cross-racial, cosmopolitan). It seems almost any word can be tacked on and alongside the term empathy.

These different approaches to "resolving" empathy's multiplicity has yielded a short laundry list of traditional empathy debates (Barnes, 2014; Cuff, Brown, Taylor, & Howat, 2016). For example, debating the degree to which there is self-other overlap or merging and questions about whether empathy, by definition, must include an ability to distinguish one's own experience from the other's (i.e., the distinction between self and other is intact). Following from a debate of this kind the assumptions undergirding a particular theorist's position are revealed, for example, if one construes that the definition of empathy includes the recognition of self as distinct from other, the assumption here is that empathy is occurring at a conscious level (as opposed to an unconscious or automatic level). Of course, this would not prohibit the theorist from proposing that there are more basic levels or automatic and involuntary empathic processes initiated at, for example, the sight of seeing someone engage in an intentional action (e.g., as suggested by Preston & Hoeflich, 2012; or as suggested by the mirror neuron thesis, see Pfeifer & Dapretto, 2009). This is a significant debate yet not the only one.

As a poignant example of another debate within the empathy literature one can ask if empathy involves *concern* for the welfare of another person or is simply the *neutral recognition* of the other's situation? This issue can be re-construed as the "hot versus cold" empathy debate or as often distinguished, the "emotional versus cognitive" empathy distinction. It might also be construed as a contrast between "sympathetic and compassionate" action versus "distanciated

and intellectualized" comprehending, or simply as "perspective-taking" without necessarily responding to this recognition.

The literature is rich, and the grounds for adopting one position over another are determined not by some universal truth, but by the rules which govern the value assessment of different forms of information in a given language community. For example, within the social psychological community, the merit of claims made about empathy are in large part determined by the degree to which there is experimental evidence supporting a claim (e.g., as used in experimental social psychology, see Cikara, Bruneau, Van Bavel, & Saxe, 2014), on the other hand within fields that do not rely on experimental research as evidence, the logic of one's arguments would be the assessment criteria (e.g., Goldie, 2011, specifies a "base case," which is the typical or standard situation that serves as the basis for explaining "empathetic perspective-shifting." Goldie specifies four conditions that make up this base case; he also specifies "conditions outside the base case" [four]).[60]

Research on the topic of empathy is truly an interdisciplinary enterprise; however, crosstalk across disciplines does not always pan out with ease. The contours of interest and the language used in one context often do not match the focus and language used in another context: mapping neuroscience discourse onto political and social discourse does not translate without significant collaboration and participatory reconstructions from both stakeholders.

My Approach

The approaches thus far have been to distinguish descriptively what is and what is not empathy, as construed through the lens of different researchers and their associated communities.

[60] Notably Goldie is deconstructing empathetic perspective-shifting in order to demonstrate that it relies on "thin rational" agency rather than a "full-blooded" notion of agency (see also Slaby, 2014). The approach exemplified by Goldie, however, is not atypical of how to construct a philosophical argument (e.g., specifying necessary and sufficient conditions: A perceives B and A has empathy for B if some set of contingencies are met).

The approach I take in this dissertation will deviate from this approach in a significant way; rather than describe the different meanings of the term, I will focus on the different *uses* of the term, which in turn, I believe sheds light on the significance of how a concept in translation and use can be foundational in creating certain psychological and social realities.

I focus less on specifying clearer grounds for making more definitive claims; rather my analysis of the conceptions of empathy is guided by a stepping back from the details of each debate and asking questions of broad trends (the impact of these different empathy discourses in terms of psychological and societal realities). What is the consequence of the varied mobilizations and uses of empathy? Therefore, the reader will note that when I refer to empathy as functioning in particular discourses and serving to form and create realities that have implications (1) this may be at odds with how these ideas have been interpreted within the larger body of empathy research in general, (2) this may be at odds with some of the reader's own conceptions, (3) the different uses of empathy are not mutually exclusive (i.e., empathy may function in the same discourse in a number of different ways and conversely may function in a similar way in many different discourses), and last (4) the mobilizations in and of themselves may produce new possibilities and applications.

Positionality and Assumptions

Within critical historical and theoretical scholarship and within qualitative research it is not uncommon for academics to reflect on their own position and pre-understandings as they embark on a project—this might be referred to as locating oneself within your work. As a critical historian and theoretician, I wish to make explicit how my academic subjectivity played a role in how I approached this topic.

My motivation for exploring the topic of empathy originated out of a personal experience

of "feeling understood" by another person. I was not certain whether empathy was an accurate term to describe this experience and I looked towards the academic literature to gain a better sense of what this word meant. Was the experience I described empathy and what did academics, researchers, and scientists have to say about it? Thus, not only was I interested in the concept for personal reasons (i.e., the experience of feeling understood by another person saved my life) but also for academic ones. After reviewing the diverse and voluminous literature on empathy, the amorphous and fluid nature of the concept was evident, and I shifted my focus from "what is empathy" to "how is empathy used or mobilized" At this time my personal motive for exploring this topic moved to the background and my academic curiosity and creativity was sparked.

It became clear that I needed to be systematic yet flexible in my review of empathy's movements. I had been organizing the academic literature into categories based on themes, discourse communities and contexts, and coupled these with exemplar publications; however, it was clear that the implications of this concept were far-reaching. I decided to move beyond the academic literature and examine empathy "airplay" in society. It was in 2009 that I set up a keyword search with Google and got a weekly digest of how empathy was making headlines in the news, in business, and in the marketplace. With this volume of data, I decided to develop a framework focusing first on conceptual foundations (i.e., what ideas and assumptions are characteristically represented in the literature) and then tracking how these conceptual foundations have been put in circulation (i.e., mobilized or applied). One key assumption that underlay my exploration without waver was the idea that language is action—words do things and language creates social realities. The way empathy is used in talk and text matters. Likewise, other representations such as audiovisuals, commercially sold products, public spaces (e.g., museums), etc., similarly create social reality.

I am enrolled in the Historical, Theoretical, and Critical Studies of Psychology graduate program within the discipline of Psychology. Unlike most psychology graduate students, I was not bound to setting up a traditional psychology research study. I knew that I was in a position to develop a unique approach to the material. When reflecting on how I have presented the material, my work on the conceptual foundations of empathy could be described as a form of intellectual history; however, my approach moved beyond intellectual history and involved a hermeneutic reconstruction of the material I was working with. I was interpreting and reconstructing empathy. Once I committed to explore empathy through lens of use, I was in. I did not enjoy each piece of this reconstruction, but I was committed to seeing it through

I have been in involved in various qualitative research projects—engaging in simple content and thematic analyses and even utilizing a systematic review approach. I was initially drawn towards this way of organizing the material—for example, placing conceptions and uses of empathy in categories and subcategories. Likewise, albeit inspired by discourse analytic approaches, I am aware of the expectations that come alongside using these methods. Given the fluidity of this concept and the assumptions underlying many of the methods employed in qualitative research and discourse analysis I chose to remain fluid in my approach. A fluid concept necessitated a fluid method.

Within historical and philosophical circles hermeneutics is a respected and recognized approach—particularly if one is avoiding an essentialist narrative and aware of the subjectivity involved in any interpretative process. Interestingly, just as empathy is prejudice so too is hermeneutics—any interpretative rendering is always recognized as such.

Aims

Synthesizing the multiple conceptions of empathy neglects the qualities that this

dissertation aims to reveal. This dissertation aims to resolve the debates about "what is empathy" by stating that it may be the case that "all empathies are useful." Likewise, it answers (in part) "why empathy" by demonstrating its "shape-shifter" and chameleon qualities and revealing how this has developed into concrete applications.

Why has this concept morphed into such a diverse array of "phenomena" which are labeled by this name (as opposed to another psychological concept, such as sorrow or admiration)? Why is it such a difficult concept to find agreement on "what it is?" And why, in spite of this lack of agreement on empathy's ontology, does it persist (and is at times reified) in the literature? An answer to this question demands more than appeal to the virtues of "being empathic," more than exposition on how this quality may form the bedrock of humane and compassionate human interaction, and more than "clearer" definitional precision. This question can in part be answered by exploring the wide range of uses that this concept serves; it is used in an exorbitant number of ways and across a diversity of contexts. Empathy's mutability is in many ways what makes it extraordinary, however, as will be demonstrated, this is also what makes it an object in need of "problematization" (Foucault, 1984).[61]

The second major aim of this dissertation is to problematize not the multiplicity of empathy's variations, but the emphasis placed on the psychology of empathy, at the expense of looking towards the societal and political nature of this concept. Not only is it the case that empathy is very useful, it is also the case that the typical way of using empathy presents it as an inherent part of an individual's psychological makeup but yet it is distinctly applied to societal contexts (e.g., in action in social fields and domains). When one thinks of empathy, they think of

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[61] Bacchi (2012) describes Foucault as using this term in two senses, the first to refer to an examination of how objects become "problems" (e.g., poverty) and the second as way of characterizing his analytic method; I will use the term problematization primarily in the second sense of Foucault's use of this term; see also Koopman, 2013, on problematization in *Genealogy as Critique*.

a person having empathy (for another person) and following from this the foundation is set to look at individual minds to address empathy-issues (deficits of it, cultivation of it, demonstrating one has it, improving one's use of it etc.). This psychologization of empathy, it will be argued, has led to the neglect of the societal nature of this concept. A focus on the individual and their psychology has served to depoliticize a number of important societal-structural problems that remain unexplored with the continued focus on empathy at the individual level. To this aim, after outlining the different uses of empathy, I will outline the core features that discursively undergird empathy's representation in use. I suggest that one way to get to the root of the depoliticized nature of our focus on individual empathy is through an examination of its antithesis (i.e., the dialectic of empathy).

The experience of empathy is embedded in historical, social, cultural, and political assemblages. In order to have a more complete view of what this concept is and how it functions, its constitution and the lived experience of it must be considered from the vantage point of social construction: socio-political institutions, cultural norms, and the historical forces that necessarily co-constitute and set parameters around the experience of empathy. Therefore, this second major aim draws attention to how empathy is contingent on social and societal norms governing what it is, when it is, and how it is experienced. Overall, it is argued that a psychologized empathy is a problem given the far-reaching impact that this concept has in use. Empathy as an individual's responsibility in response to moral and social problems functions to conceal broader societal and structural pathos; it can serve to create psychological realities that lead towards a sense of "doing good" when in fact the result of these actions has a less far-reaching impact than hoped, and in many respects helps to conceal and depoliticize ongoing social inequities and social hierarchies of dominance.

Onto-Epistemic Considerations

A patchwork of scholarship has contributed to the development of an analytic lens through which to construe my object of study. These contributions include metaphors (e.g., biography as a tool to think with), broad philosophical traditions (e.g., hermeneutics), general qualitative research strategies (e.g., thematic analysis), as well as more specific methodological approaches (e.g., critical discourse analysis). A wide-range of scholarship—from historical, to sociological, to critical theory—has played a role in forming the bedrock of my position. In the proceeding I outline the key contributions that inform my analysis. This description (a) situates the reader regarding my analytic process, (b) facilitates connections made between previous scholarship and my analytic approach, (c) informs the reader regarding terms are that are used in chapters two through four when describing conceptions and applications of empathy, and (c) foreshadows the analytic remarks made in the chapter five.

Seeking an Approach: From Metaphors to Analytic Tools

As a scholar, having a metaphor upon which to construe my topic was essential to my process. In what follows I trace my pathway towards the construction of my method.

Biographies of empathy. In conceptualizing how to think about empathy—in all its varieties—the approach adopted by Lorraine Daston and colleagues in *Biographies of Scientific Objects* (2000) was an initial starting point. As exemplified by Daston and contributors to this edited volume, scientific objects can be any number of things and in particular the objects explored in this book include abstract concepts such as "society," a common experience such as a "dream," and even the contents of cells (cytoplasm). The primary aim of this book is to discuss how these objects came into "existence," why they attracted scientific attention, and trace the trajectory of these objects' life spans. Consistent with this approach Kurt Danziger (2003) writes

of the biography of psychological concepts. The central features that define scientific objects and psychological concepts will be described in more detail in the conclusion of this dissertation but as I reviewed the possibility of this framework it was apparent to me that empathy would not best be fitted into this model.[62]

Empathy is a scientific object but adopting the biography framework was neither feasible nor desirable. First, there is an origin myth, if one takes the origin of empathy to begin within the German aesthetics tradition with the theory of *Einfühlung*, which is the generally accepted choice; however, the issue becomes complicated as one historicizes this term and tracks its movement. If one pulls back and looks at the multiplicity of features ascribed to the term, in part from an historical and decontextualized reading, one can track characteristics and attempt to follow these through history. But what we find in this case is a discontinuous narrative and in fact a plurality of pathways. For example, characteristically, we could arrive at one place, evident in the contemporary discourse on theory of mind and simulation accounts of theories of mind; however, another pathway takes us in the direction of empirical psychology; and yet another in the direction of psychoanalytic theory and psychotherapy, to name only a few of the possibilities.

Is not a primary assumption in using the biography metaphor that there is some thread of continuity for tracking the object's movement? Empathy is complicated in this regard because one of its central characteristics is its mutability. Some feature it as a concept ascribed to the projection of oneself into an object (be it person or thing), others describe it in a manner akin to emotional contagion wherein "you feel similar" to the object of your perception, others feature it as a concept which enables the understanding of another person's experience from a distanciated position, while others suggest empathy is about "feeling for" another (i.e., what we might think

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[62] Notwithstanding that my reading of Danziger and Daston certainly played a role in my "reading" of empathy.

of as sympathy). Thus, descriptively, empathy as a moving object has multiple biographies. In addition, it also has multiple locations of birth depending on which pathway one wishes to trace. For example, Lipps (1851-1914) translated Hume's (1739-40/2000) *Treatise on Human Nature* and the term "aesthetic sympathy" was part of the *Einfühlung* discourse (Hacker, 2018; Jahoda, 2005; Lanzoni, 2018). In this case, would we locate its birth with the concept of sympathy? Or alternatively, would it be preferable to look to the hermeneutic tradition, wherein part of the interpretive process is to "understand" authorial intention through "empathy" (i.e., for some scholars).

To denote that an object has a biography suggests that there are essential characteristics that comprise the object. That is, when we arrive at its death, we can say "yes that is the object" because despite transformations along the way it bears some resemblance to its birth status. And if the first point of contention begins at birth, then surely one can see how tracking a concept's transformations may be an endeavour fraught with complications. Historicizing empathy in order to tell its biography in part takes away from that feature which is a primary focus in this dissertation—empathy is a "shape shifter" and it has become a concept that can be exported all over the map for all kinds of purposes.

Identities of empathy. I have referred to the varied and numerous conceptions as the "multiple identities of empathy." I used the term "identities" loosely, to refer to a set of phenomena or descriptions that "hang-together." In relation to different definitions of "identity" the following aspects are relevant to the sense in which I have used the term in reference to conceptions of empathy: the set of behavioral or personal characteristics by which an individual [or entity] is recognizable as a member of a group; the state of being similar in nature, quality etc.; the state of being the same as a person or thing described or claimed; the distinguishing

character or personality of an individual**;** from Late Latin *identitās,* from Latin *idem* the same. And in this sense this notion could be construed as leading towards a description of the "empathy family," wherein the varied conceptions of empathy, and other concepts (e.g., sympathy) that are sometimes used synonymously, could be described as related (e.g., sympathy as a "sister" or "brother" concept) and part of an "empathy family."

Different identities could be arranged by the "appearance" of each, and by appearance I am referring to the connection made in the literature between the phenomena described and the term used as its identifier (e.g., the identity of a moral empathy could be identified with the appearance of the discourse on sympathy within moral philosophy); however, difficulties arise with the observation that the discourse on sympathy, for example, is connected to many different pathways. The literature on sympathy demonstrates (a) there continues to be a debate about the difference between sympathy and empathy and (b) the appearance of sympathy led to multiple different discourses on this concept in and of itself; when the term sympathy originated the interpretation of its meaning led to a number of suggestions that sympathy could be construed as a phenomenon which in this dissertation will be construed as related to other phenomena (e.g., imagination, projection, and even episteme). The "appearance" of the different identities of empathies may correspond with distinct waves in writings on empathy in philosophical, scientific and popular culture discourses; however, the identity narrative is discontinuous. There are trends, but it does not seem to be the case that as one identity appears another disappears. With the aforementioned considerations in mind the identity metaphor was abandoned.

Empathy as family resemblance concept. In keeping with suggestion that empathy can be used in a multiplicity of ways, one option is to approach these diverse uses by construing empathy as a "family-resemblance" concept. The notion of *family resemblance* is a concept

suggested by Wittgenstein (1953/2001) as an analogy for making connections and illuminating divergences in the different uses of a word. Applying the metaphor of family resemblances to the conceptions of empathy (or the "empathy family")—family members may be similar, but they are certainly not exactly the same, although all members belong to that which we call, for example, "the Barker family." If it is in fact the case that there is no one true or correct definition of empathy that transcends its pragmatics, then through historical reconstruction and an examination of the divergences and convergences in use, the results may fall in support or against this assertion. I suggest that there are core features that underlie *the different uses* of empathy; however, there are also, equally as many distinct and diverse qualities which may make up its constitution. Accordingly, we may find that not all conceptions of empathy have the same *essential* underlying features, yet they may be grouped together under the umbrella term empathy (or as members of the "empathy family"). This grouping is based on a determination that conceptions share characteristics with other conceptions termed by the same name (which means that all terms by this name do not necessarily share the same features). Thus, as the use of the term empathy continues to profligate, so too do the features ascribed to the term.

In drawing upon Wittgenstein's (1889-1951) notion of family resemblance, I adopt a number of other elements that comprise what may be called a "late-Wittgensteinian perspective." Within the context of my analysis, I make use of the Wittgensteinian conception of *language games* (Wittgenstein, 1953/2001). The notion of language games is perhaps the idea from late Wittgenstein's work with which most people are familiar; it is a term he used to describe those areas of human activity where it is *impossible* to specify a set of criteria that is always true for a particular area of interest, yet we clearly understand and communicate meaningfully about that area of interest (Frohmann, 1993).

Not only with terms but also with respect to social norms and rule following (through which terms acquire meaning), language games take place and are formed through social praxis. Thus, I situate empathy as a family-resemblance concept relative to this idea. Through the use of the notion of language games in scientific communities (e.g., the language game of philosophers may be different from those of developmental psychologists) empathy may acquire an exponential number of diverse members to be included in the family called empathy.

Specifically, taking empathy as my "object," which has different meanings that are produced through its use in communities and through the language games at work within these communities, I have posed questions such as: does my object have any common aspects across contexts, and if so, what are they; when the object's meaning diverges significantly, how so, and are these divergences complementary or antagonistic? As mentioned, I have derived core features related to its use, which may be suggested as differing from the constitution of what makes up the concept. As it pertains to language games and the contexts of negotiating meaning, the empathy language games are interdisciplinary and notably in some cases there is crosstalk whereas in others none is evident.[63]

Empathies within discourse communities. One metaphor that was resonant with the suggestion that empathy is used in different ways by different scholars was to appeal to the literature on thought styles and thought collectives (Fleck, 1935/1979), discursive formations (Foucault, 1969/1972), discourse communities (Teubert, 2010), and discourse circles (Elder-Vass, 2012). The appeal of these metaphors is that essentially the object of focus and of action is consistent with my approach—discourse is central both as the constructor and representative of

[63] My interpretation and use of Wittgenstein's concepts draw on the work of a number of Wittgensteinian scholars (e.g., Apel, 1986; Canfield, 1993, 2007; Crary & Read, 2000; Frohmann, 1993; Monk, 2005; Schatzki, 1996; Shanker, 1986; Stern, 2004; Thornton, 1998, 2004; Williams, 1998, 2007).

social realities. After reviewing the aforementioned descriptions of said discourse assemblages the appeal still ran high; however, within the literature on empathy, the discourses (and the intellectuals producing it) are not defined by a continuity of mutual exchange (collectives, communities, circles). These varied discourses cannot be described as assemblages. One of the features of the varied discourses on empathy is its multiplicity (both terminologically and in action and application); this has not yet been determined to occur with a form of regularity (formations, styles).

One of the primary obstacles with the notion of communities, for example, is that it denotes that within a setting, scholars are interacting with one another to negotiate meaning and this may or may not be the case, just based on temporality alone. Additionally, even though many texts from many sources contribute to the larger discourse, there are an exponential number of subcultures that render it difficult to structure an interactionist analytic around this. The notion of the collective mind (rather than particular individual minds) is an aspect that Teubert (2010) addresses; however, analytically without a starting block landscape of the varied uses mapping a network of connections is not possible. At best what would be foreseeable is the recognition that there is a web of relations among scientists, philosophers, media and popular cultural writers, and politicians that mention empathy.

Genealogy and problematization. In *Genealogy as Critique*, Koopman (2013) argues in that Michel Foucault (1926-1984) had broad view of what problematization entailed. Koopman describes how the concept of problematization can be used not only historically but also as a means for reconstructing our present. It is in this regard that Koopman refers to Foucault's use of the term problematization in two senses: (1) in relation to the historical record and the associated discourse around a problematized concept and (2) as a general way of identifying problematics in

contemporary discourse and the possibilities of problematizations perhaps not yet realized. It is in this latter sense that I will appeal to Foucault's notion of problematization, although it is also true and will be identified when empathy is in fact a response to the problematization of particular culture moments. Consistent with Koopman's thesis, that Foucault did indeed have a broad view on what was meant by the term problematization is evident via an interview entitled "Polemic, Politics, and Problematizations" conducted by Paul Rainbow (Foucault, 1984).

Words as actions in use. Given the focus I have attached to text and considerations of how empathy is used discursively, drawing on the social constructionist approach as exemplified in the work of Kenneth Gergen (b. 1935), is a logical fit. My turn to Austin (1962/1975) was also a logical inroad. I turned towards how the concept is used linguistically with an interest in its impact. Based on my survey of the literature (scientific and publics), it is clear that the way that empathy is invoked has consequences, and these are far reaching. My analytic moved toward action-oriented words to denote that in using empathy in certain ways and in certain contexts people are doing things that have consequence. In order to avoid misinterpretation, I reconfigured my analytic terms to be consistent with the way one would commonly understand the way words are used.

My approach is consistent in some respects with Austin's *How to do Things with Words* (1962/1975). For example, in some of Austin's (1962/1975) more well know examples of performative utterances, when a speaker says "I promise you that" there are certain implications implied by saying this. One might expect that this speech act will be connected to a concrete outcome. On the other hand, my approach differs from Austin in an important way. In this dissertation I suggest that all speech acts are performative (rather than constative). Austin's (1962/1975) distinction between constative and performative utterances, implies that some

statements refer to statements of fact and are verified and falsified by observation (e.g., it is either snowing or it is not, i.e., this would be a constative utterance), whereas other statements are meant to bring about actions that alter the situation (e.g. go get your hat, i.e., this would be a performative utterance). Following from the description provided by Gergen (2015b), Austin himself recognized that all constatives could be considered performative. It is in this sense that I will imply that uses of empathy (utterances, statements about it) are performative; the statement that "I empathize with you" has implications in terms of what we come to expect from that statement and also how that statement creates certain psychological and social realities through its instantiation.

Scholarship on socio-cultural and historical onto-epistemology. The purpose of this dissertation is to provide a landscape concerning the uses of empathy. Through historical reconstruction, as well as through contemporary and popular culture discourses, the onto-epistemic assumptions undergirding this dissertation is that empathy has both a socio-cultural and historical ontology (Hacking, 2002; Smith, 2005, 2007; Sugarman, 2009) and is a human kind phenomenon (versus a natural kind, see Brinkmann, 2005; Danziger, 1999; Hacking, 1995; Martin & Sugarman, 2001). And in accordance with these perspectives, the construction and reconstructing of this humankind phenomenon is ontologically and constitutively interactive (see Sugarman, 2009 on constitutive interactivity). The dynamic and interactive nature of this humankind construct results in a looping effect (see Hacking, 1995, 2002, 2007 on making up people, dynamic nominalism and the looping effect of psychological concepts). Therefore, empathy (in all its uses) as a human conception is labelled and connected to certain psychological characteristics; in labeling this as a psychological characteristic we create possibilities and opportunities for particular kinds of social reality—pointedly, as we name or

identify psychological concepts, we create possibilities and opportunities for different types of reality to be embodied by us and others. This in turn alters our views, experiences, and conceptions of a psychological construct in others and ourselves. We observe behaviour, perhaps think about others, or even consciously enact and attempt to exemplify this characteristic in our own behaviour. Bickhard (2011, p. 104) suggests that “some phenomena are constituted in the ways in which we interact and talk with one another—some things have a social ontology” and I would suggest empathy is precisely such a phenomenon.

Methods and Methodology

My method can be characterized as a form of general hermeneutics (e.g., Gadamer, 1960/1989) and it is consistent with forms of critical hermeneutics (i.e., focus on text and discourse through the lens of critical social theory; e.g., Teo, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2014, 2015a, 2018). Other methods also served as inspiration for this work; for example, discourse analysis (DA) or critical discourse analytic approaches (CDA; see Billig, 2003; Burman & Parker, 1993; Fairclough, 2010; Parker, 2013 Wodak & Meyer, 2009; van Dijk, 2001).

My method produces a landscape concerning the uses of empathy. It provides a roadmap for exploring the role that these mobilizations play in creating certain forms of social reality. The analytic guiding this work, therefore, is informed by methods used in DA, CDA, and critical hermeneutics. But also, in large part, predicated on the different metaphors and aforementioned onto-epistemic scholarship put forward by historians and philosophers of science and psychology. The reconstruction itself is theoretical rather than historical and this is implied by my methodological approach.

My intention is to avoid an essentialist narrative; rather than attempting to narrate a story of empathy, I am more interested in how empathy is used and what these uses reveal about

empathy within a societal context. In support of these aims, this dissertation provides a systematic reconstruction of empathy through a critical-interpretative lens. It assumes empathies' socio-cultural and historical ontology (Teo, 2015b) illuminating empathy's discursive functions both on a macro and micro level (e.g., within modern socio-political cultural or society and also within smaller "networks" and contexts such as those of research and academia).

The Expanding Circles of Empathy

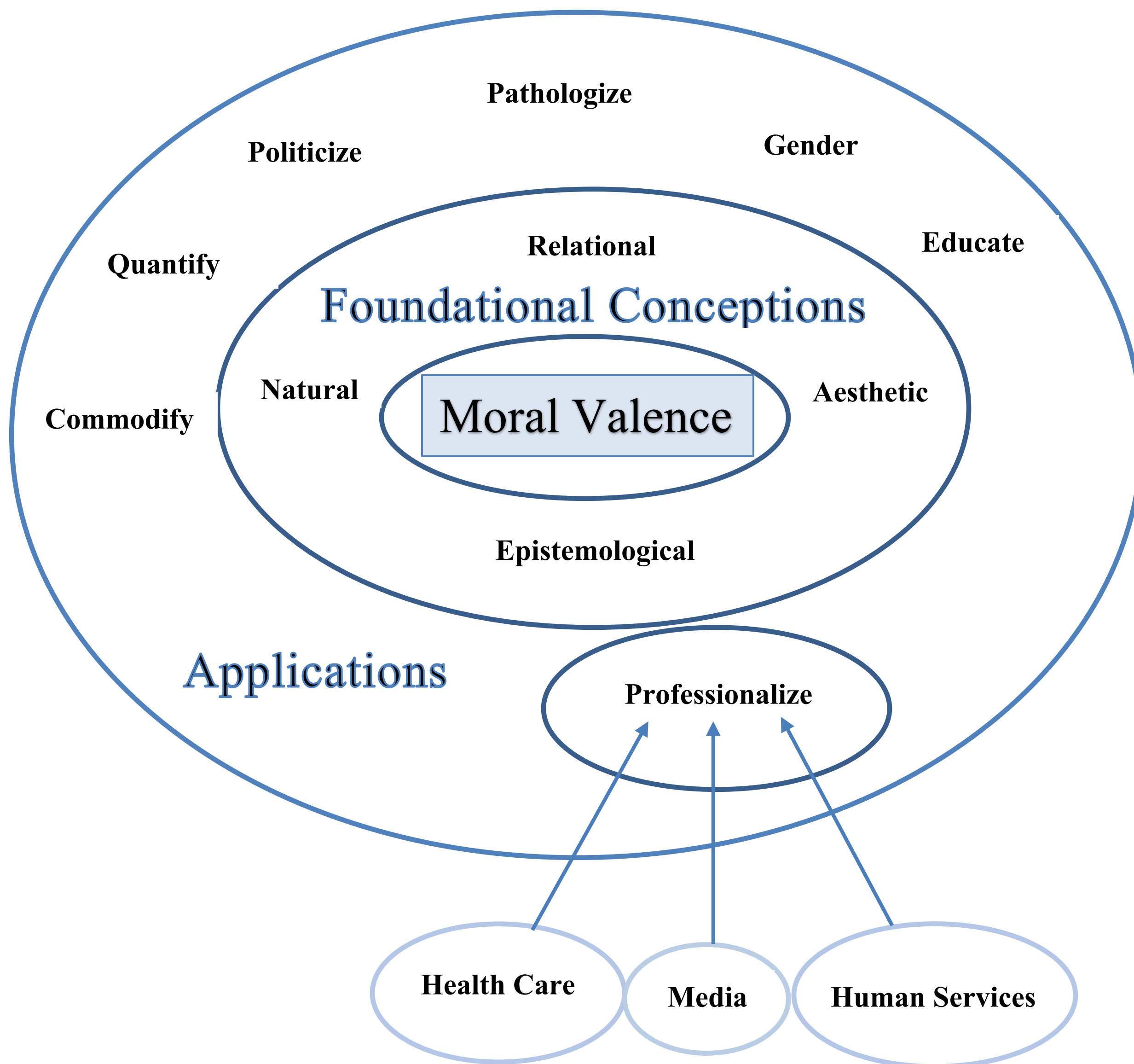
Introductory Remarks to Chapters Two and Three

Chapters 2 and 3 describe what I have termed "foundational conceptions" of empathy (see Figure 1. "The Expanding Circles of Empathy"). The metaphor of expanding circles reflects the scope of empathy's reach. Embedded within this representation is (1) a recognition that there is a moral valence at the centre of empathy's spherical presence and (2) as empathy expands outwards its societal mobilizations become increasingly salient and important. While in the final stages of completing this work, I discovered a book titled, *The Expanding Circle* (Singer, 1981/2011). In this book, philosopher Peter Singer (1981/2011) describes altruism in terms of an expanding circle of moral concern. Singer draws inspiration from moral philosophy and evolutionary psychology to describe the possibility of an emergent global kindness (see also, Zaki, 2019, p. 181). There is undoubtedly continuity between my representation and Singer's; however, my expanding circles of empathy are described on different terms and through a different lens (e.g., I focus on mobilizations of *empathy*, its application and consequences, as well as the fields in which these actions take place).

Chapter 2 is devoted to contextualizing empathy's moral valence, which I argue undergirds all ideas about, and uses of, empathy. In this sense, morality is construed to be a primary foundation for "all things" empathy (i.e., a moral valence, positive or negative, is

Figure 1.

The Expanding Circles of Empathy



Note. This model depicts the conceptual and applied expansion of empathy. The conceptual foundations (moral, relational, epistemological, natural, and aesthetic) can be traced through various applications. I selected seven applications that demonstrate empathy in action—quantify, gender, pathologize, politicize, educate, commodify, and professionalize. As depicted in Figure 1., empathy in action is further placed within particular societal contexts (health care, media, and the human services) as it pertains to empathy and professional identities.

present irrespective of theoretical or contextual factors). In Chapter 3, four other foundational ideas (*conceptions*) are described

The literature reviewed is not exhaustive. I selected, among the exemplars that undergird my analysis, those that best demonstrate the conception or application discussed. The analytic nomenclature (i.e., use of terms such as “primary” or “foundational” conceptions and/or “hybrid” applications) denotes that the use of empathy necessarily emerges from “somewhere” (i.e., a source or *idea* about what empathy is). I argue that one or more of the foundational conceptions create the preconditions for empathy to be mobilized (used) in various ways and these are described as applications.

The analytic structure presented in this dissertation presupposes that (1) uses are derived from one or more of the foundational conceptions, for example, educational, political, therapeutic, and measurement applications are derivatives of moral, relational, epistemological, natural, and aesthetic conceptions; (2) foundational conceptions create the possibility for application, for example, gendered, pathological, and commodified uses are made possible because of ideas about empathy; (3) some foundational conceptions yield more limited applications, for example, an aesthetic conception is applied within the context of education and the arts; and (4) hybrid applications come out of the “uses” themselves (in addition to being based on one or more of the foundational conceptions), for example, applications in the human services industry (e.g., policing) are nested within the professionalism application, but are also a product of political and educational uses, as well as possessing moral questions at its core (i.e., there is moral valence implicit in this and all applications).

The five foundational conceptions are as follows: moral, relational, epistemological, natural, and aesthetic. I address empathy’s moral foundations first. The moral conception is

presented first and as the primary foundation. The rationale for this presentation is based on the observation that, despite the multi-layered construction of this concept, it has a moral core; moral questions are part-and-parcel in questions about empathy. Moreover, the other foundational conceptions (relational, epistemic, natural, and aesthetic) are likewise imbued with a moral dimension. The connection between morality and the other foundational conceptions is explored in Chapter 3. For each foundational conception, I have selected discourses that demonstrate how the conception is operative in that discourse; this foreshadows a discussion of applications in Chapters 4 by addressing contemporary iterations of these conceptions.[64]

Noteworthy and central to my argument is the recognition that conceptions are not mutually exclusive; that is, in construing empathy as a natural phenomenon, a moral dimension could be and is substantiated within the same discourse (e.g., our "moral brain," Verplaetse, de Schrijver, Vanneste, & Braeckman, 2009). There is overlap: Thinkers who construe empathy as an epistemic capacity may also (implicitly or explicitly) extend this into the domain of moral reasoning. Likewise, thinkers who construe empathy as a relational concept may also extend this idea into the domain of epistemology (e.g., social cognition, interpersonal understanding etc.). These connections will be elaborated on in Chapter 3.

The reader will also note that there is historical discontinuity in this narrative (e.g., as I move from 18th-century moral philosophy to 20th-century social and developmental psychology and then cycle back); this discontinuity is deliberate. My aim is neither to provide a comprehensive nor chronological conceptual history; rather, it is to establish for the reader how

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[64] The logic behind my organization of empathy by use follows from my observation of other interdisciplinary approaches to the concept. Several scholars have reviewed empathy organized from disciplinary vantage points (Coplan & Goldie, 2011; Decety, 2012; Decety & Ickes, 2009; Lanzoni, 2018; Lux & Weigel, 2017; Matravers, 2017; Stueber, 2006, 2014); however, this approach fails to comprehensively illuminate the wide-ranging applications of empathy across contexts and within contexts (academic, public, and professional life).

empathy has been construed and mobilized in different ways, as evidenced within the discourses which substantiate this.

Chapter 2: A Moral Foundation and Valence

Prior to discussing empathy's connection to morality, attention to what morality is assumed to include is warranted. According to a standard dictionary definition of morality, it can refer to

> a moral discourse, statement, or lesson. . . . a literary or other imaginative work teaching a moral lesson. . . . a doctrine or system of moral conduct. . . . particular moral principles or rules of conduct. . . . conformity to ideals of right human conduct. . . . moral conduct (Merriam-Webster, n.d.)

The aforementioned definition is relatively broad; however, the following is salient. Specifically, morality refers to some teaching or ideas about right or wrong conduct. More generally, there is a tendency to differentiate morals as personal and individual from ethics as a set of abstract philosophical principles guiding codes of conduct within the workplace, society, etc. (Christen & Alfano, 2013, pp. 4-5; Holtam, 2012, pp. 19-20). The distinctions vary and are at times blurry; we can say a person acted morally and then attempt to identify the ethical principle underlying this behaviour. In the proceeding I will speak of morality and ethics interchangeably and state that both include questions about what is "the right or wrong" thing to do within a given context. In addition, it must be stated from the outset that morality, codes of conduct, and ethics are intimately connected to political philosophies, systems of governance, and education—this connection will be elucidated in Chapter 4 when empathy's use within politics and education is described. Apart from scholars who devote their careers to studying moral questions, most laypersons have a general set of ethical and moral principles: it is wrong to harm others, it is right to help others in need etc. (Graham et al., 2013; Haidt, 2012).[65] And it is towards this latter

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[65] Of course, moral principles such as "hurting others is bad" and "helping others is good" is abstracted from the messy stuff of everyday experience and variations on how these principles are applied within different contexts

suggestion that our attention turns as it pertains to empathy in relation to morality.

The Empathy-Morality Connection

This account will not be a first. There are scholars who have written books devoted to precisely this connection (e.g., Hoffman, 2000; Oxley, 2011) and most books on empathy include at least a chapter or two on morality and ethics (e.g., Bloom, 2017; Daly, 2016; Howe, 2013; Matravers, 2017), and several collected volumes on empathy and/or morality include at least one chapter or section on the empathy-morality or -ethics connection (e.g., Coplan & Goldie, 2011; Decety & Ickes, 2009; Decety & Wheatley, 2015; Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987; Maibom, 2017).[66] I am in company with elucidating this foundation. As it pertains to a moral valence, this assertion is interpretive rather than empirical. Central to my reading of empathy, moral issues are ever-present. Even in an area as "seemingly" neutral as aesthetics there is an underlying assumption about what is the "right" way to experience empathy in connection to inanimate objects of appreciation (or consumption). This recurring moral valence runs like a thread throughout this work (hence its placement as the seed of empathy in action and ideation).

The notion that empathy is connected to prosociality and various forms of benevolence is relatively commonplace in public discourse; it is common to read/hear in the news, reports on charitable responses to victims in need, and these sources often invoke the term empathy to refer to what motivated people to help (see Prinz, 2011, re. public outpouring of empathy to victims of Hurricane Katrina).[67] And indeed, this issue has been investigated experimentally in relation to

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(historical, socio-cultural, political, etc.). Moreover, culture and socialization history determine the content of these moral principles, there is a contingent of scholars that propose a moral foundations theory (MFT; Haidt & Graham, 2007). MFT suggests that there is a set of universal foundations that characterize the moral domain; proponents of MFT have circulated these ideas within the context of Western-Euro and North American scientism and MFT is built upon the assumptions proposed by evolutionary theory (i.e., human morality is a result of evolutionary design; see Gray, Young, & Waytz, 2012 for a critique of Haidt, 2012). See also http://moralfoundations.org, a website devoted to MFT; it has sections mentioning critics and cites Gray as the "most prolific."

[66] Maibom's (2014) *Empathy and Morality* is an edited volume entirely devoted to this connection.

[67] Prinz (2011) discusses this in relation to the limitations of empathy as a moral concept; for example, Prinz notes

fund-raising wherein donors' empathy with recipients has been determined an efficacious means through which to increase giving (e.g., Verhaert & Van den Poel, 2011), and in relation to natural disasters wherein the personal characteristics (such as empathy and other pro-social attributes) have been examined to understand what factors may contribute to helping in such contexts (e.g., Marjanovic, Struthers, &, Greenglass, 2012).

Paternalistically and hierarchically, likewise to conceptions of sympathy (i.e., associated with feeling sorry for the circumstances of another, Aaltola, 2014; Oxley, 2011), empathy has come to be connected to giving to the "less fortunate" and is thought of as precursor to "doing good" or "doing the right thing" (acting morally) given an appreciation of other peoples' situations. Empathy is often found "sandwiched" or alongside other moral emotions and concepts such as sympathy, altruism, compassion, kindness, and caring, and it is commonly found discussed in work on prosocial behaviour in general (Padilla-Walker & Carlos, 2014).

Adding to the public's empathy-morality connection, there are a number of policy-driven and institutionally-supported programs and campaigns, which aim to build empathic capacities among citizens (facilitating its growth in young children within an educational context is one of the most prominent initiatives, see Gordon, 2005/2007); these campaigns promote the development of empathy with the assumption that it is a precursor to prosociality, charitable giving, and for creating an overall moral sensibility as it pertains to the plight of others (see Hoffman, 2000; Howe, 2013; Szalavitz & Perry, 2010; Trout, 2009). Public beliefs or popular perceptions about the empathy-morality connection can be construed as a product that has

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that there was "an outpouring of support for the Katrina hurricane victims in the United States in 2005. . . . [but there is little] discussion of the Indian Ocean Tsunami a year before Katrina" (pp. 226-227). Prinz suggests that moral empathic responsiveness, in this context, was impaired by a proximity effect. Prinz also discusses the role that the media plays; that is, in whether people know that a population of people are in need or that a "disaster" requiring humanitarian efforts has occurred (i.e., sensationalism and selectivity around natural disasters etc.).

emerged out of this discourse—the public has not arrived at the empathy-morality connection out of the blue. The connection has been created and strengthened by the activities of several knowledge producers and brokers (stakeholders invested in exploring and promoting the empathy-morality connection; this is described in the uses of empathy—politicizing and educating). In this Chapter, I outline how empathy's connection to morality emerged and how strong this connection is—so strong in fact, I consider morality to be the core consideration in empathy's existence (both idea and action).

Exemplars of the Empathy-Morality Foundation

Creating and sustaining the publics' empathy-morality connection is a robust contingent of writers engaged in activities that support using empathy in the service of creating and cultivating a moral ethos in society. A brief survey of book titles published in the last decade on empathy in relation to its ability to resolve what ails society provides an illustrative snapshot of the empathy-morality connection. These works include Michael Slote (2007) *The Ethics of Care and Empathy*; Frans de Waal (2009) *The Age of Empathy: Nature's Lessons for a Kinder Society*; Jeremy Rifkin (2009) *The Empathic Civilization: The Race to Global Consciousness in a World in Crisis*; J. D. Trout (2009) *The Empathy Gap: Building Bridges to the Good Life and the Good Society*; Szalavitz and Perry (2010) *Born for Love: Why Empathy Is Essential—and Endangered*; David Howe (2013) *Empathy: What it is and Why it Matters*; Karla McLaren (2013) *The Art of Empathy: A Complete Guide to Life's Most Essential Skill*; Roman Krznaric (2014) *Empathy: Why it Works, and How to Get it*; Tracy Wide (2017) *Finding the Lost Art of Empathy: Connecting Human to Human in a Disconnected World*; and, Jamil Zaki (2019) *The War For Kindness: Building Empathy in a Fractured World*. These book titles are a sampling rather than a comprehensive list.

After reading the title of the books listed in the preceding, one would certainly glean that empathy is good and we need more of it in the world. And in fact, bridging from a print medium to virtual reality, there are several prominent online communities that describe as their mission the creation of a "global worldwide culture of empathy and compassion"; for example, the Center for Building a Culture of Empathy (http://cultureofempathy.com/). The spread of empathy as virtue has facilitated the development of large-scale international communities that base the foundation of their work on the core value of empathy; for example, Ashoka (https://www.ashoka.org/en). Ashoka is a community that promotes change-making; its areas of focus include children, education, and empathy; youth empowerment; and social entrepreneurship and innovation. The original Start Empathy program (initiated in Ashoka Changemaker schools) was directed at early childhood education; however, as the Ashoka organization has grown it has expanded its reach to include social innovation more broadly. At the core of the organization is empathy, which is suggested to provide changemakers with the power to transform society for the "good."

