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Inherited Feelings, Hovering Hands, and Yelling at the News: The Family Origins of
Partisan Affect

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Political Science

by

Christian Arthur Lindke

June 2026

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Jennifer Merolla, Chairperson

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2026

The Dissertation of Christian Lindke is approved:

Committee Chairperson

University of California, Riverside

DEDICATION

I could not have completed this dissertation without the love, guidance, and support of my wife Jody Lindke. During the process of writing this, I had many moments of frustration and imposter syndrome. Jody was always there with a word of support and belief that I would finish it. I love you so much. Thank you for everything. Speaking of everything, I'd also like to dedicate this dissertation to my twin daughters Nora and Clio. I hope through the example I set persevering through this project; you can see that anything is possible. You are both amazing and I am so proud of you. My final thanks go out to my dissertation committee. Dr. Merolla is the kind of mentor you can only hope for as a student. She was always there for me in my time of need and is a wellspring of knowledge. Dr. Pedraza is a great resource who was always available when I had a question and who was supportive even when I was not as communicative as I should be. Dr. Biggers provided me with several teaching opportunities and wonderful discussions about the Columbia School that have forever shaped my thoughts on the importance of pluralism in American politics.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Inherited Feelings, Hovering Hands, and Yelling at the News: The Family Origins of
Partisan Affect

by

Christian Arthur Lindke

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in Political Science
University of California, Riverside, September 2026
Dr. Jennifer Merolla, Chairperson

How do families produce partisans? This three-paper dissertation argues that the household is a primary generative site of affective polarization, transmitting not just party identification but partisan feeling across generations through mechanisms that are largely unintentional, emotionally driven, and rooted in the ordinary behavior of parents. The three papers examine this process in sequence, moving from the historical fact of transmission to the governing philosophy that connects parenting values to policy preferences, to the real-time emotional behaviors through which transmission occurs.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	vi
Introduction	1
References.....	9
Chapter 1: Before the Storm: Intergenerational Transmission of Partisan Affect in an Era of Low Political Polarization	
Abstract	12
Introduction	13
Literature Review.....	18
Design	26
Findings	30
Conclusions and Further Research.....	65
References	71
Appendix A: Supplementary Figures.....	79
Appendix B: Political Realignment	81
Chapter 2: Hovering at the Polls: Do Helicopter Parents Prefer Paternalistic Political Policies?	
Abstract	87
Introduction	88
Study 1a	94
Study 1a Measures.....	95
Study 1a Results	98
Study 1a Discussion	101
Study 1b	103
Study 1b Measures	103

Study 1a Results	104
Study 1a Discussion	105
Study 2a	106
Study 2a Measures.....	107
Study 2a Results	108
Study 2a Discussion	108
Study 2b	111
Study 2b Measures.....	111
Study 2b Results	111
Study 2b Discussion	111
Study 3	116
Study 3 Participants	118
Study 3 Stimuli and Method	120
Study 3 Results	123
General Discussion.....	125
Conclusion	134
References	135
Appendix 1: Measurement Scales and Construction Procedure	142
Appendix 2: Primes for studies 2a and 2b.....	160
Appendix 3: Scree Plot for Study 3.....	166

Chapter 3: Yelling at the News: Parental Emotional Expression and the Intergenerational Transmission of Partisan Affect

Abstract	168
Introduction	169

Emotional Foundations of Political Socialization.....	171
Study 1	181
Study 1 Sample.....	181
Study 1 Measures and Analytic Approach	182
Study 1 Results.....	184
Study 2	194
Study 2 Sample.....	194
Study 2 Measures and Analytic Approach	195
Study 2 Results.....	197
Study 3	201
Study 3 Sample.....	201
Study 3 Measures and Analytic Approach	202
Study 3 Results.....	203
Study 3 Summary.....	210
Conclusions and Weaknesses.....	211
References	214
Appendix 1: Supplemental Visualizations for CCES Study.....	219
Appendix 2: Yeller Only Sample	220
Conclusion.....	221

LIST OF FIGURES

Chapter 1

Figure 1.1: Average Affective Distance of Voters Across Time for Voters 17 to 24 and All Voters (ANES 2024 Time Series Data).....	14
Figure 1.2: Stability of Average Partisan Warmth 1973 to 1997.....	66
Figure 1.3: ANES Time Series Data Reflecting Average Affective Distance for Partisans and the Public at Large.....	79
Figure 1.4: Analysis of ANES Time Series Data Demonstrating Thermometer Ratings of 17 – 24-Year-Old Democrats and Republicans for their Own Party and for their Out Party.....	79
Figure 1.5: Bobbi Gentry (2013) "The Process of Political Identity Development".....	80
Figure 1.6 -- Outparty Affect Transmission by Parental Party Stability	81

Chapter 2

Figure 2.1: Helicopter Parenting Articles by Year	132
Figure 2.2: Parallel Analysis.....	166

Chapter 3

Figure 3.1: Correlation Matrix.....	221
Figure 3.2 – Numeric Correlation Matrix	221

LIST OF TABLES

Chapter 1

Table 1.1: Mother's Out Party Influence in 1973.....	31
Table 1.2: Father Out Party Influence in 1973.....	32
Table 1.3: Combined Parental Out Party Influence in 1973.....	33
Table 1.4-- Influence of Gen 2 Father's 1997 Out Party Affect on Gen 3.....	35
Table 1.5-- Influence of Gen 2 Mother's 1997 Out Party Affect on Gen 3.....	36
Table 1.6-- Influence of Generation 2 Combined Parent's 1997 Out Party Affect on Generation 3.....	37
Table 1.7-- Influence of Party Switching on Out Party Affect Transmission	39
Table 1.8-- Influence of Gen 2 Father's 1973 Out Party Affect on Gen 3	41
Table 1.9-- Influence of Gen 2 Mother's 1973 Out Party Affect on Gen 3	42
Table 1.10-- Influence of Combined Gen 2 Parent's 1973 Out Party Affect on Gen 3.....	43
Table 1.11-- Influence of Combined Gen 2 Parent's 1982 Out Party Affect on Gen 3.....	45
Table 1.12-- Influence of Gen 2 Father's 1982 Out Party Affect on Gen 3.....	46
Table 1.13-- Influence of Gen 2 Mother's 1982 Out-Party Affect on Gen 3.....	47
Table 1.14-- Influence of Combined Parental Affect in 1997 on Generation 3 Friend Circles.....	52
Table 1.15-- Influence of Father's Affect in 1997 on Generation 3 Friend Circles.....	53
Table 1.16-- Influence of Mother's Affect in 1997 on Generation 3 Friend Circles.....	54

Table 1.17-- Influence of Combined Parental Affect in 1982 on Generation 3 Friend Circles.....	56
Table 1.18-- Influence of Father's Affect in 1982 on Generation 3 Friend Circles.....	57
Table 1.19-- Influence of Mother's Affect in 1982 on Generation 3 Friend Circles	58
Table 1.20-- Influence of Generation 1 Political Activity on Generation 2 Out Party Affect (1973).....	61
Table 1.21-- Sample Comparison to Discern Unique Effect of Parental Agreement	80
Table 1.22-- Influence of Generation 2 Political Activity on Generation 3 Out Party Affect (1997)	81
Table 1.23-- Influence of Generation 2 Political Activity on Generation 3 Out Party Affect (1982).....	82
Table 1.24 -- Generation 2 Party Identification in 1973 and 1997.....	83
Table 1.25-- Direction of Party Identification Change 1973 and 1997.....	83

Chapter 2

Table 2.1 –Sample Demographics for Studies 1 and 2.....	93
Table 2.2 –Correlation Coefficients for Measures.....	97
Table 2.3 –Influence of Variables in Determining Preference for Paternalism	98
Table 2.4 –Influence of Variables in Determining Preference for Paternalism	102
Table 2.5 –Study 3 Demographics	117
Table 2.6 –Alpha Values for Study 3	119
Table 2.7 –Factor Loading of Scales	121

Chapter 3

Table 3.1 -- Partisan Media Viewership and Parental Affect Towards Candidates and Parties	184
Table 3.2-- Partisan Media Viewership and Parental Affect Toward Ordinary Partisans	187
Table 3.3-- Partisan Media Viewership and Perceived Tone Toward Political Parties	189
Table 3.4-- Partisan Media Viewership and Perceived Tone Toward Ordinary Partisans	192
Table 3.5-- Anger/Outrage Index and Frequency of Discussing Politics with Children in the Household	198
Table 3.6-- Parental Tone and Yelling Predicting Student Feelings Toward the Republican and Democratic Parties	207
Table 3.7-- Parental Tone and Yelling Predicting Republican Student Comfort with Out-Party Members	209
Table 3.8 -- Parental Tone and Yelling Predicting Democratic Student Comfort with Out-Party Members.....	210
Table 3.9 -- Effect of Tone and Yelling on Republican Student Out-Party Dating	211
Table 3.10 -- Effect of Tone and Yelling on Democratic Student Out-Party Dating	212
Table 3.11 -- Partisan Media Effects Including CNN	222
Table 3.12 – Study 2 Specification Checks.....	223
Table 3.13 – Study 2 Anger/Outrage Index Robustness.....	224
Table 3.14 – Study 2 Separate Anger Outrage Test.....	225
Table 3.15 – Average Tone t-Test.....	226
Table 3.16 – Test of Different Involvement Specifications.....	227

INTRODUCTION

Parenting, Polarization, Paternalism, Policies, and Politics: The Family as a Site of Democratic Formation

There is something almost mundane about the way politics enters a family home. A child might hear a parent grumble at a story on the evening news. A grandmother's frustration with a political candidate shifts what had been polite dinner conversation. Children learn, without being formally instructed, which team their family roots against in casual discussion. Just as children in Boston learn to hate the Yankees as a part of their identity, children in "Red" or "Blue" families learn to dislike the other team in snippets. These ordinary domestic moments, which might be unremarkable or unintended, are among the pivotal events in the formation of a democratic citizen. This dissertation argues that the household is not merely a backdrop to political life. Instead, it is one of the primary generative sites. If you want to understand the political world we inhabit, you must understand the families produce it.

The three papers in this dissertation share a single animating question: What is the relationship between parenting and our nation's politics? This applies to how parents transmit not just partisan identity but feelings about political parties across generations, as well as how "helicopter" or "free-range" parenting styles influence policy preferences. Each paper approaches the question from different perspectives that are organized around five central concepts that shape American political culture: Parenting, Polarization, Paternalism, Policies, and Politics.

These concepts interact with one another to create a web that is more than just a collection of independent variables pointing toward an outcome. How parents raise their children shapes the emotional register of life in the home, both political and non-political. The emotional register transmits partisan affect across generations and lets children know what kinds of political emotions are appropriate to hold and which expressions are legitimate. As parents have become more affectively polarized, they have emotionally socialized their children to mirror their own sentiments. This interaction is one force that has quietly fueled the rise in affective polarization that we see in aggregated survey data. Parents' preferences for how children should be governed in the home, whether the home is permissive or restrictive, has remarkable predictive power for how citizens should be governed by the state. All of these interactions are occurring during an era when American politics is increasingly defined by animosity and distrust. This dissertation argues that the rise in polarization is partly a product of the families that raise the next generation of voters.

Exploring Polarization's Origin Story

Scholars of contemporary American politics have documented rising affective polarization with great precision (Iyengar et al., 2019; Mason, 2018; McCarty, Poole, & Rosenthal, 2006). They have traced its consequences through social behavior, electoral outcomes, and institutional disfunction. What they have been slower to explain is where partisan hostility comes from in individual citizens. Is it elite and media driven (Levendusky, 2013; Robison & Mullinix, 2015)? Is it due to the increase in the use of social media (Kubin & von Sikorski, 2021)? Is it due to sorting (Levendusky, 2009) or

friend and partner selection (Iyengar, Konitzer, & Tedin, 2018)? All of these are a part of the picture, but they are looking at how factors effect adults in ways that increase polarization. What about the forces that influence people before they cast their first vote, before they even know what a policy is?

Political socialization research has long established that parents are one of the most important transmitters of partisan identity (Campbell, Converse, Miller, & Stokes, 1960; Jennings & Niemi, 1974). The standard account of this transmission tends to measure the passing on of the cognitive elements of party identification that are observed through social learning so that children emerge from adolescence with the same party as their parents and many of the same policy preferences. What this account leaves underspecified is the emotional texture of that transmission. Partisan identity is not merely a cognitive category. It is also an affective attachment. We experience partisanship in both our hearts and our minds (Palmquist, Green, & Schickler, 2004). Strong partisans don't just believe their party is correct on policy issues, they also feel warm toward fellow partisans and, increasingly, hostility toward the out-party. Children absorb both cognitive categories and emotional valences, emotions that they increasingly express politically at a relatively young age (Oxley et al., 2020; Lay et al., 2023; Tyler & Iyengar, 2023). What are the mechanisms by which they acquire this affect and what are the consequences?

This dissertation advances the argument that they absorb these emotional valencies though the household. The family is not simply a vehicle for transmitting which party to prefer; it is the primary environment in which children learn how to feel about

political outgroups. There is emotional, as well as cognitive, socialization in action. The three papers assembled here examine this process through different lenses. The first traces transmission across three generations during a period of low political polarization. The second examines whether the values embedded in parenting philosophies extend to preferences for how the state should govern its citizens. The final paper examines specific emotional behaviors, such as the emotional tone parents use, and how that tone is transmitted to children.

Paper Overviews

“Before the Storm: Intergenerational Transmission of Partisan Affect in an Era of Low Political Polarization,” uses three waves of the Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel Study (1965 to 1997) to examine whether affective political transmission was already operating before the acceleration of partisan hostility that defines the modern American political environment. Using generational dyads across three generations, the paper tests whether parental warmth or hostility toward the political out-party predicts similar affect in their children, whether that affect extends into the partisan composition of children’s peer networks, and whether parental political activity amplifies the process. The findings support the first two propositions robustly. Mothers emerge as the primary affective socializers, and the critical socialization window is located in early childhood rather than adolescence. This is a finding with significant implications for future research and intervention. The paper establishes that the roots of contemporary affective polarization were planted during a period when aggregate

thermometer data showed relatively mild inter-partisan hostility. Parents were emotionally socializing before the current storm arrived.

“Hovering at the Polls: Do Helicopter Parents Prefer Paternalistic Political Policies?” shifts the lens from the transmission of partisan affect to that of parental governing philosophies. Extending Lakoff’s “government as family” framework into a previously unexamined dimension, the paper asks whether preferences for helicopter parenting, parenting that is overprotective and limits autonomy, predicts preferences for paternalist government policies. Across three studies using an Mturk sample as well as a large sample recruited by Qualtrics, the paper finds that helicopter parenting preferences are a stronger predictor of pro-paternalistic policy attitudes than party identification, ideology, or any other measured demographic variable. A priming experiment shows that the relationship does not operate through real-time causal priming, but a large-scale factor analysis reveals a latent general paternalism construct analogous to general intelligence that organizes attitudes toward paternal, governmental, medical, educational, and business authority into a coherent domain-general preference structure. The paper’s contribution is to show that what the parents believe about governing children and what they believe about governing citizens are not separate preferences but expressions of the same underlying disposition.

“Yelling at the News: Parental Emotional Expression and the Intergenerational Transmission of Partisan Affect” returns to the question of transmission but focuses on the mechanisms rather than the outcomes. Drawing on three studies that include a module fielded in the 2020 CCES, data from an emotion module in the 2024 ANES, and an

undergraduate survey, the paper examines the household behaviors through which partisan affect is converted into children's partisan feelings in the contemporary high-polarization environment. The three mechanisms under investigation are the partisan media environment parents maintain in the home, the high-arousal emotional states that trigger political conversation with children, and the expressive tone parents use when discussing political parties. The findings reveal a pattern consistent with asymmetric affective polarization. Fox News viewership is associated with substantively more negative perceived tone toward the Democratic Party. Anger and outrage predict more frequent political discussion with children, even after controlling for partisan identity. The paper also found that parents yelling at news coverage about Democratic candidates is associated with a roughly 27-point reduction in student warmth toward the Democratic Party, while positive parental tone toward Republicans is the primary driver of Republican warmth. The paper demonstrates that the emotional home environment is a meaningful and empirically tractable site of partisan affect formation.

Connecting the Concepts

The coherence of these three papers lies in their shared insistence that politics is not separate from domestic life but embedded in it. Parenting is not politically neutral because parents socialize their children regarding what they view to be the best society. The choices parents make about how much autonomy to grant children, how to discuss political opponents, which media to consume, and how to express political emotions are simultaneously choices about what kind of citizens those children will become and what kind of political order will exist when they do.

The connection between parenting and politics in these papers is not primarily ideological. It is affective and dispositional. Parents across the political spectrum have preferences for paternalistic policies and parents do not simply teach children which party to prefer. They also teach children how to feel about the other team. That emotional socialization works through several mechanisms that include ambient media exposure, tonal modeling, and the household emotional climate. Socialization is often far from deliberate, and it is far more difficult to interrupt than explicit political discussion because it is ever present. The paper on helicopter parenting extends this logic in a direction that has received less attention. Preferences for governing children and preferences for governing citizens are not merely analogous but may be expressions of a common underlying construct. The person who believes that children need constant supervision and protection from the consequences of their choices is more likely to believe that citizens do as well.

Polarization connects all three papers because it is the political condition that gives transmission stakes in society at large. If partisan hostility were mild and the emotional content of partisan identity were thin, the emotional dynamics of political socialization would matter less. The evidence assembled in these papers, however, suggests that the emotional foundations of contemporary polarization were laid not in the political sphere but in the domestic one and that they developed in childhood rather than adulthood. They developed not as a part of a deliberate political education, but through the casual repetition of partisan feeling in the home. The implications of this are both practical and theoretical. If affective polarization is transmitted through mundane

household behaviors, then moderating them will require paying attention to those behaviors and making them more active than passive.

This dissertation does not claim to solve the problem of polarization. It claims to locate one aspect of its origin. Before there is a voter, there is a child modeling behavior. Before there is a partisan, there is a family. It's a family that talks about politics, watches partisan media, transmits feelings about politics and media, and has an underlying attitude regarding how best to govern a family. What happens in the family leaves traces that are still visible later in the political attitudes of grown children who may not remember when they first learned to distrust the other side.

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Chapter 1: Before the Storm: Intergenerational Transmission of Partisan Affect in an Era
of Low Political Polarization

Abstract

This paper examines the intergenerational transmission of out-party affect using three waves of the Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel Study (1965-1997). Drawing on data from two generational dyads, Generation 1 parents to Generation 2 children in 1973 and Generation 2 parents to Generation 3 youth in 1997, I test whether parental warmth or hostility toward the political out-party predicts similar affect in their children, whether that affect extends into the partisan composition of children's peer networks, and whether parental political activity amplifies transmission. The results support the first two hypotheses. Out-party affective transmission is detectable across both generations. Parental out-party warmth during the elementary-school socialization window predicts both child thermometers and the partisan composition of child peer networks roughly fifteen years later. The third hypothesis receives little support but has some qualified support that recommend replication. These findings suggest that the affective foundations of political polarization are transmitted across generations through household socialization processes that were already operating during a period of relatively low political polarization, well before the acceleration of affective polarization that defines the contemporary political landscape. The absence of a new representative Youth-Parent Socialization Survey during the current period of high polarization represents a significant limitation on extending these findings to the present day.

Introduction

Concerns about the effects of political polarization are nothing new. Anthony Downs (1950) warned of the potential chaos that could result from high levels of polarization and the Columbia School (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee 1954; Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet 1944) argued for the importance of a pluralist society where political issues cut across political lines for stability. Political polarization increased slowly for most of the second half of the 20th Century, but the ideological division between Republicans and Democrats accelerated in the early 21st Century as out-party animosity increased and has more than doubled in these first two decades (Iyengar et al. 2019). Recent scholarship has highlighted how the American political system is currently experiencing very high levels of political polarization (McCarty, Poole, & Rosenthal, 2006; Iyengar & Westwood, 2015; Mason, 2014; Hetherington, 2001; Goodwin, 2019; Iyengar S., et al., 2019). Polarization levels continue to increase and have expanded beyond the political arena and into the social lives of voters and elites (Hetherington & Weiler, 2018; Mason, 2018).

Polarization can have negative consequences if it leads to animosity towards political outgroups (Iyengar & Westwood, 2015), political instability as more and more extreme parties punish out-parties by enacting retaliatory policies when in power (Downs, 1957), or reach beyond the political and into non-political segments of society (Hetherington & Weiler, 2018). We are in an era of increasing negative partisanship. This form of partisanship amplifies the dangers of polarization even as it conveys some of the

benefits because it's about hating people in your out-party more than it is about loving your own political party.

A quick look at ANES data from 1964 to 2024 (Figure 1. 1 below), reveals a change in how voters feel about political parties as well as a polarization gap between generations. From 1964 to 1980, the data reveals a voter base that feels warmly towards their own party without feeling animosity towards political opponents, with younger voters being consistently less polarized than older voters¹. This interpretation of the data fits with the early socialization studies (Hess & Torney, 1967) which found that children across the political spectrum respected the President as an individual as well as respecting the institution of the Presidency. By 2024 the data looks more like what you would expect in Downs' scenario.

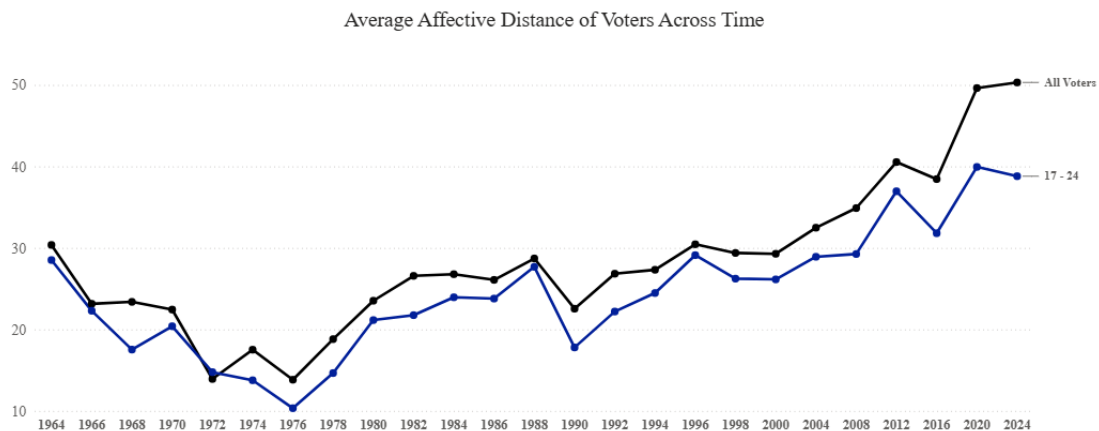


Figure 1.1-- Average Affective Distance of Voters Across Time for Voters 17 to 24 and All Voters (ANES 2024 Time Series Data)

¹ For a look at younger voters by party across time look at Figure 1.s 2 and 3 in Appendix A.

After the election of Donald Trump in 2016, replications of the Hess & Torney study found that children retained respect for the institution of the presidency but were polarized against the individual Presidential candidates (Oxley, Holman, Greenlee, Bos, & Lay, 2020). This suggests that the best interpretation of prior eras is one of warmth towards one's own party and indifference towards the out-party while the current environment is one of negative affect. If one looks at the average affective distance between partisans over time (measured as warmth towards Republicans minus warmth towards Democrats), the period from 1964 to 1976 looks like a period of decreasing polarization. This is the era that Hess & Torney did their research, and it is a much different environment from the modern era where affective distance is increasing.

While the social and political consequences of increasing polarization have been examined in some detail (McCarty, Poole, & Rosenthal, 2006; Mason, 2014; Iyengar & Westwood, 2015), these studies tend to examine partisanship of elites and adult voters. It has long been known that the strongest source of partisan identity is parents (Campbell, Converse, Miller, & Stokes, 1960; Jennings & Niemi, 1968; Achen, 2002), so it is important to examine the connection between parental transmissions of affective partisanship and increasing polarization among younger voters.

I use the Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel Studies data from 1965 to 1997 to demonstrate that children are socialized to become polarized political actors. These surveys provide an interesting lens through which to examine the growth in political polarization via generational transmission because they cover a period of relatively low but increasing political polarization. The data is unique because it provides

panel data across three generations and these surveys were taken during a period before the rapid acceleration of political polarization which lets us test affective transmission in periods of low polarization.

