Willingness to Help: How the Portrayal and Perception of a Wrongfully Convicted Individual Affects People's Willingness to Help Exonerees

by

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ABSTRACT

Currently, in Canada there is no legal requirement to compensate exonerees (Roach, 2012), and despite research suggesting Canadians would be supportive of this government assistance for exonerees (Angus Reid, 1995; Clow, Blandisi, et al., 2012), Canada rarely compensates or provides them with reintegration services (Schuller et al., 2021). Two studies were conducted to examine how emotions and empathic concern might impact personal willingness to help exonerees. In both studies, participants watched a video of an exoneree discussing an angry or sad aspect of his wrongful conviction and then asked about helping exonerees (assessed with both self-report and behavioural measures). Emotions were manipulated and/or measured a few different ways in each study. Participants' sadness about the exoneree's story and empathic concern increased self-reported helping, yet video condition had little impact. Behavioural helping was less consistent across studies. The findings are discussed in the context of education and increasing support for exonerees.

Keywords: exoneree; angry; sad; empathic concern, helping

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

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Karli Hamilton

STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS

I have used standard referencing practices to acknowledge ideas, research techniques, or other materials that belong to others. In collaboration with my thesis supervisor, Dr. Kimberley Clow, I designed both studies associated with this thesis. My thesis supervisor, Dr. Kimberley Clow, and co-supervisor, Dr. Lesley Zannella, provided feedback on each draft of the thesis. Dr. Matthew Shane provided verbal feedback in the early stages of development, and again at my oral examination. Dr. Matthew Shane also provided feedback on the written document. Dr. Christopher O'Connor provided verbal feedback during the examination and written feedback after the examination.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

In the United States, over 2800 cases of wrongful conviction have been documented (National Registry of Exoneration, 2021) and over 370 individuals have been exonerated due to DNA evidence (Innocence Project, 2021). Once released, these individuals are expected to reintegrate back into society; however, previous research has found that those who were wrongfully convicted often face significant prejudice and stigma post-exoneration, resulting in difficulties accessing opportunities and reintegration services (Clow, 2017; Kukucka & Evelo, 2019; Westervelt & Cook, 2008, 2012). For example, compared to the general public exonerees are often perceived less warm (Clow & Leach, 2015a) and receive fewer email responses when inquiring about housing rentals (Zannella et al., 2020).

Preliminary research has demonstrated that exonerees are often perceived as being angry and sad (Hamilton & Clow, 2019), yet the wrongful conviction literature has not focused on how these negative emotions influence stigma and helping toward exonerees. However, literature outside of the area of wrongful conviction has demonstrated that emotions (i.e., anger and sadness) can impact helping behaviours toward stigmatized individuals (e.g., Haccoun et al., 1976; Small & Lerner, 2008). Furthermore, empathic concern, a type of empathy related to being concerned and feeling sympathetic toward others (Davis, 1980, 1983), is also associated with increased helping behaviours (Bekkers, 2006; Verhaert & Van den Poel, 2011). Empathic concern has been found to interact with emotions, such as sadness, to further increase helping (Cialdini et al., 1987; Sassenrath et al., 2017).

The goal of the current research was to examine whether differing emotions expressed by an exoneree (in a video), and/or experienced by the participant, would impact their personal willingness to help exonerees (assessed with both self-report and behavioural measures). The current research also aimed to examine whether empathic concern would impact their personal willingness to help exonerees, and if these emotions interacted with empathic concern influence helping. Recognizing different factors that can impact the public's likelihood of helping exonerees is an important first step required to increase the help and support they deserve post-exoneration.

1.1 Post-Exoneration Stigma

A growing body of research has examined the stigma exonerees face post-exoneration and has consistently demonstrated that such stigma is present. For example, individuals often hold negative stereotypes toward exonerees (e.g., Clow & Leach, 2015a, 2015b; Savage et al., 2018; Scherr, Normile, & Putney, 2018), and they are often less liked than the general public, but similar to non-exonerated offenders (Clow & Leach, 2015a). Clow and Leach (2015a) found that exonerees were perceived as less warm, and received more pity than the general public, and similarly competent and warm compared to non-exonerated offenders. Research has also demonstrated that there are differences in perceptions towards the wrongfully convicted, depending on factors contributing to their wrongful conviction. For instance, false confessors are perceived as less competent and less warm (Clow & Leach, 2015b), and more responsible and blameworthy for their wrongful conviction (Clow & Leach, 2015b; Savage et al., 2018; Scherr, Normile, & Putney, 2018) than those mistakenly identified by an eyewitness. Several researchers have suggested that exonerees may be increasingly stigmatized due to

being perceived as a victim (Clow & Leach, 2015b) or by association with rightfully convicted individuals (Clow, Ricciardelli, et al., 2012)

Additionally, exonerees face a variety of reintegration difficulties post-exoneration. For instance, wrongfully convicted individuals received fewer email responses when inquiring about job postings (Clow, 2017) and housing rentals (Zannella et al., 2020) compared to members of the general public. In addition, other work has shown that students report wanting greater social distance from wrongfully convicted individuals than from non-criminalized citizens (Clow & Leach, 2015a). This research demonstrates that not only are exonerees viewed more negatively compared to the general public (e.g., Clow & Leach, 2015a, 2015b), but these stigmas impact their day-to-day lives by allowing them less access than the general public to essentials such as jobs and housing (e.g., Clow, 2017; Zannella et al., 2020).

More recently, preliminary research investigating perceptions of exonerees has suggested that the public believes that negative emotions, such as anger and sadness, are stereotypical traits associated with exonerees (Hamilton & Clow, 2019). These emotions may be particularly important for understanding the stigma exonerees experience, as research has found that angry individuals (not specifically exonerees) are often perceived as less likeable and less likely to be helped compared to sad individuals (Haccoun et al., 1976). Although the literature has demonstrated that exonerees experience stigma, and that anger and sadness are stereotypical of exonerees to express, research has yet to examine how the perception of an exoneree's emotions can impact their post-release experience.

1.2 Support for Assistance Post-Exoneration

Westervelt and Cook (2008) demonstrated through exoneree reports that there are currently insufficient reintegration services for the wrongfully convicted. Even at the start of this decade, only 35 U.S. states and the District of Columbia had compensation statutes (Innocence Project, 2021) and only one of the 18 death row exonerees interviewed by Westervelt and Cook (2008) had received financial compensation. Many of these compensation statutes require "burden of proof," such as DNA evidence, and will disqualify an exoneree if they had falsely confessed or pled guilty to the crime in question (Norris, 2012). In Canada, there is currently no legal obligation to financially compensate exonerees, and the government requires proof of factual innocence to consider compensation, despite there being no system in place to legally determine this (Roach, 2012; Schuller et al., 2021).

Notwithstanding the difficulties exonerees can experience qualifying for and receiving compensation, research has shown that people are generally supportive of the government assisting exonerees. For instance, Canadians typically agree that exonerees should receive some form of financial compensation from the government (Angus Reid, 1995; Clow, Blandisi, et al., 2012). That said, certain factors, such as the factor contributing to the wrongful conviction can matter: Kukucka and Evelo (2019) and Scherr, Normile, and Putney (2018) found that American participants were less likely to say they support assistance for false confessors compared to other exonerees. Although people are generally supportive of the government assisting exonerees, this research demonstrates that certain exonerees may be perceived as less deserving of help.

Moreover, qualitative research has suggested that the public may be willing to sign petitions to help wrongfully convicted individuals (Kennedy, 2017). For instance, in a content analysis of Reddit posts about the docuseries *Making a Murderer*, some Reddit users stated that they thought signing online petitions was worth doing because it was "as much as the average person can do" (Kennedy, 2017, p. 400). To our knowledge, however, no quantitative research has been conducted to evaluate the degree to which individuals would themselves be willing to provide help (e.g., signing petitions, donating money). Although it is important for the public to support government-sponsored assistance for exonerees, it is even more important for the public to take charge and provide the help they need post-exoneration. As one Reddit user stated, signing petitions could "increase pressure on the appropriate individuals or groups to take action" (Kennedy, 2017, p. 400). Considerable research has examined the willingness to help other types of stigmatized groups (Menec & Perry, 1995, 1998; Weiner et al., 1988), as well as the general role of emotions and empathic concern in helping behaviour (e.g., Haccoun et al., 1976; Willis et al., 2015), each of which will be discussed in the next few sections.

1.3 Willingness to Help Stigmatized Groups

Weiner's attribution theory suggests that when the origins of a stigma are perceived as less in the individual's control (e.g., obesity due to glandular dysfunction), people perceived them as less responsible and experienced less anger and more pity towards them, compared to when they were told the stigma was controllable (e.g., obesity due to unhealthy eating and lack of exercise; Menec & Perry, 1995, 1998; Obonsawin et al., 2013; Weiner et al., 1988). Moreover, Weiner et al. (1988) found that individuals with

controllable stigmas were also less likely to be helped, compared to those whose stigmas were out of their control. Although the perceptions of a stigmatized individual were typically impacted by the controllability of their stigma, Weiner et al. (1988) noted that this was not always the case. For example, those with Alzheimer's disease were often perceived with pity, were often helped, and were often not viewed with anger, regardless of controllability (i.e., brain dysfunction vs. brain dysfunction caused by a risky accident; Weiner et al., 1988).

The effect of stigmatization in wrongful conviction research has shown a similar pattern. For instance, Savage et al. (2018) found that false confessors were often viewed by the public as more responsible for their wrongful conviction compared to those mistakenly identified by an eyewitness, especially when there was little to no police bias in the interrogation. Furthermore, the public viewed false confessors with more anger, but only viewed exonerees (due to a false confession or misidentification) with more pity if there was high police bias (Savage et al., 2018). Similarly, Kukucka and Evelo (2019) found that police misconduct resulted in mock jurors viewing the false confessor as less responsible for their wrongful conviction than false confessors with no police misconduct, but still more responsible than the exoneree convicted based on eyewitness misidentification. When police misconduct was not a factor, however, the mock jurors perceived the false confessor as more guilty and were more likely to suggest smaller compensation amounts (Kukucka & Evelo, 2019). Nonetheless, wrongful conviction research has yet to examine whether certain factors influence the degree to which individuals would be personally willing to help exonerees, outside of the legal context.

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1.3.1 Willingness to Help and Emotions

The emotions expressed by a person in need (often referred to as "targets" in the literature) can contribute to whether an individual is willing to help them. For instance, some research has found that negatively framed emotional public service advertisements increased helping behaviours (e.g., Bagozzi and Moore, 1994). Additional research has shown that targets experiencing sadness were more likely to be helped than targets experiencing fear (Terwogt, 2002) or anger (Haccoun et al., 1976; Yee & Greenberg, 1998). Haccoun et al. (1976) presented participants with an audio recording of a sad, angry, or neutral individual and asked them to rate how willing they would be to help the individual in a variety of ways. They found that sadness led to an increase in supportive helping (e.g., listening, reassurance), whereas anger led to an increase in telling the individual their behaviour was inappropriate (Haccoun et al., 1976). Furthermore, Yee and Greenberg (1998) found that participants perceived the target as more needy and reported higher intentions to help when the target was sad compared to angry.