The common theme undergirding these activities is an interest in exploring the relationship between empathy and doing good or acting in ways that are morally sanctioned (helping others in need, donating, volunteering, giving back to those less fortunate etc.). There seems to be an unquestioned assumption that empathy is necessary to solve broad and wide-ranging societal and socio-political problems (see, e.g., Krznaric, 2015; Zaki, 2019)

Apart from popular culture books, online communities and forums, and organizations that are invested in the spread of empathy, most academics that study empathy conduct some form of research to support or test out how important empathy really is (in relation to prosociality). Empirical researchers might set up an experiment to test out factors (person or situation

variables) that lead to helping (Batson, 2011), while philosophers might debate the conceptual grounds upon which empathy can be used to substantiate (or "explain") acts of kindness (this might include discussing necessary and sufficient conditions or conceptual challenges to what empathy is construed to involve) (Coplan & Goldie, 2011). Despite differences in the construal of the empathy-to-morality process these discourses are characterized by a set of defining questions; the clearest articulation of a defining question is captured by the title of Prinz's (2011) chapter "Is Empathy Necessary for Morality?" Some of the relevant questions are as follows: How does awareness/attention/appreciation (and in some cases sharing) of other persons' circumstances lead to acting humanely or compassionately towards them; through what process do we arrive at a motivation to act on the behalf of others; is engaging with respect and kindness something that we all come to through the same means; is it something we can teach, and if so, how and under what conditions are we likely to enhance moral behaviour?

There are variations in how academics construe "morality" (e.g., natural versus normative, emotionally- versus rationally-driven, deontological versus consequentialism etc.), and some select to specify that they are not focused on morality per se (e.g., Daniel Batson). Yet if we understand moral questions to be those that revolve around how an individual decides what is right and good to do in relation to other sentient beings, then issues of conceptual specification soften. At the core of "being" moral is the sense that one should be kind, respect, and engage with others in a way that is "least harmful" or doing the "most good" for some particular.[68] (Kovacheff, Schwartz, Inbar, & Feinberg, 2018). Moral questions and being moral are

[68] In this case the particular parties to which your engagements are "least harmful" or "most good for" varies at the socio-cultural, political-economic, and historical macro-level, as well as the at the personal, contextual, and individual micro-level; specifically, what is good, or right, is a moving target. Identifying who benefits or avoids suffering by assuming a moral standpoint and acting from this perspective must be deconstructed at a local level; although, deontological moral theorists among several others might opt to defer to the notion of "universal moral principles"—right is right and wrong is wrong irrespective of context.

fundamentally questions about how we *ought* to treat other and the general observation can be stated—most believe empathy is a precursor to acting morally or for the wellbeing of others (see Maibom, 2014, 2017).[69] Likewise, there are different aspects of morality that are attended to within these discourses (e.g., moral *judgments*, i.e., perception of another's behaviours or intentions as moral or not, see Kauppinen, 2014, 2017; e.g., moral behaviours and its precursors, i.e., the act itself or those prior to acting morally, and what *emotions* or *thought-processes* take place, see Nicols, 2004; Slote, 2010; e.g., moral *responsibilities* or normative ethics, i.e., to what extent individuals are responsible for their actions, see Oxley, 2011; Shoemaker, 2017); however, these different aspects all move us towards answering questions about what *motivates* people to do things that are helpful for others (i.e., what motivates moral behaviour; see also Denham, 2017) and what socio-psychological factors are involved (e.g., moral emotions, of which, for some, empathy is grouped, and/or normative standards, moral norms or ethical principles)?

From an academic standpoint there are a set of enduring debates which characterize moral psychology and philosophy: for example, do moral emotions precede moral reasoning (e.g., see Bock & Goode, 2006, pp. 89-96); what is the relationship between rule-based accounts and emotion-based accounts of moral decision-making (e.g., Nichols, 2002, 2004; Nichols & Mallon, 2006); to what degree can we conclude that moral actions are motivated by truly "altruistic" intentions (i.e., selfish versus unselfish; e.g., does the act of giving really serve the giver rather than the recipient, in the form of a "warm glow," see Andreoni, 1990; Chuan & Sumak, 2013; see also the debate between Cialdini and Batson in the 90s regarding egoist versus

[69] Notwithstanding that there is a literature that outlines what the moral dimensions of empathy include (e.g., epistemic and normative functions, see Oxley, 2011). These dimensions are foreshadowed by Oxley's conception of what empathy is.

altruistic helping, e.g., Batson, 1991, 1994, 1997; Cialdini, 1991; Cialdini, Brown, Lewis, Luce, & Neuberg, 1997); through what process do we become moral (is it an innate predisposition, part of a moral personality, or is it a specific developmental and learned quality; e.g., Bloom, 2013; Gibbs, 2014); and, how do social and normative prescriptions on what one ought to do factor into the determination that moral motives are present within a context and that the behaviours displayed are moral (i.e., taking questions of morality outside of the individual and towards ethics and social obligations; see, Nuttall, 1993; Rawls, 2000). And despite differing views and terms upon which these debates take place the central question of why we "do good" and care for others runs like a thread through this discourse. The concepts of empathy and sympathy factor prominently into answering these questions.

First, I locate the birth of the moral foundations of empathy in the Scottish Enlightenment philosophies of the late 18th century within the notion of "fellow-feeling" or sympathy; specifically, through an exploration of the writings of David Hume (1740/2000) and Adam Smith (1759/2002). To discuss the connection of empathy to morality, I necessarily conflate the terms sympathy and empathy, while noting that the term sympathy fell into disuse and was supplanted by empathy. The primary debates around differentiating sympathy and empathy is discussed as it pertains to theories of moral development that took place primarily in the late 20th century; these debates by no means disentangle the conflation of sympathy and empathy but do serve to reinforce and in part explain the pervasive connection between empathy and morality.

Second, I discuss the work of developmental and social psychologists from the late 20th century to present in this regard (e.g., Eisenberg, 1986; Hoffman, 1978, 2000). I detail the debates that ensued from Daniel Batson's social psychological research program, initiated in the late 70s, heatedly debated in the mid 90s, and extended into contemporary social psychological

research to date. Batson's program of research has become one of the most widely known social psychological accounts of how empathy and altruistic motivation are related. This section concludes with a survey of some of the contemporary discourse on empathy as it pertains to morality in general.

Sympathy and Moral Philosophy

It has been suggested by some writers that there is sufficient clarity between the terms sympathy and empathy to warrant they be kept distinct; however, if one historicizes the contexts in which the terms developed we can attain a clearer understanding as to why the two terms are often confused and conflated (Jahoda, 2005; Wispé, 1991), and likewise, understand why the moral aspects, in which the term sympathy found its primary appearance, seem to latch-on and into the use of the term empathy. Consistent with my argument, the overlap and interaction, within historical context, of the term sympathy and *Einfühlung* has led to the development of sympathy and empathy as often thought of as interchangeable (although debated) and very much tied to morality; therefore, a discussion of empathy and morality necessarily includes the discourse on sympathy

Prior to discussing the content of David Hume's and Adam Smith's writings on sympathy, comment on how empathy is connected to moral philosophy is warranted. Several contemporary empathy researchers and theorists have connected Hume and Smith's work on sympathy to the concept of empathy (see Agosta, 2010, 2014; Batson, 2011; de Waal, 2009; Ilyes, 2017; Maibom, 2014; Matravers, 2017; Oxley, 2011; Slote, 2013; Weigel, 2017; Wispé, 1991); this connection has been established by referring to a *description* used by Hume and Smith, and remarking on how these descriptions of "sympathy" or "fellow-feeling" are consistent with modern conceptions of empathy. Specifically, the concepts are connected based

on a descriptive contrast; for example, Batson (2011) connects Hume's and Smith's descriptions of sympathy as being consistent with one among eight phenomena he observes as being referred to as empathy (e.g., Hume's and Smith's "sympathy" is connected to what Batson characterizes as "coming to feel as the other feels"; Batson, 2011, p. 16). I do not base my connection of sympathy to moral uses of empathy via this route; rather, I connect the concept of sympathy as situated within a discursive context—a moral one. And following in-line with sympathy, empathy likewise has been situated within a morality discourse. Therefore, apart from recognizing that at the descriptive level some aspects of Hume's and Smith's use of the term sympathy qualitatively maps onto some conceptions of empathy (e.g., when construed as feeling an emotion *similar* to the other or as a means for knowing or sharing these emotions), I have selected to focus on the context in which their theoretical ideas are reported.

European philosophy of the 18th century is typically thought of by students in terms of the Enlightenment ("the age of reason"), yet according to Dwyer (1998), this spotlight on reason obscures a prominent cultural preoccupation of Scottish Enlightenment thinkers—the passions. Referred to as "the discourse of the passions," Dwyer's *The Age of the Passions* attempts to bring to the forefront this discourse, which undergirded Enlightenment thought at the time. During the late 1700s, the Anglo-American tradition consisted primarily of speaking about mental states or "emotions" as "sentiments," "passions," or "virtues" (see Dixon, 2003, 2012, for an historical account of how the passions and sentiments were replaced by contemporary terms like emotion).

Writing about virtues, sentiments, and passions, Adam Smith's (1759/2002) *Theory of Moral Sentiments* and David Hume's (1740/2000) *Treatise on Human Nature* are well-known texts from this time-period concerning the topic of sympathy; however, according to Norton and

Kuehn (2000), Smith's and Hume's works are part of larger "foundations of morality" debate that was unfolding during the 18th century (actually initiated in the late 16th- through 17th-century). In contrast to contemporary academia and public life, wherein being empathic, compassionate, etc. "has become something like the gold standard for humanity," training oneself to feel compassion or be more empathic was not the priority for 18th century moral philosophers (Frevert, 2011, p. 151): it was taken for granted that a moral sense directed towards the common good and welfare for all members of a given society was a "naturally" occurring part of human nature (c.f. Haakonssen, 2006, pp. 8-9, for a discussion of what is meant by natural morality, i.e., the development of conventions and rules of morality "naturally" develop in a society in order to regulate "self-interest"; thus, for example, according to Hume, the moral virtue of justice, despite being "artificial," developed spontaneously as a practice among citizens of a society).[70] This interest in the welfare of humanity, in a given society, was referred to as "public affections" by Hutcheson, and as "public benevolence . . . or a regard to the interests of mankind" by Hume (1740/2000, p. 310 or 3.2.1 section13). Thus, in contrast to our present-day focus on "teaching" or "training" people to cultivate these social mores, according to neo-Epicurean philosophers of the 18th century, the generation of these conventions (a code of common social norms) arose inherently as part of human nature for members of a given society (see Frevert, 2011, pp. 150-160, for review of 18th century social-moral emotions).

The issues undergirding the foundations of morality debate were questions about what morality is (a virtue, a sentiment, a passion etc.), how are moral qualities characterized (acts of pity, acts of benevolence etc.), and through what process are we moral (e.g., is there such a thing as an instinct or innate propensity towards morality)? Two central concerns focused on within

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[70] This discussion foreshadows the mobilization of empathy politically.

these debates include (1) to what degree is human nature selfish (and does being self-interested necessarily lead to a lack of social morality) and (2) to what extent are moral virtues dictated by reason (as opposed to the passions)? These are concerns that both Hume and Smith addressed, and I discuss these in turn; then relate this back to the moral foundation of empathy (and by extension sympathy; see Norton & Kuehn, 2000, for a review of the "foundations debate").

18th-Century Moral Discourse on Sympathy

David Hume. Hume's work remains, among philosophers, one of the greatest in terms of the diversity of incompatible interpretations (Lopston, 1998), and there is little question that Humean scholarship is rich with interpretative debates (e.g., the extent to which one can understand and form a coherency in Hume's writing). Often referred to in moral philosophical circles as putting forward the view that "reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions" (Hume, 1740/2000, see 2.3.3 or p. 266), scholars debate about the extent to which Hume's moral theory does or does not value reason in moral judgments (see Brand, 1992; Darwall, 1998)[71]; and this is just one among the debatable topics within Humean scholarship.

There are number of points deduced from the interpretive literature on Hume that are relevant to his moral theory and his notion of sympathy: (1) Hume did not view moral motivation (will or volition) as best construed as a matter of rational deliberation (or reason); (2) passions alone determine our choices, while reason serves the function of weighing in "matters of fact"; (3) sympathy was not construed as a specific feeling (i.e., it was not construed as concept consistent with the modern-day usage of "feeling sorry for" another; the feelings we might have for someone who is bereaved or sad were referred to as "pity" or "compassion") rather it was

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[71] Targeting the sentimentalist versus the rationalist debate in moral decision-making, it has been suggested that Hume goes in a specific direction through the concept of sympathy—from sentimentalism towards judgments (e.g., Darwall, 1998).

construed as means of communication; (4) Hume did not, however, use the term sympathy consistently enough to constitute one singular meaning (e.g., Agosta, 2010, refers to four different uses), which makes it difficult to state definitively what exactly his theory of sympathy consisted of (see also Hume, 1740/2000, Norton & Norton, Eds., "Editor's Introduction," pp. 155-180; Wispé, 1991).

Several contemporary scholars have highlighted that the way that Hume used the term sympathy, matches onto emotional empathy or affect-sharing conceptions of empathy; for example, Oxley (2011, p. 16) cites "Hume's definition of sympathy: a capacity of human nature to 'receive by communication' the 'inclinations and sentiments' of others." Oxley refers to Hume's sympathy as a capacity for communicating emotions and as the mechanism of affect transmission. Oxley cites that Hume's discussion of the *transmission of emotion* via sympathy provides the basis for the modern-day conception of *emotional contagion* or what contemporary scholars might refer to as emotional empathy. However, Oxley (2011) extends this discussion to specify that sympathy also involves "care or concern for the other" (p. 17), and thus, it is not a far leap to see how Hume's focus on sympathy (as the means of receiving the emotional experiences of others), within the context of a theory of moral sentiments, would lend towards the suggestion that via the principle of sympathy we experience emotional resonance with the experience of others, and based on this feeling, we may be moved to act in ways that are benevolent or kind (Hume, 1740/2000).[72]

Much the same way empathy has been viewed as both a process and a state, Hume describes sympathy in the *Treatise* not as specific state but as a process through which one

[72] Discussion of Hume's view on natural versus artificial virtues and the extent to which we are "naturally" predisposed to act on behalf of others extends us beyond the scope of this summary; however, for a useful summary see Hume, 1740/2000, wherein Norton and Norton (Eds.)., provide an account in the "Editor's Introduction" (pp. 155-189).

comes to an understanding of others' emotions or mental states (Wispé, 1991). Thus, it would seem that Hume was describing the process through which we come to "feel for" and/or "feel what" another is feeling, rather than the consequence of this. The outcome of sympathy could be an emotion, such as pity, compassion, etc., but sympathy was the capacity to receive the feelings of others' rather than the emotional response per se (Cohon, 2010; Wertz, 1996).

Hume takes sympathy in the direction of a "morality" (construed as sentiment) within the context of his *Treatise*, and concludes that "morality, therefore, is more properly felt than judg'd [sic] of" (Hume, 1740/2000, 3.1.2, p. 302); thus, sympathy allows us to receive the emotions of others, and thus dictates how we respond (moral or otherwise). Yet as was suggested, Hume's use of the term sympathy in the *Treatise* is not consistent, and it is only in some parts of the *Treatise*, that he refers to sympathy as something distinctly connected to a moral obligation towards others. According to Wispé, (1991), Hume (1902) used the term benevolence with greater frequency to refer to acts we might refer to today as "sympathetic" or "care for the welfare of others" in his later work *Enquiry*; while Debes (2007b) suggests the Hume used the term "humanity" with the greatest frequency. Debes (2007b) also addresses the "disappearance" of sympathy (as detailed in *Treatise*) from *Enquiry* (arguing that sympathy does indeed factor into the text, albeit less clearly than is appreciable).

So how does sympathy relate to morality specifically through Hume's writings? Sympathy provides us with *the capacity for feeling concern for others*. Sympathy is the vehicle for our social mores, rather than exclusively a moral concept in and of itself. Hume suggests that there is no "universal affection to mankind" (p. 309, 3.2.1 sec 12), rather, through sympathy we are affected by those whose plight we attend to, making concern for others a matter of attention as it intersects with self-interest and social conventions. Hume (1740/2000) does acknowledge

that we may have “sympathy with public interest” (p. 321, 3.2.2. 24-25), as a sort of secondary (or artificial) virtue. This public benevolence connects back to the natural states of pleasure and pain as experienced by the individual: when sympathy yields pleasure, the actions of others becomes “virtue,” producing love or pride, and when it yields uneasiness, it becomes vicious and “vice,” producing hatred or humility. Thus, it is not the action of others that are judged as praiseworthy or despicable, rather, it is how it affects us (via sympathy) and by its invocation of pleasure or pain, that we arrive at a moral judgment.

Hume’s account of how we arrive at moral judgments and emotions, as well as social mores, certainly lends support to the appraisal of Hume’s system as associationist, but it also draws attention to two other key points: (1) self-interest was not viewed as an inherently negative feature of human nature by scholars of the Scottish Enlightenment (self-interest was construed as a part of human nature and could be put towards the common good) and (2) sympathy was primarily construed as a neutral process, although its enervation certainly was not (i.e., we attend to certain people in certain circumstances and in cases where sympathy involves an imaginative component our sympathy is strongest with those who are most familiar or similar). Thus, despite much debate about “what sympathy” was, there is little debate that it was construed as means through which we come to action—possibly leading us towards acting on the behalf of another or on the behalf of the common good.

Hume’s ideas are couched in a discourse concerning social mores; questions about the perception and judgment of the actions of others was a primary part of the moral philosophical landscape of this period. Thus, irrespective of source (i.e., whether morally good actions that benefit the welfare of others are derived from social rules of conduct initiated to regulate self-interest) the virtues of kindness and compassion (and concern for the welfare of others) were

indeed assumed to form the bedrock to social organization. And these social mores were made possible because of sympathy.

Adam Smith. It is in Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (*TMS*; 1759/2002) wherein his system of morals is outlined. Smith builds on Hume's use of the term sympathy, yet Smith outlines its workings and limitations with greater clarity than did Hume (Agosta, 2010, 2014; Weinstein, 2008; see also Norton & Kuehn, 2006 regarding how Hume leaves us to connect the dots rather than providing a clear system). Smith's writings are less disputed as it pertains to what he meant by "fellow-feeling" and sympathy (when contrasted with the more frequently debated interpretations of Hume). In addition, Smith conceptualizes how sympathy functions differently than did Hume (see Darwall, 1998, p. 267 contrasting Hume and Smith on sympathy).

Smith (1759/2002) informs that theories of morality must address two questions: "wherein does virtue consist?" and "by what power or faculty in the mind is it, that this character, whatever it be, is recommended to us?" (*TMS*, 1759/2002, pp. 313-314, Part VII, Section I, Item 2). He was attempting to answer questions about "what is good" (e.g., what are the characteristics of the virtuous person) and "how do we decide what is good" (e.g., through what process do we arrive at answers to questions of right and wrong).

Smith's moral theory aimed at providing an explanation of those forms of behaviour we call moral; to this end, he concentrated on the features of mind and the modes of interaction between several minds which gave rise to moral practices. Smith assumed there were both general and contingent features to morality; hence, there was in some sense natural and universal tendencies in humans, which were adapted and modified in different social, economic, and political circumstances (Haakonssen, 2006). In addition, to moving away from the nature versus artifice divide, Smith attended to moral practice as both qualities of human agency as well as an

aspect of our tendency to follow rules: thus, individual striving could be modified through social regulation. Smith did not view self-interest as a negative quality (i.e., as selfishness), and the establishment of social conventions and norms of conduct allowed for ones' egoist motives to remain in check.

According to Smith (1759/2002) society and others serve as a mirror to oneself. It is through the recognition of others that individuals come to know themselves; it is via sympathy that one recognizes oneself as moral agent among other moral agents in a society. Smith's theory suggests sympathy is the social glue of society. Sympathy keeps individuals connected to others; it enables individuals to make decisions about the good of others and the good of self; it provides a means for individuals to seek to maintain social unity and cohesion within society—all of this is facilitated through sympathy (Smith believed that humans could hold simultaneously both egoist and altruistic attitudes).

According to Ottenson (2000) moral standards and judgments (which facilitate decisions about others and self) are made within the context of sociality; and, individuals evaluate others and themselves comparatively—just as I judge others, others judge me (see also Smith 1759/2002, *TMS*, p. 23, Part I, Chapter III, Item 10). For Smith, moral learning and deliberation is enabled and evidenced through *sympathy*. A judgment that an action is morally "right" or "wrong" comes about through a process of evaluating whether the action or person in question is in concordance with one's own sentiments:

> To approve of the passions of another, therefore, as suitable to their objects, is the same thing as to observe that we entirely sympathize with them; and not to approve of them as such, is the same thing as to observe that we do not entirely sympathize with them. (Smith, 1759/2002, *TMS*, p. 20, Chapter I, Section III, item 1)

The determination that another's view or actions is in concordance with one's own involves a judgment—the determination of moral correctness is impossible without evaluation. However, according to Smith, "sympathy, therefore, does not arise so much from the view of the passion, as from that of the situation which excites it" (*TMS*, Chapter I, Section I, Item 10). It follows that moral judgments are not made because of the evocation of an emotional response, rather, they are made as a response to the context in which an action is taking place. Moral decisions involve emotional receptiveness *and* rational deliberation, the evaluation of self and others, and are thus both matters of individual and social interests.

Sympathy and Fellow-Feeling

According to Smith's theory, it is sympathy which allows us to make moral judgments about ourselves and others. Sympathy forms the foundation for moral deliberation, both in the sense of "approval" but also in the sense of "impartiality" (or as Smith refers to it as the "impartial spectator"). As clarified by Agosta (2010, 2014) sympathy has both an evaluative component—I feel with you and either approve or disapprove—and an impartial aspect (i.e., sympathy as a *process* through which one comes to a state of approval). As indicated by Haakonssen (2002) sympathy in Smith's moral theory is used in two senses: (1) as approval and (2) as means of appreciating another's viewpoint; this is consistent with Agosta's claim that sympathy has both evaluative and process attributes. Haakonssen notes, however, that sympathy is primarily important in the latter sense—that is, as a means of coming to understand or appreciate the viewpoint of others. Thus, the evaluative aspect of the sympathetic process is arrived at secondarily; we do not arrive at the stage of approval or disapproval of a standpoint until after we have recognized that the other indeed has one (this is consistent with most contemporary discussions concerning theory of mind and is addressed in the section on the

epistemological foundations of empathy).

In Smith's sympathetic process, the appreciation of the perspective of another is in large part relational and a matter of shared recognition: our neighbor watches us as we watch him and through this mutual recognition we come to an understanding of self and other (Haakonssen, 2002, refers to this as "mutual sympathy"). Consistent with this mutuality and the relational component of sympathy, Smith's description of sympathy is more akin to an ability to relate to someone else's emotions because we have "experienced" similar feelings ("fellow-feeling") either through direct perception (as was emphasized by Hume) or through acts of imagination (as is more distinctly discussed in Smith's work). Although, most contemporaries use the term sympathy to refer to feeling bad about another person's suffering, Smith uses it to denote "fellow-feeling with any passion whatever" (*TMS*, p. 13, Part I, Section I, Chapter I, Item 5).

According to Smith, fellow-feeling and sympathy involve imagination—in order to appreciate the feelings of another we must imaginatively place ourselves in their situation:

> In imagination we place ourselves in his situation, we conceive ourselves enduring all the same torments, we enter as it were into his body, and become in some measure the same person with him, and thence form some idea of his sensations and even feel something which, though weaker in degree, is not altogether unlike them. (*TMS*, p. 2, Part I, Chapter I, Item 2)

In the sympathetic process the "spectator… changes places in fancy with… the person principally concerned (*TMS*, pp. 12-13, Part I, Chapter I, Item 3-5), and in Smith's theory the "spectator" can both "imagine other" and "imagine self" (as viewed as by the other).

The notion spectator is at the core of Smith's moral theory and explanation of how one arrives at a moral conscience. Smith suggests that in the sympathetic process we adopt a stance

of an “ideal impartial spectator” and attempt to appraise others as they would ideally appraise us (i.e., without the limitations of prejudice, ignorance etc.; Haakonssen, 2002). Thus, the psychological concept applies to both self and other (i.e., the internal spectator can imagine self as object and other as object), and to moral appraisals of self and other (i.e., the impartial spectator allows us to reflect on and judge ourselves, as well as present and imagined others).

Given that Smith’s moral theory is about self and others, Smith makes explicit that self-interest (as opposed to an inherent desire to place the welfare of others over one’s own) is an aspect of human nature which cannot be overlooked; however, Smith suggests that social interests can trump self-interest, to the extent that moral actions, within the context of a society, are demonstrations of a “concern for the welfare of others.” So how did the individual reconcile self-interest with what is good for others? Via what is construed as an innate propensity towards social unity, that is, the tendency of individuals of a given society to seek social cohesion and order. Thus, social mores can override our individual interests. Yet this moral response which appears other-oriented is still motivated by egoist interests (e.g., we do the morally right thing for another because it serves our ego-driven interests to maintain our status and value as an accepted member in a society; Stueber, 2006, pp. 28-29).

Within the context of Smith’s theory, “sympathy” is explicated as a foundational part of moral decision-making: we recognize self and other through sympathy and are led to make decisions about rightness and wrongness based on this recognition. And it is this decision-making process which inevitably leads humans to take morally appropriate actions.

According to Haakonssen (2002, p. vii), both Hume and Smith viewed “moral philosophy as central to a new science of human nature.” Therefore, to understand human nature, both focused on the features of mind and modes of interaction that gave rise to moral practices—

sympathy, fellow-feeling, and the notion of an impartial spectator in relation to self and other-understanding were viewed as the basic building blocks to human morality (and sociality). And to this end, as will be argued in the proceeding, if sympathy was conceived of as a means for appreciating and responding morally to other minds, then it is arguably not a far leap to understand how empathy has become conflated with sympathy (i.e., empathy construed as the process through which to experience other minds), and likewise, how empathy and sympathy have both became integral to discussions of moral development and theories of morality.

The Fate of Sympathy: Mid-19th to Early-20th Century Considerations

What should be evident is that although we have discussed sympathy within the context of morality, it is also very relevant to epistemic ways of appreciating the other, relationality, and even a naturalization project. It would be an oversight to state that sympathy does not factor in as a pre-cursor concept in the other founding conceptions of empathy; although recognizably, present-day ideas about sympathy have fundamentally moved away from the multiplicity of this concept.

From roughly the mid-19th century into the early 20th, sympathy became its own hodgepodge of ideas. And the discourse on sympathy from 1750 to 1930 is a mixed bag of scholars; for example, Darwin (1871/1899) on sympathy; Baldwin (1894, 1897) on the development of the ethical self; McDougall (1908/1960) on "primitive" and advanced forms of sympathy; Washburn (1932) on "ejective consciousness" as part of the moral and social sentiments; Mead (1913, 1934); as well as Murphy (1937)—among others— were writing about sympathy in very diverse ways (Lanzoni, 2009b). It has been suggested that one of the primary reasons the term "sympathy" was not used as a translation for *Einfühlung* was to avoid a "carryover" of the baggage associated with sympathy (Lanzoni, 2012a). And, perhaps, also

because there is the suggestion that these two concepts differ, as might be denoted by the recognizing that *Einfühlung* and *Mitgefühl* are different words, one might ask whether Hume, Smith, etc., were just using the wrong word?

Developmental and Social Psychology

Construing sympathy and empathy as the means through which to recognize and demonstrate concern for others, it is has been suggested that these phenomena are "the glue that make social life" possible (Hoffman, 2000, p. 3). Given the social significance of these phenomena developmental and social psychologists have sought answers (both empirically and theoretically) to questions about the factors involved in the development of these capacities; they have ultimately sought to derive an account of what leads us to do good by others and in turn how we can then cultivate this in our young and adult citizens alike. In the late 19th and early 20th century the dividing line regarding social psychological and developmental psychological was not firm—philosophers and scientists explored social phenomena developmentally and/or conducted research with children to theorize about pan social psychological topics—therefore, I loosely follow chronology in the proceeding, pointing out designations (social or developmental) when it is relevant (i.e., in particular, where much, but not all, of the discourse on sympathy is replaced by empathy by the 60s).[73]

[73] The term sympathy was supplanted by many social scientists by the second half the 20th century. This happened primarily from 1950s onwards. Speculations on why this occurred could include the focus on cognition and the exclusion of "feelings" from the psychological enterprise during this period. Thus, sympathy (and in particular, feelings) was not on the short list for study. Empathy made significant traction in the developmental, social, and personality psychological discourse in the 1930s through 1970s and much of this work was aimed at measurement (see e.g., Dymond, 1949, 1950; Feshbach & Roe, 1968; Gordon, 1934; Hogan, 1969; Kerr & Speroff, 1954; Mehrabian & Epstein, 1972; Patterson, 1962; Stoland, 1969). The socio -political -cultural and -historical context is recognized as it pertains to the aforementioned discourse (see e.g., Gordon, 1934 as it pertains to language, the use of Mexican images within the context of experimental research; see also Lanzoni, 2018 as it pertains the measurement of sociopolitical values, e.g., Kerr & Speroff, 1954). Recognition that empathy is imbued with mobilizations underlies the approach adopted in this work; however, within the context of academic discourse, a primary theme that emerges is the supplanting of empathy for sympathy; empathy became the concept of choice (as opposed to sympathy which was not operationalized in the same way or to the same extent). More will be said of empathy and measurement in Chapter 5.

Moral Development

By the early 20th century theorizing around moral development focused on "cognitive" empathy (e.g., moral reasoning and judgment) as opposed to "emotional" or "affective" empathy (e.g., moral emotions such as compassion, concern); however, the academic distinction between "cognitive" and "emotional" empathy did not become relatively commonplace until the mid-to-late part of the 20th century (in the 70s, see Lux, 2017; see also, Mark Davis's, 1983, multidimensional conception, Davis suggests that measures in the 30s through to the early 70s had, in many cases, confounded emotional and cognitive empathy; see also Davis, Soderlund, Cole, Myers, Weighing, 2004) . Thus, for a period during the early 20th century, the Humean and Smithean component of sympathy as emotion transfer, took to the background and the primary focus of most developmental psychologists for roughly the first half of the 20th century was centered around what has been referred to as (human) "moral reasoning" and the development of what we might now refer to as "social cognition." Discussion in the proceeding is restricted to theories of moral development and prosociality (Martin Hoffman and Nancy Eisenberg) through to helping behaviour generally (Daniel Batson). The topic of social cognition and perspective-taking, specifically (i.e., "cognitive empathy"), is addressed in the section on epistemology in Chapter 3.

Martin Hoffman's Theory of Moral Development

According to Hoffman (2000) empathy is "an affective response more appropriate to another's situation than one's own" (p. 4). Hoffman summarizes that empathy is an emotional state, wherein one feels what another feels or what the other would be reasonably expected to feel in their particular situation; however not only is empathy an emotion state, it also has a cognitive component, in so far as one *knows* that *the feeling is not theirs* (i.e., it is in response to

the misfortunes of another). Hoffman's focus is on the development and maturation of "empathic distress" rather than on empathic responses to, for example, positive situations. Hoffman construes empathic distress as a "prosocial moral motive" or an "empathic motive base." Within the context of children's' moral development this is logical—there is a focus on how children learn to resolve guilt, know right from wrong, what is fair etc., and later how this develops into adult principles of caring and justice. Hoffman also focusses on modes of "empathic arousal" (the different routes through which empathic distress or moral motives can be evoked, e.g., involuntarily/automatic or voluntarily and directly or indirectly; see Hoffman, 2014, pp. 73).

Hoffman's theory is a salient example of empathy as a basis for morality—that is, it forms the foundations for developing a sense of what is right and good to do in consideration and care of others. Hoffman attempts to bridge a connection between empathic distress (an empathic moral motive) and the principles of justice and caring. This aim, however, is not without an awareness of empathy's limitations (e.g., its biases, both individual and social; see Hoffman, 2014, pp. 93-95). As Hoffman alludes to, "empathic morality, though a universal prosocial motive, is thus fragile" (Hoffman, 2000, p. 22). Hoffman developed his theory over several decades from the late 70s into the present and the tone of his theory has not changed (see e.g., Hoffman, 1978, 1981, 1990, 2000, 2014). The thrust is that with the appropriate development and education, the natural empathic motive to attend and care for others (in addition to preferences for fairness and norms of reciprocity) can be harnessed to produce a more just world.

Prosociality and Development: The Work of Nancy Eisenberg

Nancy Eisenberg is a developmental psychologist who has spent the bulk of her career examining the development of prosocial behaviour in children (see e.g., Eisenberg, 1986, 2007; Eisenberg & Eggmun, 2009; Eisenberg & Fabes, 1990; Eisenberg & Spinrad, 2014; Mussen &

Eisenberg, 1977). Eisenberg's research on empathy, sympathy, and the prosociality in children, like Hoffman, began in the late 70s (see e.g., Eisenberg & Mussen, 1978; Hoffman, 1978). Eisenberg's work, however, can be characterized by outlining two central features that thread through her work. First, Eisenberg's program is empirical. Eisenberg has undertaken several research studies working with children—experimental, longitudinal, etc. Second, Eisenberg's work is known for its distinct take on what empathy is and how it differs from other moral emotions (e.g., sympathy, personal distress etc.). It is to this latter feature that I will attend. Eisenberg's definition of empathy runs counter to the one outlined by Hoffman (2000) and other development and social psychologists (i.e., she defines empathy as "feeling what the other feels" rather than having an emotion congruent response given the circumstances; see also Lux, 2017).

To exemplify, Nancy Eisenberg and Janet Strayer's (1987) editorship on the volume *Empathy and Its Development* outline from the outset that there is a clear distinction between cognitive empathy (perspective-taking) and sympathy (an outcome of empathy). Empathy in this conception is really about "emotion-transfer" or feeling what another person feels; whereas sympathy is an other-oriented response stemming from perceiving another's emotion but does not involve feeling that emotion. Sympathy involves concern or sorrow for the other. Thus, in Eisenberg's early work, concern for the welfare of the other can come through thinking about (perspective taking) and feeling sorry for (sympathy) another; sympathy is viewed primarily as an outcome of the empathic process and perspective taking can prompt empathy or be the result of empathy (Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987, p. 6). This perspective on empathy has for several years defined Eisenberg's approach; it is a very specific version of empathy (proper) and what is a product of the empathic process (perspective-taking, sympathy, helping, and prosocial behaviour).

In Eisenberg's more recent work the definitional lines remain; for example, Eisenberg and Spinrad (2014) devote the first part of this chapter to defining and differentiating empathy, sympathy, personal distress, and altruism in relation to prosocial behaviour. The suggestion is that these definitional issues are important because these emotions are suggested to differ in motive and consequently lead to different behaviours (e.g., sympathy is associated with the desire to reduce someone else's distress whereas personal distress is associated with a focus on alleviating one's own distress). Empathy is suggested to be at the root of these emotions (although it is also suggested that other more "cognitive-like" processes are involved in use of terms such as perspective-taking); empathy can therefore spawn sympathy, altruism, etc. This is precisely why the more general umbrella term "empathy-related responding" is used and is sandwiched within the discussion of prosocial behaviour. Prosocial behaviour can be brought about by empathy in-and-of-itself, by sympathy (emerging from empathy or from perspective-taking), by sympathy (source unspecified), or from altruism. The specification does soften wherein the statement is made "because the motivation for prosocial behaviors in a given context is often unknown, we use the broader term of prosocial behavior" (Eisenberg & Spinrad, 2014, p. 61).

Pulling back from the definitional issues and looking at this program of research more holistically, it is clear that empathy remains central to Eisenberg's ideas about moral behaviour.

Social Psychology: Altruism and Helping

Following the death of Kitty Genovese, Darley and Latané's (1968, 1970) work on the bystander effect and their development of a model addressing barriers to helping in an emergency is emblematic of watershed of research on helping behavior that took place in social psychology in the 70s and 80s. The question of why people do or do not help was theorized in

several different ways; however, one of the factors implicated in this process was empathy.

It is illustrative at this point to specify that from the late 60s through to the late 90s the study of prosocial emotions, motivations, and behaviours focused on a "trifecta"—sympathy, altruism, and empathy. There is an abundance of literature exploring all of or any one of these three moral laden concepts (e.g., Krebs, 1970 on altruism, in addition to the aforementioned on sympathy and empathy).[74] Notably, within the 21st century this trifecta has expanded to include other morally-laden concepts; in particular, there has been a recent surge in writing on the topic of compassion in the first decade or so of the century.[75]

Daniel Batson and the Empathy-Altruism Hypothesis

The most sustained examination of empathy in relation to a specific form of helping—altruism—took place through the research program initiated by Daniel Batson in the late 1970s and into the present (see Batson, 2011 for a review; however, see also, Hoffman, 1975, 1978, 1981; Krebs, 1970, 1975; Cialdini, Darby, & Vincent, 1973; Coke, Batson, & McDavis, 1978 as exemplars of the beginnings of this inquiry). Batson's research was primarily aimed at unpacking the motives underlying what could be considered an altruistic act. Over several decades Batson conducted a series of experiments exploring "personal arousal" in relation to altruistic motivation. The primary thrust was to take on the age-old question of whether there is such a thing as a "good Samaritan" and if so, under what conditions does the benevolence emerge, could it be possible that there are certain "measurable" and "testable" factors that expose these contextual factors. What is it that makes an individual sacrifice their wellbeing, time, energy, money, resources, solely for the purposes of benefitting another person?

[74] Altruism has its own unique historical trajectories (e.g., within evolutionary theory), however, it is evident that it is connected to sympathy and empathy (based on the frequency in which these three concepts appear together).
[75] Notwithstanding that compassion has its roots in Eastern philosophies of emotion; however, it has taken on a "new" life within Euro-Western academia (see e.g., Breyer, 2020; Singer & Bolz, 2013; Singer & Klimecki, 2014)

Stemming out of this work two lines of literature appeared: one being an exploration into the notion of altruism and the other questioning why people "help" (e.g., is there such a thing as "true" altruism or is altruism always traceable back to some form of self-interest based on certain social conditions, see Batson, 1991, 1994; Cialdini, 1991; Cialdini et al. 1973; Cialdini 1997; Coke et al., 1978).[76]

Pertaining to the first body of literature—what is altruism—many evolutionary biologists distinguish between biological altruism and psychological altruism (Ananth, 2005; Piccinini, & Schulz, 2018; Sober, 1988, 1993). Underlying this discourse is the assumption that when speaking about biological processes and its evolutionary logic we are speaking at the level of the gene (e.g., Dawkins, 1976/2006); hence the suggestion that psychological processes must be construed differently than biological ones as it relates to consciousness, levels of awareness, attention, and memory in relation to "helping behaviour" (acts of altruism and other morally good actions; see e.g., de Waal, 2008, 2010). This is a central tension in evolutionary biology and psychology, theoretically.[77]

As it pertains to the second line of literature, which is closely connected to Batson's social psychological research program, the answer is affirmative: personality and social psychologists were keen to identify different forms of empathy and continued to work on

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[76]Batson, Cialdini, and colleagues debated on this topic experimentally and questioned the suggestion that underlying altruism is form of egoism and/or social awareness (e.g., people help because they feel good when they do or because others are watching their behaviour). Temporally congruent with this experimental work was an inquiry into the dimensions, components, types, or forms of empathy. This led to the development of measures (e.g., see Davis, 1983, 1996 pertaining to empathy's multidimensionality as an individual difference or personality factor).
[77] The concept of altruism within evolutionary biology is also frequently in juxtaposition with the notion of hedonism—they suggestion that we do good things for others because we get pleasure from doing so (Sober & Wilson, 1998). The suggestion that we act in pursuit of pleasure and in order to avoid pain is also a topic taken up by social-personality psychologists primarily in reference to egoism; this is briefly discussed in the proceeding within the context of Batson and Cialdini's debate around social motives. Likewise, the term reciprocal altruism is also presented within the context of sociobiology and evolutionary theory (e.g., I do something for you now so that you will extend the same to me later; see Trivers, 1971). See also Nowak (2011c) for a game-theory account of seemingly selfless actions. For additional information on the concept of altruism within evolutionary theory see the biography of George Price (Harman, 2010, pp. 311-331).

conceptual clarification and measurement strategies. Batson, however, had some very specific visions in mind. Noting that empathy can produce several different empathy-related responses and phenomena, he was not aiming at comprehensive theory of what empathy is, rather he aimed to "test" out his specific hypothesis—that "empathic concern" produces altruistic motivation. Notwithstanding, from the outset Batson did have to clarify and distinguish what his specific version of empathy entailed and what he meant by the different terms that had currency in the late 70s and 80s. For example, the general distinction was made by Batson, Fultz, and Schoenrade (1987) between what he called "(1) feelings of empathy (sympathy) for another who is in distress and (2) feelings of personal distress that are produced by witnessing the other's distress" (p. 163). Thus, Batson et al. (1987) point out the "other-oriented" versus "self-oriented" reaction that occurs when a person witnesses another's distress. According to Batson (1991, 1994, 2010) it is this *other-oriented response* that needs to be explored and tends to lead to helping behaviour.

In the late 70s and early 80s social psychologists and researchers interested in helping behavior, altruism, and the like, focused on the individual psychological mechanisms and the contextual cues that facilitated and motivated moral responses/behaviors (e.g., helping another in response to their situation). Empathy (as the study of sympathy by this time had largely been replaced by the term empathy as mentioned in the preceding) factored into this sequence, and researchers focused on (1) differentiating empathy from other related phenomena and (2) specifying the relationship between empathy and the concept of altruism.

Batson's work in the 80s and 90s on the empathy-altruism connection forms the bedrock of social psychological research on this topic. Batson (2011) returned to his life's work in his second book on empathy and altruism: *Altruism in Humans* (2011), herein he reflects on the

empathy-altruism hypothesis that he put forward in 90s in his book *The Altruism Question* (1991).

Batson (2011) specifies what he refers to as (1) an empathic emotion: other-oriented emotions elicited by and congruent with the perceived welfare of someone; and (2) empathic concern (shorthand empathy): other-oriented emotion elicited by and congruent with the perceived welfare of someone in need. The differentiation here is that *empathic concern*, focuses on the perception of need and is theorized as a source of altruistic motivation, whereas an empathic emotion refers to joy in another's good fortune but would not elicit altruistic motivation. Also, worth noting is that, *congruent* in this context refers to valence—positive/negative—rather than with the matched emotion state; for example, it is congruent to feel sorry for someone who is upset.

