

INTRODUCING SENSITIVITY TO JUSTICE AS A PREDICTIVE FACTOR IN
HELPING BEHAVIOR TOWARDS THE HOMELESS: UNDERSTANDING WHO
HELPS AND WHY

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between sensitivity to justice and willingness to help the homeless. A paper and online survey was distributed to community centers and educational programs across the country ($N = 276$) to assess participants' feelings and experiences regarding helping the homeless. Multiple linear regression analysis revealed that sensitivity to justice, empathy, education level and religiosity were all significantly associated to both expressed and actual willingness to help the homeless and this association was moderated by age and gender. Political affiliation and type of giving behavior did not appear associated with each other or with expressed or actual giving behavior towards the homeless. This information is helpful in understanding predictive factors in helping behavior that extend even to the most heavily stigmatized members of society.

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Introduction

Imagine you see a homeless man sitting on the sidewalk. He appears dirty, downtrodden and hungry. He asks you to spare a dollar—and you just-so-happen to have several bills in your pocket. Your decision to give or not give is most likely contingent upon the situation. Are you in a good mood or bad? Does this person look like he may be dangerous? While many of us may believe we are pro-social people, our likelihood of engaging in helping behavior may be highly circumstantial in nature (Barnes, Ickes & Kidd, 1978; Harris & Ho, 1984). Research has found that helping behavior expressed by an individual can be reduced or even reversed by making small manipulations to social expectation, degree of anonymity or threat in the environment (Andreoni & Bernheim, 2009; Bohnet & Frey, 1999; Piliavin, Rodin, Piliavin, 1969). Additionally, research has demonstrated that individuals who in one situation help others will actually avoid the situation altogether at a later time if given the option to do so, even at personal cost to themselves (Cain, Dana & Newman, 2013). In other words, you may help the homeless man on the sidewalk if he is positioned on the steps to the subway—up until you realize you can enter from the other side of the station and avoid him completely.

How do we determine if someone is likely to engage in helping behavior if helping behavior itself is so sensitive to outside influence? To answer this question, researchers investigated a personality trait called sensitivity to justice (Schmitt, Neumann, and Montada, 1995). Recent research has shown that sensitivity to justice reliably predicts helping behavior across social situations and that this trait is stable over time (Lotz, Schlosser, Cain & Fetchenhauer, 2013). Sensitivity to justice may predict helping behavior based on our understanding of stress-response systems. When an

individual feels stress and they have control over the situation, the individual will make efforts to mitigate that stress (Averill, 1973). Therefore, if viewing an injustice is particularly stressful for an individual, he or she may feel compelled to mitigate that stress through helping.

Schmitt et al., (1995) originally created this scale in an attempt to understand the individual differences in how people respond to unjust situations, and to investigate sensitivity to justice as a stable trait. To test this scale, the authors first gave participants the sensitivity to justice questionnaire. Next, two individuals, one a confederate and one a participant, were seated at computers next to one another and told to complete a puzzle-solving task. To create an “unfair” situation, the confederate was given a color monitor as well as additional information to assist in solving the puzzle. The participant in the experimental condition was given a “broken” black-and-white monitor and limited instructions for solving the puzzle. This gave the desired outcome of the confederate performing the task better than the participant, since they were purposely given an unfair advantage. Afterwards, the confederate received more money than the participant as a reward for solving the puzzle more quickly and with higher accuracy. The participants were then judged, from their videotaped reactions, for the presence of anger and anxiety. The researchers found a positive correlation between the participant’s sensitivity to justice scores and their observed levels of anxiety and anger. In short, the more sensitive to justice the individual was, the more likely he or she was upset about unfair treatment in the lab.

The scale has since been modified for increased reliability by dividing the scale into three sub-scales, designed to measure sensitivity to justice from a variety of

perspectives; that of the victim, the observer, and the perpetrator (Schmitt et al., 2005). These subscales were created in response to the finding that people have varying responses to injustice depending on their perspective (Mikula, 1994). The observer subscale has been found to reliably predict helping behavior across different social situations. For example, Fetchenhauer and Huang (2004) found individuals who scored high in the observer subscale of the sensitivity to justice measure were more likely to equally distribute money (given to them by experimenters) to other participants in the classic dictator game paradigm. Additionally, those with high scores on the observer subscale were shown to be more likely to distribute experimental tokens equally to all members of the experiment, even when they were the previously the recipients of unequal distributions (Gollwitzer, Rothmund, Pfeiffer & Ensenbach, 2009). These studies suggest that in experimental settings, those with high scores within the observer sub-scale of the sensitivity to justice measure are more likely to behave in ways that distribute resources equally to all, even when that behavior is not reciprocated.

In this study, we attempted to determine if sensitivity to justice scores from the observer subscale of the sensitivity to justice measure could help predict who would respond with helping behavior towards members of one of the most extreme out-groups in society: the homeless.

It is difficult to discuss homelessness without introducing concepts of justice. Is it fair for the homeless to live without housing? Or is it unfair, yet just—it might be argued that sleeping on the street represents some justice for the way a homeless person has chosen to live his or her life, however unfair it seems. Homelessness may appear to some individuals as an *unjust* situation, that is the result of external factors more than internal

ones, while others may believe it is caused by internal factors, therefore the subsequent consequences are, in fact, *just*. Several studies suggest that a large proportion of Americans believe that structural factors are a major cause of homelessness exceeding internal causes. For example, Lee, Jones, and Lewis (1990) found that three-fifths of respondents selected external reasons over internal ones as the main contributors to homelessness. However, these beliefs may not be stable over time, and changes in these attitudes may directly affect willingness to help the homeless. For example, Agans, Liu, Jones, Verjan, Silverbush and Kalsbeek (2011) found in a nationally-conducted phone survey that individuals, who indicated that their sympathies for the homeless had recently increased (categorized as “sympathetic respondents”), were more likely to blame external factors than internal factors as the cause of homelessness than individuals who indicated their sympathies were unchanged or had decreased (categorized as “unsympathetic respondents”). Forty-four percent of sympathetic respondents indicated that they thought inadequate access to good schools was a contributing factor toward homelessness versus 29% of unsympathetic respondents. Additionally, 83% of sympathetic individuals stated that an economic system favoring the rich over the poor was a cause of homelessness (versus 62% of unsympathetic respondents).

The definition of injustice is described as “a situation in which the rights of a person or a group of people are ignored” (“injustice,” 2014). Attitudes that reflect the idea that homelessness is caused in part by institutional problems versus internal factors would suggest that certain individuals feel that homelessness represents injustice within society. But how do we understand who these “sympathetic” individuals are, and more specifically, understand how they respond to injustice with regard to homelessness?

One could easily look at homeless individuals and note that they do not have the same amount or quality of resources as other individuals who are housed and employed. Many homeless individuals do not have stable shelter, a large selection of clean clothes, regular income, or possibly even food. Alternatively, individuals who are housed may have opportunities for employment, which can provide a regular income to purchase clothes, food, and other necessities. The difference in the amount of resources these two individuals have is large. However, how one chooses to interpret the cause of these discrepancies will largely ultimately determine if the observer views said discrepancy in resources as just. If someone helps or doesn't help in the face of injustices such as these remains an empirical question.

In the current study, sensitivity to justice and other demographic predictors were compared to both expressed and actual helping behavior towards the homeless. These helping behaviors were assessed through a series of scales and open-ended responses to hypothetical interactions with the homeless. The results of this study will extend the findings regarding sensitivity to justice as a reliable predictor of helping behavior as well as create a more complete picture of who is most likely to reach out to some of the most heavily stigmatized members of our society.