Based on the research discussed, two gaps in the literature can be identified: 1) the wrongful conviction literature has yet to focus on how negative emotions expressed by exonerees can impact helping behaviours and support toward them post-exoneration, and 2) the helping and emotion literature has not yet examined how emotions expressed by stigmatized individuals impact helping. Given that much of the helping and emotion literature has focused on negative emotions (Haccoun et al., 1976; Terwogt, 2002; Yee & Greenberg, 1998), and the two traits most frequently mentioned by participants to describe exonerees were angry and sad (Hamilton & Clow, 2019), the current research

will fill the gaps in the literature by examining how exonerees experiencing anger and sadness impacts personal willingness to help.

1.3.2 Willingness to Help and Empathic Concern

Although the emotions expressed by a target were the focus of the current research, participants' empathy and how it impacted willingness to help was also assessed. Empathy refers to "being cognitively aware of another person's internal states and/or putting oneself in the place of another and experiencing his or her feelings" (Bagozzi & Moore, 1994, p. 58). Researchers have identified many subcomponents that describe different aspects of empathy. For example, Davis (1980, 1983) suggested that the four subcomponents describe different types of empathy, such as adopting the view of others (perspective taking), imagining the viewpoint of fictitious characters (fantasy), being concerned, and feeling sympathetic toward others (empathic concern), and feeling distraught toward oneself when uncomfortable (personal distress). Chrysikou and Thompson (2016) and Gini et al. (2017) noted that researchers sometimes examine these subcomponents as one measurement of global empathy, whereas others examine them as separate components of empathy. Empathic concern has been an important aspect in the empathy and helping literature (e.g., Bekkers, 2006; Einolf, 2008; Verhaert & Van den Poel, 2011) and will therefore be the type of empathy investigated in the current research.

Verhaert and Van den Poel (2011) found that empathic concern was positively correlated with intentions to donate but negatively correlated with generosity (i.e., amount donated) to individual charities. Although empathic concern resulted in a smaller donation amount per charity, those higher in empathic concern donated to a larger number of charities overall (Verhaert & Van den Poel, 2011). In comparison, Bekkers

(2006) found that not only were those higher (vs. lower) in empathic concern more likely to donate to charities, but they were also more generous in their donations (however, information about the number of charities donated to was not included). Together, these two studies demonstrate that those higher in empathic concern are more likely to donate in general and are more likely to donate larger amounts of money than those lower in empathic concern (Bekkers, 2006; Verhaert & Van den Poel, 2011).

Interestingly, Einolf (2008) found that empathic concern could predict certain types of helping, but not others. For example, empathic concern predicted spontaneous and informal helping such as letting someone cut in line or giving change to a homeless person but did not predict planned and formal helping such as loaning money or helping someone search for a job (Einolf, 2008). Empathic concern was shown to have a positive impact on helping someone they knew and helping a stranger, and there was little difference in helping behaviours found between the two (Einolf, 2008). Although this is consistent with Davis et al.'s (2018) study demonstrating that those higher in empathic concern were more willing to help friends and strangers than those lower in empathic concern, other studies have found that people higher in empathic concern (vs. lower) are more likely to help a friend than a stranger. For instance, Schlenker and Britt (2001) had participants help a friend or stranger by describing them to someone evaluating the friend's/stranger's cognitive skills and found that more positive descriptions were provided about friends versus strangers. Additionally, Katz et al. (2015) found that participants reported higher empathic concern toward and were more likely to help a potential rape victim if the victim was a friend versus stranger, but there was no difference in blame for the victim regardless of their relationship to participants. Finally,

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Maner and Gailliot (2007) found that people were more willing to help a close family member than a stranger, and that this increase in help was mediated by empathic concern for the family member but not for the stranger.

Together, this research demonstrates that empathic concern can impact a variety of different types of helping, including self-reported helping (e.g., Einolf, 2008; Katz et al., 2015) and behavioural intentions of helping (e.g., Schlenker & Britt, 2001; Verhaert & Van den Poel, 2011). Additionally, empathic concern consistently increases helping when the person in need is a friend (e.g., Davis et al., 2018; Schlenker & Britt, 2001), yet the findings are less consistent about helping strangers (e.g., Einolf, 2008; Katz et al., 2015). These findings are important to the current research because we examine a variety of helping behaviours through self-report and behavioural metrics, and the exoneree in the videos is a stranger to participants.

Previous research has also shown that the perceived emotions of the target can influence empathic feelings and willingness to help (Willis et al., 2015), especially if participants are asked to examine the situation from a sad individual's perspective (Sassenrath et al., 2017). Although Willis et al. (2015) did not examine empathic concern directly, they did measure emotional empathy; Chrysikou and Thompson (2016) stated that researchers often measure "affective empathy" by examining empathic concern on its own or by examining empathic concern and personal distress together. Those higher in emotional empathy were more likely to help a stranger who looked sad, compared to those who looked happy, angry, neutral, fearful, or disgusted (Willis et al., 2015). Furthermore, when the target was perceived as sad, individuals were also more likely to perceive them as more in need, which increased empathic concern toward them and

greater willingness to help, compared to those perceived as angry or disgusted

(Sassenrath et al., 2017). As the current research aimed to examine helping behaviours

toward an angry or sad exoneree, it is possible that empathic concern may also play a role

in willingness to help exonerees.

Chapter 2. Study 1

The wrongful conviction literature has yet to explore whether the public would personally be willing to help exonerees, or how an exoneree's perceived emotions could impact this helping behaviour. To address this gap in the literature, Study 1 was designed to evaluate how willingness to help exonerees (measured via both self-report and behavioural metrics) would be impacted by videos of an exoneree discussing angry or sad aspects of his wrongful conviction experience. Given that research suggests that empathic concern and emotions can interact to affect helping (Sassenrath et al., 2017; Willis et al., 2015), Study 1 also aimed to examine what role participants' own empathic concern played in their willingness to help exonerees. Research has shown that increasing contact with stigmatized individuals can increase empathic feelings toward them and that contact via video is just as effective as in person contact (Clement et al., 2012).

2.1 Hypotheses

Based on the literature, we hypothesized that:

1) In line with previous findings regarding targets' emotional states and helping behaviours (e.g., Haccoun et al., 1976; Sassenrath et al., 2017; Willis et al., 2015), participants in the sad condition (vs. angry condition) would be more willing to respond favourably to a variety of services and behaviours that they themselves could do to assist exonerees (henceforth referred to as self-report helping).

2) In line with previous findings regarding targets' emotional states and helping behaviours (e.g., Haccoun et al., 1976; Sassenrath et al., 2017; Willis et al., 2015), participants in the sad condition (vs. angry condition) would be more willing to

report signing (and actually sign) a petition about government-sponsored reintegration services for all Canadian exonerees (henceforth referred to as behavioural helping).

3) In line with previous findings regarding empathic concern, targets' emotional states, and helping behaviours (e.g., Sassenrath et al., 2017; Verhaert & Van den Poel, 2011; Willis et al., 2015), participants higher in empathic concern (vs. lower) would be more willing to respond favourably to a variety of services and behaviours that they themselves could do to assist exonerees (henceforth referred to as self-reported helping). This effect may be most pronounced within the sad video condition.

4) In line with previous findings regarding empathic concern, targets' emotional states, and helping behaviours (e.g., Sassenrath et al., 2017; Verhaert & Van den Poel, 2011; Willis et al., 2015), participants higher in empathic concern (vs. lower) would be more willing to report signing (and actually sign) a petition about government-sponsored reintegration services for all Canadian exonerees (henceforth referred to as behavioural helping). This effect may be most pronounced within the sad video condition.

Several additional exploratory questions were also investigated. First, as we are expecting emotions to drive the findings, and we manipulated the emotional content discussed in the videos, we asked participants to rate their perceptions of the exoneree's emotions in the video. Partly this was done as a manipulation check, but it also allowed us to examine how perceptions of the exoneree's emotions impacted our predicted findings. Second, we asked participants to rate their own emotional reactions to the video

they watched. Again, this question was primarily a manipulation check, but it also allowed us to examine if participants' own emotional reactions drove their responses.

2.2 Method

2.2.1 Participants

One-hundred and ninety-seven undergraduate students from a university in Southern Ontario, Canada participated in the study. Participants were discarded from the data set due to being extreme outliers in the assumptions of our manipulation checks ($n = 2$), if they requested that their data be withdrawn after being informed about the true nature of the study ($n = 11$), if they did not complete the study ($n = 17$), or if they incorrectly answered two or more attention check questions ($n = 34$). After the removal of these participants, the final dataset was composed of 133 participants ($M_{age} = 21.02$, $SD_{age} = 2.87$). G*Power suggested 102 participants to detect a medium effect using a t-test at 80% power and 140 participants to detect a medium effect at 90% power. As our final dataset fell within these numbers, further data was not collected. There were more male participants (53.4%) than female (45.1%) and non-binary (.8%), and .8% skipped the question. The most frequent ethnic identities participants reported were Caucasian (42.1%), South Asian (26.3%), and Black (12.0%).

All participants that reached the end of the study and correctly answered at least two of the three attention check questions (requirements that were clearly laid out on the consent form) were rewarded with 1% toward their course grade for their participation in the study—even those who requested to withdraw or who had incomplete data but correctly completed the attention checks received their credits. With REB approval (see

Appendix A and Appendix B), participants who failed at least two attention checks or did not reach the end of the study did not receive their credit and their data was discarded. Participants were given the chance to withdraw at the end of the study if they wished to receive their credit but did not want their data included in the analyses. This was done so that participants could not open the study, close it immediately, and get their credits without participating in the study (as was an issue in previous online studies), while still respecting participants right to withdraw from the study without penalty.

2.2.2 Design

The study used a between-subjects design where the independent variable was the video condition (angry vs. sad). Empathic concern scores were not manipulated and were therefore analyzed as an individual difference. The dependent variables were self-reported willingness to help exonerees (i.e., self-reported helping) and reports of signing the reintegration services petition (i.e., behavioural helping).

2.2.3 Measures and Materials

2.2.3.1 Videos

Six two-minute videos (three angry, three sad) were created from six hours of video footage of an interview with a Canadian exoneree (who had signed a release form allowing us to use the video for research and/or teaching purposes). In each video, the male exoneree was sitting in front of a camera, with a neutral background, discussing either an angry or a sad aspect of his wrongful conviction experience. There were no visual (e.g., crying) or auditory (e.g., yelling) cues demonstrating that the exoneree was

angry or sad, but instead the emotions were indicated with the language (both verbal and nonverbal) used to discuss each topic in the videos.

In the angry videos, the exoneree talked about: a) how the woman who falsely accused him lied during her testimony at trial and how the detective and prosecutor knew but did nothing, b) how angry he was at his accuser and how she has accused several other men of similar crimes, and c) how unfair it is that he has not received any financial compensation from the Canadian government for his wrongful conviction. In the sad videos, the exoneree talked about: a) how his relationship with his girlfriend fell apart post-exoneration, b) how guarded his wrongful conviction has made him and how he does not let people get emotionally close to him anymore, and c) how he lost custody of his children because of his wrongful conviction. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the six videos. For analyses, responses to the three angry videos were examined together and responses to the three sad videos were examined together.