Because of the apparent growth in negative affect among children demonstrated by the Oxley et al (2020) research, I was inspired to address two key research questions. First, do parents transmit negative affective political beliefs to their children? Second, has negative affect towards political outgroups among high school students already expanded into traditionally nonpolitical domains such as friendships? For the first question, I draw upon work in child development and political psychology to argue that parents transmit negative affective political beliefs as well as simple party identification. For the second, I draw on modern political fortress polarization research (Iyengar, Konitzer, & Tedin, 2018). Early research (Hess & Torney, 1967) found that elementary students had acquired partisan identity without negative out-party sentiments, modern replications (Oxley et al., 2020) demonstrate that this is no longer true. Models of socialization have shown that partisan identity is acquired early in life and gets stronger over time (Newcomb, Turner, & Converse, 1965; Converse, *Of Time and Partisan Stability*, 1969; Gentry, 2013; DeSante & Perry, 2016; DeSante C. D., 2012; Achen, 2002; Conley & Rauscher, 2013; Ojeda & Hatemi, 2015)², but these studies were primarily concerned with partisan identity and not when and how negative polarization is acquired in the

² See the flowchart on the development of political identity in Appendix A. The flowchart shows political socialization as the first step in the process of the acquisition of partisan identity, a step that happens before one begins evaluating others' politics, but what if negative polarization is acquired during that process and not later?

socialization process. I contend that if affective polarization is at least partially socialized, it has roots that precede adult partisan engagement, and any effort to understand or moderate the current polarized environment must account for these developmental processes.

Using data from the 1973 and 1997 waves of the Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, I demonstrate that how warmly parents feel about political parties influences how warmly their children feel about them. Looking solely at the 1997 data and looking at the partisan make up friends in Generation 3, I demonstrate that Generation 2 out-party sentiment in 1982 has the strongest influence on the partisan make up of Generation 3 friend circles in 1997. Generation 3 was aged 15 and older (Jennings, Marcus, & Stoker, 1997), so this suggests that some amount of emotional socialization towards parties occurred prior to youth entering high school and extend their partisan affect into nonpolitical domains.

This paper contributes to both political socialization and political polarization literatures by demonstrating that the intergenerational transmission of partisan affect, both positive and negative, was already operating during a period of relatively low political polarization. This suggests that the behavioral foundations of affective polarization precede and help sustain the polarization acceleration documented in subsequent decades.

Literature Review and Theory

Political Polarization, Affective Polarization, and Negative Polarization

Political polarization is a process by which political parties, elites, or members of the public become increasingly and consistently ideologically (Poole & Rosenthal, 1997) or affectively distant (Huddy, Mason, & Aarøe, 2015; Iyengar, Sood, & Lelkes, 2012; Greene, 2002) from one another when interacting in the political environment. Early research of political polarization of elites and of the mass public focused on the ideological or policy aspects of political polarization (Poole & Rosenthal, 1997; McCarty, Poole, & Rosenthal, 2006; Bartels, 2000; Fiorina, Abrams, & Pope, 2011), but more recent research examines the emotional attachments involved and how partisan identity is a form of social identity (Huddy, 2001; Huddy, 2003; Greene, 2002; Abramowitz & Saunders, 2006) that includes negative affect toward out-party members (Hetherington & Weiler, 2018; Mason, 2018; Iyengar & Westwood, 2015). While political polarization can provide a useful voting heuristic (APSA, 1950), affective political polarization can lead to social division (Downs, 1957) and conflict in nonpolitical social domains (Iyengar & Westwood, 2015; Hetherington & Weiler, 2018; Ladd, 2017).

The term *affective polarization* is distinct from ideological polarization and is used to highlight how party identification has become a significant social cleavage due to the convergence of affective attachments and social identity. This convergence inspires positive evaluations of in-group members. However, it also creates hostile evaluations of out-group members (Iyengar & Westwood, 2015; Green, Palmquist, & Schickler, 2002;

Huddy, Mason, & Aarøe, 2015; Iyengar, Sood, & Lelkes, 2012). When voters focus more on the negative evaluations of out-group partisans, rather than positive evaluations of their own party, this is best described as negative polarization (Roush, 2016). This is to say that negative polarization is when you disagree with members of the political out-party, and affective polarization is when you “hate” them.

Research based on policy positions has demonstrated a rise in political polarization from the late 1960s to the present day among political elites (McCarty, Poole, & Rosenthal, 2006). Since this research focused on policy positions as a measure of polarization, it was hard to measure whether the mass public was polarizing. Political scientists have known since the early Columbia School research (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1954; Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1944) that the public tends to lack sophisticated political knowledge. Lack of political knowledge would make polarization on policy grounds unlikely for the average citizen. Voters primarily rely on their affective attachment to party (Green, Palmquist, & Schickler, 2002; Marcus, Neuman, & MacKuen, 2000) to provide them with policy cues and this has been shown to cause voters to sort so that their policy positions and those of partisan elites align (Levendusky, 2009).

Since voter’s attachment to party is affective (Campbell, Converse, Miller, & Stokes, 1960), in addition to being about policy choices, scholars have expanded the study of polarization to include expressive and social identity aspects as well (Burden & Klofstad, 2005; Green, Palmquist, & Schickler, 2002; Huddy, 2001; Goodwin, 2019). These studies go beyond asking questions about mere partisan identity and look at how

people feel about their party and respond to outgroup members. Researchers have found that partisans with a strong sense of party as a social identity can engage in behavior that discriminates against those they perceive as part of an out-group (Huddy, 2003; Iyengar, Sood, & Lelkes, 2012) in ways that mirror other identity based discrimination (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Tajfel, 1982).

This process of focusing more on the negative evaluations of outgroup partisans, rather than positive evaluations of in-group partisans, has been well documented among the adult population (Hetherington & Weiler, 2018; Mason, 2018). What has not been studied is how much negative polarization is impacting youth, who are still in the process of being socialized into the political system. Many scholars of political polarization, like McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal (2006) seem to ignore political socialization as a part of the process of polarization and look at polarization as a part of the development of partisan identity following Converse's model on time and partisan identity (1969). What if the acquisition of negative partisanship is part of the socialization process?

As was illustrated earlier in Figure 1.1 (above) as well as in Figures 1.3 and 1.4 in Appendix A, younger voters were less polarized in the past than they are now. They were also politically and emotionally socialized during times of lower levels of political and affective polarization. The trends in the feeling thermometers also suggest that young people are being socialized by populations that are themselves increasingly polarized. If parents are transmitting negative affect via the socialization process, we should expect to see polarization to get worse, and this is reflected in the ANES data. While thermometers are only one measure, they are highly suggestive and widely used in the polarization

literature as a proxy for polarization (Druckman & Levendusky, 2019). Polarization literature has largely overlooked socialization processes in their examinations, and the socialization literature is more concerned with ensuring that young people participate in politics and have higher levels of political knowledge and has not looked at how these are linked with polarization. This paper argues that socialization processes can partially explain negative polarization and that the polarization literature needs to incorporate and expand on the socialization literature.

Political Socialization: Family Matters

The initial means by which someone comes to identify with a political party is the process of *political socialization*. More than just party identification, political socialization consists of the “learning of social patterns corresponding to [one’s] societal positions as mediated through various agencies of society” (Hyman, 1959, p. 18). As Diana Owen (2008) described it, “political socialization is the transmission of political culture to new generations of citizens in a given society” (p. 1). It is how we acquire our initial attachment to political parties. The transmission of political culture happens through several *socialization agents*, which include one’s family, peer groups, education environment, and generational and period effects (Niemi & Sobieszek, 1977; Clawson & Oxley, 2013). This paper focuses on the influence of family on affective political polarization. Other socialization agents like the education environment and peer groups have been shown to have smaller effects on partisan identity than family transmission (Stoker & Jennings, 2008; Valentino & Sears, 1998; Tedin, 1974; Dawson & Prewitt, 1969; Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1944; Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1954).

This is in part because the family has significant influence on where and how a young person is educated, which in turn influences peer groups. Although it has been demonstrated that children are not passive recipients of parental partisan identities (Ojeda & Hatemi, 2015), and can change their parent's political positions on key issues (Conley & Rauscher, 2013), it still remains true that parents tend to be the primary drivers of the process (Jennings, Stoker, & Bowers, 2009). What has received less attention is whether parents transmit the emotional coloring of their partisanship, specifically the sharing of negative affect towards out-party, and whether that transmission is distinct from, and potentially more consequential than, the transmission of party identification alone.

Parental Transmission

There has been a great deal of research into political socialization, but there is room for additional examination of the link between political socialization and negative political polarization. Some research in Comparative Politics has looked at the connection between socialization and ideology/party, especially with regard to the creation of political identity (Sapiro, 2004), but there has been no real robust examination of whether people raised in more polarized homes, or more polarized environments, start their political engagement with higher levels of affective/sorting polarization than other generations. Iyengar, Konitzer, and Tedin (2016) find that familial agreement in partisan politics has increased with regards to partisan identity and argue that due to selective partnering choices (choosing whom to marry based on partisanship) family structure augments the current polarization. They do not examine intensity, measured as social distance or thermometers, of baseline levels of partisan politics between generations, nor

examine how family interactions influence emerging partisans. This leaves several gaps ripe for examination and further development of theory. There is a lot we don't understand about the mechanisms by which socialization transfers affective polarization. We understand that children tend to adopt the political party of their parents (Jennings M. K., 2009), even as they may differ on specific policies (Carmines & Stimpson, 1989), but haven't taken a good look into the activities parents engage in that might contribute to affective polarization. My study seeks to open the black box of socialization and test to see if certain mechanisms are in play in the transmission of affective polarization. By asking if young people notice how their parents talk about the political out-party, we can go beyond intuition regarding the home environment and examine actual mechanisms.

The first place to begin any analysis of how people acquire political beliefs is in examining the vital role parents (Converse, 1969; Campbell, Converse, Miller, & Stokes, 1960; Hyman, 1959) and group membership (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1954) play in the socialization process. While initial study of the influence of parents on children by Jennings and Niemi (1968) showed weak effects, refinements to the model found that different behaviors increased the likelihood of children adopting their parent's political beliefs, in particular party attachment when elements like political involvement were taken into account. Key factors in generational transmission included the intensity of partisan attachment of parents (Jennings & Markus, 1984), the salience of a given issue for parents, how accurately a child perceived his or her parents' political beliefs, and political homogeneity of a child's parents (Tedin, 1974; Tedin, 1980). When these conditions were included in the analysis, there was strong evidence for parental

transmission across a range of issues, though not a perfect one (Jennings, Stoker, & Bowers, 2009).

The socialization process seems stable even as family structures have changed with fathers most significantly influencing efficacy and trust in the political process (Dolan, 1995) and mothers playing the largest role in partisan attachments (Shulman & DeAndrea, 2014). Additionally, there appears to be some very strong evidence that individuals are seeking political homophily in social relationships, and that they want to date and marry those who are similar to them (Iyengar & Westwood, 2015; Huber & Malhotra, 2016). Given that parents who share political beliefs are more likely to effectively transmit that attachment to subsequent generations, this could be a key contributor to accelerating affective polarization. When parents seek political homophily in their relationships, they socialize their children to the same behavior, and this should translate into youth having fewer friends with members of their political out-party.

Historic research on familial transmission was unidirectional from parent to child (Jennings, Stoker, & Bowers, 2009) with the transmission looking like a line from one generation to the next. More recent research has students as active agents in the process (Ojeda & Hatemi, 2015) because children actively engage with their parents in conversation and interact with the environment when their parents aren't around. Based on the interactive conceptualization of partisan transmission and following the assumptions of social learning theory (Bandura, 1971) used in political socialization research I argue that parental affect helps to shape the affective orientations of children. The literature shows a strong relationship between how politically active and politically

knowledgeable the parents are and the effective transmission of partisanship between generations (Jennings, Stoker, & Bowers, 2009).

Political socialization is typically viewed as the first step in the full development of political identity (Gentry, 2013). Political socialization models rooted in social learning theory (Bandura, 1971) argue that cues are an important part of the learning process and that the strength of the cue and reinforcement of the cue are key to the learning process. Political attitudes are thought to emerge through experience, differentiation of earlier attitudes in light of new experience, trauma/shocks, directly from parents, peers, and other individuals (Hyman, 1959) with parents being seen as the strongest contributor when factors like the political activity of parents are taken into account (Jennings & Niemi, 1981). The classic studies of socialization have used level of political involvement as a proxy for the strength of the partisan cue (Jennings & Niemi, 1968). This makes sense as more politically active families are more likely to convey cues on a frequent basis.

Taken together the theoretical frameworks above generate three testable hypotheses about the role of parental affect in the early formation of partisan orientations. H1: Parents transmit negative political affect to their children through the process of political socialization. Beyond transmitting party identification, parents who express hostility toward the political out-party will produce children who share that hostility, even in an era of lower overall polarization. H2: Youth from households with higher positive parental out-party affect will be more likely to have friends who are members of the out-party. If parental affect shapes children's affective orientations, those orientations

should extend into non-political domains. H3: Having political active parents amplifies the transmission of negative political affect. Political activity signals the salience of partisan cues within the household, increasing the frequency and intensity of affective socialization and thereby strengthening the effect of parent to child transmission.

Design

To test the transmission of affective political sentiments from parent to child, I use the longitudinal data from the Youth-Parent Socialization Panel Study 1965 to 1997 collected by the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center and Center for Political Studies. The 1965 and 1972 waves include questions from people who attended high school as students in 1965 (Generation 2) as well as responses from one of their parents (Generation 1). Starting with the 1972 survey and continuing through the 1982 and 1997 waves the panel contain questions asking respondents to rate political parties (Republicans and Democrats) on a feeling thermometer. The 1997 survey panel includes responses from the children of the initial participants (Generation 3). This provides three generations of respondents to examine and two points in time. In the 1973 data, I examined connections in thermometer ratings between Generation 1 and Generation 2. Using the 1997 data I examined the connection between Generations 2 and 3. Because Generation 2 responded to thermometer questions in 1973, 1982, and 1997, I incorporated Generation 2 thermometer ratings as time series data to measure the effects on Generation 3 to see which period of affect was most influential to socialization.

Given that all the Generation 3 respondents are 15 and older in the 1997 data, they would have been influenced by the parents throughout both of those periods. The initial

sample numbered 1,669, but as subsequent waves were completed the final panel included 935 individuals though not all of those had children and while I look at all Generation 2 respondents in the 1973 analysis, I only look at Generation 2 respondents with children when examining the 1997 data. The 1965 and 1973 data included one parent respondent for each member of Generation 2 forming true parent-child dyads while the 1997 wave includes data from one parent and potentially multiple children (15 or older) of those who were high school students in the first wave. In cases where there is a member of Generation 2 with more than one child, weights have been provided in the data set for use in linear regression.

I combined data from the 1965, 1972, 1982, and 1997 waves of the study (Jennings M. K., Markus, Niemi, & Stoker, 2005) in order to perform OLS regression analysis that demonstrates the influence parental feeling thermometers had on those of their children. I examined direct transmission of generalized out-party affect. This examines negative affect on two levels; how the youth was socialized by parents to feel about parents' preferred parties and how the youth was socialized to think about out-parties in general. This illustrates how parental sentiment towards out-parties might still influence the child's behavior, even as the partisan preferences are different across generations. Because the Generation 1 data only included a single parent's responses, and that parent's reporting of spousal party identity, I used that reported partisan identity as a control variable to best reflect the influence of that particular parent. Because thermometers and partisan identity are on different scales, I normalized the data following the design of Jennings, Stoker, and Bowers (2009).

In addition to examining thermometers, I examined the effect of parental affect on whether youth would be friends with members of their own out-party. To test this, I ran both OLS and logistic regression to best represent what the data captured. The Socialization Panel included questions regarding whether a youth's friends were mostly of one party, a mix, or mostly independent

The main dependent variables for all affective analysis are feeling thermometers of the younger cohort. In addition to the partisan thermometers, I created an out-party thermometer for all respondents. Independent "leaners" were counted as partisans, but true independents were excluded from the analysis in order to test the influence of partisanship on affect in as clean a fashion as possible that was consistent with research arguing that leaners are similar to strong partisans (Petrocik, 2009). This variable is merely the feeling thermometer for the out-party of each participant. The analysis variables were the feeling thermometers of the parents of each generation towards the Republican and Democratic parties which were used to generate the out-party measure, a variable representing parental agreement on public policy issues, and a measure of parental political activity.

Because I was looking for the effect of parental transmission, the model was tested two different ways. First, I examined the effect of each individual parent's thermometer ratings on the child's individual thermometer ratings for each political party. This allowed me to look at the specific effect parental partisan sentiment has on child affect. I expected parental thermometer ratings would have a significant and positive effect on children's thermometer ratings. Because the parent-child dyads only included

one parent, I ran separate models for the effect that fathers and mothers had on their children, as well as a generic parental model. The two parent specific models include the proxy variable for spousal estimated thermometer rating.

Findings

H1: Out-party Affect Transmission Across Generations

The central question for H1 is whether parents transmit affective orientations towards the political out-party of their children. This is more than just partisan identity and includes the emotional disposition that underlies partisan hostility. The data in the Youth-Parent Socialization Study provides consistent support for this hypothesis across both sets of generational dyads (Generation 1 to Generation 2 as well as Generation 2 to Generation 3), but due to the nature of the data I was able to see a more complex pattern of transmission between Generation 2 and Generation 3. This complexity illuminates both the socialization process as well as the political context in which the cohort lived.

Since the initial panel paired a single youth with a single parent, either a mother or a father, I estimated separate pair models for the influence of mothers and fathers separately, as well as a generic combined parental model that included both fathers and mothers. Each of these specifications was tested using three models. The first model looked solely at the influence of the parental feeling thermometer of the parent who took the survey towards out-party in the year of interest. The second model added a control variable based on the reported strength of partisan identity of the spouse. The third model added an additional control variable for reported parental agreement. The variables for

strength of partisan identity and level of parental agreement were not given by that individual but were the reported perceptions of the parental respondent in the survey.

Generation 1 to Generation 2 (1973)

Out-party affect transmission in the 1973 wave is robust and the mother emerges as the primary agent of socialization. The mother's out-party sentiment (Table 1.1) predicted the child's out-party sentiment significantly across all three model specifications ($b = 0.151, p < 0.01$; $b = 0.132, p < 0.01$, $b = 0.128, p < 0.05$), maintaining its influence after the addition of the father's partisan strength as well as parental agreement without any strong attenuation. The father's influence (Table 1.2) ran in the same direction and reached significance in the baseline model ($b = 0.089, p < 0.05$) but lost statistical significance once the mother's partisan strength entered as a control and when other control covariates for education, income, and age were added. This could be due to a power issue as the addition of the control for mother's partisan strength reduces the sample size and the effect approaches significance. This pattern is consistent across the combined parental model (Table 1.3) as well, where transmission is strong and significant in all three specifications. ($b = 0.120, p = 0.0001$; $b = 0.109, p = 0.001$; $b = 0.116, p = 0.002$, $b = 0.126, p = 0.001$). The fact that the contribution of the parental agreement variable only approaches significance in the mother-specific models (column 3), and not in the father or combined models, provides some small evidence that the mother was the dominant affective socializer for this earlier generational cohort. Hypothesis 1 is supported for the 1973 Generation 1 to Generation 2 cohort.

Table 1.1-- Mother's Out Party Influence in 1973

H1-4: Mother's Outparty Affect and Youth's Outparty Affect (1973)				
	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Youth Outparty Affect		Youth Outparty w/Controls	
	Mother Only	+ Father Est.	+ Agreement	+ Covariates
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Mother's Outparty Sentiment	0.151*** (0.044) p = 0.001	0.132** (0.048) p = 0.006	0.128* (0.053) p = 0.018	0.155** (0.056) p = 0.006
Father's Est. Outparty Sentiment		-0.016 (0.031) p = 0.617	-0.023 (0.035) p = 0.516	-0.010 (0.036) p = 0.781
Parental Agreement on Politics			0.049 (0.027) p = 0.069	0.043 (0.028) p = 0.123
Education (norm.)				-0.016 (0.029) p = 0.591
Income (norm.)				0.076 (0.053) p = 0.155
Age (norm.)				0.131 (0.088) p = 0.139
Mother (vs. Father)				
Constant	0.469*** (0.029) p = 0.000	0.496*** (0.040) p = 0.000	0.472*** (0.048) p = 0.000	0.351*** (0.076) p = 0.00001
Observations	433	361	297	278
R ²	0.027	0.022	0.033	0.051
Adjusted R ²	0.025	0.017	0.023	0.030
Residual Std. Error	0.167 (df = 431)	0.165 (df = 358)	0.168 (df = 293)	0.165 (df = 271)
F Statistic	12.007*** (df = 1; 431)	4.078* (df = 2; 358)	3.304* (df = 3; 293)	2.424* (df = 6; 271)

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

All affect variables normalized 0-1 per Jennings, Stoker and Bowers (2009).

Covariates: parental education, family income, age, and parent sex.

Table 1.2-- Father Out Party Influence in 1973

H1-5: Father's Outparty Affect and Youth's Outparty Affect (1973)

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Youth Outparty Affect			Youth Outparty w/Controls
	Father Only (1)	+ Mother Est. (2)	+ Agreement (3)	+ Covariates (4)
Father's Outparty Sentiment	0.089* (0.043) p = 0.041	0.086 (0.045) p = 0.060	0.093 (0.052) p = 0.072	0.088 (0.053) p = 0.098
Mother's Est. Outparty Sentiment		-0.049 (0.030) p = 0.101	-0.042 (0.034) p = 0.216	-0.037 (0.034) p = 0.275
Parental Agreement on Politics			-0.026 (0.028) p = 0.358	-0.028 (0.029) p = 0.327
Education (norm.)				0.019 (0.028) p = 0.504
Income (norm.)				-0.066 (0.062) p = 0.293
Age (norm.)				0.052 (0.085) p = 0.540
Mother (vs. Father)				
Constant	0.496*** (0.028) p = 0.000	0.533*** (0.038) p = 0.000	0.533*** (0.047) p = 0.000	0.553*** (0.085) p = 0.000
Observations	350	330	274	269
R ²	0.012	0.021	0.023	0.028
Adjusted R ²	0.009	0.015	0.012	0.006
Residual Std. Error	0.165 (df = 348)	0.166 (df = 327)	0.168 (df = 270)	0.168 (df = 262)
F Statistic	4.241* (df = 1; 348)	3.449* (df = 2; 327)	2.124 (df = 3; 270)	1.254 (df = 6; 262)

Note:

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

All affect variables normalized 0-1 per Jennings, Stoker and Bowers (2009).

Covariates: parental education, family income, age, and parent sex.

Table 1.3-- Combined Parental Out Party Influence in 1973

H1-3c: Combined Parent Outparty Affect and Youth's Outparty Affect (1973)				
	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Parent Only	Youth Outparty Affect		Youth Outparty w/Controls
	(1)	+ Spousal Control	+ Agreement	+ Covariates
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Parent's Outparty Sentiment	0.120*** (0.031) p = 0.0001	0.109*** (0.033) p = 0.001	0.116** (0.037) p = 0.002	0.126*** (0.038) p = 0.001
Spouse Partisan Strength (Est.)		-0.030 (0.021) p = 0.167	-0.026 (0.024) p = 0.290	-0.024 (0.025) p = 0.327
Parental Agreement on Politics			0.015 (0.019) p = 0.447	0.010 (0.020) p = 0.614
Education (norm.)				0.004 (0.020) p = 0.846
Income (norm.)				0.014 (0.040) p = 0.735
Age (norm.)				0.101 (0.061) p = 0.098
Mother (vs. Father)				0.027 (0.015) p = 0.068
Constant	0.483*** (0.020) p = 0.000	0.513*** (0.027) p = 0.000	0.494*** (0.033) p = 0.000	0.421*** (0.058) p = 0.000
Observations	783	691	571	547
R ²	0.019	0.020	0.021	0.030
Adjusted R ²	0.018	0.017	0.016	0.018
Residual Std. Error	0.166 (df = 781)	0.166 (df = 688)	0.168 (df = 567)	0.167 (df = 539)
F Statistic	15.351*** (df = 1; 781)	6.906** (df = 2; 688)	4.011** (df = 3; 567)	2.422* (df = 7; 539)
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 All affect variables normalized 0-1 per Jennings, Stoker and Bowers (2009). Each row is a unique youth-parent dyad; parent is whichever parent responded. Covariates: parental education, family income, age, and parent sex.			

Generation 2 to Generation 3: Transmission During Political Realignment

The 1982 wave did not ask questions of Generation 3 and so responses from Generation 3 in 1997 are compared to Generation 2 parental responses in 1982 and 1997 to test for the Oxley et al. socialization window hypothesis. The results of the

transmission between Generation 2 and Generation 3 are much more nuanced than the 1973 wave demonstrating the transmission from Generation 1 to Generation 2. The robustness of the data, as well as changing conditions in American politics, provide a complicated and informative picture of how the socialization process works in times of political realignment.