The Issue of Homelessness

Homelessness is currently a serious social concern in the United States. There are an estimated 1.6 to 3.5 million individuals nationally who currently meet the definition of being homeless, meaning that these individuals are either precariously housed with family and friends or literally homeless and sleeping outdoors or in emergency shelters (Burt, Aron, & Lee, 2001; National Coalition for the Homeless, 2009). Studies show

between 4.7% to 8.1% of individuals in America will experience at least one incident of literal homelessness (sleeping outside or in a shelter) in their lifetime and up to 14% will experience literal homelessness and/or an instance precarious housing (living transiently with friends or family) (Hudson & Vissing, 2010; Link, Susser, Stueve, Phelan, Moore & Struening, 1994; Tompsett, Toro, Guzicki, Manrique & Zatakia, 2006). The struggle to obtain ongoing, independent housing is a problem that continues to grow, especially following the economic recession of 2008. In a study conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau (2011), between 2008 and 2011 there was an estimated 18.3% increase in individuals reporting that they were currently living with friends or family, also known as “doubling-up.” Fifty-six percent of the individuals who gave up their independent housing to move in with others reported incomes that fell below the poverty line. This suggests that there are a rising number of individuals who are experiencing economic hardships that place obtaining and maintaining regular, stable housing at immediate risk.

While the prevalence of homelessness has been an ongoing concern, reactions to the homeless have been conflicted. Approximately two-thirds of Americans stated that they believed poverty and homelessness should be a top concern for government officials (Newport & Wilke, 2014), and 58% of respondents in a separate study stated they would be in favor of raising taxes if it meant it would help the homeless (Toro & McDonell, 1992). But do these individuals who express concern for the homeless ever translate their concern into actual helping behavior? Previous research suggests that there may be a discrepancy between expressing a desire to help the homeless and actually following through with specific action to help the homeless through volunteer work or donations (Bryan, Hammer & Fisher, 2000). Homelessness recently ranked as the 8th biggest worry

amongst Americans, placing higher than other societal issues such as crime, climate change and sustainable energy (Riffkin, 2014). Yet a recent study by the Bureau of Labor Statistics recently found volunteer rates were at the lowest point since the survey first began over 10 years ago (2013). The report stated only 26% of Americans actually participate in volunteer work, with only 14.7% of those respondents indicating their volunteer work was for social or community organizations (the category that would include homeless-related projects). This suggests that while many individuals express concern about homelessness, few may be partaking in real-life, highly personal interventions.

Stigmatization of the Homeless

While people may be aware that homelessness is an issue, the stigmatization of homeless individuals may discourage direct interaction or intervention. Goffman (1963) described stigma as an attribute that discredits someone's identity from being considered normal, resulting in their exclusion from society. This stigma could be a physical handicap, being a member of a particular race, or appearing homeless. Whatever the stigmatized attribute, others may infer a wide-array of further discrediting features to the individual, which makes overcoming the original stigma even more difficult. For example, a person may see a man walking down the sidewalk without any shoes. From this stigmatized attribute of being without shoes, the observer would then create a stigma-theory, which operates so one can justify the feelings of disgust, fear or anxiety the original "unusual" attribute caused the observer. In this case, the observer may create a stigma-theory that this man has spent all of his money on drugs and abandoned his family in order to continue his substance abuse. From one attribute—not having shoes—the

individual has been ascribed other discrediting traits such as being an addict, indigent and deserter. These prejudices pile upon themselves until the original identity of the man has been, as Goffman states, “spoiled,” thus decreasing the likelihood of the individual being able to overcome the prejudice placed upon them (p. 3).

Perhaps no group of individuals has been stigmatized as heavily and readily throughout history than the homeless, in part largely due to their high visibility (Blasi, 2000; Lee, Farrell & Link, 2004). The homeless have been perpetually viewed as an extreme out-group, so much so that dehumanization can occur in which the homeless individual is not even viewed as human (Fiske, 2009). This process can occur to such an extent that subconsciously the brain may process images of the homeless as objects rather than people (Harris & Fiske, 2006). Research also suggests that while homeless individuals are as likely to be seen as responsible for their own circumstances, as is an extremely poor person, they are more likely to be heavily stigmatized for their circumstances (Phelan et al., 2007).

The stigmatization of the homeless is not new. Dating back to Ancient Rome, philosopher and orator Cicero stated that the homeless were the “poverty stricken scum of the city” (Beier & Ocobock, 2008). Those without shelter did not fare much better in Victorian times, with laws allowing those found guilty of vagrancy to be whipped and burned through the ear to mark them as dissidents from society (Eccles, 2012). In the United States today, laws are still regularly passed prohibiting behaviors commonplace for those without housing (such as sleeping on sidewalks, in parks, panhandling or loitering). In fact, these laws are growing at alarming rates. The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty reported that since 2011 there has been a 60% increase in

legislation banning camping, 35% increase banning public begging and a 119% increase in laws targeted to ban sleeping in vehicles. These laws are thought to be part of a larger political movement that results in “criminalization” of the homeless, adding an impressive burden on both the judicial system and the homeless individual themselves (Saelinger, 2006).

It is not a surprise that homeless individuals may experience stigma from others. Since most homeless individuals do not have regular shelter, they are highly visible. Additionally without adequate access to showers, food, or clothing they are likely to appear dirty, sickly or mentally ill. These traits present a possible threat to others, such as threatening sickness or violence. However, many of these stigmatized traits are not statistically higher in the homeless population. For example, an estimated 20-25% of homeless individuals suffer from a mental illness (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2009), which is roughly equivalent to the percentage of all Americans with a mental illness (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2012). Some research even suggests that issues such as domestic violence or substance use may be more prevalent in housed individuals than the homeless (Shinn, Baumohl & Harper, 2001).

Despite this evidence, people often believe homeless individuals are more likely to be mentally ill or addicted to substances. This is because when a homeless individual *does* present one of these stigmatized attributes, they are more likely to be noticed because homeless individuals are often present in public spaces. Additionally, since the stereotype of a homeless individual as a substance user with poor health is highly accessible—meaning it is an idea that is very strongly imbedded in our society—when

any trait confirming this stereotype is detected it can lead to rapid categorization and ultimately reinforce stigmatization by the onlooker (Goffman, 1963). For example, while other extreme out-groups such as pedophiles or racists may also experience heavy stigmatization, they are less likely to possess obvious physical traits that would cause instantaneous stereotype activation. Yet because homeless individuals are often located in public places and may present very obvious stereotypic traits, their stigmatization is swift and reinforced easily.

Harris and Fiske's (2006) study mentioned earlier is an important example of how deep this stigmatization goes. They found that when looking at photographs of individuals identified as homeless, participant's patterns of activation within the medial prefrontal cortex—the area where social cognition takes place—were more similar to the patterns seen when they viewed images of spiders, rodents and other “disgusting” objects than when they viewed images of individuals not identified as homeless. In short, the neural activity of participants suggested that they were not processing the images of the homeless as other humans, but rather, as objects—a phenomenon known as dehumanization. It can be deduced from these findings that those who are not viewed as human will not be the target of someone's empathy, as that would require sharing a human experience (Fiske, 2009). It is not hard to imagine that these kinds beliefs may create a hostile environment towards the homeless. Since many individuals do not empathize with such an extreme out-group, homeless individuals may become targets of both personal and institutional discrimination that becomes extremely difficult to erase.