At the beginning of each video clip there was a message stating, "The individual in this video has been wrongfully convicted of a crime he did not commit. He spent 1047 days in prison for a crime that did not happen. He was knowingly falsely accused of a crime by a woman who has also falsely accused seven other men of similar crimes. He will now talk about some of the emotional experiences related to his wrongful conviction." Following this message, the exoneree appeared and began speaking to an interviewer who was off camera, making it appear as if he was talking directly to the viewer.

2.2.3.2 Video Manipulation Questions

To test the effectiveness of our video manipulation, participants were asked to respond to two statements. These questions were also used for secondary analyses in place of the video condition to determine if perceived exoneree emotions and/or participants' emotions impacted willingness to help exonerees.

The first statement said "The exoneree in the video feels *(emotion).*" and they were presented with seven emotions (anger, disgust, fear, happiness, pity, sadness, and surprise) to rate on 5-point scales (1 = "strongly disagree"; 5 = "strongly agree"). These emotions, except for pity, have been deemed to be universal emotions (Ekman, 1992). Pity was included as it is central to Fiske et al.'s (2002) Stereotype Content Model and Weiner's attribution theory (Weiner et al., 1988), and these seven emotions have been successfully used in other wrongful conviction research (e.g., Clow & Leach, 2015b). The second question asked, "I feel *(emotion)* about the exoneree's story." and participants were presented with the same seven emotions and response scale.

2.2.3.3 Willingness to Help Measurements

To assess how willing participants were to assist wrongfully convicted individuals, we used items from existing sources, which were then modified to fit the current study, and created our own items to fill in any gaps (see Appendix C for a complete list of our own items). We used Scherr and colleagues' three items about support for reintegration services for all exonerees (Scherr, Normile, & Putney, 2018; Scherr, Normile, & Sarmiento, 2018), and created items to assess what participants would personally be willing to do to help both exonerees in general (seven items) and the video

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exoneree (seven items). Participants were also asked one question about how willing they would be to donate to Innocence Canada. All items were rated on a 9-point scale (1 = "strongly disagree"; 9 = "strongly agree").

Statements from Scherr and colleagues' research included "Exonerees should get government-sponsored career counselling." and "Exonerees should get government-sponsored job training." (Scherr, Normile, & Putney, 2018; Scherr, Normile, & Sarmiento, 2018). Items created to assess participants' personal willingness to help exonerees in general and the video exoneree were identical but focused on either exonerees in general or the video exoneree. Statements about helping exonerees in general included "I would be willing to sign a petition to make financial compensation a legal requirement for all exonerees." and "I would be willing to pay higher taxes in order to provide financial compensation to wrongfully convicted individuals." Statements about helping the video exoneree included "I would be willing to help in the job training at my place of employment for the exoneree in the video." and "I would have been willing to sign a petition for the release of the exoneree in the video from prison." A single Willingness to Help Exonerees variable (henceforth referred to as self-reported helping) was created by averaging all 18 items ($\alpha = .919$).

In addition, we assessed actual behaviour (henceforth referred to as behavioural helping) by asking participants "Please click here if you would like to sign a petition to make it a legal requirement for all reintegration services (e.g., career counselling, psychological counselling, job training) in Canada to be government-sponsored for all exonerees who wish to access these services (the petition will be opened in a new tab)." Participants had the option to click on the link, which then opened a new tab on their

computer to the petition. On the next screen, participants were asked "Did you sign the petition to make reintegration services government-sponsored for all Canadian exonerees who wish to access these services?" (coded as 0 = no, 1 = yes).

Additionally, a best estimate of whether participants actually signed the petition was calculated by matching as best as possible the time and date of each survey submission in which a participant indicated that they signed the reintegration services petition to a signature date on the actual petition. Best estimates were only calculated for participants who claimed to have signed the petition based on the previous question (coded as 0 if they reported not signing). The petition was created on Change.org which allows the creator of the petition to view how many hours ago a signature was added as long as it was within the past 24 hours (after 24 hours it only provides the date of the signature). For participants who reported signing the petition, the signature was considered a match (coded as 0 = no match, 1 = match) if the time they finished the survey was within the hour of a signature being added to the petition. In other words, if a participant completed the survey at 8:00AM and the best estimate was calculated at 6:00PM, a signature would be considered a match if Change.org recorded it as being posted "10 hours ago." Best estimates scores were calculated daily to ensure that we were being as accurate as possible.

2.2.3.4 Empathy Measurement

Davis' (1980) Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) was used to measure empathy. Davis (1980, 1983) reported that the IRI had good internal (.71 to .77) and test-retest validity (.62 to .71). Furthermore, the IRI is frequently used by others, particularly in the empathy and helping research (e.g., Chrysikou & Thompson, 2016; Einolf, 2008; Gini et

al., 2007). The 28-item questionnaire is rated on a 5-point scale (0 = "does not describe me well"; 4 = "describes very well") and is divided into four subscales (with seven questions each) to assess perspective taking, empathic concern, personal distress, and fantasy.

The perspective taking, personal distress, and fantasy subscale questions were administered to participants for integrity of the scale, but for the purpose of this study only empathic concern was analyzed as it is commonly most predictive of altruistic behaviour (Einolf, 2008) and most relevant to the current study. The empathic concern subscale aims to "assess 'other-oriented' feelings of sympathy and concern for unfortunate others" (Davis, 1983, p. 114), and an example question is "Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems." The empathic concern score was created by averaging the seven items ($\alpha = .803$) and could range from zero to 28 ($M = 20.65$, $SD = 4.56$) with higher scores indicating higher levels of empathic concern.

2.2.3.5 Attention Checks

There were three basic attention checks imbedded within these questionnaires. These attention checks were used to discard the data of participants who were not attending to the study. With REB approval, participants who failed at least two attention checks did not receive their credit and their data was discarded. The attention checks read "If you are reading this question, choose "four" as your answer to this question.", "If you are reading this question, choose "strongly disagree" as your answer to this question.", and "What was the main topic discussed by the exoneree?" For the question regarding the main topic discussed, participants were given six options to choose from: the woman who

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falsely accused him testifying at trial, the woman falsely accused him multiple times, the government of Canada has not yet compensated him for his wrongful conviction, his relationship with his partner fell apart, he does not like to get close to people anymore, and he lost custody of his children. Each option was correct for only one video. Although failing to answer the main topic question did not prevent participants from receiving their credit as long as the other two questions were answered correctly, it did exclude participants from analyses.

2.2.4 Procedure

Participants accessed the study through SONA on their personal computers, which brought them to the Qualtrics survey. The consent form appeared first; participants were asked to read the consent form thoroughly and gave their informed consent by pressing the "I consent" button at the bottom of the screen. Participants were then shown the instructions for the study. The computer randomly assigned participants to one of the six videos. Regardless of video (angry vs. sad), participants were informed, prior to watching, that the individual in the video was wrongfully convicted of a crime he did not commit. After watching the video, participants were asked to answer questions regarding their perceptions of the exoneree's emotions (as well as their own emotions regarding his story). Participants were then asked the helping items. Finally, they were asked to fill out the empathy measure and demographics (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity).

Following the completion of the study, participants were presented with the debriefing letter on their computer screen. Finally, participants were told "You have reached the end of the survey. This is your last chance to withdraw your data from the study. If you wish to withdraw your data from the study, click the "Please withdraw my

data from the study" button below. There will be no penalty for withdrawing your data from the study at this point as long as all attention check questions were correctly answered. If you wish to keep your data in the study, please click the "next" button to end of the study." They were then thanked for their participation. Compensation (1% credit) was awarded to participants at a later date based on their completion of the study and responses to the three attention check questions.

2.3 Results

We analyzed the impact of emotions on participants' willingness to help exonerees in a few different ways. The primary analyses focused on our video manipulation. Secondary analyses explored perceptions of the exoneree's emotions and participants' self-reported emotions in place of our video manipulation for each of the four hypotheses, although we did not have specific hypotheses related to our secondary analyses.

2.3.1 Manipulation Checks

To ensure that the exoneree in the videos were perceived by participants as intended (i.e., sadder in the sad condition and angrier in the angry condition), we ran manipulation checks on the ratings of perceived exoneree anger and perceived exoneree sadness. Participants who viewed any of the three angry videos were combined into the angry condition ($n = 69$) and participants who viewed any of the three sad videos were combined into the sad condition ($n = 64$). Participants did perceive the exoneree as significantly angrier in the angry condition ($M = 3.47$; $SD = 1.26$) than in the sad condition ($M = 2.66$; $SD = 1.10$), $t(130) = 3.94$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .09$, and significantly

sadder in the sad condition ($M = 4.39$; $SD = .87$) than in the angry condition ($M = 3.84$; $SD = .96$), $t(131) = -3.45$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .08$. Moreover, within the angry condition, there was no significant difference in perceptions of exoneree anger and sadness, $t(67) = -1.74$, $p = .087$, $\eta^2 = .04$; however, within the sad condition, participants perceived the exoneree as significantly sadder than angry, $t(63) = -9.87$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .61$. Therefore, the sad condition appeared to manipulate the perceptions of the exoneree's emotion as expected, but the angry condition did not.

Participant emotion was not intentionally manipulated in Study 1, but analyses were conducted to identify if participants' own anger and sadness was affected by the videos. There was no significant difference in participant anger in the angry condition ($M = 3.93$; $SD = 1.10$) compared to in the sad condition ($M = 4.14$; $SD = 1.01$) , $t(130) = -1.17$, $p = .245$, $\eta^2 = .01$, and no significant difference in participant sadness in the sad condition ($M = 4.47$; $SD = .82$) compared to the angry condition ($M = 4.19$; $SD = .91$), $t(131) = -1.86$, $p = .065$, $\eta^2 = .03$. Moreover, within the angry condition, there was no significant difference in participant anger and sadness, $t(67) = -1.73$, $p = .088$, $\eta^2 = .04$, but within the sad condition, participants rated their sadness higher than their anger, $t(63) = -2.39$, $p = .020$, $\eta^2 = .08$. Although we were not manipulating participant emotions, the sad condition appeared to result in participants experiencing more personal sadness compared to anger in the sad condition, but the angry condition did not appear to affect personal anger significantly more than personal sadness.

2.3.2 Primary Analyses

Our hypothesis that participants in the sad condition would be higher in self-reported helping than participants in the angry condition was not supported (i.e.,

Hypothesis 1 was not supported). Participants who watched a sad video ($M = 6.79$, $SD =$ 1.14) did not significantly report being more willing to help exonerees than participants who watched an angry video ($M = 6.55$, $SD = 1.40$), $t(131) = -1.07$, $p = .287$, $\eta^2 = .01$.