Parental Influence During Emerging Adulthood

Matching the 1997 parental thermometers to 1997 youth out-party affect, the father's out-party sentiment (Table 1.4) shows no significant relationship with the child's affect ($b = 0.050$, $p > 0.186$, $p < 0.05$), loses that significance when spousal partisan strength and parental agreement are added as controls. The combined parental model (Table 1.6) produces a coefficient of $b = 0.114$ that approaches but does not reach conventional significance thresholds. On its face, this looks like a substantial weakening of transmission between generations, and this was the position argued by some scholars at the time (Abramowitz & Saunders, 1998). However, the effect sizes for a mother's contribution are of similar magnitude to those in 1973 with a smaller sample size so the effect could be due to power. This suggests that there might be transmission occurring at this later stage, though something consequential happened to the Generation 2 cohort between 1973 and 1997 that adds additional context to the 1997 models.

Table 1.4-- Influence of Gen 2 Father's 1997 Out Party Affect on Gen 3

H1: Father's 1997 Outparty Affect and Gen 3 Outparty Affect (Gen 2 → Gen 3)				
	Outcome:			
	Gen 3 Outparty Affect			+ Covariates (4)
	Parent Only (1)	+ Spouse Partisan Strength (2)	+ Parental Agreement (3)	
Father's Outparty Sentiment	0.050 (0.092) p = 0.590	0.032 (0.095) p = 0.732	0.020 (0.100) p = 0.840	-0.015 (0.103) p = 0.888
Mother's Est. Outparty Sentiment		-0.070 (0.050) p = 0.161	-0.045 (0.056) p = 0.427	-0.042 (0.056) p = 0.455
Parental Agreement on Politics			0.052 (0.044) p = 0.242	0.039 (0.047) p = 0.408
Income (norm.)				0.235* (0.097) p = 0.017
Education (norm.)				-0.039 (0.047) p = 0.408
Age (norm.)				-0.068 (0.126) p = 0.589
Father (vs. Mother)				
Constant	0.398*** (0.043) p = 0.000	0.448*** (0.056) p = 0.000	0.430*** (0.062) p = 0.000	0.327*** (0.089) p = 0.0004
Observations	218	207	155	151
R ²	0.001	0.011	0.014	0.054
Adjusted R ²	-0.003	0.001	-0.005	0.015
Residual Std. Error	0.167 (df = 216)	0.168 (df = 204)	0.163 (df = 151)	0.162 (df = 144)
F Statistic	0.292 (df = 1; 216)	1.084 (df = 2; 204)	0.736 (df = 3; 151)	1.382 (df = 6; 144)

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

All variables normalized 0-1. Survey weights applied.

Replication of 1973 ICPSR hypothesis framework using Gen 2 → Gen 3 panel data.

Spouse estimated sentiment derived from Gen 2 spouse party ID (1997).

Data: Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1997.

1997 wave: Gen 3 respondents were age 15+ (proximate measurement, post-adolescent).

Table 1.5-- Influence of Gen 2 Mother's 1997 Out Party Affect on Gen 3

H1: Mother's 1997 Outparty Affect and Gen 3 Outparty Affect (Gen 2 → Gen 3)				
	Outcome:			
	Gen 3 Outparty Affect			
	Parent Only	+ Spouse Partisan Strength	+ Parental Agreement	+ Covariates
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Mother's Outparty Sentiment	0.186* (0.077) p = 0.017	0.134 (0.084) p = 0.114	0.126 (0.093) p = 0.179	0.156 (0.103) p = 0.133
Father's Est. Outparty Sentiment		0.030 (0.044) p = 0.496	-0.001 (0.053) p = 0.989	0.001 (0.055) p = 0.990
Parental Agreement on Politics			-0.073* (0.033) p = 0.030	-0.081* (0.037) p = 0.029
Income (norm.)				0.026 (0.077) p = 0.735
Education (norm.)				0.052 (0.040) p = 0.201
Age (norm.)				-0.059 (0.128) p = 0.647
Father (vs. Mother)				
Constant	0.308*** (0.040) p = 0.000	0.296*** (0.059) p = 0.00000	0.338*** (0.069) p = 0.00001	0.300*** (0.088) p = 0.001
Observations	300	242	189	178
R ²	0.019	0.011	0.036	0.057
Adjusted R ²	0.016	0.003	0.021	0.024
Residual Std. Error	0.161 (df = 298)	0.151 (df = 239)	0.150 (df = 185)	0.149 (df = 171)
F Statistic	5.823* (df = 1; 298)	1.323 (df = 2; 239)	2.327 (df = 3; 185)	1.717 (df = 6; 171)
<i>Note:</i> *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 All variables normalized 0-1. Survey weights applied. Replication of 1973 ICPSR hypothesis framework using Gen 2 → Gen 3 panel data. Spouse estimated sentiment derived from Gen 2 spouse party ID (1997). Data: Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1997. 1997 wave: Gen 3 respondents were age 15+ (proximate measurement, post-adolescent).				

Table 1.6-- Influence of Gen 2 Combined Parent's 1997 Out Party Affect on Gen 3

H1: Combined Parent 1997 Outparty Affect and Gen 3 Outparty Affect (Gen 2 → Gen 3)				
	Outcome:			
	Parent Only	Gen 3 Outparty Affect		+ Covariates
	(1)	+ Spouse Partisan Strength	+ Parental Agreement	(4)
Parent's Outparty Sentiment	0.114 (0.058) p = 0.053	0.061 (0.062) p = 0.326	0.049 (0.068) p = 0.471	0.050 (0.072) p = 0.487
Spouse's Est. Outparty Sentiment		-0.030 (0.033) p = 0.358	-0.040 (0.038) p = 0.287	-0.026 (0.039) p = 0.507
Parental Agreement on Politics			-0.027 (0.027) p = 0.314	-0.024 (0.029) p = 0.400
Income (norm.)				0.122* (0.061) p = 0.046
Education (norm.)				0.013 (0.031) p = 0.674
Age (norm.)				-0.005 (0.088) p = 0.952
Father (vs. Mother)				0.020 (0.023) p = 0.387
Constant	0.355*** (0.029) p = 0.000	0.391*** (0.040) p = 0.000	0.409*** (0.045) p = 0.000	0.306*** (0.064) p = 0.00001
Observations	518	449	344	329
R ²	0.007	0.005	0.008	0.028
Adjusted R ²	0.005	0.0002	-0.0004	0.007
Residual Std. Error	0.164 (df = 516)	0.160 (df = 446)	0.157 (df = 340)	0.156 (df = 321)
F Statistic	3.782 (df = 1; 516)	1.036 (df = 2; 446)	0.957 (df = 3; 340)	1.330 (df = 7; 321)
Note:	<p>* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001</p> <p>All variables normalized 0-1. Survey weights applied.</p> <p>Replication of 1973 ICPSR hypothesis framework using Gen 2 → Gen 3 panel data.</p> <p>Spouse estimated sentiment derived from Gen 2 spouse party ID (1997).</p> <p>Data: Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1997.</p> <p>1997 wave: Gen 3 respondents were age 15+ (proximate measurement, post-adolescent).</p>			

America was going through a period of partisan realignment during that period (Abramowitz & Saunders, 1998; Jennings, Stoker, & Bowers, 2009) and Generation 2 respondents were among those who realigned politically. Of the 232 who identified as

Democrats in 1973, 73 (31.5%) had moved to the Republican Party by 1997. Of the 154 Republicans, 29 (18.8%) had moved to the Democratic Party. Among independents, majorities moved towards both major parties. What had been a majority-Democratic cohort in 1973 was effectively split by 1997. This matters for analysis because when a parent switches parties between 1973 and 1997, their 1997 out-party thermometer measures hostility towards a different party than the one against which their child was socialized during adolescence. The child absorbed affective cues about the original out-party, which is an entirely different political object. The coefficient attenuates not because transmission failed, but because the out-party labels crossed. Given that Oxley, Holman, Greenlee, Bos, & Lay (2020) demonstrated that emotional socialization occurred as early as 10, it is important to examine how the parental thermometers at that time of life contribute to adult out-party affect.

To test this directly, I divided Generation 2 parents into party stayers and switchers based on whether they maintained the same three-category party identification from 1973 to 1997 (Table 1.7). Among stayers, the out-party transmission coefficient remained significant ($b = 0.151$, $p < 0.05$). Among switchers, transmission was small and nonsignificant. Transmission did not disappear in the 1997 wave, rather it was obscured for a substantial portion of the sample by realignment itself.

Table 1.7-- Influence of Party Switching on Out Party Affect Transmission

Party Switching and Outparty Affect Transmission (Gen 2 → Gen 3, 1997)			
	Outcome:		
	Full Sample (1)	Gen 3 Outparty Affect Party Stayers (2)	Party Switchers (3)
Parent Outparty Sentiment (1997)	0.114 (0.058)	0.151* (0.069)	0.047 (0.104)
Constant	0.355*** (0.029)	0.317*** (0.035)	0.418*** (0.051)
Observations	518	317	201
R ²	0.007	0.015	0.001
Adjusted R ²	0.005	0.012	-0.004
Residual Std. Error	0.164 (df = 516)	0.159 (df = 315)	0.168 (df = 199)
F Statistic	3.782 (df = 1; 516)	4.742* (df = 1; 315)	0.207 (df = 1; 199)
<i>Note:</i> *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 All variables normalized 0-1. Survey weights applied. Data: Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1997. Party stayers = same 3-category party (Dem/Ind/Rep) in both 1973 and 1997. Switchers = any change in 3-category party identification 1973–1997. Outparty thermometer anchored on Gen 2's 1997 party identification.			

The Socialization Window

If the reduced influence in the 1997 wave is an artifact of realignment, then using parental thermometers for earlier in the socialization window should recover the transmission signal. This is because these earlier thermometers were measured before much of the switching occurred among the parental population. This logic connects with the Oxley et al. (2020) inspired developmental argument underlying this paper. If affective socialization operates on children and younger adolescents, rather than occurring in the mid-to-late teens, then the parental affect that matters most should be that captured in the 1973 and 1982 waves and not in 1997 when Generation 3 respondents were already between 15 and 28 years old.

The wave-specific analysis confirms this logic. For the 1973 wave as a predictor of 1997 youth affect, the father's thermometer (Table 1.8) shows no significant relationship ($b = 0.090$, $p > 0.10$), consistent with the fact that for most of Generation 2 children in the 1973 wave were very young and were either not yet born or only as old as early elementary school. The mother's thermometer in 1973 (Table 1.9) is the main driver of any influence on Generation 3 affect in 1997. The baseline mother's coefficient is strong and significant ($b = 0.263$, $p < 0.01$) and survives both the addition of spousal partisan strength ($b = 0.202$, $p < 0.05$) and parental agreement ($b = 0.187$, $p < 0.01$; $b = 0.147$, $p < 0.05$). The combined parental model for the 1973 (Table 1.10) wave is also significant ($b = 0.187$, $p < 0.01$; $b = 0.147$, $p < 0.05$ with spousal control) though it loses significance when parental agreement is added to the model. The spousal partisan strength variable carries a negative coefficient in the father 1973 (Table 1.8) models ($b = -0.133$, $p < 0.05$), again suggesting that in households where fathers had strongly partisan spouses, which is to say children had mothers with strong political opinions, it was the mother's orientation that drove the child's outcome rather than the fathers.

Table 1.8-- Influence of Gen 2 Father's 1973 Out Party Affect on Gen 3

H1: Father's 1973 Outparty Affect and Gen 3 Outparty Affect (Gen 2 → Gen 3)				
	Outcome:			
	Gen 3 Outparty Affect			
	Parent Only	+ Spouse	Partisan Strength + Parental Agreement	+ Covariates
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Father's Outparty Sentiment	0.090 (0.103) p = 0.387	0.098 (0.103) p = 0.340	0.086 (0.116) p = 0.459	0.166 (0.119) p = 0.168
Mother's Est. Outparty Sentiment		-0.133* (0.059) p = 0.027	-0.065 (0.064) p = 0.315	-0.039 (0.065) p = 0.543
Parental Agreement on Politics			0.051 (0.048) p = 0.295	0.063 (0.049) p = 0.207
Income (norm.)				0.225* (0.096) p = 0.021
Education (norm.)				0.018 (0.047) p = 0.695
Age (norm.)				-0.086 (0.136) p = 0.531
Father (vs. Mother)				
Constant	0.366*** (0.060) p = 0.000	0.443*** (0.071) p = 0.000	0.400*** (0.081) p = 0.00001	0.198 (0.126) p = 0.120
Observations	162	154	129	127
R ²	0.005	0.038	0.021	0.072
Adjusted R ²	-0.002	0.025	-0.003	0.025
Residual Std. Error	0.171 (df = 160)	0.170 (df = 151)	0.167 (df = 125)	0.165 (df = 120)
F Statistic	0.755 (df = 1; 160)	2.974 (df = 2; 151)	0.875 (df = 3; 125)	1.542 (df = 6; 120)

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

All variables normalized 0-1. Survey weights applied.

Replication of 1973 ICPSR hypothesis framework using Gen 2 → Gen 3 panel data.

Spouse estimated sentiment derived from Gen 2 spouse party ID (1997).

Data: Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1997.

1973 wave: Gen 3 children were approximately ages 0–10 (early socialization window).

Table 1.9 -- Influence of Gen 2 Mother's 1973 Out Party Affect on Gen 3

H1: Mother's 1973 Outparty Affect and Gen 3 Outparty Affect (Gen 2 → Gen 3)				
	Outcome:			
	Parent Only (1)	Gen 3 Outparty Affect + Spouse Partisan Strength + Parental Agreement (2)	(3)	+ Covariates (4)
Mother's Outparty Sentiment	0.263*** (0.075) p = 0.001	0.202* (0.079) p = 0.012	0.185* (0.090) p = 0.041	0.175 (0.091) p = 0.055
Father's Est. Outparty Sentiment		0.035 (0.045) p = 0.438	0.006 (0.053) p = 0.905	-0.010 (0.054) p = 0.854
Parental Agreement on Politics			-0.073* (0.035) p = 0.037	-0.081* (0.036) p = 0.026
Income (norm.)				-0.054 (0.080) p = 0.499
Education (norm.)				0.045 (0.038) p = 0.238
Age (norm.)				-0.053 (0.123) p = 0.670
Father (vs. Mother)				
Constant	0.242*** (0.046) p = 0.00000	0.246*** (0.060) p = 0.0001	0.291*** (0.071) p = 0.0001	0.338** (0.102) p = 0.002
Observations	260	212	171	169
R ²	0.046	0.032	0.051	0.063
Adjusted R ²	0.042	0.023	0.034	0.028
Residual Std. Error	0.154 (df = 258)	0.148 (df = 209)	0.144 (df = 167)	0.144 (df = 162)
F Statistic	12.418*** (df = 1; 258)	3.442* (df = 2; 209)	2.969* (df = 3; 167)	1.808 (df = 6; 162)

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

All variables normalized 0-1. Survey weights applied.

Replication of 1973 ICPSR hypothesis framework using Gen 2 → Gen 3 panel data.

Spouse estimated sentiment derived from Gen 2 spouse party ID (1997).

Data: Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1997.

1973 wave: Gen 3 children were approximately ages 0–10 (early socialization window).

Table 1.10-- Influence of Combined Gen 2 Parent's 1973 Out Party Affect on Gen 3

H1: Combined Parent 1973 Outparty Affect and Gen 3 Outparty Affect (Gen 2 → Gen 3)				
	Outcome:			
	Gen 3 Outparty Affect			
	Parent Only	+ Spouse Partisan Strength	+ Parental Agreement	+ Covariates
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Parent's Outparty Sentiment	0.187** (0.061)	0.147* (0.063)	0.118 (0.071)	0.137 (0.072)
Spouse's Est. Outparty Sentiment		-0.043 (0.036)	-0.036 (0.041)	-0.022 (0.042)
Parental Agreement on Politics			-0.025 (0.029)	-0.021 (0.029)
Income (norm.)				0.089 (0.061)
Education (norm.)				0.026 (0.030)
Age (norm.)				-0.011 (0.089)
Father (vs. Mother)				0.022 (0.024)
Constant	0.296*** (0.036)	0.345*** (0.046)	0.362*** (0.053)	0.261** (0.080)
Observations	422	366	300	296
R ²	0.022	0.019	0.015	0.030
Adjusted R ²	0.020	0.014	0.005	0.006
Residual Std. Error	0.161 (df = 420)	0.158 (df = 363)	0.155 (df = 296)	0.155 (df = 288)
F Statistic	9.531** (df = 1; 420)	3.526* (df = 2; 363)	1.492 (df = 3; 296)	1.269 (df = 7; 288)
Note:	<p>*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001</p> <p>All variables normalized 0-1. Survey weights applied.</p> <p>Replication of 1973 ICPSR hypothesis framework using Gen 2 → Gen 3 panel data.</p> <p>Spouse estimated sentiment derived from Gen 2 spouse party ID (1997).</p> <p>Data: Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1997.</p> <p>1973 wave: Gen 3 children were approximately ages 0–10 (early socialization window).</p>			

For the 1982 wave, the combined parental model (Table 1.11) produces a strong and significant effect ($b = 0.178$, $p < 0.001$) that strengthens when spousal partisan strength is added as a control ($b = 0.189$, $p < 0.001$). It remains robust when parental agreement is included ($b = 0.155$, $p < 0.05$) and when controls are added ($b = 0.160$, $p < 0.05$). Within this wave it is the father's thermometer (Table 1.12) that carries the strongest transmission signal ($b = 0.274$, $p < 0.01$ in the baseline; $b = 0.264$, $p < 0.01$ with

spousal control; $b = 0.212$, $p < 0.05$ in the full model). It does just drop out of significance ($b = 0.207$, $p = 0.052$) when adding additional control variables, but the small sample size suggests that there might still be an effect. The mother's 1982 thermometer (Table 1.13) does not reach significance on its own ($b = 0.106$, $p = 0.072$), but approaches significance with a small sample size and an effect size similar to that of earlier years. The parental agreement variable has a small negative coefficient ($b = -0.072$, $p < 0.05$). Given the strength of the father's signal from this time period, combined with the small size, it suggests that both parents contribute but the mother's signal is harder to discern. The fact that parental agreement is negative in the mother's model is an interesting counterintuitive finding as that suggests that in households where parents are in political agreement in 1982, controlling for the mother's sentiments toward out-party parental agreement reduced the Generation 3 child's affect toward out-party in 1997.

Table 1.11-- Influence of Combined Gen 2 Parent's 1982 Out Party Affect on Gen 3

H1: Combined Parent 1982 Outparty Affect and Gen 3 Outparty Affect (Gen 2 → Gen 3)				
	Outcome:			
	Parent Only	Gen 3 Outparty Affect		+ Covariates
	(1)	+ Spouse Partisan Strength + Parental Agreement	(3)	(4)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Parent's Outparty Sentiment	0.178*** (0.053)	0.189*** (0.055)	0.155* (0.065)	0.160* (0.066)
Spouse's Est. Outparty Sentiment		-0.025 (0.032)	-0.034 (0.037)	-0.023 (0.038)
Parental Agreement on Politics			-0.026 (0.027)	-0.018 (0.027)
Income (norm.)				0.130 (0.070)
Education (norm.)				0.010 (0.029)
Age (norm.)				0.002 (0.084)
Father (vs. Mother)				0.032 (0.023)
Constant	0.315*** (0.030)	0.315*** (0.040)	0.344*** (0.047)	0.224** (0.073)
Observations	515	447	343	332
R ²	0.021	0.028	0.024	0.042
Adjusted R ²	0.019	0.024	0.015	0.021
Residual Std. Error	0.162 (df = 513)	0.158 (df = 444)	0.156 (df = 339)	0.155 (df = 324)
F Statistic	11.101*** (df = 1; 513)	6.418** (df = 2; 444)	2.771* (df = 3; 339)	2.019 (df = 7; 324)

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

All variables normalized 0-1. Survey weights applied.

Replication of 1973 ICPSR hypothesis framework using Gen 2 → Gen 3 panel data.

Spouse estimated sentiment derived from Gen 2 spouse party ID (1997).

Data: Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1997.

1982 wave: Gen 3 children were approximately ages 9–19 (primary child-rearing years).

Table 1.12-- Influence of Gen 2 Father's 1982 Out Party Affect on Gen 3

H1: Father's 1982 Outparty Affect and Gen 3 Outparty Affect (Gen 2 → Gen 3)				
	Outcome:			
	Parent Only (1)	Gen 3 Outparty Affect + Spouse Partisan Strength + Parental Agreement (2) (3)		+ Covariates (4)
Father's Outparty Sentiment	0.274*** (0.080) p = 0.001	0.264** (0.081) p = 0.002	0.212* (0.102) p = 0.041	0.207 (0.105) p = 0.052
Mother's Est. Outparty Sentiment		-0.060 (0.049) p = 0.218	-0.041 (0.055) p = 0.462	-0.039 (0.056) p = 0.490
Parental Agreement on Politics			0.059 (0.045) p = 0.188	0.063 (0.047) p = 0.186
Income (norm.)				0.130 (0.120) p = 0.283
Education (norm.)				0.002 (0.046) p = 0.969
Age (norm.)				-0.071 (0.129) p = 0.582
Father (vs. Mother)				
Constant	0.278*** (0.043) p = 0.000	0.319*** (0.056) p = 0.00000	0.324*** (0.069) p = 0.00001	0.254* (0.107) p = 0.019
Observations	215	204	152	149
R ²	0.052	0.059	0.040	0.051
Adjusted R ²	0.048	0.050	0.020	0.011
Residual Std. Error	0.163 (df = 213)	0.165 (df = 201)	0.162 (df = 148)	0.164 (df = 142)
F Statistic	11.756*** (df = 1; 213)	6.325** (df = 2; 201)	2.036 (df = 3; 148)	1.281 (df = 6; 142)

Note:

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

All variables normalized 0-1. Survey weights applied.

Replication of 1973 ICPSR hypothesis framework using Gen 2 → Gen 3 panel data.

Spouse estimated sentiment derived from Gen 2 spouse party ID (1997).

Data: Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1997.

1982 wave: Gen 3 children were approximately ages 9–19 (primary child-rearing years).

Table 1.13-- Influence of Gen 2 Mother's 1982 Out Party Affect on Gen 3

H1: Mother's 1982 Outparty Affect and Gen 3 Outparty Affect (Gen 2 → Gen 3)				
	Outcome:			
	Gen 3 Outparty Affect			
	Parent Only	+ Spouse	Partisan Strength + Parental Agreement	+ Covariates
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Mother's Outparty Sentiment	0.106 (0.072) p = 0.141	0.143 (0.076) p = 0.063	0.150 (0.083) p = 0.073	0.133 (0.086) p = 0.123
Father's Est. Outparty Sentiment		0.026 (0.044) p = 0.554	-0.001 (0.052) p = 0.992	-0.006 (0.053) p = 0.915
Parental Agreement on Politics			-0.072* (0.033) p = 0.029	-0.067 (0.035) p = 0.055
Income (norm.)				0.111 (0.088) p = 0.209
Education (norm.)				0.020 (0.038) p = 0.600
Age (norm.)				0.001 (0.121) p = 0.996
Father (vs. Mother)				
Constant	0.346*** (0.041) p = 0.000	0.286*** (0.058) p = 0.00001	0.316*** (0.067) p = 0.00001	0.245* (0.099) p = 0.015
Observations	300	243	191	183
R ²	0.007	0.015	0.044	0.055
Adjusted R ²	0.004	0.007	0.029	0.023
Residual Std. Error	0.160 (df = 298)	0.151 (df = 240)	0.149 (df = 187)	0.149 (df = 176)
F Statistic	2.184 (df = 1; 298)	1.807 (df = 2; 240)	2.867* (df = 3; 187)	1.720 (df = 6; 176)
Note:	*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 All variables normalized 0-1. Survey weights applied. Replication of 1973 ICPSR hypothesis framework using Gen 2 → Gen 3 panel data. Spouse estimated sentiment derived from Gen 2 spouse party ID (1997). Data: Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1997. 1982 wave: Gen 3 children were approximately ages 9–19 (primary child-rearing years).			

