

Fritz Breithaupt

The Dark Sides of Empathy

Suhrkamp

Contents

Introduction

1. Empathy as Co-Experience
2. The Dark Sides of Empathy. An Overview
3. Four Approaches to Empathy Research

I. Loss of Self

1. The Antithesis of Self and Empathy (Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*)
2. The Paradox of Self-Observation. Women.
3. Empathy as Ressentiment (Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*)
4. Nietzsche, Discoverer of Stockholm-Syndrome
5. Living for Others. Do Today's Student's have an Empathy Deficit Disorder? If so, is it Narcissism, or a Liberation from Stockholm-Syndrome?

II. Painting in Black and White

1. The Architecture of Empathy
2. The Three-Person-Model of Empathy
3. Radicalisation of Conflicts. Moralising
4. How Fiction Radicalizes Morality

III. False Empathy. Filtered Empathy

1. Heroes, Helpers, and Humanitarianism
2. Germany, World Champion of Empathy: Angela Merkel and the Refugees

IV. Empathic Sadism. Empathy for the Sake of Empathy

1. The Paradox of Tragedy (Aesthetics)
2. Preliminary Overview of Empathic Sadism
3. Altruistic Punishment
4. Empathic Cruelty and the "Empathic Rapist"
5. Manipulative Empathy

6. Developmental Stages of Sadistic Empathy

V. Vampirism: Helicopter-Parents, Stalkers, Fans, and Vicarious Living

1. Helicopter-Parents, Stage Mothers, and Vampirism
2. Stalkers, Fans and Obsessive Empathy (Identification)
3. Vampirism

Outlook: Mixed Feelings about Empathy

Bibliography

Introduction

This book is about the terrible things we do because of our ability to empathize with others. Sometimes, we commit atrocities not out of a failure of empathy, but rather as a direct consequence of successful, even overly successful, empathy. Empathy, as we shall see, plays a central part in a variety of highly problematic behaviors. The spectrum of such behavior ranges from one-sided callousness, an extreme form of which may constitute terrorism, to various forms of exploitation, such as vampirism and sadism, but also false pity and continuous suppression of others for one's own benefit. In many cases, empathy not only fails to block such negative acts, but in fact motivates and promotes them. In short, these malicious acts happen not despite, but because of empathy.

This point of view contradicts the common understanding of empathy. Usually, we assume that empathy leads to morally correct behavior. And certainly, there are many highly positive sides of empathy. However, we should not use an overly simple and glorified image of empathy. Let us take a look at two empathy-related instances that may help us to widen the spectrum.

In a public blog, "Just_that_random_guy" published the following commentary in December 2015:

There was this quote made by "Bedelia" a doctor and psychologist character from the tv series *Hannibal*. "Extreme acts of cruelty require a high level of empathy". I believe this to be true. Whenever I look at someone and I start imagining sadistic thoughts, I am able to understand and feel what the person would go through and the kind of pain and fear the person would experience and that's what actually turns me on. The stronger and more intense the pain and suffering I imagine to inflict on the person, the higher the gratification I derive.¹

¹https://www.reddit.com/r/serialkillers/comments/3qoey8/do_sexually_sadistic_serial_killers_really_lack/Do%20Sexually%20Sadistic%20Serial%20Killers%20Really%20Lack%20Empathy?, accessed on 16.1.2016.

The anonymous author of these lines, who claims not to be a psychopath, but just “a random guy,” draws a connection between empathic understanding and extreme emotions of another (“pain and fear”). This empathic coexperience of pain arouses him (or her) . Apparently, he can understand others and share their emotions precisely because he experiences the very pain that he attributes to the observed person. In fact, that is why he imagines their pain in his sadistic thoughts: to understand the other and share his or her feelings. Sadism is the product not of a lack of empathy, but the wish for its intensification. Horrible fantasies (and perhaps actions as well) are possible *because of empathy*. Later on, we will describe this form of empathy as “empathy for empathy’s sake” and will suggest that it includes both extreme acts of violence as well as many forms of accepted everyday behavior.

As we shall see over the course of the book, such aberrations are not limited to a few problematic individuals, but also concern many phenomena of our social world. There is a “normal” or “tolerated” form of sadism that is expressed by people pressuring, exposing, or embarrassing others in order to predict and understand their feelings. There are also general practices that structure human society, including possibly our tendency to think in categories of good and evil, that can be considered as effects of empathy, as will be suggested later.

Here is a second, less radical case of a potential malfunctioning of empathy, something that happened to me somewhat regularly when I was around 12 or 13 years old. At that time, I lived on the outskirts of the North German city of Hamburg. The city offered a subscription for public school students for all publically subsidized theaters and concert halls (nearly a dozen in the city), and I still thank my mother that she would allow my friends and me to take the train unaccompanied and armed only with our stack of tickets. However, something bizarre would happen to me in the middle of the performance. I would start sweating, and get nervous, imagining myself suddenly on stage, standing in the shoes of the player or actor, but without any skill or training. I saw myself holding a violin, or dressed for some role, only I was no artist and had not studied the lines. I imagined myself unable to produce a single sound or utter a single word. Inevitably, I

would be mortified I imagined seeing myself from the outside; I felt confused and became so flushed that I had to rush off stage to escape the confused audience. In my imagination, I would even accidentally bump into a fellow musician sitting in the narrow rows during my escape, making my suffering even worse. These fantasies were so intense and vivid that at least on one occasion, I actually had to leave my row in the audience to catch my breath outside the hall.

What this experience taught me is that I cannot always control when I will find myself transported into the world of others. Certainly, this “inverted stage fright” is not one of the dark sides of empathy that this book deals with. According to most accounts of empathy, this experience would not even be called empathy. If it were empathy, one should expect, on the one hand, an awareness of the difference between me and other and, on the other hand, a possibility of nevertheless sharing some of the other’s experiences.² Instead, I found myself, without preparation and while still remaining myself, transported into the other’s situation. Hence, there was neither a sharing of emotions nor an understanding of the other’s accomplishments involved. In this sense, one could characterize my experience as an incomplete form of empathy, perhaps as an early phase of its development. A special feature in my transportation experience is that it involves a stage with onlookers. Throughout this book, we will come back to this phenomenon of the “glowing skin” of someone on stage in the state of being observed. Our investigation will include the actual stages of the arts and American political cases of artists on stage, as well as American politicians, but also the stages in the minds of helicopter parents who wish to bask in the success of their children.

The title of the book seems to promise an attack on empathy. Can we say that this book is *against* empathy? Such general attacks have recently been waged by the psychologist

² Stephanie Preston and Frans de Waal have proposed the separation between the self and the other as a necessary condition for empathy, since this separation protects one from emotional overlap or contamination. See Stephanie D. Preston und Frans de Waal, “Empathy: Its Ultimate and Proximate Bases”, in: *Behavioral Brain Science* 25(1) (2002), pp. 1-20; cf. Jean Decety und C. Daniel Batson, “Empathy and Morality: Integrating Social and Neuroscience Approaches”, in: Jan Verplaatse et al. (Ed.), *The Moral Brain: Essays on the Evolutionary and Neuroscientific Aspects of Morality*, Dordrecht, Heidelberg, London, New York: Springer 2009, pp. 109-127.

Paul Bloom³ and the philosopher Jesse Prinz.⁴ In a more limited fashion, Peter Goldie has also critiqued the concept of empathy as being too vague, and he termed his intervention “Anti-Empathy”.⁵ In previous decades, scholars have suggested already that empathy may lead to problematic results in certain domains, such as legal justice⁶ and in aesthetics.⁷ However, what connects all these attacks on empathy is that they quixotically take aim at a false concept of empathy, not empathy itself. If one expects a full understanding of others, as Peter Goldie does, one will be disappointed. However close empathy brings you to someone else, it has strong limits. If one expects 100% fair moral judgements, as Jesse Prinz does, one can lament loudly how empathy fails to live up to such expectations, often even obstructing justice. However, the failure here is not on the part of empathy, but rather lies in the unrealistic expectations of what empathy does and accomplishes. Blaming empathy in such a fashion for its shortcomings sounds like selling academic hot air. To be fair to these authors, there absolutely are many excessive high hopes attached to empathy today, hopes for world peace and universal justice, that call for some debunking.

³ Paul Bloom, *Against Empathy*, New York: Harper Collins, 2017. {The book is now in my hands, I will offer a full discussion of it for the English book. It complements my book nicely, with little overlap, fb.}

⁴ Jesse Prinz, "Against Empathy", in: *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 49(1) (2011), S. 214-233. Obwohl Blooms Buch noch nicht erschienen ist, scheint es gemessen an einigen Ankündigungen und Interviews so zu sein, dass er ebenso wie Prinz gegen Empathie einwendet, dass sie nicht in dem Maße zu ethisch richtigen Entscheidungen beiträgt, wie es häufig versprochen wird. Wenn man aber diese Erwartung nicht hat, verschwindet der Einwand. Wenn man etwa vorsichtiger argumentiert, dass Empathie nicht per se die Basis von ethisch richtigem Entscheiden ist, sondern eher eines der Mittel der Auslotung moralisch relevanter Situationen und der Anerkennung der Emotionen von Mitmenschen, dann bleibt Empathie durchaus wichtig für Moral. Meine Einwände in diesem Buch zielen daher in eine andere Richtung, wie in der Einleitung angedeutet wird. Allerdings treffen Prinz, Bloom und auch meine Überlegungen sich (vermutlich) in vielen Aspekten bezüglich der Radikalisierung von Konflikten (siehe Kapitel II in dieses Buches).

⁵ Goldie geht es dabei um die vielen Fehlschlüsse, die wir beim Einnehmen von Perspektiven ziehen, zumal wir häufig nicht zwischen dem bloßen “Sich-Vorstellen, wie es sei, X zu sein” und der wirklich empathischen Einnahme der Perspektive eines anderen unterscheiden (dies markiert er etwa an dem Fall der imaginären Selbstbegegnung). Doch dieser Vorwurf gegen Empathie trifft natürlich nur diejenigen, die ein akkurates Verstehen von anderen erwarten und nicht bloß eine Annäherung; Peter Goldie, “Anti-Empathy“ in: Amy Coplan und Peter Goldie (Hg.), *Empathy. Philosophical and Psychological Perspectives*, Oxford: Oxford UP 2011, S. 302-317.

⁶ Toni M. Massaro, "Empathy, Legal Storytelling, and the Rule of Law: New Words, old Wounds?", in: *Michigan Law Review* 87(8) (1989), S. 2099-2127.

⁷ So schon Wilhelm Worringer, *Abstraktion und Einfühlung. Ein Beitrag zur Stilpsychologie* [1907], hg. von Helga Grebing, München: Wilhelm Fink 2007. Auf dieses Buch und die entsprechende Diskussion kommen ich zu Beginn von Kapitel II zurück.

This book has a different, and I believe more substantial goal: namely to consider the terrible things we *do* with and because of empathy. Still, it is not a book “against” empathy. Empathy makes us human. Certainly, not everything human is morally good and not every form of empathy is prosocial, but it probably would be naive to imagine we could (or should) suppress empathy in general, except in some specific instances, such as in medical or legal contexts. Instead, this book wishes to be part of a discussion of what we are because we have the capacity for a wide spectrum of empathetic forms of behavior, including the dark sides of empathy. What does it mean to be a “homo empathicus”?⁸

At the end of the book, we shall face a dilemma. To be simply “against” empathy would be simplistic, perhaps just a grab for media attention. But to simply embrace empathy without caveats is not much better.

Let us consider the arguments for empathy first. We live in a social world. We live in groups or clans, we observe others, we are affected by the experiences of others, we resonate with them and participate in the world to a degree via others. The suffering of others is our suffering as well; their happiness can be ours, as well. Conversely, our emotions and moods affect others too. Perhaps, seeking resonance in others is the core structure of being prosocial, as Hartmut Rosa suggests.⁹ It certainly cannot be a surprise that empathy has been named as a cure or even a “better angel of our nature”¹⁰ against the ailments of war, injustice, slavery, and suffering. Empathy saves lives. A teenager who suddenly behaves differently than before may be close to suicide. However, someone who understands him and feels for him can intervene and perhaps save him. Mothers and other caretakers learn to read their children and to react quickly and effectively when something is not right. When we are desperate, we wish for nothing more than someone who understands us. Parents, friends, lovers, but also professionals (such as doctors, nurses, teachers, and therapists) cultivate empathy to be there when needed. Without the

⁸ Einer meiner akademischen Lehrer hat mir stets verboten, lateinische und griechische Wendungen zu vermischen. Ich hoffe, dass er diese Zeilen freundlich überlesen wird.

⁹ Hartmut Rosa, *Resonanz*, Berlin: Suhrkamp 2016

¹⁰ Steven Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: The Decline of Violence in History and its Causes*, London: Penguin 2011.

numerous workers in humanitarian aid, donors, soldiers, and organisations like Doctors without Borders there would be many more people dying early deaths. Probably everyone has experienced a situation in which empathy made a possibly life-altering difference. We are also becoming increasingly sensitive for the more subtle forms of oppression and masked forms of violence, as Steven Pinker aims to show. In historical perspective, it probably is not necessary to remind us that it is not so long ago that slavery was abolished in most, but not all, parts of the world.

We also know that empathy needs to be learned and practiced. While we are biologically highly prepared for empathy, there needs to be a culture that supports empathy and provides models for its practices. In an age with growing rifts between different groups within society, a new nationalism, terrorism, in addition to increasing personal wealth, use of digital media, and physical isolation, empathy can appear as the central positive counterforce. Unfortunately, there are data that suggest that younger generations today have significantly less empathy than previous generations while narcissism is on the rise.¹¹

Under these circumstances, would an empathy-inducing drug be desirable? More generally, should we teach empathy? In addition to Steven Pinker, Martha Nussbaum speaks of emotional intelligence and political feelings.¹² Barack Obama demands more empathy for judges and is concerned about the “empathy deficit” of our era. For decades, Daniel Batson has collected evidence for the link between empathic concern and actual altruistic behavior.¹³ The list of advocates for empathy is long. How can one object to empathy?

The book will gather and present the counterarguments. One of its guiding assumptions is that empathy is not one of many features of man, but one of the central forms that shapes

¹¹ Vgl. Sara H. Konrath, Edward H. O'Brien und Courtney Hsing, "Changes in Dispositional Empathy in American College Students over Time: A Meta-Analysis", in: *Personality and Social Psychology Review* (2010), S. 180-198. Wir werden uns später ausführlich mit diesen und verwandten Befunden auseinandersetzen.

¹² Martha C. Nussbaum, *Politische Emotionen*, Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 2014.

¹³ Vgl. Daniel C. Batson, "The Empathy-Altruism Hypothesis: Issues and Implications", in: Jean Decety (Hg.), *Empathy: From Bench to Bedside*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2012, S. 41-54.

what we are as human beings. Empathy cannot simply be subtracted from who we are, leaving our identity intact.¹⁴ Our experience of our social environment is not simply colored by empathy but structured by it. Empathy is like a sixth sense by which we perceive the world. As soon as we are in contact with other people (or other beings that we anthropomorphize), we begin to see and experience the situation from their perspective(s). This perspective-sharing can be frightening, as Jean-Paul Sartre suggests, when he describes how he was sitting alone on a bench in the park until he suddenly realized that someone was looking at him (*Being and Nothingness*). The main effect, however, is a duplication and multiplication of our perceptions. We participate in many ways in the emotions, ideas, thoughts, and intentions of other people. It is by means of others that we see ourselves as if from the outside; we perceive our environment differently because we note how others feel about it. The emotional states that we register in others become a fact for us to that we are compelled to react to; often by being concerned for the other's happiness.

Even so-called sociopaths or psychopaths who seem void of empathy can understand others to an astonishing degree and are able to co-experience, even to the point of caring.¹⁵ People on the Autism spectrum certainly show deficiencies of empathy, but are not entirely without empathy.¹⁶ If there were people lacking empathy completely,

¹⁴ Vgl. Michael Tomasello, *Die kulturelle Entwicklung des menschlichen Denkens: Zur Evolution der Kognition*, Frankfurt, Suhrkamp, 2006. Ähnliches gilt für die Sprache. Es gibt bisweilen Gedankenexperimente wie: Wie würden wir denken und empfinden, wenn wir keine Sprache hätten? Das ist sicherlich interessant und dürfte uns vielleicht näher an Fragen zum Denken bei nicht-menschlichen Tieren führen. Aber wir würden sehr wenig über Menschen lernen, denn „wir“ wären dann nicht mehr „wir“. Wir können uns nicht vorstellen, wie wir ohne Sprache denken und uns ohne Sprache verhalten würden.

¹⁵ Dazu mehr in Abschnitt 3.

¹⁶ Autismus ist für das Thema dieses Buches kein zentraler Gegenstand der Untersuchung. Autisten besitzen allerdings verminderte Empathie-Fähigkeiten und zugleich eine verminderte Fähigkeit zur Selbstwahrnehmung (siehe Michael V. Lombardo et al., "Self-referential cognition and empathy in autism", in: *PLoS One* 2.9 (2007): e883). Es sei hier nur kurz darauf hingewiesen, dass Autisten durchaus die Fähigkeit zum „Transport“ haben, sich also in narrative Geschichten versetzen können, die ja das Schicksal eines Charakters in einer fiktiven oder realen Situation zeigen. Auch Theory of Mind Probleme können von Autisten gelöst werden, wenn diese Fähigkeit auch erst später im Leben und wohl anders erlernt wird als bei anderen Menschen (dazu im nächsten Abschnitt). Das Denken und Empfinden von Autisten wird häufig als einsam

we would not be able to recognize them as people. In fact, among all personality transformations, changes of empathy and morality are seen as more fundamental to a person than anything else, even a complete memory loss.¹⁷

We should therefore start with a more sober assumption: Like most other human abilities, empathy probably serves first and foremost the person who has empathy and not the object of the empathy. This assumption is certainly no great insight, but it protects one from the simplistic hope that empathy alone is the best means against egocentrism, narcissism, and self-interest. The co-experience of the empathic person enriches first of all his or her own experiences and knowledge, before possibly also helping the other person. In this sense, we could say that this book is devoted to the egotism of empathy and the aesthetic pleasure of the empathizer.