Predictors of Helping Behavior Towards the Homeless

Despite widespread stigmatization of homeless individuals, people do vary in both their capacity and willingness to give to others, including the homeless. The National Coalition for the Homeless (2014) currently lists over 300 active local, statewide and national organizations specifically designed to address homeless issues. In a recently released budget plan for 2015, the White House has allotted 5.9 billion dollars to help combat homelessness, which is an increase of 33% in funding towards homeless-related services since 2012 (United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, 2014). Additionally, in 2014 the Veterans Affairs department announced \$300 million in grants would be distributed to over 300 programs across the country to provide support to veterans at risk or currently suffering from homelessness (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2014). Clearly, there are many people making efforts both individually and institutionally to give back to the homeless in order to address this social issue. But the question remains, who are those more likely to make these efforts, and why?

Several studies show that there are factors that specifically correlate with predicting helping behaviors towards the homeless. Bryan, Hammer and Fisher (2000) found that communal orientation influenced the likelihood of having helping attitudes and behaviors towards the homeless. Morgan, Goddard and Givens (1997) found a correlation between empathy and expressed willingness to help the homeless. Other predictive factors are increased religious participation, gender, age, education and political orientation (Lee, Farrel & Link, 2004; Lee, Jones & Lewis, 1990). This paper will investigate these factors in the following sections as well as introducing a new factor, sensitivity to justice, as a reliable predictor of both expressed and actual helping behavior toward the homeless.

Other Demographic Factors

Age. Research suggests that charitable behavior correlates positively with age (The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, 2008; Van Slyke & Brooks, 2005). This may be because social capital and financial resources increase with age, which allow for a greater ability to give. A recent study by the Center on Philanthropy (2006) found that 75.5% of all individuals over the age of 65 gave to charity in 2006, while only 52% of individuals under the age of 40 gave to charity. Individuals born after 1982 were found to be less likely to have given to charity and less likely to express an interest in jobs related to social work than those born before 1982 (Twenge, Campbell & Freeman, 2012). Recently, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2013) found those least likely to volunteer their time were individuals in the 20 - 24-year-old age bracket. However, a nation-wide telephone survey conducted over two time periods from 1991-2003 showed that young people were more likely express sympathetic views towards the homeless than older people (Tompsett, 2006). In short, young people may be more likely to indicate that they would be willing to give charitably, but due to lack of resources or genuine a interest in giving their time, they are much less likely to actually do so. For this study, since age determines resources, experience, and ability to engage in helping behaviors, it was hypothesized that age would be a moderating variable within the multiple regression model that will positively influence the relationship between the variables of empathy, religiosity and level of education with both expressed and actual helping behavior towards the homeless (H1 and H2).

Gender. Women rate themselves—and others rate women—as more empathetic than men on a consistent basis within research (Greeno & Maccoby, 1993). Women who

were born before the year 1946 are almost twice as likely as men from the same age bracket to donate money to charity (Women's Philanthropy Institute, 2012). Women are more likely to volunteer their time across genders, ages and educational levels (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013) and are more likely to have volunteered some of their time over the past year than are men (Hodgkinson & Weitzman, 1992). An explanation of this can be presented by social role theory, which suggests that women appear more empathetic because historically women have been socialized to fulfill the role of the nurturer and caretaker (Eagly, 1987). This historical precedent therefore perpetuates re-enforcing cues from the societal environment where empathetic, helping behavior is rewarded by the media, peers and institutions. This results in more women being encouraged to adopt these characteristics (Eagly & Wood, 1999). As such, women are often characterized as having more warmth (Costa, Terracciano & McCrae, 2001; Eckes, 2002) and tenderness (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1994) than do men.

Since these traits are reinforced both implicitly and explicitly in the environment, we believe women will internalize these beliefs into their identity, this according to social role theory as suggested by Eagly (1987), leading to higher rates of both expressed and demonstrated willingness to help the homeless. Because of the omnipresence of this finding in previous literature, it is hypothesized that the factor of gender will be a moderating variable in the correlation between empathy, religion, and education levels for both expressed and actual helping behavior towards the homeless (H1 and H2).

Empathy. Empathy is defined by Eisenberg and Fabes (1990) as, "an affective response that stems from the apprehension or comprehension of another's emotional state or condition, and that is similar to what the other person is feeling or would be expected

to feel” (p. 133). In short, empathy is the ability to experience, at least hypothetically, another person’s feelings. These shared feelings may not result in an actual ability to “put themselves in another’s shoes” as much as it is an ability to extend the personal concept of self to include another’s experience (Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000). The capacity to extend one’s own feelings instead of merely adopting someone else’s is important to understand the necessity of empathy in predicting helping behavior towards the homeless.

Harris and Fiske (2006) found that out of over a dozen social groups, the homeless were reliably categorized as hostile and incompetent by participants. If it is necessary for an individual to have the capacity to overlap self and other to achieve empathy, one could expect feeling empathy towards the homeless may not be achievable for many people due to their extreme out-group categorization. In other words, it may be hard for some to “put themselves in another’s shoes” if the target is not even being recognized as human. But those who have a greater capacity for empathy may be more likely to overcome this tendency to dehumanize, thus leading to more helping behaviors towards the homeless. Research has reliably shown that empathy often correlates with helping behavior in laboratory settings (Barazza & Zak, 2009; Batson, 1991). Outside of the laboratory, Davis, Mitchell, Hall, Lothert, Snapp and Meyer (1999) found that those who scored high in empathy were more likely to express an interest in volunteer work that involved direct interaction with target individuals. Research in real-world settings has found that empathy positively correlates to spontaneous helping behavior in the form of giving money to a homeless individual in the street (Einolf, 2008) as well as increased participation in volunteer work and charitable giving (Davis, 1983a). As such, it was hypothesized that there would be an association between levels of empathy and expressed

and actual willingness to help the homeless that was moderated by age and gender (H1 and H2).

Religiosity. Research suggests that charitable behavior correlates positively with participation in religion (Forst & Healy, 1991; Suziedeles & Potvin, 1981; Wilson, Musick, 1997). A recent national study showed that the most common volunteer activity was religious in nature (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). Those who are not necessarily explicitly religious but engage in self-defined daily “spiritual” activities are also more likely to participate in a wide-range of pro-social behaviors (Saroglou, 2011; Saroglou, Pichon, Trompette, Verschueren, & Dernelle, 2005). Some scholars suggest this stems not from the religious aspects themselves, but rather the social networks, moral rules and community orientation that are often present in religious organizations (Einolf, 2013). Additionally, recent studies suggest that religiosity may not be as two-dimensional as previously believed, and pro-social behavior may be affected by various categories of religious participation, spirituality, and cultural beliefs (Einolf, 2013; Stavrova & Siegers, 2013). Because of these nuances in understanding what a truly “religious” person is, this study measured religiosity based on how much individuals incorporate religious values into their daily lives. It was hypothesized that increased religious or spiritual participation would predict a higher likelihood of both willingness and actual helping behavior towards the homeless and this would be moderated by age and gender (H1 and H2).

Education. Higher education is dominated by predominantly liberal attitudes (Rothman, Lichter & Nevitte, 2005). According to Selznick and Steinberg’s (1969) model of socialization, higher education serves as a transfer point where the “ideal” culture is communicated to students. It is believed that this “ideal” culture within

America is one of tolerance and acceptance of a wide variety of groups. Students slowly adopt these perspectives on a superficial level through a social learning model, but may not internalize the viewpoints to a point where their beliefs would be translated into action. Phelan and colleagues (1997) found support for this perspective when their national survey found that individuals with a college education were more likely to report tolerance towards the homeless, but less likely to express support for economic aid to help the homeless. Jackman (1978) also found a discrepancy between expressing a willingness to help and actually engaging or desiring real intervention for the disadvantaged in those with B.A. level educations. In her study, Jackman found that those with a bachelor-level education readily expressed support for more abstract beliefs supporting racial integration, yet there was no difference in support for actual government action to desegregate between those with college degrees and those without. However, this finding disappeared once the education level was graduate school or above. For example, The Center on Philanthropy found in 2006 that donations to charity greatly increased for those who indicated graduate level education or above. In other words, B. A. level education may merely influence abstract beliefs for equal treatment, but it is not a reliable predictor of actual helping behavior. This is in support of socialization theory, which would predict that the superficial transmission of liberal values and pro-social attitudes and behavior eventually does become internalized for those who pursue a higher education, but not until post-B.A. education is achieved. An alternative, more simple explanation could also be offered in that those who have achieved higher education are more likely to have high-paying jobs, which in turn increases the capacity to give.