Taken across all three waves, the pattern points to a division of affective labor between parents. The mother's out-party orientation during the child's youngest developmental period (1973) is the strongest driver of Generation 3 out-party affect. The father's out-party orientation matters, but it operates during the narrower adolescent

window captured by the 1982 wave rather than the earlier childhood period. This is consistent with prior research on differential parental roles in political socialization (Tedin, 1980; Dolan, 1995). The precise mechanisms are beyond the scope of this analysis. The data collected does not allow us to see whether it reflects time spent with children, conversational norms, nor does it allow us to see influence of parental transmission at those earlier points in time as Generation 3 was only questioned in 1997. What the pattern shown in the data does establish clearly is that Hypothesis 1 is supported. Out-party affect was transmitted during a period of relatively low political polarization. The pattern also provided a glimpse into the black box of socialization by showing some of the conditions under which transmission is strongest such as parental consistency, partisan affect during the active socialization window, and the absence of any label-crossing due to parents realigning politically.

H2: Parental Out-party Affect and the Composition of Generation 3 Friend Circles

The central proposition of Hypothesis 2 is that parental out-party affect shapes the partisan composition of Generation 3's friend networks. Specifically, a youth who has parents who hold warmer attitudes towards their political out-party will be more likely to have friends who are members of that out-party themselves. The outcome variable used here is a three-point scale measuring the partisan character of the youth's friend group relative to their parent's party identification. A 0 indicates that the child's friends are predominantly members of the parent's political party, a 0.5 indicates a mixed or independent group, and 1 indicates friends who are predominantly from the parent's out-party. This anchoring was used to remain consistent with the thermometer analysis where

the transmission of affect is viewed as starting with the parent and ending with the child. The theoretical question here is whether a parent who feels warmly towards Democrats produces a child who socializes with Democrats, regardless of which party the child ultimately identifies with. I am looking at direct transmission here and a positive coefficient on the parental out-party thermometer would support Hypothesis 2.

The friend circle outcome variable draws on two survey questions. Question 19 asked Generation 3 respondents whether most of their friends are Republicans, Democrats, about half-and—half, mostly independent, or not sure. Respondents who answered “not sure” were then asked a follow-up question (19a) which posed the same question as a forced choice or guess. Because 19a is the designed follow-up question, like forcing “leaners” in party identity questions, both responses were incorporated into the outcome variable. This increased the number of viable respondents by 283 cases that would otherwise have been treated as missing and nearly double the size of Hypothesis 2 analysis.

This anchoring does introduce some limitations. According to Jennings, Stoker, & Bowers (2009) the mean age of Generation 3 respondents was 23 and most of the respondents will have largely crystalized their partisan identities. Additionally, due to realignment (families where parents switched parties between 1973 and 1997), there might be cases where the child was socialized to a party the parent is no longer a member of, and the child’s party and parental party might not be aligned. The friend variable as constructed does not distinguish between a member of Generation 3 who has friends in their out-party and a someone who has out-party friends only relative to their parents out-

party. The logic behind the construction here is that the parents socialized their child to mirror the parent's partisan affect, as was the assumption in Hypothesis 1. Because of this applied logic, it is likely that realignment limits transmission effects in a similar way as it did for Hypothesis 1.

The distribution of friend group composition was informative even before I began regression analysis. Using the combined variable, the modal response was mixed or independent ($n = 317$, 47% of non-missing cases), and the distribution was balanced between in-party dominant friend groups ($n = 226$, 33%) and out-party dominant friend groups ($n = 134$, 20%). Both primarily in-party and primarily out-party friend groups were well represented within the available data. The baseline rate of out-party friend exposure is the context against which I measured parental transmission effects, and it is important to keep in mind that roughly one in five youth reported having friend groups primarily composed of their parents' out-party.

Parents' 1997 Thermometer Influence on Out-party Friends

Since 1997 was the only year that Generation 3 was included in the survey pool as respondents I began analysis using parental out-party thermometers from the 1997 wave to provide a baseline that can be used to compare the influence of parental thermometers in the socialization window. The combined parental model (Table 1.14), which adds all mothers and fathers as a "parental" variable, does not reach significance in any of the specified models ($b = 0.134$, $p = 0.134$ baseline; $b = 0.024$, $p = 0.808$ with spousal control; $b = 0.090$, $p = 0.399$ in the full model). This null result for the combined parental variable is consistent with the father specific models (Table 1.15) where the father's 1997

out-party sentiment shows no significant relationship with a Generation 3 youth's friend group composition in any of the models ($b = -0.051$, $p = 0.695$ baseline; $b = 0.169$, $p = 0.199$ with spousal control; $b = -0.234$, $p = 0.100$ in the full model). The pattern here is very similar to what was found for fathers in Hypothesis 1 using the 1997 data where the introduction of household dynamics as controls caused the father's independent contribution to disappear. The 1997 results for out-party sentiment here are likely attenuated by the same party-switching problem that affected Hypothesis 1 analysis. The combined parental sample includes "switcher" families in which the parent's 1997 out-party label does not correspond to the party against which the child was socialized.

The mother's results are clear (Table 1.16), strong, and significant. In the baseline model, the mother's 1997 out-party sentiment is a significant positive predictor of Generation 3 out-party friend exposure ($b = 0.283$, $p = 0.025$). The coefficient grows substantially and reaches strong significance in the full model ($b = 0.454$, $p = 0.004$). Comparing the subsample of mothers in the parental agreement sample with and without the parental agreement variable (Table 1.21 in Appendix B) we can see that the influence of mother's out-party sentiment increases, but the amount of increase is almost indistinguishable from zero. I tested this by running analysis where I restricted the baseline model to the 227 cases used in the parental agreement model and compared the two coefficients. I found that the difference in the mother out-party sentiment coefficients was not statistically significant ($z = 0.94$), so the larger full-model coefficient reflects sample composition rather than the parental agreement control. There is thus no evidence that household agreement amplifies the mother's influence. What the models do establish

is that the mother's out-party warmth is itself a strong and significant predictor of a Generation 3 youth being more likely to be exposed to the out-party in their circle of friends.

Table 1.14-- Influence of Combined Parental Affect in 1997 on Generation 3 Friend Circles

H2: Combined Parental Outparty Affect and Gen 3 Outparty Friend Exposure (1997)				
	Outcome:			
	Gen 3 Outparty Friend Exposure			+ Covariates (4)
	Combined Only (1)	+ Spouse Partisan Strength (2)	+ Parental Agreement (3)	
Parent's Outparty Sentiment	0.134 (0.089) p = 0.134	0.024 (0.098) p = 0.809	0.090 (0.106) p = 0.399	0.098 (0.111) p = 0.378
Spouse's Est. Outparty Sentiment		-0.004 (0.050) p = 0.937	-0.029 (0.058) p = 0.617	-0.031 (0.060) p = 0.604
Parental Agreement on Politics			-0.024 (0.040) p = 0.557	-0.036 (0.043) p = 0.403
Income (norm.)				-0.031 (0.094) p = 0.739
Education (norm.)				-0.032 (0.049) p = 0.514
Age (norm.)				-0.028 (0.130) p = 0.829
Father (vs. Mother)				0.004 (0.036) p = 0.909
Constant	0.376*** (0.044) p = 0.000	0.425*** (0.060) p = 0.000	0.426*** (0.069) p = 0.000	0.474*** (0.097) p = 0.00001
Observations	675	583	436	420
R ²	0.003	0.0001	0.003	0.006
Adjusted R ²	0.002	-0.003	-0.004	-0.011
Residual Std. Error	0.284 (df = 673)	0.279 (df = 580)	0.276 (df = 432)	0.274 (df = 412)
F Statistic	2.256 (df = 1; 673)	0.034 (df = 2; 580)	0.456 (df = 3; 432)	0.339 (df = 7; 412)

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

All variables normalized 0-1. Survey weights applied.

Replication of 1973 ICPSR hypothesis framework using Gen 2 → Gen 3 panel data.

Spouse estimated sentiment derived from Gen 2 spouse party ID (1997).

Data: Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1997.

Outcome coded: 0=inparty friends, 0.5=mixed/independent, 1=outparty friends,

Table 1.15-- Influence of Father's Affect in 1997 on Generation 3 Friend Circles

H2: Father's Outparty Affect and Gen 3 Outparty Friend Exposure				
	Outcome:			
	Father Only	Gen 3 Outparty Friend Exposure		+ Covariates
	(1)	+ Spouse Partisan Strength	+ Parental Agreement	(4)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Father's Outparty Sentiment	-0.051 (0.130) p = 0.695	-0.169 (0.131) p = 0.199	-0.234 (0.142) p = 0.100	-0.288 (0.147) p = 0.052
Mother's Est. Outparty Sentiment		-0.085 (0.067) p = 0.201	-0.093 (0.080) p = 0.245	-0.104 (0.080) p = 0.199
Parental Agreement on Politics			-0.045 (0.057) p = 0.434	-0.057 (0.061) p = 0.347
Income (norm.)				-0.007 (0.133) p = 0.958
Education (norm.)				-0.103 (0.068) p = 0.132
Age (norm.)				0.099 (0.161) p = 0.543
Father (vs. Mother)				
Constant	0.459*** (0.061) p = 0.000	0.563*** (0.077) p = 0.000	0.617*** (0.087) p = 0.000	0.684*** (0.129) p = 0.00000
Observations	306	288	209	204
R ²	0.001	0.011	0.021	0.041
Adjusted R ²	-0.003	0.004	0.007	0.012
Residual Std. Error	0.271 (df = 304)	0.263 (df = 285)	0.264 (df = 205)	0.265 (df = 197)
F Statistic	0.155 (df = 1; 304)	1.520 (df = 2; 285)	1.472 (df = 3; 205)	1.401 (df = 6; 197)

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

All variables normalized 0-1. Survey weights applied.

Replication of 1973 ICPSR hypothesis framework using Gen 2 → Gen 3 panel data.

Spouse estimated sentiment derived from Gen 2 spouse party ID (1997).

Data: Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1997.

Outcome coded: 0=inparty friends, 0.5=mixed/independent, 1=outparty friends, conditioned on Gen 2 parent's party. Negative coefficient supports H2.

Table 1.16-- Influence of Mother's Affect in 1997 on Generation 3 Friend Circles

H2: Mother's Outparty Affect and Gen 3 Outparty Friend Exposure				
	Outcome:			
	Gen 3 Outparty Friend Exposure			
	Mother Only	+ Spouse Partisan Strength	+ Parental Agreement	+ Covariates
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Mother's Outparty Sentiment	0.283*	0.225	0.454**	0.554**
	(0.126)	(0.146)	(0.157)	(0.167)
	p = 0.025	p = 0.125	p = 0.005	p = 0.002
Father's Est. Outparty Sentiment		0.086	0.058	0.049
		(0.075)	(0.087)	(0.088)
		p = 0.258	p = 0.505	p = 0.579
Parental Agreement on Politics			0.0001	-0.044
			(0.056)	(0.059)
			p = 0.999	p = 0.455
Income (norm.)				-0.074
				(0.129)
				p = 0.570
Education (norm.)				0.004
				(0.069)
				p = 0.959
Age (norm.)				-0.274
				(0.212)
				p = 0.197
Father (vs. Mother)				
Constant	0.301***	0.261**	0.181	0.273*
	(0.066)	(0.097)	(0.110)	(0.137)
	p = 0.00001	p = 0.008	p = 0.102	p = 0.049
Observations	369	295	227	216
R ²	0.014	0.011	0.036	0.055
Adjusted R ²	0.011	0.004	0.023	0.027
Residual Std. Error	0.294 (df = 367)	0.293 (df = 292)	0.283 (df = 223)	0.274 (df = 209)
F Statistic	5.072* (df = 1; 367)	1.643 (df = 2; 292)	2.803* (df = 3; 223)	2.010 (df = 6; 209)

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

All variables normalized 0-1. Survey weights applied.

Replication of 1973 ICPSR hypothesis framework using Gen 2 → Gen 3 panel data.

Spouse estimated sentiment derived from Gen 2 spouse party ID (1997).

Data: Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1997.

Outcome coded: 0=inparty friends, 0.5=mixed/independent, 1=outparty friends, conditioned on Gen 2 parent's party. Negative coefficient supports H2.

Parents' 1982 Thermometer Influence on Out-party Friends

The contrast between the 1997 and 1982 wave results is itself very informative and conforms to my argument that insignificance in 1997 is potentially due to party-switchers. The combined parental 1982 model (Table 1.17) is significant at baseline ($b = 0.193$, $p = 0.016$) and the parental influence remains significant in the fully specified model ($b = 0.240$, $p = 0.018$). As we will see when I examine the influence of mothers during the socialization window, the mother's out-party thermometer remains a significant predictor once other sources of household partisan influence are accounted for, which indicates that the relationship is robust to controls rather than dependent upon them. This robustness holds precisely in the time window that the Oxley et al. (2020) age of socialization argument predicts it should. Based on their findings we should see the strongest parental influence when Generation 3 respondents were young rather than when they were young adults.

While the socialization effect is apparent in the full parental models, when looking at the influence of the father's out-party sentiment in 1982 (Table 1.18), the effect of the father's thermometer on out-party friends never reaches significance in any model specification ($b = 0.014$, $p = 0.895$ in the baseline; $b = 0.116$, $p = 0.412$ in the fully specified model). It was the mother's out-party thermometer in 1982 (Table 1.19) that was the main driver of the combined parental results and the mother's thermometer is significant at baseline ($b = 0.388$, $p = 0.002$) and remains significant with full controls ($b = 0.381$, $p = 0.011$). The influence of the mother is the single strongest and most consistent finding in the analysis of Hypothesis 2. A measurement of the mother's

thermometer rating towards out-party during early-childhood predicts the reported partisan composition of the child's friend networks roughly fifteen years later.

Table 1.17-- Influence of Combined Parental Affect in 1982 on Generation 3 Friend Circles

H2: Combined Parental 1982 Outparty Affect and Gen 3 Outparty Friend Exposure				
	Outcome:			
	Gen 3 Outparty Friend Exposure			
	Combined Only	+ Spouse Partisan Strength	+ Parental Agreement	+ Covariates
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Parent's Outparty Sentiment	0.193* (0.080) p = 0.017	0.154 (0.085) p = 0.072	0.240* (0.101) p = 0.018	0.244* (0.103) p = 0.019
Spouse's Est. Outparty Sentiment		0.010 (0.049) p = 0.845	-0.018 (0.058) p = 0.751	-0.020 (0.059) p = 0.733
Parental Agreement on Politics			-0.020 (0.041) p = 0.621	-0.020 (0.042) p = 0.631
Income (norm.)				-0.097 (0.108) p = 0.371
Education (norm.)				-0.031 (0.047) p = 0.520
Age (norm.)				0.018 (0.127) p = 0.888
Father (vs. Mother)				0.024 (0.036) p = 0.515
Constant	0.337*** (0.044) p = 0.000	0.346*** (0.060) p = 0.000	0.337*** (0.072) p = 0.00001	0.395*** (0.106) p = 0.0003
Observations	670	580	434	420
R ²	0.009	0.006	0.015	0.019
Adjusted R ²	0.007	0.002	0.008	0.002
Residual Std. Error	0.283 (df = 668)	0.278 (df = 577)	0.275 (df = 430)	0.275 (df = 412)
F Statistic	5.805* (df = 1; 668)	1.635 (df = 2; 577)	2.137 (df = 3; 430)	1.139 (df = 7; 412)

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

All variables normalized 0-1. Survey weights applied.

Replication of 1973 ICPSR hypothesis framework using Gen 2 → Gen 3 panel data.

Spouse estimated sentiment derived from Gen 2 spouse party ID (1997).

Data: Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1997.

Outparty thermometer from 1982 wave, anchored on Gen 2 party ID in 1973.

1982 wave captures parental affect during the primary childhood socialization window (Gen 3 median age ~7). Positive coefficient supports H2.

Outcome: 0=inparty friends, 0.5=mixed/independent, 1=outparty friends (relative to Gen 2 parent party). Q19/Q19a combined variable.

Table 1.18-- Influence of Father's Affect in 1982 on Generation 3 Friend Circles

H2: Father's 1982 Outparty Affect and Gen 3 Outparty Friend Exposure				
	Outcome:			
	Gen 3 Outparty Friend Exposure			
	Father Only	+ Spouse Partisan Strength	+ Parental Agreement	+ Covariates
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Father's Outparty Sentiment	0.014 (0.109) p = 0.895	-0.038 (0.112) p = 0.736	0.116 (0.141) p = 0.412	0.103 (0.145) p = 0.481
Mother's Est. Outparty Sentiment		-0.078 (0.067) p = 0.242	-0.086 (0.080) p = 0.285	-0.090 (0.081) p = 0.272
Parental Agreement on Politics			-0.045 (0.060) p = 0.449	-0.058 (0.063) p = 0.357
Income (norm.)				-0.086 (0.167) p = 0.609
Education (norm.)				-0.086 (0.070) p = 0.220
Age (norm.)				0.087 (0.166) p = 0.600
Father (vs. Mother)				
Constant	0.431*** (0.058) p = 0.000	0.505*** (0.075) p = 0.000	0.453*** (0.094) p = 0.00001	0.544*** (0.139) p = 0.0002
Observations	302	284	205	199
R ²	0.0001	0.005	0.012	0.026
Adjusted R ²	-0.003	-0.002	-0.002	-0.005
Residual Std. Error	0.272 (df = 300)	0.264 (df = 281)	0.266 (df = 201)	0.267 (df = 192)
F Statistic	0.018 (df = 1; 300)	0.729 (df = 2; 281)	0.840 (df = 3; 201)	0.846 (df = 6; 192)

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

All variables normalized 0-1. Survey weights applied.

Replication of 1973 ICPSR hypothesis framework using Gen 2 → Gen 3 panel data.

Spouse estimated sentiment derived from Gen 2 spouse party ID (1997).

Data: Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1997.

Outparty thermometer from 1982 wave, anchored on Gen 2 party ID in 1973.

1982 wave captures parental affect during the primary childhood socialization

window (Gen 3 median age ~7). Positive coefficient supports H2.

Outcome: 0=inparty friends, 0.5=mixed/independent, 1=outparty friends

(relative to Gen 2 parent party). Q19/Q19a combined variable.

Table 1.19-- Influence of Mother's Affect in 1982 on Generation 3 Friend Circles

H2: Mother's 1982 Outparty Affect and Gen 3 Outparty Friend Exposure				
	Outcome:			
	Gen 3 Outparty Friend Exposure			
	Mother Only	+ Spouse Partisan Strength	+ Parental Agreement	+ Covariates
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Mother's Outparty Sentiment	0.388** (0.119) p = 0.002	0.402** (0.131) p = 0.003	0.381* (0.147) p = 0.011	0.395** (0.151) p = 0.010
Father's Est. Outparty Sentiment		0.121 (0.074) p = 0.105	0.071 (0.088) p = 0.420	0.054 (0.089) p = 0.545
Parental Agreement on Politics			-0.007 (0.056) p = 0.898	-0.012 (0.058) p = 0.838
Income (norm.)				-0.102 (0.146) p = 0.487
Education (norm.)				-0.001 (0.066) p = 0.994
Age (norm.)				-0.109 (0.208) p = 0.602
Father (vs. Mother)				
Constant	0.227*** (0.068) p = 0.001	0.122 (0.098) p = 0.214	0.187 (0.115) p = 0.106	0.279 (0.157) p = 0.078
Observations	368	296	229	221
R ²	0.028	0.036	0.030	0.033
Adjusted R ²	0.026	0.030	0.017	0.006
Residual Std. Error	0.290 (df = 366)	0.288 (df = 293)	0.284 (df = 225)	0.282 (df = 214)
F Statistic	10.656** (df = 1; 366)	5.489** (df = 2; 293)	2.292 (df = 3; 225)	1.215 (df = 6; 214)

Note: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001
All variables normalized 0-1. Survey weights applied.
Replication of 1973 ICPSR hypothesis framework using Gen 2 → Gen 3 panel data.
Spouse estimated sentiment derived from Gen 2 spouse party ID (1997).
Data: Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1997.
Outparty thermometer from 1982 wave, anchored on Gen 2 party ID in 1973.
1982 wave captures parental affect during the primary childhood socialization window (Gen 3 median age ~7). Positive coefficient supports H2.
Outcome: 0=inparty friends, 0.5=mixed/independent, 1=outparty friends (relative to Gen 2 parent party). Q19/Q19a combined variable.

Taken together, the results in Hypothesis 2 provide qualified support for the argument that parental out-party warmth predicts greater out-party exposure in the child's

social circles. Based on this data, it is the mother's affect during a child's pre-teen years that is the strongest signal after controlling for household partisan dynamics. The 1982 combined model is more predictive than the 1997 combined model, which is consistent with the findings in Hypothesis 1 and with the theoretical expectation that affective socialization operates on younger children rather than teenagers or young adults. That these effects extend from thermometer ratings into the reported composition of peer networks connects the socialization literature to the partisan sorting literature. This suggests that the social homophily by party that has been documented among adults may have roots in household affective environments that predate adult partisan engagement by a decade or more.

H3: Political Activity as a Moderator of the Transmission of Out-Party Affect

In Hypothesis 3, I proposed that parental political activity should amplify the transmission of out-party affect from parents to children. The theoretical logic drew on social learning theory which argues that more politically active parents generate more frequent, more intense, and more consistent partisan cues within the household. This increase of partisan cues increases the opportunities for observational learning and strengthens the transmission of parental preferences on child socialization outcomes (Jennings, Stoker, & Bowers, 2009). I tested whether political activity moderated transmission by modeling an interaction between the parental party thermometer and a parental political activity index, where a positive and significant interaction coefficient

would indicate that the transmission effect is stronger among more politically active parents.³

The Influence of Political Activity on Transmission from Generation 1 to Generation 2 (1973)

The mean-centered interaction models (Table 1.20) tell a progressively clarifying story as sample size increases. In the father model, the out-party coefficient drops to marginal significance ($b = 0.084$, $p = 0.058$) and the interaction is positive but not significant ($b = 0.212$, $p = 0.243$, $n = 350$). In the mother model the out-party coefficient holds strongly ($b = 0.148$, $p = 0.001$) and the interaction term is larger and trending towards significance in comparison to the father ($b = 0.251$, $p = 0.173$, $n = 433$). In the combined model, with an n of 783, the out-party main effects remain significant ($b = 0.116$, $p = 0.0002$) and the interaction term reaches marginal significance ($b = 0.218$, $p = 0.091$). This progression across the three specifications is a pattern that one might expect from an underpowered amplification effect. The signal is too weak to emerge in the mother or father subsets individually but begins to surface when they are pooled. The combined 1973 results provide some suggestion that parental political activity might amplify out-party affect transmission, but the evidence falls short of traditional significance thresholds.

³ The political activity index is severely right skewed in all waves which limited the variance of the data. Initial tests of the interaction models showed a high VIF, so I followed the standard practice of Brambor, Clark & Golder (2006) and mean centered the variables while keeping in mind recent pushback by Kalnins & Praitis Hill regarding overuse of mean-centering (2025).

Table 1.20-- Influence of Generation 1 Political Activity on Generation 2 Out Party Affect (1973)

H3: Combined Parental Political Activity and Outparty Affect Transmission			
	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Father Effects (1)	Youth Outparty Affect Mother Effects (2)	Parental Effects (3)
Father's Outparty Sentiment	0.084 (0.044) p = 0.058		
Mother's Outparty Sentiment		0.148*** (0.044) p = 0.001	
Parent Outparty Sentiment			0.116*** (0.031) p = 0.0002
Parent Political Activity	0.035 (0.039) p = 0.380	-0.052 (0.037) p = 0.162	-0.015 (0.027) p = 0.581
Father Outparty x Political Activity	0.212 (0.181) p = 0.243		
Mother Outparty x Political Activity		0.251 (0.184) p = 0.173	
Outparty Sentiment x Political Activity			0.218 (0.128) p = 0.091
Constant	0.551*** (0.009) p = 0.000	0.564*** (0.008) p = 0.000	0.559*** (0.006) p = 0.000
Observations	350	433	783
R ²	0.018	0.037	0.024
Adjusted R ²	0.009	0.030	0.020
Residual Std. Error	0.165 (df = 346)	0.166 (df = 429)	0.166 (df = 779)
F Statistic	2.073 (df = 3; 346)	5.503** (df = 3; 429)	6.272*** (df = 3; 779)
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 All variables normalized 0-1 per Jennings, Stoker, and Bowers (2009).		

Transmission Post-Partisan Realignment in 1997 and the Socialization Window

The 1997 wave results are more uniformly null. Across both the father-specific and combined parental models (Tables 21 and 22, Appendix B), the interaction between parental activity and out-party thermometer ratings does not approach significance in any

specification. The main effects of parental affect on child affect remain detectable, which is consistent with the findings in Hypothesis 1, but the addition of the activity interaction term doesn't contribute anything significant. As with 1997 Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 models, these results are almost certainly attenuated by the partisan realignment problem that was discussed above. The activity index would not be expected to amplify transmission through a thermometer variable that has itself been changed by party-switching and by 1997 the primary socialization window for Generation 3 had already closed. These structural features of the 1997 data make it a poor test for the amplification hypothesis.