Some readers may wonder what qualifies me to write this book. The opening anecdote of my “inverted stage fright” may not be well suited to boost the reader’s confidence in me. My academic training is in various disciplines from art history to law. After my official studies, I added cognitive science to the mix of my professional interests and I am now an affiliated professor of cognitive science. However, my main focus in the academy lies in literary criticism and cultural studies. Although this is not a work of literary criticism, I hope it nevertheless retains some of that field’s sensitivity.¹⁸ As a scholar of literary

dargestellt, doch anscheinend sind auch sie nicht jenseits von Empathie. Und selbst wenn es so wäre, würden wir aus dem Studium von Autisten nur bedingt lernen, was ein Mensch ohne Empathie ist, da Autisten zugleich andere Abweichungen von anderen Menschen aufweisen.

¹⁷ Nina Strohminger and Shaun Nichols, "The Essential Moral Self", in: *Cognition* 131 (2014): 159-171.

¹⁸ Fiktion kann in der Tat ein wichtiger Ausgangspunkt zu Fragen der Empathie sein, und wir werden im Laufe dieses Buches wiederholt auf Fragen der Narration und Fiktion zurückkommen. Suzanne Keen hat argumentiert, dass Fiktion einen sicheren Bereich darstellt, in dem wir unsere Empathie erproben können, ohne dass wir vom lebhaften anderen ausgenutzt werden; siehe Suzanne Keen, *Empathy and the Novel*. Oxford and New York: Oxford UP, 2007: Introduction. Dass wir täglich wohl über vier Stunden von Narrationen umgeben sind, ist dabei einer der deutlichen Fingerzeige, dass narrative Denken uns durchaus prägen dürfte; siehe Jonathan Gottschall, *The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human*, Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012;

criticism, one learns that every form of human behavior can be presented in the form of a narrative and thereby can be imagined by most people. Life stories and fiction seem to follow similar trajectories.¹⁹ As a scholar of literature, one learns to imagine under which circumstances one could commit even the worst crime or have seemingly absurd emotions. Based on this experience, it is more difficult (but not impossible) to demonize “bad” or „irrationale” behavior. Hence, the main object of the book is not to condemn the dark sides of empathy, but to understand how they come about and how many so-called perversions are part of being human. Of course, understanding how actions come about does not mean to approve of them, or (before the law) to excuse them.

1. Empathy as Co-Experience

In this book, I define empathy as co-experience of another’s situation. However, the book will also consider and discuss the results of research with different definitions. As we will see, the notion of co-experience has a wider, but in another sense narrower range of meaning than another common definition of empathy, namely the notion of emotion-sharing. Emotion-sharing has emerged as a working definition of empathy in brain research of the past decades. The notion of emotion-sharing is attractive since new possibilities of empirical research have made it possible to measure similar brain routines in observer and observed (as we will discuss in the next section). Hence, the similarity of brain routines promises an empirical basis and in that sense an objective form of empathy. However, this new measurability alone does not define the phenomenon adequately, as I will suggest in the following. (And it should not be overlooked that the similarity of the brain routines of observer and observed are limited to a few strong emotions. Empathy with complex or social emotions so far escape brain imaging. What

sowie Brian Boyd, *On the Origin of Stories*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 2009.

¹⁹ Vgl. Jerome Bruner, *Making Stories: Law, Literature, Life*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003.

does an empathetic observer do when he or she observes someone who is in love? Will she also fall in love? And with the same person?).

In contrast to emotion-sharing, co-experience emphasizes the situation of the other. Of course, emotions are central to the situation of the other since important situations are usually emotionally loaded. Bodily reactions are also of central importance since we experience situations in a bodily fashion. However, co-experience also involves many cognitive processes for which emotions are secondary, such as anticipation, consideration of circumstances, weighing of arguments, and strategic thinking. Co-experience means to assume the perspective of another in their specific situation and thus to share their real or imagined reaction to the situation. One slips into the shoes of another where they meet their specific environment.²⁰

What exactly constitutes co-experience in the context of empathy? Co-experience means to be transported into the (cognitive, emotional, bodily) situation of another being. The emphasis here lies on the situation of *another*. There is a wide range of degrees of “transport,” beginning with a mere mental sharing of action like in watching a film scene or reading a narrative²¹ on the one hand to an active (though imaginary) participation of the observer in all decision-making of the other and experiencing of his or her conflicts and emotions. Empathy thus means that one lives up to the demands of the other’s situation in some or all of their emotional and cognitive aspects. The question of what the other should or could do, that is, decision-making, plays a large role for co-experience.

²⁰ Ein möglicher Einwand soll hier kurz aufgenommen werden, nämlich dass diese Definition nicht deutlich zwischen der bloßen Vorstellung, in der Situation des anderen zu sein, und emotionale Einnahme einer Perspektive unterscheidet, wie etwa David Batson oder Peter Goldie es einfordern. Hier soll es gerade um die Kontinuität des Sich-Hineinversetzens und der emotionalen Perspektivübernahme gehen. Die Situation des anderen wird graduell zur Situation eines anderen mit seinen Eigenschaften, Zuständen, Annahmen und seiner Vorgeschichte. Denn auch die Besonderheiten eines anderen können, vor allem von außen betrachtet, als Teil der Situation vorgestellt werden, so dass die Differenz zunehmend verschwindet. Zudem geht es bei dieser Definition nicht um akkurate Empathie, vgl. Peter Goldie, „Anti-Empathy“, 2011; Daniel C. Batson, "These things called empathy: Eight related but distinct phenomena", in: Jean Decety, Hg., *The Social Neuroscience of Empathy*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2009, S. 3-15.

²¹ Vgl. Philip J. Mazzocco, Melanie C. Green, Jo A. Sasota und Norman W. Jones, "This story is not for everyone: Transportability and narrative persuasion", in: *Social Psychological and Personality Science* (2010), S. 361-368; Blakey Vermeule, *Why do we care about literary characters?* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2011.

To be sure, to co-experience the situation of another does not mean actually being in the same situation. One of the core differences is that one usually has at least some level of consciousness of the difference between me and the other. A second difference is that one does not actually have to react to the situation of the other, while the person in the situation has to react. Nevertheless, considering the future is a key component of empathy. A third and central difference is that the empathetic observer usually has more clarity about the situation.

This last point deserves some explanation. When someone co-experiences the situation of another or is transported into the situation of another, he or she tends to reduce the situation to a few key features. When we actually face the situation, however, because it is our situation, we are usually more distracted from various impressions and considerations, even when the situation is quite pressing and specific. Our feelings and impressions are probably rarely simple and unequivocal. Instead, we tend to have mixed emotions and ambiguous feelings. Even in important situations, we often do not know what we feel and think. This is why one of the major tasks of counselors and therapists lies in helping us to sort out what we are feeling.

If in contrast we co-experience the situation of another, we reduce the situation to a few major features. We can more easily abstract from the direct perceptions, though we also can perceive things the other cannot yet see (such as the lurking tiger in the bush). But even in that case, the observer has an advantage of clarity of the things the other does not yet see, but should see.

In one word, the empathetic observer has an “aesthetic” advantage. The concept of aesthetics is here used in the sense of the German philosopher Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten who invented the term in the mid-eighteenth century to denote the clarity of sensual perception. In this sense, the situation of the other is *clear* to us since we can simply perceive it. More specifically: We can move ourselves in our imagination into the shoes of someone else precisely because his or her situation seems clear to us. Put in yet another way: One can empathize because one can aestheticize and “clarify” the situation of the other. We owe the clarity of a human situation, a clarity we lack when it is our situation, to a medium, and this medium is the other person. As a medium, the other person becomes a character in the play we watch and experience. Emotionally intense

situations, dramatic actions, and moments of decision are especially well suited for empathy since in these instances, the pressure on the other is exceptionally *clear*.

It helps our co-experience that the individual differences between me and the other shrinks: We would all feel more or less the same way in these loaded situations.²² To be sure, co-experience does not have to invisibilize the other or dispense with his or her idiosyncracies, oddities, and experiences. The empathetic observer can consider all the features of the other as elements of the situation. To witness the speech of a shy person or a stutterer can be especially intense since we also co-experience the shame or the pride of overcoming the shyness.

Does this co-experience mean that we accurately experience or feel what the other is feeling? Of course not. To be sure, the intensity of co-experience can correlate to the intensity of the situation and to the actual feelings of the other person. However, what someone feels in a situation and what the empathetic observes feels can be quite distinct. Who knows what the shy speaker truly feels and how he or she experiences the situation? Happiness is not equal to happiness, sadness is not equal to sadness, even when the measured brain routines seem to be similar. Of course, both the observed and the observer bring their life story to bearing. In every situation, certain elements will resonate with each person differently depending on their past encounters, their open wounds, traumata, and happy memories.

In this sense, one can say that the other is more or less invisibilized in the act of co-experience. He or she is overshadowed by the empathetic observer's own empathy experience. But the other does not disappear. The observed other can exhort us to support his or her fortunes. It can be that we feel close to him or her and want to become even more similar to him or her. It may also be that we want to increase the difference or gap between us. These are some of the complications the book will develop.

An example will help us to consider the difference between a person in a situation and an empathetic observer who witnesses the other's situation. Someone trips loudly in a restaurant. Perhaps he runs over a chair, falls down, breaks some glass in the process and

²² Die Simulation von Ähnlichkeit durch drastische, dramatische Situationen entspricht Theodor Lessings Minimaldefinition für Mitleiden, siehe *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, (1776).

cuts his hands on the shards. This person, one can assume, feels a rush of emotions and has various thoughts flashing through his brain simultaneously. Assuming that he is embarrassed for having caused such a ruckus, he may want to downplay the pain in his hand. Perhaps he hardly feels it, given the slight shock and the shame. Instead, he might be tempted to undo the commotion as quickly as possible, may try to clean up the broken glass on the ground with his bleeding hand, only making matters worse. Or he might try to divert attention from himself by faulting others who have placed the chair in his way. Or maybe he is mostly concerned about his companion, perhaps an important business partner. Or he might be thinking that he recently had several minor accidents of this kind and might remember how his siblings used to tease him about his clumsiness. If the accidents happened mostly recently, he may also think that he might need to go to a doctor, given what he read about Parkinson.

The empathetic observer, however, is less confused and can easily resolve the situation in the one or the other direction. There are two main factors to consider for the observer: the actual accident and the embarrassment. The observer might feel the pain in the hand, even if the other himself has not felt it yet. And the observer registers the social sense more clearly and can therefore more easily put the slightly embarrassing moment to rest.

In both cases, the empathetic observer plans what should happen to dissolve the situation. In the case of the accident, there is a simple question of the correct medical treatment; in the case of the social embarrassment a quick return to normalcy is asked for. While these are probably the observer's objectives, the person in the situation, the tripper, is probably less goal-oriented, since he is overstimulated by the events. Maybe he needs to vent and to release emotions by yelling at the waiter for placing the chair wrong, which only makes things worse. The way forward is not as easily visible for the person in the midst of things.

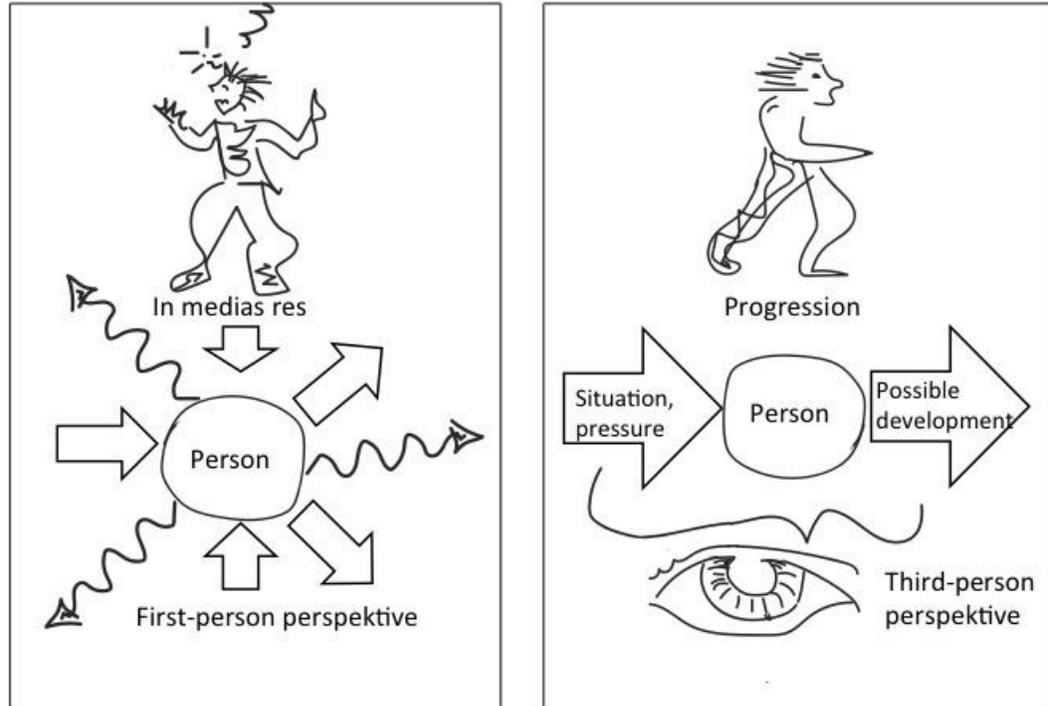
This somewhat complicated example illustrates how an empathetic observer may experience the situation of the observed differently than she or he does. Still, the co-experience consists in an emotional and cognitive reaction to the situation of the other in

all its perceivable facets.²³ In the co-experience, one assumes the position of the other (be it by means of an involuntary transport or by means of a conscious effort), reacts to the situation of the other, and projects a future trajectory to the other in the situation. The situation is *pro-jected* in the sense that it is placed in front of oneself. In this sense, the situation appears real, not just imaginary, even if it is the other who “really” finds himself in that situation. In many cases, this will mean that the feelings of the observer and the observed are similar, or overlap. Some of the strong emotions are in fact part of the situation; if someone is scared this is an immediate part of the situation. However, even in that case there is a range of differences between both people in their perceptions, emotions, activation of past experiences, and plans for resolve the situation.

Of course, the empathetic observer does not always see a clear path forward. When a close friend is in trouble, I may be just as desperate and unable to react properly. Not knowing what to do can intensify one’s suffering (though it also can block my empathy, as will be suggested in chapter 2). However, even in that case the observer tends to have a more unimpeded, clearer view of the dilemmas, even in a hopeless situation.

One corollary of this understanding of empathy is its assumption that life experience is one of its prerequisites. Co-experience is possible because situations can be read and allow a focused view of the future. Children can accomplish this, but their repertoire is more limited. Fairy tales and other stories can serve to expand their repertoire of narrative situations and for the future. Nevertheless, too much life experience can also limit empathy. When someone can always already anticipate the outcomes, he or she may be much less involved.

²³ Natürlich umfasst der Begriff des Kognitiven auch Emotionen, insofern ist es unnötig hier von „emotionalen und kognitiven“ Reaktionen zu sprechen. Doch da in allgemeinwissenschaftlichen Darstellungen immer wieder eine Differenz ziehen und „kognitiv“ schlicht als kalten rationalen Prozess mißcharakterisieren, werden hier und im Folgenden der Klarheit halber beide Begriffe aufgeführt.



Caption: A comparison of self-perception and observation of another (empathy). The observer of another translates the unclear situation in a temporal progression and invents a solution to problems.

As indicated situations suited for empathy involve a trajectory into a future. Connected with this future is another aspect of empathy, which is the imagined self-interest of the other.²⁴ Co-experiencing another's situation means to face an open future, shaped but not fully determined by the situation. This future has some urgency—and we will discuss how only specific situations are well suited for empathy, namely situations that present themselves as clear, relevant, and decisive—otherwise the situation is not interesting and not likely to draw empathetic attention to itself. By assuming that the other has self-interest, the observer gains an idea of which future developments are to be hoped for and which ones are to be feared. Hence, to feel empathy is not a neutral activity. It requires

²⁴ Das englische „self-interest“ ist im Gegensatz des deutschen „Eigennutz“ oder wertneutral. Daher soll hier der Begriff des Selbst-Interesses betont werden, Vgl. Kelly Rogers, Hg., *Self-interest: An anthology of Philosophical Perspectives from Antiquity to the Present*, London: Routledge, 2014.

planning a future for the other. Self-interest, to be sure, is not always simple and does not follow a single or universal standard. It is a projection. One can wish for the other to suffer now for some future good, and the future good can be various things: emotional well-being, wealth, glory, health, normality, etc.