The hypothesis of this study is as follows: those with graduate level education or above will be more likely to both express a willingness to help the homeless and to have engaged in helping behavior towards the homeless in the past and this will be moderated by age and gender (H1 and H2).

Political affiliation. Political affiliation has also been found to predict helping behavior, but the relationship is highly nuanced. While many equate liberalism with helping behaviors, liberalism is traditionally known for the support of government institutions for charitable interventions, while conservatism puts more focus on the individual in enacting change (Brooks, 2007). As such, conservatives have been found to give more financially and also to be more likely to volunteer, and this charitable behavior is directly correlated to distrust of government (Brooks & Lewis, 2001). In other words, the more a conservative individual does not believe the government can be trusted, the more likely he or she will personally volunteer their own time and money. This could be because part of the conservative political ideology is that change is enacted individually through personal hard work.

Studies suggest that individuals give more to organizations that align with the moral foundations of his or her political affiliation (Winterich, Zhang & Mittal, 2012). Liberals have demonstrated a higher interest in moral issues relating to fairness and harm to others than conservatives (Graham, Haidt & Nosek, 2009). As such, liberals may be more likely to express a willingness to help the homeless. For example, Stouffer (1955) found in his influential research that those who were liberal were more likely to have favorable attitudes towards out-groups. Research regarding attitudes towards the homeless has reliably reflected that liberals are more likely to express a willingness to

help the homeless as well as indicate more sympathetic viewpoints towards the homeless than are conservatives (Lee, Lewis & Jones, 1992; Morgan, Goddard & Givens, 1997). Thus, this study predicted that liberals would have higher scores of expressed and actual willingness to help the homeless than conservatives and but this relationship will be moderated by type of giving behavior: Conservatives will be more likely to give when the type of giving is individual and liberals will be more likely to give when the type of giving is institutional (H3 and H4).

Summary

Understanding the traits of individuals who may be inclined to give to the homeless can help shape future policy relating to community engagement. Additionally, exploring a new predictive factor in helping behavior that extends to situations involving the most heavily-stigmatized members of our society increases the reliability of sensitivity to justice as trait that can predict helping behavior across a variety of social situations. The current study explores who is most likely to express an interest in giving to the homeless, and who is likely to have participated in actual helping behavior towards the homeless. The hypotheses are as follows:

- H1: There will be a positive correlation between sensitivity to justice, empathy, religiosity, and education level with expressed willingness to help the homeless that is moderated by age and gender
- H2: There will be a positive correlation between sensitivity to justice, empathy, religiosity and education level with actual helping behavior towards the homeless that is moderated by age and gender

The hypotheses regarding political affiliation, type of giving behavior and its relationship with helping behavior towards the homeless are as follows:

- H3: Liberals will be more likely to express a willingness to help the homeless than conservatives and this will be moderated by type of giving behavior

H4: Liberals will be more likely to have engaged in actual helping behavior towards the homeless than conservatives and this will be moderated by type of giving behavior

Method

Procedure

The present study sought to replicate previous findings that established associations between capacity for empathy, gender, age, education level, political affiliation, and type of giving behavior with willingness to help the homeless. A new factor was also introduced—sensitivity to justice—as a reliable predictor of expressed and actual willingness to help the homeless.

All participants completed the survey either using the software tool Qualtrics, or using a paper copy provided through in-person distribution. Participants were given a counterbalanced series of surveys; a demographic form to assess age, gender, political affiliation and educational level, the sensitivity to justice (observer) scale to assess sensitivity to justice (Schmitt, 2005), the Religious Commitment Inventory (Worthington, Wade, Hight, Ripley, McCullough, Berry, Schmitt, Berry, Bursley & O'Connor, 2003), and the Toronto Empathy Questionnaire to measure empathy (Spreng, McKinnon, Mar & Levine, 2009). Once the participant completed all sections of the survey, they were notified and thanked for their participation. Since there was no deception used in this study, there no debriefing was necessary.

Materials

Independent variables. The observer subscale of the sensitivity to justice scale originally developed by Schmitt (1995) and updated by Schmitt, Gollwitzer, Maes & Arbach (2005) was used to determine a SJ score (see appendix D). This scale has strong

psychometric properties and was found to be highly consistent with a Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha = .94$ (Schmitt et al., 2010). For this study only the observer subscale was used. This is because the "observer" perspective is the most appropriate perspective for those most individual's relationship to homelessness. This subscale contains ten questions to which responses can be made on a Likert scale with point values from 0-6 where individuals can rate how much the sentence applies to them from 0=*Disagree Strongly* to 5=*Agree strongly*.

Participants' level of empathy was scored using The Toronto Empathy Questionnaire [TEQ] (Spreng et al, 2001; see appendix B) to replicate previous findings that have shown a correlation between empathy and willingness to help the homeless. This TEQ was created by culling 142 questions from over 10 different previously existing empathy scales. An item-total correlation was calculated on these questions, designed to examine if the scores on each of the questions correlate correctly to the participant's overall score. For example, if the participant has an overall high score in empathy, they should also score highly on each question designed to measure empathy. 16 questions were chosen based on their high internal validity, and also to create a scale containing items from a variety of previous scales while still being brief in nature. The remaining 16 questions forming the TEQ were found to have a Chronbach's alpha of $\alpha = .85$ and when an EFA was conducted with a forced single factor the item-related coefficients ranged from .41-.65, indicating very good discrimination.

The religiosity of participants was assessed using the 10-question Religious Commitment Inventory (Worthington et al., 2003). This scale does not measure or make distinctions based on which religious belief an individual has, but rather to what extent

that belief influences their day-to-day activities and beliefs. Worthington et al. (1988) found that individuals who were more active or committed to their religious beliefs evaluated others based on a different set of values than the non-religious. They also had more limited “zones of toleration” in which they would accept the values of others. The Religious Commitment Inventory was designed to measure the degree to which individuals may use their religious beliefs to design their own schemas for evaluating the world around themselves. We believe this is an appropriate measure for studying helping behavior towards the homeless as one can hypothesize the more committed one is to their religion, the more it will influence the degree to which they use their religious beliefs to evaluate others.

The questionnaire contains questions in which the participant indicated on a 5-point Likert scale how much a statement does or does not apply to them. For example, “I enjoy working in the activities of my religious organization,” would be answered by filling in a circle from 0=*Not at all true of me* to 5=*Totally true of me*. The questionnaire was found to have high internal consistency when tested with a religiously diverse sample with a Cronbach’s alpha of $\alpha = .98$ (Worthington, 2003).

Political affiliation was determined categorically in the demographic form by providing five options ranging from *very liberal* to *very conservative* and a sixth “other” option. Type of giving behavior was also assessed in order to understand its relationship to political affiliation. This was measured by analyzing the helping scores on two questions within the expressed and actual willingness to help the homeless scales in relation to political affiliation and two questions within the actual willingness to help the homeless scale.