Taken across waves and parental models, the interaction coefficients are uniformly positive but fall short of significance. What the 1973 combined results hint at, that political activity increases the influence of household affective cues, is plausible on theoretical grounds and consistent with the direction of all nine coefficients interacting out-party sentiment and political activity (Table 1.20, Table 1.21, Table 1.22). The 1982 model, which occurs during the socialization window, is closer to significance than other specifications but it has only 515 respondents. The lower number of respondents combined with the highly right-skewed nature of the activity index, where most parents are concentrated at low participation levels, limits statistical power to detect what may be a modest amplification effect. The consistency of maternal transmission across activity levels in both waves reinforces the conclusion that the mother's affective socialization operates through emotional modeling and household affective climate rather than formal participatory behavior and the activity index is not designed to capture affective

socialization. Hypothesis 3 is not confirmed, but the pattern suggests it would be premature to treat the amplification argument as falsified rather than underpowered.

Taken across all three waves and parental models, Hypothesis 3 seems possible, but is not fully supported by the results.

Conclusions and Further Research

This paper sets out to answer three questions about the roots of affective polarization: whether parents transmit out-party affect to their children, whether that transmission extends beyond thermometer ratings and into the composition of friend networks, and whether parental political activity affects transmission. The data from the four waves of the Youth-Parent Socialization Survey provide consistent evidence in support of the first two propositions, with important qualifications that illuminate as much as the findings themselves.

The core finding of Hypothesis 1 is that out-party affective transmission was operating before the acceleration of partisan hostility that defines the contemporary political environment. Parents who expressed negative affect toward the political out-party produced children who shared that effect and they did so during an era when the average thermometer ratings do not suggest a highly polarized cohort. The average warmth toward the Democratic Party among Generation 2 participants in 1973 was 59.64, declining modestly to 57.38 by 1997. Warmth toward the Republican Party was 55.31 in 1973 and 56.44 in 1997. These are not the readings of a generation consumed with partisan hostility. Yet within that relatively mildly affective environment, the parent-to-child transmission mechanism was already functioning. That it was doing so under

conditions of low polarization suggests that the mechanism itself predates and likely helps sustain the polarization acceleration document in subsequent decades. The behavioral and socialization foundations of affective polarization were being laid out before the polarization became visible in aggregate data.

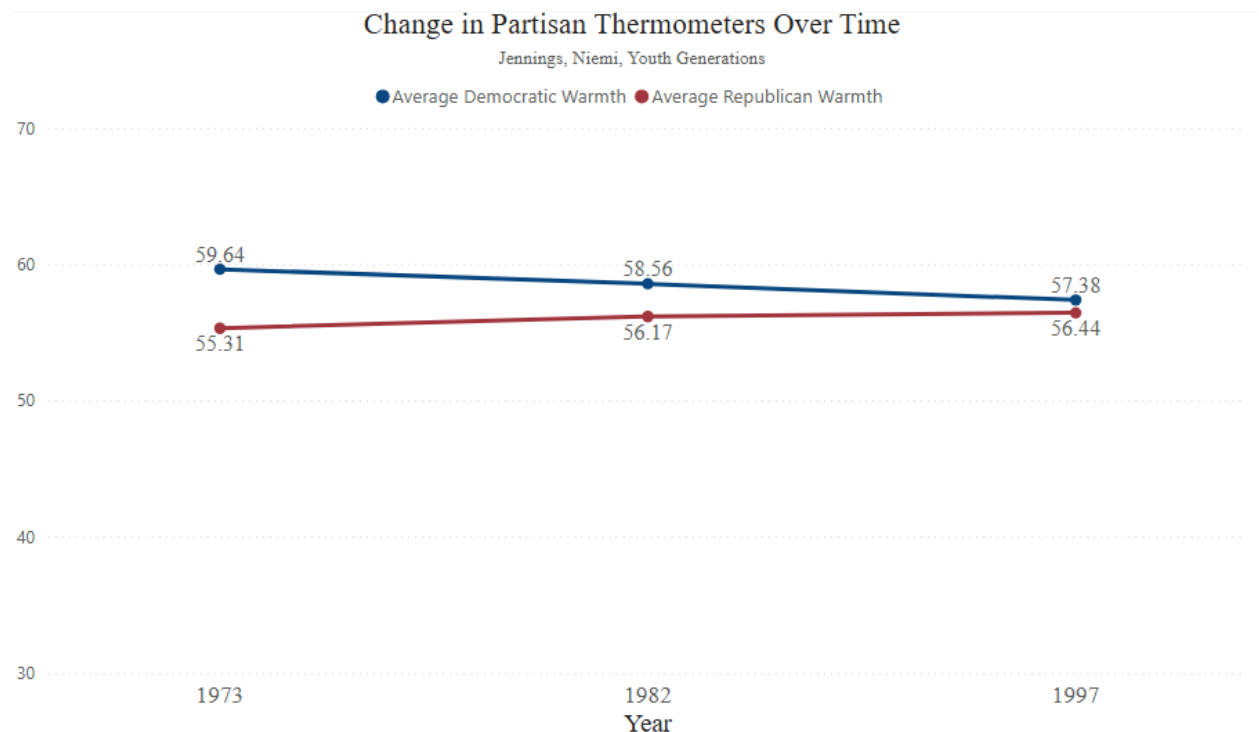


Figure 1. 2-- Stability of Average Partisan Warmth 1973 to 1997

Mothers emerged as the primary affective socializers across both generational dyads. A mother's out-party thermometer predicts child out-party affect as well as child friend network composition more consistently and more robustly than the father. It survives the addition of spousal and agreement controls in ways the father's does not. This is not to say that the father's influence is irrelevant. The 1982 father thermometer

produces the strongest single transmission coefficient in the Hypothesis 1 analysis, but the father's contribution appears to be concentrated in the active childhood socialization window while the mother's signal is detectable across a wider range of measurement time points. The different temporal profiles of maternal and paternal influence are themselves a finding that deserves further research, particularly considering how gender roles changed during, and since, the eras the data capture.

The socialization window analysis adds an important dimension to the transmission story. Parental thermometers from the 1982 wave, when Generation 3 respondents had a median age of approximately 7, consistently outperform 1997 thermometers as predictors of Generation 3 affect and friend network composition. This pattern appears across all hypotheses and points toward early childhood, rather than adolescence as the critical socialization window for affective orientations towards out-party members. This finding is consistent with Oxley et al.'s (2020) evidence that affective polarization is acquired earlier in the developmental process than prior research assumed. It also complicates the standard reading of the 1997 combined models as evidence that parental influence weakened between the two generational dyads (Abramowitz & Saunders, 1998). Much of the apparent attenuation is explained by the realignment of the Generation 2 cohort between 1973 and 1997, which created a measurement mismatch between socialized out-party and measured out-party for switching parents, and by the fact that by 1997 the primary socialization window had already closed for most Generation 3 respondents.

The effect of realignment is worth dwelling on. Of the 232 Generation 2 parents who identified as Democrats in 1973, 73 had moved to the Republican Party by 1997. This is a 31.5% defection rate. Of the 154 Republicans in the 1973 data, 29 switched to the Democratic Party. What had been a majority-Democratic cohort in 1973 was effectively split by 1997, and the number identifying as independent was approximately one-third of what it had been a generation earlier. The hollowing out of the center and the growth of strong partisanship (Strong Republicans grew from 47 to 113 in the panel) coincided with a sharpening of the affect differential.

The results demonstrated in Hypothesis 2 extend the socialization argument beyond attitude measures and into social behavior. Parental out-party warmth during the 1982 socialization window predicts the partisan composition of Generation 3's peer networks roughly 15 years later. That a parent's emotional orientation toward political opponents, measured when their child was in elementary school, leaves a detectable imprint on who that child chooses to socialize with as a young adult connects the socialization literature to the partisan sorting and homophily literatures in a way that prior work has not established empirically. Research has shown that people are socially segregating by party and there is a growing tendency to live, work, and befriend primarily co-partisans (Iyengar, Konitzer, & Tedin, 2018; Iyengar & Westwood, 2015; Bishop, 2009). This may have roots in household affective environments that predate adult partisan engagement by a decade or more.

There was no strong evidence that political activity amplifies transmission. What little support for that hypothesis there was weak and inconsistent. The

interaction coefficients were uniformly positive across all nine models spanning three waves of data and both parents, but none reached the level of statistical significance. The right-skewed activity distribution, which concentrates most parents at low participation levels, limits the power to detect amplification, as does the sample size. The 1997 wave faces the additional attenuating effects of realignment documented in Hypothesis 1. The combination of results suggests that there are transmission mechanisms that operate independently of formally participatory behaviors. While the hypothesis is falsified in this data, I believe the sample to be underpowered and that this would be a productive direction for future inquiry.

The most significant limitation of this paper is one that cannot be remedied with methods, it is a limitation of data availability. The Youth-Parent Socialization Survey ended in 1997 and there has been no large-scale effort to create a replacement. Such an endeavor would be expensive and face significant challenges during this age of high polarization, even though it would provide significant analytical leverage. The 1965 cohort and their children offer an invaluable window into the period before acceleration, but a comparable three-generation study covering families who came of age in the 1990s and 2000s would allow for direct testing of whether the transmission mechanisms documented here operated more powerfully as the environment became more polarized and whether the socialization window pattern holds in a period when children are exposed to partisan conflict earlier and more intensely than the Generation 3 cohort was. The Oxley et al. (2020) finding that children were already polarized against presidential candidates by 2016 suggest that the socialization process may have moved upstream.

Elementary school age might no longer be the critical window but may itself now be too late. A new panel study that interviews parents and children at multiple developmental stages, and that includes direct behavioral measures of household political climate rather than relying on activity indexes, would be a tremendously valuable contribution to the field and to the literature.

What this paper does establish is that affective socialization toward political outgroups was operating well before the current polarized environment made it visible. The parents and children in the Jennings and Niemi data were the first generations to enter and fuel the acceleration that followed. The modest effect sizes documented here are real, but not large and significant, but not dominant. These are precisely what you would expect from a transmission mechanism operating under conditions of relatively low baseline affect. They are not evidence that the mechanism is weak. They are evidence that the mechanism was already running.

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Appendix A – Supplementary Figures

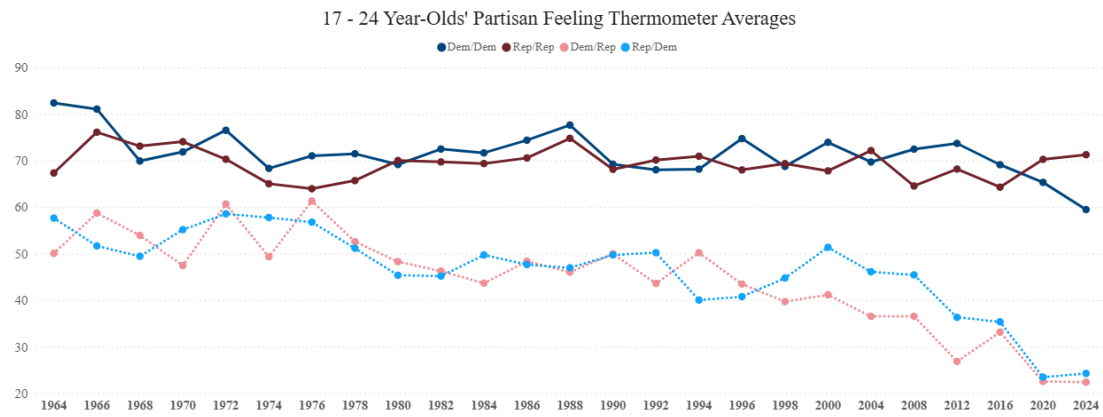


Figure 1.3 --ANES Time Series Data Reflecting Average Affective Distance for Partisans and the Public at Large

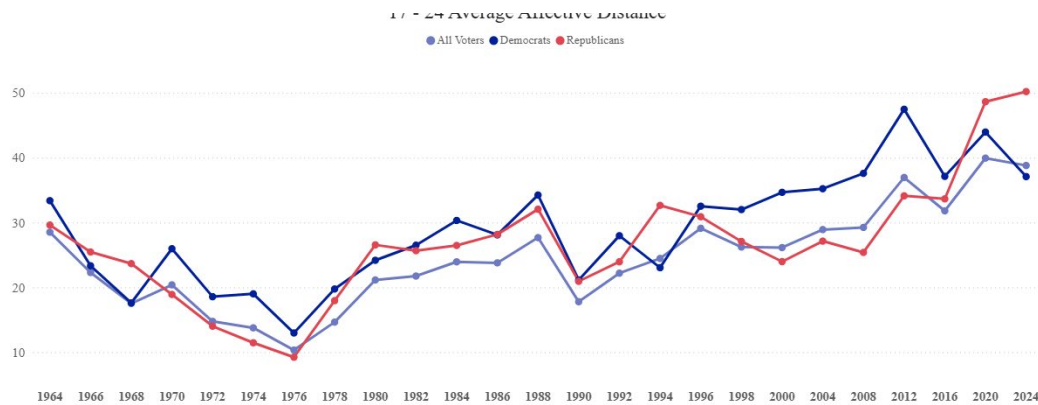


Figure 1.4-- Analysis of ANES Time Series Data Demonstrating Thermometer Ratings of 17 – 24 Year-Old Democrats and Republicans for their Own Party and for their Out Party

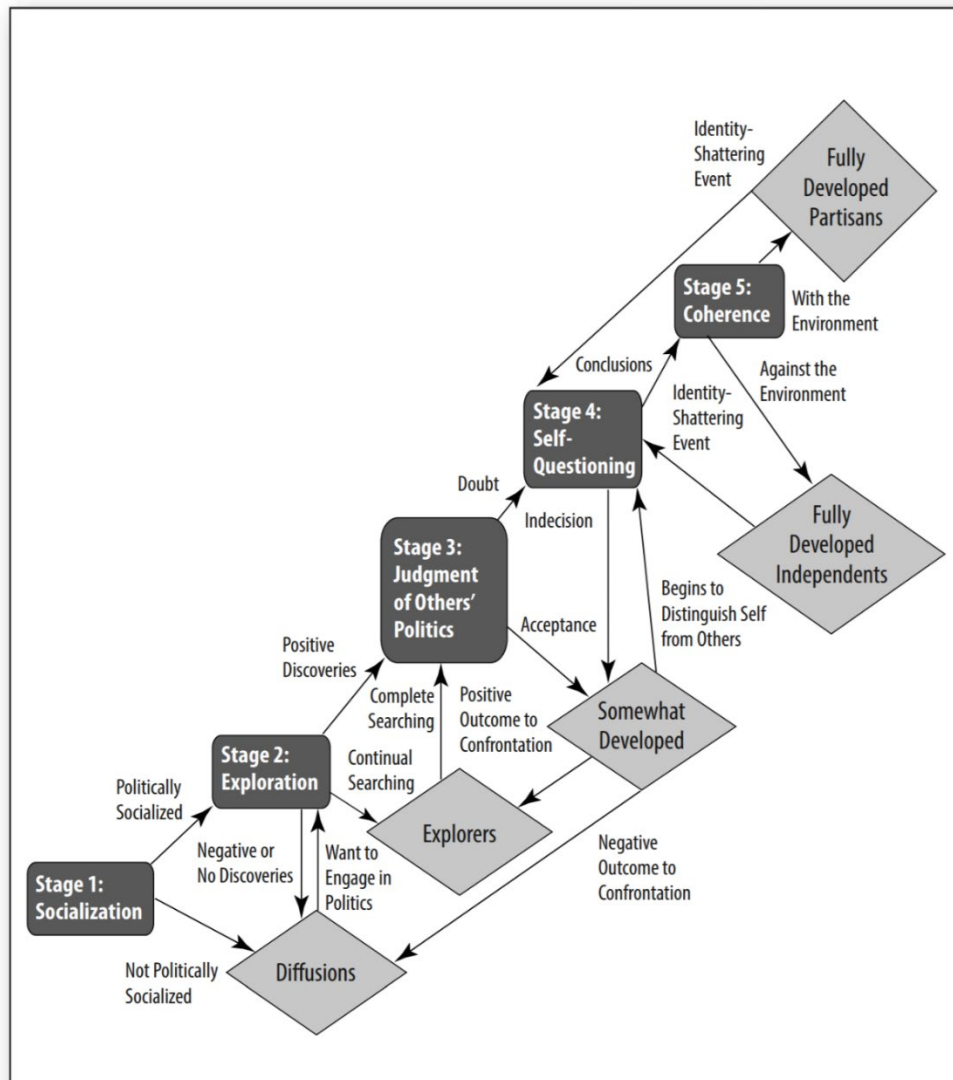


Figure 1.5-- Bobbi Gentry (2013) "The Process of Political Identity Development"

Appendix B: Political Realignment

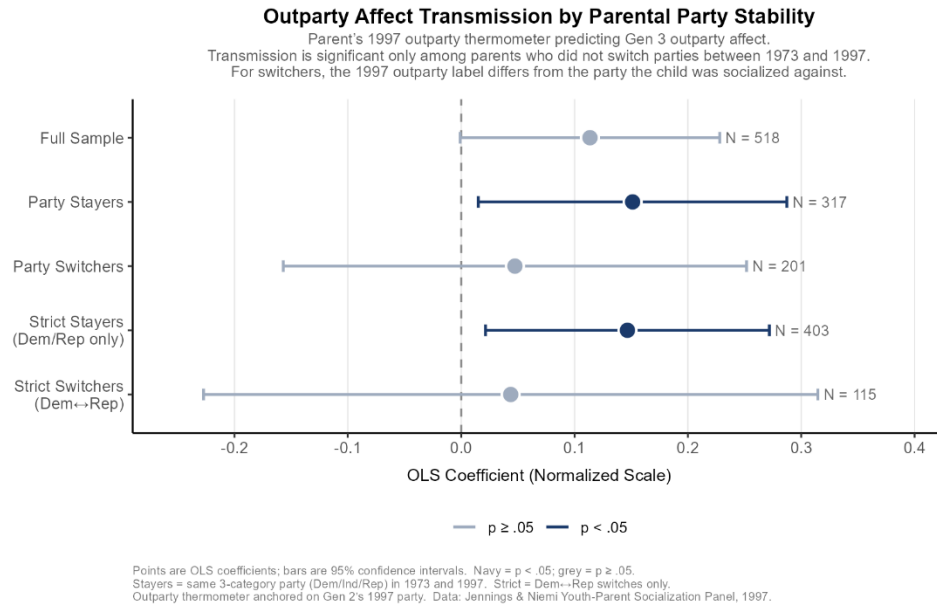


Figure 1.6 -- Outparty Affect Transmission by Parental Party Stability

Table 1.21 -- Sample Comparison to Discern Unique Effect of Parental Agreement
H2 Mother: Model 1 on Full vs. Parental Agreement Sample

	Outcome:		
	Gen 3 Outparty Friend Exposure		
	Mother Only (full sample) (1)	Mother Only (parental agreement sample) + Parental Agreement (2)	(3)
Mother's Outparty Sentiment	0.283* (0.126) p = 0.025	0.438** (0.155) p = 0.006	0.454** (0.157) p = 0.005
Father's Est. Outparty Sentiment			0.058 (0.087) p = 0.505
Parental Agreement on Politics			0.0001 (0.056) p = 0.999
Constant	0.301*** (0.066) p = 0.00001	0.231** (0.077) p = 0.004	0.181 (0.110) p = 0.102
Observations	369	227	227
R ²	0.014	0.034	0.036
Adjusted R ²	0.011	0.030	0.023
Residual Std. Error	0.294 (df = 367)	0.282 (df = 225)	0.283 (df = 223)
F Statistic	5.072* (df = 1; 367)	8.017** (df = 1; 225)	2.803* (df = 3; 223)

Note:

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

All variables normalized 0-1. Survey weights applied.

Replication of 1973 ICPSR hypothesis framework using Gen 2 → Gen 3 panel data.

Spouse estimated sentiment derived from Gen 2 spouse party ID (1997).

Data: Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1997.

Outcome coded: 0=inparty friends, 0.5=mixed/independent, 1=outparty friends, conditioned on Gen 2 parent's party. Negative coefficient supports H2.

Col 1 vs 2: difference due to sample composition (listwise deletion).

Col 2 vs 3: difference due to the controls, sample held fixed.

Table 1.22-- Influence of Generation 2 Political Activity on Generation 3 Out Party Affect (1997)

H3: Parental Political Activity and Father's Outparty Affect Transmission (1997)			
	Outcome:		
	Father Effects (1)	Gen 3 Outparty Affect Mother Effects (2)	Parental Effects (3)
Father Outparty Sentiment	0.039 (0.097) p = 0.689	0.187* (0.077) p = 0.017	0.112 (0.059) p = 0.058
Parental Political Activity	0.009 (0.060) p = 0.882	-0.007 (0.052) p = 0.890	0.005 (0.038) p = 0.903
Sentiment x Activity	0.133 (0.360) p = 0.712	0.099 (0.339) p = 0.770	0.056 (0.235) p = 0.812
Constant	0.421*** (0.015) p = 0.000	0.397*** (0.012) p = 0.000	0.409*** (0.009) p = 0.000
Observations	218	300	518
R ²	0.002	0.019	0.007
Adjusted R ²	-0.012	0.010	0.002
Residual Std. Error	0.168 (df = 214)	0.161 (df = 296)	0.164 (df = 514)
F Statistic	0.143 (df = 3; 214)	1.960 (df = 3; 296)	1.279 (df = 3; 514)

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

All variables normalized 0-1. Survey weights applied.

Replication of 1973 ICPSR hypothesis framework using Gen 2 → Gen 3 panel data.

Spouse estimated sentiment derived from Gen 2 spouse party ID (1997).

Data: Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1997.

Activity = Gen 2 political activity index (1982 wave, V4012, corrected).

Interaction terms use mean-centered predictors to reduce VIF inflation.

Table 1.23-- Influence of Generation 2 Political Activity on Generation 3 Out Party Affect (1982)

H3: Activity Moderating Combined Parental Outparty Transmission (1982 Wave)			
	Outcome:		
	Father Effects (1)	Gen 3 Outparty Affect Mother Effects (2)	Parental Effects (3)
Parent Outparty Sentiment (1982)	0.263** (0.085) p = 0.003	0.097 (0.073) p = 0.186	0.163** (0.055) p = 0.004
Parent Political Activity	-0.002 (0.057) p = 0.969	-0.008 (0.051) p = 0.875	-0.003 (0.037) p = 0.938
Outparty × Activity	0.111 (0.288) p = 0.701	0.265 (0.310) p = 0.393	0.213 (0.208) p = 0.309
Constant	0.416*** (0.014) p = 0.000	0.403*** (0.012) p = 0.000	0.409*** (0.009) p = 0.000
Observations	215	300	515
R ²	0.053	0.010	0.023
Adjusted R ²	0.040	-0.0002	0.017
Residual Std. Error	0.164 (df = 211)	0.160 (df = 296)	0.162 (df = 511)
F Statistic	3.934** (df = 3; 211)	0.977 (df = 3; 296)	4.040** (df = 3; 511)

Note:

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

All variables normalized 0-1. Survey weights applied.

Replication of 1973 ICPSR hypothesis framework using Gen 2 → Gen 3 panel data.

Spouse estimated sentiment derived from Gen 2 spouse party ID (1997).

Data: Jennings and Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1997.

Both interaction components mean-centered; VIF < 1.2 for all predictors.

Positive interaction coefficient = stronger transmission among more active parents.

Outparty thermometer anchored on Gen 2 party ID in 1997 across all waves.

Table 1.24 -- Generation 2 Party Identification in 1973 and 1997

Generation 2 Party Identification, 1973 and 1997 (N = 477)

1973 Party ID	Democrat (1997)	Independent (1997)	Republican (1997)	Row Total
Democrat	150 (64.7%)	9 (3.9%)	73 (31.5%)	232
Independent	31 (34.1%)	18 (19.8%)	42 (46.2%)	91
Republican	29 (18.8%)	7 (4.5%)	118 (76.6%)	154
Column Total	210	34	233	477

Note: Entries are counts with row percentages in parentheses. Party identification collapsed to three categories: Democrat (1–3), Independent (4), Republican (5–7) on the 7-point scale. Gen 2 respondents with valid party ID in both waves. Data: Jennings & Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1965–1997.

