

I. Definitions:

- A. empathy = vicarious sharing of affect (having same affect as other)
- B. perspective-taking = imagining oneself as having another's mental state
- C. emotional contagion = being caused by the other's mental state to have the same mental state; "catching" the other's mental state
- D. personal distress = self-oriented feeling (e.g. upset, alarm, anxiety, distress) caused by other's distress
- E. mindreading = knowing what other's mental state is; attributing a state of mind to another

[LB: definition of empathy does not capture its being a feeling for or toward another—a feeling that has another person as its object]

II. Goal of chapter: determine cognitive and affective mechanism underlying altruistic motivation

[LB: SN does not clearly define "altruism." Sometimes he is talking about helping behavior, sometimes helping behavior motivated by concern for other person.]

III. Core cases of altruistic motivation

- A. in children
- B. in adults

[LB: not clear why or how the child cases form a "core" for the adult ones, or what SN means by "core"]

IV. Theory that no mindreading is necessary for altruism

- A. Emotional contagion theory
- B. Sympathy theory (Sober and Wilson): feeling toward other that does not require same feeling in subject (so not empathy)
 - 1. can there be sympathy for an "objective situation" of other without knowledge of her mental state?
No evidence for this.

[LB: adults can have sympathy for objective situation]

V. Theory that sophisticated mindreading is necessary for altruism

- A. perspective-taking (Goldman)
- B. Blum's view

VI. Nichols's "minimal mindreading" account

SN asks question: Why do people stay and help when they could escape?

- A. "enduring mental representation" view—escape would not rid subject of personal distress
 - 1. but minimal cues can trigger emotional contagion
- B. So need mindreading to avoid minimal cues problem and have accurate view of other's state of mind

[LB: Is this a solution to problem of why a person engages in helping behavior, or what psychological mechanism underlies altruistic motivation?]

VII. How SN's account applies to children; how child altruism is related to adult altruism

VIII. Argument for perspective-taking (again: see V): Batson's theory

- A. Children can be altruistic without perspective taking

IX. Alternative theory: more than minimal mindreading but less than perspective-taking: Blum's "discrepant desire" view

- A. "ethical" vs. "mindreading" egocentrism

X. Affect and altruistic motivation: is affect required to get from attribution of distress to helping/altruistic action