Within the expressed willingness to help the homeless scale, the score from one item describing institutional giving behavior was analyzed (“I would be willing to donate money to a national organization that helps the homeless”), as well as one item describing individual giving behavior (“I would be willing to donate money to directly to an individual who is currently homeless”). Within the actual willingness to help the homeless scale, two similar questions assessing previous experience either giving institutionally or individually to the homeless was analyzed. Two regression models, one for expressed willingness and one for actual willingness, were then analyzed to explore the hypotheses that liberals would have higher expressed and actual willingness to help scores overall, but that this would be moderated by type of giving behavior.

Dependent Variables. The expressed willingness to help the homeless score was determined using two scales. The willingness to help scale adapted from Morgan, et al., (1997; see appendix E) consisted of five questions and was designed to assess the explicitly stated interest in helping the homeless on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 0=*Completely Disagree* to 5=*Completely Agree*. However, this study included several “filler” questions to obscure the true meaning of the study. These filler questions asked respondents to indicate their interest in engaging in activities not explicitly related to the homeless, such as helping at a local animal shelter or engaging with volunteering with a religious organization. These filler questions were not analyzed and were simply intended to reduce the incidence of demand characteristics.

The second measure was also adapted from Morgan et al. (1997), but was reduced from eight to three hypothetical interactions describing a homeless individual who was either asking for help or obviously in need of help. Participants were then asked to

explain how they would respond given the description of events within the question. These answers were written in an open-ended format. For example, participants were asked, “A man approaches you while you are waiting to cross the street and asks you for change. What do you do?” The open-ended format allowed individuals to more freely describe their thought processes and provide context to their behavior.

The responses to these hypothetical responses were then read and judged by five unique readers who read the behavior described in the open-ended answer and provided ratings from 0=*not helpful at all* to 5=*extremely helpful*. The extent of the inter-rater reliability was analyzed via Krippendorff’s Alpha. This calculation is preferred for analyzing results from multiple raters using ordinal data. A value above .7 is conventionally considered adequate. Obtained results of .8 suggested that the inter-rater reliability was acceptable. The averaged ratings for each question were then re-entered into the data-set after being combined with the results of the expressed willingness to help the homeless scale for a total expressed willingness to help score [EW].

The actual willingness to help the homeless score was calculated using a brief, 5-item questionnaire. This scale contained five target questions and five filler questions developed by the author to assess previous participation in volunteer work or donations towards the homeless (See appendix F). Target questions included, “Have you ever volunteered at a homeless shelter in any capacity?” And “Have you ever donated money to a homeless-related cause? Filler questions consisted of inquiries regarding volunteer work at other kinds of non-profit organizations and were not analyzed.

Political Affiliation and Type of Giving: Political affiliation was determined in the demographic form by asking participants which political party they identified most

closely with. Type of giving was determined by analyzing the scores on two target questions within the expressed willingness scale and two target questions within the actual willingness to help scale. These questions were determined by the author to clearly indicate either individual or institutional giving, therefore would highlight the differences in the type of giving people preferred in relation to their political position.

Participants

Data was collected from 281 participants over the age of 18 from a large, nationally sourced community sample. Five participants were removed from the study due to failing attention tasks, inability to answer open-ended questions at an adequate level of English, or dropping out of the survey before completion. Two-hundred and seventy-six participants were included in the final analysis ($N=276$). Slightly more females ($n=154$) than males ($n=116$) participated in the study. Age of participants were widely varied and are described as follows: 18-24 years ($n=128$), 25-34 years ($n=63$), 35-44 years ($n=35$), 45-54 years ($n=21$), 55-64 ($n=19$), and above 65 ($n=6$). Participants were asked to select their race based on which categories they felt they most closely belonged. Results were diverse: Non-Hispanic white (112), East-Asian (77), Native Hawaiian or Polynesian (26), Asian-Indian (20), African-American (11), Hispanic (10), Native American or American Alaskan (5) and “other” (15).

Participants read and either digitally or physically signed a consent form that confirmed their agreement to participate in “a study about helping behavior” (See appendix A). Participants were informed that they could stop the survey at any time and were provided the name and contact information of the primary investigator if they

wanted to ask any further questions. Since this experiment consisted solely of surveys and required no deception, no debriefing was necessary.

Results

Descriptive Statistics. The descriptive statistics for the four continuous variable predictors (sensitivity to justice, empathy, political activity, and religious commitment) are presented in Table 1. Sensitivity to justice and empathy had skewness and kurtosis values < 1 indicating a reasonable normal distribution for each, although a slight left skew to both suggest a small ceiling effect. Histograms for each variable were also examined and these did not indicate any violation of the assumption of normality. The RCI reflected that a high number of participants indicated little to no religious activities in their daily life. Participants with RCIs under 5 (indicating little to no religious involvement) made up 39.9% of the total. This caused a low and flat distribution of the data. This is further explained by the 28.3% of respondents ($n = 78$) who indicated they were either atheist or agnostic. The next most frequent religious categories were Christians ($n = 57$), followed by Catholics ($n = 35$) and Hindus ($n = 31$).

Political affiliation revealed that almost half (46%) of participants either “did not identify with any political party” or considered themselves “Independent” ($n = 126$). The following most frequent political affiliation was Democrat ($n = 95$), followed by Republican ($n = 43$) and then by “other” and “prefer not to disclose” ($n = 12$). This suggests our sample is largely not committed to any particular political party. This influenced their likelihood to engage in political behavior (assessed in the demographic form). At a $p = .05$ significance level, participants who identified themselves as Republicans or Democrats were significantly more likely to engage in political activity

than those who did not identify with any party ($r = .147, p = .015$).

About one-fifth ($n = 51$) of participants received no college education, and almost half received some college ($n = 108$). One-third participants had a bachelor's degree and approximately one-tenth ($n = 37$) of participants had a Master's degree or higher.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics for participant's scores on continuous variable measures

Measure	No. of items	Internal Consistency (α)	<i>M</i>	SD	Skew
Sensitivity to Justice	10	.82	33.63	6.52	-.23
Empathy	16	.94	58.8	10.63	-.47
Political Activity	2	-	2.16	1.41	-.87
Religious Commitment	5	.95	7.96	6.39	.27

Multiple Regression Analysis

Model 1 – Expressed willingness to help the homeless. Multiple linear regression was used to determine if the predictive factors previously outlined could be used to predict expressed helping behavior towards the homeless with age as a moderator. Before entering into the model, all variables were mean-centered. Eight extreme multivariate outliers were identified using Mahalanobis' distance as having values larger than the critical value of 21.7. However, upon analysis of these participants' answers, it was determined that they were appropriate given the range of responses available and therefore included in the analysis. Missing data was addressed through pairwise deletion. Homoscedasticity was examined via scatterplot. The spread of distribution of the error term appeared normal across all independent variables. Due to the overrepresentation of participants from the University of Hawaii ($n = 101$), the first step in constructing the

model was to control for possible effects of this sampling bias within the model. Age, gender, sensitivity to justice, empathy, education and religiosity were then also entered in as main effects. Age and gender were also added as interaction variables with each main effect. The correlation matrix showed that there were strong correlations with the likelihood of engaging in helping behavior from all of the predicted variables except for education and age (Table 2).

The multiple linear regression model was significant: ($R^2 = .298$, $F = 7.699$, $p = .001$) which suggested the model successfully predicted a likelihood to express willingness to help the homeless. Within the model, the main effects of gender ($p = .002$), sensitivity to justice ($p = .020$), empathy ($p = .001$) and religiosity ($p = .003$) were all significantly associated with expressed willingness to help the homeless. All variables had tolerance values above .3 and VIF values under 5, suggesting there was relatively low collinearity between variables.

Table 2.