Table 1.25-- Direction of Party Identification Change 1973 - 1997

Direction of Party Identification Change, 1973–1997

Category	N	%
Party Stayer (same category 1973 and 1997)	286	60%
Democrat to Republican	73	15.30%
Republican to Democrat	29	6.10%
To or From Independent	89	18.70%
Total	477	100%

Note: Gen 2 respondents with valid 7-point party identification in both 1973 and 1997 (N = 477). Strict switchers (Dem ↔ Rep) = 102 (21.4%). Data: Jennings & Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel, 1965–1997.

Chapter 2: Hovering at the Polls: Do Helicopter Parents Prefer Paternalistic Political Policies?

Abstract

Lakoff's model of political ideology proposes that people's beliefs about how government should operate are grounded in beliefs about how families should operate. Previous research shows the left-right political spectrum can be explained by differences in preferences for nurturant (Democrats) and disciplinarian (Republican) parenting styles. We extend the theory to another dimension, helicopter vs. free range parenting styles. In Study 1 we find parenting attitudes strongly predict paternalistic policy attitudes – more than ideology, party identity, or any other measured demographic variables. In Study 2, we attempt to establish a causal link but find manipulating preferences for helicopter parenting does not influence policy preferences as Lakoff's model would suggest. In Study 3, we identify a latent variable that predicts preferences for paternalism in parenting, policy, and a host of other domains such as business, medicine, and education. We discuss implications for Lakoff's theory, the political psychology of libertarianism/paternalism, and society at large.

Keywords: helicopter parenting, political parties, political metaphors, attitudes, paternalism.

Introduction

For centuries people have used metaphors of family to describe government: Big Brother, Uncle Sam, Founding Fathers, Mother Russia. Indeed, the word patriotism comes from the Greek word *Patris* – father, and languages around the world reference fatherhood when describing the homeland, including Pakistani (*vatan*), Albanian (*adthe*), Somali, (*Dhulka abaa*), Persian (*mihan*), and German (*vaterland*). One might argue that these metaphors are mere rhetorical flourish, but according to conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), metaphors provide a primary means by which our minds understand the world. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argue that metaphors extend beyond the language we use and that “human thought processes are largely metaphorical” (p.4). Indeed, scholars have shown that the metaphors we use can influence political attitudes even more powerfully than ideology or political affiliations (Thibodeau & Boroditsky, 2011; 2013).

Based in the framework that metaphors guide our thinking about the world, and the prominence of family metaphors in political speech, Lakoff has advocated a 'government as family' theory, suggesting that our beliefs about how government should function are based largely in our beliefs about how families should function (Lakoff, 2002; Lakoff, 2008).

Lakoff (2002; 2008) has noted that while both Democrats and Republicans use family metaphors in their rhetoric, the nature of those family metaphors differs by party. He argues that the American political system has two distinct family based moral systems, each representative of a different underlying parental metaphor. According to

Lakoff (2002), in American politics the political parties represent two different kinds of parents. Conservatives have a moral politics that is grounded in a “Strict Father⁴” metaphor, while political liberals have a moral framework that is based in a “Nurturant Parent” metaphor.

Adherents to the Strict Father view of parenting view the world as a dangerous place where survival is difficult, and competition is everywhere. Strict Father frameworks are accepted in order to help children become more self-reliant in order to survive as adults. This model focuses on punishing those who “misbehave” and praises obedience to authority. Extending this to government policy, according to the Strict Father metaphor, the purpose of the justice system is to punish criminal behavior and providing welfare to the poor enables the undesirable behaviors that led to poverty in the first place.

Conversely, the Nurturant Parent model is one that focuses most strongly on empathy, “the primal experience behind this model is being cared for and cared about...and deriving meaning from mutual interaction and care” (Lakoff 2002, p. 108). Children learn morality and how to empathically work with others in the world through a loving attachment to their parents. Self-reliance in a Nurturant Parent home is achieved by emulating the behavior of parents you respect, rather than as a fearful response to punishment. Extending this to government policy, according to the Nurturant Parent metaphor, the purpose of the justice system is rehabilitation and supporting reintegration

⁴ It should be noted that Lakoff makes it clear that the “Strict Father” need not be male, but given this metaphor’s typical association with patriarchal family structure he calls it Strict Father

into society and providing welfare to the poor allows individuals to get back on their feet and reach their potential.

There is empirical support for Lakoff's theory (but see Musolff, 2016 for criticisms). Lakoff (2002; 2008) has documented the widespread use of 'government as family' metaphor in political speech. Other scholars have found more direct evidence in the observation authoritarian parenting styles predict political preferences (Feldman & Stenner, 1997; Barker & Tinnick III, 2006), and that in particular authoritarian parenting correlates with conservatism (Fraley, Griffin, Belsky, & Roisman, 2012). Other researchers have looked outside of the authoritarianism literature; utilizing Rickel and Biasatti's (1982) Child Rearing Practices Report (CRPR), which assesses parental restrictiveness and nurturing, Janoff-Bulman, Carnes, and Sheikh (2014) found evidence that parental restrictiveness was associated with conservatism. Manaf et al. (2014), found similar results among Malaysian students.

In constructing his model of government as family, Lakoff built upon the psychology literature on parenting styles. One of the most influential models of parenting styles was developed by Diana Baumrind (Baumrind D. , 1971; 2012) who categorized parents as either authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, or neglectful. Where the Baumrind taxonomy that serves as the basis for Lakoff's theorizing provides four parenting styles, current models of parenting include more dimensions. These multi-dimensional models are measured using scales that frequently fall along the lines of 1) acceptance/rejection, 2) psychological autonomy/psychological control, and 3) firm control/lax control (e.g. Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012).

One style of parenting that has emerged from this literature is the phenomenon of Helicopter Parenting (Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012). Helicopter parenting has been defined as “a parent who takes an overprotective or excessive interest in the life of their child or children. Helicopter parents are so named because like helicopters they ‘hover overhead’ overseeing every aspect of their child’s life” (Oxford Languages, 2020).

Helicopter parents, like authoritarian parents, exhibit significant controlling behaviors with regard to their children’s lives, but where authoritarian parents tend to be confrontational, helicopter parents tend to be psychologically coercive in their behaviors (Liga, et al., 2017). Due to the high levels of psychological control exhibited by helicopter parents, their children tend to lack autonomy and exhibit problem behaviors during emerging adulthood (Liga, et al., 2017). These behaviors include a lack of self-efficacy, a sense of entitlement, retreat from institutions like marriage, and increased incidences of anxiety/depression (LeMoyne & Buchanan, 2011; Givertz & Segrin, 2014; Willoughby, Hersh, Padilla-Walker, & Nelson, 2015). The effects of Helicopter Parenting have also begun to affect interactions in the workplace (Karl & Peluchette, 2016) and the well-being of college students. Children of helicopter parents have been found to have higher levels of academic entitlement, decreased student engagement, and lower levels of satisfaction with life (Schiffrin, Liss, Miles-McLean, Geary, & Erchull, 2014; Knepp, 2016; Turner & McCormick, 2017; Kouros, Pruitt, Ekas, & Kiriaki, 2017). This literature demonstrates that Helicopter Parenting is a valid and distinctive construct that influences other aspects of parents and children’s lives (Nelson, Padilla-Walker, & Nielson, 2015; Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012; Segrin, Woszidlo, Givertz, &

Montgomery, 2013; Segrin, Givertz, Swaitkowski, & Montgomery, 2015). Despite the rise in scholarship regarding how helicopter parenting affects children raised under such conditions, there is a dearth of research examining the relationship between helicoptering and other psychological constructs. There is some evidence that those raised by helicopter parents favor more interventionist policies (Milita & Bunch, 2017) and that parenting styles influence the effectiveness of transmission of political ideology (Murray & Mulvaney, 2012), but not an examination of how the multiple dimensions parenting metaphor might influence preferences. If we take Lakoff's notion of "government as family" seriously, then we might expect to see parenting dimensions aside from those explored by Lakoff (Nurturant vs. Disciplinarian) similarly influencing political attitudes. Helicopter parenting is orthogonal to Lakoff's proposed parental metaphors; a parent can be over-involved and supportive or over-involved and corrective. If, as Lakoff posits, parenting style and political attitudes are related, then we would expect to observe a link between helicoptering and preference for paternalistic government /policies, while free-range parenting styles yield a preference for libertarian policies.

It should be noted here that we use the terms helicopter parenting and free-range parenting to represent polar extremes on a psychological dimension. Despite the emotional weight they carry, they are useful terms for examination because of their common usage in everyday speech, allowing readers to link our construct to existing

schemas⁵. Both terms can be viewed as politically charged and derogatory, but as Sunstein and Thaler (2003) have pointed out many of the derogatory uses of the term are based on false assumptions regarding the necessity of some paternalism in policies⁶. We define paternalism using Gerald Dworkin's (1972) definition, which is that paternalism is "the interference with a person's liberty of action justified by reasons referring exclusively to the welfare, good, happiness, needs, interests or values of the person being coerced."⁷ We do not imply any positive or negative valence in the use of the terms; for our purposes they are merely descriptive.

There is some evidence that those raised by Helicopter Parents prefer government surveillance and paternalistic state policies (Milita & Bunch, 2017). However, while Milita & Bunch and Murray & Mulvaney examined the connection between how one was raised and their policy preferences, here we examine how the family metaphor itself influences policy preferences. In other words, to the extent that the 'government as family' model of political thought is true, people who believe that the role of parents includes exerting more control over their children should also believe that the role of a

⁵ Both helicopter parenting and free-range parenting can have positive and negative impacts on children, however a review of parenting outcomes based on helicopter or free-range parenting styles is beyond the scope of this paper.

⁶ Critiques of paternalism date at least back to John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* where he argued that it was wrong to deny an individual's agency if the goal was to protect them from themselves (Mill, 1978). Defenders of liberal paternalism include Cass Sunstein and Richard Thaler, as well as William Galston, who pointed out that a defense of paternalism doesn't deny the value of individual sovereignty but "it is to deny that the noncoerced pursuit of the bad enjoys priority in principle over the coerced pursuit of the good" (Galston, 1982, pg. 624).

⁷ Dworkin's definition of paternalism has been critiqued by Sunstein, but it provides a good basis for discussion as the defense of paternalism often begins with this definition as a jumping off point.

government includes exerting more control over its citizens. This is the fundamental question we aimed to explore in this paper.

Study 1a

Study 1a attempted to establish whether or not preference for a helicopter parenting style predicts preference for paternalistic policy. All studies were approved by Institutional review boards at Carnegie Mellon University and the University of California, Los Angeles.

Participants. 99 respondents were recruited using Amazon's Mechanical Turk during the second week of January 2017 (Review, 2022). As is common in M-Turk samples, the groups are disproportionately Democratic, White, and have more education than the population as a whole. However, the sample did contain representation across the political, racial, and education spectrum (for detailed demographics, see Table 1). Although we did not specifically target parents in our M-Turk recruitment (as our construct of interest was beliefs about optimal parenting, not actual parenting style) nearly half of our sample had children.

Table 2.1 –Sample Demographics for Studies 1 and 2

Table 1: Sample Characteristics for Study 1 and 2				
	<u>Study 1a</u>	<u>Study 1b</u>	<u>Study 2a</u>	<u>Study 2b</u>
Democrats	49	45	72	139
Republicans	24	22	30	60
Independents/Leaners	22	28	37	84
No Preference	4	4	9	18
White	73	78	108	217
Black	9	6	12	25
Hispanic	9	3	5	15
Asian/Pacific Islander	5	9	13	28
Mixed Race/Other	3	3	9	16
Male	50	52	76	159
Average Age (Years)	36.5	35.48	36.15	36.11
Have Children	44	36	61	113
Associate's Degree +	60	71	104	182
N	99	99	147	301

Measures

Lindke/Oppenheimer Helicopter Parenting Preferences Scale

Since to our knowledge no validated measures of helicopter parenting preferences existed prior to the present research, we developed the scale from scratch (for details on scale construction procedure, see Appendix 1). Participants rated a set of 19 items describing concrete parenting behaviors on a scale of 1 (completely appropriate) to 9 (completely inappropriate). Examples of the statements the respondents evaluated include: “filling out a child’s college applications for him/her to ensure s/he has the best chance to attend a good school,” and “giving a child an allowance with no restrictions” (reverse scored).

(See Appendix 1 for a complete list of items of this and all other scales). We then combined and averaged these items for each respondent to give them a helicopter parenting preference score.

Lindke/Oppenheimer Age Norms

An alternate operationalization of helicopter parenting preferences explored parents' beliefs about what age it was appropriate for children to engage in a variety of activities without parental supervision. Examples include: "at what age is it okay to allow a child to ride a bicycle alone to a friend's house more than two blocks away," "at what age is it okay to allow a child to cross the street without holding hands with an adult," and "at what age is it okay for a child to go on a romantic date without adult supervision?" The Age Norms scale consisted of 23 items. We then combined and averaged these items for each respondent to give them an age norms score.

Lindke/Oppenheimer Paternalistic Policy Preference Scale

Since to our knowledge no validated measures of paternalistic policy preferences existed prior to the present research, we developed the scale from scratch. We compiled the examples that we had gleaned, along with several that we brainstormed into a set of 28 concrete policy statements, such as "I support laws that require homeowners to install carbon monoxide detectors in their personal residence". We also added 4 general policy statements such as "I believe it is the government's job to protect its citizens from engaging in unhealthy eating behaviors" for a total of 32 items (see Appendix 1 for full list of items). Respondents were asked how they felt about each policy scale on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree/oppose) to 7 (strongly agree/support) about a particular policy

statement. We then combined and averaged these items for each respondent to give them a paternalistic policy preference score.

Padilla-Walker & Nelson Parenting Scale

In their study evaluating helicopter parenting as a distinct behavior from other forms of parental control, Laura M. Padilla-Walker and Larry J. Nelson (2012) designed a 14-item scale measuring three different elements of parental behavior. The scale's questions asked respondents to evaluate whether a certain behavior sounded like something their parents would do, rather than asking whether they believed that a particular behavior is appropriate. In other words, this scale measures whether a participant was him/herself helicopter parented, rather than about the participants' preferred parenting style. We slightly modified the Padilla-Walker/Nelson scale by merely asking our respondents whether it sounded like something "their parents" have done (rather than asking about mothers and fathers individually). Statements on this scale include statements like "My parents intervened in settling disputes with my roommates or friends", and "My parents tried to set rules about what I did with my free time". We then combined and averaged these items for each respondent to give them a parental behavior score.

Social Conformity Authoritarianism Scale

The Feldman (2003) Social Conformity scale is a sixteen-item instrument which predicts authoritarian tendencies. This scale gives respondents paired qualities and asks them to select the one they most agree with in the pair. For example, "students must be encouraged to question established authorities and criticize the customs and traditions of society" would be paired with "one of the major aims of education should be to give

students a few simple rules of behavior to make them better citizens”. We selected the five items from the scale which line up with the items in the American National Election Studies child rearing scale (Feldman & Stenner, 1997) We then combined these items to create a scale of 0 to 5 based on Feldman and Stenner’s work.

Scale Reliability

All of the scales achieved reasonable to excellent internal reliability (Helicopter Parenting Preferences ($\alpha = .785$), Age Norms ($\alpha = .903$), and Paternalism Norms ($\alpha = .913$), Padilla-Walker Scale ($\alpha = .820$), Feldman Social Conformity Scale ($\alpha = .6663$)).

Procedure

After filling out a consent form, respondents completed i) the Helicopter Parenting Preferences Scale, ii) the Age Norms Scale, iii) The Padilla-Walker & Nelson Scale (how much the respondent’s parents engaged in helicopter behaviors), iv) the Feldman Social Conformity Scale (authoritarian child rearing), and v) the Paternalistic Policy Preference Scale. We used the political party question from the ANES to determine respondent’s political affiliation and asked respondents to evaluate their political ideology (liberal to conservative) on a 7-point Likert Scale. Items within each scale were asked in a random order and the order of scales were randomized by participant.

Results

Respondents’ attitudes toward paternalistic government policy were significantly correlated with both the Helicopter Parenting Preferences scale ($r = .413$, $p < .001$) and the Age Norms Scale ($r = .308$, $p < .01$). The relationship between Helicopter Parenting

Preferences and Age Norms, while statistically significant ($r = .324, p < .01$), was lower than expected⁸. Interestingly, we found that both Helicopter Parenting Preferences Scale and the Age Norms Scale were significantly correlated with conservatism in Ideology (r 's $> .223, p$'s $< .01$) but were not significantly correlated with political Party preference (r 's $< .10, p$'s $> .10$). This is consistent with the Political Science literature which finds that Party and Ideology, while strongly correlated, are distinct (Barber & Pope, 2018). Additionally, this aligns with the notion that Helicopter Parenting Preference represents another dimension of parenting which may influence political choices in a different direction than Lakoff's Strict Disciplinarian and Nurturing Parent framework suggests. (For complete correlation matrix, see Table 2.2)

Table 2.2 –Correlation Coefficients for Measures

	Helicopter	Age Norms	Authoritarianism	Paternalism	Padilla Walker	Padilla Helicopter	Padilla Behavior	Padilla Psychological	Party	Ideology
Helicopter Parenting Preferences	1									
Age Norms	0.324**	1								
Authoritarianism	0.231*	0.193	1							
Paternalism	0.413***	0.308**	0.205	1						
Padilla Walker	0.520***	0.303**	0.049	0.401***	1					
Padilla Helicopter	0.619***	0.330***	-0.028	0.492***	0.762***	1				
Padilla Behavior	0.457***	0.360***	0.172	0.325**	0.871***	0.553***	1			
Padilla Psychological	0.199	-0.015	-0.037	0.183	0.759***	0.305**	0.505***	1		
Party	0.025	-0.025	0.320**	-0.326**	-0.198	-0.255*	-0.082	-0.12	1	
Ideology	0.223*	0.346***	0.430***	-0.128	-0.024	-0.023	0.044	-0.074	0.723***	1

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

We next regressed respondent's Helicopter Parenting Preference against their preference for Paternalistic Policies (Table 2.3). When examined without any control

⁸ We conducted an exploratory analysis where we combined these two measures into a single scale – the effects we report here become stronger when the scales are combined, however we chose to adopt a more conservative approach because the correlation was low enough that we did not feel comfortable combining them into a single scale for the primary analysis.

variables, the coefficient for Helicopter Parenting Preference's⁹ contribution to preference for Paternalistic Policies was .413 ($p < .001$). We then controlled for Party, Ideology, Gender, Race, Education, and whether the respondent had children. This increased the explanatory power of our model and slightly increased the contribution of Helicopter Parenting Preferences to .423 ($p < .001$). Party was also a significant contributor ($\beta = -.187$, $p < .05$) but Ideology was not (see Table 3 for complete regression).

Table 2.3 –Influence of Variables in Determining Preference for Paternalism

Independent Variables	Paternalism (Model 1)	Paternalism (Model 2)
Helicopter Parenting Preference	.413 (.100)***	.423 (.109)***
Party		-.187 (.082)*
Ideology		.027 (.078)
Male		-.231 (.213)
White		-.224 (.233)
Education		-.013 (.082)
Has Child(ren)		.205 (.203)
Constant	2.12 (.379)***	2.87 (.530) ***
Adjusted R ²	.160	.273
Mean VIF		1.86

Note: Entries are regression coefficients with standard errors in parantheses. * = $p < .05$,

** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$

Discussion

Helicopter Parenting Preference was strongly associated with people's attitudes toward paternalistic policies. In fact, in our regression we found it was the strongest correlate of paternalistic attitudes, and by a wide margin. This provides some preliminary support that Lakoff's model generalizes beyond the Nurturant vs.

⁹ When we examined Age Norms in lieu of Helicopter Parenting Preference, the pattern was qualitatively similar, but failed to reach standard thresholds for statistical significance.

Disciplinarian parenting models, and beyond the traditional left/right ideological dichotomy.

While the libertarian/paternalism axis is conceptually distinct from the liberal Conservative parent axis, such conceptual distinctions do not always bear out empirically. It could be paternalistic policy preferences are merely a proxy for the well-established conservative/liberal distinction. After all, libertarians have often aligned with conservatives and are widely considered to be part of the Republican coalition (Boaz & Kirby, 2006). Indeed, many political scientists conceptualize ideology as a single dimension (Carmines & D'Amico, 2015).

If this were the case, then given the common finding that disciplinarian parenting styles predict conservatism (Janoff-Bulman, Carnes, & Sheikh, 2014), it may be that Lakoff's original one-dimensional parenting model is just as predictive (or even more predictive) of attitudes toward libertarianism/paternalism than helicopter parenting. Study 1b aimed to test whether disciplinarian parenting attitudes predict attitudes toward paternalism as well, or better, than helicopter parenting preferences. To do this, we replicated Study 1a, but using established measures of Disciplinarian/Nurturant parenting styles in lieu of the Helicopter Parenting Preferences Scale. If those established scales show a different relationship with paternalistic government preference than we saw when using helicoptering preference scales, that would suggest that the constructs are, in fact, distinct.

Study 1b

Participants. 99 respondents were recruited during the third week of March 2017 from Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Demographic characteristics were similar to that of Study 1a (see Table 1 for full demographic details).

Measures and Methods

Rickel and Biasatti (1982) Child Rearing Practices Report (CRPR): The CRPR is a multi-item scale that is frequently used in research to assess parenting styles and is divided into two sections which measure restrictive parenting and nurturing parental behavior, respectively. The first 22 items constitute the Restrictiveness scale and include items such as: "Thought a child should be seen and not heard," "children should be aware of how much their parents sacrifice for them," "believed that scolding and criticism make a child improve."

The last 18 items on the scale measure Nurturance and include statements like: "encourage their children to be curious, to explore, and question things," "find some of their greatest satisfaction in their children," and "respect their children's opinions and encourage them to express them." All questions used a 7-point Likert scale with 1 being "not at all" like my parents and 7 being "very much so" like my parents. Following Janoff-Bulman, Carnes, and Sheikh's (2014) methodology, we considered the Restrictiveness and Nurturance scales independently. For both the Restrictiveness and Nurturance scales we averaged the answers to create a measure of each construct.

These styles correspond with Lakoff's (2002) parental metaphor model. Following Janoff-Bulman, Carnes, and Sheikh (2014) in their examination of the link between having strict parents and political conservatism, we used a modified scale that

asked respondents use the scale to describe their parents' behavior and not their own. Unlike Janoff-Bulman, Carnes, and Sheikh (2014) we measured Party and Ideology separately because of our finding in study 1a that Party and Ideology correlated in different ways with our Helicopter Preferences measurement.

Both the Nurturance Scale ($\alpha = .953$) and the Restrictiveness Scale ($\alpha = .901$) of the CRPR had excellent internal reliability.

Procedure.

Study 1b was identical to Study 1a with one notable exception: we replaced the Lindke/Oppenheimer Helicopter Parenting Preferences and Age Norms scales with Rickel and Biasatti's (1982) Child Rearing Practices Report (CRPR) as described above.

Results

We regressed respondent's preference for Restrictive and Nurturing parenting styles against their preference for Paternalistic Policies (Table 4). When examined without any control variables, neither the coefficient for Disciplinary Parenting ($\beta = .138, p > .1$) nor Nurturant Parenting ($\beta = .034, p > .1$) appreciably contributed to preferences for paternalistic policies. We then controlled for Party, Ideology, Gender, Race, Education, and whether the respondent had children. This increased the explanatory power of our model and slightly increased the contribution of Disciplinary Parenting to marginal significance ($\beta = .198, p < .1$), although Nurturant Parenting was still not predictive ($\beta = .058, p > .1$) As in Study 1a, Party was a significant contributor ($\beta = -.182, p < .05$) but Ideology was not (see Table 4 for complete regression).

Table 2.4 –Influence of Variables in Determining Preference for Paternalism

Independent Variables	Paternalism (Model 1)	Paternalism (Model 2)
Restrictiveness	.138 (.101)	.198 (.102)+
Nurturing	.034 (.077)	.058 (.077)
Party		-.182 (.072)*
Ideology		.065 (.073)
Male		.004 (.202)
White		-.235 (.243)
Education		-.014 (.079)
Has Child(ren)		.097 (.209)
Constant	3.05 (.553)***	3.39 (.209)***
Adjusted R ²	-.001	.082
Mean VIF	1.19	1.54

Note: Entries are regression coefficients with standard errors in parantheses.

+ = $p < .10$, * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$

Discussion

In Study 1b we examined whether Disciplinary or Nurturant parenting styles could predict paternalistic policy preferences. While there were marginally significant results, suggesting the possibility that a higher power study may have found a statistically reliable relationship, the magnitude of such a relationship was much smaller than the relationship between preferences for helicoptering parenting style and preferences for paternalistic policies that we found in Study 1a. There was no relationship between Nurturing and preference for paternalism. Moreover, we replicated the (relatively small) relationship between Party and paternalistic preferences, with Democrats once again showing more pro-paternalism attitudes.