Now we are in the position to sharpen our definition of empathy. Empathy is the co-experience of the other's situation. To co-experience means to project oneself into the situation of the other to experience it emotionally and cognitively, typically more clearly than the other can experience it; co-experience involves anticipating future developments and evaluating them from the perspective of the other's self-interest.

A direct simulation of emotions is not a necessary condition or a result of empathy (although both can happen). Empathy also does not necessarily lead to altruism, even though it often does. The exceptions and objections to the empathy-altruism hypothesis are the target of this book.

2. The Dark Sides of Empathy. An Overview

From here we can venture to offer the impatient reader an initial overview of the arguments of the book. The dangers arising from empathy are grouped into five trends, and these trends correspond to the five chapters.

I. Empathy can lead to self-loss (while also delivering aesthetic pleasure to the empathizer). Via a reading of Friedrich Nietzsche, we will discuss the premises and consequences of a "self" and "self-loss." From Nietzsche, we will embark on a discussion of the twenty-first-century studies, which suggest a decreasing of empathic concern in our modern age. Is that such a bad thing?

II. Empathy can lead to a painting of the social world in black & white, a thinking in terms of friend and enemy. As we will suggest, conflicts may emerge not despite of, but because of empathy since human beings tend to quickly take sides in conflicts and glamorize their chosen side using empathy. The chapter provides a general architecture of

empathy and proposes a three-person model of empathy. It will be suggested that we often do not act morally because we feel empathy, but rather that we moralize to justify our quick and empathetic side-taking. One of the case studies concerns a school experiment in Northern Ireland.

III. Empathy is often conflated with mere identification, and as a result falsely identified. A common pattern works as follows. Instead of empathizing with a person in need, we identify with a helper figure, even if the helper is only imaginary. This identification may boost the identifier who pats himself on the back for his good deed, but at the expense of the person in need. The chapter discusses the cases of humanitarian aid and of Angela Merkel's refugee politics.

IV. It is probably not an exception that people use empathy to enjoy the pain of others. Empathic sadism is not so much a phenomenon of so-called psychopaths (who actually may feel less sadistic empathy than other people), but rather an emotional and intellectual enjoyment that most people can feel in situations of altruistic punishment, tragedies, but also more or less everyday events, such as embarrassment, bullying, and domination. It will be considered to what degree a sadist, including an everyday sadist, wishes the discomfort of others in order to feel empathy with them. The chapter also includes a discussion of the common Hollywood trope of the "empathic rapist."

V. Another morally dangerous variant of empathy consists in vampirism, which takes place when one person expands his or her experience via empathy. Such a form of empathic vampirism can be found in helicopter parents and stage moms, but also in fans and stalkers, who live via others to experience what they otherwise could not.

In the conclusion, we will face the question of whether and how empathy should be taught and promoted. Our answer will be *yes*, though not so much for moral reasons, but rather for the sake of increasing the complexity of our perception. Our perception and awareness of social situations becomes more complicated when we consider and share the various cognitive and emotional perspectives of others.

[...]

[...]

[...]

II. Chapter Painting in Black and White

1. The Architecture of Empathy

Let's begin with an extreme example. Hannah Arendt described how even the more reasonable-seeming Nazis were able to "free" themselves of sympathy for their victims. The "trick" Himmler taught them was "to reverse their feelings of sympathy as they formed, to turn them from others back onto themselves. So that the murderers, whenever the horror of their actions overcame them, would say to themselves, not 'what am I doing?' but rather 'how I suffer, to carry out such a terrible duty, how heavily this burden weighs on me!'²⁵ Anyone can use this strategy at any time to feel like a victim and demand sympathy. What this strategy most of all shows is that empathy cannot be reduced to a simple process that is activated and then follows a set path, but rather is a complex process characterized by blockages and diversions. In order to show such complexities at work, this chapter will propose a general architecture of empathy, and then explore in more detail the catalysts of empathy.

The first chapter already introduced the idea that there is such a thing as too much empathy. Nietzsche goes so far as to claim that the empathetic person permanently loses his identity and can only recognize himself in other beings, to whom he subordinates himself. To this argument we now add new research, according to which today's youth, at least in America, is characterized by a rapid decline in empathy. This raises the question of when it is a problem to have too much or too little empathy. Is an empathy deficit one of the great challenges of our time, as Barack Obama thinks, or does it constitute rather a liberation from dependence on others?

The question of too much or too little empathy led us, in the previous chapter, to general cultural and philosophical questions. Now we want to link these questions to the

concrete physical, behavioral mechanisms of empathy. We will ask what control mechanisms our bodies develop to distinguish between an empathy surplus and an empathy deficit. What might be the consequences of such mechanisms of empathy-management?

This chapter proposes an architecture of empathy. The architecture assumes that empathy as a whole is influenced by the risk of excess, by a loss of self. This chapter discusses how the control mechanisms can be seen *as a part* of empathy. This will lead to a tripartite model of empathy. These are not three parts that can be isolated as three different neural routines; it is a way of describing empathy as an observed phenomenon.

This architecture makes it possible to ask in what cases empathy is allowed, and in what cases it is repressed. The central question then becomes: what causes empathy, and what allows it? This will bring us to the bias, prejudice, and injustices that empathy can cause—the dark side of empathy.

The mere ability to empathize can only be one aspect of a full model of the actual use of empathy. It is necessary to also locate when and how empathy is activated. Most people are equipped with an impressive range of empathetic abilities, which are richly interwoven with our experiences and our identity. Before outlining some of these capabilities, let us first consider the sheer variety of empathetic abilities.

A glance at the early history of empathy research reveals a strong aptitude for empathy. The first empathy research was based on a concept from German aesthetics called *Einfühlung*, which literally means “feeling into.” In 1909, Edward Titchener coined the English word “empathy” as a translation of *Einfühlung*, which word was then back-translated into German as *Empathie*, and, with slight variations, emerged in other European languages at around the same time.²⁶ Earlier, Theodor Lipps, professor of aesthetics at the University of Munich, a follower of the German philosopher Robert Vischer, had analyzed the ways in which observers project themselves into crudely drawn forms and figures. His work rested on the idea that all aesthetic pleasure is built on a core of self-encounter. If you take pleasure in observing a geometrical figure, Lipps claims, it is because you can see yourself in it.

26

In his book, *Aesthetics: The Psychology of Fine Art*²⁷ Lipps argues that the observer gives life to not only the simplest drawings, but also to the most complex works of art, by projecting his own feelings, moods, and emotions onto them. This process of loading our feelings into the drawing makes manifest and objective something of ourselves, which we can confront and experience like an external object.

Lipps emphasizes the way human perception in general has a tendency to mentally transform dead things into living ones.²⁸ This tendency could be called an “empathy bias,” which consists of imagining even inanimate objects as if they were alive, and so to treat them as living beings. Animated films make use of this every time they bring a broom to life.

A colleague of Lipps, Wilhelm Worringer, gave this empathy-bias a German name: *Einfühlungsdrang*, an “urge to project feelings,” based on the original German word for empathy, *Einfühlung*. Worringer criticized this urge, not because he didn’t believe in it, but, on the contrary, because he thought it was ubiquitous in human experience. Against what he saw as an all too powerful empathy-urge, Worringer offered another theory of how we see art, based on abstraction. Worringer’s famous 1907 book *Einfühlung und Abstraktion (Empathy and Abstraction)* tries and fails to work out such a model.²⁹ He succeeds at demonstrating the power of empathy, but he runs out of steam as soon as he tries to come up with an alternative, managing only to say that it, the crucial concept, is different from imitation and empathy, but nothing else.

By now, the discovery of an empathy-bias is old news. Everyone knows the experience of having feelings aroused by a stick figure, a smiley face, or a human-looking robot. Vittorio Gallese and his colleagues have demonstrated that mirror neurons respond to aesthetic experiences and works of art much as they do when faced with a real person.³⁰ You don’t have to be a genius at marketing to know that products from cars to toothpaste can get you to buy by smiling at you. But this was big news around 1900, as trends towards simplicity in art paved the way for modern design, and at the same time, branding and marketing, in the forms we know them today, were invented.

27

28

29

30

In the history of aesthetics, Lipps is known for his theory of aesthetic projection. One can indeed accuse him of reducing the aesthetic object to an instrument of the observer's wish to expand the self.³¹ Which makes it a bit ironic that Lipps is behind much of the academic interest in interpersonal empathy. Consider for instance Edward Tichener, Edith Stein, who saw human empathy as a kind of projection, Edmund Husserl, the phenomenologist. Even if Daniel Batson dismissed the idea of aesthetic empathy, the origin of the modern scientific study of the phenomenon still can be traced back to Lipps.

The point of this short historical digression is not to defend Lipps' reputation, or even to show how young this discussion actually is. (Speaking of the age of the discussion, it is enough to mention Aristotle's discussion of sympathy, or the enlightenment view of empathy proposed by Hume, Lessing, and Adam Smith.) No, the point here is to show the importance in the history of the idea of just this tendency towards over-empathizing, towards an empathy-bias. This tendency probably has a real influence on human perception. Today we would not use words like "drive" or "urge," but this view nevertheless casts light on the idea that humans have a fundamental inclination towards animation, anthropomorphizing, the projection of feelings, and empathy, even in cases when there is no other living being, human or otherwise.

There is a second factor informing this tendency, which reinforces our quickness to extend empathy. Apparently we humans have not one, but many, techniques at our disposal for coming to an empathetic understanding of our fellow man. I mentioned some of these in the introductory discussion of the diversity of terms for empathy. The range of possible mechanisms, which scientists have studied in recent decades, stretches from the intellectual practice of purposeful guessing of feelings and the calculation of another's thoughts, as far as the unconscious emotional simulations and selective imitation, such as when you mimic someone's body language.

Even if we limit ourselves to a more narrow definition of empathy – for example the "perception action model," which describes the use of similar neural processes and routines on the part of the one acting and the one observing – we still encounter a number of ways that this emotional co-experience can be activated. Impetuses of this kind include

31

an unconscious emotional infection in large crowds (as in cases of mass hysteria³²), the observation of strong feelings, the observation of goal-oriented behavior, the taking on of a perspective, the experience of being transported into a fictional world,³³ taking on a particular body language, and intellectual focus. It is therefore probable that between these various empathy-related reactions there regularly occurs a transition from one to the other. What was initially an intellectual impulse can unleash emotional processes, and so on.

At the end of this chapter we will imagine specific cultural catalysts of empathy. It is striking, in any case, to activate the empathy apparatus in the brain.

For now it is enough to say that we are primed for empathy in various ways. Both our biology and our culture lead us towards empathy. Our social environment is very good at cultivating empathy, because our emotional and intellectual understanding of other gives us palpable advantages. We are incited, trained, and seduced by empathy. You could also say that we live in a world of social and empathetic noise. People right in front of us are in competition with for our empathetic attention with people connected to us by modern media. Our tendency towards empathy is easily activated, to the point that we are quick to empathize with non-living things, imaginary beings, or people long dead. In a word: we are hyperempathetic beings.

Hyperempathy sounds like a good adaptation for a social creature. Nevertheless, we must remember what evolutionary biologists call the “costs.” Empathy brings, as described above, the risk of self-loss, a loss of one’s own interests and perspectives. Self-loss was described above as an effect of simulation, adaption, or taking on the perspective of another, leading to a weakening of one’s own interests, feelings, self-perception, intensity, identity, self-esteem, or self-awareness. In chapter one we portrayed this self-loss not as the loss of a straightforward psychological instance, as the ego, but rather as an *enselfening* of the other; the other is conceived of as overly powerful, more real and more important than the idea that one has of oneself. Instead of self-loss, it would be more appropriate to speak of a self-conception, but of a self that is denied to oneself, and which is attributed only to the other. Like a movie hero, who appears superhuman to us,

32

33

just so can others appear to use because of empathetic self-loss. Only the other holds onto his self, or his ego. This “self-loss” always showed the way to a richer experience, through the experience of the other. That, too, we should keep in mind.

From this discovery we come to the second stage in the proposed model. If people are hyperempathetic, we must ask what mechanisms or techniques we use to avoid or limit the loss of the self. To put it simply: how do we manage to control our empathy, to focus it and to block it? One answer would be that empathy can only be learned and perfected if our emotional and intellectual attention for others can be turned off, filtered, and steered. Without mechanisms or techniques of partial empathy-blocking, we would live in a world of permanent loss of perspective, in a perpetual state of Stockholm Syndrome. In the extreme case we would be unwillingly drawn into the perspectives not only of other people, but also possibly of animals or even mythological and fictional creatures, and made to share their real or imaginary experiences. In this ongoing shared experience or simulation of others we would lose our sense of self, as we saw Nietzsche argue.

Just as there are different capacities leading to empathy, we can tentatively suggest that there is not a single form of empathy-blocking, but rather a number of them. This would mean a range from conscious steering to learned forms of callousness and numbness,³⁴ corresponding to the variety of forms of empathy.

On the level of neural activity there are, in addition to activating mechanisms, suppressing ones. On top of mirror neurons, there may be a group of neurons that suppress other neurons.³⁵ We should be careful here, however, because the connection between mirror neurons and empathy is not yet well understood. We can imagine that the neural routines of mirror neurons proceed semi-automatically, pre-reflexively and pre-rationally,³⁶ but this does not mean that these activities necessarily lead to empathy.³⁷

At the other end of the spectrum of control mechanisms are conscious processes with which one can selectively distance oneself from others. We can learn to block empathy. A surgeon for instance should not empathize too much with the patient he is

34

35

36

37

operating on. We can assume that people in many specialized occupations develop techniques for keeping their empathy under control. Think of judges,³⁸ caregivers, doctors, and paramedics.³⁹

Between the extremes of completely unconscious controls and the learned techniques of empathy blocking, we can posit a variety of other suppression methods. These can be described on the neural and on the psychological and cultural levels. How these mechanisms should be classified is largely an open question. What constitutes empathy blocking? What role is played by higher level psychic systems (such as “consciousness?”) What role do collective cultural techniques play (apparently entire cultural groups can develop exceptions to empathy – for a long time we did not show much empathy for slaves, for instance)? And under what conditions will empathy be allowed after all?

It would be premature to offer a thorough and systematic overview of all empathy blockers. Instead we can present a series of particular phenomena of blocking, control, or suppression of empathy.⁴⁰ Among these is the strategy attributed to Himmler of redirecting empathy from the victim to yourself, the poor perpetrator.

As mentioned in the introduction, empathy can be limited when it comes to the suffering of people we find to be morally in the wrong. Most of us tend to feel less empathy when we see the guilty person get punished if we think they deserve it.⁴¹ What interests us here is that the attribution of guilt can serve as a catalyst for blocking empathy. At least the data suggest that claims like “it is her own fault” influence the intensity of empathy.

The insightful study by Tania Singer takes “guilt” in the narrow sense exemplified by actively cheating at a game. But we can ask ourselves in the context of empathy blocking to what extent other forms of blame can serve as a catalyst. If you revoke a teenager’s driving privileges due to bad behavior, you are also charging them with possibly hurting themselves. Does this mean you have less empathy with this teenager?⁴² And what role does language play in the process? We have just spoken of blame. Is that

38

39 I would have mentioned soldiers. Just saying.

40

41

42 I don’t think I understand this example

quite the right concept? When we think a cheater deserves to be punished, this could be led back to a moral intuition of the sort named by Jonathan Haidt, which is subject to only a slight rational control.⁴³

We can speculate as to how the withholding of empathy or empathy blocking emerges. One possibility is blame or declaration of guilt through language.⁴⁴ We could also move beyond language to investigate whether accusations that cannot be taken back play a special role. Such charges, like particularly strong defamations, could continue to play a role even when they are found to be groundless.

This could take many forms beyond the question of guilt. One group could just declare another one bad, and its members less valuable. The people characterized in this way, marked by language, would attract less empathy, regardless of their individual behavior. History, and not only in the twentieth century, is all too full of examples of this.

Another explanation could be that a person who behaves badly is mentally marked. In this case that would mean that we feel less empathy for the marked person, when something bad happens to them, even if we do not see it, either causally or even temporally, as a punishment for what they did wrong. Still another possibility could be that whenever we see an empathetically relevant scene, we come to a quick and rarely conscious judgment⁴⁵ as to whether we should empathetically engage. Experiments can distinguish between this and other variations, perhaps by changing the order in which information is received, or by expanding the time between crime and punishment.

One could speculate as to whether the mechanisms outlined here play some part in ethnic, national, or religious violence. But rather than pursue this thought, for our purposes here it is more relevant to determine that empathy clearly can be held back or suppressed, either individually or collectively, in response to previous suffering. The same scene of punishment can spark empathy in one case, while at the same time leaving many observers cold – or even releasing positive feelings in the reward center of the brain.

Another case may be similar. Subjects were shown pictures of people in pain. At the same time they were told how much money the pictured person received for

43

44

45

undergoing such pain. When the sum was big enough, the subjects showed little empathy. When the same people in the pictures were said to have received little or no compensation, the fMRI measured significant levels of empathy.⁴⁶

Another widespread form of empathy control appears to be part of group membership. We know from numerous studies that people on average show less empathy with people who are not a part of their group. It has also been confirmed that similarity between observer and observed plays a major role.⁴⁷ In any case it is not clear whether it makes more sense to speak of empathy blocking, or of empathy preference.