Correlations between independent variables and expressed willingness to help the homeless

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. UH Student	-								
2. Age	-.49**	-							
3. Sex	.26**	.42**	-						
4. Sensitivity (J)	.15*	-.13*	.23**	-					
5. Empathy	.07	.04	.35**	.48**	-				
6. Education	-.28**	.42**	-.04	-.05**	.00	-			
7. Religiosity	-.02	.19**	-.01	.16**	.21**	.20**	-		
8. Expressed W.	.02	.04	.32**	.31**	.47**	-.06	.24**	-	
9. Actual W.	.08	.01	.13*	.06	.12	.07	.23**	.37**	-

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$

Table 3.

Interaction effects of age and gender in the multiple linear regression model predicting expressed helping behavior towards the homeless

Independent variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>p</i>
UH Student	-2.01	1.07	.053
Age	.03	.05	.519
Gender	3.71	1.19	.002
Sensitivity to Justice	.25	.11	.020
Empathy	.22	.07	.001
Education	-2.00	1.22	.170
Religiosity	.30	.10	.003
Sensitivity to Justice X Age	.00	.01	.690
Sensitivity to Justice X Gender	-.30	.14	.038
Empathy X Age	2.14e ⁻⁵	.00	.995
Empathy X Gender	.00	.10	.978
Education X Age	-.03	.04	.443
Education X Gender	-1.20	1.62	.457
Religious Commitment X Age	.00	.01	.927
Religious Commitment X Gender	-.15	.13	.249

Note: For UH student, *non-student* = 0, *student* = 1. Gender, *boys* = 0, *girls* = 1. Education, *bachelor degree or less* = 0, *graduate education or higher* = 1.

Overall model tests $F(15, 276) = 8.085, p < .001, R^2 = .324$

Sensitivity to justice was a significantly associated with expressed willingness to help the homeless, and this relationship was significantly moderated by gender ($B = -.30, SE = .14, p = .038$). No other interaction was significant within the model. Probing this effect revealed that sensitivity to justice was a much stronger predictor of helping behavior in men than in women ($B = .254, p < .001$). This suggests that women's expressed willingness to help the homeless is stable across sensitivity to justice scores, where as men's expressed willingness to help increases significantly with higher sensitivity to justice scores (Figure 1).

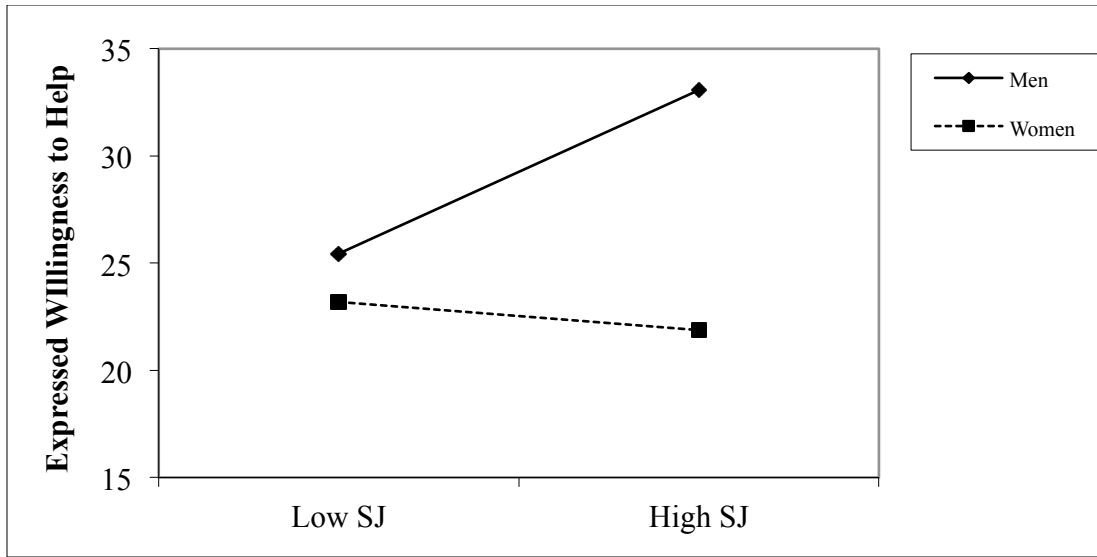


Figure 1. *The interaction between sensitivity to justice scores and gender on expressed willingness to help the homeless*

Model 2 – Actual Willingness to Help the Homeless. Next, correlational and multiple linear regression analyses were conducted in an attempt to understand the association between the independent variables and the dependent variable of actual likelihood to help the homeless. Nine outliers were identified using Mahalanobis’ distance and once again these were included in the model. No threats to homoscedasticity were observed. Sampling bias from the University of Hawaii was again controlled within the model. All main effects and interactions were entered in the same as in the previous model, only this time tested against the dependent variable of actual willingness to help the homeless.

Analyses of the correlation matrix showed that gender ($p = .038$), religiosity ($p = .000$) and expressed willingness to help the homeless ($p = .000$) were all significantly correlated with actual willingness to help the homeless. Additionally, the overall multiple linear regression model was significant ($R^2 = .098$, $F = 1.813$, $p = .033$; see Table 4). This suggested the model successfully predicted likelihood to engage in actual helping

behavior towards the homeless with gender and age as moderators. No signs of major collinearity were detected. Within this model, no specific interactions were significant and the only significant main effect was religiosity ($p = .011$), suggesting that religious participants were the most likely to have previously engaged in actual helping behavior towards the homeless.

Table 4.

Interaction effects of age and gender in the multiple linear regression model predicting expressed helping behavior towards the homeless

Independent variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>p</i>
UH Student	.16	.24	.509
Age	-.01	.01	.440
Gender	.37	.26	.156
Sensitivity to Justice	-.02	.02	.525
Empathy	.03	.03	.090
Education	.04	.32	.891
Religiosity	.06	.02	.011
Sensitivity to Justice X Age	.01	.01	.350
Sensitivity to Justice X Gender	.01	.03	.810
Empathy X Age	-.01	.01	.178
Empathy X Gender	-.03	.02	.095
Education X Age	.01	.01	.291
Education X Gender	-.14	.35	.684
Religious Commitment X Age	.00	.01	.716
Religious Commitment X Gender	-.02	.03	.543

Note: For UH student, *non-student* = 0, *student* = 1. Gender, *boys* = 0, *girls* = 1. Education, *bachelor degree or less* = 0, *graduate education or higher* = 1.

Overall model tests $F(15, 276) = 1.813, p < .033, R^2 = .098$

Model 3 – Type of giving, political affiliation and expressed willingness to

give. Correlational and multiple linear regression was used to test the hypotheses that participants who identified themselves as liberal would be more likely to express a willingness to help the homeless and that this would be moderated by type of giving behavior—liberals being more likely to give institutionally and conservatives more likely to give individually. The correlational analyses showed that institutional giving and independent giving were highly correlated with one another ($p = .000$; Table 5). This

suggests that giving behavior did not differ based on the type of giving described. This was the only observable significant correlation. The regression model was not significant ($R^2 = .031$, $F = .995$ $p = .423$). Additionally, within the model, no main effects or interaction variables were significantly associated with expressed willingness to help. This suggested that there was no association between political affiliation, type of giving behavior and expressed willingness to help the homeless.

Model 4 – Type of giving, political affiliation and actual willingness to help the homeless. Correlational and multiple linear regression analyses were used to analyze the relationship between political affiliation and actual willingness to help the homeless moderated by type of giving behavior. There were no significant relationships detected in the correlational analyses except the already established significant association between expressed willingness and actual willingness to help the homeless ($p = .000$), suggesting people who express a willingness to give also have engaged in actual giving behavior as well. The overall model was not significant ($R^2 = .05$, $F = 1.598$ $p = .164$). This suggested that there was no association between political affiliation, type of giving behavior and likelihood to engage in actual helping behavior towards the homeless.