Given that Batson has spent the bulk of his career conducting research on empathy in relation to prosociality it is not surprising that he is considered among the most authoritative figures on the social psychology of helping; however, he is also considered an expert on the topic of empathy in general. Batson (2015) is still writing on the empathy-altruism hypothesis and his position is unaltered, "*empathic concern produces altruistic motivation*" (p. 385); however, consistent with the specificity of what is meant by the term empathic concern and altruistic motivation, Batson is also clear to point out that none of the other phenomena often described as empathy (e.g., knowing another's thought and feelings; adopting the posture or matching the neural responses of another; feeling as another feels; personal distress when witnessing another's suffering; imagining how one would think and feel in another's place; imaging how another thinks or feels; a general disposition to feel for others) produces altruistic motivation unless it is also evokes empathic concern. These conditions for the possibility of the empathy-

altruism hypothesis to hold true are quite specific.

The aforementioned three psychologists detailed (Hoffman, Eisenberg, and Batson) have slightly different formulations and foci as it pertains to empathy and its connection to "morality"; however, there is one consistent thread—all three have devoted the bulk of their academic careers to their theory, and their conceptualizations remain relatively consistent overtime (e.g., Hoffman, Eisenberg, and Batson still retain their fundamental definitional distinctions despite subtle adjustments overtime). All three continue to write on the topic and the writings on the topic are relatively predictable if one is familiar with their theories and line of research.

Contemporary Debates

The connection of empathy to moral psychology is summarized by Aaltola (2014):

> Studies demonstrate that empathy figures as an important element in the development of pro-social behaviours . . . and it has also been linked to the ability to form moral judgments. . . . Based on its connections to sociality and moral decision-making, many have argued that empathy acts as a key component in moral ability. . . . Indeed these studies lay the groundwork for the argument that empathy is a *necessary* requirement for moral agency – a stance that will here be called "the empathy thesis" (Aaltola, 2014, p. 76, emphasis in the original)

Aaltola (2014) describes in her article some of the core conceptual debates that are at the centre of empathy's connection to morality (in particular focusing on the case of autism and debates about empathy-deficits being a primary feature of this disorder and also psychopathy; the suggestion is that there is a deficit of affective empathy but an excess of cognitive empathy).[78]

[78] I take up empathy as a means for pathologizing (Chapter 4). Noteworthy, however, is that one of the key distinctions drawn out as a thesis in Aaltola's article is the suggestion that it is "affective empathy" which factors in most strongly regarding empathy and morality. Cognitive empathy appears to remain in the background of this piece. This is consistent with other writings. Cognitive empathy or perspective taking is set "outside" of the debate.

Yet what is evident from this contemporary philosophical paper is that questions of the empathy-morality connection are alive and thriving in the 21st century.

Literature from the late 20th to early 21st which focuses on the relationship between empathy and morality spans several disciplines. First, we see the topic make a sustained appearance among philosophers (e.g., is empathy necessary for morality; Prinz, 2010, 2011). The topic is discussed as a conceptual, analytic, and categorical issue from an evolutionary-biological perspective (e.g., Sober, 2006), an intellectual-historical-philosophical perspective (Ugazio, Majandzić, & Lamm, 2014), a critical anthropological-philosophical perspective (i.e., moral philosophy subjected to ethnography, see Hollan, 2014), and along traditional philosophical debate-lines such as sentimentalism versus utilitarianism (more broadly referred to as virtue ethics; see Kauppinnen, 2014). Heidi Maibom's (2014) *Empathy and Morality*, an edited collection of papers, addresses precisely these connections.

Pulling back from the umbrella remark that empathy and morality continue to be in close proximity and maintain this presence within the literature, there are several features worth remarking on both pertaining to morality in general and empathy in particular; for example, the sustained emotion versus rationalist debate and questions about whether "sharing" of emotion need be involved in questions of empathy and morality (see Blum, 2011). In addition to continued questions about whether moral decisions are informed by emotion or whether they ought to exclusively rely on reason, it is noteworthy that as it pertains to moral emotions and judgements the current trend in philosophy is to think of moral judgements not only as an act of cognition but rather as a complex process involving both emotions and cognition. Of the emotions implicated in the process of moral deliberation, empathy and sympathy are principle. The question persists—are emotions helpful as it pertains to moral judgment? Writing about

moral emotions, Prinz (2010) draws attention to the fact that although empathy (as well as sympathy and fellow-feeling, although Prinz distinguishes among the concepts) may play a role in motivating prosocial behaviour, it is not a moral emotion per se, as it does not *necessarily* lead to prosocial behaviour.

Several philosophers have also taken up Batson's work, focusing specifically on the concept of "empathic concern." The question is whether empathy and/or sympathy are needed to feel concern for another. Simmons (2014) discusses the moral significance of empathy, and suggests that empathy is necessary and sufficient to feel concern for the well-being of others (see also Greenspan, 2010). Likewise, Prinz (2010) makes this distinction and notes that empathy and sympathy are a prompt to concern but as mentioned already does not suggest that in and of itself empathic concern is necessary and sufficient to facilitate moral behaviour (e.g., acting on behalf of another or to improve another's welfare).

The other interesting direction involves identifying the "social emotions" (as was mentioned above); for example, Gerdes (2011) clearly specifies that empathy, sympathy, and the like are social emotions. Gerdes has applied this to social work practice and developed the concept of social empathy. Likewise, Greenspan (2010) a philosopher of morality and emotions, would agree that there are some emotions that are best characterized as being of a social nature. It is not difficult to see how the invocation of "social" emotions leads to questions about prosociality, or how these social emotions function in the service of acting for the betterment of others. Greenspan refers to morality, following from 18th century moral philosophy, as based on "social emotions," and questions whether "moral responses" coupled with social emotions can be used to explain what we might call moral judgments. Greenspan notably discusses the interplay of cognition and feeling with regard to this.

The question might be posed: In the end, does it come back to a question of emotional empathy versus cognitive empathy? Interestingly, research related to empathy is viewed unfavorably when emotional empathy is interpreted as providing support for the existence of cognitive empathy (and vice versa). This is particularly salient in questions about empathy's necessity and sufficiency in bringing about moral behaviour (see Oxley, 2011, pp-66-73 on Slote's use of Hoffman and Batson's work). In many ways, the debate about empathy's role in morality harks back to the very similar sentimentalist versus rationalist debate of the 18th century in regard to sympathy.

There are several scholars who claim that the debates about whether empathy and morality are connected is best construed as a "fad**"** (e.g., attacks on de Waal, Rifkin, i.e., e.g., Bloom, 2017; Brooks, 2011). And at the same time there are several scholars invested in the pursuit of the underlying mechanisms which comprise morality; for example, there is moral foundations theory, a perspective espoused by Jonathan Haidt and colleagues. The central aim is to identify the core principles underlying the development of morality (through the lens of evolutionary theory and the psychological sciences).

Undoubtedly, the most prevalent connection of empathy to morality leads in the direction of empathy as a moral "good" or "virtue"; however, this is not the entire story. Several scholars, for example, Breithaupt (2019), alert us to how empathy can be used in service of perpetrating horrific acts of violence and genocide. If one views empathy as a means for reading "hearts and minds" in order to manipulate, control, and ultimately commit acts of violence against other human beings, then "concern for others" would not be part of this definition of empathy is.[79]

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[79] This issue is also addressed in Chapter 4 in relation to antisocial personality disorder (ASPD) and the question of whether or not social intelligence is similar to what is understood to be empathy; it appears to be the case that when scholars describe "a lack of moral conscience" and/or "a lack of empathy" the assumption is that empathy is "morally good" and associated with prosociality and concern for the welfare and wellbeing of others.

Whether or not empathy does include concern for the wellbeing of others and whether or not is a moral good are among the topics debated within moral philosophy and psychology (see e.g., Bloom, 2017; Breithaup, 2019; Gray, Young, & Waytz, 2012; Hoffman, 2000; Kauppinen, 2017; Maibom, 2008, 2009, 2014, 2017; Prinz, 2011; Oxley, 2011; 2019; Simmons, 2014).

There are several moral philosophers and theories not detailed in this dissertation; the intention was not to provide a comprehensive review of moral philosophy—this is not necessary to support my thesis that empathy irreducibly has a moral valence at its core. This valence can be construed as empathy leads to social goods or social ills; the valence is either positive or negative but nonetheless present. With the preceding discourses in mind, it is evident that the empathy-morality connection is the most sustained among the discourses on empathy. This has led me to posit that a moral dimension is at the core of “all things” empathy. The preceding review was intended to present a compelling case that separating the concept of empathy from moral questions is possible but would in essence neglect the core feature that characterizes empathy’s conceptualization and its mobilizations.

Chapter 3: Foundational Conceptions of Empathy

The foundational conceptions are about empathy within particular discourses. In addition, to recognizing the connection of empathy to morality, empathy is also in part entwined with discourses about relationality, epistemology, naturalism, and aesthetics. The four conceptual foundations—relational, epistemological, natural, and aesthetics—vary in prevalence; however, these, as well as its moral foundation, are the distinct characteristics that undergird applications of empathy.

Relational Conceptions

As it pertains to empathy's connection to relationality there is a challenge inherent in the use of certain terms (or lack thereof) and the different traditions associated with defining what "relationality" means. Despite obstacles, there are several common features that suggest that "empathy" or something like empathy is central to human relationships and central to being human ("social beings"). In what follows I focus on human relationships although I recognize that relating empathically to non-human primates, other sentient life forms, as well as inanimate objects are not beyond the scope of this discussion.[80]

There are numerous examples wherein empathy is described as means through which to form a genuine connection with others (or in some cases "demonstrate" said connection). The practice of invoking empathy as a route to understanding and relating to others is overabundant to the extent that it seems parochial to try and isolate (and differentiate) this founding conception from the other conceptions that form the basis for its use. In simple terms: Inherent in most basic definitions of empathy is the suggestion that this concept is about one "self" (individual) in some

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[80] I restrict my discussion of empathy and animals to the naturalized basis of empathy wherein I discuss an essentialist (physicalist and biological) conception of empathy. Likewise, I devote my discussion about empathy and inanimate objects to the aesthetic conception.

way "relating" to "others" (other individuals)

Most formulations of the empathic process suggest that empathy is a psychological concept (i.e., it is something that occurs or takes place within an individual) and that this process is directed towards or is about experiencing, connecting, perceiving, reading into, predicting the moves of, or attempting to understand another human being. This could include trying to relate to their emotional experience, contemplate their circumstances, tease apart a rationale for some action, or simply to resonate with the meaning conveyed (see Churchill, 2016; Stueber, 2017). Irrespective of the aspect attended to—emotions, reasoning, mind-reading—not only is empathy considered an individual concept it is also a social concept—it is about a directedness towards another (also referred to as "other-orientation"; see Batson, 2010). In more generic terms, empathy is predominantly construed as "self-in-relation-to-others."

The discussion becomes complicated when distinguishing among discourses which view human subjectivity (and likewise intersubjectivity) as constituted through the lens of a relational or social ontology (Dreyfus & Taylor, 2015; Barad, 2003; Crossley, 2011; Daly, 2014; Gergen, 2009; Hersch, 2003; Slife, 2004; Salice & Schmid, 2016; Salice & Taipale, 2015; Schmid, 2009, 2014; Szanto & Moran, 2016; Taylor, 1989; Tuomela, 2007, 2013) and those that take the individual as the locus of causality (common in most psychological discourses).

Central to the relational perspective, subjectivity, the individual, and the psychological are primordially relational in so far as there is no discrete self or object we call "I" without the recognition that this exists only "in relation to others." The lineage of this thought can be traced back to several self-social psychological theorists (e.g., Cooley, 1902/1964; Mead, 1913, 1934), social phenomenologists and hermeneuts (e.g., Husserl, 1912/1989; Heidegger, 1927/1962 Merleau-Ponty, 1945/1962; Scheler, 1913/1970; Schütz, 1932/1967), as well as moral and social

philosophers (Buber, 1923/1958; Levinas, 1961/1969; Macmurray, 1961). Evident in the aforementioned is that, despite a common relational thread undergirding these works, the aims and traditions among these scholars are diverse (c.f., Martin Buber, 1878-1965 to Alfred Schütz, 1999-1000). A comprehensive reconstruction of the concept of relationality (e.g., the distinction between inter- and intra- or intersubjectivity and subjectivity) and the particular dimensions suggested to delineate the psychological from the social are beyond the scope of this particular work. It is sufficient to emphasize that the landscape is diverse, and the disciplinary boundaries diffuse—from relational sociology (see Crossley, 2011) to feminist relational theory, the law, and virtue ethics (see Llewellyn & Grant-Downie, 2012). Not only are the borderlands mixed, there is also diversity in terms of whether conscious experience (e.g., phenomenologists), language and power (e.g., critical discourse analysts, social constructionists), and other societal structures are the analytic target through which to understand the concept and creation of subjectivity.

As a juxtaposition to scholars that suggest a relational ontology are scholars that maintain that the individual and the social should be examined as separate entities. These formulations focus on the psychology of an individual mind (i.e., critically referred to as engaging in psychologism, atomism, abstractionism) and then secondarily explore how the social impacts the individual (or vice-versa). This approach maintains categorical distinctions—there are psychological issues and there are social issues and if the two are interacting the preservation of these distinctions is ideal; for example, clearly delineating that social psychological topics are best viewed with the individual as the basis. As it pertains to empathy, when taking the individual as the locus for creation, the individual's relationship with another individual involves one mind attempting to (and often faltering) to understand another individual's mind.

Despite a breadth of scholarship that continues to challenge the individualistic approach to human reality and experience, our institutions and practices (established via modernity and structuralism, extended into postmodernity and poststructuralism, and re-enacted by the contemporary manifestation termed neo-liberalism; see Sugarman, 2015) persists in keeping these borderlines in place. The mainstream distinctions between the individual and the social remain firmly entrenched.

In addition, to fundamental differences in philosophical assumptions and traditions, the landscape is further complicated by the frequent synthesis of relational processes with those of an epistemic nature (e.g., as exemplified in the concept of *interpersonal understanding*; see Michael, 2014; Zahavi, 2010, 2014b). Specifically, the literature is rich with discourse that focusses on what happens when (while in relation to others) we attempt to "know" or "understand" the mental contents of another person's mind; this has roots in the "problem of other minds" conundrum. Leudar and Costall (2004) explicate that the "theory of mind" (ToM) frameworks developed out of the philosophical "problem of other minds"; the suggestion is that in essence, this discourse ends up reducing sociality to cognition (it should not be surprising that the ToM or mentalizing discussion falls under the umbrella term "social cognition"). Likewise, the relational foundations of empathy not only extend to epistemic concerns they also concern those experiences of "catching" or "feeling" (vicarious experiencing) of an emotion as a response to encountering another. "Affective" or "emotional empathy" is discussed within the context of the naturalized foundational conception of empathy, with the recognition that the "feeling" component is not exclusive to a naturalized empathy.[81]

[81] Maibom (2017) suggests that it is precisely at the affect versus cognitive distinction where phenomenological insights cause us to question the compartmentalization of these two aspects. Moreover, not only does the phenomenological approach bust open this dichotomy, certain theorists also call into question the "I-You" distinction, suggesting that a "we" would precede subjectivity (see Schmid, 2014, cf. Brinck, Reddy, & Zahavi,

In this work the ontological is distinguished from the epistemological (descriptions of reality or the way things are [i.e., a focus on being, what is the nature of reality] in contrast to ways of knowing or activities of the knowing subject [i.e., how do we know reality]). For the purpose of delineating relational discourse and empathy's relational foundations, I distinguish among relational theories using this distinction. Specifically, I address empathy as a relational concept ontologically and empathy as an epistemic concept via an appeal to epistemology.

There are texts which address "relating" ontologically—that is, describing relationality as a fundamental feature of inhabiting a world with others (e.g., Heidegger, 1927/1962, human being [*Dasein*] as in being with others [*Mitsein*]; this is an onto-existential form of phenomenology; see also Hersch, 2008, 2015). These relational theories are primarily philosophical. Identifying certain texts as primarily concerned with relational ontology does not preclude identifying relational texts that are also concerned with epistemological questions (e.g., a "social cognition" version of "relating," e.g., co-cognition, see e.g., Heal, 1998; e.g., an intersubjective, direct perception, and interactive approach, see e.g., Gallagher, 2015).

Psychology, however, primarily deals with ontic rather than philosophical ontology (e.g., specific types, modes, and determinants of relations in contrast to asking broader philosophical questions of "reality," see, Ryan, 1989). For example, intersubjectivity from a developmental perspective focusses on very specific conditions and contexts from which to substantiate claims (starting with observations and then allowing for the possibility of theory; see, Trevarthen, 1980).

With the aforementioned in mind, however, there are relational approaches that make this distinction rather blurry. In particular, the psychotherapeutic version of empathy (e.g., client-

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2017; Zahavi, 2015).

centered therapy, i.e., Rogers, 1959, 1975), the psychoanalytic version of empathy (e.g., self-psychology, i.e., Kohut, 1959, see Goldberg, 2011; Lee, Rountree, & McMahon, 2009), as well, as the psychoanalytic approach identified as relational psychoanalysis (i.e., Sullivan, 1953, see Mitchell, 1988, 2000) and other psychoanalytic thinkers, broadly referred to as intersubjectivity theorists (e.g., Benjamin, 1990; Jaenicke, 2008; Orange, 1995, 2002, 2009; Stolorow & Atwood, 1992) also inform the basis for empathy's connection to relationality. These texts include what can be described as an "epistemological" underpinning but some focus on questions of ontology as well (see also, Agosta, 1984; Akhtar et al., 2007; Aragno, 2008; Basch, 1983; Burston & Frie, 2006; Frie, 1997; Hersch, 2003, 2015 for additional description regarding empathy and psychoanalysis, as well, as philosophically-informed practices in psychotherapy).[82]

Within the context of a "general" psychotherapy (i.e., a broad approach encompassing a diversity of perspectives and/or forms of eclecticism) there is wealth of contemporary resources that exemplify the notion that empathy is central to the therapeutic relationship (Bohart & Greenburg, 1997; Clark, 2007/2014; Elliott et al., 2011; Gelso, 2018; Jordan, 1997, 2018; Jordan, Kaplan, Stiver, Miller, & Surrey, 1991; Jordan, Waker, & Hartling, 2004; Josselson, 1996; Miller & Stiver, 1997; Pedersen, Crethar, & Carlson, 2008; Staemmler, 2012; Wampold & Imel, 2015; Watson, 2002).[83] Despite diversity, forms of epistemology thread through this

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[82] I differentiate psychoanalysis from psychotherapy in general. This is because the assumptions that underlie these two forms of therapy differ; there are distinct techniques and professional boundaries. Notwithstanding that in reality most psychoanalysts borrow from general psychotherapy and many general (eclectic) psychotherapists borrow from the psychoanalytic literature too (e.g., psychodynamic-oriented therapists).

[83] Empathy within the context of psychotherapy will be discussed in Chapter 4; it will be described in relation to professionalism in the healthcare services field. Noteworthy, however, is that the predominant approach adopted for contemporary psychotherapy is "eclectic"—but with a founding basis built out of Carl Rogers (1902-1987) humanistic client-centered/person-centered approach; for example, Jean Baker Miller (1927-2006), Judith Jordan, and colleagues have developed what is referred to as relational-cultural therapy (see Robb, 2006; Jordan, 2018). This is a blend of feminist and cultural theory based on the central assumptions underlying the person-centered approach (e.g., c.f. with cognitive behavioural therapy). Recognition of eclecticism is key; however, the Rogerian foundations (i.e., non-judgment, empathy, authenticity) are evident.

literature as well, which will be described below.

There are several relational texts that deal with what has recently become a burgeoning field within contemporary phenomenology, sociology, social-cognitive psychology, as well, social theory broadly construed—this is referred to as "social ontology" (e.g., social phenomenologists, Schütz, 1932/1967). A central feature, however, is distinguishable as it pertains to the assumptions underlying the subject-object relationship within some social ontologies; for example, in Schütz's conception of social phenomenology, intersubjectivity is anchored in the individual subjects that are acting (Overgaard & Zahavi &, 2009, p. 102). The contemporary iterations of social ontology and social phenomenology, despite a commitment to studying the dimensions of social life, are still connected to maintaining the distinctions between what is "subjective" ("I" experiencing) and what is "intersubjective" ("we" experiencing); for example, within the field of phenomenology and the cognitive sciences the notion the of "we-relations" (Schütz, 1932/1967) is deconstructed (Brinck, Reddy, & Zahavi, 2017; Salice & Schmid, 2016; Schmid, 2009; Zahavi, 2015, 2017) and there is as a developing critique of the "interactive" turn in social cognition (see e.g., Overgaard & Michael, 2015). The blending of these areas has not been without its critics.

Relationality is a fundamental feature of human existence; it is integral to the description of what it means to be a human in relation to the world around us. There are certainly different ways of describing relationality. Some of the hallmark identifiers include those discourses that make use of terms such as a first-person, second-person, and third-person perspective (wherein vantage points are demarcated), concepts such as "shared reality" (Echterhoff, 2012; Echterhoff, Higgins, & Levine, 2009; Hardin & Higgins, 1996; Hardin & Conley, 2001; Higgins, 1992), and others that are characterized by the use of compound pronouns such as "we-hood" (Frie, 1997,

2010; Lanzoni, 2003; Smyth, 2011; Szanto & Moran, 2016), or other similar historical constructions such as the "I-Thou" distinction (Buber, 1923/1958).

Among the different approaches to relationality, scholarship by Brent Slife and colleagues warrants consideration (see e.g., Richardson & Slife, 2011; Slife, 2004; Slife, Reber, & Richardson, 2005; Slife & Wiggins, 2009; Wendt & Slife, 2007). Slife (2004) proposes a means for conceptualizing relationality. The primary context in focus for Slife and colleagues is psychotherapy, however, this conceptualization is intended to extend towards the human sciences and human relationships more broadly. The barrier to radical (strong) *relationality* within psychology is radical *individualism* (Slife & Wiggins, 2009). This approach to the human sciences is by no means new, rather, it is entrenched within Western neoliberal approaches to humanity, and its modes of operation and production.

There is no room to debate what psychology is about—suffice it to state that the focus is the individual and this is evinced by a survey of the discipline in relation to its theories, research practices, and pedagogy. A focus on abstracted, itemized, atomistic, generalizations, and regularities about phenomena are central to the methods of the natural sciences. In contrast, Slife and Wiggins (2009) outline what a radical relationality might entail as an application of relational ontology within the human sciences. The notion of ontological relationality, on one hand, respects the systematic construction of a framework as such, while at the same time illuminates the importance of context and lived experience. There are different forms of relationality—weak, strong, radical—or generally it is referred to as an "ontological relationality."[84] Relating, relations, relationships and human betweenness—however one situates

[84] Beyond the scope of this research, one approach to conceptualizing how empathy is used by reconstruing them along the dimensions of weak, strong, and radical relationality. This is would be another application of Slife and colleagues' ontological relationality.

the perspective—is on the landscape. The terrain, however, is varied. This approach provides a framework for exploring the terrain within the context of psychology (and perhaps beyond).

Deconstructing each theorist's idiosyncratic dictionary of terms is beyond the scope of this work; however, notable is the common underlying theme in all these writings—they are all explicitly statements about the inherently socio-relational nature of human beings. Some focus on broad generalizations and abstract systems, while others attend to context and the particulars but all focus on relationality in some form. This topic opens up a floodgate of ideas and long-standing philosophical questions—What is self? What is subjectivity? What is the nature of intersubjectivity? What is the nature of "we" in relation to "me"? How do we understand the space "between" persons? (see Josselson, 1996; Teo, 2018; Zahavi, 2015). The aforementioned questions have led to myriad of proposals and terms—for example, co-cognition (Heal, 1998)[85] and as mentioned above, "shared reality," the notion of "we-hood" etc. (see Durt, Fuchs, & Tewes, 2017; Higgins, 2018). What is definitive, however, is an attention to some variation on a relational process.

The term empathy is at times explicitly referred to in "relational" writings and in other instances not (see e.g., Agosta, 2010, 2014; Owen, 1999, 2003). Where other terms such as sympathy, understanding, are used, there are historical-cultural and socio-political reasons, and last, often, conceptual reasons. Agosta (2014), for example, suggests that Freud, did not use the term "empathy" because of Lipps's theory of *Einfülung*. In other cases, it might be that the word empathy was not on the landscape (e.g., when sympathy was the term in currency) or some may have had an interest in moving towards greater specificity and away from the conceptual inconsistencies that plague the term empathy, and therefore chose to use different terminology

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[85] The notion of co-cognition will be detailed as it pertains to the epistemic foundations of empathy; in particular within the context of theory of mind.

that denotes a relational aspect within a particular context of interest without explicitly invoking the term (e.g., use of terms such as therapeutic alliance, interpersonal understanding, attunement, mutuality, recognition, validation, co-presence, etc.). Despite the lack of linearity and denotation it is evident that empathy is connected to and associated with relational processes; this observation, it is argued, in part forms one among the foundational conceptions of empathy.

Epistemological Conceptions

How do we know what others are thinking; how can we see things from the perspective of another (distant or local, present or imagined)? An answer to these questions is considered relevant to the domain of epistemology within philosophy. Discourse of this variety span several time periods and different traditions (philosophical and otherwise; each with its own thought styles and patterns of language use). For purposes of this description, I suggest that despite disparate explanations of how this knowledge comes to be and different terms for describing it, a unifying theme underlying this discourse is that empathy functions as a means to produce some knowledge (accurate or otherwise) of another person's experience, feelings, thoughts, and intentions.

As elucidated while describing the discourse on relationality, there is a comparable comment to be made as it pertains to the discourse on epistemics—the terrain varies, and borderlands are messy. In particular, two primary traditions (hermeneutics and phenomenology) that are associated with relationality and epistemics are not easily disentangled. There is an intersection of hermeneutics and phenomenology (see e.g., Ricoeur, 1981/2016, p. 74 on the provisional title "hermeneutic phenomenology"; see also Tate, 2011).[86] It is not uncommon in

[86] Noteworthy within context, Ricoeur (1981/2016) is explicit that in order for hermeneutics and phenomenology to partner "hermeneutics and phenomenology presuppose one another only if the idealism of Husserlian phenomenology succumbs to the critique of hermeneutics" (p. 89). Ricoeur is suggesting that phenomenology is hermeneutic.

contemporary context to see scholarship described as "hermeneutic phenomenology (e.g., Kakkori, 2009; Laverty, 2003); there is even the introduction of an approach in qualitative research termed "interpretative phenomenological analysis" (IPA; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Moreover, recently, hermeneutics and phenomenology have been merged in what is referred to as an "embodied hermeneutics," wherein the work of Gadamer and Merleau-Ponty are brought into dialogue (see Solli, 2017). Many scholars who identify as practicing phenomenology, likewise, identify as hermeneuts. Despite disciplinary, organizational, and institutional recognition (i.e., clarity around the merging of these traditions), it appears that Ricoeur's envisioned program has been in some form executed. Albeit, within contemporary circles, phenomenology has markedly set out organizationally (see e.g., www.phenomenologyonline.com).

There are on record several different varieties of phenomenology (existential, social, moral, naturalized, neuro-, etc.) and there is heated debate about how to define phenomenology and what it is "really" about (see Zahavi, 2018; see also Giannota, 2018; Churchill & Wertz, 2015). Likewise, there are different varieties of hermeneutics (regional, general, philosophical, critical; see Kögler, 1999; Martin & Sugarman, 2001; Ormiston & Shrift, 1990; Ricoeur, 1981/2016; Sugarman & Martin, 2009) and the tradition itself is associated with several different contexts for its instantiation (e.g., the therapeutic context, see Martin & Dawda, 1999; Martin & Thompson, 2003, e.g., as a complement to the cognitive sciences in research on imitation, see Keestra, 2008).[87]

[87] Most pointed, however, is the narrative of how the traditions came together—it is a lineage story: Heidegger was student to Husserl, Gadamer was student to Heidegger, and the story unfolds (see Gadamer, 1994). Noteworthy is that traditional hermeneutics existed before Husserl introduced phenomenology; however, it has been suggested that some hermeneuts moved towards phenomenology, in part, in order to critique Husserl's phenomenology (see Ricoeur, 1981/2016).

Empathy is connected to both traditions—phenomenology via the notion of subjectivity, intersubjectivity, first- and second-person perspectives on self-to-other experiences, as well as the concept of interpersonal understanding; hermeneutics via the notions of historicity, dialogicality, and interpretative understanding. Although there are shared characteristics among hermeneutic and phenomenological approaches (e.g., both are committed to a form of understanding) there are certainly identifiable distinctions.[88] It is worth highlighting, however, as suggested above, the field of phenomenology has set out quite explicitly to reclaim the notion of "empathy" from its unique vantage point (e.g., Husserl, 1859-1938, Scheler, 1874-1928, Schutz, 1899-1959, etc.). A very robust research programme exists at the Center for Subjectivity Research, University of Copenhagen, spearheaded by Dan Zahavi (Director) in 2002.[89] There are several collaborations in process; for example, phenomenology pairing with the cognitive sciences (Gallagher & Zahavi, 2012). The productivity of this endeavour is robust.[90]

With the aforementioned disclaimer in place, I trace the primary discourses that underlie empathy's conceptualization as involving an epistemic component, noting that there may be overlap in writing identified as hermeneutic and/or and phenomenological and those referred to as relational and/or epistemic and that this may not sit right with all readers.

Hermeneutics and Understanding

The notion of understanding is certainly relevant to epistemology. It is likewise relevant

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[88] There are several other shared characteristics between hermeneutics and phenomenology (see Ricoeur, 1981/2016). One interesting approach is to describe Heidegger's work in relation to phenomenology whilst invoking his hermeneutic leanings, see Owen 1999, who writes about "The Special Hermeneutic of Empathy," i.e., about Heidegger's statements on this issue).
[89] See https://cfs.ku.dk/
[90] In particular, Dan Zahavi has gone onto be the lead in the development of a phenomenological research program in Copenhagen. The evidence of the connection to psychology remains in cognitive and neuroscience movement. Shaun Gallagher studies cognition and philosophy of mind with the discipline. He too has a robust research program, and his work has come to introduce these relational/social accounts in psychology coupled with cognition (see Gallagher & Varga, 2014).

to ontological questions, within the hermeneutic tradition (e.g., “fundamental ontology,” Heidegger, 1927/1962; *Truth and Method*, Gadamer, 1960/1989); however, within the current context the discussion is restricted to “how do we know” (rather than “what it is that we know”) and how this relates to the notion of empathy. The hermeneutic tradition is a logical place to begin.[91]

In the history of the hermeneutic tradition there is a recognition that the act of interpreting textual material requires (as suggested by some hermeneuts, e.g., Schleiermacher, 1819/1990) that the interpreter “read” into the psychological intentions of the author. Re-construed within contemporary discourse this suggests that some form of “empathy” is involved in interpretation.[92] In general, the hermeneutic tradition has come to be associated with *Verstehen* (*Verständnis*) or understanding and interpretation.

Classic forms of hermeneutics have direct implications for contemporary theories of understanding; however the concept of understanding in-and-of-itself has taken on several meanings within the context of philosophy, psychology, and theology (e.g., see some variations represented at the Varieties of Understanding midpoint conference at Fordham University,

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[91] It must be noted, however, as mentioned in Chapter 2, part of the definition of sympathy involved “knowledge” of other minds. Moral philosophers, likewise, invoked sympathy as a route to other minds; for example, Smith (1759/2002) spoke of the “impartial spectator” as a precursor to moral judgements of the other, this is undoubtedly suggesting an epistemic role for the concept of sympathy in relation to other minds.

[92] It must be noted that “empathy” in this context is often a translation from *Hineinverstezen* or *Verstehen* (interpretive understanding; see Mueller-Vollmer, 1985). In the hermeneutic tradition the focus is on *interpretive understanding*, and there are a number of terms that could connote empathy (or be translated as empathy or understanding); this is done at the discretion of the translator in light of their interpretation of authorial meaning. This being noted, the concept of empathy, in terms of an interpretive process, is connected to hermeneutics (as might be suggested in the idea of understanding authorial intention through empathy or putting oneself in the mind-set of the author, which *may* be viewed as an empathic process). Most hermeneuts tended to avoid using the term empathy; it is found spattered in translations. It has been suggested that the process of psychologizing the authorial intent as part of the interpretive process began with Schleiermacher (e.g., Schleiermacher, 1819/1990, see Ormiston & Schrift, 1990; Stueber, 2006), however, Forster (2007) suggests that Johann Gottfried von Herder’s (1744-1803) ideas preceded Schleiermacher’s and that much of what Schleiermacher introduced was not new. Forster (2002) is a collection and translation of much of Herder’s work. There is also several remarks and debate about Hans-Georg Gadamer 1900-2002 and Jürgen Habermas’s (b. 1929) views on the issue of psychologizing the art and science of interpretation (see Harrington, 2001).

http://digital.library.fordham.edu/digital/collection/vou/id/20/rec/10). Within the human sciences, understanding is often paired with the concept of explanation (Mahajan, 2011).

The explicit connection of hermeneutics to the human sciences is found in the writings of Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911). Dilthey emphasized the distinction between the natural and the human sciences (Walsh, Teo, & Baydala, 2014). He proposed that understanding is a method for the human sciences, as well as suggested its role in a more everyday way of people experiencing other people within various contexts, and it is in this latter sense that empathy has been connected to understanding (see Dilthey, 1976; Feest, 2010; Galbraith, 1995; Harrington, 2001; Makkreel, 1996, 2000; Taylor, 1985; Teo, 2001).

Dialogue is central to hermeneutics, and in this sense arguably hermeneutics could also be construed as part of the relational foundations of empathy; for example, dialogue is central to Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics. Thus, if dialogue is like conversation, it involves two perspectives coming together to discuss some topic—with this logic there is a mutual understanding that occurs in person-to-person encounters as well as text-based dialogical processes (Kögler & Stueber, 2000). Relevant to the aforementioned connection of dialogue to relational processes as well as the suggestion that interpretation involves a reading into the psychological dimensions of an author within the philosophical literature there is a movement towards describing empathy in terms of *social epistemology* (see e.g., Campelia, 2017; see also, Oxley, 2011; Stueber, 2008/2019). This complements the preference to not only demarcate but also merge the relational and the epistemic components of "empathy." The social epistemological approach connects to the psychological notion of "social cognition." Prior to delving into contemporary formulations, however, I discuss the notion that there is a "problem of other minds" from a historical vantage point.

From the Problem of Other Minds to Perspective Taking, Mind Reading, and Theories of Direct Perception

The philosophical topic referred to as "the problem of other minds" has selective historical roots (see Avramides, 2001).[93] Origins aside, this issue occupied philosophical circles within the 20th and into the 21st century; for example, within the philosophical curriculum of most moral sciences departments in North America and continental Europe, in the mid-twentieth century, there was some reading connected to the issue (e.g., Malcolm, 1958; Wisdom, 1952/1956 *Other Minds*, which is a collection of eight reprints from *Mind* on this topic).

Discussions about other minds is important both in analytic and continental philosophical circles (Hyslop, 2005/2019; e.g., phenomenologists, such as Husserl and Merleau-Ponty were concerned with this issue). The epistemic connection is clear, and this becomes particularly evident when empathy is described as a quasi-form of perception (see Stein, 1917/1989). Phenomenologists focus on the "here and now" of experience and centrally focus on characterizing subjectivity; however, what comes to the fore in this focus is the notion of "knowingness" or a "giveness" of experiencing the other. Being in relation to others and having experiential access and an awareness of others is central to phenomenology (see Zahavi, 2005, 2018).[94] In essence, knowing that there are other minded human beings, who, like me, have a range of thoughts, feelings, and intentions is part of the phenomenologists' formulation of subjectivity and experience.

Where this becomes particularly relevant is in clarifying what this *knowing* entails; it

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[93] Avramides (2001) considers her work an "early history"; she explores the topic from the ancient Greeks, to Descartes, to Reid, to Wittgenstein through to Davidson and Strawason. Avramides restricts her work primarily to the analytic tradition. Husserl, Scheler, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty are not included. Hyslop (2005/2019) notes that it was not considered a major problem up to the 19th century and credits Thomas Reid as the first to introduce the terminology "other minds."

[94] Noteworthy is a recognition that ontological issues are not far removed from these foci.

appears to be distinguished in the framing of the question; for example, knowing the consequences of drinking a bottle of whiskey (based on your own experience) versus knowing how “Joe” feels after experiencing a bottle of whiskey (Matravers, 2017). There are several philosophical explanations for how these two experiences differ; for example, Matravers (2017, Chapter 4) outlines the specifics of the simulation or “co-cognition” theory and discusses the logic underlying these theories. This philosophical work speaks little of the phenomenologists (yet explicitly acknowledges the parameters of the account). The discourse is distinct yet connected to the phenomenological movement; it attends to similar questions and modes of operations but changes the language game slightly (albeit not in its entirety across the onto-epistemic-ethical dimension).[95] Disentangling these experiences in theoretical terms remains the modus for both continental and analytically-oriented philosophers (Bird & Tobin, 2008/2017; Darwall, 1998; Kögler & Stueber, 2000; Smith, 2017).

Not only shared questions, but also in the reasoning about these phenomena; for example, a logical line of inquiry might include questions about knowing about someone else’s experience through my experience or knowing how “Joe” feels because of an experience. There are several names you can ascribe to the process (re-experiencing, simulation, projection, inferring etc.) and you could also temporalize the process (a priori and posteriori knowing) and/or discuss it as direct experience (in the here-and-now or face-to-face encounter). There are several key words and dimensions worth deconstructing in the aforementioned contrast; however, important in this case is that both include a “knowing,” and the intention was to make explicit that analytic and continental philosophers grapple with similar questions (but may answer them differently).

It is often detailed within the literature that Lipps (1851-1914) was criticized by Stein

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[95] See Barad (2007) on onto-epistemic-ethical issues in relation to the sciences.

(1891-1942), Husserl (1859-1938), Scheler (1874-1928), and other phenomenologists because he was suggesting some sort of "inference" or "projection" process when describing an experience of otherness (see Jardine, 2015; Jardine & Szantos, 2017; Moran, 2004; Zahavi, 2008, 2014b). This is consistent with some of the same problems that the phenomenologists describe today as it pertains to theory of mind and the notion of what happens at the neuroscientific level when describing mirroring or simulating others when perceiving or imagining how another may be feeling or what they might be experiencing (see Zahavi, 2012). The epistemic debate as it pertains to subjectivity and intersubjectivity, and how they relate (experienced as distinct) has deep roots in philosophy.

In the psychological discourse (in psychology), many ascribe questions about understanding the experience of others to the notion of perspective taking. An example is exemplified in early developmental work on social cognition. Jean Piaget, for example, had a three mountains (3M) task where perspective taking was about perspective shifts—a child's ability to see things differently than before when in a different position and understand that others may not have the same view of the three mountains as they do (see Flavell, 1992).[96] Mounoud (1996) describes this in relation to the development of theory of mind and the tasks that ensued; however, the term perspective-taking (see Piaget & Inhelder, 1948/1967, later built on by Flavell, 1963, 1974; see also Perner, Stummer, Sprung, & Doherty, 2002; Moll & Tomasello, 2006) can in-and-of itself be considered independently. Perspective-taking had its heyday within the social cognitive and developmental literature from the late 70s into the early 90s. The notion of perspective taking was connected to the ability to recognize that there are

[96] Piaget's 3M task: The notion of perspective-taking must be understood within the context of Piaget's concept of decentration and egocentrism; theory of mind as later developed emerges from a different vantage point (see Mounound,1996).

perspectives other than one's own and was viewed as a *developmental milestone* in relation to children being able to develop a sense of self and theory of mind. Thus, demonstrating the ability to perspective shift is not synonymous with a sense of self or a theory of other minds. The most common conception of perspective taking corresponds to the suggestion that we apprehend another person's thoughts and feelings via a survey of relevant visual, auditory, and situational cues; this process is suggested to not involve emotion (Rankin, Kramer, & Miller, 2005)

In the contemporary literature the notion that we have knowledge of other minds—is discussed in relation to the term a "theory of mind" (ToM). ToM has been the umbrella term for debating and describing "the problem of other minds" or "mindreading." The notion of a ToM is connected to many of the central questions occupying developmental psychologists; for example, as exemplified in the Rouge Test (or the mirror self-recognition [MSR] test; see Amsterdam, 1972, in infants; Gallup, 1970, in animals) and in the False Beliefs Task (Wimmer & Perner, 1983; see also, Perner, Leekman, & Wimmer, 1987; Perner & Wimmer, 1985).[97] These are two examples of how psychology has dealt with what was traditionally a "philosophical" debate about access to the inner/internal contents of "other minds."

The paradigm period of ToM research in psychology and philosophy is pronounced from the late 80s into the late 2000s. There is a rich tradition of debate and theorizing which has emerged wherein different theories have been catalogued into different camps, dependent on how the theory explains the process of "reading into" the mental states of another—these two

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[97] Notable of this time period are the paths this research took; for example, the MSR test has been extensively used in the study of animals. This line of research is specifically focused on levels of self-awareness in primates (see e.g., Gallup, 1968, 1970, 1977, 1985; Gallup, Anderson, & Platek, 2011; Gallup, Anderson, & Shillito, 2002; Mitchell, 1992, 1993; Premack & Woodruff, 1978; Suddendorf & Butler, 2013). Apart from primates, there is evidence reported which indicates that other animals demonstrate self-recognition; for example, dolphins (Reiss & Marino, 2001), Asian elephants (Plotnik, de Waal, & Reiss, 2006) and magpies (Prior, Schwarz, & Güntürkün, 2008). Albeit this line of research has also morphed into discussions about what it means to be "self-aware" (are psychological and bodily awareness the same; see Boyle, 2018). Likewise, false beliefs inquiries have been applied to questions of "theory of mind" in relation to autism (see e.g., Baron-Cohen, 1995; Baron-Cohen, Leslie, & Frith, 1985).

camps are broadly referred to as theory-theory (TT) ToM and simulation-theory (ST) ToM (see Carruthers & Smith, 1996; Davies & Stone, 1995; Gopnik & Meltzoff, 1997; Gopnik & Wellman, 1992; Goldman, 1989; Gordon, 1986, 1996; Heal, 1996, 1998, 2013; Smith & Nichols, 1995). TT accounts are also referred to as "folk psychology" theories and typically refer to inferences made about the mental state of others (e.g., Carruthers, 2009, 2013); on the other hand, ST accounts tend to describe either implicit or explicit simulation processes to account for mindreading (e.g., Goldman, 2006, 2012) (see also, Malle, 2005; Mitchell, 2005; Nichols & Stitch, 2003; Ratcliffe, 2007; Reddy, 2008).