Our hypothesis that participants in the sad condition would be higher in behavioural helping than participants in the angry condition was supported (i.e., Hypothesis 2 was supported). Video condition explained 7.5% of the variance in behavioural helping, $\chi^2(1) = 7.65$, $p = .006$, and participants were 63.1% lower in behavioural helping in the angry condition (48.5% reported signing) than in the sad condition (71.9% reported signing), Wald's χ^2 (1, $N = 132$) = 7.30 $p = .007$, 95% CI [.18, .76].

Our hypothesis that participants higher in empathic concern would be higher in self-reported helping than participants lower in empathic concern was supported, but our hypothesis that this would be most prominent in the sad condition was not supported (i.e., Hypothesis 3 was partially supported). In stage 1, with video condition and empathic concern, the model was significant, $F(2, 130) = 12.60$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .16$; empathic concern significantly contributed to the model, $\beta = .11$, $t = 4.86$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.07, .16], but video condition did not, $\beta = .09$, $t = .45$, $p = .654$, 95% CI [-.32, .50]. In other words, those higher in empathic concern were higher in self-reported helping, but the video condition did not matter. The addition of the interaction at stage 2 did not add to the model fit, $F(3, 129) = 8.35$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .16$.

Our hypothesis that participants higher in empathic concern would be higher in behavioural helping than participants lower in empathic concern, and that this would be more prominent in the sad condition was not supported (i.e., Hypothesis 4 was not

supported). The model explained 8.0% of the variance in behavioural helping, $\chi^2(3) =$ 8.37, $p = .039$[1]. However, the main effects and interaction did not significantly predict the behavioural helping ($ps > .05$).

Our primary analyses indicate that the video condition predicted behavioural helping but not self-reported helping, and that regardless of video condition, empathic concern scores predicted self-reported helping but not behavioural helping.

2.3.3 Secondary Analyses

2.3.3.1 Perceived Exoneree Emotions

In terms of perceived exoneree anger/sadness on self-reported and behavioural helping, neither the multiple linear regression model, $F(2,129) = .53$, $p = .592$ nor the logistic regression model, $\chi^2(2) = 3.60$, $p = .165$, was significant. Therefore, it appears that perceived exoneree anger and perceived exoneree sadness did not have a significant impact on self-reported or behavioural helping.

To evaluate the impact of perceived exoneree anger/sadness, and of empathic concern, on self-reported helping, a multiple regression was administered. In stage 1, with perceived exoneree anger, perceived exoneree sadness, and empathic concern, the model was significant, $F(3, 128) = 8.48$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .17$; empathic concern significantly contributed to the model, $\beta = .11$, $t = 4.92$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.07, .16], but perceived exoneree anger, $\beta = -.02$, $t = -.26$, $p = .815$, 95% CI [-.17, .15] and sadness did

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[1] The model for the best estimate of behavioural helping was not significant, $\chi^2(3) = 5.96$, $p = .114$.

not, $\beta = -.01$, $t = -.04$, $p = .966$, 95% CI [-.23, .22]. In other words, those higher in empathic concern were higher in self-reported helping than those lower in empathic concern, but perceived exoneree anger and perceived exoneree sadness did not matter. The addition of the interactions at stage 2 did not significantly add to the model fit, $F(5, 126) = 5.35$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .18$.

For the impact of perceived exoneree anger/sadness, and of empathic concern, on behavioural helping, the model was not significant, $\chi^2(5) = 4.96$, $p = .42$. In other words, none of the main effects or interactions predicted the behavioural helping.

Across the self-reported and behavioural helping, there was no significant findings using perceived exoneree emotion as a predictor.

2.3.3.2 Participants' Emotions

Participants' own anger and sadness about the exoneree's story explained 9.3% of the variance in self-reported helping, $F(2,129) = 6.68$, $p = .002$. Although participant anger did not significantly predict participants' self-reported helping, $\beta = .12$, $t = 1.11$, $p = .268$, 95% CI [-.09, .33], participant sadness did, $\beta = .38$, $t = 2.96$, $p = .004$, 95% CI [.13, .64].

Participants' own anger and sadness about the exoneree's story explained 10.1% of the variance in behavioural helping, $\chi^2(2) = 10.15$, $p = .006$. Although participant anger did not significantly predict behavioural helping, Wald's χ^2 $(1, N = 131) = .41$, $p = .523$, 95% CI [.61, 1.29], for every one-point increase in participants' sadness, behavioural helping increased by 2.01, Wald's $\chi^2(1, N = 131) = 9.06$, $p = .003$, 95% CI [1.28, 3.17].

To evaluate the impact of participants' own anger/sadness, and of empathic concern, on self-reported helping, a multiple regression was administered. In stage 1, with participants' own anger, participants' own sadness, and empathic concern, the model was significant, $F(3, 128) = 10.44$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .20$; empathic concern significantly contributed to the model, $\beta = .10$, $t = 4.05$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.05, .14], but participant anger, $\beta = .12$, $t = 1.14$, $p = .257$, 95% CI [-.09, .32], and participant sadness did not, $\beta = .20$, $t = 1.51$, $p = .134$, 95% CI [-.06, .45]. In other words, those higher in empathic concern were higher in self-reported helping than those lower in empathic concern, but participants' own emotions did not matter. The addition of the interactions at stage 2 did not significantly add to the model fit, $F(5, 126) = 6.28$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .20$.

For the impact of participants' own anger/sadness, and of empathic concern, on behavioural helping, the model was not significant, $\chi^2(5) = 10.26$, $p = .068$. In other words, none of the main effects or interactions predicted behavioural helping.

Participant sadness predicted self-reported and behavioural helping, but participant anger did not. When empathic concern was also considered, it predicted self-reported helping (but not behavioural helping), and participant sadness no longer impacted either form of helping.

2.4 Discussion

In this study, we examined whether exoneree's emotions and participants' empathic concern influenced their willingness to help exonerees. Although previous research has found that people report being more willing to help sad individuals compared to angry individuals (e.g., Haccoun et al., 1976; Yee & Greenberg, 1998), this

was consistently not the case in our study. However, participants in the sad condition were more willing to engage in behavioural helping than participants in the angry condition, which is consistent with previous literature that has found sad individuals receive more help than angry individuals (e.g., Haccoun et al., 1976; Yee & Greenberg, 1998). Thus, it seems that the emotions expressed by the exoneree in the videos had an impact on participants' behavioural helping but did not influence self-reported helping.

That said, in both the angry and sad video conditions, participants reported a relatively high level of willingness to help exonerees, indicating that people were largely willing to help, regardless of the emotion expressed in the video. The idea that people generally want to help exonerees is consistent with past research demonstrating that Canadians tend to be supportive of exonerees receiving some form of reintegration support and financial compensation (e.g., Angus Reid, 1995; Clow, Blandisi, et al., 2012). Thus, given the high level of self-reported helping in both the angry and sad condition, it is possible that our assessment of self-reported helping suffered a ceiling effect, and we could not detect a difference between video conditions as there was no room for a significant increase between them.

Previous literature has suggested that individuals who score higher in empathic concern are more willing to help others (e.g., Gini et al., 2007; Willis et al., 2015). Similarly, in our study participants higher in empathic concern were higher in self-reported helping than participants lower in empathic concern. We had expected the video manipulation to interact with empathic concern scores, however, and this was not the case. Although research has demonstrated that those higher in empathic concern are more willing to help targets who appear sad (Sassenrath et al., 2017; Willis et al., 2015), this

did not translate to greater helping in the sad condition compared to the angry condition among high empathic concern participants in our study. Moreover, while participants' higher in empathic concern were higher in self-reported helping, empathic concern did not impact behavioural helping.

Additionally, we wanted to know if either perceived exoneree anger/sadness or participants' own anger/sadness impacted self-reported and behavioural helping. Although we did not hypothesize how we expected perceived exoneree emotion and participants' own emotions to impact willingness to help, the literature suggests that the results should have been in the same direction as our four hypotheses (e.g., Haccoun et al., 1976; Small & Lerner, 2008).

Inconsistent with the literature suggesting that people are more likely to help those who are perceived as sad compared to angry (Haccoun et al., 1976; Yee & Greenberg, 1998), neither perceived exoneree anger nor perceived exoneree sadness seemed to predict self-reported or behavioural helping. Furthermore, when examining empathic concern with the exoneree's perceived emotion, only empathic concern predicted self-reported helping, and none of the variables predicted behavioural helping. These are interesting findings considering the exoneree was rated as being sadder, compared to angrier, in the sad condition, with no difference in anger and sadness in the angry condition; one would expect this increased sadness expressed by the exoneree to translate into an increase in helping behaviours (e.g., Haccoun et al., 1976). Given the lack of significant findings associated with perceived exoneree emotions and willingness to help, this variable will not be examined in Study 2 and will not be discussed further.

Nonetheless, consistent with the literature suggesting that sad individuals are more likely than angry individuals to help others (e.g., Small & Lerner, 2008), participant sadness predicted both self-reported and behavioural helping, whereas participant anger did not. These findings illustrate that personal emotions predict willingness to help exonerees, and that personal sadness in particular, appears to have a more prominent effect. Furthermore, when examining empathic concern with the participants' emotions, only empathic concern seemed to predict self-reported helping, and none of the variables predicted behavioural helping. These findings suggest that although personal sadness appears to predict helping behaviours, empathic concern may be a better predictor. In Study 2, we further explored the idea of personal emotions affecting willingness to help exonerees by manipulating the participants' emotion prior to watching the video of the exoneree.

Overall, Study 1 demonstrates that empathic concern is more predictive of self-reported helping than perceived exoneree emotions and participants' own emotions. Nonetheless, the emotions appeared to have the greatest impact on both self-reported and behavioural helping when participants were sad about the exoneree's story as opposed to how they perceived the exoneree felt in the video.

Chapter 3. Study 2

3.1 Introduction

The findings of Study 1 provide preliminary evidence regarding how certain negative emotions (angry and sad) can impact different forms of willingness to help. Although the video condition did not impact participants' self-reported helping, participants in the sad condition were higher in behavioural helping than participants in the angry condition. Furthermore, empathic concern had an impact on self-reported helping, but not behavioural helping. Although exploratory analyses for Study 1 indicated that perceived exoneree anger/sadness did not impact self-reported or behavioural helping (and will therefore not be analyzed in Study 2), participant sadness (but not anger) did. Thus, in Study 2 we examined participant emotions (anger/sadness) through a manipulated emotion-invoking task to further investigate how these emotions impact willingness to help exonerees, while our video manipulation and empathic concern measurement remained the same.

3.1.1 Willingness to Help and Emotions

Not only has research demonstrated that the emotions expressed by a target in need can impact participants' willingness to help (e.g., Haccoun et al., 1976; Terwogt, 2002; Yee & Greenberg, 1998), but it has also shown that the emotions experienced by participants themselves can impact helping behaviours. For instance, Drouvelis and Grosskopf (2016) had participants play an economics game where they were given the opportunity to help their group members (i.e., contribute tokens to the group) and participants were either induced to be angry or happy by watching a video clip. The results were that angry individuals contributed fewer tokens to the group than happy

individuals (Drouvelis & Grosskopf, 2016). Similarly, Terwogt (2002) manipulated the emotions of the helper and found that angry individuals were less inclined to help compared to happy individuals. However, Terwogt (2002) manipulated the emotions of their participants *and* the targets in need, as we are proposing to do in Study 2, and found that participants reported being more likely to help based on the target's emotional states rather than their own, especially when the target was sad.