In Study 1a we found that preference for helicopter parenting style is strongly associated with paternalistic policy preferences, and in fact correlates more strongly than more standard political variables such as party or ideology. In Study 1b we found that the association to be stronger than previous parental metaphors that have been proposed.

However, according to Lakoff's model, parenting metaphor is not merely associated with political attitude, but rather causal. This leads to the hypothesis that to the extent that an intervention changes an individual's parenting preferences, it should also influence their policy preferences. Thus, in Study 2 our goal is to use priming to manipulate preferences for helicopter parenting, and, if Lakoff's model is correct, this should also affect attitudes toward paternalistic policy.

However, before we can test this logic, we first needed to establish that preferences for helicopter parenting styles are, in fact, malleable. If parenting preferences are stable and resistant to manipulation, then interventions to test the causality of the system may not be possible. Thus, Study 2a developed and assessed an intervention to influence attitudes towards helicopter parenting.

Study 2a

Participants. We recruited 150 respondents using Amazon's Mechanical Turk service during March of 2017. As is common in M-Turk samples, the sample is disproportionately Democratic, White, and has more education than the population as a whole. However, the sample did contain representation across the political, racial, and education spectrum (for detailed demographics, see Table 1). Although we did not specifically target parents in our M-Turk recruitment (as our construct of interest was beliefs about optimal parenting, not actual parenting style) approximately 40% of our sample had children.

Measures and Methods

To determine whether Helicopter Parenting attitudes are malleable, we used newspaper articles to prime respondents to shift their support of Helicopter Parenting behaviors. We theorized exposing respondents to an article describing Helicopter Parenting in a negative light would lead to less support of Helicopter Parenting behaviors.

The Anti-Helicopter prime involved an article from PRNewswire (2016) that described inappropriate helicopter parenting behaviors during job interviews. The article opened by describing how employers found these behaviors to be unacceptable and ended with expert quotes on how this sort of parental behavior undermined children's job searches. The bulk of the article gave examples of such behaviors, such as "'One parent asked if she could do the interview for her child because he had somewhere else to be.'" The article was edited for length, and the version presented to participants was approximately 300 words.

We also prepared two variants of the article to function as controls. In the "interview etiquette" control, we modified the article to discuss unprofessional attire at job interviews – which kept constant the notion of inappropriate behavior in an interview situation, but which made no referencing to parenting, thus ensuring that any effects are not due to problematic workplace behavior being primed. We harvested the examples for this article from websites identified through google searches for inappropriate attire at job interviews, such as "I once had a guy show up to an interview in gym clothes *post* workout. It was really easy to tell he had worked up a sweat, especially in the teeny tiny interview room". In the "bad parenting" control, we modified the article to discuss

problematic parenting behaviors that were not helicoptering specific and occurred outside the context of a job interview, thus ensuring that any effects are not due to criticism of parenting styles more generally. We harvested the examples for this article from websites identified through google searches for bad parenting examples, for example “At a restaurant, a young girl orders milk. Her mom says ‘no, just give her a coke - there are no free refills on the milk.’” Full text for all three articles can be found in Appendix 2.

Respondents were randomly assigned one of the three different articles. Upon reading the articles, participants evaluated on a 1-7 Likert scale a) how well written, b) how easy to understand, and c) how interesting the article was, relative to other posts on social media. We included these questions to prevent participants from guessing the true purpose of having them read the article, and as a distractor task.

All participants then completed the Helicopter Preferences ($\alpha = .752$) and Age Norms ($\alpha = .862$) surveys described in Study 1, the Padilla-Walker & Nelson Scale ($\alpha = .888$) (i.e. to what extent did your parents engage in helicopter behaviors) and reported demographics, as described in the Participant section above.

Results and Discussion.

Two participants were dropped entirely from the sample, one for answering “5” to all questions in the survey and one for being an outlier – giving answers to Age Norms questions primarily in the 40’s (which, given questions about when a child should no longer have parental enforced bedtimes or be allowed to use a public restroom without parental oversight seemed like evidence of faulty responding). Additionally, three individual observations were removed from the Age Norms survey for obvious typos

(“N”, “1110” and “100” respectively). Occasionally a respondent left a question blank; such missing information was resolved by replacing that item with the scale-mean for the participant.

The anti-helicopter prime provided participants with negative examples of helicopter parenting with the aim of reducing their preference for helicopter parenting styles. Thus, we expected participants exposed to the anti-helicopter prime to score lower on the preference for helicopter parenting scale than participants in either of the two control conditions. This is exactly what we found. Independent samples one-tailed *t*-tests revealed that responses on the Helicopter Preferences scale for the Anti-Helicoptering prime ($x = 4.16$, $s.d. = 0.86$) were significantly lower than responses on the Interview Etiquette control ($x = 4.51$, $s.d. = 1.01$; $t(97) = 1.86$, $p = .033$) and the Bad Parenting Control ($x = 4.52$, $s.d. = 0.77$; $t(94) = 2.14$, $p = .017$)¹⁰. There were no differences between the two control conditions ($t(99) = .02$, $p = .49$.) Independent samples one-tailed *t*-tests also revealed that responses on the Age Norms scale for the Anti-Helicoptering prime ($x = 12.87$, $s.d. = 1.40$) were significantly lower than responses on the Interview Etiquette control ($x = 13.56$, $s.d. = 1.67$; $t(97) = 2.19$, $p = .015$) and the Bad Parenting Control ($x = 13.44$, $s.d. = 1.67$; $t(94) = 1.78$, $p = .04$). Again, there were no differences between the control conditions ($t(99) = 0.37$, $p = .36$). Finally, independent samples one-tailed *t*-tests also revealed that responses on the Padilla-Walker

¹⁰ We also ran an exploratory regression controlling for demographic variables; while the qualitative trends are the same, the findings when controlling for ideology, partisanship, race, gender, and age, are only marginally significant ($.05 < p < .10$). We do not know why controlling for these factors weakens the effects as we had no a priori reason to believe that they would do so but report the finding in the interest of open-science.

& Nelson Test ($x = 1.72$, $sd = 0.74$) were significantly lower than for the Interview Etiquette Control ($x = 2.23$, $sd = 0.91$; $t(97) = 3.05$, $p = .002$) and the Bad Parenting Control ($x = 2.14$, $sd = 0.94$; $t(94) = 2.4$, $p = .009$). There were no differences between the control conditions ($t(99) = .515$, $p = .61$)

Study 2a revealed that Helicopter Parenting attitudes as measured by our scales are indeed malleable. Respondents who read about egregious helicopter parenting behaviors subsequently gave lower evaluations of the appropriateness of more mainstream helicopter parenting behaviors and reported being more willing to allow children to engage in various agentic behaviors unsupervised at younger ages. Notably, none of the specific behaviors described in the Helicopter Preferences or Age Norms surveys were described in the anti-helicoptering article, suggesting that participants were generalizing the lessons from the article to parenting behaviors more generally. Moreover, these observed changes in attitudes toward helicopter parenting style were not observed when respondents read about negative parenting behaviors (unrelated to helicoptering) or inappropriate etiquette behaviors more generally.

Having established that helicopter attitudes are malleable and having developed a paradigm to manipulate them, we can return to Lakoff's model of parental metaphor as a driver of political attitudes. According to Lakoff (2012), our political beliefs are largely shaped, via metaphor, by our beliefs about parenthood. Thus, to the extent that an intervention changes people's parenting beliefs, that intervention should also influence people's policy preferences. In Study 2b, we explore this possibility – we again prime participants to hold anti-helicopter parenting attitudes, a manipulation we now know to

be effective (based on Study 2a), but here instead of measuring the effect of the prime on parenting beliefs, we measure the effect of the prime on preferences for paternalistic government policy.

Study 2b

Participants: Participants were recruited during March 2017. Anticipating that effects would likely be weaker given that the causal pathway involves more processing stages than in Study 2a (i.e. three steps instead of two: priming anti-helicoptering → anti-helicoptering attitudes → anti-paternalism attitudes) we doubled the number of participants sampled from the 150 total respondents in Study 2a to 300. As in Study 2a, participants were randomly assigned to the experimental (anti-helicopter) condition, the bad parenting control, or the interview etiquette control. As before, our sample skewed Democratic, White, and more educated than the population as a whole. However, the sample did contain representation across the political, racial, and education spectrum, and contained a non-trivial number of parents (for detailed demographics, see Table 1).

Materials and Procedure. The primes and priming procedure were the same as those used in Study 2a. However, upon completing the primes, respondents filled out the Paternalistic Policy Preference Scale ($\alpha = .908$) as the primary dependent measure. In all other ways, this study was identical to Study 2a.

Results and Discussion. There were four participants who took less than 2 minutes to complete the entire study (including reading the prime, completing the surveys and demographics), which was unrealistic for diligent participants. As such, we dropped

those 4 participants from the sample¹¹. No additional participants were excluded from the sample. As in Study 2a, missing data was resolved by filling in the scale mean for that item.

In Study 2a, the anti-helicopter prime had reduced participant's preferences for helicopter parenting styles. Thus, based on Lakoff's model, we expected participants exposed to the anti-helicopter prime to (via metaphor) hold less positive attitudes toward paternalistic policies (and hence score lower on the Paternalistic Policy Preference Scale) than participants in either of the two control conditions. This is not what we found. Independent sample one-tailed t-tests showed that respondents in the Anti-Helicopter Prime Condition ($x = 3.75$, $s.d. = 0.98$) showed no significant differences in paternalistic government attitudes than those in either the Bad Parenting Condition ($x = 3.62$, $s.d. = 0.95$; $t(198) = 1.08$, $p = .14$) nor the Job Etiquette Condition ($x = 3.71$, $s.d. = 0.91$; $t(195) = .402$, $p = .68$). The two control conditions also did not differ from one another ($t(195) = .68$, $p = .50$).

Despite the high naturalistic relationship between attitudes toward helicopter parenting and attitudes toward paternalistic government (as shown in Study 1a), we found no evidence to suggest that manipulating the former impacts that latter.

There are several possible explanations for this null result. It is possible that the study was insufficiently powered to detect an effect – although given the fact that the

¹¹ Including those participants does not qualitatively change the results.

sample size was double that of Study 2a where we found reliable effects, that seems unlikely. Nonetheless, our sample sizes to this point were smaller than ideal, a problem that we rectified in Study 3.

Alternatively, it could be that the findings in study 2a were an artifact of experimental demand. Perhaps, for example, participants' attitudes toward helicopter parenting did not change in Study 2a, but rather the primes affected their willingness to honestly report their attitudes (i.e. they were embarrassed to say they approved of helicoptering after reading cases in which helicoptering was problematic). In that case, asking about seemingly unrelated topics such as attitudes toward government policy would not be susceptible to such demand effects. While this is possible, the fact that Study 2a also found effects on responses to the Padilla-Walker Nelson Scale, which does not reflect on one's own parenting behaviors, suggests that it is not a likely cause of the null result.

A third possibility is that political attitudes are resistant to influence. People may have stable political attitudes that are not subject to lab based environmental influence. However, this also seems unlikely given the large literature in psychology on the malleability of political attitudes, in which seemingly trivial environmental features can change people's political attitudes and behaviors (Berger, Meredith, & Wheeler, 2008; Hall, Strandberg, Pärnamets, Tärning, & Johansson, 2013). For a review, see Oppenheimer & Edwards (2012).

Finally, it may be that Lakoff's model is incorrect or does not generalize beyond the nurturant/disciplinarian parenting dimension and the left/right political dimension. For example, it may be that the link between parenting attitudes and political attitudes is not causal. Lakoff's theorizing was based on linguistic observations – that politicians from different parties use different family metaphors (Lakoff, 2002). Subsequent work has also been correlational in nature, examining ideology and partisanship of people who hold nurturant or disciplinarian parenting attitudes (Janoff-Bulman, Carnes, & Sheikh, 2014; Manaf, Omar, & Orthman, 2014). While causation has been assumed, there has been a surprising paucity of work looking to establish causation between parental attitudes and political attitudes.¹²

Could it be that the frequently observed relationship between parental attitudes and political attitudes is due to a third variable? Given our interest in paternalism and the fact that paternalistic preferences might be situational, in Study 3 we aimed to explore whether there might be a latent personality variable that unites attitudes toward parenting, policy, and perhaps many other life domains.

To do this, we draw a metaphor to intelligence research. Intelligence researchers have explored a wide range of cognitive abilities and have found that people who perform well on one cognitive task consistently perform well on most other cognitive tasks

¹² It is also possible that the causal arrow points the other way – political attitudes cause parental attitudes. We ran a set of studies to investigate this possibility and found no evidence in support. Because these studies are not conclusive and are tangential to the main focus of the manuscript, we leave them out of the current manuscript. Details available upon request from the authors.

(Spearman, 1927). Indeed, scholars have found a single factor – known as general *g* – accounts for more than half the variance in individual differences in cognition (Carroll, 1993; Carroll, 2003), and that *g* predicts performance across spatial, mathematical, verbal, intrapersonal, interpersonal, musical, kinesthetic, and many other tasks (Undheim & Gustafsson, 1987; Wechsler, 1997). While there has been a great deal of controversy about the nature of general *g* and what it represents, for our purposes it does not matter. We are merely drawing an analogy: just as there is a latent construct that predicts many types of cognitive abilities, we posit that there may be a latent factor that predicts paternalistic preferences over a wide range of domains.

It is worth noting that it is also quite possible paternalism could be domain specific rather than domain general. Many individual difference constructs are domain specific. For example, measures of risk tolerance consistently show that risk taking in financial domains is different from risk taking in social domains which in turn is different than risk taking in health/safety domains (Blais & Weber, 2006). Indeed, the Domain Specific Risk Tolerance Scale (DOSPERT; Weber, Blais, & Betz, 2002), has shown that within subject variance in risk seeking across domains is seven times as large as between-subject variance (c.f. Blais & Weber, 2006). Similarly, it is plausible that paternalistic tendencies are domain specific, and that there is no single underlying construct that captures proclivity toward paternalism.

In Study 3, we aim to determine whether paternalistic preferences are domain specific or domain general.

Study 3

Study 3 had three major goals. First, we aimed to replicate the findings of Study 1a on a larger and more representative sample to ensure that our original findings were not a fluke. Studies 1 and 2 involved relatively small samples for research in individual differences, and was skewed heavily toward liberals, which could bias results; in Study 3, we recruited a much larger sample that more closely mimicked the political demographics of the population. Second, we aimed to create and validate measures of paternalistic preferences across a wider array of domains than had previously been studied. To this end, we created seven new scales to measure paternalism across a wide range of domains. Finally, we aimed to determine whether a single construct could effectively account for paternalistic attitudes across social domains, or if the strong relationship between policy and parenting is unique/special. To accomplish this, we used factor analysis to identify how many factors underlie paternalistic preferences across domains – a single factor, as in intelligence research, or many domain specific factors as in risk tolerance.

Anticipating the possibility of a single factor structure, we also explored discriminant validity in order to identify whether preference for paternalism could be collapsed under the umbrella of other, more well-established constructs. In particular, we used measures of self-efficacy (Sherer, et al., 1982) and Horizontal and Vertical scales of Individualism and Collectivism (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). Moreover, the literature on helicopter parenting has established strong links between helicoptering and self-efficacy

(LeMoyne & Buchanan, 2011; Givertz & Segrin, 2014; Willoughby, Hersh, Padilla-Walker, & Nelson, 2015).

Given that our construct is about restriction of agency, it seemed plausible that it could be highly related to (or part of) the construct of self-efficacy. Individuals who feel low self-efficacy might be more inclined to relinquish agency to others, as they do not feel competent to achieve their goals on their own. Indeed, people who have high self-efficacy prefer to exercise self-control (Bandura, 1999), which could lead them to resent being subjected to paternalism.

Alternatively, the construct could be related to (or part of) the construct of individualism vs. collectivism. After all, a primary characteristic of individualism is the desire to exert individual choice (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), which could plausibly lead to an aversion to paternalism. Indeed, one of the primary features of individualism is “self-reliance” (Triandis, Leung, Villareal, & Clack, 1985; Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucca, 1988) a preference that is diametrically opposed to the notion of paternalism (but see Markus & Kitayama, 2003, for nuanced discussion about the relationship between individualism and agency).

To foreshadow results, preference for paternalism across domains was best accounted for with a single factor structure, and that factor was orthogonal to both self-efficacy and individualism/collectivism.

Participants and Participant Exclusions:

Based on Comrey and Lee's (1992) guidelines for factor analysis sample size and knowing we would be forced to exclude some of our sample for pre-determined reasons (see below), we aimed to collect data from 1650 participants. Qualtrics Research Services was contracted to recruit 1650 participants selected to be representative of the US adult population in political affiliation, parental status (parent vs. non-parent) and income. Panel members were recruited by Qualtrics and were informed of the expected time commitment and compensation, but not of the research topic so as to avoid self-selection biases. Although the sample was intended to be nationally representative, it skewed female (59%) and white (85%). The sample also skewed more highly educated than the US population, with more participants achieving terminal degrees, and fewer with less than a high school education. Due to a programming error, incomplete data was collected on income, although this tends to correlate highly with education levels (Tamborini, Kim, & Sakamoto, 2015).

Participant ages ranged from 18-95 years old (median = 62). Nearly 60% of the sample had children, with the number of children ranging from 1-9 (median = 2). The sample was 26% Republican, 30% Democrat, with the remainder unaffiliated, making it representative of political demographics in the United States. See Table 5 for complete demographic data and for a breakdown of self-reported ideology.

Exclusion criteria were pre-determined before the study was run and we included a strong attention check in which respondents were directed using the following directions, "I have read this question. If you have actually read this question all the way

through, please do not click on the 1-7 scale below and instead click on the words ‘Strongly agree’ in the last answer choice” Participants were excluded from the survey if they clicked on the 1-7 scale rather than the words ‘strongly agree. Four hundred and nine participants failed the attention check, which is consistent with failure rates reported in prior literature (Oppenheimer, Meyvis, & Davidenko, 2009), leading to a final sample of 1,243. Demographic and ideological breakdowns were comparable between the full sample and analysis sample. As a robustness check we analyzed the data both with and without the excluded participants and the results were not appreciably different.

Table 2.5 –Study 3 Demographics

Variable	Value	Analysis Sample (n=1243)	Full Sample (n=1651)
Gender	Male	449	613
	Female	793	1037
	Other	1	1
Race	White	1084	1400
	Black or African American	64	107
	Other/Mixed	94	140
	NA	1	4
Education Level	Less than High School Degree	7	10
	High School Graduate (or GED Equivalent)	156	217
	Some College but No Degree	258	342
	Associate Degree in College (2-year)	138	173
	Bachelor's Degree in College (4-year)	364	488
	Master's Degree	244	321
	Doctoral Degree	32	39
	Professional Degree (JD, MD)	44	59
	NA	0	2
Parents Educational Level	Less than High School Degree	80	101
	High School Graduate (or GED Equivalent)	400	529
	Some College but No Degree	187	253
	Associate Degree in College (2-year)	113	148
	Bachelor's Degree in College (4-year)	250	346
	Master's Degree	135	177
	Doctoral Degree	30	36
	Professional Degree (JD, MD)	48	61
Have Children	No	481	657
	Yes	758	990
	NA	4	4
Political Ideology	Extremely Liberal	70	96
	Liberal	159	219
	Somewhat Liberal	187	240
	Neither Liberal nor Conservative	307	434
	Somewhat Conservative	207	276
	Conservative	195	247
	Extremely Conservative	102	127
	NA	16	22

Stimuli and Method.

A series of scales was developed to measure paternalistic preferences across a number of domains of potential paternalistic behaviors: Teachers, Clergy, Doctors, Peers, Coaches, Employers, and Caregivers (i.e. children looking after their elderly parents). Each question asked participants whether certain paternalistic behaviors are appropriate (e.g. “To what extent is it appropriate for a child to put a camera in the home of an

elderly parent so that they can monitor their parent's safety and notify the authorities in case of emergency?") or the extent to which an authority held responsibility for the well-being of another individual (e.g. "To what extent is it the responsibility of an employer ensure its employees are saving adequate amounts for retirement?" or "To what extent is it the doctor's responsibility to limit drug addiction by refusing to prescribe/renew pain medications even if a patient is in pain and has requested them?"). For a complete list of survey items, see Appendix 1. Surveys were normed on a pilot sample of 40 Mturk participants to determine internal reliability. All of the scales had excellent ($\alpha > .8$) reliability, thus there were no modifications made to the scales before the main study.

For the main study, participants completed all seven of the new paternalism scales in addition to the Helicopter Parenting and Government paternalism scales described in previous studies. The Age Norms survey was not included in this study, due to logistical (length) constraints. As a means of establishing discriminant validity, and determining whether this construct was distinct from other, related constructs, we also collected data from a self-efficacy scale (Sherer, et al., 1982), and Horizontal and Vertical scales of Individualism and Collectivism (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). The self-efficacy scale is a 17-item instrument that asks respondents to evaluate statements like, "When I make plans, I am certain I can make them work." The Individualism and Collectivism scale contains 16 items and includes statements like, "I usually struggle through personal problems by myself." Scales were presented in a random order, and within each scale the order of items was randomized. Finally, participants answered demographic questions. On average, the survey battery took slightly over 40 minutes to complete.

Reliability Analysis

We calculated Cronbach's alpha using the alpha function from the Psych R package. Missing values were removed by default from the matrix of responses for each scale. All alpha's values were above .75, (good) and most exceeded point .9 (excellent). Thus, the new scales had extremely high internal reliability. See Table 6 for specific alpha values.

Table 2.6 –Alpha Values for Study 3

<u>Scale</u>	<u>Total</u>		<u>Passed attention check</u>		<u>Failed attention check</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>α</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>α</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>α</u>
Employer Paternalism	1557	0.853	1174	0.849	383	0.868
Parenting Paternalism (Helicopter Scale)	1536	0.785	1167	0.769	369	0.798
Parenting Paternalism (Without Reverse Coded Items)	1568	0.755	1192	0.748	376	0.738
Religious Paternalism	1552	0.947	1172	0.945	380	0.95
Caregiver Paternalism	1561	0.914	1174	0.915	387	0.913
Coach Paternalism	1530	0.92	1159	0.922	371	0.92
Peer-ternalism	1527	0.926	1144	0.926	383	0.928
Medical Paternalism	1522	0.884	1147	0.876	375	0.907
Government Paternalism	1444	0.911	1080	0.916	364	0.898
Educational Paternalism	1531	0.904	1153	0.905	378	0.902

Post Hoc Helicopter Preferences Scale Modifications

An issue arose within the Helicopter Preferences Scale where a programming error led to uncertainty about whether the reverse coded items were recorded accurately. We evaluated Cronbach's alpha with and without the reverse coded items, and found no meaningful difference, thus we decided to discard the reverse coded items from the scale in the remainder of the analysis to ensure the integrity of the data. The results are qualitatively similar regardless of whether these items are included.

Results

Relationship with demographic variables

None of the demographic variables appreciably correlated with any of the constructs of interest. However, all of the different paternalism scales were significantly correlated with each other (all r 's $> .25$, p 's $< .05$).

Factor Analysis

A factor analysis was computed using the scale means for each participant, including all 9 paternalism scales along with Self-Efficacy, Horizontal Collectivism, Vertical Collectivism, Horizontal Individualism, and Vertical Collectivism. Row means for responses with incomplete answers were calculated by averaging the answers to those questions that were complete within the scale. First, a parallel analysis was conducted to produce a scree plot and evaluate the number of factors that should be included (See Figure A1 in Appendix 3).

As was evident from the Scree plot, it was unclear whether the best descriptor was a one factor or a two-factor model. As a conservative strategy, we adopted a two-factor model structure. Using the results of this, a factor analysis was conducted with a varimax rotation¹³. All of the paternalism scales load highly (above .3) on the first factor, while none of the other scales do. Meanwhile, the remaining scales (except for vertical

¹³ Both the parallel analysis and the factor analysis were computed using a minimum residual factor analysis

individualism) load onto an orthogonal second factor, but none of the paternalism scales do (see Table 2.7)¹⁴.