At the level of specific theories (rather than broad perspectives/approaches) several hybrid variations have proceeded out of the simplicity first construed as the "ST versus TT debate on ToM." Not only simulation from the philosophical perspective but also from the perspective of a "theory-of-mind mechanism" (Leslie, 1994) and "theories of mind in the brain," (Mahy, Moses, & Pfeifer, 2014) which both blend evolutionary-modularity theories and simulation theories. The prevalence of simulation-type theories into the 21st century is evident; a significant turning point for the simulation approach came in the early 90s and this is no more evident than in its synthesis into the literature on mirror neurons (e.g., Gallese & Goldman, 1998; Rizzolatti & Sinigaglia, 2008; see also Adams, 2001; Hickock, 2014).

As suggested, there are ToM descriptions that are clearly connected to neuroscience (e.g., the "shared manifold hypothesis," Gallese, 2001, 2003; Gallese & Mignone, 2007); however, there are several hybrid (or pluralistic) frameworks that have unfolded in the first two decades of the 21st century (see Gallagher, 2015). These alternative approaches to social cognition, knowing other minds, mindreading, etc., include narrative theories (Hutto, 2004, 2008, 2007, 2009; Hutto & Jurgens, 2018), re-enactive simulation theories (Stueber, 2006, 2012), and the

notion of embodiment and an enactive approach to cognition (De Jaegher & Di Paolo, 2007; De Jaegher, Di Paolo, & Gallagher, 2010; Noë, 2004; Thompson, 2001, 2007; Valera, Thompson, & Roach, 1991/2017). The inclusion of embodiment and enaction into the literature on mind has given way to an interactive and direct perception approach to social cognition (De Jaeghar, 2009; Di Paolo, 2009; Gallagher, 2001, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2015; Hickock, 2014; Zahavi, 2011; cf. Jacob, 2011)

Undoubtedly one can see the dominance of the trend, it is a bringing together of the notions of social cognition, direct perception, embodiment, and interaction (Bohl, 2015; Bruin, Strijbos, & Slors, 2011, 2014; Gallagher, 2017; Jardine, 2015; Summa, 2017). Phenomenology and social- and cognitive- neuroscience have theoretically come together in a unique hodgepodge (termed neurophenomenology in Valera, 1996). This discourse community evident by the early 2000s is rhetorically traceable (e.g., Gallagher & Zahavi, 2012). There are some excellent insights to be derived. Not only traditional philosophies that are connected to terms such as embodiment (Merleau-Ponty, 1908-1961) and phenomenology (Husserl, 1859-1938, Heidegger, 1889-1976), but also inclusion of philosophers less well-known in relation to the "problem of other minds" (e.g., Wittgenstein, 1889-1951, and the perception of other minds; see Overgaard, 2007). This recent trend has culminated in a model that is referred to as the 4E approach—enactive, embodied, embedded, and extended approaches to the mind (Ratcliffe, 2017; Zahavi & Michael 2018).

The larger theme, however, is a questioning of how we gain access to the contents of other minded persons—empathy is suggested as a means to this end. At a more specific level some might suggest that this is the essence of what some refer to as "cognitive empathy." While others prefer to stick to terms such as "perspective-taking" or "mentalizing" to ensure that there

is a sufficient demarcation of empathy from other social cognitive processes. Irrespective of the preferred terminology empathy is imbued within in this discourse.

Tools and Forms of Knowing: Therapy and Imagination

As detailed in the preceding there is an epistemic connotation associated with empathy. This is theoretically mapped out by scholars from various traditions (e.g., Matravers & Waldow, 2019, c.f., Oxley, 2011). In describing epistemic conceptions of empathy, I have focused on the most prevalent discourses within different scholarly communities. The aforementioned, however, lacks two prevalent and epistemologically relevant topics that come to mind for the general public when it comes to empathy. First, that empathy is something that therapists and counsellors (should) have and second, that empathy is facilitated and/or elicited when using one's imagination. These are both connected to a "ways/forms of knowing"; for example, the therapist empathizes with their client to "understand" or demonstrate "empathy" for their experience and readers experience empathy with an imagined other when immersed in the narratives of their lives (in textual, visual, audio, and even self-generated "thinking about," or internal dialogue and narrative). I *briefly* comment on empathy and therapy and empathy and imagination.

Therapy and Epistemics. The notion of empathy as a tool in therapeutic settings is discussed within the context of Chapter 5; it is certainly integral to health care and the human services-oriented professions. As prefaced above, empathy and therapy is not only about episteme, it is also about relationality, as suggested in the section on relationality. Some scholars distinguish these types of discourse based on "distanciated" versus "interpersonal" dimensions; specifically, there are forms of epistemic understanding that include a relationship *and* those that do not. Thus, one does not necessarily assume the other (Campelia, 2017).

Although the element of relating and relationship is implied in the therapeutic

arrangement, the consequence of appeals to empathy as a foundation for therapy swiftly moves in the direction of describing how, within in the therapeutic context, a practitioner is encouraged to use, as a clinical tool, their ability to “read into” and “understand” things from the patient/client perspective. The term “therapeutic alliance” (coined by Zetzel, 1956; Wampold & Imel, 2015; see also Norcross, 2011; Norcross & Wampold, 2010, Wampold, 2001) certainly denotes both the relational and epistemics of psychotherapy (i.e., the term alliance itself presupposes a problem to be worked on; the term therapeutic alliance is now often referred to as a working alliance; see Elvins & Green, 2008). This psychotherapeutically-oriented concept is in part defined by its connection to empathy—specifically, empathic skills (Bohart & Greenberg, 1997; Elliott, Bohart, Watson, & Greenberg, 2011; Decker, Nich, Carroll, & Martino, 2014). These are the skills that therapists are encouraged to cultivate. Likewise, the use of empathy as an epistemic tool for understanding others is also exemplified within the psychoanalytic tradition, such as the “vicarious introspection” of Heinz Kohut (1959, 1971, 1984). Thus, empathy as epistemology is relevant within psychoanalysis, Rogerian client-centered therapeutic approaches (Rogers, 1957, 1959, 1975), as well as many other therapeutic modalities (e.g., Hiltner, 1954). All with applications forthcoming.

Imagination and Epistemics. A form of knowing that is part of empathy’s epistemic foundations is what some refer to as imagination. Imagination or imagining can be connected to various modes of expression and engagement—performing, visual, and literary arts, among others. Imagination is often described in relation to creativity, development, therapy, and, professionalism (Bank-Libra, 2017; Kind, 2016). Imagination in conceptual connection to empathy-like processes is theorized through anthropological, continental philosophical, psychological, and psychoanalytic lens (Hammond & Kim, 2014; Hollan, 2008; Sherman, 1998)

Only one of many epistemic pebbles that form a bedrock for empathies is explored in this section—specifically, empathy in relation to imagination via the act of "reading." In particular by the notions of narrative and historical empathy—both are suggested to involve imagination.[98]

There is intent behind traditional forms of reading; for example, materials provided to educate versus material provided for pleasure and the obvious intersection of the two. Likewise, there are different ways "reading" can be construed; reading is about information processing (sensory information—visual, tactile, kinesthetic, auditory) and/or text and symbols. Reading occurs through different mediums but in particular empathy is connected to literature; albeit a diversity of foci is discursively represented (see Keen, 2007 c.f., Hunt, 2007).

Since the early 1980s- to present, an extensive body of literature has developed around what is referred to as *historical* empathy (see for definition Barton & Levstik, 2004; Davis, 2001; Foster, 1999) (see Bryant & Clark, 2006; Davis, Yeager, & Foster, 2001; Hunt, 2007, 2009) and *narrative* empathy (see Keen, 2006, 2007, 2013; Hammond & Kim, 2013).[99] The suggestion behind both terms is that one "reads" into the life and events of others via imagination (fantasy and [re]construction).

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[98] As a preface pertaining to empathy, imagination, and reading, a discussion of narrative and historical empathy reoccur in the section on aesthetics (both are posited to occur through in the realm of aesthetics). In connection to the performing and visual arts via different modes of engagement—music, dance, art, paintings, drawing, architecture—imagination, creativity, and empathy is broached. These are broached within the aesthetic foundation of empathy as the coveted connection to reading and language are by far the most debated in connection to epistemics and the acquisition of knowledge (not surprising given the form of engagement that dominates academia). Likewise, in Chapter 5, wherein the conceptions of empathy take form in application and action, narrative and historical empathy are important (e.g., in education both are important with epistemics and aesthetics as a foundation and a moral valence at its core).

[99] Narrative in and of itself is a huge topic of importance as it pertains to the experience of empathy. In addition to the narrative presented in books, narratives as communicated in real-time discussion and in film also form an important basis for the provocation of empathy within the context of the helping professions, both in education and training and in theorizing and research in practice. For example, this a huge topic not only within psychotherapy but also within the context of how to teach care-giving professionals to have empathy for their patients/clients (for example narratives and film is used with medical students to have them learn to listen to their patients; see González-Blasco & Moreto, 2012). Likewise, approaches to the concept of "narrative" differ in research approach, for example. Norrick (2013) uses a form of conservation analysis to unpack narratives of vicarious experience (i.e., talking about something someone heard about rather than experienced personally).

Literary scholar Suzanne Keen (2006, 2007, 2013) has developed a theory of *narrative empathy*. The focus of Keen's work is literature; in particular, the novel. Keen defines narrative empathy as "the sharing of feeling and perspective-taking induced by reading, viewing, hearing, or imagining narratives of another's situation and condition" (Keen, 2013, para. 1).[100] Matravers (2017) describes this as either *posterior* understanding—perspective-taking with people of the past or understanding imagined others that one may or may not have had concrete encounters with. Several scholars have different ways of describing this in empathic terms; for example, Stueber (2006, 2017) describes this as re-enactive empathy; Hutto and Jurgen (2018) refer to it as enactive empathy; Currie and Ravenscroft (2002) call it recreative empathy; Goldman (2006, 2012) refers to it as e-imagination or enactment; Maibom (2016) empathic imagination; and, Gallagher and Hutto (2008) describe it as a form of social cognition in relation to narrative.

The distinction between imagination that is not real (fiction) or that which is prompted by the real (non-fiction) is an interesting subject-matter. From a philosophy of literature perspective, we can discuss fiction readers versus non-fiction readers. Coplan (2008) describes this in terms of character engagement (which can be viewed through different mediums—film, literature, media, etc.).[101] The epistemic connection of empathy to these more abstract forms of literary engagement are philosophically connected to a very specific contingent of theorists: Peter

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[100] Keen further connects this to aesthetics albeit the primary focus is on epistemology and psychology.

[101] According to Keen (2007) narrative empathy can be understood as it does not seem unreasonable to assert that the narrative of a film might too warrant consideration when attempting to describe what happens when we experience film (although not all films have sound or spoken word and in most cases the idea of a narrative itself is construed as a linguistic or spoken word phenomenon). Narrative empathy is a topic of central importance in the film viewing experience, as film, like a novel, tells us a story (although it may be argued that the novel provokes a differing process in contrast to film; film has the element of visual presentation rather than imagined, as is the case in some, but not all novels); and certainly, this plays a crucial role in the experience of and our understanding of film. A particularly important piece which is directly relevant to empathy, film, and narrative is Margrethe Vaage's (2010) article discussing how different "varieties of empathic engagement" with fiction film aid in the development of the spectator's understanding of the film's narrative. This is important but beyond the scope of this particular work.

Goldie, Suzanne Keen, Derek Matravers, and others (e.g., Goldie, 2011; Keen, 2006, 2007, 2013; Matravers, 2011, 2017; Matravers & Waldrow, 2019; see also Steinberg, 2014). All of these scholars are interested in epistemic and narrative forms of empathy. So, imagining "real" others or "not real" others along the dimension of "knowing personally" or "not knowing personally" can be connected back to empathy. Arguably, the one that is *not* real and that you do *not* know personally would be the furthest leap empathically.

In the discourse on the self-to-for-as-other, there is plenty of literature suggesting that empathy is more likely and less effortful the more similar and/or familiar the other is. This will be redressed later as it is a fundamental critique of empathy as a possible "fix" to "othering." Within the realm of epistemology, however, the suggestion that we broaden our perspective and gain knowledge through exposure to storied lives is not a stretch (see Stueber, 2006, 2016, on empathy and the imagination). There are different theories concerning imaginative engagement with the self and other; among the different terms that could be used to refer to this process are the notions of dialogicality and narrative as ontology (e.g., Hermans, 1999, 2001, 2003; Hermans & Kempen, 1993; Ricoeur, 1981/2016). These accounts provide different perspectives on the way things are.

Psychologically, this has been explored by looking at readers of narrative fiction versus expository non-fiction in relation to empathy and theory of mind. Mar, Oatley, Hirsh, dela Paz, and Peterson (2006) found that readers of fiction perform better on empathy-related tasks related to social abilities (when compared to readers of non-fiction). Mar, Oatley, and Peterson (2009) extended this line of research in an attempt to unpack possible explanations for this finding. Mar et al. (2009) examined individual differences such as personality (i.e., the Big Five), levels of immersion and engagement (when reading fiction), and gender, in addition to assessing social

outcomes (such as size of social network and levels of loneliness etc.). The relationship is complex but there are several features of reading narrative non-fiction that appear to enhance empathic abilities, social sensitivity and reasoning. Djikic, Oatley, and Moldoveanu (2013) and Mar, Oatley, Djikic, and Mullin (2011) have continued this program of research making use of experimental social-personality research methods and continuing to unpack the contributions of individual differences (e.g., personality) and varying levels of affective and cognitive empathy in relation to reading. The initiation of this research program in large part stems from an initial interest in exploring different types of reading and its connection to social psychological capacities.

It is appropriate to discuss the notion of historical empathy in relation to reading fiction versus non-fiction. Historical empathy is primarily relevant within the field of education and will be discussed more extensively in Chapter 4; however it is important to recognize, first, that historical empathy is presumed to be based on non-fiction (albeit recognizing the reality of any historical narrative is a reconstruction of some event and not a matter of pressing play on a tape recorder). Second, the relationship between narrative and historical empathy is not 100% clear-cut; for example, narrative empathy is presumed to be about imagining and reading "made up" stories, whereas reading non-fiction is presumed to be expository—about information and knowledge (Djikic et al., 2013). It is clear, as per Mar and colleagues' line of research, that readers of fiction demonstrate enhanced empathic abilities (of the social kind). And presumably this is because of a well-worked out imagination and the ability to consider multiple perspectives. Does the same hold true if non-fiction is the consumed; does the reality-basis or factual content make a difference? This is an empirical question; however, one that is epistemologically relevant if we assume that reading about storied lives has an impact on the

development of empathy. And in particular, quite relevant if we understand historical empathy to be of an information variety.

This epistemological foundation—from understanding authorial intention, to clinical skill and expertise at mind reading, to the more general notion that we can indeed access the internal states of another through the cultivation of this mind reading skill—serve a similar end in relation to empathy—they connect to the concept to "knowing" about the mental life of another person.

Natural Conceptions

In construing what is a "natural kind" the notion of objects and materiality comes to mind—things we can count group together along some dimension that is related to how inherent this dimension is to all things grouped (Hacking, 1991). The term naturalism shores up nouns and verbs associated with biological systems and the sciences (human and non-humans in relation to brain-body relations). In psychology as a natural science, terms like brain, behaviour, neuroscience, observation, measurement, testing etc., are prevalent. The naturalizing of psychological concepts is recognized as a defining characteristic of the 21st century (referred to as "brainhood," see Vidal, 2009; see also, Choudhury & Slaby, 2012; Ortega & Vidal, 2011; Pickersgill, 2013; Whitehead, Jones, Lilley, Pykett, & Howell, 2018; Wolfe, 2014).

This is not a new observation, psychology as a natural science is a feature of the narrative shaping most histories of psychology (Walsh, Teo, & Baydala, 2014). Empathy is implicated in the biologization of psychological concepts (Slife, Burchfeld, & Hedges, 2010; Teo, 2004, 2015b; Young, 2012). Empathy, however, has a rather unique path regarding this process; it is distinctly connected to the biological bases of behaviour (brain-body systems), evolutionary

theory, and comparative and primate research. These connections have been strengthened by several "breakthroughs" in scientific research and scholarship on science and philosophy.

The *first* major moment to report in the contemporary project of naturalizing empathy is the discovery of "mirror neurons" (Di Pellegrino, Fadiga, Fogassi, Gallese, & Rizzolatti, 1992; Gallese, Fadiga, Fogassi, & Rizzolatti, 1996; Hickock, 2014). The *second* major moment is referred to as the "turn to affect" (Leys, 2011).[102] The *third* major moment is the study of empathy (sympathy, altruism, helping behaviour etc.) from an evolutionary perspective—"better nature, is our nature" (de Waal, 2009, 2019).[103]

While reviewing the literature on empathy, I have distinguished certain writings as part of a naturalized conception of empathy if they answered or attempted to deal with some of the following questions (i.e., these questions guided my analytic): (1) do they provide a physiological or somatic correlate to some variety of empathy; (2) do they discuss neural correlates to empathy; (3) do they provide some description specifying how empathy evolves from a mammalian form to a human form? This search yielded the following outline: (a) *empathy and the body*; (b) *empathy and the brain*; (c) *empathy and animal*s (ethology and

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[102] The emotion-focused research conducted by Silvan Tomkins (1911-1991) and Paul Ekman (b. 1934) suggests, that quite distinct from intention and meaning, our emotions are our first line of processing. Harkening back to William James and Charles Darwin, the assumption underlying this work is that emotions are bodily responses that are phylogenetically ancient and automatic (without cognition, beliefs, secondary appraisals etc.; see Keltner, Oatley, & Jenkins, 2019 for a thorough review of the connection between Tomkins, Ekman, Darwin, and James). The Tomkins and Ekman approach suggests that we have a set of basic (universal) emotions that can be read (decoded) and are instantiated (encoded) via our autonomic nervous system. Ekman in particular (as well as Carroll Izard) studied different muscles in the face and the unique configurations of these facial muscles in the production of specific emotions. It is evident in the literature on emotions that a synchronicity has emerged with study of emotion and the body. As it pertains to empathy, the closer we get to physiology, the closer we get to research in affective neuroscience, wherein the body, movement, reasoning, part of a larger panhuman structure. Some might question why emotions are being discussed within the context of the naturalization project. This is because of emotions close connection with physiology. Recognizing the subjective and experiential component is one aspect but historically the behavioural and physiological manifestations of emotion have been strongly tied to biological systems.

[103] This lens focuses on the adaptive functions of social harmony, cohesion, and the benefit of empathy (and empathy-related behaviours such as altruism, attachment, prosociality etc. (see Decety, Norman, Bernston, & Cacioppo, 2012; Lehmann & Keller, 2006; de Waal, 2009, 2019).

primatology) *and evolution* (explaining why we can draw on research in animals to understand human development); (d) *evolution and brainhood* (integrating neuroscience with evolutionary theory). A discussion of emotional and cognitive empathy is integrated within; for example, emotions and the body and cognition and the brain.

Empathy and the Body

The suggestion that there was something "bodily" about "empathy" is often traced back to the concept of *Einfühlung* in late 19th century German aesthetic theories; for example, Robert Vischer (1873/1994) described *Einfühlung* as kinesthetic and bodily response in relation to the perception of an object of art. Both Vischer and Lipps (1903/1979) described this "feeling-into" in relation to a broad array of aesthetic objects (both inanimate such as architecture, as well as animate and dynamic objects such as bodies moving or dancers dancing). An aesthetic conception of empathy is described below; however, the connection of *Einfühlung* with sensing and feeling bodily movement in oneself and in others is one among several features that have facilitated the construal of empathy as natural. Empathy was thought to be physiological, visceral, and motor and in contemporary terms has been connected to the activities of most branches of the peripheral nervous system (somatic and autonomic nervous system; i.e., it could include voluntary muscular actions, changes in respiration, and other physiological reverberations in the body). The notion of a bodily component to empathy is exemplified in the notion of inner imitation or inner mimicry, which was suggested to be a form of kinetic or kinesthetic empathy (see Foster, 2014; Reynolds & Reason, 2012).

Not just empathy but also empathy-like concepts such as altruism; for example, Krebs (1975) was interested psychophysiological measures of emotional arousal—specifically,

empathy and altruism.[104] By the 1960s into the 70s use of the galvanic skin response (GSR) was commonplace in research on emotions and complex emotions like empathy (Lux, 2017, p. 126). It was considered a measure of autonomic nervous system arousal, in addition, to monitoring others changes in bodily rhythms (e.g., heart rate, hormone fluctuations etc.).

The measurement of physiology is connected to motor and kinesthetic responses. These are typically involuntary responses; for example, via the use of the electroencephalogram (EEG) involuntary motor responses to looking at others' facial expressions are recorded (Leiberg & Anders, 2006). Muscles move in response to observation; however, EEG recordings are measuring electrical brain activity (waves)—in this case the motor and visual cortex. What is physiological about the aforementioned within this context is simply this connection to the body and movement. Empathy is suggested to have bodily component to it—whether we call this emotion, a feeling, or something else.[105]

There are several lenses one could apply: for example, the relationship between motor response/action and emotional experience. Hickock (2014) surveys the empirical support concerning imitation and whether it leads to induced emotions (some have found subjective reports that it does, others have not). The function of imitation in relation to socio-emotional and cognitive development and in relation to neuroscience is a broad topic (e.g., see Decety & Batson, 2007 within the context of social neuroscience; Decety & Jackson, 2004, Jackson, Meltzoff, & Decety, 2005 on pain perception; Decety & Sommerville, 2003 in relation to social

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[104] Connecting this physiological measure to the empathy-altruism hypothesis is noteworthy; one can see how "empathy-to-altruism" leads to more "likely-to-help" would be a logical direction to follow; see also Neumann and Westbury (2011, pp. 119-142) on the psychophysiological measurement of empathy.

[105] A lion's share of research on emotion is conducted in relation to the body and physiology; however, it certainly can be differentiated based on the measurement technologies in the case of brain activation patterns the variety of empathy we are describing expands exponentially. This is best discussed as it pertains to application.

cognition, etc.) and this is addressed below.[106] Overall, however, there is a focus on the body and action, and researchers attempt to weave together an understanding of this in relation to empathy.

An important line of research in relation to empathy and the body can be illuminated via the notion of "synchronous physiology"; for example, heart rates going into synchronicity with another (e.g., interpersonal physiology, sociophysiology; see Hojat, 2007/2016, pp. 36-38 on implications in the clinical setting and a description psychotherapy studies in the late 1950s). This was also referred to as "shared physiology," and Levenson and Ruef (1992) conducted research on this particular concept in relation to empathy. In this research participants watched videotapes and rated the feelings of those they were watching. Levenson and Reuf found greater empathic accuracy when the subject (observer) and the target's heart rate were synchronous. Subsequently, there is a contingent of researchers that gather physical/physiological data in the study of emotions and empathy. In the case of empathy, it was suggested that certain facial expressions elevated heart rate and that skin conductance might indicate empathy or empathic arousal (see also Levenson, 1996, 2003).

Robert Levenson and Anna Reuf's (1992) research is an example of empathy in relation to measurement (outlined in Chapter 4); however, in this case a very particular kind of physiological measure emerged from this research. Physiological indices are historically and contemporaneously connected to emotion research (e.g., the EEG and autonomic nervous system [ANS] arousal). The focus on *emotions* is not to lose sight of the notion that "*reading*" the emotions in the face of others is possible; for example, reading voluntary and involuntary

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[106] Pertaining to motor actions and their role in empathy this is outlined in relation to the brain and mirror neurons. Some argue that the imitative aspect is more a matter of communicating that one comprehends another's emotional state rather than a mechanism facilitating such understanding (see Hickock, 2014 for an excellent review), while others focus on the observation of this sort of imitation or responsiveness in terms of facial expressions, body posture, autonomic nervous system changes—this leads into behavioural research on reading emotions in others, generating emotions in oneself, and sometimes into work on the interpersonal communication and body language. (Keltner, Oatley, & Jenkins, 2019).

muscled movements in the face led to the development of the facial action coding system (FACS; Ekman & Friesen, & Hager, 1978/2002; see also Ekman, Friesen, & Ancoli, 1980; Levenson & Ekman, 2002; Levenson, Ekman, & Friesen, 1990; Levenson, Ekman, Heider, & Friesen, 1992). This system and its theoretical basis have gone in different directions (e.g., see Paul Ekman's website: https://www.paulekman.com/, see also, Ekman & Levenson, 2006; Ekman & Rosenberg, 2005); however, in terms of practical use, it now underlies training and education in criminology and has also been popularized. (i.e., "mindreading"). Noteworthy, however, is that the affective or cognitive distinction restricts this discourse to particular approaches to emotion wherein self-report (performance/accuracy) and physiology are combined.[107]

Empathy is tied to the measurement of emotion as a physiological concept (e.g., facial feedback hypothesis from Levenson & Ruef, 1992; Marcus, 1987; Neumann &Westbury, 2011). And in this case, empathy is an emotion—it is defined as "the state of feeling what another person is feeling" (Keltner, Oatley, & Jenkins, 2019, p. 20). Perhaps the most explicit connection is provided by de Vignemont and Singer's (2006) definition of empathy as it is construed as "(a) having an emotion which is (b) someway *similar* to that of another person; which is (c) elicited by the observation or imagination of the other's emotion; and (d) knowing that the other is the source of one's emotion" (de Vignemont & Singer, 2006, p. 435). I return to the work of Tania Singer and colleagues below.

The aforementioned correspond to one line of reasoning in biologizing empathy: It corresponds to indices of physiology (measuring body systems, e.g., heart rate, body

[107] Ekman and Levenson's psychophysiological/behavioural line of inquiry (e.g., Ekman et al., 1980; Ekman & Rosenberg, 2005; Levenson, 2003; Levenson et al., 1990) can be compared and contrasted with "top-down" approaches to emotion (e.g., Barrett, 2006), as well as other approaches such as Baron-Cohen's (2005) approach to "reading mind in eyes" (which constitutes an entirely different discourse discussed in Chapter 4).

temperature) and behavioural and self-report indices of emotion and empathy. There is, however, an imitative, developmental, and comparative track that is of relevance. This line of reasoning focuses on behaviour and observation. It assumes definitions of empathy to include a "matching," or "mimicking of a similar emotion as part of what constitutes empathy. This is a key line of inquiry in the developmental literature in terms of imitation both in relation to infants (Meltzoff, 1995; Meltzoff & Moore, 1977, 1983, 1989; Trevarthen, 1979, 1980, 1998; Trevarthen & Aitkin, 2001) and in primatology and various forms of comparative research or scholarship on this topic (Bard, 2004; Burghardt, 1991; Burkhardt, 2005; Carlson, 2008; Datson & Mitman, 2005; de Waal, 1996; Fossey, 1984; Galdikas, 1995; Goodall, 1986; Haraway, 1989; Harlow, 1958). Select lines of reasoning are described in the empathy and animals section.

Another track on empathy and the body that is important is described in the literature on embodiment. Most connect the concept of embodiment to cognition; notably, however, scholars view cognition as involving the body and emotion (Cromby, 2015; Keltner et al., 2019). Theoretically the task is to avoid too much representationalism without empirical evidence and it is in this way that cognition (and emotion) works together in the body (e.g., Gallagher, 2005, 2009, 2012, 2017). The line of reasoning relies primarily on neuroscientific evidence (described below). The connection of cognition to emotion and to the body does bring into focus that there is still an undercurrent in the empathy literature that separates the emotional from the cognitive. The devil, however, is in the details. Those theories that separate the two appeal to characteristics and definitions (perspective taking, mentalizing as opposed to emotion sharing, matching, and feeling). The reality, however, is that these two things are linked theoretically (see Beswick, 2017; albeit neuroscience goes in different directions on the nature of this connection in the brain-body system; see the distinction between affective and cognitive neuroscience below).

It is evident in the literature on emotions that a synchronicity has emerged in study of emotions and the body. The physiological indices of emotion (including empathy) are historically and contemporaneously connected to emotion research (e.g., the GSR, i.e., autonomic nervous system arousal). As it pertains to empathy, the more physiological the description, the closer we get to research in affective and cognitive neuroscience. From this vantage point the body, movement, reasoning, are all considered part of a larger panhuman structure and studied from a third-person perspective (cf. Gaukroger, 2014).

Physiological responses, such as tears or trembling, experienced when identifying or sharing in another person's experience are often associated with empathy. When these responses take place within the context of being a witness to or a participant in what is defined as the other's experience, researchers and theorists will note this as being among the physiological correlates of empathic experience (Lux, 2017; Neumann & Westbury, 2011). This is an observation and interpretation; however, as these observations amass, they become part of a pool of components that constitute empathy's physiological basis.

Empathy and the Brain

Late-20th and 21st century trends play a role in what has become the construal of empathy as a non-conscious-adaptive-panhuman biological event; for example, individuals can read intentions, share in emotional experience, and be aware of another person's mindset or emotion state without needing to think about doing so (i.e., the process is initiated by witnessing; e.g., mirror neurons, Gallese et al., 1996). Much of the heavy work takes place in the emotion-connected (limbic system, amygdala, pre-frontal, insula, etc.) areas of the brain, and likewise the somatosensory and motor cortices of the brain. Most anatomical structures in the brain are explained as having a functional architecture; wherein a theory of the brain and how it operates

play a role in determining what needs to be explained. There are different variations on this process—for example, affective neuroscience (Panksepp, 1998; Pankseep & Biven, 2012; Pankseep & Lahvis, 2011), cognitive neuroscience (Zaki & Oschner, 2012), and social neuroscience (Decety & Ickes, 2009/2011) (albeit the cognitive and social are often merged together as social cognitive neuroscience, see e.g., Lamm, Batson, & Decety, 2007). As of yet we do not have an evolutionary neuroscience per se (see de Waal, 2012). Noteworthy, is that most of the aforementioned use slightly different conceptual tools (see e.g., Mason & Ben-Ami Bartal, 2010; Pankseep, Lane, Solms, & Smith, 2016; Walter, 2012) and this results in an interesting multidisciplinary mix.

Theories of how the brain and body operate describe how human beings detect emotions and the intentions of others and how this might serve an adaptive function. This ability is then connected to the personal experience of these states (i.e., one's personal experience of the sadness seen in another, or the experience of throwing one's fists in the air, a motor action one might enact when frustrated about a situation). The *brain-body pathway* can be described in behavioural terms, as a subjective experience, or at cortical or subcortical level—where one starts in describing this pathway most often does not matter (cf. Sullivan, 2018).

Trends of "somatic markers" (Damasio, 1994, 1999, 2004; Damasio, Everitt, & Fischer, 1996), "embodied cognition," (Niedenthal, 2007) and so forth, has led to what might be construed as an acceptance of a "mind-body" connection. The biological approach accepts the body and accepts the mind—speaking now in terms of bodily intelligence. The brain is assumed to be one part of the complex system (bodily sense ascending to the brain; brain messaging descending to the body). Of course, we also have recognized the notion of brain receptors throughout the body, so it is difficult to speak of the body and brain as divided. More common is

body-brain. Our brain sends messages to the body in terms of action. This notion of action becomes clear when we discuss the discovery of mirror neurons and understand its neuroscientific explanation as one in relation to perception and action—more specifically a "perception action model" (PAM; Preston & de Waal, 2002) or a "somatosensory" (body sense) and "motor cortex" (action execution) exploration of the brain (Hickock, 2014, see pp, 90, 246-247).

Noteworthy, however, is the distinction often made among neuroscientists: there is research in affective neuroscience (AN) and research in cognitive neuroscience (CN). According to Pankseep et al. (2016) these two designations take different approaches to understanding the brain basis of emotion—they use different models and methods. AN uses an animal model and links this to research on human emotion (more invasive research techniques; lesions, neurochemicals, etc.). CN uses less invasive technologies such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (*f*MRI), position emission tomography (PET), EEG for researching the brain basis of human emotion. CN likewise appeals to subjective reports and the experience of emotions, which entails a different language on the brain in terms of what the experience of emotion means for humans and how it is represented in the brain and through what mechanisms it is facilitated. AN and CN likewise have different views on the hierarchical nature of brain: AN scholars believe that the subcortical brain rules the system, whereas, CN scholars focus on the neocortical areas. (see also Beswick, 2017)

The distinction between emotional and cognitive empathy plays out on this landscape. As it pertains to the body, emotional empathy has been conducive to study. The construal of emotion as bodily is perennial; however, methods of capturing this in the body have advanced. The landmark research on this front relates to the "empathy for pain paradigm." Empathy within

this context is primarily described as emotion sharing (de Vignemont & Singer, 2006; Klimecki & Singer, 2013; Singer et al., 2004; Singer et al., 2006; Singer & Klimecki, 2014).

With the latest methods of brain imaging, emotions remain on the agenda; for instance, with Tania Singer's work on the bases of empathy. Singer and colleagues make use of *f*MRI technologies, which picks up changes of blood flow in regions of the brain when the neurons in different regions are active. Singer et al. (2004) compared *f*MRI data when volunteers received a painful shock and when they were signaled that their loved one (in the room) was receiving a shock. Some areas such as somatosensory cortex were activated only when the volunteer experienced a painful shock (through their own senses, i.e., they received a painful electric shock). But other areas—the anterior insula and parts of the anterior cingulate cortex—were activated both when they were signaled that their loved one (who was in the room) was receiving a shock and when they received pain.[108]

The study by Singer et al. (2004) might suggest that the emotional aspect of pain was *shared* in the brain; it was affected by the participants' subjective experience of pain and imagining the experience of pain in their loved one. Research on empathy and pain was among the first line of research; however, other emotion-related phenomena have also been explored (Singer & Klimecki, 2014; see also Decety & Grezes, 2006; Decety & Jackson, 2004; Decety & Lamm, 2009; Lamm, Decety, & Singer, 2011; Singer & Lamm, 2009; Wicker et al., 2003). The suggestion based on these lines of research is that an "empathy network" in the brain (e.g., the anterior insular cortex and anterior cingulate cortex) is activated when people respond empathically to other people's experience of fear, anxiety, disgust, and pleasure. These are

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[108] The anterior insula is typically involved in tracking physical sensations in the body and is suggested to represent those sensations as conscious feeling; the anterior cingulate cortex is typically activated during experiences of negative emotion and conflict and is suggested to motivate actions (Keltner, Oatley, & Jenkins, 2019).

"emotion-related" phenomena; however, the empathy network has been explored in relation to these and other hybrid emotion-phenomena such social pain (e.g., Masten, Morelli, & Eisenberger, 2010), social exclusion (e.g., Novembre, Zanon, & Silani, 2014) and social suffering (e.g., Meyer et al., 2013), as well as other phenomena more commonly associated with sensation (e.g., touch, Lamm et al., 2015)

Noteworthy is that the aforementioned research (neuroimaging-based) involves investigating brain activation patterns in relation to brain region and locale. The construal of emotion-related phenomenon such as pain, disgust, and pleasure are, in part, defined by the technology which is used to substantiate them. There are several lines of reasoning as it patterns to neural patterns and networks (Guo, 2017 on neural synchronicity and mirror neurons). Likewise, there are several lines of reasoning as it pertains to how the brain is organized; for example, Panksepp et al. (2016) adopt an AN approach, which consists of approaching things from a lower level or using a form of bottom-up reasoning. In this approach phenomena such emotional as contagion might be explored via animal brain lesion studies (i.e., the AN approach often involves comparative research). The AN approach is contrasted with the CN approach, where the focus is on affective perspective taking; the CN approach focuses on higher-order phenomena and makes use of top-down processing models. Noteworthy, is that the CN approach, like the AN approach, maintains an emotion focus.

The notion of lower versus higher processes can be related back to epistemic conceptions of empathy; in particular, cognition-oriented to theories of simulating and the ToM debate. Albeit it likewise opens the debate to distinctions among perception, emotion, cognition, etc. As a contrast point, this can be traced back to more cognitively oriented discourses; for example, as construed through the ToM- simulation- and even direct-perception debates (Gallese, 2005;

Gallese & Goldman, 1998; Gallese & Sinigaglia, 2011; Goldman, 2006; Zahavi, 2011, cf. Jacobs, 2011). Of particular relevance to empathy is the proposal within cognitive neuroscience—specifically that we have two systems (Zaki & Oschner, 2012) and likewise two neuroscientific theories of the relationship between emotion and cognitive (i.e., AN versus CN; see also Kanske, Bockler, Trauwein, & Singer, 2015).

Bringing the distinction between emotional and cognitive empathy back to a consideration of the "mirror neuron system," wherein it was suggested that the observation/perception of certain behaviours performed by others will activate the same motor areas for action execution in the brain (Hickock, 2014), theoretically this line of research had to enter into the realm of mental states and representation (attributions about mental state of others). The notion of mental representation in relation to neuroscience plays out on many fronts—in particular, in relation to emotion and language (Barrett, 2012; Barrett, Lindquist, & Gendron, 2007; Friederici, 2011; Lindquist, Wager, Kober, Bliss-Moreau, & Barrett, 2012). But also, in terms of what would primarily be construed as cognition; for example, Frith and Frith's (2003) work on "mentalizing" is a staple in cognitive neuroscience (see also Frith & Singer, 2008). Notwithstanding that the notion of mentalizing has also been categorized under the umbrella of social neuroscience as well (e.g., Decety & Ickes, 2009; Singer & Lamm, 2009).

Empathy and Animals

The connection of empathic-type behaviour to *animal* behaviour is central to the biological basis of empathy; for example, as reported through research with rats and mice as early as the 50s (Church, 1959) and into current day (Ben-Ami Bartal, Decety, & Mason, 2011; Grenier & Lüthi, 2010; Langford et al., 2006; Ueno et al., 2019). This research has in large part focused on the experience of distress in rodents when perceiving pain in other rodents; however,

this line of inquiry has extended to monkeys (Wechkin, Masserman, & Terris, 1964/2014). Not just in relation to an “emotion-sharing” (or emotion contagion) but also within the context of a broader definition of empathy and in discussions about it as the building block to morality; for example, Flack and de Waal (2000) initiated this line of reasoning in relation to nonhuman primates.[109]

Frans de Waal (b. 1948) has devoted his career to studying chimpanzees, monkeys, and bonobos and presents a sustained position on these matters—why should we think that humans are unique in their ability to engage in what is often considered civilized behaviour (reconciliation, forgiveness, conciliation, peace-keeping, helping, kindness, empathy etc.; see also de Waal, 1999). Thus, when a primatologist reports on the observation that non-human primates display “sympathy-like” or “helping behaviours” this bolsters the conceptualization of empathy as natural. From observation to explanation, these comparative findings are discussed in terms of it being a more primitive form of our human capacity to be compassionate or kind towards other but nevertheless the precursors to it (see de Waal, 1996, 2008, 2009, 2019; de Waal & Roosmalen, 1979; Preston & de Waal, 2002).[110]

These observations and the connection of animal behaviour to forms of human behaviour are often partnered with a discussion of the adaptive function of such behaviours (e.g., de Waal, 2001, 2005; Greenspan &, 2004). It seems that to justify the study of “tender-hearted” animal behaviour, one needs to theorize how this is functional based on the logic of evolution and neurobiological evidence (de Waal, 2010; Decety, 2011; Decety, Ben-Ami, Uzefovsky, &

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[109] Sympathy and other sentimental emotions have been suggested a basis for a form of endogenous morality; these emotions are based on observations of animal behaviour (see e.g., Bekoff, 2007).

[110] This conception does not neglect the role of culture in the creation of social norms and sanctions for non-compliance. In fact, de Waal extends that non-human primates likewise have a culture wherein the codes of conduct are established. The underlying suggestion is that human behaviour and society are fundamentally an outgrowth of our phylogenetic lineage.

Knafo-Noam, 2016[111]; cf. Aaltola, 2018; Vicedo, 2009, 2013).

Evolution and Brainhood: The Integration of Neuroscience with Evolutionary Theory

There are several examples within the scientific literature that could serve as examples of empathy naturalized; however, I listed three salient moments—contemporary reports on mirror neurons, a discursive shift to a focus on affect in the psychobiological sciences, and the construal of emotions such as empathy and sympathy through the lens of evolutionary theory. The narratives underlying these moments are nuanced (i.e., the interplay of the body-brain sciences, the social sciences, and evolutionary theory is a minefield of its own, e.g., evolutionary psychology; see Buss, 2019). To state that "moments" constitute the entire story in empathy's naturalization project would neglect other key factors and historical precursor theories that play a role in the biological conception of empathy. There are several features that can be factored into a description of what constitutes an empathic response; however, the prevalent features are emotions, brain-body systems, evolutionary theory and research on empathy-related processes in animals.

A theory of empathy in relation to evolution, animals, and the brain was introduced by Preston and de Waal (2002); the perception-action model (PAM) was among one of the most popular theories of empathy (integrating both neuroscience and evolution) for roughly the first decade of the 21st century. At the same time as Preston and de Waal were proposing PAM, other theories attempting to do the evolution of social cognition in relation to empathy and neuroscience were on this landscape as well (e.g., the first theoretical ideas emergent for the

[111] Of note is Decety et al.'s (2016) definition of empathy after recognition of its diverse meanings: "Here we consider empathy as an induction process that reflects an innate ability to perceive and be sensitive to the emotional states of others, which can be, but not necessarily is, coupled with a motivation to care for their well-being" (p. 2). This definition requires some unpacking. First, an inductive process (bottom-up) involving sensation and perception (AN approach). Second, an innate other-oriented ability to detect the emotions in others that may or may not involve a motive to care or help. Does this construal suggest that empathy has a neutral moral valence?

mirror neuron Parma group, see Gallese, 2001; Gallese & Goldman, 1998, 2001).

Just shy of a decade after the mirror neuron "research rush" (see e.g., Hickock, 2014), critique and debate commenced. In general, the line of research associated with the discovery of mirror neurons began in 1992 (i.e., di Pellegrino et al., 1992; Gallese et al., 1996; Rizzolatti & Craighero, 2004; Rizzolatti, Fadiga, Gallese, & Fogassi, 1996; Rizzolatti, Fadiga, Fogassi, & Gallese, 2002) and dominated the neuroscientific and popular culture discourse for more than a decade (De Vignemont & Singer, 2006; Decety & Jackson, 2004; Jackson, Meltzoff & Decety, 2005; Keysers, 2011; Lamm, Decety, & Singer, 2011; Rizzolatti & Singaglia, 2008; Singer et al., 2006; Singer et al., 2004; Zaki & Oschner, 2012). This line of research extends into current neuroscientific, clinical, and psychopharmacological research (e.g., Jeon & Lee, 2018).

As suggested the critique does begin in earnest in the later part of the 2000s, however, rumbling did begin early on (e.g., Lakoff, 2001) and the critique got remarkedly robust from 2007 onwards (e.g., Cromby, 2015; Debes, 2010; Heyes, 2010; Hickock, 2014; Jacob, 2011; Jacob & Jeannerod, 2005; Kilner & Lemon, 2013; Lizardo, 2007; Steinhorst & Funke, 2014).

Last, in what is now commonly referred to in the literature as the "social brain," empathy is integrated with developmental and cognitive psychology and sociobiology. This is described by Decety and Meltzoff (2011). Meltzoff draws on the role of imitation based on his early research (i.e., Meltzoff & Moore, 1977) and Decety draws on his work in neuroscience from an evolutionary framework. Fundamentally, the suggestion is (1) that there are rudimentary forms of empathy that can be examined comparatively and developmentally (i.e., an ethological approach) and (2) forms of empathy in humans are built out of more basic forms, wherein the selection of affective communication, social attachment, and parental care are evident (non-humans). The tension, however, is in questions about to what extent prosociality is selected for.