Small and Lerner (2008), however, found individuals' emotions to be important in predicting helping behaviour. Participants wrote about either anger- or sad-invoking memories prior to being presented with a welfare case. As expected, participants given the sad-invoking task reported higher levels of sadness, which correlated positively with self-reported helping, and participants given the anger-invoking task reported higher levels of anger, which correlated negatively with self-reported helping (Small & Lerner, 2008). These results are supported by research showing that those expressing anger demonstrate higher levels of stereotypic judgments compared to those expressing sadness (Bodenhausen et al., 1994). Study 2 was designed to test this further.

3.1.2 Willingness to Help and Empathic Concern

In Study 1, we found that empathic concern contributed to self-reported willingness to help exonerees. This relationship was examined further in Study 2. Although the video condition and the participants' own emotions about the exoneree's story in Study 1 did not interact with empathic concern to impact willingness to help, Cialdini et al. (1987) found that sadness did interact with empathic concern to increase helping behaviour. Specifically, those higher in empathic concern were found to be more helpful than those lower in empathic concern, but only if they were also sad (Cialdini et

al., 1987). Thus, Study 2 again tested if empathic concern impacts helping, particularly when participants are sad.

3.2 Hypotheses

In Study 2, in addition to showing participants one of the six videos from Study 1, where the exoneree was either talking about an angry or sad topic, the emotions (angry/sad) of the participants were also manipulated by an emotion-invoking task (Small & Lerner, 2008) prior to watching the video. Otherwise, the method was the same as Study 1. We hypothesized that:

1) In line with Small and Lerner's (2008) findings, participants given the sad-invoking task (vs. anger-invoking task) would be more willing to respond favourably to a variety of services and behaviours that they themselves could do to assist exonerees (self-reported helping).

2) In line with Small and Lerner's (2008) findings, participants given the sad-invoking task (vs. anger-invoking task) would be more willing to report signing (and actually sign) a petition about government-sponsored reintegration services for all Canadian exonerees (behavioural helping).

3) In line with Cialdini et al.'s (1987) findings, participants higher in empathic concern (vs. lower) would be more willing to respond favourably to a variety of services and behaviours that they themselves could do that would assist exonerees. This effect may be most pronounced within the sad-invoking task (self-reported helping).

4) In line with Cialdini et al.'s (1987) findings, participants higher in empathic concern (vs. lower) would be more willing to report signing (and actually sign) a

petition about government-sponsored reintegration services for all Canadian exonerees. This effect may be most pronounced within the sad-invoking task (behavioural helping).

Given that Study 2 was a replication of Study 1, aside from the addition of the participant emotion-invoking task, secondary analyses were conducted to investigate whether the video condition and self-rated personal emotions about the exoneree's story led to the same findings in Study 2 as in Study 1. In addition, we explored if the emotion-invoking task and video condition worked together to impact self-reported and behavioural helping.

3.3 Method

3.3.1 Participants

Three-hundred and fifty-seven undergraduate students from a university in Southern Ontario, Canada participated in the study. Participants were discarded from the data set due to being extreme outliers in the assumptions of our manipulation checks ($n = 10$), if they requested that their data be withdrawn after being informed about the true nature of the study ($n = 25$), if they did not fully complete the study (n = 12), or if they incorrectly answered two or more attention check questions ($n = 63$). After the removal of these participants, the final dataset was composed of 247 participants ($M_{age} = 19.5$, $SD_{age} = 3.34$). G*Power suggested 128 participants to detect a medium effect using a 2 x 2 factorial ANOVA at 80% power and 171 participants to detect a medium effect at 90% power. As our final dataset was well above these numbers, further data was not collected. There were more female participants (65.2%) than male (34.0%) and non-

binary (.8%). The most frequent ethnic identities participants reported were Caucasian (36.8%), South Asian (28.3%), and Black (13.4%).

All participants that reached the end of the study and correctly answered at least two of the three attention check questions (requirements that were clearly laid out on the consent form) were rewarded with 1% toward their course grade for their participation in the study—even those who requested to withdraw or who had incomplete data but correctly completed the attention checks received their credits. With REB approval (see Appendix D), participants who failed at least two attention checks or did not reach the end of the study did not receive their credit and their data was discarded. Participants were given the chance to withdraw at the end of the study if they wished to receive their credit but did not want their data included in the analyses. This was done so that participants could not open the study, close it immediately, and get their credits without participating in the study (as was an issue in previous online studies), while still respecting participants right to withdraw from the study without penalty.

3.3.2 Design

The study used a between-subjects design where the independent variables were the emotion-manipulation task (angry/sad) and the video condition (angry/sad). Empathic concern scores were not manipulated and were therefore analyzed as an individual difference. The dependent variables were self-reported willingness to help exonerees (i.e., self-reported helping) and reports of signing the reintegration services petition (i.e., behavioural helping).

3.3.3 Measures and Materials

All the materials and measures from Study 1 were used. Similarly, for Study 2, a single Willingness to Help Exonerees variable was created by averaging all 18 items ($\alpha =$ .941; henceforth referred to as self-reported helping); the self-reported and best estimate reintegration services petition variables were calculated identical to Study 1 (henceforth referred to as behavioural helping); and empathic concern scores were created by averaging the seven empathic concern items ($\alpha = .734$) and could range from zero to 28 ($M = 20.79$, $SD = 4.23$) with higher scores indicating higher levels of empathic concern.

New to Study 2, participants were asked to write about something that either made them angry or sad prior to watching the video (Lerner et al., 2003; Small & Lerner, 2008). Participants were randomly assigned to the anger- or sad-invoking task and were given identical instructions (see Appendix E). Participants were told to write about the last time they were angry/sad as long as it was not too traumatic or embarrassing. They were asked to really think about and try to relive the experience and the emotions felt for one minute prior to writing. The screen with these instructions had a timer (one minute) that did not allow participants to continue to the next page where they were to begin writing until the time was up. They were then given the chance to write about the last time they were angry/sad in as much detail as possible.

To verify that the emotion-invoking task was manipulating emotions as expected, we added a manipulation check as well: "To what extent are you currently experiencing the following emotions?" After they completed the task, they were presented with this question for seven emotions (anger, disgust, fear, happiness, pity, sadness, and surprise) that were rated on 5-point scales (1 = "not at all"; 5 = "extremely").

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3.3.4 Procedure

The procedure was identical to Study 1 with the addition of the emotion-invoking task: participants accessed the study through SONA; viewed the consent form; if they consented, the instructions for the emotion-invoking task appeared on the screen, followed by the emotion-invoking task itself (the computer randomly assigned participants to either the anger- or sad-invoking task); after completing the emotion-invoking task and answering the new manipulation check, the remainder of the study was identical to Study 1.

3.4 Results

We analyzed the impact of personal emotions on participants' willingness to help exonerees in a few different ways. The primary analyses focused on our emotion manipulation (emotion-invoking task). Secondary analyses focused on the video condition and participants' own emotions about the exoneree's story. Furthermore, secondary analyses explored the effects of the two manipulations (emotion-invoking task and video condition) on both self-reported and behavioural helping.

3.4.1 Manipulation Checks

Prior to analyses, we conducted manipulation checks on the participants' ratings of their own anger and sadness to ensure that the emotion-invoking task worked as intended. Participants who were asked to write about something that made them angry ($n = 120$) did report feeling significantly angrier ($M = 2.90$; $SD = 1.34$) than participants asked to write about something that made them sad ($n = 127$; $M = 2.32$; $SD = 1.29$), $t(245) = 3.44$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .05$, and participants asked to write about something that

made them sad did report feeling significantly sadder ($M = 3.65$; $SD = 1.32$) than participants who were asked to write about something that made them angry ($M = 2.53$; $SD = 1.32$), $t(245) = -6.65$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .15$. Moreover, within the anger-invoking task, participants rated their anger significantly higher than their sadness, $t(119) = 3.00$, $p = .003$, $\eta^2 = .07$, and within the sad-invoking task, participants rated their sadness significantly higher than their anger, $t(126) = -10.77$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .48$. Therefore, the emotion-invoking task manipulated participants' own emotions as intended.

To test whether the exoneree in the videos were perceived by participants as intended, we conducted manipulation checks on participants' perceptions of the exoneree's anger and sadness. Participants who viewed any of the three angry videos were combined ($n = 126$) and participants who viewed any of the three sad videos were combined ($n = 121$). Participants perceived the exoneree as significantly angrier in the angry condition ($M = 3.75$; $SD = 1.22$) compared to in the sad condition ($M = 2.87$; $SD = 1.14$), $t(243) = 5.88$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .12$, and significantly sadder in the sad condition ($M = 4.39$; $SD = .79$) compared to in the angry condition ($M = 3.30$; $SD = 1.21$), $t(215.11) = -8.38$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .22$. Moreover, within the angry condition, the exoneree was perceived as significantly angrier than sad, $t(123) = 2.82$, $p = .006$, $\eta^2 = .06$, and within the sad condition, the exoneree was perceived as significantly sadder than angy, $t(118) = -13.08$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .59$. Although the video manipulation only fully worked in the sad condition in Study 1, the videos manipulated the perceptions of the exoneree's emotions as intended in Study 2.

In Study 1, we explored participants' emotions regarding the exoneree's story because the video manipulation did not work as intended. In Study 2, although the video

manipulation worked, we continued to explore participants' emotional reactions to the exoneree's story Participants felt significantly sadder about the exoneree's story in the sad condition (M = 4.38; SD =.91) than in the angry condition (M = 3.71; SD = 1.19), t(232.89) = -5.02, p < .001, η^2 = .09, but their anger did not significantly differ across conditions (angry: M = 4.16; SD = 1.06; sad: M = 4.08; SD = 1.13), t(242) = .59, p = .577, η^2 = .01. That said, within the angry condition, participants rated their own anger about the exoneree's story significantly higher than their own sadness, t(123) = 4.40, p < .001, η^2 = .14, and within the sad condition, participants rated their own sadness about the exoneree's story significantly higher than their own anger, t(118) = -3.05, p = .003, η^2 = .07.

3.4.2 Primary Analyses

Our hypothesis that participants given the sad-invoking task would be higher in self-reported helping than those given the anger-invoking task was not supported (i.e., Hypothesis 1 was not supported). Participants who wrote about something sad (M = 7.11, SD = 1.32) did not significantly report being higher in self-reported helping than participants who wrote about something angry (M = 7.04, SD = 1.55), t(245) = -.35, p = .729, η^2 = .0005.

Our hypothesis that participants given the sad-invoking task would be higher in behavioural helping than those given the anger-invoking task was not supported (i.e., Hypothesis 2 was not supported). The emotion-invoking task did not predict behavioural helping, χ^2(1) = .28, p = .598. In other words, participants given the sad-invoking task (56.7% reported signing) were not higher in behavioural helping than participants given the anger-invoking task (60% reported signing).