Another case of possible empathy blocking has to do with the familiarity of a situation. When I ask my students what role it could play for empathy if you have experienced a particular situation yourself, before watching someone else go through it, they consistently answer that personal experience is important for empathy. These students imagine that it is easier to share feeling and emotions when one can recreate them from past experience. That sounds like a reasonable speculation, and it is supported by empirical evidence based on the direct observation of physical pain.⁴⁸ Nevertheless there are gaps in the research, if not downright uncertainties. It is possible that in certain situations the opposite may be the case. When we have already experienced something, it could be that we are less curious, and one attraction of empathy is to share an experience that would normally be inaccessible to us. Or when we already know that a particular experience is “not so bad,” we withhold our sympathy and may even be repulsed by what strikes us, in retrospect, as a pathetic overreaction. Or when we have an aversion to what happened and do not wish to go through it again. In these cases, having previously experienced something can be cause for callousness, aversion, or avoidance, and therefore a top-down mechanism of empathy blocking.⁴⁹

The range of possible forms of empathy blocking is wide. One way to organize the various forms of empathy blocking is by their degree of consciousness. We can also distinguish between blocking directed at the subject and at the object. Some techniques are aimed at directing empathy away from a particular object, perhaps because of that

46

47

48

49

person's guilt, or because he belongs to the wrong group. Blocking techniques aimed at the subject, on the other hand, are those aimed at simply stopping an individual from forming empathy at all. Likewise, we can organize empathy blocking on a scale from the more individual acquired forms, to cultural patterns.

This model calls for empathy blocking as a countermeasure to the underlying hyperempathy, or empathy bias. This necessity of empathy blocking can also be derived from a different, but related source. Stephanie Preston and Frans de Waal have proposed an influential model of empathy, according to which infants, like many social animals, have a hard time distinguishing emotionally between themselves and others.⁵⁰ This primitive condition of undifferentiatedness between the self and the other can be seen in cases of shared emotions, or emotional infection. When an individual feels a strong emotion, like fear, this emotion can infect an entire group and unleash a collective panic.⁵¹ Social creatures find themselves in a sphere of "shared multiplicity."⁵² Preston and de Wall suggest that humans and other species can learn to distinguish between themselves and others, and thereby ignore the emotions of others. Seen in this way, the function of the ego or the self is to protect the individual from the emotions of others. Empathy would therefore consist in understanding and feeling with the other, while at the same time being aware of the difference between the self and the other.

Preston's and de Waal's model is insightful, if instances of emotional infection or herd behavior are the starting point of an investigation. But the model is problematic from other points of view. It assumes that selfhood is an acquired feeling. And it is usually assumed that emotional infection is a primitive mimicry limited to a few strong emotions and affects, primarily fear, aggression, and exhaustion.⁵³ These strong acts would have to be central to the development of the sense of self. In cultures or populations with little aggression and fear, there would have to be almost no sense of individual identity. A further problematic consequence of the Preston-de Waal model is the fact that it presents empathy as a kind of regression to an earlier stage of less differentiation.

50

51

52

53

This is only the beginning of the list of possible top-down mechanisms for the restraint, blocking, or neutralization of empathy. There is much work yet to be done.

The third step in the architecture of empathy consists of the mechanisms and techniques that bypass or neutralize the block, so that empathy can take shape. If we are in fact correct that humans are hyperempathetic (step 1), but learn to suppress, control, and limit our empathy (step 2), the next question is to determine when we nevertheless do feel empathy.

A series of possibilities emerge for this third step. The schematic representation allows an initial taxonomy. I should emphasize, however, that this is a theoretical construct. The metaphorical nature of this overview is highlighted by the quotation marks. Of course there are cases where the blocking mechanisms never come into play, where the external impulse to share feelings (like the sight of an injured person) leads straight to empathy. Empathy is, we can say with some confidence, accessible by a number of top-down processes and steering mechanisms.

A. The first possibility is to “bypass” the empathy block. Such a case emerges when the blocking mechanism is simply not prepared for a particular stimulus of empathy. Perhaps it “specializes” in other sorts of cases, and is overcome in this way. In this case one can imagine that the blocking technique will be quick to catch up to this stimulus, to be better prepared the next time it comes up.

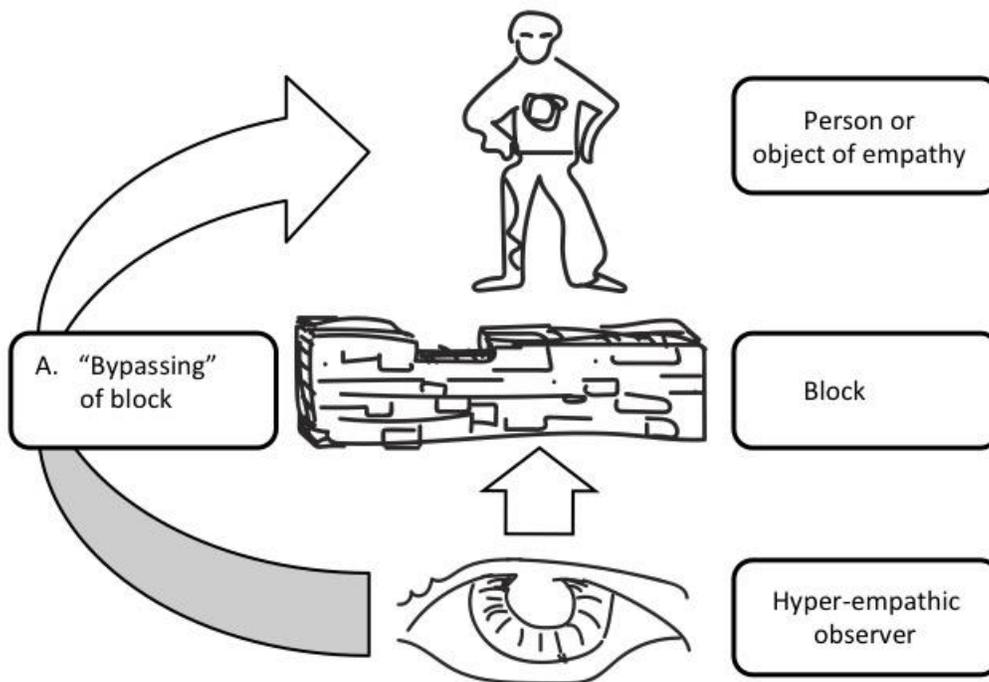


Fig.: Bypassing of the empathy block.

B. Another case emerges when the catalyst for empathy is so strong that it “breaks through” the block. The “strength” of an empathy catalyst could mean a few different things here. Bodily reactions come into play here, as watching others is so often a corporeal experience. The strength of a catalyst could also be a matter of the clarity or precision. Films, works of art, and stories can be powerfully moving because of the clarity of the situation, which is not clouded by prior knowledge. Other “strong” catalysts of empathy could be childlike-characteristics, or unjust suffering. The strong emotions of outrage in the face of unjust suffering “spills” into empathy.

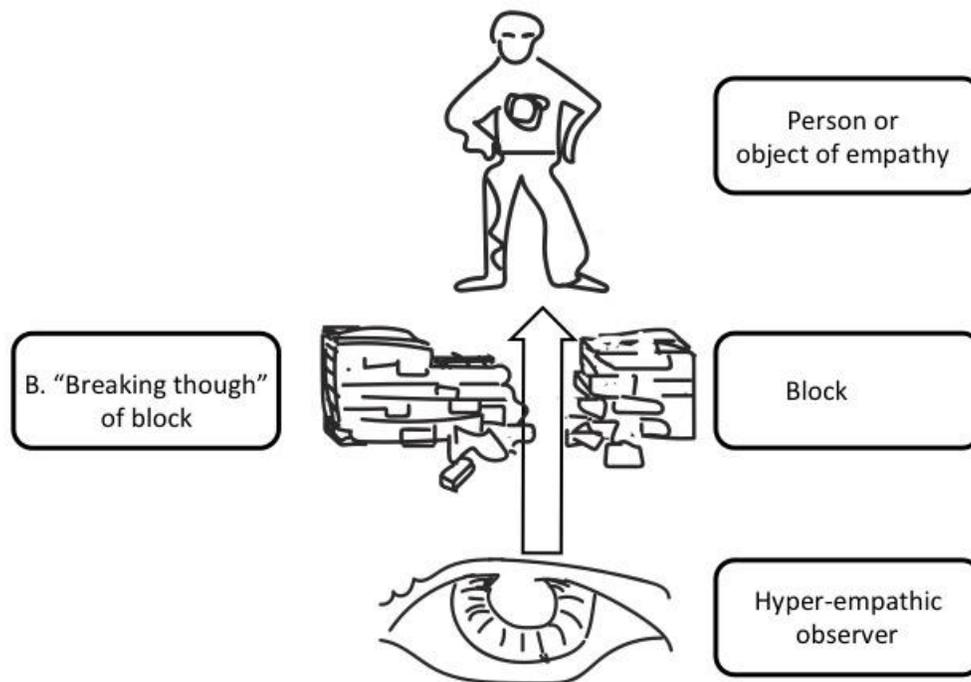


Fig.: Breaking through of empathy block.

C. It could be that the “strong” catalysts of empathy, which “break through” the defense system (as in case B), have the form of culturally positive, sanctioned occasions for empathy. In such cases there is a kind of “tunnel” through the empathy block. For certain catalysts empathy is allowed, and the empathy block “stands down.” There are situations where the external stimulus is sanctioned in advance, so that the block never enters the picture. There are various occasions for this, which could be different from culture to culture and from group to group. A child who has hurt himself and is crying will arouse empathy in one culture, while in another people will find the noise irritating. Cultural codes of behavior determine our expectations for ourselves, as to whether we should show empathy or not.

This leads us to a further observation, namely that we can also be consciously made to feel empathy. When it is called for, or we summon it ourselves, we can “turn on” our empathy. Instead of “turning it on,” this could really be a “shutting down” of our

empathy blockers. This conscious release of empathy is similar to the cultural channeling of empathy. In both cases it is clear that the impulse does not come from the stimulus, but rather from the subject and his readiness to empathize. The difference between cultural “tunnels” and deliberate “shutting down” is simply a matter of whether it is a conscious action or not.

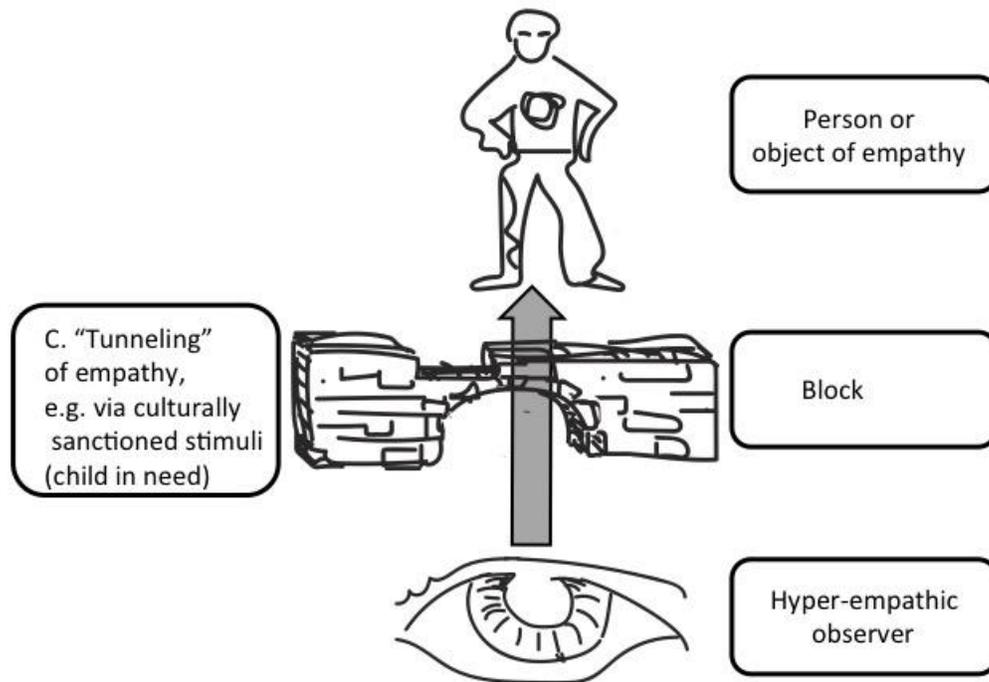


Fig.: Tunneling of block via a culturally positively sanctioned form of empathy.

D. A further possibility for the partial blocking of empathy is the temporary allowance of empathy. Two possibilities come into focus here, distinguished by the mechanism that sets the time interval.

The first case is when the block itself governs the amount of time. This could be seen as a kind of “pulse,” whereby the block becomes passable for a short period of time, then closes again.

The second case creates its mechanism for limiting the time of empathy though the interplay of subject and object. If the subject has decided that empathy is needed for a

particular amount of time, it is easier to “lower the gate” because he knows that after a short time he can “return” to himself. An example of the difference between empathetic behavior for limited and unlimited times can be seen in the case of acute and chronic illnesses. In the case of an acute illness, such as an injury, an observer can assume that the illness will get worse, then hopefully better, in a short period of time. But in the case of a chronic illness, the hope for recovery is gone. And in fact the evidence shows that people show more empathy for acute patients than chronic ones.⁵⁴ This may be disappointing from an ethical point of view, but it fits well with this architecture of empathy.

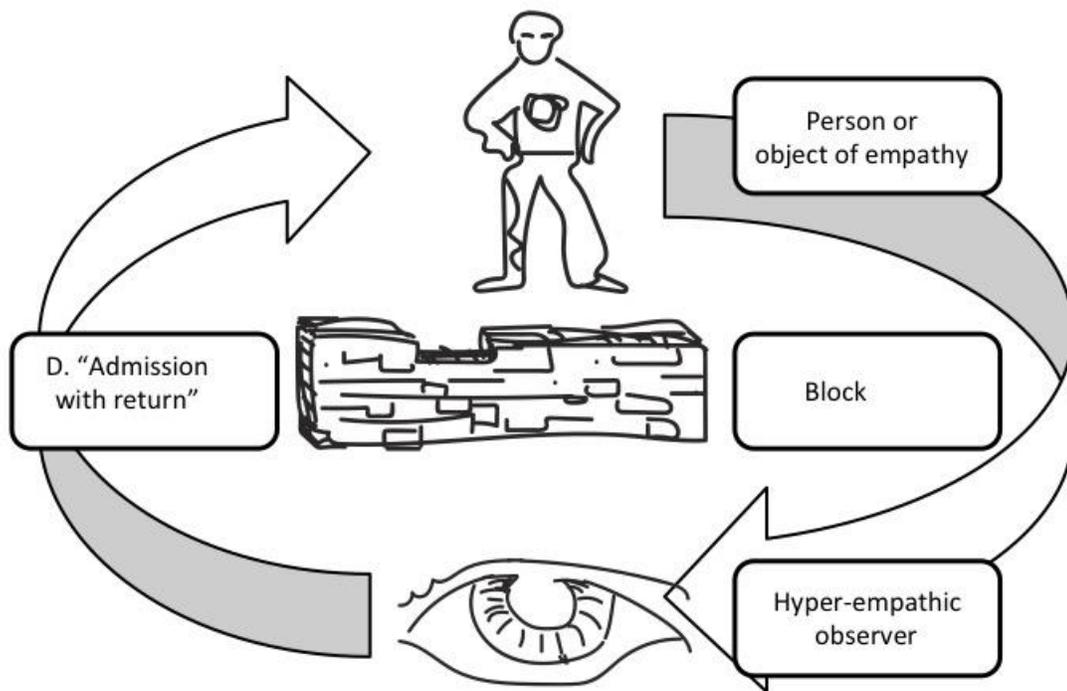


Fig.: Short-term empathy with “return.”

Another example of our preference for time-limited empathy comes from fiction. Most people are prepared to step into the shoes of a fictional character for a short time, even if that character faces the most terrible suffering, as in a tragedy. Works of fiction have, as

54

Aristotle writes, a beginning, a middle, and an end. In other words, works of fiction, and narrative in general, promise to come to an end, when we can withdraw our empathy. When the play is over, or the story wraps up, we can “return” to ourselves.⁵⁵

Both of these cases, the illness and the tragedy, are more complex than this short overview can show (we will return to tragedy later on). The point here is simply that the promise of an end can provoke empathy, and get us to lower our defenses.

This interplay between the subject and object of empathy also shows that it would be too simple to always look for the cause of empathy in the external world. Indeed the subject, in his readiness to empathize, can look for an object, and – in the case of fiction and fantasy – even invent one himself.

E. A further possibility for the activation of empathy is that a secondary activity in the brain, some sort of irritation or dynamic process, which actually has nothing to do with empathy, “spills over” and circumvents or shuts down the block. One such possibility will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, when we discuss side taking. The list of possible secondary activities is long. It includes nearly all forms of attentiveness to others, even when they do not directly touch upon empathy. Strong emotions like love and passion, as well as evaluation and judgment of others, either in moral cases or competition, choice scenarios and contests. Even merely paying attention to someone else can strengthen our hyperempathetic tendencies. Because the impulse or stimulus does not emerge from typical empathy situations, you could say that the blocking mechanism is “asleep,” and can therefore be easily “sidestepped.”