In this case, theories of the social brain defer back to cognitive complexity and selectivity in responding to the distress of others. Empathy and the development of empathy is distinguished as proximal in relation to its connection to prosocial behaviours (i.e., helping, caring from the other, consolation etc.; see also Decety et al., 2016).

The concept of the "social brain" (not unlike the concept of the empathic brain; see de Vignemont & Singer, 2006) has not been without critique (see Wolfe, 2014; Young, 2012). Likewise, it is insufficient to ignore the traditions associated with the psychological sciences; in this case psychophysiological concepts and their placement within context would benefit from a historical-cultural and societal analysis (Teo, 2018).

Perhaps not surprisingly, the naturalization conception has a direct line of communication with the early history of *Einfülung* in relation to "motor" empathy couched within the epistemic theories of embodied simulation and the burgeoning field of neurophenomenology (e.g., Gallese, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009; Gallese & Singaglia, 2011)[112] and as it pertains to aesthetics (Gallese & Freedberg, 2007).

As it pertains to the "affective turn," this is still in process (Clough & Halley, 2007; Leys, 2011). The study of emotion continues to focus on the role of empathy (e.g., embodied empathy; see Keltner et al., 2019), while at the same time explicitly studying cognitive empathy as well (see Zaki, 2019, "Choosing Empathy," pp. 33-51, drawing on social psychological, neuroscientific, and motivation research).

Aesthetic Conceptions

The first question to address is "what is aesthetics"? One thinks of aesthetics as a quality

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[112] Vittoro Gallese (b. 1959) among the original Parma group is one of the figures most well-known within the literature on neurophenomenology; primarily because of the maneuvering of his work on mirror neurons, social cognition, etc. within and across diverse research traditions; writing within several different contexts, for phenomenological, clinical, psychoanalytic, circles.

or an appreciation of some object of perception (Kivy, 2004; Kieran, 2006; Mirzoeff, 2001; Rader, 1935/1966).[113] The term aesthetics is derived from the Greek word *aisthesis* (perception) (see Berlyne, 1974, p. 1; Hammermeister, 2002, p. ix).

Aesthetics is a branch in philosophy (analytic and continental). And within the context of philosophical theories of aesthetics, the psychological dimensions are explicit via concepts such as a "psychical distance" (Bullough, 1912, 1957). This psychological dimension proves important when delineating aesthetics. There is a branch termed empirical aesthetics and, in this context, the psychological dimensions are also explicit (agreeable or not); empirical aesthetics is characterized as objective and scientific (e.g., *Studies in the new Experimental Aesthetics: Steps Toward an Objective Psycholog*y, Berlyne, 1974; see also Fraisopi, 2019).

Beginning with Fechner (1867/1997), undoubtedly natural scientific psychology of this period is married to psychophysics (the measurement of sensing, perceiving, judgments etc.; see Heidelberger, 2004). Psychophysics is likewise closely tied to the measurement of sensations and perceptions in relation to works of art. In particular, research was conducted in relation to the visual perception of paintings (see Fechner's golden section; Green, 1998). In this context psychological aesthetics is about determining the "most preferred" proportions of objects of perception. The connection of aesthetics to psychophysics is evident in the language used by researchers within the contemporary field of psychology and the arts (judgments, preferences, perception of; see e.g., Hager, Hagemann, Danner, & Schankin, 2012; Hosoya, 2020). Psychological aesthetics is also represented via organizations, associations, societies, etc.; for example, the International Association of Empirical Aesthetics (IAEA; see also Greb, Elvers, &

[113] Note. The term "esthetic" is used interchangeably with aesthetic in Western philosophy; see for example the five editions of Rader's (1935/1966) *A Modern Book of Esthetics: An Anthology*.

Fischinger, 2017).[114] This association has a robust membership, and many members are also fluent on psychophysical among other specializations.

On the other hand, as it pertains to an historical reconstruction, philosophical aesthetics can be traced back to several varieties of thought; for example, Kant and German Romanticism as well as Shaftesbury and British Sentimentalism, among others (i.e., 18th century philosophy; see Guyer, 2004; Hammermeister, 2002). Theories of aesthetics are connected to moral sentimentalism and moral judgements. Within this context, aesthetics is connected to virtue.

Aesthetics are also connected to the stuff of citizenry and within the contemporary context there are theorists who describe aesthetics as a part of everyday living. This is based on tradition of referring to aesthetics as the "conduct of everyday life" (Berleant, 2012; Schraube & Højholt, 2016).

Aesthetics and good taste is recognized as something of value—it represents "reasonable judgement" (i.e., if the spectator views some work as beautiful and this judgement is consistent with "experts," this is a plus for the spectator; see e.g., Dickie, 1962 for a critique of normative and value-laden theories of art perception); however, aesthetics is also connected to emotion and this could be construed as where empathy gets introduced to the picture—described below.

It is generally understood that aesthetics (theories of taste, judgements, preferences, and values) is connected to art. And the current conception is captured in the statement that art is related in important ways to aesthetics, but the aesthetic cannot completely absorb art and vice-versa (see Kieran, 2006). Nonetheless the connection to art is strong and many connect the term not only to the visual arts but also literary and arts performing, (see e.g., Aschenbrenner & Isenberg, 1965; Kieran, 2006)

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[114] See for example the International Association of Empirical Aesthetics https://www.science-of-aesthetics.org/

Aesthetics and the Connection to Empathy: Theories of *Einfühlung*

As a place to begin, I locate as my site of empathy's aesthetic "birth" the Germanic aesthetics theory context of the late 19th and early 20th century (i.e., Lipps's 1903/1979; Vischer, 1873/1994). Albeit, as suggested above, there were other contexts wherein aesthetics was a topic of discussion, empathy's aesthetic foundation is salient within this context. This discourse is likewise connected to the appearance of the term "empathy" as a derivative of theories of *Einfühlung*.

Aesthetic theorists described *Einfühlung* as an emotional and kinesthetic response primarily in relation to inanimate art-objects. Debates exist regarding the use of term *Einfühlung* and recent historical scholarship documents that the term was used by Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803) in the 18th century not in relation to aesthetics but in relation to culture and nature (e.g., Herder 1774, 1778, as cited in Curtis, 2014; Depew, 2005; c.f. Edwards, 2013; Waldow, 2019; the former scholars suggest that Herder's conception differed from the theories of *Einfühlung* that proceeded).[115] Likewise, it is suggested that *Einfühlung* may have been coined by the philosopher Rudolf Hermann Lotze (1817-1881) in *Geschichte der Aesthetik* (1865; *Outlines of Aesthetics*) (as cited in Curtis, 2014; see also Depew, 2005; Mallgrove & Ikonomou, 1994; Nowak, 2011b).

There are several sites of conceptual birth for the notion of *Einfühlung*; irrespective it is clear that in the late 19th century the term *Einfühlung* was in circulation within German aesthetic discourse, and it was coupled with a physiological connotation. For example, when used by Robert Vischer (1873/1994) to refer to an optical sensing of form in the perception of an object, whereby aesthetic viewing depended on the stimulation of muscles and nerves of the eyes, which

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[115] Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803) is raised as a linguistic example as "*Einfühulung*" was not his theory (Edwards, 2013; see also, Bahr, Durrant, Evans, & Maughan, 2008; Frazer, 2010; Garrret & Greenwalt, 2010).

invoked a pleasurable sensation. These bodily sensations, evoked feelings, which were in turn projected into and felt in the object—a sort of merging and projection of one's bodily sensations and feelings with the object of contemplation. Albeit still reliant in large part on the initial physiological aspects there was undoubtedly a "feeling" component and some form of "sharing" with the object of perception (see Bridge, 2010; Curtis, 2014; Nowak 2011b for an overview and the implications of *Einfühlung* theories in relation to other theorists; see also Mallgrave & Ikonomou, 1994, for contributions from Theodor Vischer, 1907-1887 and Robert Vischer, 1847-1933 pertaining to *Einfühlung* in the field of aesthetics).

Within these early precursors to empathy there were different notions of what "feeling into" concerned; for example, as described by Lotze (1858) we can feel into nature (e.g., a tree), sentient beings (e.g., feel like a mussel), and even inanimate objects (e.g., architecture) (as cited in Curtis, 2014). Lotze was focused on the physiological in this case describing the bodily memories and the associated aesthetic giving quality of experiencing the external world internally. Motoric responses and simple sensations to objects did not necessarily mean that it was *Einfühlung* that we were experiencing rather it was the bodily feeling associated with (aesthetic) perception (Curtis, 2014).[116]

On the other hand, in Lipps's (1905/1994) theory, *Einfühlung* was construed as the highest level of feeling; the theory primarily focused on the subjective feeling rather than muscular sensations. During the late 19th century, debates went back and forth concerning *Einfühlung*—was it a theory of perception, what role did motor movement and imitation play, and what were the relative contributions of organic sensations and *mental* factors (see Curtis, 2014; Gladstein, 1984; Jahoda, 2005; Lanzoni, 2018; Morgan, 1996).

[116] In addition, Curtis (2014) suggests that *Einfühlung* was considered not only a part of an aesthetic but also a "key element of everyday experience" (p. 360).

As noted in Chapter 1, these debates played out within different philosophical traditions; phenomenologists, for example, directed attention towards the subjective experience and suggested that empathy is "perception-like" but it is a form of perception that is unlike that of perceiving objects—specifically that empathy is about the recognition of others as minded creatures (Zahavi, 2012; this line of reasoning has translated into the direct-perception approach to empathy). Notably the terminology is more complicated as several different German terms are connected to empathy; for example, as outlined in Zahavi (2010, 2014b) there is *Nachfühlen* (reproduction of feeling), *Nachleben* (reproduction of experience), *Fremdwahrnehmung* (perception of others), *Mitfühlen* (emotional sharing), *Mitgefühl* (sympathy), *Einsfühlung* (emotional identification) as precondition for empathy (*Nachfülen*) found in the phenomenological literature. Likewise, there is *Hineinverstezen* or *Verstehen* (interpretative understanding; Muller-Vollmer, 1985) and *Hineinfühlung* (Edwards, 2013), and I am certain that have missed others (see also Bridge, 2010). Terminological debates abound, there were several different terms used that are implicated in the "empathy refers to …" debate. And there were, within this context, others that urged that empathy ought to be translated as a form of "aesthetic sympathy" (see also Lanzoni, 2018 pertaining to Baldwin, 1906, attempting his own understanding of the term).

Of note, is that the English-language terminological distinction as it pertains to this discourse relate back to aesthetics and the response inanimate objects of perception (this was the source approach for experimentalists). There were various German continental aesthetics theories in the early 19th to early 20th century; for example, scholars such as Robert Vischer (1847-1933), Theodor Lipps, Violet Paget (Vernon Lee; 1856-1935), and Wilhelm Worringer (1881-1965) among others were interested in clarifying what it is that happens at the intersection

of perceiver and an object of perception. The notion of empathy was viewed as means of describing the co-constitutional quality of both beholder and the object itself; for examples as described by Worringer in *Empathy and Abstraction* (1908/1967) (see also Helg, 2015; Koss, 2006).

The place of "empathy" within empirical-philosophical-aesthetic traditions of this period is noteworthy as empathy was a guiding concept. As noted in Chapter 1, there is still debate about the "empathy" translation; however, "most" cite Titchener (1909) as the introduction of the term into an English-speaking context within American psychology. It is documented that he translated *Einfühlung* after a visit to Germany and while writing his textbook, *Experimental Psychology of Thought-Processes* (1909; see Lanzoni, 2018, pp. 46-67 for a historical analysis). Despite this particular and repeatedly passed along story of how the term empathy originated from the term *Einfühlung*, less is known about what was happening within the American context which made the concept of empathy somewhat catchy. Following the translation of *Einfühlung* and the terminological birth of empathy, the concept of *Einfühlung*, as applied to aesthetics declined in spotlight by the mid-twentieth century. Theories of *Einfühlung* appear to have had their heyday beginning from the mid-19th century into the mid-20th century and the diversity of its construals is connected to several different scholars; for example, Johannes Volkelt (1848-1930), Heinrich Wölfflin (1864-1945), Karl Groos (1861-1946), William James (1842-1910), Carl Georg Lange (1834-1900), Herbert Langfeld (1879-1958), Violet Paget (Vernon Lee, 1999-111, Moritz Geiger (1880-1937), James Mark Baldwin (1861-1934; Hugo Münsterberg, 1863-1916, and of course, Friedrich Theodor Vischer, 1807-1887, Robert Vischer, 1847-1933, Rudolf Hermann Lotze, 1871-1881, and Theodor Lipps as described above; see Brain, 2012; Bridge, 2010; Depew, 2005; Curtis, 2012, 2014; Lanzoni, 2018; Mallgrave & Ikonomou, 1994; Nowak,

2011b; Stueber, 2006). It was not until empathy had fostered new identities within various other discourse communities that we find the notion of an aesthetic empathy reinvigorated, primarily within the literary field and those concerned with artistic reception as it is applied to different forms of media available with advent of new technologies.

Aesthetics and Empathy in the 21st Century

Despite the relationship between empathy and aesthetics taking a backseat in the mid-to late twentieth century continuing into the twenty-first, it is undeniable that the remnants of this aestheticizing function underpin much of the scholarship in the performance, visual, design, and literary arts (e.g., the fine arts). Lanzoni (2018) considers empathy and aesthetics through an examination of the performing arts; specifically, dance. Likewise, empathy is explored in relation to drama and the "moving image" (broadly conceived e.g., theatre, film, media, and virtual reality; see e.g., Anderson & Anderson, 2007; Bearman, Palermo, Allen, & Williams, 2015, Mankovskaya, 2007 as well as music, drama, and the intersection of sight and sound (Clarke, DeNora, & Vuoskoski, 2015; Goldstein, Lerner, & Winner, 2017).

To state that empathy is connected to the "Arts" necessitates that there is a general understanding of what this includes (see Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009). In institutions of higher education, we find programs in dance, film, music, and design and this is what is typically considered under the School of Arts or as a Bachelor of Arts (see Fine Arts, Laurentian University; Fine and Performing Arts, Brock University; Creative and Performing Arts, University of Calgary, and York University's School of Arts, Media, Performance, and Design).[117] The arts are considered in education and training and this ought to be translated into

[117] See also *Times Higher Education* (n.d.) "Top Universities Where you can Study Art, Performing Arts and Design" retrieved from https://www.timeshighereducation.com/student/what-to-study/art-performing-arts-design and *Times Higher Education* (2018, October 31) "Best University for Arts and Humanities retrieved from https://www.timeshighereducation.com/student/best-universities/best-universities-arts-and-humanities-degrees

what would be assumed industry standards. The connection of empathy to the arts and industry will be discussed in Chapter 4 as it pertains to an application of empathy via professionalism in the field of media, business, and industry.

When attempting to describe the bodily connection between oneself and the experience of entertainment, producers and creators have devoted their training to the consideration of the impact on the receiver, spectator, and/or consumer (Reynolds & Reason, 2012). As it pertains to the production of art itself (performing arts, dance and drama) producers view their creation as a means of communication and expressing to others "parts" of themselves (e.g., through movement of their body, symbolism in their use of shapes, forms, and mediums, as well as words as representation; see e.g., Goldstein, 2009; Machabeli, 2007; Vaage, 2010); this is clearly construed as one of the essential components of empathic experience in general. Specifically, the experience of another is received and taken into oneself for further psychological processing. This is what we mean when we state that "we were moved by reading their word" or …"

A particularly important piece which is directly relevant to empathy, film, and narrative is Margrethe Vaage's (2010) article discussing how different "varieties of empathic engagement" with fiction film aid in the development of the spectator's understanding of the film's narrative. This is important. The aesthetic and emotional component of viewing historical films (as described as part of the historical epistemic empathic process Chapter 3 and in relation to historical empathy in relation to education in Chapter 4) is clearly connected to an epistemic conception of what empathy entails; likewise, the notion of narrative and fiction is also assumed to be part of the epistemological/contextual empathic response in this process.

Last, to hark back to the concept of creativity and its connection to empathy and imagination—the psychological and social conditions are clear—empathy with the

maker/producer (individual) and/or empathy with the object be it imagined, substantiated, or demonstrated; are these different things? Yes, but are they both empathy (see Coplan, 2011a, Currie, 2011; Schmetkamp & Ferral, 2019)? On the other hand, we can see a more applied rendering in discourse that merges relational, aesthetic, and naturalized conceptions in literature and research on theatre, drama, film, fiction, and imagination (Goldstein et al., 2017; Goldstein & Lerner, 2018).

From Aesthetic Theories to Fine Arts, Performance and Design

Although in its original context the use of the term *Einfülung* was originally confined to the appreciation of art it was suggested as a means for a person to enter into another persons' mind (or see things through the lens of another or as a demonstration of the other). Once the term had been adopted into the American psychology experimental context and into the laboratory of Titchener (1867-1927) the notion of the "feeling" or "acting" of the mind was suggested akin to activities of a muscle. As suggested by Titchener (1909):

> Not only do I see gravity and modesty and pride and courtesy and stateliness, but I feel or act them in the mind's muscles. This is, I suppose, a simple case of empathy if we may coin that term as a rendering of *Einfühlung*. (p. 21)

Titchener describes kinaesthetics in relation to visual imagery and its feeling within the body. At the same time, however, Titchener suggested that the activity of the mind could be extended without visual or external stimulation—the notion of the mind as actively seeking to flex itself to another mind was invoked.[118] And thus, despite empathy's original use primarily with person

[118] It was also around this time that James and Titchener were actually debating back and forth about the notion of telepathy, Titchener conceiving of the ability to sense the contents of another's mind or sense another's gaze on your back, as a result of some sort of physiological energy released when the mind was flexing its muscle, and not a metaphysical power like telepathy (Meyer, October 12, 2008). Steven Meyer's (Washington University, St. Louis) discussion of the correspondence between William James and Titchener was discussed in the paper "Why *Mirror* Neurons? Richard Powers' *The Echo Maker* and the Conceptual Limitations of Empathy", presented as a contribution to the interdisciplinary workshop, "Varieties of Empathy in Science, Art and Culture," October 10–12,

and object, for example, a person experiencing a feeling produced by perceiving the movement of rolling pebble, or the physiological-feeling of a movement sensation produced by perceiving the textures of painting, by the time empathy was part of English-speaking parlance it had become associated with both the perception of movement in an object and the matching or reading of an experience in another human being (Curtis, 2014). This latter use was the primary course (that is person-to-person understanding) it was to take in the social sciences and into the twentieth century

As mentioned, part of the debates surrounding empathy consist of questions such as to what extent is it primarily a physiological reaction or a feeling; to what extent "mental factors" are involved; and, to what extent is it is projection or a merging or a projection of person (self) into an object (or person) that one is observing, perceiving, experiencing. Therefore, the term was used by scientists and philosophers to refer to phenomena we might connect to ideas of immersing oneself into other (be it object or person) both emotionally and physiologically Perhaps some synonyms for the first uses of the term might be projection, vicarious experiencing, or a particular kind of contagion. An often referred to example provided by Lipps's (1851-1914) is his description of viewing an acrobat walk the tight rope, and in doing so, the bodily sensation experienced, a sort of kinesthetic matching of the tension or shakiness one might experience if they had to walk the tight rope themselves; an imagining "as if" through observation accompanied by a bodily response (Curtis, 2014; Montag, Galliant, & Heinz, 2008).

Empathy has been conceptualized as having an aesthetic facilitating quality. It enables us to realize our preferred objects of perception—what we are "feeling into" is suggested to provide one with a sense of their tastes. The notion of an "aesthetic empathy" refers to discourse which

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2008, held at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC.

invokes empathy to describe the experience of a spectator/observer when engaging with a static inanimate object (e.g., a painting), experiencing a dynamic audio and/or visual object (e.g., music, film), and also when using one's imagination (e.g., experience of an object animate/inanimate in the absence of its presence). These are the assumptions underlying this notion; albeit, the term aesthetic has a specific connection to preference and primarily refers to the subjective experience of being drawn towards an object, inanimate or animate. From its original context to present day theories of architectural design and expression through to the performing arts, empathy is considered a cornerstone to activities which involve some sort of an aesthetic dimension.

Chapter 4: Applications of Empathy

In Chapter 4, I present *applications* of empathy ("empathy in use"). The applications described are based on prevalence in the academic and scientific literature, as well as discourse in the public domain (e.g., news, social media, and e-consumer sites). I present seven relatively specific applications of empathy (quantitative, gender, pathological, political, educational, commodified, and professionalism). My question: How is empathy mobilized in different ways, to serve different ends? In addition, I provide an example of how one application (i.e., empathy as an essential component in defining professional identities) is evident and can be viewed in several fields (i.e., active in defining professionalism in the fields of health care, human services, and industry, e.g., business and media). This enhancement is provided as an example of how a focus on applications of empathy can be a fruitful avenue for further exploration.

Noteworthy, all of the applications are suggested to have a moral valence at their core. The strength of this moral valence is in greater or lesser extents depending on use and context. With this moral undercurrent in mind one can see its reverberations in empathy—these are exemplified in its applications and increasing spherical presence. The order of applications are as follows: quantitative, gender, pathological, political, educational, commodified, and professional. As it pertains to the last application—the professional—empathy is demonstrated as operative within the fields of health care, human services, and industry (i.e., it is involved in constituting forms of professionalism, i.e., an examination of empathy's role in professionalism within fields many work in).

Quantitative

It is not uncommon to read critiques and/or reviews of measures of empathy (Bloom, 2017; Bryant, 1987; Choplan, McCain, Carbonell, & Hagen, 1985; Duan & Hill, 1996; Lux,

2017; Stueber, 2008/2019; Wispé, 1986; Zhou, Valiente, & Eisenberg, 2003). Overtime these reviews demonstrate the increasing complexity and hyper-specialization in the measurement of a general concept of empathy. Much like any other psychological concept the pursuit to quantify and assess "levels of" empathy is prevalent within the field of psychology and within natural scientific domains of psychology (e.g., neuroscience); however, because empathy is used to refer to a diverse range of phenomena and because of its status as a central concept of importance in the human and social sciences, its measurement (relative to other psychological constructs) is an issue of consistent scrutiny (in particular, from the 1950s into the present). Most critics point to issues of construct validity: Is the measure assessing empathy or another related concept, or empathy plus these other related concepts (Batson, 2011; Batson, Fultz, & Schoenrade, 1987; Eisenberg & Fabes, 1990)? The question permeating the measurement literature is consistent with the more general questions of empathy's conceptual clarity outlined in Chapter 1.

Pertaining to the measurement of empathy, it is also commonplace for authors and researchers to refer to the distinction between "affective" empathy and "cognitive" empathy: Is this measure assessing one or the other (Barnes, 2014; Coplan, 2011a, 2011b, 2014; Coll et al., 2017; Cuff et al., 2014; Lux, 2017; Reniers, Corcoran, Drake, Shryane, & Völlm, 2011; Smith, 2006)? Within the contemporary literature there is a suggestion that two "types" of empathy rely on different brain systems (i.e., distinct patterns of activation implicating different areas of the brain; Nummenmaa, Hirvonen, Parkkola, & Hietanen, 2008; Shamay-Tsoory, 2009; Shamay-Tsoory, Aharon-Peretz, & Perry, 2009; Zaki & Ochsner, 2012). These neuroscientific findings and the precedent set by distinguishing affective empathy from cognitive empathy in scale development (i.e., discrete items demarcate one from the other) has led to a nuanced, and often contradictory, repository of measures of empathy.

I restrict this discussion to psychological measurement (via the use of individual differences measures, both personality and ability/skill). Psychological measurement is the clearest form of empathy quantified.[119]

Individual differences. Rosalind Dymond (1948, 1949, 1950) was among the first to develop a measure of "empathy" (in contrast to a measure of sympathy that conceptually measured something we may or may not refer to as empathy).[120] Dymond (1948) introduces empathy within the context of the psychotherapeutic concept of insight; the interest is to determine whether those that have high empathic ability ("the ability to feel and describe the thoughts and feelings of others," p. 232) will be more apt to have "insight" in therapy. Dymond (1949) went the next step and developed a test to measure "empathic ability." The test involved two participants (A and B) rating (on a 5-point Likert scale) themselves and the other person. The process for each participant involved four steps: (1) A rates herself; (2) A rates B; (3) A rates how she thinks B would rate her; and (4) A rates how she thinks B would rate themselves. Essentially, we have two people rating themselves, and then guessing about how the other would rate them, and how they would rate themselves. The ratings were in relation to a series of six items (self-confidence, superior-inferior, selfish-unselfish, friendly-unfriendly, leader-follower, and sense of humour). From a contemporary perspective, it would appear that Dymond focused on cognitive empathy (the ability of a person to make judgments about the way the other is thinking or feeling), in addition to including a measure of self-perception as well.[121]

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[119] Physiological measures (e.g., GSR) and brain imaging technologies (e.g., EEG, *f*MRI) are addressed in Chapter 4 in the section on naturalized conceptions.

[120] I use the term phrase "among the first" deliberately as there were others that had developed measures of empathy (e.g., the Empathy Test developed by Kerr & Speroff, 1947, as cited in Choplan, McCain, Carbonell, & Hagen, 1985). Kerr and Speroff (1954) attempted to validate their Empathy Test.

[121] Contemporaries of Dymond did not hesitate to raise concerns about the inclusion of "projection" (i.e., the psychoanalytic and psychotherapeutic foundations) in Dymond's measure of empathic ability. Bender and Hastorf (1950) started with an examination of "other person" perception, a concept predominately used in social psychology, in relation to three measures of personality. Hastorf and Bender (1952) attempted to remove the projection factor

As pointed out by Stueber (2008/2019) a focus on the concept of empathic ability occupied social and clinical psychologists from the late 1940s into the 1960s. It is noteworthy, however, by the late 1960s the psychotherapeutic community dropped the term "ability" and begin simply measuring "empathy" (e.g., Bergin & Jasper, 1969). This observation addresses another shift that took place in the measurement literature during this time-period: the trend veered in the direction of personality; that is, specifically assessing empathy as a stable individual difference.[122] These measures went in either the direction of a cognitive conception

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from their developing measure, and in 1953, put forward a version they referred to as a "generalized empathic ability." Bender and Hastorf (1953) attempted to isolate the concept of social sensitivity (empathic ability) from the concept of projection. Later, Hastorf, Bender, and Weintraub (1955) were struggling with a scale of "refined empathy."

[122] The assessment of empathy as an "ability" was picked back up in two guises in the social-personality literature of the 90s. First, in the form of *empathic accuracy*, which will be discussed in the proceeding and second, in the measurement of empathy as component of emotional intelligence (EI; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The term EI became popularized with Daniel Goleman's (1995) book entitled *Emotional Intelligence*. A turning point in the EI saga relates to whether it is assessed as a component of personality (trait) or something that is more situation-specific (a state) that could best be described as a learned skill. The resolution in the literature is the suggestion that there are two types of EI: ability and trait (Petrides & Furnham, 2000, 2001; Pérez-González, Petrides, & Furnham, 2007). EI ability is assessed via performance and is associated with the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test version 2.0 (MSCEIT-II) (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000a, 2000c); this test is typically referenced as a measure of EI ability (Rossen, Kranzler, & Algina, 2008). EI as a disposition is typically measured through self-report assessment and is referred to as trait EI (i.e., ability EI is a task based whereas EI trait is assessed through self-report). The 33-item Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) proposed by Schutte et al. (1998) is the most commonly cited measure. According to the authors emotional intelligence is "conceptualized as a somewhat enduring, trait-like characteristic" (Schutte et al., 1998, p. 174). Schutte, Malouff, Thorsteinsson, Bhullar, and Rooke (2007) re-state this distinction in the introduction of their meta-analysis where they distinguish EI ability as similar to cognitive intelligence and EI trait as similar to personality characteristics. The two-fold distinction, however, is not dichotomous. There are EI models and measures that are referred to as "mixed." For example, the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I; Bar-On, 2000). According to Bar-On (2000), the EQ-I is described as a self-report measure of "emotionally and socially competent behavior that provides an estimate of one's emotional intelligence…the EQ-i was developed to measure this particular construct and not personality traits or cognitive capacity" (p. 364). In this case, emotional intelligence as well as social intelligence is not cognitive ability or a personality trait, rather, a mix of affect-based and interpersonal skills that may lead to improved emotional and social functioning. And the EQ-I taps into these emotional and social *competencies* at the self-perceived level (self-report). The distinction here is that the MSCEIT-II (ability EI) and the EQ-I (mixed trait and ability) measure ability or competency differently; the MSCEIT-II through performance criterion (correct/incorrect response), whereas the EQ-I assesses competency through self-report (i.e., one's subjective perception of their abilities). There continues to be tension around the assessment of EI as a stable dimension of personality or as a skill or ability acquired through appropriate training. This issue, likewise, plagues the measurement of empathy. Last, and certainly worth comment, some measures of EI do include empathy; for example, empathy is one factor of ten different factors on the EQ-I. The empathy subscale on the 133-item EQ-I comprises five items (Bar-On, 2000). Thus, empathy is implicated in emotional intelligence but in the case of the EQ-I. Typically when one reads a definition of emotional intelligence it is described in general terms; for example, "the ability to perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion in thought, understand and reason with emotion, and regulate emotion" (Weiten & McCann, 2019, p. 322). Deconstructing what this definition entails Salovey, Mayer, and Caruso (2000b) specify components of EI: the

(e.g., Hogan's Empathy Scale [HES]; Hogan, 1969; see also Froman & Peloquin, 2001) or an affective one (e.g., Questionnaire Measure of Emotional Empathy [QMEE]; Mehrabian & Epstein, 1972). Later Mehrabian (1996) went on to develop the Balanced Empathy Emotional Scale (BEES) (as cited in Newton et al., 2000); the BEES is not widely used.

Following the widespread use of these different measures Mark Davis (1983) proposed a multidimensional measure of empathy; this measured is called the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI). The IRI consists of four subscales measuring four different dimensions of interpersonal reactivity (Davis, 1983). Davis's model views empathy as a set of distinct, but related constructs, two of which are cognitive and two of which are emotional: (a) *fantasy*, which is the tendency to project one's self into the feelings and actions of fictitious characters portrayed in movies, books, etc.; (b) *perspective taking*, which is the tendency to spontaneously adopt another person's psychological viewpoint; (c) *empathic concern*, which consists of other-oriented feelings of sympathy and concern for unfortunate others; and, (d) *personal distress*, which consists of self-oriented feelings of personal anxiety and unease in charged interpersonal settings.

The IRI remained the dominant self-report inventory for assessing a multidimensional form of empathy for close to two decades. Research on its psychometric proprieties has been assessed pertaining to languages, geographies, and culture; for example, in French Canadians (Gilet, Mella, Studer, Gruehn, Labouvie-Vief, 2013), Germany (Koller & Lamm, 2015), Chile (Fernández, Dufrey, & Krump, 2011), and in research exploring East Asian culture from Western culture (self-identified, see Cassels, Chan, Chung, & Birch, 2010).[123] The IRI remains a

ability to accurately perceive emotions in oneself and others; the ability to express one's own emotion; awareness of how emotions shape thinking and decision making; the ability to analyze and understand the complexity of one's own emotions; and last, the ability to regulate one's emotions (see also Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, & Cherkasskiy, 2011). On the other hand, one does not typically include self-regulation and the interpretation of one's own feelings in definitions of empathy. It is clear that empathy may be considered a part of EI but EI is not conceived of as empathy.

[123] Cassels et al. (2010) examine the IRI in connection to culture; the examination takes place within the context of

widely used measure of empathy among some cultures (see, Batchelder, Brosnan, & Ashwin, 2017; Spreng, McKinnon, Mar, & Levine, 2009; Stueber, 2019).

In the first decade of the 21st century, however, several other measures have emerged. Among measures of individual difference, Simon Baron-Cohen and colleagues developed the empathy quotient (EQ; Baron-Cohen & Wheelwright, 2004). The EQ is a questionnaire which determines where an individual lies on a spectrum of empathy-related personality traits.[124] The EQ was created as part of Baron-Cohen's larger theory about empathy and autism and sex differences ("male" and "female"). Females are suggested to score higher in EQ than males and males are suggested to score higher than females on the proposed systematizing quotient (SQ; Baron-Cohen, Richler, Bisarya, Gurunathanand, & Wheelwright, 2003). Theoretically, Baron-Cohen (2011) has gone onto to develop a theory about the origins of evil and human cruelty, explicating this in relation to the quantitative, neurobiological, and genetic sciences. This will be described in more detail in other contextualized applications (e.g., gender/sex and pathology).[125]

Vancouver, BC. Cassels et al. (2010) identify East Asian versus Western cultural groups (these groups are self-identified, there is also a Bicultural group. They were intent to explore the affective aspect of Davis's IRI. They conclude that Asian groups score higher on personal distress, Western group scores higher on empathic concern; bicultural somewhere in between but overall have high levels of personal distress, scores more consistent with East Asian culture.

[124] Baron-Cohen (2011) describes the impetus behind developing his own measure of empathy. In doing so he makes explicit that fantasy and imagination are not what he considers relevant to empathy. Empathy from Baron-Cohen's perspective is much more about experiencing an emotion in response to another's emotions, thoughts, behaviours. As defined by Baron-Cohen (2011, p. 16) "empathy occurs when we suspend out single-minded focus of attention and instead adopt a double-minded focus of attention. . . . . Empathy is our ability to identify what someone is thinking or feeling and to respond to their thoughts and feelings with an appropriate emotion (p. 16; note, that the latter part of the definition is very similar to Hoffman and Batson's definition of empathy). Baron-Cohen states that the first part describes its form (dual-focus) without addressing process or content. The second part is suggested to address this; it is specified as "recognition and response," (p. 16) meaning that the process involves awareness that another person needs to be responded to and then doing just that (e.g., noting facial movements indicating frustration) and then responding appropriately (e.g., offer assistance; Baron-Cohen refers to this response as "responding with an appropriate emotion; pp. 16-17). Baron-Cohen's theory will be described in greater detail in the section on gender and pathology; however, worth highlighting is that his theory proposes that empathy is as normally distributed and that "we all lie somewhere on the empathy spectrum [from low to high]" (Baron-Cohen, 2011, p. 15).

[125] In addition to the empathy quotient and the systemizing quotient Baron-Cohen is also known for developing the Reading the Mind in in the Eyes Test (Baron-Cohen, Wheelwright, Hill, Raste, & Plumb, 2001a). The Reading the Mind in Eyes Test assesses peoples' ability to decipher a mental state from pictures of the eyes alone and according

The IRI and EQ are among the most popular measures used. In the last decade several new self-report and individual differences have emerged; for example, the Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (TEQ; Spreng et al., 2009) and Empathy Components Questionnaire (ECQ; Batchelder et al., 2017). The four aforementioned measures (IRI, EQ, TEQ, and ECQ) either a multidimensional/componential and/or single common factor view of empathy and are self-report individual difference measures.

The development of scales to measure empathy has arrived at a common formula: delineate the components one includes in one's conception and then develop a measure of items which denote this; for example, the Basic Empathy Scale (BES; Joliffe & Farrington, 2006). Favre, Joly, and Renaud (2011) describe the process of developing the Cut-off—Empathy—Contagion (CEC) test (see also, Coll et al., 2017). The test includes a distinction between emotional contagion, empathy, and emotional cut-off. Noteworthy, however, is that this measure emerges out of a desire to identify children at risk of developing violence-related problems (e.g., conduct disorder). This is a hallmark of several contemporary measures of empathy (e.g., BES; Joliffe & Farrington, 2004, 2006; the Empathy Index [EDI]; Grady & Rose, 2011, for sex offenders); the context or the "why" we are measuring empathy is important (cf. Davis & Gold, 2011 on forgiveness and romantic relationships).

The degree of explication varies among individual-difference and self-report measures: The explications differ by instrument developers as it pertains to how explicit they are about who and what the measure is for (a specific population, as a screening tool etc.). The meta conceptual question is whether the measure intends to assess personality dimensions, traits, or factors (i.e.,

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to the authors, is an advanced measure of mind-reading or in our terminology "cognitive empathy." Baron-Cohen, Wheelwright, Skinner, Martin, and Clubley (2001b) also developed the autism spectrum quotient (AQ) discussed in the proceeding in relation to pathology and empathy.

stable individual characteristics; e.g., Davis, Luce, & Kraus, 1994; Leibetseder, Laireiter, & Köller, 2007; Reniers et al., 2011) or an ability/skill an individual can acquire or be prompted by certain conditions (i.e., empathic ability, accuracy etc., which an individual can learn; e.g., Batchelder et al., 2017 distinguishes "ability" from "drive/motivation"). This is quite separate from questions about who the measure is intended for and why the measure is needed. It is evident that individual difference measures have come to construe empathy as a defining feature of an individual or as something that can be taught like a skill. The latter has become the more prevalent approach in the contemporary literature, and this marks a swing back to the original measures proposed in the early part of the 20th century.

The notion of a tendency to be "empathic" (in some form) has not been without critique (as a measure of a stable quality); for example, Stueber (2006) described this as *situational* versus *dispositional* empathy. There is the suggestion is that although a person can be assessed (via self-report and forced-choice or Likert-scale items) as high in perspective-taking and empathic concern (IRI) or cognitive empathy and emotional reactivity (EQ), or as higher in emotional processes—defined as "an accurate affective insight into the feeling state of another" (TEQ; Spreng et al., 2009, p. 68), or even with a score on affective ability/drive/reactivity or cognitive ability/drive (ECQ), these components may be displayed differentially across contexts and circumstances. This is resonant with the introduction of social determinants and motivational concepts being introduced to several measures (e.g., ECQ with the inclusion of "drive" within its componential construction).

Behavioural measures. Observations or the demonstration of empathy (operationalized) is empathy quantified. An assessment of how empathic one is or how skilled one is at knowing the contents of another's mind has been developed under the banner of an *empathic accuracy*

approach. The contemporary empathic accuracy approach is backed by an extensive research program initiated in the 90s by William Ickes (e.g., Ickes, 1997, 2003, 2011; Ickes, Culwell, & Cuperman, 2009; Ta & Ickes, 2017). In this approach participants are evaluated in relation to their "mind reading" abilities (i.e., can they accurately infer what the "target" is thinking or feeling). The participants empathic accuracy is either "online" or "offline" with what the target is thinking or feeling. The term empathic accuracy refers to "the extent to which everyday mind reading attempts are successful" (Ta & Ickes, 2017, p. 354; see also Ickes, 1997, 2003). A typical study in this program follows along the lines of "exposure to a target stimulus" followed by self-report, and inference and perceptions about the target, and vice-versa; albeit there are different research designs for assessment of empathic accuracy.

Research is ideally informed by theory. Ta and Ickes (2017) outline the two different designs as—the *unstructured dyadic interaction paradigm* and the *standard stimulus paradigm* (Ta & Ickes, 2017, pp. 354-355). In this case it is clear Ickes empathic accuracy program has developed to include the dynamics of interaction and the term empathic accuracy has come to be construed more broadly. Ickes empathic accuracy test (EAT) has been critiqued by Coll et al. (2017).[126] These researchers specify their own conception and put forward a new model, wherein "emotion identification" in the other and in oneself is compared to derive a measure of what is termed "affect sharing," in addition to obtaining an overall score on accuracy of emotion recognition (self and other).

Assessments of therapist empathy is also a behavioural measure and example of empathy

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[126] Coll et al. (2017) specify their own conception of what empathy; as indicated in the preceding, this follows the prototypical approach to developing a measure of empathy and/or a model or theory. Coll et al. (2017) put forward a new model, wherein emotion identification in the other and in oneself can be compared to derive a measure of what is termed "affect sharing" in addition to obtaining an overall score on accuracy of emotion recognition (self and other).

quantifying; these measures draw on observation and self-report. Starting in earnest with Rogerian client-centred practices (Rogers, 1957, 1959, 1975), observation, self-report, and quantification is applied to the therapeutic context. Some of these measures include the accurate empathy (AE) scale (Truax, 1961, as cited in Truax et al., 1966a 1966b; see also Caracena & Vicory, 1969; Truax & Carkhuff, 1967), the relationship inventory (RI; Barrett-Lennard, 1962, see also Barrett-Lennard, 1981; Walker & Little, 1969), and various other approaches to the measurement of therapist empathy (Bachelor, 1988; Bohart & Watson, 2011; Elliot et al., 2011; Elliott, Bohart, Watson, & Murphy, 2018; Kurtz & Grummon, 1972). All of these measures were attempts to quantify and document the role of therapist empathy in counselling and psychotherapy. The measures consist of some form of therapist self-report/ratings, client report/ratings, observer report/ratings (see Decker et al., 2014, for a synthesis of these measures in relation to contemporary practices such as MI etc.; see also Elliot et al., 2018).

The aforementioned has been only a smattering of research on empathy that includes quantitative data (i.e., neuroscientific research[127], social psychological experiments[128], and observational studies[129] use numerical data) and a discussion of measures in relation to empathy; however, the notion of the why and context around how these measures are used is central; for example, as alluded to, therapist empathy is assessed in relation to psychotherapy, and assessments of physicians' and nurses' empathy has followed (see Hojat, 2007/2016). The recognition that empathy is fundamental to caregiving illustrates its moral valence; it also exemplifies an application of empathy quantitatively.

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[127] See discussion in Chapter 3 on naturalized conceptions of empathy.
[128] See discussion of Batson's research program in Chapter 2 in connection to the "empathy-altruism" hypothesis.
[129] See discussion of Melzoff's observational research with infants in Chapter 4 and the naturalized conceptions of empathy.

Gender

The suggestion that males and females differ in their propensity for empathy is tied to quantification. Much like several other psychological concepts (e.g., intelligence, aggression, etc.) there is literature on sex and gender differences in relation to empathy (see e.g., Baron-Cohen, 2003). The discourses of sex and gender differences in relation to psychological concepts must be viewed against the backdrop of history; for example, through what process and in what context did the term gender appear, what is sex in contrast to gender, how do we understand these concepts (discrete categories, fluid dimensions), and in what ways to do we use these terms in different discursive contexts (see e.g., Rutherford, 2019, 2020). In the following, I neither reconstruct a history nor comprehensively review all discursive contexts. I summarize some discourse that informs my lens when interpreting the continuation of research on empathy in relation to "sex/gender." This includes comment on some early research on empathy and gender (e.g., developmental; Eisenberg & Lennon, 1983; Hoffman, 1977) and a select contemporary application (a bio-quantitative approach to sex differences, Baron-Cohen, 2003, 2007, 2009, 2011; see also, Batchhelder et al., 2017; Ickes, Gesn, & Graham, 2000; Klein & Hodges, 2001; Mestre, Samper, Dolores, & Tur, 2009; Rueckert, 2011; Rueckert & Naybar, 2008; Schulte-Rüther, Markowitsch, Shah, Fink, & Piefke, 2008).