Our hypothesis that participants higher in empathic concern would be higher in self-reported helping than participants lower in empathy was supported, but our hypothesis that this would be the case particularly for participants given the sad-invoking task was not supported (i.e., Hypothesis 3 was partially supported). In stage 1, with emotion-invoking task and empathic concern, the model was significant, $F(2, 244) = 27.13$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .18$; empathic concern significantly contributed to the model, $\beta = .14$, $t = 7.36$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.11, .18], but emotion-invoking task did not, $\beta = .07$, $t = .43$, $p = .669$, 95% CI [-.26, .40]. In other words, those higher in empathic concern were higher in self-reported helping than those lower in empathic concern, but the emotion-invoking task did not matter. The addition of the interaction at stage 2 did not significantly improve the model fit, $F(3, 243) = 18.32$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .18$.

Our hypothesis that participants higher in empathic concern would be higher in behavioural helping than participants lower in empathy was supported, but our hypothesis that this would be the case particularly for participants given the sad-invoking task was not supported (i.e., Hypothesis 4 was partially supported). The model explained 4.2% of the variance in behavioural helping, $\chi^2(3) = 7.81$, $p = .05^2$; for every one-point increase in empathic concern, behavioural helping increased by 1.12, Wald's $\chi^2(1, N = 247) = 5.80$, $p = .016$, 95% CI [1.02, 1.24]. However, the emotion-invoking task and the emotion-invoking task by empathic concern interaction did not contribute to the model, Wald's

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[2] The model for the best estimate of behavioural helping was not significant, $\chi^2(3) = 2.61$, $p = .455$.

$\chi^2(1, N = 247) = 1.34$, $p = .247$, 95% CI [.34, 66.58] and Wald's $\chi^2(1, N = 247) = 1.16$, $p = .281$, 95% CI [.82, 1.06], respectively.

Our primary analyses indicate that the emotion-invoking task did not predict self-reported or behavioural helping, and that regardless of the emotion-invoking task, empathic concern scores predicted both self-reported and behavioural helping.

3.4.3 Secondary Analyses

3.4.3.1 Video Condition

Participants who watched a sad video ($M = 7.03$, $SD = 1.40$) were not significantly higher in self-reported helping than participants who watched an angry video ($M = 7.12$, $SD = 1.46$), $t(245) = .48$, $p = .630$, $\eta^2 = .0009$. Furthermore, video condition did not predict behavioural helping, $\chi^2(1) = .84$, $p = .360$. In other words, participants who watched a sad video (55.4% reported signing) were not higher in behavioural helping than participants who watched an angry video (61.1% reported signing).

To evaluate the impact of video condition and empathic concern on self-reported helping, a multiple regression was administered. In stage 1, with video condition and empathic concern, the model was significant, $F(2, 244) = 27.27$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .18$; empathic concern significantly contributed to the model, $\beta = .14$, $t = 7.37$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.11, 18], but video condition did not, $\beta = -.11$, $t = -.64$, $p = .523$, 95% CI [-.43, .22]. In other words, those higher in empathic concern were higher in self-reported helping than those lower in empathic concern. The addition of the interaction at stage 2 did not significantly improve the model fit, $F(3, 243) = 18.32$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .18$.

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For the impact of video condition and empathic concern on behavioural helping, the model explained 5.1% of the variance, $\chi^2(3) = 9.54$, $p = .023$[3]. However, neither the main effects nor the interaction significantly predicted behavioural helping ($ps > .05$).

Our secondary analyses indicate that the video condition did not predict self-reported or behavioural helping, and that regardless of video condition, empathic concern scores predicted self-reported helping but not behavioural helping.

3.4.3.2 Participants' Emotions (Video Condition)

Participant's own anger and participant's own sadness explained 7.8% of the variance in self-reported helping, $F(2, 240) = 10.21$, $p < .001$. Both participant anger, $\beta = .24$, $t = 2.60$, $p = .01$, 95% CI [.06, .41], and participant sadness, $\beta = .19$, $t = 2.14$, $p = .034$, 95% CI [.02, .36], significantly predicted self-reported helping, with participant anger being the best predictor, $beta = .18$. In other words, as participant anger or sadness increased, so did self-reported helping. Nonetheless, participant anger and participant sadness did not predict behavioural helping, $\chi^2(2) = 1.35$, $p = .509$.

To evaluate the impact of participants' own anger/sadness, and of empathic concern, on self-reported helping, a multiple regression was administered. In stage 1, with participants' own anger, participants' own sadness, and empathic concern, the model was significant, $F(3, 239) = 22.28$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .22$; empathic concern and participant anger significantly contributed to the model, $\beta = .13$, $t = 6.55$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.09, .17] and $\beta = .17$, $t = 2.00$, $p = .047$, 95% CI [.003, .34], respectively, but participant sadness

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[3] The model for the best estimate of behavioural helping was not significant, $\chi^2(3) = 2.51$, $p = .474$.

did not, $\beta = .14$, $t = 1.65$, $p = .100$, 95% CI [-.03, .30]. In other words, those higher in empathic concern and those higher in anger were higher in self-reported helping than those lower in empathic concern and those lower in anger. The addition of the interactions at stage 2 did not significantly improve the model fit, $F(5, 237) = 13.34$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .22$.

For the impact of participants' anger/sadness, and of empathic concern, on behavioural helping, the model explained 9.0% of the variance, $\chi^2(5) = 16.85$, $p = .005$[4]. For every one-point increase in participant anger, behavioural helping increased by 9.27, Wald's $\chi^2(1, N = 247) = 7.93$, $p = .005$, 95% CI [1.97, 43.66], and for every one-point increase in empathic concern, behavioural helping increased by 1.65, Wald's $\chi^2(1, N = 247) = 8.02$, $p = .005$, 95% CI [1.17, 2.33]. Furthermore, for every one-point increase in the participant anger by empathic concern interaction, behavioural helping increased by 10.2%, Wald's $\chi^2(1, N = 247) = 7.36$, $p = .007$, 95% CI [.83, .97]. However, participant sadness and the participant sadness by empathic concern interaction, did not significantly contribute to the model, Wald's $\chi^2(1, N = 247) = .43$, $p = .512$, 95% CI [.23, 2.06] and Wald's $\chi^2(1, N = 247) = .18$, $p = .674$, 95% CI [.96, 1.07], respectively.

Our secondary analyses indicate that participant anger and participant sadness predicted self-reported, but neither predicted behavioural helping. When empathic concern was also considered, it predicted self-reported and behavioural helping, but participant sadness no longer impacted self-reported helping (but participant anger did).

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[4] The model for the best estimate of behavioural helping was not significant, $\chi^2(5) = 6.08$, $p = .298$.

3.4.3.3 Emotion-Invoking Task and Video Condition

There was no significant main effect of emotion-invoking task, $F(1, 243) = .10$, $p = .752$, partial $\eta^2 = .000$, main effect of video condition, $F(1, 243) = .19$, $p = .661$, partial $\eta^2 = .001$, or interaction between emotion-invoking task and video condition on self-reported helping, $F(1, 243) = 2.16$, $p = .143$, partial $\eta^2 = .009$. Furthermore, for the impact of the emotion-invoking task and video condition on behavioural helping, the model did not explain any of the variance, $\chi^2(3) = 1.58$, $p = .665$.

3.5 Discussion

In this study, we examined whether exoneree's emotions, participants' emotions, and participants' empathic concern influenced their willingness to help exonerees. Although previous literature has typically found that sad individuals report being more willing to help others than angry individuals (e.g., Small & Lerner, 2008) and that people are more willing to help a sad target compared to an angry target (e.g., Haccoun et al., 1976; Yee & Greenberg, 1988), this was not the case in our study. Specifically, neither the emotion-invoking task nor the video manipulation significantly impacted self-reported or behavioural helping. However, we found that participants' own sadness about the exoneree's story predicted self-reported helping, and unexpectedly, that participants' own anger about the exoneree's story was more predictive of self-reported helping than their personal sadness. However, neither of our participants' emotions impacted behavioural helping.

Previous literature has also suggested that individuals who score higher in empathic concern are more willing to help others (e.g., Bekkers, 2006; Verhaert & Van

den Poel, 2011), and that experiencing emotions, such as sadness, can interact with empathic concern to increase helping behaviour (Cialdini et al., 1987). In our study, participants higher in empathic concern were higher in self-reported helping than those lower in empathic concern across the emotion-invoking task, video manipulation, and participants' emotion about the exoneree's story. Although participants higher in empathic concern were higher in behavioural helping than those lower in empathic concern across the emotion-invoking task and participants' own emotions about the exoneree's story, our best estimate indicated that they were not actually more likely to sign the petition. However, sadness did not seem to increase this tendency – whether it was the exoneree's or participants' own – but participants' own anger about the exoneree's story did, which is a deviation from the literature.

Overall, Study 2 demonstrates that empathic concern is more predictive of self-reported behavioural helping than perceived exoneree emotions and participants' reported emotions. Nonetheless, the emotions appeared to have the greatest impact on self-reported and behavioural helping when participants were angry/sad about the exoneree's story as opposed to how they perceived the exoneree felt or how they reported feeling based on the emotion-invoking task.

Chapter 4. General Discussion

Understanding what can impact the public's helping behaviours toward exonerees is an important step in increasing the help and support they receive to ensure their successful reintegration. Many exonerees face stigma post-exoneration which can result in difficulties, such as finding work (Clow, 2017) and housing (Zannella et al., 2020). As previous research has demonstrated, a variety of factors can contribute to the public being supportive of reintegration services, such as factors contributing to the wrongful conviction and the crime for which they were wrongfully convicted of (e.g., Kukucka & Evelo, 2019; Zannella et al., 2020). Until now, research had not examined the impact of emotions and empathic concern on helping exonerees.

Our results suggest that viewing videos of an exoneree discussing their wrongful conviction can influence the emotions experienced by participants. This is consistent with qualitative research demonstrating that wrongful conviction documentaries, such as *Making a Murderer*, cause the public to feel a variety of emotions such as anger and disgust (Kennedy, 2017). As participant sadness about the exoneree's story consistently predicted self-reported helping across the two studies and predicted behavioural helping in Study 1 (but not Study 2), it may be possible to increase support for reintegration services and encourage other helping behaviours from the public if educational videos (e.g., documentaries) discuss wrongful convictions in a way that could make the viewer feel sad (rather than angry) about their stories. Although future research is required to get a better understanding of how emotions can influence willingness to help exonerees, this could be incredibly important knowledge for how exonerees tell their story, and how

wrongful conviction documentaries and innocence organizations (i.e., Innocence Project, Innocence Canada) frame their videos.