Table 5.

Correlations between political affiliation, type of giving and willingness to help the homeless

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Political affiliation	-				
2. Institutional giving	.52	-			
3. Individual giving	.08	.35**	-		
4. Expressed willingness	-.05	-.15	-.04	-	
5. Actual willingness	-.13	-.04	-.17	.41**	-

Note: For political affiliation, *Democrat* = 1, *Republican* = 0.

Discussion

The present study aimed to establish a new predictive factor specifically related to helping behavior towards the homeless—sensitivity to justice. It also sought to replicate the relationship between predictive factors such as age, gender, empathy, education, religiosity and helping behavior towards the homeless. These factors had been established in previous research as reliable predictors of helping behavior towards the homeless (Morgan et al., 1997). The goal of this research was to provide a more complete predictive model of who reaches out to the homeless and who does not. This study also sought to present a more accurate analysis of the relationship between political affiliation and helping behavior, specifically towards the homeless.

This study found that higher levels of sensitivity to justice, empathy, education and religiosity predicted expressed and actual willingness to help the homeless and these factors were moderated by age and gender. Additionally, this study also found that higher sensitivity to justice scores predicted expressed helping behavior towards the homeless significantly more in males than in females. This is especially compelling since women's sensitivity scores overall were significantly higher than male's ($r = .23, p = .000$). This suggests that women are more likely to express a willingness to help the homeless regardless of sensitivity to justice scores, while men's helping behavior is largely contingent upon it.

This could be explained in part by social role theory (Eagley, 1987), which states women's socialization as caregivers perpetuates nurturing and helping behavior. Because this social role socialization is so strongly reinforced through rewards from the social environment, women may be less likely to self-report negatively on items measuring traits related to sensitivity to justice, as these items may indicate not caring about the

well-being of others. Men, on the other hand, may not have received the same socialization to appear nurturing and helpful, thus are more likely to respond to the sensitivity to justice scale with a variety of responses. The literature on sensitivity to justice reports that the scale does function as a reliable predictor of helping behavior, but our findings suggest that there may be external forces at hand that influence how female participants respond. Female participants may have internalized this social role as a nurturer and their sensitivity to justice scores are an accurate reflection of their beliefs, or they may have experienced social-desirability effects which decreased the ability of the scale to accurately measure the trait. Understanding which influence (or both) caused the interaction effect remains an empirical question. Alternatively, there may be a serious gender bias within the scale that necessitates further investigation.

Model 2 was significant overall, but it did not present any significant interactions with age and gender on any main effects. However, the main effect of religiosity was significant within the model, which suggests that those who are religious are more likely to have engaged in actual helping behavior towards the homeless than their non-religious counter-parts. This extends the findings of previous research that found the most common volunteer activity in America was religious in nature (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013).

This study also sought to better understand the nuanced relationship between political affiliation and giving behavior. Previous research suggested that individuals give in ways that mirror the values of their political party (Brooks, 2007). Previous research also suggested that liberals have more sympathetic feelings towards the homeless than conservatives (Lee, Lewis & Jones, 1992). As such, it was hypothesized that liberals would have higher expressed and actual willingness to help the homeless than

conservatives, but the type of giving specified would moderate political affiliation and likelihood to help. In other words, liberals would have higher expressed and actual giving scores than conservatives, but they would be more likely to indicate an interest in giving to institutions. Additionally, conservatives would indicate less likelihood to engage in expressed or actual helping behavior towards the homeless, but would be more likely to express an interest in giving to individuals. This was not found in our study. Liberals and conservatives appeared to engage in the same levels of both expressed and actual helping behavior towards the homeless and there was no significant interactions observed between political affiliation and giving behavior.

Limitations and future directions

This study was limited in part by a sample bias. In seeking a wide-ranging, community sample, certain sampling centers had much larger response rates than others. This resulted in there being an over-representation of young, college-aged Hawaii residents within the study. This was controlled for within the model, which did not suggest any significant associations, however it may have had negative effects on the external validity of the study. Future research should be more rigorous in how sampling is employed and to limit the number of respondents from every location sampled so not to distort the final results.

Another limitation to this study is the very small measure used for actual willingness to help the homeless. The actual willingness to help the homeless scale only assessed previous experience helping the homeless, which had a floor effect as most individuals do not interact with the homeless on a regularly enough basis to have had much experiences helping the homeless. Additionally, relying on self-report for measures

of helping behavior may fall prey to issues of social-desirability. Future research would employ a behavioral or observational measure in which actual helping behavior can be witnessed and measured by the researcher.

The non-significant effects of models three and four were most likely influenced by the fact a majority of respondents did not indicate any political affiliation at all. This suggests that the sample for this study was not particularly politically engaged, and this may have weakened the likelihood that a political affiliation would have been important enough to the participant to influence the type of giving behavior they preferred. Future research would explore the notion of removing a binary approach to political affiliation and use measures that would allow testing on a larger variety of political leanings outside of the traditional two-party system.

The measurement of type of giving behavior was also small in scope. Overall, four total questions were used to analyze the interaction between political affiliation, type of giving behavior and willingness to help the homeless (two items for expressed willingness, two items for actual willingness). Because giving behavior is highly nuanced and contextual, the items may not have been effective measures of giving behavior. Since these questions were created by the author, psychometric testing has not yet been performed on their validity. Future research would employ tests of giving behavior towards the homeless that has strong psychometric properties.

Additional research would be helpful in developing reliable and valid scales for assessing helping behavior towards the homeless. This study combined previously established scales associated with helping behavior and attempted to adapt other scales to accurately measure helping behavior specifically towards the homeless. Future work

would be helpful in developing tools that assist researchers in assessing how and why certain people help the homeless, and others do not. Additionally, understanding how these opinions towards the homeless effect communities in regard to their homeless interventions would be especially compelling.

Appendix A

Consent form, demographic information

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN
A study about helping behavior

Researchers:

Jeanette Lee Purvis, Principal Investigator: (808) 927-8149

Elaine Hatfield, Project Supervisor: (808) 956-6276

My name is Jeanette Purvis. I am a graduate student at the University of Hawaii (UH). As part of my degree program, I am conducting a research project examining helping behavior. The purpose of my project is to study the motivations for helping others. I am asking you to participate in this project because you are at least 18 years old.

Project Description - Activities and Time Commitment: If you decide to take part in this project, you will be asked to fill out a demographic questionnaire and brief survey divided into five short sections. Most responses will be multiple choice, however, there will be a few questions where you may add an open-ended response. The survey is accessed on a website which can be accessed using a link below. Completing the survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes. Approximately 200 individuals will participate in this research project.

Benefits and Risks - There will be no direct benefit to you for taking part in this project. The findings from this project may help better understand helping behavior and research related to Social Psychology. There is little risk to you in participating in this project.

Confidentiality and Privacy - I will not ask you for any personal information, such as your name or address. Please do not include any personal information in your survey responses.

Voluntary Participation - You can freely choose to take part or to not take part in this survey. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits for either decision. If you do agree to participate, you can stop at any time.

Questions - If you have any questions about this study, please call or email me, the principal investigator, at 808-927-8149 or jpurvis@hawaii.edu. You may also contact the project supervisor, Dr. Elaine Hatfield, at (808) 956-6276 or elainehatfield582@gmail.com. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the UH Human Studies Program at 808.956.5007 or uhirb@hawaii.edu.

