Seeing Us in Them

What causes some people to stand in solidarity with those from other races, religions, or nationalities, even when that solidarity does not seem to benefit the individual or their group? Seeing Us in Them examines outgroup empathy as a powerful predisposition in politics that pushes individuals to see past social divisions and work together in complex, multicultural societies. It also reveals racial/ethnic intergroup differences in this predisposition, rooted in early patterns of socialization and collective memory. Outgroup empathy explains why African Americans vehemently oppose the border wall and profiling of Arabs, why Latinos are welcoming of Syrian refugees and support humanitarian assistance, why some white Americans march in support of Black Lives Matter through a pandemic, and even why many British citizens oppose Brexit. Outgroup empathy is not naive; rather it is a rational and necessary force that helps build trust and maintain stable democratic norms of compromise and reciprocity.

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Cambridge Studies in Public Opinion and Political Psychology is dedicated to furthering theoretical and empirical research on the relationship between the political system and the attitudes and actions of citizens.

Books in the series are listed on the page following the Index.
Seeing Us in Them

Social Divisions and the Politics of Group Empathy

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For Sean and Dylan –
may you stay forever young and empathic.

For Dom, Toby, and Stella –
your kindness, curiosity, and love are your greatest gifts.
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