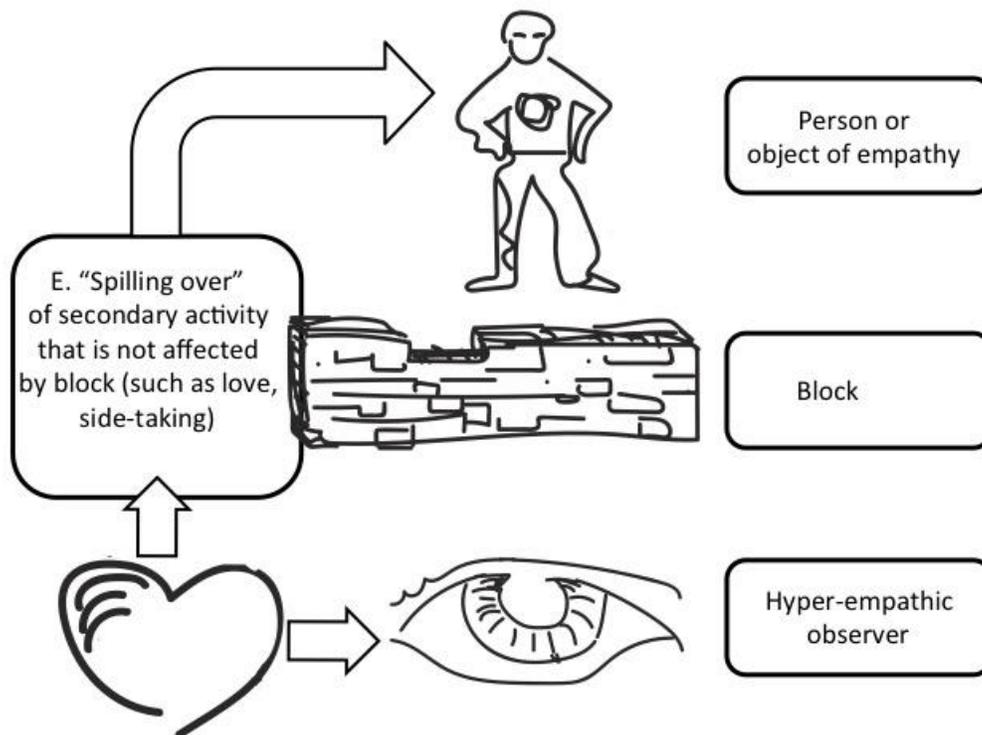


Fig.: Secondary activity “spills over” and becomes a trigger of empathy.

F. Finally there is a possibility that rests on the unity of the entire architecture described here, such that when one part of it is activated, the entire system of empathy routines is activated. It would therefore be at least theoretically possible that the activation of some empathy blocks in turn activate empathy. Whoever blocks empathy, can become correspondingly more fixated on the object of the blockade, and thus fuel a secondary empathy reaction, just as some romantic heroes fall in love with the very person they most despise. At first glance this seems to be a paradox. But when you think that every component of the architecture can be a part of the empathy routine, it becomes clear that the entire empathy architecture is mobilized when one element is set into motion. Routes already taken can be contested; the withholding of empathy for the sake of punishment can lead, later on, to a secondary manifestation of empathy.

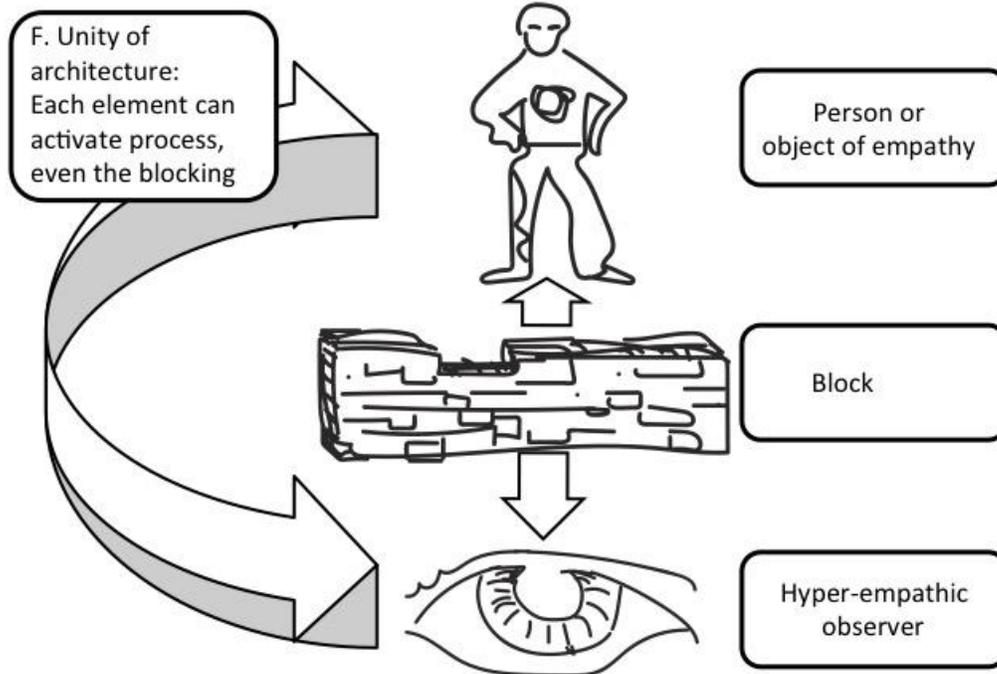


Fig.: Unity of empathy architecture: Each element can become trigger to start entire process.

I would like to emphasize once again that this proposed architecture is not a representation of the brain and its components. This model offers rather a phenomenological description of logically delineated processes of empathy. The brain is imagined here as a black box, which we are trying to understand using only input and output. The central purpose of this model is in the embedding of our principle capacities for empathy in social, cultural, and individual processes, which determine when we actually feel, or activate, empathy.

The three-stage architecture of empathy allows us to formulate the complex balance of empathy and empathy blocking. It also allows us to predict that empathy will be the strongest when it is engaged by certain secondary activities. Central to these considerations are individual and cultural differences in the use of empathy. Starting from the general capacity for empathy, as described by theory of mind, or simulation,

individual differences in the use of empathy would be hard to understand. One could imagine that different people have different degrees of empathetic ability. This can be measured in the case of major deficiencies of empathy, for example autism. But this does little to explain the pattern of empathy activation for most people in daily life. When and how do people who have a disposition for empathy use it? And when don't they?

By understanding the blocking mechanisms as part of the architecture of empathy, we become aware of the complex individual differences in the use of empathy. This frees us from the oversimplified idea that the more empathetic person is always the better person. We can see the importance of our mechanisms for blocking empathy.

In the following we will turn to one secondary activity that may be of particular interest for empathy.

2. The Three-Person Model of Empathy

The three-stage architecture of empathy proposed above implies that it is not sufficient to explain the emergence of empathy to show that humans have the capacity to empathize. They must be made to use empathy in a particular concrete situation, to think and feel empathetically, and what's more their blocking mechanisms must be deactivated. We suggested that certain external stimuli are important, say, a child in danger, which we observe. But internal preparations, experiences, or attempted empathy blockers are just as important in explaining why and how empathy actually takes place.

One catalyst of empathy consists in the dynamics of side-taking, when an observer is witness to two parties, and decides between them. Now we will explain this in more detail, beginning with an example.

I write this chapter in the heat of the 2016 primary season, the stage when Americans tend to examine not the policies, but the personalities, of the candidates. Among the Republicans, the businessman and political outsider Donald Trump has surprised everyone by taking the top spot in polls and the first few contests. His election

as president is suddenly a realistic possibility. His sudden emergence has not only divided voters, but entrenched them in opposing camps. You have to be for or against Trump. The two remaining candidates on the Democratic side, Hillary Clinton, long a public figure, and the Socialist Bernie Sanders, are not dividing voters in the same way. So what brings about such deep divisions when it comes to Donald Trump?

In the debates and in his campaign appearances, Trump has behaved differently than people are used to from a politician, and to all appearances allows himself to be guided by spontaneous bursts of emotion. Trump says things that are considered politically unviable, he breaks moral taboos, rails against political correctness and makes derogatory statements against Mexicans, Muslims, women, people with disabilities, and journalists. His foreign policy calls for forceful military interventions and a ban on Muslims entering the US. His domestic policy consists primarily of the claim that all Mexicans are rapists. He has insulted his opponents. He shows little capacity for nuance. He changes his positions even more than classical politicians, he contradicts himself, he spreads misinformation, swears at his opponents, uses sexist slurs and stereotypes. But not all his positions are radical. The only radical thing about him is the self-awareness he projects. Whenever he speaks, he makes off the cuff remarks, contrary to any evidence. And in this way he has drawn the public imagination to him. Every observer has an opinion about him.

In the primaries, every other candidate turned “against” Trump. Even the media focused mainly on him. The outcome can be explained using empathy. His emotions, outbursts, his many violations of taboos, and his self-aware presentation, paired with his image of a political outsider, led a not insubstantial portion of the electorate to see things from his point of view. The fact that he stood there as “one against all” only made him a more attractive object of empathy.

If you take Trump’s side and pair this alignment with empathy, you only ever find more support for your position. For every fit of rage, for every insult and every lapse of judgment, explanations and excuses can be found. Yes, the outpouring of attacks on The Donald, as he is often called, only reinforces for his supporters that they made the right choice. They eagerly wait to see how he will defend himself from the next (self-inflicted) blow. Side-taking, identification, and protectiveness are all blurred together. He has

become the great political baby. And many want to help him, to stand by him, because his feelings have become facts. It may have helped him that Hillary Clinton was portrayed as emotionally cold. He puts himself in the symbolic position of a baby, and it no longer matters that babies should not be running the country.

We can generalize this observation and analyze the interactions of different forces. We start with the human ability to take sides. The importance of this quality—and it is a quality, if a peculiar one, that is probably not found among animals – can hardly be overestimated. It is surely part of our development as social creatures. Humans are uncommonly focused on taking sides, and on the judgment of their fellow humans. While there are forms of coalition building and side taking among some species of animal, most notably among our closest relative, the chimpanzee,⁵⁶ yet, as far as we can tell the influence of such instincts is weaker than among humans. Just think of how unforgiving humans can be, how a judgment about a person, once made, lingers in perpetuity, how rivalries are maintained, and how carefully we observe one another. Nothing comparable has been observed among chimpanzees.

Side taking and moral judgments are surely not the same thing, and the relationship between them is unclear. But it is often the case that we take sides with the one to whom we also feel moral agreement. Still, it is unknown whether side taking follows moral judgment, or the other way around. Do we place someone in the moral right because we are on their side? Or do we take their side because they are morally correct? Both are not only thinkable, but in fact the structure of real behavior. It seems to be a compelling hypothesis, that side taking is the primary, and evolutionarily older, structure, and that moral judgment follows closely on its heels. If this hypothesis is correct, then we have developed moral intuitions because we have taken a position for or against others, perhaps in order to legitimize our position.⁵⁷

Daniel Batson and his colleagues have carried out experiments in which they asked participants to distribute limited goods among people in need. Those who were instructed to avoid empathy distributed the goods according to principle of fairness. But the participants who acted with empathy contradicted rules of fairness and justice, and

⁵⁶

⁵⁷

clearly favored those for whom, following instructions, they formed empathy. From this, the concluded that empathy is at odds with the principles of fairness and justice.

Further evidence for the hypothesis of the primacy of side taking to moral judgements and other forms of more rational decision making is found in the shocking speed with which we judge others. This is true for the judgment of faces, which we form an opinion about in a fraction of a second.⁵⁸ Also in juridical situations most people come to a judgment long before the actual argumentations and the weighing of evidence.⁵⁹

One of the puzzles that this inquiry is meant to solve is the fact that these quickly formed positions tend to stick – even when later information does not match the initial judgment.⁶⁰ In the political primaries, as well, most of the debates served the purpose not of persuading voters to support this or that candidate, but rather to reinforce the correctness of the choice they had already made, to strengthen their support of their side. The answer that I will come to below is that it is empathy that, bit by bit, solidifies the side already taken

Side taking assumes that there is more than one option, and that more than one decision is possible. Even if the choice is more or less determined in advance, it regularly seems to the one deciding that it is purely his decision. The difference between the options does not even have to be particularly significant. This significance is assured, however, once a tension emerges between the positions, like a conflict, a fight, a competition or the like. It is already enough for the people deciding to be different, to have different opinions or roles, and therefore an indirect conflict.

Side taking exists among humans and creatures to which we can attribute a spirit, or will. We don't take the side of an inanimate object, unless it is a robot or an animated object, which we imagine as alive. Beings with a spirit and a will of their own have feelings, thoughts, and intentions that cannot be entirely seen and experienced from the outside. It is not expected of the side-taker to fully understand the side he is taking, to share these feelings, and see these intentions. But we assume he recognizes a *tendency*, or

58

59

guesses one. A tendency is hypothesized from the outside based on perceivable actions, their inclinations, and their implications.⁶¹

From these observations we can now recapitulate the three-person model of empathy.⁶²

[Picture with caption: The three-person model of empathy. An observer sees a conflict, immediately takes one side, sees the situation from that perspective and thereby slowly develops empathy. Which in turn leads to a strengthening and reinforcing of the initial side taking.]

The dynamic relationship between side taking and empathy creates a positive feedback loop. When an observer intuitively and quickly (or slowly, if he can restrain himself) takes the side of A, then he can see the situation from that perspective. But A's point of view imagines the other side, B, is somehow unappealing or wrong. B can therefore be seen as the aggressor who is harming A, whose side the observer has taken. The more the distinct perspectives of the observer and A contrast the two sides, the more probable it becomes that the observer will also share the pain and feelings of A. In a word: the observer experiences the emotional situation of A, and develops empathy.

Empathy is not the end here, but rather the beginning for a renewed side taking and therefore a stronger alignment with this side. It thus becomes all the more likely that the empathetic observer takes with new enthusiasm the side he had already chosen, and firms up his initial judgment in this way.

This positive feedback loop does not have to begin with side taking; it could start at any point. Instead of the initial observation of a conflict and taking one side in it, it could begin with the adoption of a perspective, or with empathy, and then lead to side taking. The key is the alternating confirmation and reinforcement of these three elements (side taking, adopting the perspective, and empathy). The dynamic stays the same.

Two factors make this cycle particularly binding. The first lies in the human capacity for making quick judgments and taking sides. The second is the fact that

⁶¹

⁶²

situations of conflict are particularly relevant to empathy. The clear contrast between A and B, in tension and conflict, allows us to understand exactly the situation of A or B, and to simulate it. The situation of A consists of standing against the other, of being his victim. Such clear situations are uncommonly attractive to empathy (and aesthetically), as described in the introduction. Taking sides heightens the clarity of a situation by preferring one perspective of the other, and often forces one into action, or into a decision.

The three-person model of empathy offers an explanation of how different elements and forms of empathy are tied together through the empathy process, and can revert into one another. On the one hand it is possible to distinguish between a number of capacities and empathy-like forms of behavior, from theory of mind to thoughtful care.⁶³ But on the other hand many of these different behaviors frequently work together in daily life, including those we not generally associated with empathy. An initially rational observation, that leads to side taking, can soon lead to a very emotional empathy. By the same token, a strongly emotionally colored and spontaneous empathy can lead to taking another person's side and building rational reasons for doing so, even if we only come up with them after the fact.

This model explains why arbitrary, accidental, superficial snap judgments or side taking can persist and reinforce themselves with empathy, even when they contradict our moral intuitions. Why precisely these people should come together, and not, some others, to form a group, remains uncertain. Maybe the mystery consists of those bonds of empathy that can develop and form a group, when a certain *je ne sais quoi* enters the picture.

Still, we should not underestimate human judgment. Even shockingly quick, intuitive judgments are usually correct.⁶⁴ The simplest heuristics often outpace complex calculations,⁶⁵ and our moral judgments are relatively rarely wrong, at least according to Robert Kurzban and his colleagues.⁶⁶

63

64

65

66

For the sake of completeness it should be mentioned that the model developed here cannot determine what criteria we use for our initial side taking. It is more a matter of tendencies, including:

a) Similarity between observer and one side.⁶⁷ That said, people can still process experiences dissimilar to their own and develop empathy.⁶⁸

b) Strategic calculations, which serve the self-interest of the side taker

c) moral-juristic decision as to which side is more correct.⁶⁹

d) Past experiences with a person⁷⁰

e) “self-reflexive” forms of side taking. Since the observer, as observer, is more passive,⁷¹ he will tend to be more sympathetic to the passive, acted-upon side of the conflict.⁷²

f) The strength of the emotions on display

g) Various cultural frameworks

h) Victimization. One tends to have more empathy with victims, since they are the side more in need of help and generally show stronger emotions.

In summary we can say that empathy, understood in this sense, has above all the function of supporting quick judgments. The support calls for clear behaviors. As a highly social species, we have conflict and discord as part of our daily lives. The dynamic of side taking and empathy allows us to make quick and firm decisions, to jump into conflicts and take clear positions. Codes of behavior, like morals, would not be thinkable if we were not capable of taking positions, and in fact usually did so. The more I feel the pain of one side, the stronger I will come to their aid. Empathy legitimizes both positive and negative behavior towards others. When I have firmly opted for one side over the other, I can punish, or feel schadenfreude at the opposing party. Empathy is the medium that lends itself to turning even quick and accidental side taking into enduring alliances. This appears to suggest that modern aesthetics (an aesthetics know to be somewhat indirect on the matter of clarity) is designed to prevent, or at least delay, such side taking.