Feminist Research on Sex/Gender and Emotion Discourses

As it pertains to empathy, gender, and the suggestion that males and females differ in empathic abilities and propensities, the study of *emotion* must necessarily be introduced—empathy-related emotions tend to aid in "doing gender" (West & Zimmerman, 1987; 2009; see also Butler, 1990, 2004 on "gender performativity" and "undoing gender; Benhabib, Butler, Cornell, & Fraser, 1995; Locke, 2011; Risman, 2009; Shields, 2002, 2005; Shields, Garner, di

Leone, & Hadley, 2006; Rutherford, 2018, 2019, 2020; see also, Lux, 2017 for a summary of the "emotion" aspect of empathy and sympathy).[130]

Shields (2002) describes *doing emotion as doing gender*; resonant and consistent with emotion and gender doing, Shields (2005) cogently accounts for emotion discourse in relation to power, hierarchies, gender, and the notion of "appropriate" emotion. Shields refers to this as the "politics of emotion"—this includes gendered norms, expectations, beliefs, and social outcomes in relation to power (see also Shields et al. 2006; Shields & Warner, 2008).

Supporting the notion of an ideal feminine subject, which outlines the expectations, guidelines, and parameters of a women's work, the behavioural manifestations are identified as "emotion labour" (these include "feeling rules"; see Hochschild, 1979, 1983, 2003; Hochschild & Machung, 1989/2012).[131] Scholars can do research with this frame in mind across various contexts (e.g., doing gender through emotional expressions in the research interview; see Hellum & Olah, 2019); however, a predominant amount of scholarship focusses a lens on the view that women are naturally the caregiver—it is within this sentimentalist context that (emotional) empathy as "feminine-female" emerges.

With this discursive frame in place (i.e., that women are naturally the caregiver) feminist scholars interested in care ethics and empathy have unpacked how sex, gender, and patriarchy are tied up in what constitutes a woman's work. Lorraine Code (1995) discusses the intersections

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[130] The notion of "doing gender" has been the subject of debate within feminist social theory (see Risman, 2009). In particular questions about the application of "doing gender" are debated. Within the field of psychology overall, the actions of psychological concepts is under microscope (e.g., epistemic violence, Teo, 2017) and this is consistent with psycho-socio-political theories across various disciplines (i.e., feminist intersectional theories within literature and language studies discourse and postcolonial critical race theories, e.g., "the subaltern," Spivak, 1988; "interlocking systems of oppression" or "matrices of domination," Collins, 1990, 1993, 2000; see also Crenshaw, 1989, 1991).

[131] Notably Hochschild's work heads on an exploration of feeling rules in relation to women's work—in relation to economics (e.g., Hochschild, 2003); albeit this is the metaphor used to discuss the dynamics of assumed sex-typed social roles throughout the Hochschild's work. A way was paved with Hochschild's approach; there is, however, recognition of the limited perspective provided by Hochschild's analytics (see e.g., Wingfield, 2010).

of epistemic authority/responsibility and gender discourse; power, control, and a view on women's work can be surmised. Code attends to how discourse and knowledge function (rather than detailing explicit power-control and/or dominance-subordination and oppressive behavioural manifestations). Discourse focussed on how gender, science, and knowledge intersect highlight how if women are viewed as "naturally empathetic" (emotionally) then empathy is not synonymous with a skill—the suggestion being that if considered a skill, males would be supported in its development (see Code, on the way the discourse operates – rhetorically—in relation to gender and the issue of "knowing" and "feeling," pp. 121-143; see also). Several discourses identify the (emotion) irrational-versus-rational (reason). Likewise, most empathy-related discourse does make a distinction between affective empathy versus cognitive empathy (see e.g., Bluhm, 2017).

Gender norms and roles are naturalized and reified by evolutionary theory (e.g., that women are naturally caregivers, e.g., Noddings, 2010; see also Eagly & Wood, 2011, 2013, see also Eagly & Wood, 2016). In more recent history there is recognition of what is referred to as "neurosexism" (Fine, 2010) and the "brain differences" question in relation to sex and gender and this is seamlessly included in neuroscientific research. The suggestion herein is that there is a "female brain" that differs from a "male brain" in fundamental ways—specifically the male brain championing rationality and the female brain championing emotionality (see also, Bluhm, 2017; Fine, 2010, 2013, 2017; Schmitz & Höppner, 2014).

Lobb (2013) describes the "female empathy tax," wherein societally the message is that men and women are equal (equity hiring practices etc.), while on the other hand, assuming that women are "naturally" expected to be caregiver. In essence the intersection of these two ideas

make equity impossible. Lobb suggests we move towards the "androgynization of empathy"—meaning, a non-gendered conception of empathy gender and sex, in relation to empathy.

Empathy finds itself represented in these discourses; it plays a feature role in re-inscribing sex and gender performances that serve oppressive power systems for women. Feminist epistemology informs the observation that empathy serves to "do gender" and maintain a conception that care is just what a woman does ("care" in this case is understood to be the antithesis of the objectivity coveted by science; see Lott, 1996). Women as the "carers" is understood to maintain systemic inequities in care-giving responsibilities, while at the same time stifle its development as a role for all humans (Novak, Northcott, & Campbell, 2017). For a review of the topic of women and caregiving, care ethics, and empathy, in relation to sex/gender and feminism, see Code (1995), Koehn (1998), and Lobb (2013); these resources include works from varying epistemic perspectives.

The connection between care ethics and the feminine is articulated along the following lines: females are caregivers and therefore as it pertains to the expression of compassion, sympathy, and empathy for others, women are "naturally" inclined to fulfill this role. It is assumed that women are more suited for sympathy-related and touchy-feeling activities (professional and otherwise). It is assumed that this constitutes a "natural" difference based on biology (i.e., gender similarities-differences hypotheses, Hyde, 2005; the variability hypothesis, Shields, 1982; complementarity hypothesis Pickren & Rutherford, 2010; Rutherford, 2019). The debate about focusing on differences or similarities (i.e., "commonalities" make us stronger) exists; however, there is recognition that effacing difference is to the detriment of the political subject (Butler & Athanasiou, 2013). The connection of this to prevalent trends in empathy research is exemplified by the work of scholars such as Simon Baron-Cohen (2003, 2007, 2009)

Simon (2006, 202002), whose work is described below.

The lens through which empathy is viewed when focussed on sex/gender is consistent with an informed view of what constitutes a feminist epistemology and in particular with attention to scholarship on the concept of intersectionality and critical race theory (Collins, 1990, 1993, 2000; Crenshaw, 1989, 1991; see also, Dhamoon, 2011; Nash, 2008; Shields, 2008). A feminist epistemology endeavours to see and hear peoples that are impacted by systems of oppression, hegemony, misogyny, sexism, racism, and ableism; for example, peoples self-identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, and other identities that are non-binary, heterosexual, and/or cisgender (LGBT2SQQIA+), people of colour (POC), queer trans people of colour (QTPOC), indigenous peoples, and people with visible and invisible disabilities, and many more peoples that are impacted by systems of oppression, hegemony, misogyny, sexism, racism, and ableism. In this context we must understand that feminist epistemology and the intersectionality lens includes more than just a focus on sex and gender. It includes experiences of peoples who are oppressed and marginalized via systems of power in relation to social categories and relations (Collins, & Bilge, 2020).

In the aforementioned intersection of social forces—vectors of power, race, class, gender—we see not only, critical social theory, but also a focus on the body and materialism, discourse and messages, and their impact. The psychological aspects of gender and *identity* can also be unpacked by a look at social media—specifically, what might be referred to as the ideal feminine subject? The ideal female differs in terms of identity presentation; women do more work in managing their social identities (Lyons, McCreanor, Goodwin, & Moewaka Barnes, 2017, in relation to studies of drinking and self-presentation). Affective technologies, such as

social media, *affect* users in relation to their identity and experience of emotion—this can be theorized as "circuits of affect." In these cases, the user is not theorized albeit they are affected by the technologies. The notion of doing identity online (social media) is an important social sphere

Swan (2008) identifies the "ideal feminized subject" and its role in emotional economies.[132] Emotional economies are represented in concepts such as soft skills, emotional intelligence (Swan, refers to this "soft capitalism"). Emotional economies have become a staple in workplace dynamics. Thus, it is not just about "females" doing emotion but about how "feminized" identities and emotions function in a hierarchical structure (such as government, business, etc.). Swan describes this within the context of therapeutic cultures and neoliberal discourse. There are several functions that feminized emotions serve. The neoliberal discourse and its societal dimensions are clear: emotion/empathy is politicized, educated, commodified, and fundamentally akin to governmentality. Doing gender and likewise doing identity materializes ideas about what should be done and provides a politics and governance to the body in relation to sexuality and gender (i.e., heteronormativity and cisgender, Fausto-Sterling, 2012). This is of particular relevance to peoples whose identities do not fit within the narrative and structure around the neoliberal actor (i.e., an intersection of identities, e.g., women of colour, LGBT2SQQIA+, POC, QTPOC, and indigenous peoples).

Prevalent Trends in Empathy Research

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[132] The aforementioned is all very tied to emotion discourse and feminist epistemology. The overarching theme being Western culture, patriarchy, colonialism, and the mass production of different systems of oppression. There is a patriarchal discourse exists wherein roles and identities are viewed in terms of binaries—males versus females. Within the 21st century there is a movement towards non-binary approaches to human sexuality and gender identities; however, the binary approach is entrenched and embedded in the hegemony of most Western societies. In addition, other socio-historical categories, such as race, nationality, heritage, and class need unpacking. A non-categorical, linear, and binary approach poses a challenge to the "order of things" from the vantage point of the natural sciences. This directly impacts the human sciences that are built off of a foundation in the natural sciences and thus relying on the ability to count and measure things (humans and non-humans).

Sex differences. The exploration of sex differences between men and women in relation to empathy was bolstered in the 1980s when several prominent empathy researchers of that time made this a priority (e.g., Eisenberg & Lennon, 1983; Hoffman, 1977). The focus up to the 80s was on affective empathy; the research connection between the affective aspects and not the cognitive aspects is not hard to find (e.g., Bohart & Greenberg, 1997; Eisenberg, 1986; Hill & King, 1976; Hojat, 2007/2016; Owen-Anderson, Bradley, & Zucker, 2008; Roberts & Strayer, 1996; Strayer & Roberts, 2004). By the late 20th into early 21st century it was assumed that "women are more empathic than men." This was and still is primarily construed as an affective form of empathy rather than a cognitive form such as perspective-taking (Rueckert, 2011).[133]

Simon Baron-Cohen (2003, 2007, 2009) published his theoretical ideas with the topic of sex differences and empathy at the forefront. Baron-Cohen utilizes quantitative data and ultimately offers a mathematical approach to empathy. He focuses on genetics and neuroscientific research. The lens and aims are clear: provide a quantitative account which, measures and classifies different variants of empathy. This is to be based on genetic and neuroscientific research among others. Baron-Cohen's work in relation to psychopathology is described below (i.e., in the pathology section); however, his initial treatise on sex differences was most comprehensively presented in the *Essential Difference* (Baron-Cohen, 2003); this work began in the 90s (e.g., Baron-Cohen & Hammer, 1997).

Baron-Cohen's (2003) work theorizes that the female brain is hard-wired for empathy and the male brain is hard-wired for understanding and building systems. This view suggests that there are natural sex differences in empathic capacities; for example, women are more tender-

[133] Albeit the tides have shifted with respect to the affect-cognition distinction (e.g., within the context of affective versus cognitive neuroscience, see Panksepp, 2011; within philosophical and historical scholarship on the distinction between empathy and sympathy and their status as emotions/affects, see Lux, 2017).

hearted and maternal, and males are rational, problem-solving and task-oriented, pragmatic, and practical.

The distinction can best be understood within the context of Baron-Cohen's empathizing and systemizing quotients. The derivation of the empathy quotient and the systemizing quotient is based on Baron-Cohen's theory of the Extreme Male Brain (EMB). According to Baron-Cohen and Wheelwright (2004)

> The EMB theory recognises two psychological dimensions: "empathizing" (E) and "systemizing" (S). Empathizing is the drive to identify another's mental state and to respond with an *appropriate emotion* [emphasis added] to this. Systemizing is the drive to analyze a system in terms of its underlying lawful regularities and to construct systems using such lawful regularities. The male brain is defined as individuals in whom S > E, and the female brain is defined by the converse psychometric profile (E > S) (p. 170).

Empathizers are characterized as a having a female brain and systemizers are defined as having a male brain (see Baron-Cohen et al., 2003, on the systemizing quotient; Baron-Cohen & Wheelwright, 2004, on the empathy quotient). Women drive to identify mental states of others and respond appropriately, whereas men like to stick to lawful or orderly regularities (no emotion involved). This approach will be addressed again in relation to autism and psychopathy.

The sex differences reported by Baron-Cohen and colleagues are accounted for by appeal to evolutionary, genetic, and neurobiological theories. Baron-Cohen's suggestion that women are superior at empathizing is attributed to innate biological factors. This line of research and its explanatory power has been criticized (e.g., Bluhm, 2017; Fine, 2013; Jordan-Young, 2010; Rutherford, 2018).

There is research that brings other factors—apart from self-report—into the mix. Klein

and Hodges (2001) focussed on social motivation in their quasi-experimental research. They demonstrated that men's scores on an empathy task equaled women's when a monetary reward for good performance was offered. The suggestion being that if men were motivated to empathize, they would and could. This line of thinking has been pursued in the social psychological literature (see Zaki, 2019). In summary, as with earlier research on gender differences in affective empathy, support for Baron-Cohen's theory of the male versus female brain/systemizer versus empathizer is open to debate, as are the methods used to substantiate this theory.

Gender differences. Rueckert (2011) reports that the research on empathic gender differences (women and men) is varied. Rueckert suggests that the mixed and inconsistent findings can be investigated by the type of empathy being measured (emotional versus cognitive), the form of measurement used (self-report versus physiological indices, e.g., hormones), and the context in which these measures are used (e.g., it is suggested that demand characteristics may play a role).

The aforementioned considerations are supported in the literature; for example, Hill and King (1976) suggest that sex differences disappear when the measure is administered unobtrusively. Baez et al. (2017) discuss the research on sex/gender differences and empathy, highlighting inconsistency in the findings—the researchers sought to explore moral judgments, empathy for pain, and self-reports of empathy (see e.g., Han, Fan, & Mao, 2008, in relation to sex differences in empathy for pain). Baez et al. (2017) conducted two studies, the conclusion was that sex differences are dependent on the type of assessment used: self-report, judgments, and pain. Baez et al. utilized traditional social-psychological methods—experimental design, moral judgments in response to (moral/not moral) dilemmas/scenarios (vignettes), inferential

statistics (e.g., sex differences in relation to empathy-for-pain), and self-report (i.e., individual endorsement of certain empathic qualities). They had mixed results. Inconsistency as it pertains to the empirical evidence that supports sex-related differences is questioned; however, it remains on the agenda of many social scientists—some feminist perspective included (see e.g., Eagly, 1995 in relation to standpoint theories).

Addressing contextual factors in relation to the assessment of empathy, Zaki (2019) suggests that "empathy priming/prompts" may actually reduce difference; specifically, if you prime males and females to focus on the emotional experience of a target object (e.g., a vignette of a person's experience or a contextualized picture of a person's facial expression) men tend to endorse empathic items (self-report) and "empathic circuitry" in the brain is activated. This suggests that there is not a fixed sex/gender difference and that situational and contextual adjustments reduce performative gender. These findings, however, need to be viewed in light of the suggestions made by Hill and King (1976) in terms of unobtrusive assessments and Baez et al.'s (2017) finding that type of assessment makes the difference. The authors suggest that sex differences do exist with self-report measures and this is attributed to gender-specific/relevant socio-cultural norms and expectations. Sex differences are a sociocultural artifact. Whereas, others might suggest that neuroscientific findings is where we ought to look (c.f., Fine, 2013; Schmitz & Höppner, 2014)

Remarks

With the aforementioned lens in sight, my suggestion that empathy functions as a means for further codifying gender differences is illuminated. We can construe empathy as an affective technology (e.g., emotion politics). This technology in relation to a natural and morally-valenced conceptualization most clearly gives ammunition to those invested in sex/gender differences.

These discourses often serve in maintaining binaries, categories, and the perseverance of the narrative "women and men as naturally […]" (e.g., Vetlesen, 1994, describes this in relation to emotions, morals, and gender; "boys will be boys" and "this is for a girl").

Supported by recent feminist scholarship, Pedwell (2012a, 2014) alerts us to what she refers to as the "politics of empathy." Pedwell's scholarship introduces a primary component in relation to feminist scholarship on emotions, power, marginalization, and oppression. Pedwell's critique of empathy will be further described in Chapter 7; however, the notion that there is a "politics of empathy" resonates and is consistent with Shield's "politics of emotion." The gender, empathy, emotion, and power dynamics are clear. And in particular, empathy serves as a technology in power asymmetry maintenance for neoliberal subjects (in relation to gender, class, race, ability etc.; see Rutherford, 2019).[134] "Gendered empathy" is furthered within the professionalism application, for example, in relation to empathy, gender, and the practice of medicine (see Singer, More, & Milligan, 1994).

Pathological

Given the central claim of this work—that empathy has a moral valence—it should hardly come as surprise to observe that this quality has taken a tone wherein excesses or deficiencies have been pathologized. The literature on pathology and empathy is rich (see e.g., Woodruff & Farrow, 2007). Given the preceding discussion about empathy as implicated in quantification, it was suggested that the context wherein empathy is invoked is important (there are many measures developed in relation to developmental and adult clinical and criminal populations; see e.g., Baron-Cohen & Wheelwright, 2004; Lockwood, Bird, Bridge, & Viding,

[134] The critique within these bodies of scholarship illuminate how science and industry discourse do not seek to understand socio- cultural- historical- and political contexts; these discourses operate with specific end in sight. Critical scholarship unpacks how this allows oppression and power to remain unscathed. The lines of research do not disrupt systems of power rather they identify pathways for technologies to be of service.

2013). The two primary exemplar applications of empathy mobilized in discourse on pathology are in relation to autism and psychopathy (Kennett, 2017).

The assertion that empathy has been used to pathologize is arrived at via an exploration of the notion of "excesses" or "deficiencies" (Baron-Cohen 2011)—certain "types" have deficiencies and/or other types have excesses (see McLaren, 2013; see also Jeffrey, 2016; Nillson, 2014 on the notion of empathic over-arousal in relation to compassion fatigue). The assumption is that there is a "normal amount" or a "threshold" at which point the "right amount" of empathy is demonstrated.[135] Empathy's connection to its moral valence within the context of pathologizing is clear. This normalizing approach is most clearly relevant to discussions wherein deficits or deficiencies are suggested to exist (Bird & Viding, 2014; Blair, 2008a; Jones, Happé, Gilbert, Burnett, & Viding, 2010).

This suggestion of empathy as involved in anything related to pathology does have teeth. There is no "deficit" of discourse. The discourses identify different psychopathologies wherein empathy is implicated; for example, schizophrenia (see Lanzoni, 2018; Gallagher, 2013; Frith, 2004, re. ToM), eating disorders (see Warrier et al., 2018) etc. The discourses that identify empathy (in some form) in descriptions of clinical populations likewise discuss training clinicians, medical doctors, and other health care professionals how to cultivate "just enough of" and "the right amount" of it (Glaser, Markham, Adler, McManus, & Hojat, 2007; Halpern, 2001; Hojat, 2007/2016; Mercer, Maxwell, Heaney, & Watt, 2004; see also Pedersen, 2009 for a

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[135] For example, Nillson (2014) discusses the notion of empathic over-arousal. The connection between emotion regulation and empathy. There is inconsistency in the literature concerning this. Is there an emotion-regulatory part to the empathic process? Is there a point at which a person shares emotion just enough to experience affective empathy but not so much as to have that sharing become an experience of personal distress? Depending on how one construes empathy this regulatory component may or may not be conceivable. Interesting is the suggestion that if exposed too many traumatic situations that prompt empathy and compassion, this can result in burnout, compassion fatigue. This is extensively written about in health care and human services environment; this is furthered in the professionalism section.

critique of this research track; see also this recent research in relation to South America, Cánovas et al., 2018; Wollmann, Hauser, Mengue, Roman, & Feltz-Cornelis, 2018). This is detailed in the professionalism section in relation to empathy within the field of health care.

I selected the most prevalent discourse in relation to pathologizing—specifically the discussion of empathy in relation to autism spectrum disorder and psychopathy (Bird & Viding, 2014; Blair, 2008a; Kennett, 2017; Shoemaker, 2017)

Autism. As it pertains autism, the epistemic connection is described in terms of ToM (described in Chapter 3). The standard format was to administer tasks such as the false beliefs test—this account would fall within the theory-theory camp. On the other hand, simulation theorists have turned to neuron-based accounts and in particular focussed on mirror neurons, as well as on the development of perceptual sensory-motor system (e.g., mimicry, imitation, matching/replicating, and exploring these processes in interaction with others, i.e., social perception) (Gallagher, 2004, 2005, 2013, 2015; Gallese, 2007; Goldman, 2006, 2012). In contemporaneous literature the discussion has moved beyond the theory of mind debate (in terms of TT versus simulation theorists) and shifted towards social cognition and interaction patterns ("intersubjectivity" and consciousness, e.g., narrative, Gallagher, 2012 etc.).[136] The aforementioned noted, the discourse on empathy and autism was in large part shaped by the general question about what it means to lack or be deficient in theory of mind.

A profound statement was made by Baron-Cohen's (1995) theory that children suffering with autism lack a theory of mind as demonstrated in their social interactions; this was termed

[136] In this account the debate about theory of mind focusses on what constitutes mentalizing and how does the process unfold—TT theorists have an account and simulation theorists have another. Much of the current research in this field, however, emerges with some of the central tenants underlying simulation theory at its core—it is psychological, cognitive, and neural. What varies primarily is how it is approached (lens) and assessed (methods) (e.g., see Gallagher, 2013).

"mindblindness." Baron-Cohen and colleagues developed the autism spectrum quotient (AQ; Baron-Cohen et al., 2001b), and the "Reading the Mind in the Eyes" test (Baron-Cohen et al., 2001a). According to this line of reasoning individuals identified with autism spectrum condition (ASC) lack empathy (including both an affective and cognitive component as per its operationalization via the EQ).

Wheelwright et al. (2006) describe research conducted to examine the connection of individuals with ASC in relation to the empathy quotient (EQ) and the systemizing quotient (SQ) (both described in the preceding sections of this chapter in relation to gender and quantification). Thus, in addition, to the essential differences (male/female brain), Baron-Cohen argued that individuals with an ASC have a very strong male brain (this is reflected by a high SQ) and rather low levels of empathy (reflected by low EQ). And third, sex differences in the EQ and SQ are explained in the empathy-systemizing (E-S) theory (Baron, Cohen, 2003). Focussing specifically on the AQ, Wheelwright et al. (2006) come to the conclusion that individuals high in AQ are low in EQ and high in SQ—as assessed by the SQ-R. As they describe in the discussion portion:

> The E-S theory predicts [sympathy-systemizing theory] that more typical females should have Type E (E > S) brains and more typical males should have Type S (S > E). The EMB theory predicts that ASC [autism spectrum condition] should have Extreme Type S(S >> E) brains. These predictions were supported by the data: (pp. 52-53).[137]

There is much more that can be described in relation to Baron-Cohen's research track (see Baron-Cohen, 2006, 2009; see also, Dapretto et al. 2006; Evans, 2012; Kennett 2002, 2017; Pearce, 2020); two points are noteworthy. Baron-Cohen's (2003) extreme male brain (EMB)

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[137] The brain types are plotted along the following dimensions in order to calculate the proportion of people scoring in each of 5 defined "brain types": Type S, Type E, Extreme Type S, Extreme Type E and the balanced brain, Type B (E = S), as a direct test of the E–S and the EMB theories. (Wheelwright et al., 2006, p. 49)

theory of autism coincided with Baron-Cohen (2003; *The Essential Difference: Men, Women and the Extreme Male Brain*) which also coincided temporally with the development of the EQ, SQ, and AQ. And the line of research to conclude with in relation to Baron-Cohen (2011) is in the account of the role of "zero empathy positive" in connection to autism. Baron-Cohen (2011) describes that autism spectrum individuals are zero empathy positive, while psychopaths are zero empathy negative. Baron-Cohen (2011) suggests that empathy is lacking in individuals with autism spectrum, but they are good at systematizing. This version of empathy is defined as an ability in this theory; albeit sex differences predict who is likely empathic or a systematizer.[138] This line of research continues along the persistent themes in Baron-Cohen's work pathology (autism, psychopathy), gender (EMB, extreme male brain), and measurements (EQ, SQ, AQ, and the Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test; see Baron-Cohen, 2015). Likewise, Baron-Cohen's measures is among the most prevalent of measurement tools used in the assessment of autism in relation to empathy, theory of mind, and emotion recognition (e.g., Montgomery et al., 2016).[139]

The primary theory discussed thus far, in relation to empathy and autism, is Baron-Cohen's E-S or EMB theory; however, as it pertains to contemporary theories of autism, there are several rivaling hypotheses and theoretical accounts at varying levels of analyses. For example, Smith (2009) describes an empathy imbalance hypothesis of autism, wherein individuals with autism are suggested to have a deficit of cognitive empathy but a surfeit of emotional empathy. Susceptibly to empathic overarousal is suggested to underlie this imbalance.[140] For example, from Lawson, Rees, and Friston's (2014) aberrant precision account

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[138] Baron-Cohen appears to have published the same book twice under different titles with different publishing companies: See Baron-Cohen (2011) *The Science of Evil: On Empathy and the Origins of Cruelty*. New York, NY: Basic Books (in the reference list); however, also see Baron-Cohen, S. (2011). *Zero-Degrees of Empathy: A New Theory of Human Cruelty*. London, UK: Allen Lane Publishing

[139] Noteworthy is that Baron-Cohen is the last author listed on this six-person-authored article.

[140] Noteworthy is that Smith (2009) purports to be provide an alternative to the extreme-male-brain theory of autism.

of autism from a neuroscientific perspective: autism is explained by appeal to neuro-mechanisms and -modulators. Bird and Viding (2014) suggest a framework for understanding not only autism but other conditions (psychopathy, alexithymia) wherein an impairment or atypical level of empathy is suggested. Bird and Viding call their exemplar the "self to other model of empathy" (SOME) and describe their approach as a mechanistic cognitive model of empathy.

There also different approaches to studying autism; for example, De Jaegher, Pieper, Clénin and Fuchs (2017) took an interesting approach to explore intersubjectivity and interactional patterns in children with autism; fundamentally attempting to establish a method for studying interactional patterns in contrast to behavioural learning perspective; for example, autism treatment involving applied behavior analysis (ABA).

Despite rivalling theories and methods for studying autism within the public domain the notion of a "neurotypical" has become commonly described in relation to autism (see Hobson & Hobson, 2014; Rudy, 2019). In this sense there is a continuation in distinguishing ASD from "normal." The most prominent discursive play is to speak of neurodiversity, neurogenesis, plasticity, and epigenetics—recognizing the socio-cultural turn in neuroscience (Schmitz & Höppner, 2014).

The aforementioned certainly leads to innumerate lines of reasoning as it pertains to autism and it surely is related to other clinical categories than I will unpack (see e.g., Gallagher, 2013; Lanzoni, 2018; Zaki, 2019 on empathy in relation to schizophrenia, borderline personality disorder, and psychopathology in general); however, the second pathology related discourse that often puts empathy to use relates to the concept of psychopathy (Decety, Chen, Harenski, & Kiehl, 2013; Englebert, 2015; Gallagher 2013; Hare, 1999; Hare & Neumann, 2008; Lockwood,

2016). I discuss these two mobilizations as it is often the case that empathy is part of the discourse on autism and psychopathy (see e.g., Bird & Cook, 2013; Bird & Viding, 2014; Lockwood, 2016; Lockwood, Bird, Bridge, & Viding, 2013)

Psychopathy. As it pertains to the concept of psychopathy and empathy, the moral valence is clear—psychopaths lack empathy and a moral sense (Bird & Viding, 2014; Blair, 1995, 2005, 2008b; Blair, Mitchell, & Blair, 2005; Coll et al., 2017; Greene, 2014; Harpur, Hakstian, & Hare, 1988).[141] This lack of moral sense is also described as a lacking in moral conscience or moral faculty, and in terms such impairments in moral judgements, reasoning, and motivation (Greene, 2014). Likewise, a lack of empathy is described in terms deficits or impairment rather than a full-scale lack of it (Kauppinen, 2017; Marsh, 2014; Shoemaker, 2017). This lack or deficit of empathy is integral to measures of psychopathy (see e.g., the Psychopathy Checklist Revised [PCL-R]; see Hare et al., 1990, and the Psychopathic Personality Inventory [PPI]; see Lillenfeld & Andrews, 1996). And in this context empathy helps define and make measurable psychopathy.

Psychopathy, likewise, and in part, helps to characterize what empathy entails; empathy is understood as integral to what it means to have a moral compass (e.g., Kauppinen, 2017; Marsh, 2014; Shoemaker, 2017; cf. Bloom, 2017, Prinz 2011).[142] However, the technicalities reside in how one construes empathy or which aspect of empathy one is attending to; for example, as a socio-cognitive skill such as emotion recognition (an ability to read the emotions of others) or as an affective phenomenon wherein the observer feels some emotion congruent

[141] The term psychopath is used for lack of a better word. In particular, we can specify antisocial personality disorder as clinical diagnosis whilst still recognizing the plethora of ways the term psychopath is used. People associate it with sociopathy (or sociopathic behaviour) as well (Hirstein & Sifferd, 2014).
[142] Noteworthy is that within this context moral philosophers devote a significant proportion of their writing to differentiating among different moral phenomena—judgement, responsibility, norms, motivation, intuition, insight etc. (see Kauppinen, 2017; Shoemaker, 2017).

with the recognition of another's person situation and emotional experience (Bird & Vidding, 2014). Often these aspects are assessed part-and-parcel.

Marsh (2014) reports that in addition to impaired moral judgement in relation to victim suffering (i.e., emotion recognition), psychopathy is linked to an impairment in recognizing specific types of emotions in others (see e.g., Marsh & Blair, 2008). Impaired recognition of fear and sadness in others, is also suggested to be accompanied by lower levels of reported personal experiences of fear and sadness. Thus, the primary distinction in research on psychopathy and empathy is to establish what is the focus; in the case of responses to others and judgments about their emotions—the cognitive component is recognized, whereas in the case of an individual's subjective responses and experiences of certain emotions, the affective domain becomes central. The study of emotion is more physiological and is aided by neuroscience.

Maibom (2008, 2009, 2014) describes empathy as one among other moral emotions; for example, others include sympathy, concern, personal distress, compassion. Maibom (2014) suggests that many scholars do not actually identify empathy as an emotion in its own right and prefer to construe it as a means for experiencing emotions; compound forms such as emerged empathic embarrassment, pleasure, disgust anxiety, sadness, fear, etc., have emerged).[143] Maibom suggests that when it comes to morally-relevant processes, the question becomes about whether the individual can discern, recognize, etc.; therefore, higher cognitive faculties immediately enter into the picture. As it pertains to cognitive neuroscience, direct perception theories line-up. This loops back to the focus question—are we examining what a psychopath experiences or what they judge another to experience? So, what can be said is that psychopathy

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[143] Maibom (2014) suggests that many scholars do not actually identify empathy as an emotion in its own right and prefer to construe at a means for experiencing emotions; varieties of compound forms have emerged empathic embarrassment, pleasure, disgust anxiety, sadness, fear, etc.)

is connected to emotion and empathy dysregulation—it can likewise be construed as affective and cognitive (i.e., emotion recognition involves cognition and leads to reasoning, see Kauppinen, 2017, and an individual's emotion processes, for example as experienced as observer, can also be considered). On the other hand, there are alternatives; for example, as suggested above, instead of focussing on subjective experience one focusses attention to neural models of what happens.

There are several scholars who have devoted the bulk of their career to studying psychopathy (e.g., Blair, 1995, 2005, 2008b; Blair et al., 2005; Hare, 1965, 1985, 1998, 1999, 2016; Hare et al., 1990; Hare & Neumann, 2008). There appears to be consensus that psychopathy involves emotion dysregulation/dysfunction and antisocial behaviour (Blair, 2008b; Hare & Neumann, 2008). This opinion appears to be consistent with what at first glance appears to be incongruence with some of the descriptors used to describe the psychopathy (e.g., poor impulse control and impulsive aggression compared with calculated callousness, social intelligence, and an ability to manipulate others—Blair, 2008b, describes this as the "instrumental-reactive aggression dichotomy," p. 137). Notably the terms of agreement are dimensional and broad—dysfunction or dysregulated emotion and antisocial behaviour can refer to several different characterizations.

Neuroscientific research concerning the relation of psychopathy to particular brain regions and systems is prevalent—ranging from a foci on specific brain regions and structures to more general proposals about neurophysiological systems (see e.g., Blair, 2008a; Kiehl, 2006; Kiehl & Hoffman, 2011; Kiehl et al., 2001). Hirstein & Sifferd (2014) outline this as neuropsychological theories and models of psychopathology—including a consideration of brain regions such as the amygdala as well as emotion dysregulation, impairments in executive

functioning, and moral reasoning. In addition to the aforementioned Hirstein and Sifferd (2014) consider psychopathy in relation to ethics and legality, specifically as it pertains to the question of criminal culpability and diagnostics. The primary diagnostic used in identifying and measuring psychopathy is the PCL-R (see Hare, 1998, 2016; Hare et al., 1990). This is widely used in the criminal justice system; for example. Blair et al. (2005) use it as a standard treatment in sex offender rehabilitation (see also Ward & Durrant, 2014). The legal and ethical implications are clear.

Clinical practitioners using the DSM-5 primarily stick to using the term psychopathy as a specifier or descriptive in relation to antisocial personality disorder (ASPD); however, the term sociopathy is also included as a descriptor in the clinical description of ASPD. The terms sociopathy and psychopathy tend to stick together; for example, “sociopathic personality disturbance” was introduced in the *DSM* (1952) and it was divided it into three categories, antisocial reaction, dissocial reaction, and sexual deviation; the history is there (as cited in Hecht, Latzman, & Lilienfeld, 2018). Currently most clinicians and forensic psychologists conceptualize and measure psychopathy.

As it pertains to the public perception of what is psychopathic versus sociopathic, there are several webpages and videos that outline common misconceptions positing that there ought to be distinctions; for example, Bonn (2014) distinguishes a sociopath from a psychopath. Bonn suggests that sociopaths and psychopaths share a disregard for the law, societal values, and the rights of others. Both are without remorse or guilt—lack a moral conscience. Bonn, however, maintains that there are distinctions to be made; for example, the sociopath is nervous, easily agitated, and prone to emotional outbursts (emotion dysregulation). The sociopath is socially outcast and has challenges but can form attachments with others. In contrast the psychopath is

suggested unable to form attachments with others yet very socially intelligent and adept. It is suggested that the psychopath can calculably manipulate others—criminality is planned, organized, and executed with social attunement (e.g., calculated about how to act socially while carrying out a plan). This is just one example of a popularized account of sociopathy and psychopathy; it is an accepted yet debated train of thought (e.g., certain professions use sociopathy and psychopathy distinction despite its research status in the scientific and/or empirical literature).

Remarks

Empathy is implicated and put to work in a discourse that outlines what it is on the extremes—deficits, excesses, zero-degrees, normality-abnormality, and other dimensions of value—discourse of this nature also functions in an "ought" capacity. This evinces the moral undercurrent inherent in empathy discourse and action: autism and cognition and psychopathy and emotion problems.

Political

I outline three prevalent political discursive contexts wherein empathy is mobilized. First, within publics and sociocultural politics, second in moral and political philosophy, and third in the psychological sciences. Empathy is politicized in several different ways; therefore, I conclude with a broader statement concerning a delimitation of what is a political or constitutes a politic.

First, within what I will refer to as the "public domain" (including socio-cultural (societal) politics) the most prominent application of empathy is evident in Barack Obama's (b. 1961) tenure as Democratic Senator of Illinois (1997 to 2004) and later President of the U.S. (from 2009 to 2017). Within the context of this contemporary political landscape Obama

declared that that the U.S. suffers from an "empathy deficit" (Pesca, 2007; see also Obama, 2006, p. 67; Teo, 2015a).[144] The literature and coverage on this particular mobilization extensive.

This can be tied back to public discourse—information dissemination and public perception. It is clear that since its emergence on this landscape empathy has become a regular term of use in relation to many things political. It is not uncommon to see statements made that Donald Trump suffers from an empathy deficit (Kounalakis, 2019), has selective empathy (D'Antonio, 2019), or as suggested by Obama, lacks empathy in his treatment of Mexican families at the U.S.-Mexico border (Trimble, 2018). An assessment of political figures, authority, and leaders is certainly not particular to U.S. politics; it is also evident in Canadian politics. In the first year after Justin Trudeau was elected Prime Minister, Sallot (2016) reported that the Trudeau government was making inroads through empathy.[145]

Speaking to the geopolitics of empathy, science-publics discourse includes graphical representations and interpretations of quantitative data to discuss subject-matters such as science, society, and geopolitics in relation to empathy; see for example, Andrews (2016) comments on "The World's Most Empathetic Countries" (Andrews, 2016) and this is one among several online publics websites (news, op-eds, blogs, etc.). Chopik, O'Brien, and Konrath (2016) is the research study discussed in the online science-publics discourse on this particular topic.[146]

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[144] Noteworthy, however, is that empathy is central to Obama's political writings, memoirs, speeches, interviews and overall platform from the mid 90s onward (e.g., Obama, 1995/2004, *Dreams from my Father*, pp. x, 270; see Pedwell, 2014b; see also, Pedwell 2014b Economies of Empathy: Obama, Neoliberalism and Social Justice).

[145] Liberal Part Justin Trudeau became the Prime Minister (PM) on November 24, 2015. The primary depiction was that the PM was extremely empathic, later more charismatic, and as of September 2019 (four years after the beginning of his term) the public depiction is that Trudeau is full of stage presence without action (see Global National (20 August, 2019), "New Poll on How Canadians' Feels on Trudeau" see on the ethics committee, ethics commissioner, Trudeau, broke the law as per ethics violations and the "law." (see Amanda Connolly [Video] https://globalnews.ca/news/5887824/snc-lavalin-rcmp-inquiry-canada-election/
https://globalnews.ca/video/5791181/new-poll-reveals-canadians-feelings-on-trudeau-snc)

[146] See also Osborne & Rose (1999) as it pertains to the politicization of virtue through governance and spatiality; in particular as a means for construing the implications of categorizing and enforcing virtue through social identities and geographical locales

On the other hand, we can see empathy in use when geared towards individuals in particular socio-political contexts (see e.g., Feldman, Huddy, Wronski, & Lown, 2020; Pagano & Huo, 2007). The focus is on beliefs, opinions, and psychology in relation to specific sociopolitical issues. As suggested by Shogan (2009) questions about empathy and political leaders is most salient (explicit) in Western contexts; however, this can be reconstructed historically as it pertains to scholarship and academics on the matter as well.[147] What is ascertained by a survey of scholarship and news media is that empathy is considered integral to an assessment of the character of political and public figures and is central among the political values highlighted in relation to party platforms and campaigns (Morris, 2020). Likewise, character assessment in relation to leadership values (and nation values) is particularly evident in the political rhetoric of populist and nationalist movements that are salient in current geopolitics.

Second, "empathy politicized" runs like a thread through moral and political philosophy. Empathy (sympathy) features prominently in the history of philosophy and the moral sciences. Initiated within context of liberal philosophy (Hume and Smith) empathy has provided a means for construing the good society. Undoubtedly when looking at moral philosophy from the 18th through to the present we see remnants of Hume and Smith (in the supplant of sympathy with empathy, as described in Chapter 1 and 2). This observation is exemplified in contemporary research and scholarship (e.g., Kauppinen, 2014; Slote, 2010). Remaining aligned with philosophical discourse the conceptual research on this matter is evident; for example, Hannon (2018) provides an account of "epistemic virtue" in relation to deliberative democracy. It appears that the tradition of *Verstehen* (empathic understanding) and cognitive empathy have become a

[147] Given the "publics" aspect and the nature of political messaging research on how propaganda and politics work is apropos. The moral valence of this application is a concern (see e.g., Crawford, 2014, "Institutionalized Passion in Worlds Politics."). Crawford describes how fear and empathy are institutionalized in the political arena.

virtue (see Battaly, 2011 is empathy a virtue article; see also Bloom, 2017; Coplan, 2011b).

In addition to calling a form of empathy virtuous, empathy is connected with democracy and citizenry (Morrell, 2010, empathy and democracy; see also Grönlund, Herne, & Setälä, 2017). Empathy is put to use as a component of ethical citizenry and deliberative democracy (Grimm, 2018; Hannon, 2019; Nussbaum, 2013). This discourse covers the psychological and philosophical dimensions of empathy within political theory and select social arenas. These varieties of psychologization and its mechanisms of action (historical and philosophical) in the public-politics-science forum is provided by Pykett, Jones, and Whitehead, 2017 and Whitehead et al. (2018).

Publics and philosophical discourses are fundamentally linked to scientific discourse—and, in particular to the *psychological sciences* (Lanzoni 2018). Within the context of psychology, empathy has been used as a way of characterizing individuals by political affiliation; for example, liberals are more empathic, whereas conservative are less so. Hasson, Tamir, Brahms, Cohrs, and Halperin (2018) question whether liberals and conservatives differ in their levels of social motivation and the ability to feel empathy towards others? This particular line of research is typically conducted within the area of social and personality psychology, and as suggested above, has been used in the service of character assessment of public political figures.

Noteworthy is that only particular discourses relevant to empathy, publics, politics, and science have been introduced. There is also an extensive literature (political, philosophical, and scientific discourses) which introduce naturalized conceptions of empathy (with an intense moral valence) into its expositions of the psychological processes underlying politics. Within this context the distinction between emotion and rationality are salient and the work of Jonathan Haidt stands out as an exemplar. Haidt (2012) draws on psychological research to argue that

people are fundamentally intuitive, not rational. Haidt suggests that rationality is often not powerful enough to change people's minds. If you want to persuade others, you have to appeal to their sentiments. This line of argument aligns with Humean view that our desires and passions are not rationally evaluable; reason cannot tell us what is "wanted," but it can provide direction on how to get what we want (Hannon, 2019). This perspective is likewise connected to the psychological literature in relation to the topic of testimonial trust; Bailey (2018) suggests that empathy can facilitate testimonial trust while at the same time it is also prone to distortion.

The aforementioned suggests that at the intersection of politics and ethics, an individual's moral compass must be directed with a recognition that emotions are powerful and must fundamentally be controlled and regulated. This belief about the passions (or emotions) as contrasted with rational deliberation is indicative of how political and publics discourses are shaped and supported by the psychological sciences and an appeal to the troubles of our human nature (see Decety & Wheatley, 2015; Keltner et al., 2019).

