1. What did you think of the video? Were you able to “ step outside of your thoughts and behavioral patterns” and reserve a part of your mental capacity to “listen” to and monitor your internal reactions as a means of gaining a deeper insight into the nature of yourself? What’s your perspective on this notion of “self awareness” in the present moment as a tool to learn more about yourself?  Was this “radical experiment” an effective one in terms of helping you understand the concept of empathy?  Also, what connections to the concept of cultural humility come to mind?  (Write at least several well-developed paragraphs - very short answers are NOT sufficient!)

I thought the video was real insightful and helped shed a new light on things regarding perception. The video helped a lot with realizing different things happening in the world and putting yourself in the shoes of different people to learn why situations are the way they are. It required different thinking, but I was able to reserve a part of my mental capacity to listen to my internal reactions as a means of gaining a deeper insight into the nature of myself. Once I was able to put myself in the shoes of other people and realize why some of their situations are the way they are, I was able to really understand things a lot more clearer. One situation in particular stood out to me and that was when the Iraqi men were caught by the Americans for attempting to kill them. On one side of the situation, Americans have caught assassins that were out to kill, however, on the other side of the situation, patriotic men were fighting for what they believed was right and attempting to kill for justice. The notion of self-awareness is extremely underrated in the ways that it helps one to learn more about themselves. Self-awareness is what  everyone needs to fully understand themselves, which leads to understanding other people thereafter. Sam Richards experiment was of radical means, but I do believe it helped more clearly understand the concept of empathy by setting the situation to an extreme in order to gain the attention that was needed. Regarding the concept of cultural humility, I am not afraid or nervous of it, but more so excited to be an individual in the present moment experiencing it. Cultural humility leads to learning the shoes of other people, and in turn learning their culture in it's entirety. 

2. Whenever we travel abroad, we experience differences in perspective and ways of thinking.  Sometimes we may feel that others are judging us inappropriately based on our appearance, our ability to communicate with locals, and our nationality (there's no shortage of stereotypes regarding the "typical" American - and, as an easily identifiable American, you will hear a lot about Donald Trump and American politics during your stay in Europe).  So, take a moment to consider how other cultures / countries may view Americans.  Do some informal research (on the internet or perhaps talking with people who you know who have spent a significant amount of time in foreign countries), and answer the following questions:  1)  What are some perspectives or attitudes, positive and negative, that you believe Europeans (or, more specifically, central / eastern Europeans) may have about Americans? (cite your sources); and 2)  What are some things you can do to integrate more effectively into the local culture - and avoid being labeled with some of the negative stereotypes that Europeans may have about Americans?  (Write at least several well-developed paragraphs for EACH question above - very short answers are NOT sufficient!)

I believe that there are many perspectives and attitudes shown and given towards Americans by Europeans. Most of these attitudes are negative, so I've heard, due to the way Americans act in their countries and from the stereotypes they hear about Americans, in general. Europeans get confused by many of the things we do. For example, they are bewildered at the fact we eat such massive portions, our tipping is generally much higher than theirs, our measurement system compared to theirs, the American legal drinking age, etc. America is very different compared to Europe in the things that we do and the ways that we act. To some Europeans we are viewed as selfish and lazy because of these perspectives that get fixed against us. I personally believe to integrate well into their local culture it is best to avoid American talk. Our slang and general attitude will divert us from conforming to their culture and blockade us from learning. We need to commit ourselves fully to learning their new culture and have zero assumptions when it comes to that. Staying open minded and empathetic to their culture and views is pragmatic to understanding the full experience of their culture.

http://www.businessinsider.com/things-europeans-find-strange-about-america-2015-7

3. How can practicing the concepts of empathy and cultural humility (and understanding something about the history, culture, and traditions of a people / place) allow us to see a clearer view of reality?  Along these lines, to what extent do you believe empathy and cultural humility are practiced by the world’s political leaders, and what suggestions might you have for them?  Be specific, use examples.  (Write at least several well-developed paragraphs - very short answers are NOT sufficient!)

Practicing the concepts of empathy and cultural humility will allow us to see a clearer view of reality by opening our minds and perceptions to new things. The knowledge by doing this will flow in and allow us understand much more than we can even anticipate. These skills will allow me to personally become a better person, as well. When each person can fully understand each other's personal situations by being put in their shoes they will become fully aware of their situations and be able to understand them more thoroughly. I believe many of the world's political leaders practice empathy and cultural humility. Being a world leader means dealing with world politics on a daily basis. Practicing empathy and cultural humility is a necessity for these leaders to fully become successful leaders. My suggestions for these leaders would be to never stop learning and practicing empathy and cultural humility. Each day thrive to put yourself in a situation where you don't feel comfortable because the culture is not yours or the situation seems completely one sides. Thrive to learn more and more about a different culture and to learn more by putting yourself in someone else's shoes to see things as they view it.

4. Finally, I want your ideas for steps you will take (prior to leaving for Europe, and while you are there on program) to enhance your own worldview; to become a more [global citizen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_citizenship" \o "Global Citizen" \t "_blank).  Assignment 1 asks you to set some goals for your time on the program, and you can just summarize here (for support and future conversations with me and your fellow classmates) your goals and plans related to improving your intercultural competencies.

Prior to leaving to the Czech Republic, I hope to familiarize myself with the culture that is present there as much as I can without actually being there. I would like to learn many common phrases in the Czech language to appropriate myself with. I want to learn more on how to continuously make sure I am remaining empathetic of the culture present there and constantly keeping an open mind out there. My personal goals include learning more about myself while putting myself in situations I am unfamiliar with in different and unknown environments. My career goals include learning about relations with other countries through offshore banking in the field I will be working with. I think it will be very exciting to learn about different countries' international policies regarding banking, as well.