⁶⁷

⁶⁸

⁶⁹

⁷⁰

⁷¹

⁷²

From this point we can turn to two of the dark sides of empathy, which are not to be underestimated. First, the calcification of thought into dualistic categories: good and bad, black and white, friend and foe. Second, cultivation of a self-image of victimhood

3. Radicalizing Conflicts, Moralizing

The previous chapter described how empathy can be used to shore and deepen quick side taking judgments. In theory this can lead to polarization, which can turn relatively moderate tensions into acute conflicts. People and groups can be deeply divided in this way. But how does it work in practice?

A particularly drastic instance of polarization is in the case of terrorism. Modern terrorism has its origins in the incendiary nationalism of the nineteenth century, which coincided with the emergence of the mass media. To this extent it is not wrong to describe terrorism as effective marketing. A relatively small number of people manage to put a nation in a state of fear, maybe even a state of shock, and bring attention to their ideas. In spite of the hateful calculus and the brutality of the deeds, the people who commit them are rarely coolly calculating agents of hate. Many of them are rather forced into action by their devotion to a group, a religion, or a leader, more than by a rejection of the dominant culture and ruling powers. Even the assassins and suicide bombers of recent history are more likely to shout “Alahu akbar” than “Fuck the West.” Terrorism is, from this point of view, initially an alignment with, a decision for, one side, and a reasonable degree of sympathy for a movement. There is clearly a number of social causes for the transformation of a side taker into a criminal. Considering recent waves of attacks primarily from Islamic groups against the West, or xenophobic attacks in Europe, or the conflicts between black and white Americans, there is no shortage of attackers who are

socially excluded, lack a broad perspective and see terrorism as one of only a few possibilities for doing something meaningful with their lives. But there are also plenty among their numbers from privileged or at least stable backgrounds. Most terrorists cannot really be described as victims; they are not working through terrible or even traumatic experiences, which could explain their actions as seeking revenge. Rather, they appear to have taken a side and made it their own, and felt its suffering so strongly that they see the defense of this side as their life's calling.

Few moments would therefore seem to be more suitable for initiation than the public funerals of victims from one's own group, the mourning of the families of the victims, or the corresponding narrativizing of the suffering (Islamic) people, or (African American) group, even in anthropomorphized form (as a body, or a wounded lion, etc.). These presentations of the bodies of victims and their suffering are naturally an unparalleled impetus for empathy, which activate latent side taking, or the feeling of group belonging. Thoughts of reward (think of what awaits martyrs in heaven) and maybe even hate and uncontrolled rage are only a secondary drive to action.

One is right to ask how such polarization can be avoided. My colleague Keith Barton reports a fascinating case in which the activation of empathy was able to put the brakes on a worsening conflict. He is professor for comparative pedagogy, and has long been engaged with the conflict in Northern Ireland. School authorities there were tasked with coming up with a history curriculum that was balanced in such a way as to soften for future generations the conflict between Catholics and Protestants. With this goal in mind, history teachers in grades 6 through 8 developed history units that intended to contribute to mutual understanding between the two sides. All the students, including the Protestants, were taught and tested on the reasons why the Catholics supported the Home Rule Bill of 1888, what acts of violence and political injustice the Catholics had suffered, and so on. At the same time, all students, including Catholics, were also charged with understanding the failures and sufferings of the Protestant side. The idea was that by learning to see the conflict from the other perspective, students would develop empathy, which would relativize and soften the hardened opposition of the rival parties. The effort was a success, it seemed, as students learned the new material and received the appropriate grades for their work.

But contrary to all hopes, further study revealed that this new generation of students was just as strongly polarized, and still a long way away from setting aside historical conflicts. In fact, “identification of students with their group’s historical positions grew stronger,” after three years of the new program.⁷³ Studies showed that “students were highly sympathetic towards members of the opposing group: but their sympathy consisted primarily of assimilating the experience of the other into their own frame narrative. Rather than simply ignoring or disregarding the alternative position, students now reinterpreted it.”⁷⁴

What went wrong? There are different ways to interpret the data. One possibility is that the curriculum neglected to directly engage the students emotionally. Barton himself told me that this is what he believes. The curriculum was instead focused largely on the cognitive taking on of differing perspectives. Another possibility is that the pressure from the social milieu in which the students lived, and widespread cultural divisions were simply too strong to leave the students any real choice. In that case it would have been too much to hope for that a history lesson alone could make the difference.

One other plausible explanation is that the structure of empathy itself was working against the peace process. Instead of bridging the divide, empathy here served to strengthen the conflict. McCully and Barton suspect in retrospect that the well intentioned effort itself contained the basis for further polarization.⁷⁵ If empathy is closely interlocked with side taking, as suggested here, then empathy or identification with one side will only be strengthened by being presented with more conflicts, even when they show your own side in a bad light (as argued in the previous chapter).

The main takeaway for the students was that every event in their history could be seen from two sides, namely a Catholic and a Protestant one. This only reinforced the division the program was intended to overcome. And the students knew very precisely which of the sides was their own. Even when the student had learned to take on

⁷³ Keith C. Barton and Alan W. McCully, “Trying to ‘see Things Differently’: Northern Ireland Students’ Struggle to Understand Alternative Historical Perspectives,” in *Theory and Research in Social Education* 40:4 (2012) 377

⁷⁴ Ibid 379

⁷⁵ “You Can Form Your Own Point of View: Internally Persuasive Discourse in Northern Ireland Students’ Encounters with History,” in *Teachers College Record* 112:1 (2010)

cognitively (and probably also emotionally) the perspective of the other side, the curriculum consistently taught them that such a perspective was just that: the other side.

The project was given up. Following this last thought, it would seem to make sense to teach a common history. That would mean for instance emphasizing the famine of 1900, since hunger makes no distinction between rivals.

Similarly we can ask what role side taking and empathy play in other conflicts. Hardly any region of the world has been free of conflict and division in the 19th, 20th, and now even in the 21st century. Even in western democracies, these divisions come up again and again, as the candidacy of Donald Trump showed. The list of civil wars from recent decades is a long one, and there is no need to go through it again. In many of these cases, unlike in Northern Ireland, there is hardly a common history to appeal to.

These conflicts regularly polarize domestic and international observers. Consider the collapse of Yugoslavia, or the Israel-Palestine conflict, or Syria. In each of these conflicts, international observers develop various sympathies. The tensions and conflicts between Israel and Palestine has polarized the international community, from the Arab world to the West, although not always into straightforward factions. For instance, there are numerous pro-Palestinian or anti-settlement protests in Europe. In the light of our discussion about empathy, it is remarkable to see how often the same event can provoke such different reactions. When there are losses and devastation on one side, the sympathizers with that side mourn and lament, while the other side pats itself on the back for its just revenge for some previous atrocity. Both sides see most events as supporting their own position, and so feel ever more empathy for their side, regardless of who the most recent culprit was. Side taking, empathy, legitimizing and moralizing enter into a self-reinforcing dynamic, which is often largely immune to objections.

But it is still important to note that empathy can be used to soften or resolve conflicts. The abolition of slavery is surely historically connected to a rise in empathy (in connection with human rights). But in the case of slavery there were not two sides standing in conflict with one another—there was one side, exploiting the other. *My suggestion here is that empathy, left uncontrolled to its own devices, tends to strengthen, rather than resolve, conflicts.* This is not to say that empathy has no place in conflict

resolution. But the question is: how can it be used productively? The example of Northern Ireland councils caution.

The case of South Africa, to give another example, seems to me not a straightforward one at all, since it was not empathy, but rather the forging of a new, shared, identity that stood at the heart of the matter. The methods of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission are important because they reached forgiveness as a judicial verdict, independent of disposition, empathy, or side taking. Whoever gave a full confession was forgiven. Perhaps this principle, that forgiveness could be the result of a judicial procedure, is only possible when the truth comes to light through confessions, and the expectation of side taking and empathy is kept in check. The goal of this judicial-political apparatus was to keep the conflict from growing deeper, to set aside punishment in favor of avoiding further escalation. In a word: precisely because side taking and empathy are bound together, the conflict could be settled.⁷⁶

As argued in the context of the architecture of empathy and the three-person model of empathy, empathy solidifies and reinforces quick judgments. Instead of contributing to the settlement of a dispute, empathy far more often becomes itself a part of the problem, which must be overcome.

4. Radicalizing Morality through Fiction

One of the most fundamental features of fiction and mythology all over the world is that it distinguishes clearly between good and evil. In folktales, not only Western ones, good characters reveal themselves through their good actions, while the wicked commit one crime after another, until they meet their just end. Mythology, and an astonishing number

⁷⁶ cf Richard A. Wilson, *The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa: Legitimizing the Post-Apartheid State*.

of canonical literary works, retain just this scheme. To be sure, heroes make more mistakes now, and are less certain of their path, but if they recognize their mistakes and go on to do better the next time, they make it to a happy ending. Even in the aesthetic-emotional exceptions, like tragedies, wickedness is still clearly punished, while the hero finds a glorious ending, and is elevated in the eyes of the audience.

The question arises: how did it come to such a clear division of good and evil in narrative and fiction? Perhaps the historical developments of morality and of fiction are intertwined. It is at the very least quite remarkable that the majority of works of fiction make a clear distinction between good and evil characters. In reality there are seldom such truly good or truly evil people. To make such a distinction in real life is in all probability to be influenced by whether someone is familiar, or strange, or friend or foe. Such an attribution takes actions that could be seen as good or bad, and projects them onto someone's character.

In real life it not very common to use the categories of good and evil when we describe others. (Although my children do tell me that their teachers peg them as either good or bad.) Yet works of fiction display just such clear moral categories. But why? Where does fiction get its black-and-white view of morality? Is it about moral instruction? When you realize that stories and myths have been circulating for thousands of years, perhaps even since humans first began to speak some 70,000 years ago, and that today we still spend our days telling stories,⁷⁷ it is not absurd to imagine that there might an evolutionary explanation for this emphasis on morality in storytelling. Or is it rather a repressive cultural model that keeps revolutionary ideas under control? Or could this model be explained simply by its entertainment value? It may just be pleasant to have clear and straightforward moral pictures in front of you. Many other explanations are possible. Readers of Carl Jung might think of archetypes.

One interesting explanation of this phenomenon is offered by William Flesch.⁷⁸ He argues that fiction instigates and strengthens our moral feeling. More important than identification or empathy with the hero, he claims, is the punishment of evil, and likewise

⁷⁷ cf Jonathan Gottschall, *The Storytelling Animal*

⁷⁸ William Flesch, *Comeuppance: Costly Signaling, Altruistic Punishment, and Other Biological Components of Fiction*

the punishment of those enablers, who stand by and allow evil to be done.⁷⁹ Flesch emphasizes how much of Western literature, from the stories of the Old Testament to Modernity is influenced by the image of poetic justice, which doles out to each just what he deserves. This form finds evolutionary explanations in the necessity of keeping freeloaders in line.

From Flesch's point of view, literature, fiction, and narration serve an important moral function for society. If morality is the goal, we can see that literature creates nearly optimal training conditions to bring up possible mistakes and, with or without empathy, to plant them as an emotional event in individual minds. Even the exaggerations of fiction, the caricaturing of good and evil characters, can serve this purpose by making the audience particularly clearly aware of the markers of immoral behavior.⁸⁰ At the same time fiction can also teach moderation in certain circumstances. Because real life is so often more ambivalent or uncertain than the clear markers of fiction, one could be more inclined to forgive and forego punishment. This too could have a purpose.

In the following, I will present a different argument. Let us begin with a short inventory: there is hardly a single folktale in the Western tradition, or for that matter in most Asian ones, that does not tell us right away who are the good and who the bad characters. The good guys win in the end, and the bad guys are kills, expelled, or defeated. And in epic poetry, mythology, and today's genres, theater and novels, the reader expects that there will be punishments for those who deserve it. A major part of the suspense of many works comes from waiting to see whether everyone gets what they deserve. The Count of Monte Cristo gets his revenge in the end. In the beloved *Game of Thrones* series by George R.R. Martin, and the HBO show, this expectation is manipulated to dramatic effect, when good characters suffer and die, while the villains triumph. Even such manipulations only make the expectations especially strong, and probably more fun, because there is always still the chance that everything could change, and the good guys of the Stark clan (or some other clan that the reader has picked out as their favorite) come into power. Up to that point, one can have fun with the crimes of the villains, imagining that the author is playing with the readers' expectations. This game

79

80

with readers and audience has become a structural principle of any number of popular shows in recent decades. But even then, the basic assumption remains, according to Flesch's claims, that audience and writer both know that the expectation is for good deeds to be rewarded, and bad ones punished in the end.

Following the thoughts of the previous chapters there is another interpretation of this discovery, based not on just punishment, but on the overdetermined contrast between good and evil. If we dive into the world of fiction and mythology, whether in literature, film, or fantasy, we find a world of clear contrasts. The characters emerge clearly. Mostly they are clearly different from one another, or are made that way in the course of the narrative, not only in terms of good and bad, but also any number of other characteristics, say, male and female characters, adventurers and snivelers, good-hearted naïfs and schemers, and so on. These contrasts allow the hearer, reader, or audience, to quickly take one side or the other, and to begin experiencing and evaluating events from the perspective of this side.⁸¹

The cognitive advantage of such a clear model of good and evil lies in the orientation it offers. It is not problem for this model that the difference is not always clear at the beginning of the story; the pleasure of the story often lies precisely in the unmasking of false heroes in order to arrive at clarity. To offer orientation is not the same as to offer an immediate benefit. The benefit only arrive when that clear model has been developed. There is an inherent value in clarity, and in aesthetics, which cannot be translated into social advantages or survival benefits.

Against Flesch's directly functional theory of the moralizing effect of fiction as a way of promoting good behavior, I argue that storytelling and fiction are so beloved because they offer orientation, which permits and encourages the sharing of experience. This principle attractiveness enables in turn numerous other possibilities, from excuses to the celebration of heroes, which become relevant through their narration.

In a secondary way this emphasis on orientation also has morally relevant effects. In keeping with the previous chapter's argument, one can assume that side taking and empathy encourage polarization. In many cases that can be a good thing, morally speaking. We humans are mostly in agreement. That is important, and helps avoid

⁸¹ cf Fritz Breithaupt, *Kultur der Ausrede*

conflicts within a group. Robert Kurzban calls this effect “bystander coordination,” which consists of keeping bystanders from being divided by a conflict, and helping them end up on the same side.⁸² The decisive party for a conflict is the third party, the observers. If they are dragged into the conflict, and take different sides, a simple conflict between two people could divide a large community. This must be avoided, of course. Morality, strengthened by narrative examples, serves as a mechanism here, insofar as people can use it as a guide for which side to pick.

The crux of this argument lies in the fact that people must then actually come to the same side of the conflict. Morality could give some indication of which side to take, but this is unreliable. People in conflict are especially skilled at drawing on the reactions of observers and coming up with plausible arguments for their own position, in order to win over at least some observers. It is even more uncertain which side an observer should take in a fictional conflict, if there is more than one option. There is hardly a fictional creature that won’t find someone to take its side. Zombies were probably invented in the films of the 1980’s for precisely this reason, so they could be more easily killed onscreen, without the risk of attracting empathy. But since then several zombie movies have broken from this model, just as Mary Shelley’s original Frankenstein monster presented a creature with whom the reader could empathize just as much as any other character, simply because no one else seems to have any pity for him. Even zombies are therefore potential recipients of empathy and side taking, all the more reason to conclude that every character in fiction and film is.

Emphasizing the tendency toward agreement creates problems on a higher level. The dynamics of agreements between large groups can lead to massive conflicts and wars. In that case most people naturally sympathize with their own group, the one they know best. But this can be at odds with the alliances between different groups. The tendency towards agreement can polarize precisely because each group thinks it is in the right, and, more importantly, *feels* that it is right. One could try to minimize the warlike potential in humans, as Steven Pinker does, with calls for empathy.⁸³ But we should not disregard the destructive potential of our species. In a war, both sides will have stories

⁸² Vladimir Propp, *The Historical Roots of the Fairy Tale*

⁸³

and fictions at the ready to arouse latent sympathy for their side. Today's nationalism, heightened by fiction, may be a recent phenomenon, but the tendency it represents is an old one.⁸⁴

The thesis for this chapter is: the simple good-and-evil constructions in mythology, fiction, and storytelling are there because they offer clear orientation, but possibly at the cost of moral and social justice. The polarizing overdetermination of good and evil and related dichotomies make stories enjoyable. But at the same time social divisions are deepened and entrenched, which can lead to open conflicts. Of course there are great works of fiction that undermine such simplistic constructs. But the message that sticks for many readers is the division of people into different categories, which completely characterize them. Fiction stirs suspicion.⁸⁵ The moral polarization owing to empathy may offer orientation, aesthetic pleasure, and satisfaction in a simplified way of seeing things, but that does not mean that it achieves an actual cultivation of morality, let alone a positive morality of punishment, as William Flesch suggests.

Polarization has, as already suggested, two fictionalizing effects. The first is in the black-and-white portrayal of the social world. People tend to respond extremely sensitively to moral violations, and mentally “mark” suspect people or groups. However much this dynamic unifies groups, just as much can it deploy different groups against one another.

The second consequence is to encourage self-presentation as the victim to win people over to one's side. To be a victim is associated with the need for help, with authenticity, emotional depth, and with being in the right. This is an old tendency. Nietzsche even railed against it, in the notes to the first chapter of *The Genealogy of Morals*.⁸⁶ Victims or survivors are of course entitled to our sympathy in many cases, as well as our patience and our well wishes. Above all, those who are seen by others as victims must not identify themselves with the role of victim. The least that is permitted to such a person is that he or she can and may help shape their role.