Delimitations: The Politics of Empathy and Emotion

Pedwell (2014) alerts to what she refers to as the "politics of empathy" (see also Ahmed 2014; Slaby & Bens, 2019). In this context we must understand delimitation of politics within the context of feminist, critical race, and cultural theory and broadly within discourses which recognize the "affective turn." Consistent with this perspective when one discusses the politics of empathy they are moving beyond the level of the individual and towards the societal context. Likewise, this is about a politics of emotion and the technologies of affect which govern societal structures (Slaby & Scheve, 2019). I define the political as those contexts wherein issues of power, hierarchy, and governance are central; to this end, I have a broad conception of what is political (see Mol, 1999, re. ontological politics). With this conception in mind, arguably all

applications of empathy are political (in any social space, where power and hierarchy are operative; see e.g., Pedwell, 2014; Segal, 2018; Shields, 2005); however, for the purposes of this work, I pushed the concept of the political only a bit further than is traditional (i.e., not deviating too far from the arena of societal affairs, leadership, policy-making, governance, etc.).[148] Thus irrespective of how one imagines what constitutes a politicized space, empathy is present. Given the varied political applications of empathy and consistent with working in a politicized space I turn to applications within the context of education (see e.g., McGregor, 2004).

Educational

Segueing into the examination of empathy applied to education is not a challenge. The discourse is consistent with education literature employing empathy as a means to enhance education (learning) and within discourses that use empathy as cornerstone/principle to shape curriculum towards a certain end (developmental milestone for children, citizens, and professionals).

Education is Enhanced by Empathy.

The assertion that empathy is a tool that can be used to enrich and deepen learning is evident in several different educational contexts—from historical and narrative empathy to learning to respond to others with compassion and kindness (which is about social emotional development within the context of early childhood education).

Within the area of education, facilitating empathy has been promoted as a key goal (e.g., as an aim of the curriculum, Portal, 1983; teaching it, Sutherland, 1986; and using it to promote learning, Knight, 1989). Focusing, specifically on teaching history, since the early 1980s- to present, an extensive body of literature has developed around what is referred to as *historical*

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[148] I touch on the application of empathy with international peace-building initiatives in Chapter 5 with respect glocalization and volunteer tourism.

empathy (see for definition Barton & Levstik, 2004; Davis, 2001; Foster, 1999; Retz, 2015).[149] The use of historical empathy in education is explored in depth below as this application has a relatively long-standing history (cf. virtual empathy and advanced technologies to learn about other people's experiences, which is relatively new in contrast to empathy and teaching history; see Bearman, Palermo, Allen, & Williams, 2015; DePape, Barnes, & Petryschuk, 2019; Zaki, 2019).

The pedagogical traditions associated with teaching history in the classroom and in particular cultivating historical empathy in the classroom has led to the full-scale development of this as a topic in the field of education, and in some cases, as part of national standards on history curricula development—historical empathy is cited as a primary aim. For example, as discussed in Davis, Yeager, and Foster's (2001) *Historical Empathy and Perspective Taking in the Social Studies*. This edited volume contains a series of studies that focus on teaching middle-school children and adolescents history through empathy (see also Barton & Levstik, 2004; Brooks, 2009; Foster & Yeager, 1998; Yilmaz, 2007).[150]

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[149] What is this thing called "historical empathy"? Lee and Ashby (2001, p. 24), characterize historical empathy as "where we get to when we know what past agents thought, what goals they may have been seeking, and how they saw their situation, and can connect all this with what they did" (p. 24). According to Jill Jensen's criteria, historical empathy includes "the ability to recognize how the past was different from the present, distinguish between multiple perspectives from the past, explain their analysis of the author's perspective, and defend it with historical evidence." (Jensen, 2008, p. 54)

[150] Is "historical empathy" just a fancy term referring to critical thinking skills; a form perspectivalism or educated perspective-taking? Some prefer to refer to it as "historical thinking" (e.g., Wineburg, 2001; see also Stearns, Seixas, & Wineburg, 2000; VanSledright, 2004); others call it "perspective-taking" (e.g., Levstik, 2001); while others simply refer to this process as "contextualization" (e.g., VanSledright, 2001). So, in many ways, yes, historical empathy is a fancy term for developing critical thinking skills in students; however, what makes historical empathy a unique enterprise of teaching history is precisely the aspects necessary to think critically and historically – namely *historicism* and contextualism, loosely construed (refer to this form of historical thinking and perspective-taking as) a form of *epistemological empathy* and *contextual empathy*. I use these terms because of the distinct focus on arriving at historical understanding through rational deliberation (e.g., given the context why did the historical actors do what they did; see Yeager, Foster, Maley, Anderson, & Morris, 1998); it is largely construed as non-emotive process. And in some instances, has been brought back to its philosophical origins in Gadamerian hermeneutics and the tradition of *verstehen* (Retz, 2015; Stueber, 2002). Of course, it is not accurate to state that all proponents of historical empathy view it as solely a cognitive enterprise, some do recognize the importance of an affective component (e.g., Barton & Levstik, 2004); however, the lion's share, do have a distinctly cognitive bent to their conception and for this reason epistemological and contextual work (see also Bryant & Clark, 2006). It is this focus

Debate exists among scholars concerning the role of empathy in facilitating historical thinking (e.g., should the provocation of empathy be a goal in teaching history; Blake, 1998); however, despite discordant views many educators have pursued this aim. Teachers and researchers have attempted to distinguish "historical empathy" (e.g., defining it as perspective-taking or as a more complex cognitive skill) from how others use the term empathy (e.g., distinguishing it from more emotion-focused conceptions and from concepts such as sympathy, e.g., Foster, 1999). They have likewise differentiated historical empathy from other educational pursuits involving empathy (e.g., the attempt to teach empathy as a precursor to prosocial behaviour and as an important social developmental skill).

Invoking the concept of empathy as a goal or an outcome in education has been criticized; for example, Megan Boler's (1997) commentary concerning the use of empathy to teach about otherness and cultural diversity in class-room settings is particularly compelling. Boler's critique is built out of the rhetoric around empathy as a vehicle of social change (i.e., "if we cultivate empathy in our children and teach it within our classrooms, we will build a better society"). Boler suggests that a form of "passive empathy" is cultivated through reading text, and that this distanciation, detachment, and passivity on the part of the reader fails to lead to action in the direction of social change; and in fact, Boler suggests that this form of teaching about cultural diversity (or the cultural other) reinscribes a consumptive mode of identification with that "other." Likewise, Peacock and Roth (2004) question what is to occur through the evocation of historical empathy; for example, as it pertains to "holocaust studies" and the two-way process in attempting to understand the past. Not only socio-cultural context but our current socio-

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on an epistemological and contextualizing process that is meant to facilitate an "overcoming of presentism" in learning about the past (e.g., students might be infuriated to read about certain events but may attain a better understanding with information about the normative structure of society during a particular era).

cultural context must be brought into dialogue with any reading of the past (see also Dean, 2004; Mushaben, 2004; Retz, 2015; Schertz, 2007).

The critique of empathy has not only been broached within the context of "reading about" the cultural and historical other, it has also been launched as it pertains to invoking empathy via a different medium—specifically, in an educational series aimed at "learning about people of the past." Bryant and Clark (2006) discuss *Canada: A People's History* which is a 17-episode, 30-hour television production by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and Radio-Canada. The series aired from 2000-2002. The series traced Canadian history from a mythological pre-history through to the 1990s. Its central purpose, according to Executive Producer Mark Starowicz (2003), is to present "Canada, through the eyes of the people who lived it" (as cited in Bryant & Clark, 2006, p. 1040). The series was developed not only for public broadcasting, but also as a key resource to be integrated into the teaching of Canadian history in middle-school classrooms. Bryant and Clark (2006) argue that the series does provoke empathy (which they refer to as "emotive empathy") but fails to establish the type of empathy necessary to facilitate historical understanding. They argue for the cultivation of historical empathy and view the series as failing to facilitate this. Bryant and Clark's primary critique pertains to the series' representations and portrayals of Indigenous peoples. Bryant and Clark do not wage a war on "empathy" per se; they do, however, specify how historical educational materials need to be handled in order to facilitate "historical empathy" proper (e.g., including Indigenous perspectives in the making of these histories).

Despite ongoing debate on what it is and how to properly develop it, the notion of historical empathy continues to have solid base in history education. The first decade of the 21st century reveals the substantiality of this claim. A search of the literature yielded results which

indicate that several dissertations and research papers on the topic of historical empathy have been published—discussions about historical empathy within the context of teaching and doing history has presence (e.g., dissertations, see Diamond, 2012; Meir, 2009; e.g., articles, see Brooks, 2009; Colby, 2008; Jensen, 2008). In addition, to its instantiation in early and higher education, the cultivation of empathy as means for historical understanding exists in popular culture too (e.g., Kisida, Greene, & Bowen, 2013). This *New York Times* op-ed. reports on the facilitation of *historical empathy* and *critical thinking skill*s through going to the *museum* (e.g., students were randomly selected to visit a museum on a field trip or not). This popular culture outlet speaks to the idea that empathy and learning about history continue to be on the radar of educators and researchers. Bowen, Greene, and Kisida (2014) published this work in the *Educational Researcher* in relation to research conducted on museum visits, education, and the development of critical thinking skills.

Likewise, the museum experience has undergone change; for example, in the UK, Roman Krznaric (author of *Empathy: Why it Matters, and How to Get it*, 2014) is listed as a guiding board member and founder of the Empathy Museum.[151] Clare Patey the creator of the exhibits hosted by the Empathy Museum, and in particular "A Mile in My Shoes" credits several institutions and government agencies that commission and fund this work.[152] The Empathy Museum has extended its reach, it is now "travelling" globally.[153] In addition, to producing podcasts and additional online content.[154]

As suggested above, in addition to historical empathy through the medium of reading, it is suggested we can present educational content and facilitate learning through film and civics

[151] See http://www.empathymuseum.com/index9
[152] See http://www.clarepatey.com/projects/a-mile-in-my-shoes
[153] See http://www.empathymuseum.com/index5
[154] See http://www.empathymuseum.com/index3 and http://www.empathymuseum.com/index2

engagement (i.e., going to the museum). This learning results from engaging an empathic process in the experience of information reception. Whether termed historical or narrative empathy (or some other similar empathy-like term), the message is fundamentally the same: empathy is a means for enhancing the reception, retention, and ability to demonstrate learning.

Empathy as a Guiding Principle: Curriculum and Programs

The literature and resources which claim empathy as the centrepiece of the curricula are diverse. As suggested above, the mediums through which "we educate" has expanded within the context of the 21st century and the establishment of virtual platforms for learning. There is a robust education curriculum which teaches empathy as a skill and covets it as a developmental milestone; for example, the development of empathy as an aim or as a core foundation of the organization *Roots of Empathy* (Gordan, 2005/2007; see also Masterson & Kersey, 2013; Spinrad & Einsenberg, 2014).[155]

Likewise, *Ashoka* is also among key organizations wherein empathy is at its foundation. Notably, Ashoka is viewed as an application organization—it serves to enhance education in partnership with the many social institutions that form what can be referred to as "global societies"—understood to be Western, democratic, neoliberal, societies. Social entrepreneurship is involved and the key to this skill is empathy.[156]

"*Twenty One Toys o*ffers "The Empathy Toy" as shaping classrooms of the future.[157] They are now available across the spectrum (from young to old in the classroom and in the boardroom)—empathy is viewed as the most important skill one can have. In addition to the empathy toy they have the "failure toy." The website describes how the empathy toy has been

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[155] See the Roots of Empathy website: https://rootsofempathy.org/
[156] See the Ashoka website: https://www.ashoka.org/en-CA/home
[157] See the *Twenty One Toys* website https://twentyonetoys.ca/

integrated into higher education: it is found used in college and university curricula and material intended to engage adult community and professional learners.[158] Likewise, empathy is considered a key feature in designing curricula for adult learners with the context of online learning (Vann, 2017). And, as mentioned above, the Empathy Museum is also used as an educational tool. Professional training and education material also employs empathy as a key skill (see e.g., Bearman et al., 2015; Patel, Wallis-Redworth, Jackson, & Rose, 2017). This professional training literature and empathy's role in within this context will be described below.

The role of empathy in advanced forms of education is a publics matter. It includes educating adults and members of a given society to be aware and informed about the values and norms which comprise good citizenry within a societal context. This statement is substantiated and exemplified in the National Film Board of Canada's aims.[159] Within this public domain, access to and the development of material for the public good is educational. Within this context, we see the merging of research, pedagogy, and government with citizen and public outreach (e.g., nationally funded films reflect current science on the different subject matters and films reflect current societal concerns and thus inform what can be referred to as national identity).

Education Programs to Teach Citizenry and Civics.

There is no doubt a politics connected to government funded and/or regulated education content. Some forms of education are tightly regulated while others are not. In general society tries to keep a thumb on the pulse of what is desirable. These societal mores are taught through public discourse (government programs, commercials, and of course schools), and even societal (and government funded) structures like museums. Gokcigdem (2016) describes how empathy

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[158] See Edwin Rutsch's website: https://www.scoop.it/u/edwin-rutsch; Rutsch has a webpage devoted entirely to devoted specifically to "Empathy Curriculum."
[159] See the National Film Board of Canada's website: www.nfb.ca

can “serve as lens” for engaging in the world; in particular, within the context of the museum. The suggestion is that museums are archives of histories and entering into these fields provides a space for the cultivation of empathy via engagement with narratives of the past. Thus, rather than passive citizenry, education in this context is defined as a tool used to aid in the development of citizens and into shaping society (e.g., McGregor, 2004). This form of historical empathy extends into experiential learning contexts within the field of education.

Nussbaum (1990, 2001, 2013) also suggests that narrative reading helps form good citizens (see also Keen, 2006, 2013 for a commentary on Nussbaum, 1990, 2001). Thus, the application of empathy within the context of education is societal including politics and commercialization (i.e., a commodification application; see also professionalism domain as corporations and the business sector is relevant).

Education is often purported to be about teaching ethical know how. This form of education occurs in diverse literary spaces. There are a variety of proposals made by scholars with an aim of using education and empathy to cultivate critical, engaged, and relationally oriented students; these proposals often address issues of difference, alterity, and the challenge of empathy within culturally diverse education contexts (Lake, 2010; Luce-Kapler, Sumara, Iftoday, 2010; Jordan & Schwartz, 2018).

The moral valence is evident in so far as empathy is elevated as a virtue in terms of childrearing and education praxis (Horsthemke, 2015; Materson & Kersey, 2013). This brings us back to three foundational conceptions of empathy—relational, epistemic, and aesthetics. The suggested relations among empathy, literature, and education are complex; it can go in several directions, for example exploring educational content and social mores or explanations of the

process through which empathy is invoked through reading (see e.g., Hammond & Kim, 2014). And more pointedly into the commercialization of education.

Commodified

The leap from education to commercialism is not far. Given the politics of empathy it ought to come as little surprise that when empathy is ingrained into education it likewise becomes connected to capital (social and economic). Anything that is being sold and connected to the cultivation or enhancement of empathy is considered commodified. I will offer some economic examples of empathy commodified and then discuss the social capital component.

Sticking Strictly to Material Economies

Marketers, companies, business, corporations etc. are selling empathy. This includes manufacturing, designing, and selling products which aim to produce empathy (notably, demonstrations of empathy might also be used to sell products). There has been a significant bomb in empathy-related products in the last 15 years. One of the first examples was the development of the AGNES suit (product designers MIT business driven).[160] Raised in the section on education, the empathy toy "Teacher Kit and the Facilitator Kit" are $499 CAD and training for how to use the product and access additional resources requires "Level 1: Empathy Toy Training," which is $1,500 CAD.[161] This is a company that is doing well, and it was entrepreneurship that made it happen. Within the first two decades of the 21st century a strong link has been established with empathy and business (touched on below) and empathy and social entrepreneurship (see e.g., the Ashoka organization).

As a relatively straightforward example of the connection between empathy and business,

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[160] This was mentioned in the introduction to this work; it was a justification for the statement that "empathy is a thing" (phenom) of the twenty-first century.
[161] See https://twentyonetoys.ca/collections/toys-games-training-development/products/empathy-toy-facilitators-kit and see also https://twentyonetoys.ca/pages/empathy-toy-training

it is not difficult to find what is referred to as "empathy cards"; see "Empathy Cards & Gifts" sold online by *Emily McDowell & Friends*.[162] In this context, empathy cards are marketed as synonymous with sympathy and condolence cards, but with a twist. For example, one of the cards is listed as the "Cry In The Car Empathy Card." The card is sold for $4.50 USD and is described as a card you would send to someone you care about to let them know that if they need to cry in the car that this okay and that you are there in spirit.[163]

Albeit the empathy cards example refers to a relatively small business (presupposing a modest revenue and economic gain from selling empathy cards and gifts) it is a source of information. It suggests that, socio-culturally, there is the widespread belief that empathy is something that we offer or extend to others. Publicly (across socio-economic statuses) people encounter the message that empathy is good. This example of empathy (greeting) cards is particular; it serves as a site of information not only because it tells us something about socio-cultural norms and beliefs but because it also demonstrates what is available in society.

Empathy commodified tells something about individual belief systems *and* a society's socio-economic structure. It is about production, marketing, and consumption and/or producers, marketers, and consumers.[164] The most advanced versions of empathy commodified are now at the interface with the tech industry—*Twenty One Toys*, the Empathy Museum, empathy video games, and simulation experiences. These are considered forms of education; however, they must also be acknowledged as forms of economics with production and consumption. There are stakeholders, benefactors, and public consumers.

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[162] See https://emilymcdowell.com/collections/empathy-cards
[163] See https://emilymcdowell.com/collections/empathy-cards/products/cry-in-the-car-empathy-card
[164] A contextualized account of the greeting card sector is beyond the scope of this work; however, a similar contextualized analytic on the use of sympathy (condolences) would be an interesting contrast. In fact, a contrast with "empathy cards" and congratulations cards would be even more interesting (if one assumes that empathy is about shared emotion).

Affective Technologies and Social Capital

Affective technologies in commercial industry is commonplace within our contemporary context—these range from programs and applications which track your preferences in the retail marketplace to your personal exercise and eating habits. Given the air of "choice" around integrating these applications into everyday life the hegemony is clearly a form of embodied neoliberalism. These technologies both shape self-identity and monitor it (see Serrano-Puche, 2015). It is unclear what the future looks like concerning affective technologies; however, the concern is that socially we are "buying" into what is being disseminated as necessary to thrive in this era of tech-control and regulation. One of the key features of these affective technologies is that they not only monitor and track behaviour but also prescribe how one ought to live (Ellis, Tucker, & Harper, 2013; Lyon, 2010; Rose, 1999).

It is within this context that demonstrations of empathy (perhaps expressed by endorsing certain causes or joining certain online communities) is connected to social capital. Tracing this back to empathy commodified, most large corporations and business organizations discuss empathy as among one of the key *soft skills* to acquire within one's professional life. Empathy is likewise branded as a technique to be used to facilitate productivity in business (both internally, i.e., management of workers, and externally, i.e., reaching consumers). One such example, is the notion of "empathy maps" which are suggested useful in workplace ("team") meetings (see Brignull, 2016).

Summarizing Remarks on Six Applications

Based on the aforementioned six applications (quantitative, gender, pathology, political, education, and commodification) it is clear that empathy has been mobilized in many different ways. In discourse on pathology and gender the moral valence is clear; yet, the moral valence is

nevertheless also emergent in the other applications as well. Empathy, irrespective of how it is mobilized, appears to always have a moral undercurrent to its invocation. This brings me to an additional level of analysis or an expanding circle of impact as it pertains broader socio-societal structures. These fields of action are largely relevant to North American and European (Western) societies; this qualifier may seem increasingly irrelevant given the aim of transferring Western, democratic, and neoliberal values globally; however, it is not. The reality is that many societies and cultures do not function or operate with the concept of professionalism as central (e.g., they may have different governance structures or models of community sustainability in play. These fields of action and the expanding scope of empathy are unpacked via the notion of professional identity. Empathy is integral to understanding several social structures but most clearly it plays a role in defining actors in social spaces. These actors are construed as “professionals” in the proceeding.

Professionalism

Institutionalized through education, training, and regulatory bodies, there are several different professions that have embraced empathy as integral to defining how a professional ought to behave. These professions mobilize empathy by its inclusion in training or by using empathy as a cornerstone within fields of action.

Fields of Action in Professionalism Identities

Empathy is present in several sub-specializations; however, I will draw on three broad fields wherein empathy is integral to actions. Empathy is cornerstone in defining professionalism in these cases. The three fields include *health care* (medical care, i.e., physicians and nurses, and mental health care, i.e., therapists, psychologists, social workers, counsellor), *human services* (community services, i.e., social workers/social service workers, community counsellors,

probation officers and agencies of law, justice, and order, i.e., police officers), and *industry* (media and business).

Health Care

Medical care (physicians and nurses). Within medicine (and in the healthcare field broadly defined) empathy is thought to be an invaluable and essential tool. Among healthcare professionals, training and education on empathy is common (e.g., in the field of nursing, see Fernandez & Zahavi, 2020). Likewise, among one of the central tenants that comprises a physician's identity is an ability to identify what is ailing their patient. A relational, epistemic, and a moral valence certainly underlies empathy in relation to what it means to be a physician. Scholarship in the history of medicine substantiates this connection (Koretzky, 2018).

Halpern (2001, 2011, 2014) describes the notion of "detached concern" and suggests an authentic and balanced approach to patient-physician encounters (relational and epistemic). Halpern's discussion exemplifies the tension due to inconsistencies in how one conceives of empathy—for example, sharing the emotion versus appreciating the emotion of another and acting appropriately. Halpern (2011) suggests that responding appropriately (as a physician) is to be curious about your patient and honest about your feelings in relation to each particular case (within the context of your colleagues and professional community rather than with the patient). Halpern does suggest authentically connecting with your patient while at the same time shifting your needs outside and remembering your *role* as a caregiver: physician do no harm. Halpern's scholarship can be interpreted as engaging in the relational and epistemic conceptions of empathy. And at the same time, it also demonstrates that these conceptions are invoked when empathy applied within the context of professionalism (there are parameters, boundaries, norms, codes of conduct and ethical considerations—specifically, there is a moral valence).

Shapiro (2011) describes empathy as a cornerstone of medical student education training and as pronounced in the transition from student to practitioner (i.e., professionalism). A search of medical school programs and training yields support for the claim that empathy is part of the curriculum; however, a more compelling example is derived from a literary account provided by Jamison (2014) in the *Empathy Exams*. Jamison (2014) describes the experience of physician empathy within the context of medical student training—acting as the patient receiving the empathy (her job title is "medical actor"). Jamison explains that "we test second- and third-year medical students in topical rotations: pediatrics, surgery, psychiatry… . each student must go through 'encounters'—their technical title—with three or four actors playing different cases" (p. 2). After the encounter the medical actor (Jamison) evaluates the medical student's performance via a checklist. Jamison states that checklist item 31 is acknowledged as the most important; this item is about empathy. It is located in the affect section of the evaluation. Jamison notes that students' have to say the right words ("voiced") to get credit on the evaluation. Jamison goes on to state that empathy is not about what is measured via this checklist item and describes her experience via the empathy exams. The connection of empathy to developing professional skills in medicine (via education) is clear (see also Burcher, 2018).[165]

Mental health (therapists). There is a relatively stable and robust belief that a good therapist must demonstrate empathy. Moreover, it is suggested that this empathy is not only useful epistemologically, but it is also therapeutic. As with the preceding, empathy within the context of mental health is epistemic, relational and has a moral valence; empathy for another not

[165] The efficacy of empathy education and training among healthcare professionals is not a focal point in this particular work; however, the reader can consult the following sample of research which explores this question—see Ghoamzadeh, Khastavaneh, Khademian, and Ghadakpour (2018), Teding van Berkhout and Malouff (2016), and Wündrich et al. (2017).

only aids in being a good detective, it is also healing. And, this is of particular importance when one's role is defined as in the service of helping and healing others.

As suggested in preceding chapters of this work (Chapter 3, in particular but also Chapters 5 and 6) the connection of empathy to psychotherapeutic praxis was institutionalized with Carl Roger's work in the late 1950s. Within the contemporary psychotherapeutic literature empathy's current incarnation is typically described as a component of the therapeutic alliance or working alliance. Evidence of empathy's central role in psychotherapy is reviewed in Oh, Stewart, and Phelps (2017). Oh et al. (2017) rank empathy, the working alliance, etc., among the highest ranked topics in the *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 1963-2015. Their analytic is a characterization of 3,603 articles to derive 70 topics (labels) mapped onto four categories (empathy 23 of the counseling process and outcome category, which included 383 of 3,603; whereas research methodology, included, 371 of 3,603; multiculturalism = 109 and vocational psychology = 245).

When I first thought to describe empathy in relation to therapy, I thought to include it as a "therapeutic" application. This does not capture the breadth of empathy's scope in "helping" professions in diverse contexts. A prime example is social work. Social workers developed the concept of social empathy, and its connection to a client-centered approach is clear (Geddes et al. 2009, i.e., in relation to the development of the social empathy scale; Segal, 2018).[166] Likewise, training in therapeutic approaches is common within the field. Training has broadened and the curriculum is designed to extend the social workers training and role; for example, in Ontario, Canada, social workers can become registered with the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO). This is a change to both protections of the term therapist but also the

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[166] Elizabeth Segal and colleagues developed the original social empathy scale within the context of social work. Segal (2018) represents the culmination of some of this earlier work.

inclusion of social workers into the role of therapist (see http://www.ocswssw.org/professional-practice/regulation-of-psychotherapy/ for information on this topic).

Recognizing societal-institutional and structural aspects that are coupled with an element of human engagement there are those that would be considered community-services oriented (probation officer). It is for this reason that social workers and those that would be considered community service workers are considered among some of the actors in the field of human services as well.

Human Services

Social work and community counselors. At first glance this might appear misplaced; however, when discussing empathy as a defining component of community service workers the point of distinction is in relation to the field of action. Social service workers as professionals approach their case management from a distinct vantage point in relation to the structures and procedural policies outlined in a particular society (e.g., within the Canadian health care and social services system).

Professionals in community-service-oriented roles include a variety of social service workers including social workers, community counselors, and probation officers; as a means of exemplification, empathy is considered a central aspect in being an effective probation officer (see Giovannoni, McCoy, Mays, & Watson, 2015; Knight, Phillips, & Chapman, 2016; Walters, Vader, Nyguyen, Harris, & Eells, 2010; Yost, 2016). Typically, government social service workers are at the centre of community and social issues (domestic violence, crime, trauma etc.) either on site (on the field) or along the line in the societal and public sector process.

Social service professionals are typically thought of as government employees (national or local) and the nature of their work is strictly outlined and regulated through governmental

policies. Within most social services training and education, empathy is suggested important (Pietrantoni, Hennig, Totten, Shindelar, & Keene-Ortan, 2019; Segal, 2018; Zaleski et al., 2016). To be explicit, health care professionals abide by regulatory policies and procedures and are subject to scrutiny under the law in the same way as human and social service workers are; but human service professionals are distinguished by the proximity of their positions to law enforcement and public safety.

Law enforcement and public safety (policing). There has been a distinct movement in law enforcement professionals and social services workers in relation to how they do their job. In recent news (local and international) there has been recognition of police brutality; however, there has also been an attempt to redefine the professional identity of law enforcement. This is reflected in recent reports concerning police training (see e.g., Simon, 2017) and measures of empathy developed specifically to assess levels of empathy among police officers (Inzunza, 2015a, 2015b). Likewise, it is common now to think of law enforcement professionals as engaged in community policing (Zaki, 2019). Police officers and other professionals involved in law and order, public safety, and in service to the concepts such as justice, are granted an immense amount of power and authority in societies. Empathy is relatively a new feature explicitly included in defining professionalism within this arena; in particular as it pertains to law enforcement and in the criminal justice system. It is considered essential to effective regulation and response, and essential in following policing procedures and protocol (e.g., to have empathy for perpetrators, victims, and individuals in a mental health crisis see also Holley, 2019; Posick, 2015). Empathy has become integral to defining professionalism in policing. Simultaneously there is a callout for the public to demonstrate this towards police officers (see Erikson, 2016).[167]

[167] Noteworthy is that in the health care and human service fields relational and epistemic conceptions of empathy are salient; the moral valence is also evident. The naturalized and aesthetic conceptions are less salient.

Industry (Media and Business)

Media (journalism, social media consultants). This is very large field of action that takes place at the intersection of publics and business. Professionals involved in communicating with the public on societal matters are have far reach. Journalists for example are responsible for information sharing and dissemination. A key component to this is accurate reporting but also being involved in the acquisition of facts. Speaking directly to journalistic standards and practices, Blank-Libra (2017) suggests that an ethic of empathy and compassion are central to this profession. Blank-Libra describes this ethic from the vantage point of interviewing, reporting and as being as "close to the story as possible" (p. 105); however, given the many mediums for reporting and disseminating information it is notable that empathy can be mobilized in different directions within journalism and information sharing. If journalism is about storytelling and professionally there is an ethic involved in assuming this role, then Blank-Libra's perspective is understandable; however, the business of storytelling can also be viewed under the category of media (e.g., film, broadcasting news, social media etc.). If empathy defines professionalism in this field ethics are important at a variety of societal levels. Likewise, technology is also in part redefining what this field looks.[168]

Business (small business to corporation). Many varieties of empathy involved in making a business professional; for example, an interior designer might embrace an aesthetic

[168] Noteworthy within industry and media a variety of conceptions and applications are invoked; for example, journalists, writers, film makers, directors, vloggers, are also interested in aesthetic and epistemic conceptions of empathy. And empathy as described within the education application involves multiple mediums; for example, film is viewed as a form of media and the role of empathy in film and education is extensive; see the National Film Board of Canada (https://www.nfb.ca/). There is an educational component. Here we see more of the research component reflected in our national identity. Likewise, we can also view virtual spaces and virtual reality (VR) as an entirely new medium. Zaki (2019) reports that in our digital age we are "less" empathic; he suggests that it is too early to tell but maybe VR will help? The moral valence of virtual, digital, and social media culture is complicated and unfolding. For example, it is evident that new social technologies and forms of reality are creating arenas for complex identities in unexplored cultural spaces (see Lyons, McCreanor, Goodwin, & Moewaka Barnes, 2017).

form of empathy crucial to doing their work (e.g., development of structure, design, and other art-related skills are often viewed as essential to creating beautiful spaces).

In defining a business professional identity, the role that empathy plays is primarily of an epistemic and relational form, but it is a commodification application in action. Most pertinent is the recent trend reported by Hamilton (2019), in her op-ed entitled "Changing Cultural Perceptions Through Developing Curiosity and Empathy"; the post is written on behalf of Forbes Coaches Council, a paid program leadership, produced in relation to business, management and leadership skills training. The strategies promoted in the business sector are catching up with the affective sciences (albeit one of the most commonly misused tools in the business sector is the Myers-Briggs type indicator; see Bajic, 2015; Nguyen, 2018). There is undeniably a thrust to have public management professionals aware of societal perceptions and how to effectively communicate with the public; however, defining a business professional includes empathy's role in not only being attuned to publics but also in how to use it in business transactions and to manage employees (see Ashkanasy, Härtel, & Zerbe, 2012).[169]

Concluding Remarks

The applications of empathy (one through six) were relatively specific and select. Upon outlining these, I threw open the net and examined one application in relation to societal domains and fields of action. This extended form of analysis was intended to serve as a framework as the implications are exponential. I did not include a scientific application (cf. educational, political, quantitative etc.). This conceptualization differs from Lanzoni's (2018) presentation; Lanzoni discusses making empathy scientific and empathy in politics and culture. I would suggest that

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[169] This connection was noted in relation the use of "empathy maps" in the boardroom (education). Most of the literature in relation empathy and business emerges out of the emotional intelligence literature; see the Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organizations website: http://www.eiconsortium.org/index.html

there is a scientific undercurrent in the political and culture domain as it pertains to how empathy is utilized; for example, empathy politicized makes use of science to support its introduction into the political space, and likewise, within culture spaces (e.g., public domain, social media etc.). In addition, I chose not to discuss empathy's use in science as this would necessitate unpacking definitions of science. As already alluded to science is embedded with the preceding applications.[170]

The preceding discussion has (for the most part) problematized applications of empathy; however, the intent in presenting these applications is to illuminate rather than shut down the power of empathy. Whether empathy ought to be quantified, used to do gender, or to sell products is not the question, it is a reality, it is observation. In Chapter 5, I outline the central debates in the empathy literature and introduce its critics. I follow with an onto-epistemic framework for narrowing down what is true about empathy. This framework is provided in service, of once again, problematizing empathy. I conclude with possible resolutions to these problems.

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[170] I have archives of news media on empathy from the years 2009 through 2019. This is digest provided by Google. I set up a search and weekly digest for the last 10 years. In July of 2019 one of the digests featured a link to a story by *BBC News*. It was on the topic of mirror-touch synesthesia in relation to empathy. UK researchers on working on the neuroscience of synesthesia and focusing on the intersection of two sense system – see/visual – to – touch/somatosensory – vestibular, kinesthetic) sense system. This topic can be interpreted with a pathologizing lens, a quantitative lens, an educational lens, and commodified lens. BBC being a news outlet is reporting on scientific activity. Recognizing this one can also take a technological lens to the topic; for example, asking questions of how science and technology are family. See https://www.bbc.com/news/av/science-environment-48928892/how-a-fake-hand-test-can-help-the-study-of-empathy

Chapter 5: Conclusion on the Problem of Empathy Redux

It is clear there is conceptual continuity with many of the characteristics that reoccur in relation to empathy; empathy involving "feeling" aspects, being "other-oriented" etc. In addition to this conceptual overlap, academic and scientific discourses continue to reflect relatively consistent points of debate among scholars of empathy (Barnes, 2014; Cuff et al., 2014). As it pertains to uses of empathy however, the heterogeneity is astounding.

In what follows I outline the points of contention that thread throughout most discourses on empathy. This is proceeded by an analysis of empathy through the lens of use, I reflect on areas of overlap and simultaneity in the different uses (e.g., there may be several uses underway within the same discourse) and how these overlapping uses have facilitated hybrid usages (i.e., some of the subsidiary or secondary uses that have emerged through this overlap). The final remarks, as it pertains to re-occurring themes and uses of empathy, is my culminating statement on the ontology of empathy as I construe it. The last section in this chapter outlines the repercussions of the ontology of empathy highlighting the directions that this sort of reality takes and how a shift in empathy's ontological vantage point may be a viable option.

Themes in the Debates on Empathy and Conceptual Intermingling

In Barnes (2014), I outlined four themes that tend to reoccur in the literature on empathy. These themes often occur within the context of some form of debate (e.g., one scholar or a group of scholars espousing their version of "what empathy is" in an attempt to correct misconceptions or "errors") consequentially a couple of these themes retain their status as a question. The four themes include: (1) conceptual confusions (2) the distinction between self and other (3) empathy and its connection to helping behaviour and morality, and (4) epistemic and affective debates (emotional versus cognitive distinctions).

1. Conceptual Confusions: Tightening or Broadening how the Term Empathy is Used?

Aiming to reduce conceptual confusions, most researchers begin with an acknowledgment of empathy's various definitions and then specify how they have selected to construe the concept. Some researchers choose to study it narrowly (e.g., empathic accuracy, Ickes, 2003), while others take a "multidimensional" stance, differentiating empathic "processes" from empathic "outcomes" (e.g., Davis, 1996). There have been several attempts at a way out of conceptual confusions. One prevalent approach has been to turn empathy into an "umbrella concept," which encompasses the many aspects cited within the literature (from emotional contagion to perspective-taking, e.g., Preston & de Waal, 2002, or as involving several pieces including sharing, caring about, and thinking about others' feelings, e.g., Zaki, 2019), whereas another approach has been to tighten up the use of the term (i.e., specify necessary and sufficient conditions and build a case around why this criterion approach is preferred as opposed to others, e.g., Coplan, 2011) or clearly demarcate empathy-like terms as having different features (e.g., Singer & Klimecki, 2014 differentiate sympathy/compassion from empathy; in this case empathy proper does not necessarily involve "concern" for the other).

As described in Chapter 1 a review of the historical record reveals that empathy is frequently conflated, used in conjunction with, or as a synonym for sympathy and understanding (notwithstanding empathy's descriptive connection to other concepts such as projection, imagination, emotion contagion, mimicry, imitation, vicarious affect sharing, mentalizing, mind reading, shared representations, compassion etc.). Noteworthy is that efforts to distinguish empathy from concepts such as sympathy (e.g., Eisenberg, 2000) have not led to clarity, agreement, or consistency around empathy's use in relation to its family relations (e.g., sympathy and understanding). And in fact, attempts to demarcate empathy from sympathy or understanding

have in many ways increased confusions; for example, one author uses a term ("sympathy") to describe a phenomenon that is known by others as something else ("empathy") (Verducci, 2000). This conceptual confusion has in many ways rendered the term, in and of itself, redundant (e.g., when the term is invoked the ensuing question is "what variety of empathy are you talking about?"). When it comes to being definitive about empathy (apart from simply asking "what is your definition") the *description* of the phenomena has become the only means through which to discriminate what "concept" is being invoked within a given discourse (perhaps making a best guess at which description is truer to one's own ideas about what empathy is). Based on the historical contexts in which terms such sympathy, understanding, *Einfühlung*, and empathy were circulated, disentangling empathy from sympathy and understanding has and will continue to be an ongoing issue and a subject of debate within the contemporary literature.

2. The Distinction Between Self and Other: Is Empathy about Me or is it About You?

Is empathy always other-oriented or is it always necessarily self-oriented? Is it possible for empathy to be both other- and self-oriented? Or does authentic empathy require a merging of the self and the other (Bartky, 1996). As it pertains to empathy and self, some have suggested that it is possible to have empathy distinctly for oneself (e.g., self-empathy; Barrett-Lennard, 1997). Others have insisted that the distinguishing feature of empathy is a self-other awareness—an awareness that the emotional response is yours but produced by the other's situation (de Vignemont & Singer, 2006; Decety & Jackson, 2004; Lamm, Batson, & Decety, 2007). While other theorists have broken empathy into a set of emotions that are more self-oriented or other-oriented (e.g., Batson, 1991, 2011).[171]

[171] See, Batson (1991) in contrast to Cialdini (1991) and Cialdini et al. (1997). According to Cialdini and colleagues because there is a self-overlap in empathic concern, in reduction we can thus assume it is really about self and not the other. Therefore, altruism is *really about self* and hence *not true altruism*, or a genuine care for the other. This is in contrast to Batson, who suggests that empathic concern can be selfless, and motivated be a genuine other-oriented

Rhonda Blair (2009) describes this self-other awareness well: Blair suggests that there are three attributes of empathy. First, there is an affective response to another (this is connected to physiology in the current context, bodily-ness, embodiment, physiology/physical responses). Blair mentions the debate about sharing emotional states. Second, there is perspective taking; the "walk in the shoes" of another idea or some would state cognitive empathy. Third, the experiencer recognizes the distinction between self and other as it pertains to the source of the emotion and the thoughts (empathy).[172]

Within the simulation and mindreading literature (i.e., epistemic conceptions and uses, e.g., perspective-taking) the self-other divide as it pertains to this phenomenon becomes blurred. Questions can be posed regarding the extent to which imagining oneself in the other's situation or imagining the other in the situation alters the construal of whose phenomenon it is? Once an imaginative process has swapped out the other with oneself, does it not then become the imaginer's experience? On the other hand, if one imagines the other's experiencing of an event, does this then become more an interpretive matter involving perception, judgement and evaluation (rather than a feeling-into or projective-like process)? Lastly, to what extent does the simulacra of other peoples' emotional experiences need to be "a match" (or is "somewhat similar" sufficient)? How are criteria for necessary and sufficient matching set? And who sets these parameters? Following out of this line of questioning, Zahavi and Overgaard (2012) pose an additional nuance to the issue about whether empathy is about self or other and whether it can indeed lead to interpersonal understanding—they do this by questioning how the act of

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care for the other (i.e., true altruism). See also Batson (2010) for his views on empathy-induced altruism.

[172] Blair applies this perspective to the use of empathy in the performing arts, specifically acting/drama. In part this can be interpreted as a very "general" understanding of empathy with language games imbued in the discourse, i.e., specific terminology. Noteworthy. Blair credits her sources as accessible and the discourse she is relying is primarily neuroscience-oriented with social psychological spin.

simulating and projecting, or matching of another's state, does or does not provide access to the other. They fundamental argument outlined by Zahavi and Overgaard is that recognition of the other's emotional experiences (or even inferences about their intentions) does not need at any kind of simulation or matching process; rather the suggestion is that we already have direct access to the other via simpler process—other-directed perception. And in sum, one person's perception of the other always remain their perception, and the other's experience always remains their own.

Continuing below the surface of the iceberg on the self-other distinction additional questions emerge. For example, how does the self-other demarcation fit with co-constitutive theories of intersubjectivity (e.g., wherein the experience of empathy is not an individual act but rather is best conceptualized as emergent phenomena that occurs in a relational encounter where two humans are *co-constructing* the experience; e.g., Hersch, 2003; Stolorow & Atwood, 1992).[173] And wherein does empathy take place (do we always need a perceiver and a perceived

[173] Theories of intersubjectivity abound (e.g., early work in developmental psychology, e.g., Stern, 1985; Trevarthen, 1979; Trevarthen & Hubley, 1978, within the phenomenological tradition, e.g., Zahavi, 2015; Zahavi & Rochat, 2015; from a "developmental-phenomenological, neuroscientific" perspective, e.g., Bråten, 2007; and within social psychology, e.g., Echterhoff, Higgins, & Levine, 2009; Hardin & Higgins, 1996; Hardin & Conley, 2001, on "shared reality"; see also Echterhoff, 2012; Gergen, 2009), I refer readers to the recent versions of intersubjectivity as conceived of through the notion of "enaction" (see De Jaegher et al., 2017; McGann & De Jaegher, 2009 for reviews). As a way of contrast, intersubjectivity theory as expressed by Stolorow, Atwood, Orange and colleagues (working within the psychoanalytic tradition; see also Mitchell, 2002; Orange, 2002) is essentially a non-dualist theory—that is, philosophically individual subjectivities are constitutionally and irreducibly shaped by the encounter with others (cannot have one without the other). On the other hand, varieties of enactive theory posit that social interaction is unit of analysis without doing away with the individual; for example, many varieties of enaction use theories of how biological systems function (e.g., autopoiesis; see Luisi, 2003; Razeto-Barry, 2012) and still retain the "individual" and "organism" as their central focus but with an emphasis how the environment or "other" fundamentally alter the organism (constitutionally). In this comparison, we have two different views on what happens when subjectivities come in contact, both with divergent ontological positions on the subject-object distinction (see also literature on "social ontology" for yet another unique vantage point; e.g., Schmid, 2009). Noteworthy is the recognition that there are several different variations one could find in approaching empathy as an individual, social, biological and/or conscious process (see e.g., Ginot, 2009, who adopts a neuropsychoanalytic lens). Worth remark is the observation that much like empathy even the notion of what is involved in intersubjectivity is contestable. Analytically I would suggest that one of the primary stumbling blocks for theories of intersubjectivity is that much of the theorizing assumes that real-living bodies encounter one another in physical time and space (i.e., direct encounters); however, increasingly people engage with others in "non-traditional modes" (email, text, video, as well as the less technologically mediated form—imagination), wherein two living bodies are

object/subject). Of course, one can think of relational encounters where one person views another as an object (like any other "thing"); however, we might then ask, is this what the majority think of when they think of empathy (a rhetorical question for sure)?