Previous research has demonstrated that the public is typically supportive of exonerees receiving reintegration support upon release (e.g., Angus Reid, 1995; Clow, Blandisi, et al., 2012), though research has shown that a variety of factors influence the degree of public support and willingness to help (e.g., Kukucka & Evelo., 2019; Scherr, Normile, & Putney, 2018). The helping literature has suggested that individuals are more likely to help a person who is sad (e.g., Haccoun et al., 1976), and when they themselves feel sad (e.g., Small & Lerner, 2008), especially if they are more empathic (e.g., Cialdini et al., 1987). Expanding on this research, and novel to the wrongful conviction literature, both studies in this thesis examined whether emotions, expressed by an exoneree and experienced by participants, or level of empathic concern, would impact willingness to help exonerees. Across the two studies, we found that empathic concern does play a role in willingness to help exonerees. The emotion findings were less consistent across studies and suggest that it may depend on who is experiencing the emotion and what type of helping is expected.

Consistent with previous empathy literature, we found that empathic concern led to an increase in self-reported helping in both studies. To our knowledge, this is the first research to explore the role of empathic concern in assisting wrongfully convicted individuals post-exoneration. Although the current studies did not manipulate participants' empathic concern toward the exoneree in the video, research has shown that hearing stories about wrongful convictions can increase empathetic feelings toward exonerees (Kennedy, 2017; Ricciardelli et al., 2012). Therefore, this knowledge is

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important because it demonstrates that if telling the public about exoneree's stories can increase empathy toward them (Kennedy, 2017; Ricciardelli et al., 2012), and if empathic concern increases helping behaviours, then exonerees telling their stories should increase support and help from the public.

Additionally, consistently across the studies empathic concern did not interact with the video condition to impact behavioural helping. However, across Study 1 and Study 2 there were inconsistent findings about how empathic concern interacted with participants' own emotion to affect behavioural helping. For example, in Study 1 empathic concern did not interact with either participant emotion about the exoneree's story to predict behavioural helping, yet in Study 2 empathic concern interacted with participant anger, but not sadness, about the exoneree's story. Since behavioural helping such as signing petitions requires more commitment than simply stating they *would* help exonerees, one possible reason for the inconsistent findings is that signing petitions could have been viewed as being too much effort compared to stating they *would* help, and therefore empathic concern did not have an impact. Similarly, Graziano et al. (2007) asked participants to listen to a broadcast in one of two ways: listen to the information provided or listen to the emotional aspects (e.g., empathically). They found that when asked to listen to the broadcast empathically, participants were less likely to offer help to the individual in the broadcast if they perceived helping to be effortful (Graziano et al., 2007). Future researchers might wish to explore these possibilities further.

We had also expected the exoneree's emotions (i.e., video condition) to interact with empathic concern to increase self-reported helping in the sad condition, but this was not the case in either study. One reason for this may be that we did not ask our

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participants to take the perspective of the exoneree. Sassenrath et al. (2017) asked

participants to imagine how the target felt about their situation and found that only when

the target was sad (compared to angry or disgusted) did perspective taking increase

willingness to help. They suggested that the sad emotion increases feelings of empathy

because sad individuals are often perceived as more in need, therefore increasing the

likelihood of one being willing to help (Sassenrath et al., 2017). They also noted that

other researchers have found sad individuals to be perceived as more helpless (Frijda et

al., 1989) and as "evoking more emotional support" (Hendriks & Vingerhoets, 2006;

Sassenrath et al., 2017, p. 97). Perhaps if we had asked our participants to explicitly take

the perspective of the exoneree, the sad videos would have had more effect.

In both studies, we found that video condition did not impact self-reported

helping, however, in Study 1, the sad condition led to an increase in behavioural helping

– but this finding did not replicate in Study 2. Furthermore, in Study 1 participants'

sadness about the exoneree's story was predictive of self-reported helping. In Study 2,

however, both participants' anger and sadness were predictive of self-reported helping –

yet contrary to expectation, participants' anger was the better predictor. One potential

explanation for these findings is perceptions of responsibility. Weiner's attribution theory

states that if a stigmatized individual is viewed as not responsible for their stigma (e.g.,

obesity due to glandular dysfunction, drug addiction from prescribed medication after an

accident), people view them with greater pity than if the stigma is viewed as within the

individual's control (e.g., obesity due to over-eating and lack of exercise, drug addiction

from recreational drug use; Weiner et al., 1988). Furthermore, the theory states that this

increase in pity for the individual not responsible for their stigma often translates into an

increase helping (Menec & Perry, 1995, 1998; Obonsawin et al., 2013; Weiner et al., 1988).

Similar findings have been found in the wrongful conviction literature: Kukucka and Evelo (2019) found that exonerees perceived as being responsible for their wrongful conviction (i.e., false confessors) were awarded less compensation by mock jurors and Savage et al. (2018) found that exonerees were perceived as less responsible for their wrongful conviction when police did not follow best practices (i.e., high police bias), especially if the exoneree had falsely confessed. However, Weiner and colleagues (1988) have argued that if a stigma is in and of itself so awful, it appears that individuals pity those suffering from the stigma regardless of their perceived responsibility (e.g., contracting AIDS). Given that all participants, regardless of video condition, were told that the exoneree had been knowingly falsely accused of the crime he was wrongfully convicted of, it is possible that participants being aware that the wrongful conviction was not in the exoneree's control led to such an increase in pity towards him that it did not allow for emotions to have a significant impact on helping behaviours. Our participants were asked about their perceptions of how responsible he was for his wrongful conviction, but this was not analyzed in the current studies and could be later examined.

Interestingly, Terwogt (2002) noted that when asked to justify their helping behaviours, their participants explained the helping to be more due to the emotions of the person in need and less because of their own emotions. Although we did not specifically ask our participants what contributed to their helping, or lack thereof, their own emotions about the exoneree's story appeared to have a greater effect on helping across both studies. That said, Terwogt's (2002) participants were children, whereas the current

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research sampled university students. Future research may wish to conduct the study with a more diverse sample of the population. Moreover, Terwogt (2002) had their participants help a friend, whereas we had participants help an exoneree whom they have never met. Research focusing on helping friends versus strangers has been inconsistent: some researchers have suggested that friends and strangers are helped equally (Davis et al., 2018; Einolf, 2008) whereas others have suggested that friends are helping more than strangers (Katz et al., 2015; Schlenker & Britt, 2001). Although this research has examined the effects of empathic concern on helping friends versus strangers, little has been done to examine how emotions impact this form of helping. It is possible that helping a friend is impacted by the emotions of said friend, whereas helping a stranger may be more impacted by the emotions of the person helping.

4.1 Limitations and Future Directions

One potential limitation of the studies was the videos themselves. At no point in the interview did the exoneree visibly show extreme anger or sadness, therefore we created six videos that demonstrated the emotions through the topic and language used. Although the sad videos appeared to manipulate the perceived sadness of the exoneree as intended across both studies, the angry videos did not always do so (i.e., Study 1). One possible way to ensure that the appropriate emotions are being expressed for each video type would be to hire an actor to express the anger/sadness visibly and verbally. However, as the current videos used footage from an interview with a real Canadian exoneree, it created a more authentic experience and may allow for a more realistic comparison to videos that the public would be exposed to more naturally (e.g., wrongful conviction documentaries). However, future research may wish to develop and test videos

that manipulate anger and sadness more strongly, which could help solve the issue of the ceiling effect as well as the manipulation of the exoneree's perceived emotions. Developing videos that elicit anger and sadness more strongly would allow for a better academic assessment of how the emotions influence both forms of willingness to help exonerees, although this may diminish the study's ecological validity.

Another possible limitation is that the empathy measurement focused on the overall empathic concern of the individual and did not specifically measure participants' empathic concern toward the exoneree in the video. Pavey et al. (2012) found that having participants focus on their empathic feelings toward the target in need further increased their self-reported helping, and that this was a result of an increase in their autonomous motivation. Future wrongful conviction research could examine the effects of empathic concern toward an exoneree and its impact on willingness to help, as well as how different motivations (e.g., autonomous vs. controlled; Pavey et al., 2012) mediate the helping intentions and behaviours toward exonerees.

Moreover, although the emotion-invoking task was similar to that used by Small & Lerner (2008), one possible reason our findings were not consistent with the literature is a lack of deception about the goal of the emotion-invoking task. Although we did not tell participants how we expected the emotion-invoking task to impact their willingness to help, we did explicitly state which emotion we wanted them to write about and feel, and we emphasized that we wanted them to try to relive the experience and emotion to the best of their ability. Although Small and Lerner (2008) specified the emotion participants were to write about, their instructions had less emphasis on reliving the emotions. Therefore, it is possible that many participants did not truly feel angry or sad

after our task, but rather rated the emotion they were instructed to write about higher than the other emotions because they assumed that is what we were expecting of them. Although we were very open with participants about what we expected from them for ethical reasons, future researchers could try to induce the emotions in a way that is ethical but less explicit so that participants do not truly understand the goal of the task. For example, Small and Lerner (2008) told their participants the emotion-invoking task and the welfare case were two separate studies and asked participants to rate the emotions they experienced during the emotion-invoking task at the end of the welfare case, as opposed to immediately after writing about the emotional experience.

Furthermore, in Study 2, not only did the emotion-invoking task not impact either form of willingness to help exonerees, but there was also no interaction of emotion-invoking task and empathic concern. One possible reason that participants' sadness did not interact with empathic concern to increase helping, as expected, is because their sadness may have been alleviated due to time passing between the task and the helping items. Cialdini et al. (1987) found that those higher in empathic concern are more likely to help others when they personally felt sad, but if they were led to believe that this sadness could be alleviated prior to helping, sad individuals higher in empathic concern were often less willing to help. Although there was no indication in our study that participants' sadness was alleviated, future researchers may want to ask participants to rate their emotions immediately after the emotion-invoking task and again before the helping items; this could inform the researchers if personal anger or sadness increased or decreased over the course of the experiment, potentially impacting helping behaviours.

Another possible explanation for the lack of a significant interaction between empathic concern and our manipulations might be insufficient power. According to our G*Power analysis, we should have had sufficient power to detect a medium effect size. That said, if the interaction was actually a small effect, we would have been greatly underpowered to detect it. According to G*Power, we would have needed 787 participants in the final sample to detect a small (.10) effect in Study 2, rather than the 247 participants actually analyzed. In addition, of course, G*Power is not without its own limitations and imperfections.

Another potential limitation was the sample used. Some research has shown that middle-aged adults (vs. younger and older) are higher in empathic concern (O'Brien et al., 2013), whereas others have demonstrated a negative correlation between age and empathy (Schieman & Van Gundy, 2000). As the current studies only consisted of undergraduate students (i.e., primarily younger adults), it is possible that empathic concern scores would differ in an older sample. Furthermore, females (vs. males) report higher levels of empathy (O'Brien et al., 2013; Schieman & Van Gundy, 2000), and are often more willing to help (Belansky & Boggiano, 1994). Future research may wish to examine how demographics, such as age and gender, influence empathic concern and helping behaviours toward exonerees.