Nevertheless there appears to be something attractive in the role of victim, as even Himmler seemed to understand.

⁸⁴ Steven Pinker, *The Better Angels of our Nature*

⁸⁵ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*

⁸⁶

In my classes I sometimes perform a roleplaying exercise, in which I ask students to argue with one another about a given topic. Perhaps they are supposed to argue about custody of an imaginary child. Or figure out who is responsible for the death of the apartment goldfish. In the course of the conversation they are allowed to think up anything they want to change other people's minds. At the end the class votes on (1) whose argument was best, (2) who inspired more empathy, and (3) who was right, that is, who should receive custody, or the blame for the dead goldfish. The regular result, regardless of whether all the participants knew the rules in advance, is that one of the contestants is voted winner of the debate (1), while the loser of the debate wins at empathy (2).⁸⁷

If you ask the students what they have observed, they by and large explain that the rhetorically weaker side aroused their sympathy. Perhaps he or she was more nervous about speaking in front of the group, or didn't know what to say. They immediately noticed hesitation, embarrassment, or unconfident body language. Even if someone is completely incompetent at argumentation or public speaking, he still wins the most empathy. The speaker with the most self-confidence, on the other hand, remains inaccessible to empathy.

In the final vote of who is right (3), the results are sometimes split between the winners of (1) and (2), but students tend to prefer the winner of the empathy competition, if only because he was the "victim" of the better speaker.

Of course this votes are not conducted under experimental conditions, and perhaps it is only American students, with their fixation on victimhood, who would vote this way. And students were influenced by the context, and knew or suspected that the exercise had something to do with empathy. Nevertheless it is interesting to note how consistently empathy emerges for the weaker speaker, and that this is the very property, being rhetorically weaker, that often leads to a victory in a debate. Perhaps this is Donald Trump's chance.

It is possible to speculate broadly here, and to suggest that perhaps empathy effects equality in the face of intellectual or physical superiority. But, less speculatively, it points to the fact that it can be useful now and again to present yourself as weak, as a

⁸⁷ cf Max Scheler, *Das Ressentiment im Aufbau der Moralen*

“victim.” While most students in these debates were not happy to be put in the weaker position, many students admitted that at a certain point they were strategically seeking out just this role. Thanks to empathy, victims, real and fictional, can sometimes be the winners.

Bibliography

Ackerman, Joshua M, Noah J. Goldstein, Jenessa R. Shapiro und John A. Bargh, "You Wear Me out the Vicarious Depletion of Self-Control", in: *Psychological Science* 20, Nr. 3 (2009), S. 326-332.

Ahoda, Gustav, "Theodor Lipps and the Shift from 'Sympathy' to 'Empathy'" in: *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 41.1. (2005), S.151-163.

Allen, Colin und Marc Bekoff. *Species of Mind: The Philosophy and Biology of Cognitive Ethology*, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1999.

Anderson, Benedict, *Die Erfindung der Nation: Zur Karriere eines folgenreichen Konzepts*, Campus-Verlag, 2005.

Anscombe, G.E.M., *Intention*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1957.

Arendt, Hannah, *Eichmann in Jerusalem. Ein Bericht von der Banalität des Bösen*, München, Zürich: Piper, 2011.

Ariès, Philippe, Michelle Perrot und Georges Duby, *Geschichte des privaten Lebens*, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1989–93.

Assmann, Aleida, und Ines Detmers, Hgs., *Empathy and its Limits*, New York: Palgrave, 2016.

Badiou, Alain, *Paulus: Die Begründung des Universalismus*, Sequenzia-Verlag, 2002.

Bal, Matthijs und Martijn Veltkamp., How does Fiction Reading influence Empathy? An Experimental Investigation on the Role of Emotional Transportation", in: *PloS one* 8.1 (2013): e55341.

Barnes, Jennifer L., Tyler Hill, Melanie Langer, Margaret Martinez und Laurie R. Santos, "Helping Behaviour and Regard for others in Capuchin Monkeys (*Cebus apella*)", in: *Biology Letters* 4, Nr. 6 (2008), S. 638-640.

Baron-Cohen, Simon, Alan M. Leslie und Uta Frith, "Does the Autistic Child have a "Theory of Mind"?", in: *Cognition* 21, Nr. 1 (1985), S. 37-46.

Barton, Keith C. und Alan W. McCully, "“You Can Form Your Own Point of View’: Internally Persuasive Discourse in Northern Ireland Students’ Encounters With History”, in: *Teachers College Record* 112, Nr. 1 (2010), S. 142–181.

Barton, Keith C. und Alan W. McCully, "History, Identity, and the School Curriculum in Northern Ireland: An Empirical Study of Secondary Students' Ideas and Perspectives", in: *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 37.1 (2005), S. 85-116.

Batson, Daniel C., "The Empathy-Altruism Hypothesis: Issues and Implications", in: Jean Decety, Hg., *Empathy: From Bench to Bedside*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2012, S. 41-54.

Batson, Daniel C., "These Things called Empathy: Eight Related but Distinct Phenomena", in: Jean Decety, Hg., *The Social Neuroscience of Empathy*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2009, S. 3-15.

Bechara, Antoine, Hanna Damasio, Daniel Tranel und Antonio R. Damasio, "Deciding advantageously before knowing the Advantageous Strategy", in: *Science* 275, Nr. 5304 (1997), S. 1293-1295.

Birkett, Melissa Ann, "Self-Compassion and Empathy across Cultures: Comparison of Young Adults in China and the United States", in: *International Journal of Research Studies in Psychology* 3.1 (2013).

Bjerregaard, Beth, "An Empirical Study of Stalking Victimization", in: *Violence and Victims* 15.4 (2000), S. 389-406.

Blair, James R., "Responding to the Emotions of others: Dissociating Forms of Empathy through the Study of Typical and Psychiatric Populations", in: *Consciousness and Cognition* 14.4 (2005), S. 698-718.

Bloom, Paul, *Against Empathy*, erscheint: Bodley Head Limited, 2017

Bluffer, Sarah Hrdy, *Mothers and Others*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2011.

Borsche, Tilman, "Auf wen bezieht sich das Wort "wir" in Merkels Satz "Wir schaffen das"?", in: *Philosophie Magazin* 2 (2016), S. 55.

Boyd, Brian, *On the Origin of Stories*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 2009.

Breithaupt, Fritz, "Empathy for Empathy's Sake: Aesthetics and Empathic Sadism", in: Aleida Assmann und Ines Detmers, Hgs., *Empathy and its Limits*, New York: Palgrave, 2016, S. 151-165.

Breithaupt, Fritz, "Empathic Sadism. How Readers Get Implicated," in: Lisa Zunshine, Hg., *Oxford Handbook for Cognitive Literary Studies*, Oxford: Oxford UP, 2015, S. 440-462.

Breithaupt, Fritz, "A Three-Person Model of Empathy", in: *Emotion Review* 4.1 (2012), S. 84-91.

Breithaupt, Fritz, *Kultur der Ausrede*, Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2012.

Breithaupt, Fritz, *Culturas de la Empatía*, Buenos Aires, Madrid: Katz Editores, 2011.

Breithaupt, Fritz, "Empathie als Parteinahme: Anagnorisis bei Goethe und Stifter", in: Claudia Breger und Fritz Breithaupt, Hgs., *Empathie und Narration*, Freiburg: Rombach, 2010, S. 187-204.

Breithaupt, Fritz, *Kulturen der Empathie*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp 2009.

Brown, Jane K., *Goethe's Alleories of Identity*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.

Bruner, Jerome, *Making Stories: Law, Literature, Life*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003.

- Burgard, Peter J., Hg., *Nietzsche and the Feminine*, Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1994.
- Burke, Edmund, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, hrsg. von J. Boulton, Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1958 [1757].
- Burke, Simon, Katerina Mihayalova, Hgs., *Gewissen: Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven auf das 18. Jahrhundert*, Würzburg: K & N, 2015.
- Call, Josep, und Michael Tomasello, "Does the Chimpanzee have a Theory of Mind? 30 Years Later", in: *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 12, Nr. 5 (2008), S. 187-192.
- Carruthers, Peter, "How We Know our own Minds: The Relationship between Mindreading and Metacognition", in: *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 32.02 (2009), S. 121-138.
- Carruthers, Peter, "Simulation and Self-Knowledge: A Defence of Theory-Theory", in: P. Carruthers und P.K. Smith, Hgs., *Theories of Theories of Mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, S. 22-38.
- Carver, Joseph M., "Love and Stockholm Syndrome: The Mystery of Loving an Abuser", (2007).
http://drjoecarver.makeswebsites.com/clients/49355/File/love_and_stockholm_syndrome.html (Zugriff am 15.6.2016).
- Cavell, Stanley, *Cities of Words, Pedagogical Letters on a Reister of Moral Life*, Cambridge, MA.: Belknap Press, 2004.
- Cheng, Y., et al., "Expertise Modulates the Perception of Pain in others", in: *Current Biology* 17 (2007), S. 1708–1713.
- Cline, Foster, und Jim Fay, *Parenting with Love and Logic: Teaching Children Responsibility*, Tyndale House, 2014 [1990].
- Damasio, Antonio R., *Descartes' Irrtum: Fühlen, Denken und das menschliche Gehirn*, Berlin: Ullstein, 2014.
- Daston, Lorraine, Peter Galison, *Objektivität*, Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 2007.
- Davis, Mark H., "Measuring Individual Differences in Empathy: Evidence for a Multidimensional Approach", in: *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 44, Nr. 1 (1983), S. 113-126.
- Davis, Mark H., "A Multidimensional Approach to Individual Differences in Empathy", in: *JSAS Catalog of Selected Documents in Psychology* (1980), S. 85-101.
- Decety, Jean, "Dissecting the Neural Mechanisms Mediating Empathy", in: *Emotion Review* (January 2011), S. 92-108.
- Decety, Jean, et al., "Atypical Empathic Responses in Adolescents with Aggressive Conduct Disorder: A Functional MRI Investigation", in: *Biological Psychology* 80.2 (2009), Nr. 203-211.
- Decety, Jean, und Claus Lamm, "The Role of the Right Temporoparietal Junction in Social Interaction: How Low-Level Computational Processes Contribute to Meta-Cognition", in: *The Neuroscientist* (2007), S. 580–93.
- Decety, Jean, "Human Empathy", in: *Japanese Journal of Neuropsychology* 22 (2006), S. 11-33.

- Decety, Jean, und Thierry Chaminade, "Neural Correlates of Feeling Sympathy", in: *Neuropsychologia* 41.2 (2003), S. 127-138.
- Delgado, Richard, "Rodrigo's Eleventh Chronicle: Empathy and False Empathy", in: *California Law Review* 84, Nr. 1 (1996), S. 61-100.
- DeScioli, Peter, und Robert Kurzban, "Mysteries of Morality", in: *Cognition* 112.2 (2009), S. 281-299.
- Dinstein, Ilan, Cibu Thomas, Kate Humphreys, Nancy Minshew, Marlene Behrmann und David J. Heeger. "Normal Movement Selectivity in Autism", in: *Neuron* 66, Nr. 3 (2010), S. 461-469.
- Dunbar, Robin, *Grooming, Gossip and the Evolution of Language*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1997.
- Dunbar, Robin, "Neocortex Size as a Constraint on Group Size in Primates," in: *Journal of Human Evolution* 22 (1992), S. 469-93.
- Eisenberg, Nancy, Richard A. Fabes, Stephanie A. Shepard, Bridget C. Murphy, Ivanna K. Guthrie, Sarah Jones, Jo Friedman, Rick Poulin und Pat Maszk, "Contemporaneous and Longitudinal Prediction of Children's Social Functioning from Regulation and Emotionality", in: *Child Development* 68, Nr. 4 (1997), S. 642-664.
- Eklund, Jakob, Teresi Andersson-Straberg und Eric M. Hansen, "'I've also Experienced Loss and Fear': Effects of Prior Similar Experience on Empathy", in: *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology* 50, Nr. 1 (2009), S. 65-69.
- Elfenbein, Hillary Anger, "The Many Faces of Emotional Contagion: An Affective Process Theory of Affective Linkage", in: *Organizational Psychology Review* (2014).
- Engelen, Eva-Maria, "Innenleben und Dialog", in: *Paragrana* 24, Nr. 2 (2015), S. 177-190.
- Fernandez, Yolanda M., und W. L. Marshall, "Victim Empathy, Social Self-Esteem, and Psychopathy in Rapists", in: *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment* 15.1 (2003), S. 11-26.
- Feshbach, Norma D., "Parental Empathy and Child Adjustment/Maladjustment", in: Nancy Eisenberg und Janet Strayer, Hgs., *Empathy and Its Development*, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1987, S. 271-291.
- Flesch, William, "Reading and Bargaining", in: Lisa Zunshine, Hg., *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Literary Studies*, Oxford: Oxford UP 2015, S. 369-386
- Flesch, William, *Comeuppance: Costly Signaling, Altruistic Punishment, and Other Biological Components of Fiction*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007.
- Foucault, Michel, *Überwachen und Strafen*, Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 1994.
- Freedberg, David, und Vittorio Gallese, "Motion, Emotion and Empathy in Esthetic Experience", in: *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 11, Nr. 5 (2007), S. 197-203.
- Gallese, Vittorio, "Die mannigfaltige Natur zwischenmenschlicher Beziehungen. Die Suche nach einem gemeinsamen Mechanismus", in Claudia Breger und Fritz Breithaupt, Hgs., *Empathie und Erzählung*, Freiburg: Rombach, 2010, S. 21-52.
- Gallese, Vittorio, "The 'Shared Manifold' Hypothesis. From Mirror Neurons to Empathy", in: *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 8.5-6 (2001), S. 33-50.

Gallup, Gordon G., und Steven M. Platek. "Cognitive Empathy Presupposes Self-Awareness: Evidence from Phylogeny, Ontogeny, Neuropsychology, and Mental Illness", in: *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 25.01 (2002): S. 36-37.

Gigerenzer, Gerd, und Peter M. Todd, *Simple Heuristics that Make Us Smart*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Gleichgerricht, Ezequiel, und Jean Decety, "Empathy in Clinical Practice: How Individual Dispositions, Gender, and Experience moderate Empathic Concern, Burnout, and Emotional Distress in Physicians", in: *PLoS One* 8.4 (2013): e61526.

Goldie, Peter, "Anti-Empathy" in: Amy Coplan und Peter Goldie, Hgs., *Empathy. Philosophical and Psychological Perspectives*, Oxford: Oxford UP 2011, S. 302-317.

Gopnik, Aslington, "Children's Understanding of Representational Change and its Relation to the Understanding of False Belief and the Appearance-Reality Distinction", in: *Child Development* 59.1 (1988), S. 26–37.

Gottschall, Jonathan, *The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human*, Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012.

Green, Melanie, "Transportation into Narrative Worlds: The Role of Prior Knowledge and Perceived Realism", in: *Discourse Processes* 38, Nr. 2 (2004), S. 247-266.

Gu, Xiuyan, Li Zheng, Wei Zhang, Lei Zhu, Jianqi Li, Qianfeng Wang, Zoltan Dienes, and Zhiliang Yang, "Empathic Neural Responses to others' pain depend on Monetary Reward", in: *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience* (2011): nsr034.

Gumbrecht, Hans-Ulrich, *In Praise of Athletic Beauty*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 2006.

Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion*, New York: Vintage, 2012.

Hamilton, Andrew, und Fritz Breithaupt, "These Things called Event: Toward a Unified Narrative Theory of Events", *Sprache und Datenverarbeitung (SDV)* 37 (2013), S. 65-87.

Hanich, Julian, Valentin Wagner, Mira Shah, Thomas Jacobsen und Winfried Menninghaus, "Why We Like to Watch Sad Films. The Pleasure of being Moved in Aesthetic Experiences", in: *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts* 8 (2014), S.130-143.

Harenski, C. L., K. A. Harenski, M. S. Shane und K.A. Kiehl, "Aberrant Neural Processing of Moral Violations in Criminal Psychopaths", in: *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 21 (2010), S. 1-12.

Hatfield, Elaine, John T. Cacioppo und Richard L. Rapson. *Emotional Contagion*, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994.

Heilbrun, Alfred B., "Cognitive Models of Criminal Violence Based upon Intelligence and Psychopathy Levels", in: *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 50, 4 (1982), S. 546-557.

Hickok, Gregory, *The Myth of Mirror Neurons: The Real Neuroscience of Communication and Cognition*, New York: W.W. Norton 2014.

Higgins, Lynn A., und Brenda R. Silver, *Rape and Representation*, New York: Columbia UP, 1991.

Holt, S., J.. R. Meloy und S. Strack, "Sadism and Psychopathy in Violent and Sexually Violent Offenders", in: *Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law* 27 (1999), S. 23–32.

Hunt, Lynn Avery, *Inventing Human Rights: A History*, New York: WW Norton & Company, 2007.

Iacoboni, Marco, "Imitation, Empathy, and Mirror Neurons", in: *Annual Review of Psychology* 60 (2009), S.653-670.

Jackson, Philip L., Eric Brunet, Andrew N. Meltzoff und Jean Decety, "Empathy examined through the Neural Mechanisms Involved in Imagining how I Feel versus how You Feel Pain," in: *Neuropsychologia* 44, Nr. 5 (2006), S.752-761.

Jackson, Philip L., Pierre Rainville und Jean Decety, "To what Extent Do We Share the Pain of others? Insight from the Neural Bases of Pain Empathy", in: *Pain* 125.1-2 (2006), S. 5-9.