Demographic Information

Please answer the following questions about yourself:

1. What is your age? _____

2. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Trans
- Not listed (please specify) _____
- Prefer not to disclose

3. What race do you most closely identify with? (Please check all that apply)

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Non-Hispanic White
- Black or African American
- Asian Indian
- Hispanic or Latino
- Chinese
- Filipino
- Japanese
- Korean
- Vietnamese
- Asian not listed (Please print race below. For example; Hmong, Laotian, That, etc.) _____
- Native Hawaiian
- Samoan
- Pacific Islander not listed (Please print race below. For example; Fijian, Tongan, Chuukese, etc.) _____
- Prefer not to say

4. Which of the following types of places best describes where you live? Definition:

Metropolitan City is any city with population greater than 50,000 or any city in an Metro or Urban Area with population greater than 50,000. If not sure, use your best guess.

- CENTRAL DOWNTOWN area in a METRO CITY (City has population greater than 50,000, or any city in Metro Area with population greater than 50,000)
- Outer area of, but still INSIDE the CITY limits of a METRO CITY (City greater than 50,000, or any city in a Metro Area with population greater than 50,000)
- In the SUBURBS, outside of the official city limits, but still in the METRO AREA (area greater than 50,000 or area with city greater than 50,000)
- In a RURAL NON-METRO City or Town (city or town with population less than 50,000 & area less than 50,000)
- In the immediate SUBURBAN area just outside of RURAL NON-METRO town (suburban area of city or town less than 50,000 & area population less than 50,000)

- In a RURAL NON-METRO AREA removed from any town or city

4.1. **OPTIONAL:** In what city, state/region, and country do you currently reside?

5. What is your religious preference?

- An Orthodox church such as the Greek or Russian Orthodox Church
 Protestant
 Roman Catholic
 Christian
 Christian Scientist
 Hindu
 Jewish
 Muslim
 Seventh-Day Adventist
 Mormon
 Atheist
 Agnostic
 None of the above (please specify)

-
- Prefer not to say

6. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- Did not complete high school
 High School/GED
 Some College
 Bachelor's Degree
 Master's Degree
 Advanced Graduate work or Ph.D.
 Not Sure

7. What political party do you most closely identify with?

- Republican
 Democrat
 Independent
 I do not identify with any political party
 None of the above (Please specify)
-

8. On a scale of 1-10, how strongly do you identify with your respective political party? Please circle the appropriate number: 0 meaning you do not identify strongly with your party at all and 10 meaning you fully identify with all beliefs of your respective political party.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

9. How often do you discuss your political beliefs with others?

- Never
- Rarely
- Every once in a while
- Sometimes
- Almost always

10. Have you participated in a political election within the last two years?

- Yes
- No

Appendix B

Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (TEQ)

		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1.	When someone else is feeling excited, I tend to get excited too	0	1	2	3	4
2.	Other people's misfortunes do not disturb me a great deal	0	1	2	3	4
3.	It upsets me to see someone being treated disrespectfully	0	1	2	3	4
4.	I remain unaffected when someone close to me is happy	0	1	2	3	4
5.	I enjoy making other people feel better	0	1	2	3	4
6.	I have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me	0	1	2	3	4
7.	When a friend starts to talk about his/her problems, I try to steer the conversation towards something else	0	1	2	3	4
8.	I can tell when others are sad even when they do not say anything	0	1	2	3	4
9.	I find that I am "in tune" with other people's moods	0	1	2	3	4
10.	I do not feel sympathy for people who cause their own serious illnesses	0	1	2	3	4
11.	I become irritated when someone cries	0	1	2	3	4
12.	I am not really interested in how other people feel	0	1	2	3	4
13.	I get a strong urge to help when I see someone who is upset	0	1	2	3	4
14.	When I see someone being treated unfairly, I do not feel very much pity for them	0	1	2	3	4
15.	I find it silly for people to cry out of happiness	0	1	2	3	4
16.	When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards him/her	0	1	2	3	4

Appendix C

The Religious Commitment Inventory

		Not at all true of me	Somewhat true of me	Moderately true of me	Mostly true of me	Totally true of me
1.	I often read books and magazines about my faith.	0	1	2	3	4
2.	I make financial contributions to my religious organization.	0	1	2	3	4
3.	I spend time trying to grow in understanding of my faith.	0	1	2	3	4
4.	Religion is especially important to me because it answers many questions about the meaning of life.	0	1	2	3	4
5.	My religious beliefs lie behind my whole approach to life.	0	1	2	3	4
6.	I enjoy spending time with others of my religious affiliation.	0	1	2	3	4
7.	Religious beliefs influence all my dealings in life.	0	1	2	3	4
8.	It is important to me to spend periods of time in private religious thought and reflection.	0	1	2	3	4
9.	I enjoy working in the activities of my religious affiliation.	0	1	2	3	4
10.	I keep well informed about my local religious group and have some influence in its decisions.	0	1	2	3	4

Appendix D

Sensitivity to Justice Observer Scale (SJ)

	Observer	Completely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Mostly Agree	Completely Agree
1.	It bothers me when someone gets something they don't deserve.	0	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I am upset when someone does not get a reward he/she has earned.	0	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I cannot easily bear it when someone unilaterally profits from others.	0	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I can't forget it for a long time when someone else has to fix others' carelessness. 2	0	1	2	3	4	5
5.	It disturbs me when someone receives fewer opportunities to develop his/her skills than others.	0	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I am upset when someone is undeservingly worse off than others.	0	1	2	3	4	5
7.	It worries me when someone has to work hard for things that come easily to others.	0	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I ruminate for a long time when someone is being treated nicer than others for no reason.	0	1	2	3	4	5
9.	It gets me down to see someone criticized for things that are overlooked with others.	0	1	2	3	4	5
10.	I am upset when someone is being treated worse than others.	0	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix E

Expressed Willingness to Help the Homeless

Self-Description

		Completely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Mostly Agree	Completely Agree
1.	I would be willing to volunteer at a soup kitchen	0	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I would be willing to take a job at a homeless shelter	0	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I would be willing to attend a rally at the state capital to support homeless issues	0	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I would be willing to donate money to a national organization that helps the homeless	0	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I would be willing to donate money to directly to an individual who is currently homeless	0	1	2	3	4	5

Hypothetical Situation

1. A man approaches you while you are waiting to cross the street and asks you for change. What do you do?

2. One evening you notice a homeless individual lying on the sidewalk, wrapped in blankets. A group of 5 young men walk past the homeless individual and curse towards him or her, shouting "bum" and "get a job." One person kicks the homeless individual and the group laughs and continues to walk. The group is about to walk past you. What do you do?

3. You see a homeless individual on a street corner standing by your car window as you stop at a red light. They are holding a sign that says "will work for food." What do you do?

- 4. A neighbor that you do not know is fighting with their spouse. You hear a sound indicating that someone has just been physically assaulted. Neither of the people involved are calling for help or have indicated from your observations that they have called police. They continue to argue. What do you do?**

- 5. You see a homeless individual on a street corner standing by your car window as you stop at a red light. They are holding a sign that says, "Hungry, please help." You have the option of switching lanes to avoid idling next to where the homeless individual is standing. What do you do?**

- 6. You have decided to donate \$100 charitably. You can give to a national organization, a local group, or an individual. Where will you donate the \$100 and why?**

Appendix F

Actual Willingness to Help the Homeless

		Yes	No
1.	Have you ever donated money to a National homeless organization?		
2.	Have you ever volunteered locally for a homeless-related cause?		
3.	Have you ever donated money directly to a homeless person on the street?		
4.	Have you ever given goods such as food or clothing directly to a homeless person on the street?		
5.	Have you ever been involved with any political activity relating to helping the homeless?		

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