Finally, this study was limited to two emotions: anger and sadness. Future research could examine other emotions that may influence helping behaviours, such as disgust and happiness. Although preliminary results from Hamilton & Clow (2019) have suggested that the public believes that anger and sadness are stereotypical emotions experienced by wrongfully convicted individuals, feelings of happiness and fear were

also frequently mentioned when asked about traits associated with exonerees. Previous research has shown that although people are more willing to help a person in need who appears sad, they would be more willing to ask for help from someone who appears happy compared to angry or disgusted (Willis et al., 2015). Other research has demonstrated that when primed with either love, distress, or solidarity, those primed with love were more willing to donate money to sick children (Lamy et al., 2012). Thus, exploring additional emotions may prove fruitful.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

Exonerees often experience difficulties reintegrating back into society due to negative perceptions about them (e.g., Clow & Leach, 2015a, 2015b; Zannella et al., 2020) and a lack of reintegration services (Norris, 2012; Westervelt & Cook, 2008). These are the first studies to examine how emotions expressed by an exoneree and experienced by the participant, as well as empathic concern, influences one's willingness to help exonerees. Together, these studies demonstrate that how an individual feels about an exoneree's story and their general empathic concern may have a greater influence on helping behaviours than how they perceive the exoneree to be feeling. Whereas video condition had little impact on helping behaviours, an increase in participants' sadness about the exoneree's story and in their empathic concern increased self-reported willingness to help consistently across both studies. Although this research is an important first step at identifying how we can increase support and help for exonerees reintegrating back into society, more research in this area is required to further investigate how we can encourage people to help exonerees.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Ethics Approval for Study 1

Date: *July 16, 2020*
To: *Kimberley Clow*
From: *Paul Yielder, REB Vice-Chair*
File # & Title: *15971 - Pineapple*
Status: **APPROVED**
REB Expiry Date: **July 01, 2021**
Documents Approved:

**Revised Confidentiality Form for Research
Assistants (received July 14, 2020)**
**Revised Social Media Consent Form (received July
14, 2020)**
**Revised Social Media Recruitment
Letter (received July 14, 2020)**
**Letter of permission from the speaker in the
videos (received June 16, 2020)**
Debriefing form (received June 16, 2020)
Screenshot of video (received June 16, 2020)
Explanation of the study (received June 16, 2020)
**List of questionnaires and attention check
questions (received June 16, 2020)**

Notwithstanding this approval, you are required to obtain/submit, to Ontario Tech Research
Ethics Board, any relevant approvals/permissions required, prior to commencement of this
project.

The Ontario Tech Research Ethics Board (REB) has reviewed and approved the research study
named above to ensure compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for
Research Involving Humans (TCPS2 2018), the Ontario Tech Research Ethics Policy and
Procedures and associated regulations. As the Principal Investigator (PI), you are required to
adhere to the research protocol described in the REB application as last reviewed and approved
by the REB. In addition, you are responsible for obtaining any further approvals that might be
required to complete your project.

Under the TCPS2 2018, the PI is responsible for complying with the continuing research ethics
reviews requirements listed below:

Renewal Request Form: All approved projects are subject to an annual renewal process.
Projects must be renewed or closed by the expiry date indicated above ("Current Expiry").
Projects not renewed 30 days post expiry date will be automatically suspended by the REB;
projects not renewed 60 days post expiry date will be automatically closed by the REB. Once
your file has been formally closed, a new submission will be required to open a new file.

Change Request Form: If the research plan, methods, and/or recruitment methods should change, please submit a change request application to the REB for review and approval prior to implementing the changes.

Adverse or Unexpected Events Form: Events must be reported to the REB within 72 hours after the event occurred with an indication of how these events affect (in the view of the Principal Investigator) the safety of the participants and the continuation of the protocol (i.e. un-anticipated or un-mitigated physical, social or psychological harm to a participant).

Research Project Completion Form: This form must be completed when the research study is concluded.

Always quote your REB file number (**15971**) on future correspondence. We wish you success with your study.

Sincerely,

Dr. Paul Yielder   Emma Markoff
REB Vice-Chair   Research Ethics Assistant
paul.yielder@uoit.ca   researchethics@uoit.ca

NOTE: If you are a student researcher, your supervisor has been copied on this message.

Appendix B.   Ethics Change Form Approval for Study 1

Date: *September 04, 2020*
To: *Kimberley Clow*
From: *Paul Yielder, REB Vice-Chair*
File # & Title: *15971 - Pineapple*
Status: ***CHANGE REQUEST APPROVED (Received September 3, 2020)***
Current Expiry: ***July 01, 2021***

 Documents   ***Appendix 9 - Consent Form for SONA***
Approved:

Notwithstanding this approval, you are required to obtain/submit, to Ontario Tech's Research Ethics Board, any relevant approvals/permissions required, prior to commencement of this project.

The Ontario Tech Research Ethics Board (REB) has reviewed and approved the change request related to the research study named above. This request has been reviewed to ensure compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2 2018), the Ontario Tech Research Ethics Policy and Procedures, and associated regulations. As the Principal Investigator (PI), you are required to adhere to the research protocol described in the REB application as last reviewed and approved by the REB.

Under the Tri-Council Policy Statement 2, the PI is responsible for complying with the continuing research ethics reviews requirements listed below.

Renewal Request Form: All approved projects are subject to an annual renewal process. Projects must be renewed or closed by the expiry date indicated above ("Current Expiry"). Projects not renewed 30 days post expiry date will be automatically suspended by the REB; projects not renewed 60 days post expiry date will be automatically closed by the REB. Once your file has been formally closed, a new submission will be required to open a new file.

Change Request Form: If the research plan, methods, and/or recruitment methods should change, please submit a change request application to the REB for review and approval prior to implementing the changes.

Adverse or Unexpected Events Form: Events must be reported to the REB within 72 hours after the event occurred with an indication of how these events affect (in the view of the Principal Investigator) the safety of the participants and the continuation of the protocol (i.e. un-anticipated or un-mitigated physical, social or psychological harm to a participant).

Research Project Completion Form: This form must be completed when the research study is concluded.

Always quote your REB file number (**15971**) on future correspondence. We wish you success with your study.

Sincerely,

Dr. Paul Yielder   Emma Markoff
REB Vice-Chair   Research Ethics Assistant
paul.yielder@uoit.ca   researchethics@uoit.ca

NOTE: If you are a student researcher, your supervisor has been copied on this message.

Appendix C. Willingness to Help Measurements

C.1. Willingness to Donate to Innocence Canada

Please rate the following questions on a 9-point scale.

Strongly Disagree   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   Strongly Agree

1) I would be willing to donate money to the following organizations:
   Innocence Canada

C.2. Willingness to Help Exonerees in General

Please rate the following questions on a 9-point scale.

Strongly Disagree   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   Strongly Agree

1) I would be willing to attend a protest to help wrongfully convicted individuals.
2) I would be willing to sign a petition for the release of a wrongfully convicted
   individual from prison.
3) I would be willing to pay higher rent for my apartment building so that a
   wrongfully convicted individual could live there more affordably.
4) I would be willing to sign a petition to make financial compensation a legal
   requirement for all exonerees.
5) I would be willing to help in the job training at my place of employment of a
   wrongfully convicted individual.
6) I would be willing to donate money to Innocence Canada.
7) I would be willing to pay higher taxes to aid in the financial compensation of
   wrongfully convicted individuals.

C.3 Willingness to Help Video Exoneree

Please rate the following questions on a 9-point scale.

Strongly Disagree   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   Strongly Agree

1) I would be willing to attend a protest to help the exoneree in the video.
2) I would have been willing to sign a petition for the release of the exoneree in the
   video from prison.
3) I would be willing to pay higher rent for my apartment building so that the
   exoneree in the video could live there more affordably.
4) I would be willing to sign a petition to make financial compensation a legal
   requirement for the exoneree in the video.
5) I would be willing to help in the job training at my place of employment for the
   exoneree in the video.
6) I would be willing to donate money to help the exoneree in the video.

7) I would be willing to pay higher taxes to aid in the financial compensation of the exoneree in the video.

Appendix D. Ethics Change Form Approval for Study 2

Date: January 05, 2021
To: Kimberley Clow
From: Paul Yielder, REB Vice-Chair
File # & Title: 15971 - Pineapple
Status: ***CHANGE REQUEST APPROVED (Received December 29, 2020)***
Current Expiry: ***July 01, 2021***

Documents   ***Appendix 10 (Received December 29, 2020)***
Approved: ***Appendix 11 (Received December 29, 2020)***

> Notwithstanding this approval, you are required to obtain/submit, to Ontario Tech's Research Ethics Board, any relevant approvals/permissions required, prior to commencement of this project.

The Ontario Tech Research Ethics Board (REB) has reviewed and approved the change request related to the research study named above. This request has been reviewed to ensure compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2 2018), the Ontario Tech Research Ethics Policy and Procedures, and associated regulations. As the Principal Investigator (PI), you are required to adhere to the research protocol described in the REB application as last reviewed and approved by the REB.

Under the Tri-Council Policy Statement 2, the PI is responsible for complying with the continuing research ethics reviews requirements listed below.

Renewal Request Form: All approved projects are subject to an annual renewal process. Projects must be renewed or closed by the expiry date indicated above ("Current Expiry"). Projects not renewed 30 days post expiry date will be automatically suspended by the REB; projects not renewed 60 days post expiry date will be automatically closed by the REB. Once your file has been formally closed, a new submission will be required to open a new file.

Change Request Form: If the research plan, methods, and/or recruitment methods should change, please submit a change request application to the REB for review and approval prior to implementing the changes.

Adverse or Unexpected Events Form: Events must be reported to the REB within 72 hours after the event occurred with an indication of how these events affect (in the view of the Principal Investigator) the safety of the participants and the continuation of the protocol (i.e. un-anticipated or un-mitigated physical, social or psychological harm to a participant).

Research Project Completion Form: This form must be completed when the research study is concluded.

Always quote your REB file number (**15971**) on future correspondence. We wish you success with your study.

Sincerely,

Dr. Paul Yielder   Emma Markoff
REB Vice-Chair   Research Ethics Assistant
paul.yielder@ontariotechu.ca   researchethics@ontariotechu.ca

NOTE: If you are a student researcher, your supervisor has been copied on this message.

Appendix E. Emotion Manipulation Task Instructions for Study 2

We are going to ask you to write about the last time you were ANGRY [SAD] that you would be willing to share with us. If the last time you were ANGRY [SAD] was traumatic or too embarrassing for you to share with us, please think back to a different time you were ANGRY [SAD].

The emotional memory you will be writing about should be something that occurred in your own life and not the life of someone else. However, if you cannot think of something that made you ANGRY [SAD] in your own life, you may write about something that made you ANGRY [SAD] that occurred to a close friend or family member. Just remember to focus on your emotions, and not the emotions of someone else.

When you are ready, please press the continue button below to begin.

[next page]

First, spend at least one minute really thinking about the time that you were ANGRY [SAD] that you are going to write about.

Please take as long as you need to fully remember the incident. Think about the memory in as much detail as possible and try to relive the emotions experienced during the event.

You cannot move on to the next screen until at least one minute has passed.

[next page]

In the space below, please write out in as much detail as you are willing to share the time when you were ANGRY [SAD].

It is very important to relive the experience and to give us as much detail as you can. Please feel free to omit or change all personal details you do not wish to share with us (e.g., names, dates, locations, embarrassing moments).