Just_a_random_guy, "Do Sexually Sadistic Serial Killers Really Lack Empathy?", https://www.reddit.com/r/serialkillers/comments/3qoey8/do_sexually_sadistic_serial_killers_really_lack/ Internet (Zugriff am 15.3.2016).

Kantorowicz, Ernst, *The King's Two Bodies. A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1957.

Keen, Suzanne, *Empathy and the Novel*. Oxford and New York: Oxford UP, 2007

Kidd, David Comer, und Emanuele Castano, "Reading Literary Fiction Improves Theory of Mind", in: *Science* 342.6156 (2013), S. 377-380.

Kiel, Kent A., *The Psychopath Whisperer: The Science of Those Without Conscience*, Crown, 2014.

Kiehl, Kent A., and M. B. Hoffman, 'The Criminal Psychopath: History, Neuroscience, Treatment, and Economics', in: *Jurimetrics: The Journal of Law, Science & Technology*, 51.4 (2011), S. 355–97.

Kittler, Friedrich A., *Aufschreibesysteme 1800/1900*, München: Fink, 1985

Konrath, Sara H., Edward H. O'Brien und Courtney Hsing, "Changes in Dispositional Empathy in American College Students over Time: A Meta-Analysis", in: *Personality and Social Psychology Review* (2010), S. 180-198.

Koopman, Emy M., Michelle Hilscher und Gerald C. Cupchik, "Reader Responses to Literary Depictions of Rape" in: *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts* 6.1 (2012), S. 66-78.

Koschorke, Albrecht, *Körperströme und Schriftverkehr: Mediologie des 18. Jahrhunderts*, München: Fink, 2003.

Koselleck, Reinhart, *Vergangene Zukunft*, Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 1979.

Kovács, Ágnes Melinda, Ernő Téglás und Ansgar Denis Endress, "The Social Sense: Susceptibility to others' Beliefs in Human Infants and Adults", in: *Science* 330.6012 (2010), S. 1830-1834.

Kraus, Josef, *Helikopter-Eltern. Schluss mit Förderwahn und Verwöhnung*, Reinbeck: Rowohlt, 2013.

Krebs, Dennis, "Empathy and Altruism", in: *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 32.6 (1975). S. 1134-42.

Kurzban, Robert, Peter DeScioli und Erin O'Brien, "Audience Effects on Moralistic Punishment", in: *Evolution and Human Behavior* 28.2 (2007), S. 75-84.

- Lamm, Claus, Andrew N. Meltzoff und Jean Decety, "How Do We Empathize with someone who is not like Us? A Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging Study", in: *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience* 22.2 (2010), S. 362-376.
- Laqueur, Thomas W., "Mourning, Pity, and the Work of Narrative in the Making of 'Humanity'", in: Richard Ashby Wilson and Richard D. Brown, *Humanitarianism and Suffering: The Mobilization of Empathy*, Cambridge: Cambridge UP 2009, S. 31-57.
- Leiberg, Susanne, and Silke Anders, "The Multiple Facets of Empathy: A Survey of Theory and Evidence," in: *Progress in Brain Research* 156 (2006), S. 419-440.
- Leedom, Liane, "Sadism and Warped Empathy in Sociopaths", November 13, 2008. <http://www.lovefraud.com/2008/11/13/sadism-and-warped-empathy-in-sociopaths/> (Zugriff am 15.3.2015).
- Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm, *Sämtliche Schriften und Briefe* (Akademie-Ausgabe), Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 2011, Abt. III, Bd. 7.
- Lisak, David, und Carol Ivan, "Deficits in Intimacy and Empathy in Sexually Aggressive Men", in: *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 10.3 (1995), S. 296-308.
- Lombardo, Michael V., et al., "Self-referential Cognition and Empathy in Autism", in: *PLoS One* 2.9 (2007): e883.
- Lonsway, Kimberly A., und Louise F. Fitzgerald, "Rape Myths in Review", in: *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 18.2 (1994), S.133-164.
- Loshitzky, Yosefa, Hg., *Spielberg's Holocaust. Critical Perspectives on Schindler's List*, Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1997.
- Luhmann, Niklas, *Gesellschaftsstruktur und Semantik*. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 1993.
- Luhmann, Niklas, "Sthenographie und Euryalistik", in: *Hans-Ulrich Gumbrecht & Ludwig Pfeiffer, Hgs., Paradoxien, Dissonanzen, Zusammenbrüche: Situationen offener Epistemologie*, Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 1991, S. 58-82.
- Madeira, Jody Lyneé, *Killing McVeigh: The Death Penalty and the Myth of Closure*, New York, NYU Press, 2012.
- Madeira, Jody Lynee, "Lashing Reason to the Mast: Understanding Judicial Constraints on Emotion in Personal Injury Litigation" in: *UC Davis Law Review* 40, Nr. 137 (2006).
- de Man, Paul, "Rhetorik der Persuasion (Nietzsche)", in ders., *Allegorien des Lesens*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1988, S. 164-178.
- Marguier, Alexander, "Die Sprücheklopperin: Angela Merkels 'Wir schaffen das'" in: *Cicero* 16.9.2015, <http://www.cicero.de/berliner-republik/angela-merkels-wir-schaffen-das-die-spruecheklopperin/59847>.
- Maskarinec, Malika, *Balancing Acts: The Acrobatics of Form and Force from 1900 to 1930*, unveröffentlichte Dissertation.
- Marsh, Abigail A., "Empathy and Compassion: A Cognitive Neuroscience Perspective", in: Jean Decety, Hg., *Empathy: From Bench to Bedside*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2012, S. 191-205.
- Marshall, W. L., und Heather Moulden, "Hostility toward Women and Victim Empathy in Rapists", in: *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment* 13.4 (2001), S. 249-255.
- Massaro, Toni M., "Empathy, Legal Storytelling, and the Rule of Law: New Words, Old Wounds?", in: *Michigan Law Review* 87, Nr. 8 (1989), S. 2099-2127.

McEwan, Troy E., Paul E. Mullen und Rachel MacKenzie, "A Study of the Predictors of Persistence in Stalking Situations", in: *Law and Human Behavior* 33.2 (2009), S.149-158.
Mazzocco, Philip J., Melanie C. Green, Jo A. Sasota und Norman W. Jones., "This Story is not for everyone: Transportability and Narrative Persuasion", in: *Social Psychological and Personality Science* (2010), S. 361-368.

Melis, Alicia P., Felix Warneken und Brian Hare, "Collaboration and Helping in Chimpanzees," in: Elizabeth V. Lonsdorf et al., Hgs., *The Mind of the Chimpanzee: Ecological and Experimental Perspectives*, Chicago: Chicago UP, 2010, S. 278-393.

Meltzoff, Andrew, "Understanding the Intentions of others: Re-enactment of Intended Acts by 18-month-old Children", in: *Developmental Psychology* 31, Nr. 5 (1995), S. 838–850.

Merz, Jenna L. und Carolyn Zahn - Waxler, "Neurobiology of Empathy and Callousness: Implications for the Development of Antisocial Behavior", in: *Behavioral Sciences & the Law* 27, Nr.. 2 (2009), S. 137-171.

Mullen, Paul E., Michele Pathé und Rosemary Purcell, *Stalkers and their Victims*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Myler, Stephen F., "Chinese Cultural Lack of Empathy in Development", *Counselling Practice*, 2009

http://www.academia.edu/3620724/Chinese_Lack_of_Empathy_in_Development

(Zugriff am 15. Julie 2015)

Nägele, Rainer, *Reading after Freud: Essays on Goethe, Hölderlin, Habermas, Nietzsche, Brecht, Celan, and Freud*. New York, Columbia University Press, 1987.

Nelson, ED Adie, "The Things that Dreams are Made on: Dreamwork and the Socialization of 'Stage Mothers'", in: *Qualitative Sociology* 24.4 (2001), S. 439-458.

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Sämtliche Werke: kritische Studienausgabe* (kurz: KSA), hg. von Giorgio Colli und Mazzino Montinari, München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1988-.

Nünning, Vera, "Cognitive Science and the Value of Literature for Life", in: *Values of Literature*, Brill, 2015. S. 93-116.

Nussbaum, Martha C., *Political Emotions*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2013.

Nussbaum, Martha C., *From Disgust to Humanity: Sexual Orientation and Constitutional Law*, Oxford New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Paret, Christoph, "Habe die Wut, dich deines eigenen Verstandes zu bedienen!" Über Empörung als emanzipative Psychotechnik“, in: Alexandra Schwell & Katharina Eisch-Angus, Hgs., *Der Alltag der (Un)Sicherheit. Ethnographisch-kulturwissenschaftliche Perspektiven auf die Sicherheitsgesellschaft*, erscheint: Berlin: Panama, 2017.

Paret, Christoph, "’Aktives Zuhören’ oder Reden, um nicht füreinander da zu sein – Thomas Gordon und die Verwandlung von Autoritätspersonen in gesprächige Projektionsflächen“, unveröffentlichtes Manuskript.

Pinker, Steven, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: The Decline of Violence in History and its Causes*, London: Penguin, 2011.

Pithers, William D., "Empathy Definition, Enhancement, and Relevance to the Treatment of Sexual Abusers", in: *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 14.3 (1999), S. 257-284.

- Plantinga, Carl, "Facing others. Close-Ups of Faces in Narrative Films and in *Silence of the Lambs*", in: Lisa Zunshine, Hg., *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Literary Studies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015, S. 291-311.
- Porter, Stephen, Leanne ten Brinke und Chantal Gustaw, "Dangerous Decisions: The Impact of First Impressions of Trustworthiness on the Evaluation of Legal Evidence and Defendant Culpability", in: *Psychology, Crime & Law* 16.6 (2010), S. 477-491.
- Preis, M. A., und B. Kroener - Herwig, "Empathy for Pain: The Effects of Prior Experience and Sex," in: *European Journal of Pain* 16.9 (2012), S. 1311-1319
- Premack, D. G.; Woodruff, G. (1978). "Does the Chimpanzee have a Theory of Mind?". *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 1 (4), S. 515–526
- Preston, Stephanie D., und Frans BM De Waal. "Empathy: Its Ultimate and Proximate Bases", in: *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 25.1 (2002), S.1-20.
- Prinz, Jesse, "Against Empathy", in: *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 49.s1 (2011): S. 214-233.
- Prinz, Wolfgang, *Selbst im Spiegel. Die soziale Konstruktion von Subjektivität*, Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2016.
- Prinz, Wolfgang, "Modes of Linkage between Perception and Action", in: ders., Hg., *Cognition and Motor Processes*, Berlin Heidelberg: Springer, 1984, S.185-193.
- Propp, Vladimir, *Die historischen Wurzeln des Zaubermärchens*, München: Hanser, 1987.
- de Quervain, Dominique JF., Urs Fischbacher, Valerie Treyer und Melanie Schellhammer, "The Neural Basis of Altruistic Punishment", in: *Science* 305, Nr. 5688 (2004). S. 1254-59.
- Ramachandran, Vilayanur S., und Lindsay M. Oberman, "Broken Mirrors: A Theory of Autism", in: *Scientific American* 295, Nr. 5 (2006), S. 62-69.
- Reinhardt-Becker, Elke, *Seelenbund oder Partnerschaft?: Liebessemantiken in der Literatur der Romantik und der Neuen Sachlichkeit*, Frankfurt/M.: Campus Verlag, 2005.
- Rice, Marnie E., "Empathy for the Victim and Asexual Arousal among Rapists and Nonrapists," in: *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 9.4 (1994), S. 435-449
- Robinson, Michael E., und Emily A. Wise, "Prior Pain Experience: Influence on the Observation of Experimental Pain in Men and Women", in: *The Journal of Pain* 5.5 (2004), S. 264-269.
- Rogers, Kelly, Hg., *Self-Interest: An Anthology of Philosophical Perspectives from Antiquity to the Present*, London: Routledge, 2014.
- Rosa, Hartmut, *Resonanz*, Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2016.
- Saarela, Miiamaaria V., Yevhen Hlushchuk, Amanda C. de C. Williams, Martin Schürmann, Eija Kalso und Riitta Hari. "The Compassionate Brain: Humans Detect Intensity of Pain from another's Face", in: *Cerebral cortex* 17, Nr. 1 (2007). S. 230-237.
- Scheler, Max, *Das Ressentiment im Aufbau der Moralen* [1913], Frankfurt/M.: Klostermann, 2004, 2. Aufl.
- Schlaffer, Heinz, *Das entfesselte Wort. Nietzsches Stil und seine Folgen*, München: Carl Hanser 2007.

- Schiffirin, Holly H., et al. "Helping or Hovering? The Effects of Helicopter Parenting on College Students' Well-Being", in: *Journal of Child and Family Studies* 23.3 (2014), S. 548-557.
- Shamay-Tsoory, Simone G., Judith Aharon-Peretz und Daniella Perry, "Two Systems for Empathy: A Double Dissociation between Emotional and Cognitive Empathy in Inferior Frontal Gyrus versus Ventromedial Prefrontal Lesions", in: *Brain* 132.3 (2009), S. 617-627.
- Shirtcliff, Elizabeth A., Michael J. Vitacco, Alexander R. Graf, Andrew J. Gostisha, Singer, Tania, und Olga M. Klimecki, "Empathy and Compassion", in: *Current Biology* 24.18 (2014), S. R875-R878.
- Singer, Tania, "Understanding others: Brain Mechanisms of Theory of Mind and Empathy," in: *Neuroeconomics: Decision Making and the Brain* (2009), S. 251-268.
- Singer, Tania, Ben Seymour, John P. O'Doherty, Klaas E. Stephan, Raymond J. Dolan und Chris D. Frith, "Empathic Neural Responses are Modulated by the Perceived Fairness of others", in: *Nature* 439 Nr. 7075 (2006), S. 466-469.
- Smith, Christian, Kari Christoffersen, Hilary Davidson und Patricia Snell Herzog, *Lost in Transition: The Dark Side of Emerging Adulthood*, Columbus, Ohio: Ohio UP, 2011
- Stein, Edith, *Zum Problem der Einfühlung*, Halle: Buchdruckerei des Waisenhauses, 1917.
- Stiegler, Bernd, *Spuren, Elfen und andere Erscheinungen. Conan Doyle und die Photographie*, Frankfurt/M.: Fischer, 2014.
- Tangney, June P., Roy F. Baumeister und Angie Luzio Boone, "High Self-Control predicts Good Adjustment, Less Pathology, Better Grades, and Interpersonal Success", in: *Journal of Personality* 72.2 (2004), S. 271-324.
- Tine, Michele, und Joan Lucariello, "Unique Theory of Mind Differentiation in Children with Autism and Asperger Syndrome", in: *Autism Research and Treatment* (2012), S. 1-11.
- Todorov, Alexander, Manish Pakrashi und Nikolaas N. Oosterhof, "Evaluating Faces on Trustworthiness after Minimal Time Exposure", in: *Social Cognition* 27.6 (2009), S. 813-833.
- Tomasello, Michael, *Die kulturelle Entwicklung des menschlichen Denkens: Zur Evolution der Kognition*, Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 2006.
- Tomasello, Michael, *Die Ursprünge der menschlichen Kommunikation*, Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 2009.
- Tucker, Corinna Jenkins, Kimberly A. Updegraff, Susan M. McHale und Ann C. Crouter, "Older Siblings as Socializers of Younger Siblings' Empathy", in: *The Journal of Early Adolescence* 19, Nr. 2 (1999), S. 176-198.
- Vermeule, Blakey, *Why do We Care about Literary Characters?* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2011.
- de Vignemont, F., und P. Jacob, "What is it Like to Feel another's Pain", in: *Philosophy of Science* 79, (2012), S. 295-316.
- Vogl, Joseph, *Kalkül und Leidenschaft. Poetik des ökonomischen Menschen*, München: Diaphanes, 2002.

Voss, Christiane, "Einfühlung als empistemische und ästhetische Kategorie bei Hume und Lipps", in: Robin Curtis und Gertrud Koch, Hgs., *Einfühlung. Zu Geschichte und Gegenwart eines ästhetischen Konzepts*. München: Fink, 2009, S. 31-47.

de Waal, Frans "Empathy in Primates and other Mammals," in: Jean Decety, Hg, *Empathy. From Bench to Bedside*, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2012, S. 87-106.

de Waal, Frans, *Chimpanzee Politics*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University UP, 1998

Wahrman, Dror, *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.

Wallach, Wendell, and Colin Allen, *Moral Machines. Teaching Robots Right from Wrong*, Oxford und New York: Oxford UP, 2008.

Wilson, Richard A., *The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa: Legitimizing the Post-Apartheid State*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Worringer, Wilhelm, *Abstraktion und Einfühlung. Ein Beitrag zur Stilpsychologie*, [1907] hg., Helga Grebing, München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2007.

Young, Allan, "Empathic Cruelty and the Origins of the Social Brain", in: *Critical Neuroscience. A Handbook of the Social and Cultural Context of Neuroscience* (2012), S. 159-176.

Zahavi, Dan, und Søren Overgaard, "Empathy without Isomorphism: A Phenomenological Account", in: Jean Decety, Hg., *Empathy: From Bench to Bedside*. Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press, 2012, S. 3-20.

Zahn-Waxler, Carolyn, et al., "Psychophysiological Correlates of Empathy and Prosocial Behaviors in Preschool Children with Behavior Problems", in: *Development and Psychopathology* 7.01 (1995), S. 27-48.