Empathy and its Connection to Helping Behaviour and Morality

Questions regarding whether empathy leads to a genuine concern for the welfare of others, whether it leads to helping behaviours, whether it is the source of altruism, and whether it is the grounds for moral decision-making are substantive topics within the literature (i.e., with moral psychology and philosophy; see Aatola, 2018; Maibom, 2014, 2017; Scapletti, 2011). Popular and public culture conceptions attribute a positive valence to empathy, for example, as suggested by the contemporary campaigns to cultivate more empathy in society (e.g., Trout, 2009). The assumption underlying the promotion of empathy is based on a belief that it will lead persons to act on the behalf of other persons in need (i.e., that empathy fosters moral consciousness and actions). Empathy has been explored as the pre-condition for moral performance and ethical decision making (e.g., Vetlesen, 1994); as the primary source of altruistic motivation (e.g., Hoffman, 2000); and others have developed an extensive research program examining how certain conditions lead to concern for the welfare of the other and action on their behalf (e.g., Batson, 2010, 2012).

Notwithstanding the aforementioned research programs, academic discourse, and the popular notion that having empathy is "good" and will "make people do good things," most people would agree with the following statement: Knowing or having a feeling about another's

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not actually sharing physical space together. One wonders what happens in the case of theories where there is no central locus of action (e.g., a subject perceives another subject/object and one subject owns the empathic experience) or in other theories such as enaction, where the other is not environment but rather a form of "representation" (memory, imagination etc.), in the organizing structure's mind. It is evident that these shifts in modes of intersubjective relating have not "fully" found its voice in theoretical literature.

circumstances does not necessarily translate into action (benevolent or otherwise). Part of the difficulty in drawing conclusions about empathy in relation to morality stems from one of the primary problems with the study of empathy—there isn't one singular conception of how we connect morality and empathy. Does it include pro-social behaviour *and* concern for the welfare of others? Some scholars say "no" (Decety et al., 2016), while others say "yes" (e.g., Zaki, 2019), and some side-step the issue altogether. A response could be concern (feelings and thoughts) but an action is what is implied in the notion of pro-social behaviour. If we disconnect the two, the response becomes a moral question (with the understanding that the first is generally assumed "good" or the "right thing to do). And if we recognize that a response to the aforementioned questions necessitate this distinction, we can ask of what direction does the "concern for the other" response take (if it is not necessarily behavioural). What is its moral valence? If no concern for the other is assumed, we can see its negative moral valence, and this links up with empathy in relation to pathology (lack of empathy is not good).

The reality is that fundamentally different questions are being asked in relation to the study of this concept; for example, *how* can one *know* what another is thinking or feeling and *what* leads a person to *respond* with care to the suffering of another? (Batson, 2009).

Epistemic and Affect Debates: Emotional Versus Cognitive Distinctions

In decades past the trend within the psychological literature was to distinguish between cognitive-based and affect-based empathy. This dichotomy still lingers, for example, in the epistemic debates regarding theory of mind; the notion of affect sharing and emotional contagion; and about "hot" empathy (affective) versus "cold" empathy (cognitive), which can still be found in some of the recent literature. Despite this commonplace way of differentiating between types of empathy (cognitive versus affective), as the academic landscape continues to

change, most no longer conceive of empathy exclusively on affective or cognitive terms, rather, they construe it includes both (see Armony & Vuilleumier, 2013; Lux, 2017)

Applications of Empathy

Discontinuities and Continuities

In describing empathy through the lens of use there is little doubt that in many instances there are several pragmatics at play simultaneously within different discursive contexts.
One of the primary challenges is pragmatics in context are not restricted; that is different uses are not discrete categories. Thus, much like the debate on the psychological disorders and specific diagnosis, a lot of conceptions overlap in one application and several applications can be instantiated in one context.

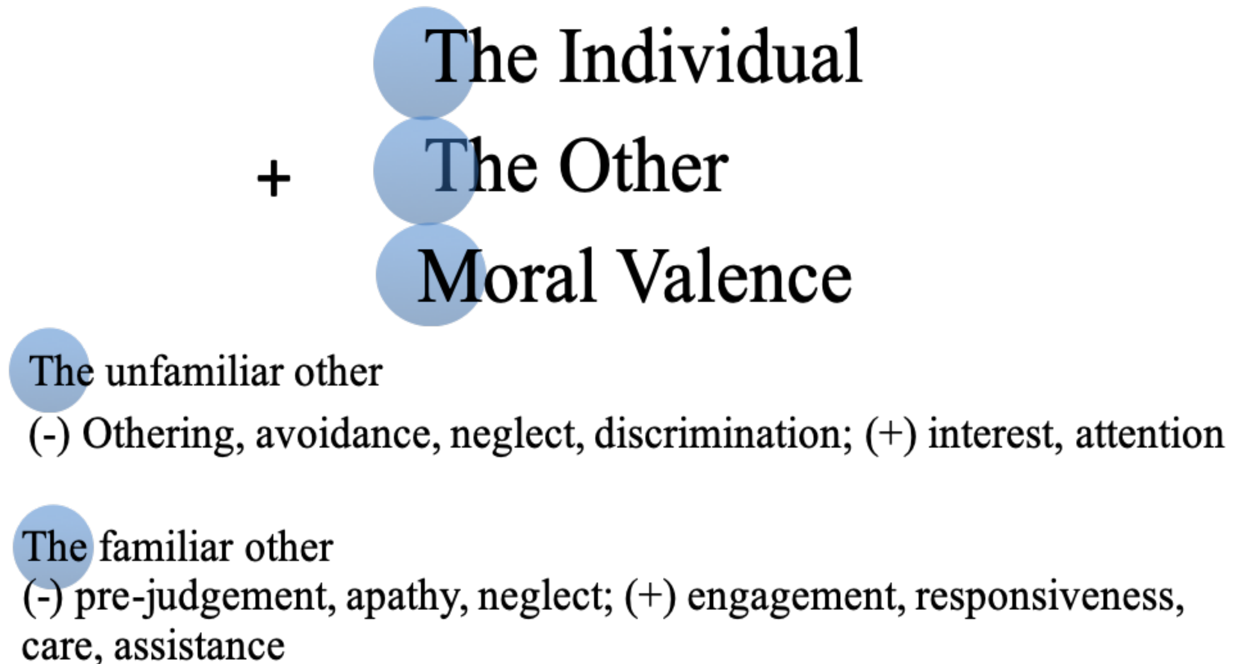
An Ontology of Empathy in Use

Building on my early work on the reoccurring themes in the literature and with further reflection on the different uses I have derived three different features that are central to empathy in use. The first feature is that empathy is a psychological concept (i.e., a "mental thing" belonging to or experienced by an individual); the second feature is that there is always an "other" (i.e., there is always some object of empathy that is not oneself); and the third feature is that there is always a moral valence (empathy is always valued in terms of good/bad, positive/negative, excessive/deficient etc.). Taking these features together (combined), I suggest that the ontology of empathy can lead down two very different paths for encountering and perceiving the other. (See Figure 2. "An Ontology of Empathy in Use").

Empathy as an individual and psychological concept. It is *almost* impossible to conceive of empathy as otherwise (unless e.g., you are of an existential, transcendental, and/or relational orientation, where the subject-object distinction and dualities are actively fought

Figure 2.

An Ontology of Empathy in Use



Note. An ontology of empathy and possible outcomes given the combination of these features.

against). The vast scholarship comes at the concept with an assumption that there is someone that owns the empathy. Specifically, some individual is having an empathic experience, is characteristically identified as empath, is demonstrating their empathic skill etc. Empathy emanates from the vantage point of the individual.

There is always the other. The other need not be person, the other could be animal or inanimate object; it is essentially construed as that which is not intrinsically part of "me." The suggestion that with empathy there is always an "other" is applicable to not only common sense examples (Person A meets Person B, whereby Person A is the perceiver of Person B),[174] but also to less obvious examples wherein the "other" is construed as simply some object that is "not me" or "outside of oneself" (I think here of art, nature, animals etc.).

There is always a moral valence. Whether we are talking about "feeling-into" the artistic expressiveness of a painter (or even evaluating its aesthetic value in terms of composition and form) or whether we are taking about personal dispositions (personality traits or characteristics) of a person, there seems to be no way around the "positive" or "negative" (good/bad; pleasant/unpleasant; right/wrong; excessive/deficient) valence of empathy. Valence as used in the study of emotion typically refers to the good/bad distinction; positive being associated with good feelings (e.g., happiness) and negative being associate with bad feelings (e.g., shame) (Colombetti, 2005; Shuman, Sander, & Scherer, 2013). Sassenrath, Pftatheicher, and Keller (2017) suggest that different emotions (with distinctly good or bad valences) have an impact on empathic concern, perspective taking and inclinations to help a needy target.

Combinational consequences. Combining these three features leads to combinational

[174] Of course, we can recognize that in a human encounter Person B will likewise perceive Person A and hence produce a 2nd-person perspective; however, part of the features of the ontology of empathy in use is that the central starting point is the individual.

consequences. The literature to support that valence plays a role in how one treats or perceives the other is bountiful (see e.g., Goodwin, Piazza, & Rozin, 2014 on "person perception"). But the idea is quite logical if a valence of good/bad is placed on the other, the consequences follow along a familiar narrative: if you are good, this is good, I will move towards you; if you are bad, this is not good, I will move away from you. I suggest that by combining the three core features of empathy in use (the individual, the other, a moral valence) a relatively clear fork in the road appears as it pertains to what empathy has the capacity to produce.

On one hand, empathy can create community, familiarity, comfort, etc., if the other is familiar-good; whereas empathy can also create segregation, distance, discomfort etc., if the other is unfamiliar-bad. This is not an essentialist account of "what" empathy is per se, rather it is an ontological account of what features are always present (to greater or lesser extents and degrees of explicitness) when empathy is used (i.e., invoked in the literature).

This combined impact (the individual, the other, and a moral valence) I would suggest emerges from an alterable place—the individual. In the proceeding, I clarify why starting with empathy at the individual-level or from a 1st-person perspective is a mistaken starting point. Notwithstanding that we *can* begin with a different vantage point, I am certainly not suggesting that this would solve all the "problems" of empathy, but it may help us to begin from a broadened view of what is other and make matters of good or bad less a matter of individual preference (which is narrow account of how preferences are formed).

Fundamentally, the features of salience as it pertains to empathy are those that connect to relations and the contents of those relations are loaded. I proposed, after setting the stage with some of the foundational conceptions, that empathy emerged from an amorphous concept that gets used in diverse ways. Empathy offers and contributes something to a wide range of

applications. Given the breadth and adequate/sparse sampling of applications, I selected one application and explored the societal fields to which it applied. What was salient for me was the moral valence of each of these contexts.

Critiques and the Problem

Conceptually there is continuity with the characteristics that seem to reoccur in relation to empathy as a psychological concept. The academic and scientific discourses that have and continue to take place reflect a relatively consistent set of points for debate among scholars of empathy. In pointing to the central themes that reoccur in the literature I offer the suggestion that the focus of these debates have centered around a conception of empathy that is constrained by certain epistemological and ontological assumptions about the nature and creation of "things." In the case of empathy, its psychologization and the overarching aim to delineate and hone-in-on how it develops and occurs within individual minds has led to the neglect of its social genesis—specifically, that what it takes to "be empathy" (*sui generis*) requires a historical, socio-cultural and political reconstruction. Despite the recognition that empathy is understood to be about "others," the recognition of the social dimensions that define "what is other" is constrained by a limited view on how individuals interact within the social world (e.g., as in social psychology when the individual is the perspective through which all perceptions and actions play out in relation to the presence of others, or in other discourses, e.g., phenomenology, wherein first-person subjectivity and experience is still central; see Irarrázaval 2020) and neglects the historical, socio-cultural, and political features that constitute what is other. I present argumentation that demonstrates that when empathy is construed of as a psychological concept that has moral value and social capital if cultivated within individuals it provides (1) a limited view on what this concept does and has the possibility to do; (2) neglects how it functions in

relation to larger social, societal, and geopolitical problems; and (3) omits elaboration on how this individual conception re-inscribes insidious systemic hierarchies of power, which create the very conditions for "empathy" to not be enough.

Critiques of Empathy

I recognize that I am not the first nor will be the last to point to problems with the concept of empathy; however, my critique focusses specifically on empathy as a psychological concept (i.e., something that individuals possess or choose to experience in varying degrees, making it vulnerable to the particularities that follow along with an individual conception of "mind").

Illustrative of some of the varieties of critique (that are not focused on conceptual distinctions, i.e., what is in and what is out when defining what empathy is) are those espoused by Paul Bloom (2017). In *Against Empathy: The Case for Rational Compassion*, Bloom targets his critique on sentimentalist versions of empathy. In Bloom's view empathy is not a good guide to use when making moral decisions; instead, he appeals to rationalism as a more reliable means through which to make moral decisions as it pertains to the "other." And rather than appealing to empathy, Bloom suggests we supplant the notion of empathy as a benevolent or moral concept with that of compassion. Bloom is not wrong in his critique, however, in contrast to the focus of my critique Bloom continues to give primacy to *individual* decision-making and action.

Likewise, Cameron et al. (2019) discuss empathy's limitations. The research reported by Cameron et al. focusses only the "cognitive load" inherent in empathy. From this vantage point, empathy is limited because it costs too much to invest time and energy into a consideration of the other. Zaki (2019) broaches this decline in empathy within the context of digital work—why is it the case that we are less empathic given our "digital" connectedness? Breithaupt (2019) takes this a step further and describes the "dark side" of empathy. The fact that empathy is "selective."

Another recent form of critique that has been launched at empathy is waged not at empathy *per se* but more specifically at the role of mirror neurons in understanding the intentions of others. In Gregory Hickock's (2014) *The Myth of Mirror Neurons*, the tale of the rise and fall of mirror neurons (as the penultimate explanatory discovery) is traced.

Moving beyond a critique that is waged at psychological conceptions of empathy (e.g., Brooks, 2016, takes to task the notion of affective empathy as a moral guide, whereas Hickock, 2014, takes to task the neuroscientific research on mirror neurons as an explanatory mechanism for higher-level forms of thinking and reasoning), Olson's (2013) *Empathy Imperiled: Capitalism, Culture, and the Brain* broadens this scope. Olson, a political scientist, takes capitalism to task in this work. Olson accurately describes how the nature of capitalism is one of exploitation and competition and highlights how this runs counter to what empathy is "supposed" to be about. Olson suggests that empathy has been co-opted by corporations in the service of profitability. Olson provides a unique vantage point through, which to critique capitalism; his work is consistent with the work of cultural and politically-oriented scholars (described below). And Olson's critique begins to scratch the surface of what I now turn attention towards—the politics of emotion.

The work of Carolyn Pedwell (2012a, 2012b, 2014, 2016) speaks directly to issues related to the politics of emotion and addresses this in relation to empathy specifically. Shifting the lens towards the topic of neoliberalism and transnationality, Pedwell questions how empathy is related to circuits of power (histories of colonialism and movement, and transnational capitalism). Pedwell (2012a, p. 164) refers to her focus as the "transnational politics of empathy." She describes transnationality as "constituted by inter-related and shifting processes of colonialism, slavery, diaspora, migration, development, globalisation, neoliberalism and

global media, among other phenomena (Pedwell, 2016, p. 30) and neoliberalism "primarily as processes whereby market-oriented logics come to order and refigure modes of political governance and citizenship" (Pedwell, 2012a, p.165).[175] As it pertains to how neoliberalist values are instantiated we can turn to policies and institutions which embody these ideas; however, we can also look to broader societal discourse. Within our current socio-cultural and political context discourses surrounding empathy for the "other" are used as affective rhetoric for disseminating a means through which to "do good" or for "social justice"; this discourse provides the "privileged" subject with the opportunity to "help" the needy.[176] The peoples who (2SLGBTQQI; Two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, and asexual and racialized) do not have access to this "empathy for all" campaign.

Explicit in Pedwell's writing, as well as Olson's, is the suggestion that once discussing issues around engaging the "other" (distant or local), the political (understood to be distant or local policies, institutions, ideologies, and culturally sanctioned normative behaviours that serve to structure and maintain power and hierarchy within) becomes central. I now turn to what I believe to be the central problem of empathy psychologized; specifically, if empathy remains a matter of the individual, we will continue to omit the historical, socio-cultural, and political conditions that

[175] Clearly neoliberalism and capitalism are linked; although some argue they should be kept as distinct. For purposes of this discussion when describing neoliberal values as reflected in social and political structures, I necessarily assume as it pertains socio-economic issues that we are dealing with capitalism (Whitehead et al., 2018; Wolfe, 2014).

[176] Termed the "affective turn" it is not uncommon to read of phrases such as "discourses of compassion" (Silverstone, 2007) or find works with titles such as *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (Ahmed, 2014), *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements* (Goodwin, Jasper, & Polletta, 2001), *Compassion: The Culture and Politics of an Emotion* (Berlant, 2004). This interdisciplinary trend (sociology, cultural studies, political science, history, literature studies etc.) is keep up with the trend that has emerged in the social science as it pertains to neurobiology of "everything." (e.g., Olson, 2013 speaks of the "neuropolitics of empathy"). As neuroscience has zeroed in on emotion (i.e., affective neuroscience), so too has critical social studies and the humanities. Despite the divergent traditions of these disciplines a common thread is looking outside the "individual mind" and questioning how historical, social, economic, and political structures are involved in the production and maintenance of certain realities. (Although they may espouse different views on how the individual and the social [society, the collective, communities] are connected: e.g., inside-to-outside, outside-to-inside; inside and outside, etc. see Ahmed, 2014, pp. 8-12)

create and maintain what is *made possible* for the subjective experience of empathy.

The Problem: Empathy Psychologized (Psychological Empathy or Social Empathy?)

Why is this a problem? To problematize the current ontology, we need to turn our gaze to the importance of this concept as reflected in our societal structures (policies and institutions) and in our everyday practices of knowledge sharing and interaction within a society (discourse). Empathy as I have construed it (i.e., as an individual, othering, and morally valenced concept) is familiar, but could also be viewed as a not so familiar story. There are several conceptualizations of empathy and many do not *explicitly* focus on moral dimensions. The basic logic underlying my analysis of this primordial moral dimension is one based on the reality of human relatedness—self + other—and the fact that it is difficult to avoid discussions of moral implication when speaking about humans perceiving, engaging, acting on behalf of, imitating, serving, therapizing, pathologizing, interpreting, quantifying, biologizing, etc. an "other." Without attention to the historical, socio-cultural, and geo-political contexts that surround such views of the "other" we threaten to continue having empathy for the other (distant or local) only as far as a gaze will allow (i.e., based on what is given to us by the structures that govern our movement and the strictures that define our normative behaviour). The omission of questions concerning why some are more familiar or accessible than others based on the structure of society, leaves us with a profound gap. Without a consideration of the structures and ideologies that govern our actions and perceptions of others we do not have access to the possibility of a decolonized empathy, which would be a real transformation in the way individuals engage one another.

Prior to discussing the repercussions of empathy constrained at the level of the individual, it is fitting to provide some stage setting. The issues I am honing in on concern geopolitics (e.g.

forms of transnational empathy for the distant other), access to engagement with the "cultural other" in relation to social structures and privilege (local or distant) and the forms that this empathy might take (consumption via the media or via other means). The mediums for communicating to society a form of affective discourse include the media, business, corporations, and government -run or -funded institutions (i.e., policies, laws, and the rules governing society are embedded in our social and societal institutions) as well as in the everyday practices of citizens in a society (i.e., observations of what others do is a viewed as a form of communication providing information about what is normative in context).

To appreciate how social and societal structures interact with individuals, I am informed by a variety of theoretical and disciplinary perspectives such as those of Pierre Bourdieu (e.g., the concept of habitus, field and doxa; see Grenfell, 2008), Antonio Gramsci (e.g., the concept of hegemony; Gramsci, 1971; see also Crehan, 2016) as well as writings found in the postcolonial/decolonial discourse (e.g., Mignolo, 2005, 2005; Malandos-Torres, 2008; Moane, 2011), critical feminist and intersectionality literature (e.g., Burman, 2003; Fine, 2012; Moane, 2011; Morawski, 1994, 1997; Pedwell, 2014; Shields, 2008) and various other forms of critical scholarship (e.g., Rose, 1998; Rose & Miller, 2008).[177] In addition, worth being explicit about, as evidenced by the emergence and growing prominence of empathy within the political domain and as used by institutions (e.g., for the governing structures in society; e.g., policing), I view the political as embedded in the social as well as shaping the discourse on emotions circulating in society; I draw on work done on affective politics (Ahmed, 2014; Berlant, 2004; Silverstone, 2007). I also drew inspiration from ideas found in contemporary sociological and social work theory (e.g., Crossley, 2011; Segal, 2011, 2018; Segal, Wagman, & Gerdes, 2012) wherein the

[177] I will cite specific scholars works as it is relevant. But these citations are meant to inform the reader of the critical frame through which I am approaching what follows.

concept of "social empathy" has been invoked. Lastly, as it pertains to the suggestion that we are no longer living in isolated little societies, I necessarily must consider the concepts of transnationalism and how the politics of emotion is spread not only locally but globally (Pedwell, 2014).

Transnationalism, the glocal, the cultural other, and media. "Having empathy" for another human being has moved beyond care ethics (e.g., health care providers, medical, mental health etc.) and is now used as a governance-authority ethic (e.g., police and conduct, e.g., training to be more empathic in civilian interactions), as a business ethic (or non-ethic in the case of its *use* within the context of business, e.g., sales and customer service), and as part of political agendas (e.g., nation building and enhanced citizenship through the cultivation of empathy, e.g., Obama's campaign).

Empathy for "the other" is described as a means to overcome sources of degradation towards people of other cultures, ethnicities, socio-economic statuses, etc. And recently within an era of, what has been termed by Roland Robertson (1995) "glocalization," we are thinking globally and acting locally. Not only is our ability to think globally increased but we have (or at least the dominant socioeconomic class) the opportunity to connect with the distant other. As referred to earlier in this dissertation, Jeremy Rifkin (2009) suggests that we have evolved into what he has termed *Homo Empathicus*. Because of the increased movement of information across geographical borders, with the aid of technology we have, unlike any other time in history, the chance to communicate and experience distant others.[178] Rifkin's thesis is that this

[178] Spivak reminds us that contemporary globalization is problematic in its simplistic view that "new speed and flexibility of technology enables the effective transnational circulation of people, money and information [but] this dominant idea clearly ignores the fact that the circulation of money and information is profitably regulated by rich, industrial 'First World' nations, while the vast majority of the world's population are living in a state of poverty and oppression… the world is represented from the dominant perspective and geopolitical location of the 'First World' to the exclusion of other disenfranchised groups" (as cited in Morton, 2003, p. 5)

heightened empathy for other human beings, comes at a great cost to our planet, environmentally but the point in referring to Rifkin's work is that there is truth in the statement that "we" (i.e., affluent, white, Euro-Western and North American people) but not "everyone" has an opportunity to empathize with distant others. The question is, do we? And if we do, why do we empathize with some and not others? Why on a local level do we act on the behalf of some specific global others (and not others) and why, if we can be empathic towards the foreign other, are we selecting only some.

Just as we are unlikely to have authentic empathy for the slum dweller in Calcutta, because if we were to travel to India it is unlikely that a substantial portion of our trip would involve dwelling in the slums (unless that was a pre-planned excursion or the primary reason for travel, e.g., if we were doing some form of volunteer-tourism-humanitarian work, or research there; see also Frenzel, Koens, & Steinbrink, 2012, on slum tourism), it is also unlikely that we will have a lot of empathy for the single-mother-welfare recipient living in one of the housing projects in Toronto (e.g., Jane and Finch; see also Hall, 2015). In both cases (distant and local), the foreign other may be accessible, but we don't enter contexts (e.g., neighborhoods) where we would likely encounter them in a way that would facilitate empathic engagement. Speaking directly to this issue is action-participant researcher Mary Abrums (2000). Abrums described her experience of doing research on the other side of town, and although in her case she used her reflexivity to observe and resolve her prejudice, employing a form of critical reflexivity, this is unlikely a normative part of the average middle-class white North American's everyday thinking about who they interact with, where, and why.

Implicit in conceptualization of empathy given globalization is an "ought" or moral prescriptivism. And accordingly, there are two propositions or ideals of empathy: first, we need

to be more empathic because if we have more of it, we will treat people better, and second, a society full of empaths has the power to transform and improve the society for the good of all (Kzarnic, 2014; Zaki, 2019). There are, however, a few damaged spokes in this wheel: we can, but we don't, and when we do, how do we determine who? Many psychologists, social or otherwise, would focus on individual factors related to the person and the situation (e.g., characteristics related to the person in need of empathy, attributions related to blame and worthiness etc.). I would however, like to draw attention to a larger machine that I believe is the determinant of why, how, and who we have empathy for. Specifically, these ideals may play out at the individual level but are constituted at the ideological, socio-cultural, political, and institutional level. If we focus for a moment on the individual-personal level and one's sense of "me-ness" or "I-ness" or "identity" this is in large part a matter of recognition. Identities, labels, signifiers, etc., "identity" terms are created at a larger superstructure level (i.e. persons identified as part of a certain social group or social category). That is, a person's identity is one that is recognized (or misrecognized) through political and legal sanction (i.e., citizens of) and this identity shapes the who, how, and where persons are prohibited or encouraged to move towards or away from in a society (Assmann & Detmers, 2016; Kryiakides & Torres, 2012; Vesley-Flad, 2017). Different vectors of power are operative in different contexts; however, governance is practiced from the top down along social identities such as race, gender, class etc.

Speaking now about how social categories and social hierarchies are communicated, I turn to the media. This is where a large portion the socio-cultural and political discourse is disseminated. Who owns the broadcast media (in Canada it is both private and public, corporate and government) but regardless of who "owns it," the government regulates it. Despite the doctrine of "free speech" and reporting "just the events" (one we rhetorically find as a disclaimer

in the reading of "open-speech" forums) far be it from the case that news reporting (as one of the institutions used in support of a government and class hegemony) can be assumed to be politically and ideologically neutral.[179] So in large part, the media and different modes of information dissemination (also schools and centers of higher education) are the primary vehicles for communicating to us our social-societal values and determining what constitutes our social and cultural capital.

Moreover, embedded in media communications and the rhetoric of political ideology is certainly the definition of what is "other." I think here of "defining the feared other" (e.g., fear mongering in relation to recent U.S. politics; see Ahmed, 2014) but also in terms of "defining the needy other."

The point here is to alert the reader to the role of transnationalism and the neoliberal discourse surrounding "access" to the distant other (reaching the distant other via "immersions"; Pedwell, 2012a) on one hand, and on the other hand not engaging the local other (avoiding going to "unsafe" neighbourhoods). Ideas about what is possible (benevolent) and what is risky are packaged in the machines that disseminates these ideas (the media, the government, and social institutions) but also in our everyday practices as they serve to re-inscribe these ideas. I do not delve comprehensively into a discussion regarding race, racism, and the problems endemic in the connection between political agendas, social actions, subjectification, and demoralization (and historically dehumanization) of certain human beings (see Teo, 2020). Rather I provide a

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[179] Popular culture artifacts from the last 10 years (i.e., print newspaper and magazine articles from the *Globe*, *New York Times*, and *Toronto Star*, internet-based news, and recent popular culture books that have come out in the last decade) empathy has surged in its appearances (especially in the last two decades relative to its infrequency of the past). Empathy would not have attained the status it has without being implicated in popular culture and in science; scientific discoveries support its appearance in public discourse, and reciprocally, as it continues to be on the public agenda, research agencies (government, university, corporate) also continue to fund scientists to study it. Cultivating empathy in the classroom, the workplace, and civic society, even marketing and selling the skills needed to demonstrate that one has it for another: one is hard-pressed to argue against the statement that empathy is topic of considerable popularity in most areas of contemporary discourse.

moment to pause to consider how such these seemingly abstract ideas (ideology, transnationalism, governmentality) inform (via discourse) what we do at the individual level.[180] And how social categories and judgments (familiar, safe, good, bad) are matters of politics and ideology.

With this frame in mind, I now turn to three forms of empathy that are a result of the psychologized conception of empathy.

1. Empathy avoidance. The central idea behind this term is that the hierarchical and structural arrangement of societies facilitates empathy avoidance (i.e., you are not in contact with the "other"). What is empathy avoidance? This process of not engaging with certain others may be due to fear, ignorance, a lack of desire, but I would like to focus on empathy avoidance as a re-production of what Antonio Gramasci (1971) has termed "cultural hegemony," referring to the dominant class re-producing its dominance through a nexus of institutions, social relations and ideas; wherein, the normative ideology is that this structure is for the good of all.[181] This also could be described as what Cecil Blake (1979) has referred to as "cultural warrants," which are customs, beliefs, and laws that people utilize to justify their communicative actions and behaviours, they can be seen reflected in traditions, religious texts, constitutions etc. (Blake,

[180] Drawn to call on Ian Hacking's (1995) notion of the looping effect: we are created by our institutions, we constitute the institution, yet the institutional ideology constitutes us; we perform our labels we become our label; (label's change, drop out, new ones emerge and become real); I also think here of historical ontology and self-fulfilling prophecy

[181] Antonio Gramsci (1971) proposed that a culturally diverse society can be dominated by one social class whose dominance is achieved by manipulating the societal culture (beliefs, norms, values) so that its ruling-class worldview is imposed as the societal norm, which every social class then perceives as a valid ideology that justifies the social, political, & economic *status quo* as natural, inevitable, and beneficial for everyone, rather than as artificial social constructs that benefit only the ruling class. In Gramsci's view, a class cannot dominate by advancing its own economic interests or through force and coercion alone. Rather, it must exert intellectual and moral leadership, and make alliances and compromises with a variety of forces, he calls this union of social forces a "historic bloc," (term from Georges Sorel), this bloc forms the basis of consent to a certain social order, which produces and re-produces the hegemony of the dominant class through a nexus of institutions, social relations and ideas. Gramsci developed a theory that emphasized the importance of the political and ideological superstructure in both maintaining and fracturing relations of the economic base. Culture hegemony may be difficult to locate on a personal experiential level, yet it is embodied in most our institutions political and civil.

1979; see also Calloway-Thomas, 2010).

The process of non-engagement is referred to as empathy avoidance. Described as simply this: our experiences in the world are largely determined by habits of action that we often do not reflect on, thus the places we will go and not go may be part of a cultural script (danger/safety, good/bad) based not so much on lived experiences (but could be) but by communicated ideas embedded and reproduced in our day-to-day living, actions, and encounters. It may be noted that this conception lacks a concept of agency, self-reflection, and certainly we often are, but I would suggest at the level of categories of the other, unless encouraged one is typically not reflecting on the role of ideology in creating the latest humanitarian effort publicized as a concern of "global citizens." Empathy-avoidance, according to how I am construing, it requires no more description for a moment—we are empathic towards some and not others, and those we are empathic towards needs to be construed of as a socio-ideological and political matter.

But what may be asked, is, and of which I will respond to, is a question concerning how empathy avoidance or a lack of empathy with the foreign other differs from the surgeon's lack of empathy with the patient encountered on the surgery table. On a purely intuitive level, empathy avoidance makes functional sense. If one were to move through their daily lives attuned to the experience of others, well, simply life would be unbearable, functionally we just cannot. We are selective about who we tune into. However, what I am suggesting in this term is not reducible to personal-practical-experiential functioning. Empathy avoidance as I am construing it is prescribed for us through the "socio-political machine," which is delivered to us via the "media-information-technology machine," which is for the most part created through the same source.

2. Arm-chair empathy. There is an evident tension between the empirical and the literary and as alluded to in the preceding the notion of passivity around "reading" of other persons

circumstances. It is easy to "feel bad" for other people's misfortunes at a distance but the impact is minimal. It is minimal in particular as it relates to direct action. A motive to perhaps donate money may prompt a feeling of action and a warm glow and/or someone calls you for coffee and life goes on (Boler, 1997, 1999; Cameron, 2011; Hammond & Kim, 2014; Solomon, 2003).

The cultural other is often represented via the media and in literature and as argued by Boler (1997, 1999) when constituted through spectatorship (e.g., reading) a form of passive consumption occurs. Much like the passive act of viewing a television drama, media representations (e.g., news) allow for the consumer to feel touched by the other but not actually feel responsible nor it is possible to authentically engage with the distant other. These forms of "empathy" often have the effect of "no effect"—you feel sympathy or sadness by viewing (or reading about the misfortunes of others) but this feeling is often short-lived as you receive a text from a friend asking if you want to go for coffee. This low intensity impact (and passivity) runs counter to the suggestion that cultivating "narrative empathy" will enable the reader to understand the experience of the other (cf. Nussbaum, 2001, who suggests that "multicultural" reading has the ability to be a key motivator in creating social change) When narrative empathy is not placed within a broader socio-historical context, it retains its status as a story about someone (a transhistorical character) and readers tend to identify those characteristics with which they can relate (and neglect to see the larger socio-cultural factors connected to race, gender, class etc.). The ahistorical story of the individual life leaves little room for consumers to contemplate these representations within a larger societal context.

Charbot-Davis (2004, 2008, 2014) describes "cross-racial" empathy. She offers a perspective on whiteness and the reading of African-American narratives; Charbot-Davis suggests that the result of reading these texts is mixed (e.g., for some white book club readers it allowed them to

access their white privilege and served as foundation for changing their views on "race"; while for others the cultural other was reduced to simply a character having experiences that one could or could not relate to).

There are "discourses of compassion" (Silverstone, 2007, p. 10) which feature attention to "others"; however, the pain and distress of distant and suffering others is often mediated by technology—on the world's screens (Kyriakidou, 2008, see also see Boltanski, 1999; Chouliaraki, 2006, 2008). This is part of a larger critique as noted by literary and cultural theorists; for example, Lauren Berlant (2004) argues that the consumption of minority cultures by sympathetic whites can be viewed as an imperialist form of cooptation that affirms rather than dismantles hierarchical systems based on race, gender, ability, and socio-economic status (see also Gallagher, 2003; Kyriakides, 2015, Kyriakides & Torres, 2012).

3. Regulated empathy. There are opportunities created to "fulfill your empathic desires" (e.g., volunteer tourism, you travel to an "exotic place" and participate in some time-limited and regulated event; you engage with "the people" within the parameters of the package). Consistent with this broadened view on how discourses of empathy recapitulate neo-liberal ideas of "help the less fortunate" but assume that those that are able should help themselves and get in the game (i.e., capitalism) are expressions regarding the notion of global discourses of compassion (Höijer, 2004; Silverstone, 2007); this type of discourse allows for a passive form of compassion, in particular, when consumed via the media. Discourses of compassion include the notion of a class consciousness which is associated with one who can be global traveler (Calhoun, 2002) and who has access to the experience of what is called "cosmopolitan empathy" (Beck, 2006; Crossley, 2017; Kryriakidou, 2008; Mostafanezhad, 2014)

Volunteer tourism is the ideal exemplar which demonstrates this idea. The industry of

volunteer tourism typically follows along certain procedural rules. Travel to a destination for a limited amount of time; do some charitable work and see some local sights (Butler & Tomazos, 2011; Tomazos & Butler, 2010). This is very consistent with the idea of cosmopolitan empathy; however, the primary issue is that this form of empathy is not available to everyone—the cosmopolitan represents only one small segment of a given societal reality—the haves (Mostafanezhad, 2014).

Empathy is Prejudice

Overall conclusion if empathy remains a matter of individual choice: empathy is *prejudice*. Psychologically people identify with others that bear some similarity to oneself (Maner et al. 2002; termed "intragroup favouritism" or the "intergroup empathy gap" in the social psychological literature, see Batson & Ahmad, 2009; Mealy & Stephan, 2010; Trawalter, Hoffman, & Waytz, 2012) or another self whom one views positively (e.g., as attractive or as beautiful; see Müller, Van Leeuwen, Van Baaren, Bekkering, & Dijksterhuis, 2013) or with another whom one feels it is their responsibility to assist (Marlier & Crawford 2013), wherein the other is not thought responsible for their plight (Lee, Winterich, & Ross, 2013). Empathy is a subjective phenomenon, and this is a precondition for selectivity—that which is unfamiliar, not felt to be one's responsibility, or if the other is not positively valenced, is least likely to be the focus of one's empathic view; the unfamiliar, the distant, is simply a gaze rather than a focus of attention.

Unlike Bloom (2017), wherein empathy is also described as prejudice, it is not here suggested that this refers to the inability for us to use our "emotions" as a guide to appropriate moral decisions (Bloom suggests we'd do better with rationalism), rather what is meant by this assertion is that we are still placing these questions at the level of the individual when we should

be asking how society has framed the preconditions for making only certain options available to only certain individuals. This would be my primary justification for suggesting that when it comes to empathy as a moral concept, we need to resituate these questions at the macro level (i.e., the socio-political). This might include asking questions about how social structures and institutions are set up in manner conducive to instilling and perpetuating prejudice, systemic racism, and other forms of oppression against some other.

Conclusion

This work provides an alternate system for examining the problem of empathy. It is about empathy in action. I outline the founding ideas (conceptions) informing what empathy has become and describe how empathy is mobilized (applications). At the core of this reconstruction is empathy's moral valence, I argue that empathy is irreducibly connected to ethical questions and there is always a moral valence inherent in the use of empathy. Other founding conceptions of empathy are suggested to include empathy naturalized, empathy as relational, empathy as an epistemology, and empathy as a form of aesthetic. After outlining the originating conceptions (i.e., answering the question "from where" would a possibility for use/application emerge), I outline the ways empathy is used (applications).

This analysis culminates in a final "word" on empathy. The word is that empathy is important, but it is not enough to continue to construe it as a concept that involves one individual's intentionality towards some other. I suggested some of the consequences inherent in empathy construed as an individual concept (empathy avoidance, arm-chair empathy, and regulated empathy). Central to these final remarks are my reflections on the three things that are inherent in the conceptualization and use of empathy—the individual, the other, and of course, that moral valence.

The Problem of Empathy.

Chapter 1 summarizes the multiplicative nature of empathy and the common approaches to resolving this. In this chapter I begin with *On the Problem of Empathy*—the title of Edith Stein's (1917/1989) doctoral dissertation. The problems I describe are several. First, is the challenge of historicizing "empathy"; for example, where does the origin story begin? (Do we include other German terms [besides *Einfühlung*] such has *Verstehen* [understanding]; do we include sympathy etc.) Second, is the conceptual quagmire. How can we discuss the concept when no two people define it the same or employ similar characteristics to describe the phenomenon? Third, is the divergent approaches to handling the conceptual quagmire. Some define empathy so broadly that the concept becomes meaningless, while others specify different levels, necessary and sufficient conditions, etc. This often amounts to empathy becoming virtually unidentifiable in terms of how most "experience" empathy. I then set out my views on what empathy is and how I would handle this task.

Conceptual Foundations and Applications

Chapter 2 summarizes the connection of empathy to questions about morality. I devote at least half of this chapter to the empathy-sympathy issue. I conclude with the ongoing philosophical debates on empathy and ethics/morality in the current literature. In Chapter 3, I suggest other conceptual foundations involved in constructing empathy. The discourses are grouped around empathy construed as (1) a relational phenomenon (intersubjectivity, social psychology), (2) an epistemic (hermeneutics, theories of mind, etc.), (3) a natural phenomenon (biological, physiological, and traceable from an evolutionary vantage point), and (4) an aesthetic phenomenon (historical connection with *Einfülung*, theories of preference etc.).

Chapter 4 consists of a review of the different applications of empathy—it has been used

in several diverse contexts and with different consequences. I describe seven different applications—it has been used to gender, quantify, pathologize, educate, politicize, commodify, and professionalize. Within this last category (professionalize), I provide an example of the continued expansion of my model by discussing the different ways empathy is used as means for defining what it means to be a professional in the human services, health care, and media.

The Problem of Empathy Re-dux

In Chapter 5, I reflect on the common themes within the literature. I suggest three features that constitute an ontology of empathy—the individual, the other, and a moral valence. With this ontology in eyesight, I problematize staying the course with empathy construed through the lens of individualism.

The danger of the intermingling—self, other, and a moral valence.

Empathy as psychological concept has become part of our public ethos. It is popular in all domains—business and leadership skills, advertising, and marketing; social work theory, research, and practice; education and development; media studies, the arts, and literature; and in the medical field.

What is portrayed as a matter of individual psychology is part of our social reality such that we take empathy to be an important part of our social world and it is valorized as a tool for how to “handle” others. This co-optation is because empathy has features that make it strikingly easy to transport across discursive lines.

With malleability of empathy, however, comes the observation that it appears to immutability foster forms of prejudice and othering. This prejudice and othering is evident not only at the micro (or individual) level, but also at the macro (or societal) level.

Final Remark

As presented in this dissertation there are fluid and expansive nature about empathy; this makes empathy malleable in and across contexts. The central tenets represented in the expanding circles of empathy model are that there are several "first" ideas about empathy. These ideas are that there is something relational, epistemic, natural, and aesthetic about empathy; discourses can house and put in action several different conceptual bases for empathy (the discourses are not mutually exclusive so aesthetic and epistemic ideas can be represented within the same discursive community). From ideas to action, we can look at the applications of empathy. I suggest that there are several themes that recur in relation to applying empathy. These themes relate to quantification; gender; pathology; politics; education; commodification; and, professionalism. Professionalism was opened up to look at domains of fields of action wherein empathy is played out societally. The suggested lens for reconstructing empathy is but one; however, working diagrammatically and discursively the suggestion is that this approach can be further deconstructed. And in fact, several of the discursive contexts wherein the parts can be found do exist. This dissertation provides some crumbs for tracing.

There are several definitions of empathy and theories of how it occurs; this work has approached the diversity of the literature by focusing on concrete actions. How can we find empathy represented in tangible and observable phenomenon? This mixed approach is at the intersection of defining, describing, and conceptualizing.

I am certainly not an expert on all the varieties of empathy; however, I am an expert because I experience empathy. As introduced in Chapter 1, On the Problem of Empathy, Shlien (1997, p. 63) states that "[e]veryone who experiences empathy is entitled to propose a definition." I first read this statement in 2008 and it seemed quite right to me then and now.

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