Table 2.7 –Factor Loading of Scales

<u>Scale</u>	<u>Factor1</u>	<u>Factor2</u>
Parenting	0.35	-0.07
Religion	0.67	0.06
Employer	0.75	0.09
Caregiver	0.5	0.15
Coach	0.7	0.09
Peer	0.72	0.12
Medical	0.76	0.13
Education	0.69	0.02
Government	0.7	0.06
Self Efficacy	-0.17	0.43
Horizontal Collectivism	0.22	0.68
Horizontal Individualism	0.03	0.32
Vertical Collectivism	0.2	0.67
Vertical Individualism	0.15	0.21

We supplemented this exploratory factor analysis with confirmatory factor analysis to examine whether all seven Paternalism scales and the Helicopter Parental Preference as single factor was a better conceptual fit than one where the Paternalism scales and the Helicopter Parental Parenting scale were assumed to be two correlated factors. Due to the fact that many goodness-of-fit measures can be substantially influenced by sample size (Marsh, Balla, & McDonald, 1988), we opted to use root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) because it is less affected by sample size. When

¹⁴ We also ran a factor analysis including only the 9 paternalism scales. This analysis showed a single factor structure, upon which all of the paternalism scales loaded heavily, except for (surprisingly) the original helicopter parenting scale which loaded moderately.

examining the single factor model using only those who passed the attention check, the RMSEA for the combined construct was 0.067 (+/- 0.001 at the 90th Confidence Interval) compared to an RMSEA of 0.066 (+/- 0.001 at the 90th Confidence Interval).¹⁵ Both scores are lower than the 0.10 RMSEA that would lead one to reject the model, but both are sufficiently close that neither a single or two factor explanation can be said to better explain the construct. Given that our initial Paternalism scale significantly and strongly correlated with the Helicopter Parenting Preference scale ($r = .413, p < .001$), we believe that this supports the argument that these factors are all influenced by a latent paternalism variable.

Discussion

With a much larger sample size, Study 3 replicated the finding from Study 1a that attitudes toward helicopter parenting and attitudes toward paternalistic preferences are highly correlated. Moreover, this relationship was extended to many other important domains, including medicine, education, business, peer-relationships, religion, athletics, and caregiving. Despite being quite disparate domains, paternalistic attitudes for all of them load onto a single factor, suggesting a domain general predilection toward paternalism drives attitudes broadly. This factor was shown to diverge from other surface similar personality characteristics including efficacy, collectivism, and individualism suggesting that proclivity for paternalism may be a distinct construct.

¹⁵ The RMSEAs reported here are only for those who passed the attention check. Full analysis is available in the R script provided for public use.

Although Lakoff (2002) has posited that parenting beliefs are a driver of political beliefs, in Study 3 we find that parenting beliefs have the lowest factor loading of the paternalism factors. This suggests that it is not a common cause of attitudes for other forms of paternalism; typically in common cause models the effects have lower correlations to each other than they do the cause (Steyvers, Tenenbaum, & Wagenmakers, 2003), while here we have the opposite pattern. The pattern of results does not support Lakoff's model, at least insofar as it extends to paternalism.

General Discussion

Previous research has shown that beliefs about family and beliefs about government are highly related (e.g. Janoff-Bulman et al., 2014; Manoff et al., 2014). Indeed, prominent scholars have posited that beliefs about family structures serve as grounding for beliefs about government and are drivers of ideology and policy preferences (Lakoff, 2002). Specifically, Disciplinary parenting is argued to underlie conservative ideology, while Nurturant Parenting is argued to underlie liberal ideology. In this paper, we examined this 'government as parenting' model in the domain of helicopter parenting and paternalistic policy.

In Study 1a we established that the relationship between government and parental attitudes does extend to helicoptering and paternalistic government. These relationships were demonstrated to be stronger than that of the traditional Restrictiveness and Nurturing measures on the CRPR scale that have been used in past empirical examinations of Lakoff's metaphor model. In fact, the relationship was stronger than other likely predictors of paternalistic policy preferences such as party affiliation,

ideology, and major demographic indicators. However, when we attempted to establish a causal relationship, we were unable to do so. In Study 2, while we were able to manipulate attitudes toward helicopter parenting, doing so did not affect policy preferences as we would expect if parenting attitudes were driving policy preferences.

Of course, it is always possible that in Study 2a the prime did not actually move people's preferences for helicoptering, but rather created task demands that led them to report different preferences than they actually held. The primes were not particularly subtle, and participants might have discerned the purpose of the experiment and responded accordingly. Whereas in Study 2b the link between the primes and the dependent measures was not as obvious, thus creating fewer task demands, leading to an artificial dissociation between preferences for paternalism and helicoptering. While we do not deny the possibility of this, or other experimentally induced artifactual explanations for the findings, it is worth noting that despite a large literature on the government as parents metaphor, there is currently a paucity of experimental manipulations demonstrating that influencing one influences the other; the literature consists almost entirely of correlational analyses. While there is ample evidence that manipulating the metaphors that people use can change how people think about various

policy issues (e.g. Thibodeau and Boroditsky (2011)), for metaphors relating parenting and politics such evidence is notably lacking.¹⁶

As a result, while both our studies and previous studies show that preferences about parenting styles can predict policy preferences, it seems premature to argue that the parenting metaphor causes political preference. It may be that there are other stable individual differences (third variables) which lead to both political and parenting preferences. This led us to believe that perhaps the best model is not that parenting attitudes cause political attitudes but rather that there might be a latent construct that informs both.

Drawing on a metaphor from intelligence research and the positive manifold (Spearman, 1927), Study 3 explored the relationship between paternalistic attitudes across a disparate array of meaningful domains and found that the variance loads onto a single factor. Moreover, helicopter parenting had the lowest factor loading of any of the domains, which again speaks against parenting attitudes being the causal agent driving other paternalistic beliefs. Instead, it appears that we have identified a novel latent

¹⁶ It is worth noting that while we do not find evidence for Lakoff's (2002) government as family model, we were looking in a domain that is distinct from the Nurturant/Disciplinarian metaphor that Lakoff was theorizing about. Thus, our studies are not a fair test of his model, and our finding of an alternative causal structure for paternalistic attitudes is at best tangential evidence against his theory. Nonetheless, as Musolf (2016) reminds us, "the empirical evidence Lakoff presents for his two-model theory in *Moral Politics* is very small. While the literature has firmly established that the Nation as Family metaphor is prominent in American political speech, attempts that have been made to empirically analyze Lakoff's claims have had mixed success." Given the paucity of evidence for a causal relationship between parenting attitudes and ideology more generally, it would behoove proponents of that theory to investigate causal pathways further. In this paper we have shown that it is possible to manipulate parenting attitudes through priming, opening avenues to explore the effects of Nurturant/Disciplinarian parenting models using experimental rather than correlational methods.

construct which impacts beliefs and attitudes across a spectrum of important applied domains, including medicine, religion, education, and business. We do not make claims about the nature of this construct, (e.g. whether it is a stable personality trait or situationally constrained), but as it appears to be a powerful driver of attitudes across domains, it is worthy of future study.

Our paper provides several new tools for the study of parenting styles and the parental metaphor when applied to political processes. We developed new scales of Preference for Helicopter Parenting Styles that are distinct from the Padilla-Walker & Nelson scale and developed entirely new scales for measuring Paternalism across a variety of dimensions. That these scales loaded on a single factor suggests that researchers could use a variety of scales to examine political questions, possibly even using the peer or caregiver scales when examining questions in other domains like governmental policy or education.

Given that our scales are orthogonal to traditional Left/Right ideological and Party scales, these instruments might be particularly useful in examining the recent rise of conservative Populist and Nationalist candidates whose brand of right-wing politics combines Nurturant and Disciplinary roles depending on whether the individual is “American” or other.

Our findings also beg the question of whether we should be looking for a general Nurturant Disciplinary proclivity similar to our general Paternalism that might be a better causal model than Lakoff’s in the current political environment. It also makes us wonder if Lakoff’s findings also extend to education, religion, business, etc. If so, are

there other parenting dimensions that might be useful for identifying new axes of ideology. While the single dimension explains a great deal of political behavior, examining other dimensions might help explain realignments or singular figures.

Implications for Political Science

We found a consistent distinction between ideology and party with regards to Paternalism. At first, we found this puzzling due to the increase of partisan sorting (Levendusky, 2009), but modern reactions to political policies have demonstrated that partisan identity remains extremely strong even as elites advanced policies that were contrary to earlier party ideology. This fits with Gerring's (1998) discussion of changing party ideologies over time and our measures might supplement the party as identity literature by adding other potential constructs to use when examining preferences underlying voter choices.

The role of parents in the transmission of political partisanship is a well-studied phenomenon in political science and we know that parents are the primary influencers of an individual's party attachment (Beck & Jennings, 1991; Dawson & Prewitt, 1969; Jennings & Niemi, 1974; Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1954). Recently, we have seen an increase in political science research regarding how parenthood affects the individual political behavior of the parents (Elder & Greene, 2012a). Media and political elites have used parenthood as a means of making sense of elections (Elder & Greene, 2012a), and one of the reasons for this is the influence George Lakoff's framing recommendations have had on how political campaigns frame their arguments in the real

world (Bai, 2005; Iyengar, 2005). Thus, this paper should shape how we think about parenting and politics.

Social implications

While the term “Helicopter Parenting” was largely unheard of at the turn of the century, it has been rising in prominence for the past several decades. Indeed, according to a Lexis-Nexis search¹⁷, the phrase “helicopter parenting” was only used in newspapers 16 times combined in 2004 and 2005 but was used nearly than 600 times in 2019 alone (See Figure 2.1). Indeed, several states have implemented legal protections for free range parenting, including Utah (Koleman, 2018) and Idaho (Krutzig, 2021) in an attempt to counter the rise in helicopter parenting. In Study 3, we find that paternalistic preferences appear to have a common latent cause. Thus, to the extent that helicopter preferences really are increasing, these changing societal norms about parenting might indicate a shift in this latent variable, which would then predict shifts in policy preferences of the electorate. In other words, observed increases in paternalistic parenting style could predict increasing support for paternalistic government policy, such as bans on

¹⁷ Search run by the 2nd author on 12/07/20

consumption of large quantities of soda (as implemented in New York; Saul, 2014).

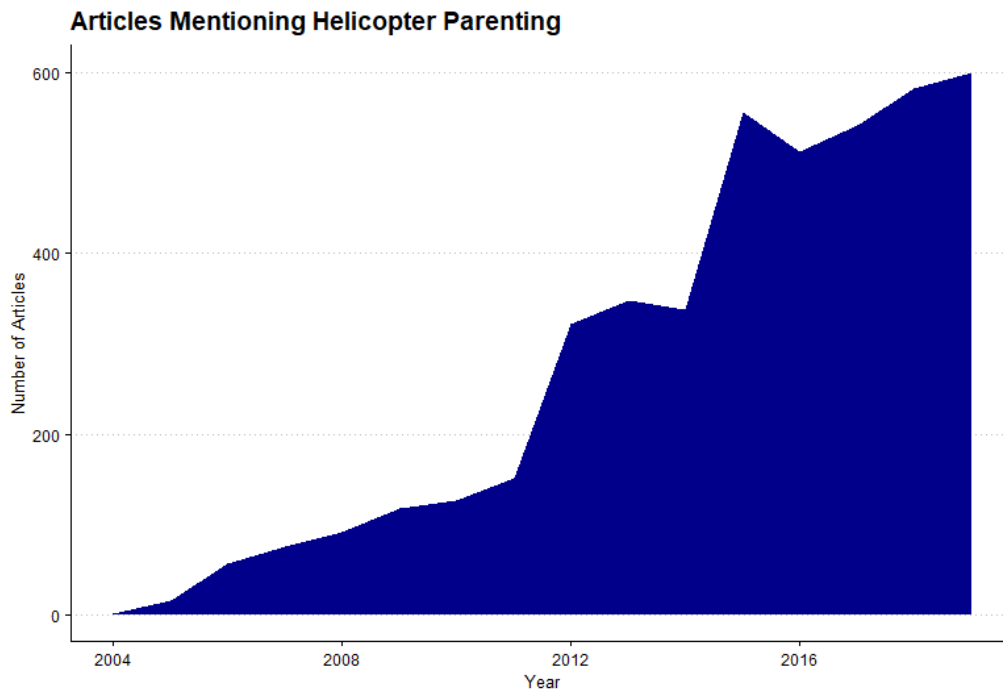


Figure 2.1 – Helicopter Parenting Articles by Year

The point of this paper is not to discuss the pros and cons of helicoptering but rather to understand it as a psychological construct. Nonetheless, there is a great deal of evidence that helicopter parenting can have negative effects on children. Children raised by helicopter parents tend to lack autonomy and exhibit lack of self-efficacy, a sense of entitlement, retreat from institutions like marriage (LeMoyne & Buchanan, 2011; Givertz & Segrin, 2014; Willoughby, Hersh, Padilla-Walker, & Nelson, 2015), and increased incidences of anxiety/depression, and lower satisfaction with life (Schiffrin, Liss, Miles-McLean, Geary, & Erchull, 2014; Knepp, 2016; Turner & McCormick, 2017; Kouros, Pruitt, Ekas, & Kiriaki, 2017). Given the findings in this paper that paternalism preferences appear to be a domain general construct it may be worth exploring whether

paternalism in other domains, such as employment and education, lead to similarly negative mental health outcomes

In particular, we find that individuals who endorse paternalistic parenting styles also endorse paternalism in elder care. In other words, people who limit agency for their children are also likely to engage in behaviors that limit agency for their elderly relatives. There is a large literature that suggests that restricting agency among the elderly has negative impacts on both longevity and quality of life (Langer & Rodin, 1976; Rodin & Langer, 1977). The aforementioned rise in helicopter prominence tracks with Gen X and Millennials becoming parents. Those generations are also transitioning into elder care as their aging parents retire and need support. To the extent that these generations are indeed more paternalistic, the reduced agency in the elderly generation engendered by their children's helicoptering behaviors during elder care could result in reductions in longevity and quality of life among geriatric populations.

While the present studies are not applied and are not designed to measure downstream consequences of general proclivity for paternalism, they should nonetheless function as a red flag, warning us to begin investigating the effects of paternalism on the elderly, in schools and in the workplace so as to inform policy moving forward.

Conclusion

In this paper, we find a relationship between preferences for helicopter parenting styles and preferences for paternalistic policy – a relationship that previous theory (c.f. Lakoff, 2002) had indirectly predicted but had never formally observed (Study 1). We then attempted to affirm the causal mechanism that the theory had established but instead found that the causal relationship was not what we had hypothesized (Study 2). Finally, we explore a novel causal relationship of a domain independent latent variable and find strong evidence in favor of that mechanism (Study 3). As a result of these studies, we have a much greater understanding of the construct of preference for paternalism, which informs how people behave across a wide array of domains of great societal importance. prefer it in all aspects of life, from parenting to policy, from education to medicine. As societal norms shift to become more paternalistic, more research on this construct is needed because the implications could be far-reaching.

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Appendix 1: Measurement Scales and Construction Procedure

We developed items by i) searching for newspaper articles containing key phrases relevant to the construct (e.g. “Helicopter parenting” or “free range parenting”), ii) asking students at a large, public, west coast university to generate examples of helicopter parenting behaviors that they had experienced or observed and iii) perusing webpages that were devoted to the helicopter/free range parenting debate. We compiled the examples that we had gleaned, along with several that we brainstormed, into a set of concrete parenting activities.

We asked small pilot samples of university undergraduates and Mturk workers ($n < 50$) complete the instrument. We then calculated Cronbach’s Alpha and point biserials for each item and removed items that were not contributing to the internal reliability of the measure. After several iterations of this procedure, the scale achieved good internal reliability ($\alpha > .75$), leaving us with 19 items.

Lindke/Oppenheimer Helicopter Parenting Preference Scale

Please answer the following questions indicating how acceptable you consider certain parental behaviors to be. There are no right or wrong answers; we are just trying to get a sense of how norms of parental behaviors vary across different groups of people.

Scale 1 = Completely Inappropriate, 7 = Completely Appropriate

- 1) Filling out a child’s college applications for him/her to ensure s/he has the best chance to attend a good school.
- 2) Writing a book report for a child because s/he is sick and cannot complete it him/herself.
- 3) Allow a child unmonitored access to Facebook and/or other social media.

- 4) Forcing a child to attend class on a day when s/he will encounter offensive material.
- 5) Discreetly follow a child on a romantic date to make sure s/he is safe.
- 6) Putting tracking software on a child's phone to check to make sure that s/he is where s/he is supposed to be.
- 7) Allowing a child to play at a friend's house without first meeting the friend's parents.
- 8) Allowing a child to turn in homework that the child's parents have not reviewed first for accuracy and quality.
- 9) Giving a child an allowance with no restrictions on how s/he spends that money.
- 10) Insisting that a child deal with being teased or bullied himself/herself, rather than intervening with the school, or with the aggressor's parents.
- 11) Allowing a child to watch television before his/her homework for the evening is finished.
- 12) Enrolling a child in music lessons that s/he doesn't like in order to improve his/her list of extra-curricular activities on college applications.
- 13) Hiring a professional editor for a child's college research papers to improve his/her grade.
- 14) Forbidding a child from going to a social event wearing clothes that are revealing, sexually suggestive, or immodest.
- 15) Picking college classes or a major for a child.
- 16) Forbidding your child from studying literature or history in college.
- 17) Calling a college professor to ask about a child's performance in class.
- 18) Allowing your child to skip religious services if they don't want to go
- 19) Allowing a child to attend parties where there may be alcohol and there is unlikely to be adult supervision.

Lindke/Oppenheimer Age Norms Scale

Development

The items on the Age Norms Scale were generated using the same procedure as the Helicopter Parenting Preferences scale. This scale had excellent internal reliability in its first iteration ($\alpha > .90$) and thus did not require revisions.

Scale

The following questions will ask you the age at which you think parental monitoring of children's behaviors are necessary or no longer necessary. There are no right or wrong answers; we are just trying to get a sense of how norms of parental behaviors vary across different groups of people. Answer these questions for what you think is appropriate for a typical child.

- 1) Ride a bicycle alone to a friend's house two blocks away
- 2) Play in the front yard without supervision
- 3) Use a public restroom in a mall unattended
- 4) Play unsupervised in the backyard with an unfenced swimming pool
- 5) Surf the internet without supervision or parental controls
- 6) Cross the street without holding hands with an adult
- 7) Leave a child without a babysitter for the evening
- 8) Leave the child without a babysitter overnight
- 9) Allow the child to spend the night at a friend's house
- 10) Allow the child to pet dogs and other domesticated animals without parental permission
- 11) No longer enforce bedtime
- 12) Choose their own food without restrictions
- 13) Not have restrictions on what shows the child can watch on television
- 14) Go on a romantic date without supervision

- 15) Have his/her own credit card
- 16) Wear Makeup
- 17) Select his/her wardrobe without adult supervision
- 18) Do his/her own laundry
- 19) Do his/her own taxes
- 20) Prepare his/her own dinner
- 21) Clean his/her own bathroom
- 22) Complete Homework without adult supervision
- 23) Go on a quick run to the grocery store alone

Paternalistic Policy Scale

Development

Items were developed by i) searching for newspaper articles containing key phrases relevant to the construct (e.g. “paternalism”, “libertarian”, etc.), ii) asking students at a large, public, west coast university to generate examples of paternalistic behaviors that they had experienced or observed and iii) perusing webpages that were devoted to libertarianism. The Paternalistic Policy Preference scale had excellent statistical reliability ($\alpha > .9$) in its first iteration and thus did not require revisions.

Scale

General items.

Please rate how much you agree with the following statements on a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 means strongly disagree and 7 means strongly agree. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. I believe it is the government’s job to protect its citizens from engaging in unhealthy eating behaviors.
2. I believe it is the government’s job to protect its citizens from engaging in risky sexual behaviors.
3. I believe it is the government’s job to protect its citizens from being exposed to offensive ideas or hurtful speech.
4. I believe it is the government’s job to protect its citizens from partaking in addictive substances.

Specific items.

Please rate how much you support or oppose the following proposals on a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 means strongly oppose and 7 means strongly support. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. Laws that require drivers and passengers to wear seatbelts in moving vehicles.
2. Laws that restrict the amount of soda that a person can purchase at restaurants and convenience stores.
3. Laws that require people to purchase health insurance.
4. Laws that prevent people from taking out credit cards with interest rates greater 20% per year.
5. Laws that require children to be in car seats until they are 4'9" tall.
6. Laws that require homeowners to install carbon monoxide detectors in their personal residence.
7. Laws that limit people's use of tobacco or vaping products.
8. Laws that prohibit counter-normative sexual acts between consenting adults in private.
9. Laws that require televisions to contain 'v-chips' or other parental controls.
10. Laws that prevent people from taking out pay-day loans.
11. Laws that require motorcyclists to wear helmets.
12. Laws that require teenagers to attend school.
13. Laws that prevent people from taking jobs below a minimum salary.
14. Laws that prevent people from being exposed to dangerous or hurtful ideas and speech.
15. Laws that restrict the timing or amount of alcohol purchases.

16. Laws that require food packages to prominently display calorie and/or sugar content.
17. Laws that forbid swimming on public beaches during off hours (when no lifeguards are present).
18. Laws that limit the speed at which people can drive on the interstate to below 60 mph.
19. Laws that prevent people from taking on mortgages if their income is low enough to create a significant risk of default.
20. Laws that require all high school students to take college admission exams (e.g. the SAT or ACT).
21. Laws that prohibit the use of highly addictive drugs such as heroin.
22. Laws that prevent people from engaging in prostitution.
23. Laws that require people to put aside a percentage of their income towards retirement.
24. Laws that prevent people from gambling.
25. Laws that allow the government to collect and monitor citizens' online activity.
26. Laws that prohibit the sale of medications with potentially harmful side effects to consumers even if those consumers are aware of those side effects.
27. Laws that prevent citizens from building homes in flood planes or fire zones.
28. Laws that guarantee employment to all citizens.

Employer Paternalism

In the digital age, employers take an active role in the lives of their employees. We are interested in your opinions regarding certain employer behaviors. There are no right or wrong answers. Please answer the following questions by indicating to what extent you consider certain employer behaviors to be acceptable.

1- Not at all 2- To a small extent 3- To some extent 4- To a moderate extent

5- To a great extent 6- To a very great extent

1. To what extent is it the responsibility of an employer ensure its employees are saving adequate amounts for retirement?
2. To what extent should employers override their employee's choice of health care plans if there is a better plan available to ensure that employees have a health care coverage plan best suited to their needs?
3. To what extent should an employer encourage healthy behaviors by removing soda from the vending machine and replacing it with filtered water or juice?
4. To what extent should an employer encourage preventative health care by requiring their employees to have annual check-ups?
5. To what extent should employers monitor employee stress levels through biometrics in order to ensure employees are not experiencing unhealthy levels of stress?
6. To what extent should employers discourage employees' smoking by not having an easily accessible smoking room/space?
7. To what extent should employers restrict employees' access to alcohol at company functions by denying alcohol to employees who appear intoxicated?
8. To what extent should employers punish employees who engage in abusive or violent behavior outside of the workplace?
9. To what extent should employers punish employees who post offensive material on social media when such posts are made outside the workplace?

10. To what extent should employers require employees to regularly change the password to their digital devices?
11. To what extent should employers limit the number of hours an employee can work each week to ensure a healthy work-life balance even if the employee wants to work longer hours?
12. To what extent should employers mandate lunch breaks for their employees and implement policies that prevent their employees from working during lunch breaks?
13. To what extent should employers require employees to take at least two weeks of vacation per year, even if employees do not request that time off?
14. To what extent should employers mandate their employees to engage in training that could yield future raises and promotions?
15. To what extent is it the responsibility of the employer to protect employees from difficult or abusive clients or customers?
16. To what extent is it the responsibility of the employer to provide severance to employees that have been laid off?

Religious Paternalism

We are interested in your opinions regarding certain clergy behaviors. Please answer the following questions by indicating to what extent you consider certain behaviors to be acceptable. There are no right or wrong answers.

1- Not at all 2- To a small extent 3- To some extent 4- To a moderate extent

5- To a great extent 6- To a very great extent

1. To what extent is it the responsibility of clergy to intervene if they suspect adultery among their congregants?
2. To what extent is it the responsibility of clergy to ensure their congregants maintain healthy diets?

3. To what extent is it the responsibility of clergy to offer unsolicited counseling when they witness a married couple fighting?
4. To what extent is it the responsibility of clergy to offer unsolicited counseling when they witness a parent struggling to control their children?
5. To what extent is it the responsibility of clergy to provide unsolicited hygiene advice?
6. To what extent is it the responsibility of clergy to help members of their congregation find jobs?
7. To what extent is it the responsibility of clergy to shield members of the congregation from undesirable or troubling ideas?
8. To what extent is it the responsibility of clergy to intervene if they suspect a member of their congregation has a drug or alcohol problem?
9. To what extent is it the responsibility of clergy to ensure the work/life balance of members of their congregation?
10. To what extent is it the responsibility of clergy to help congregants make wiser financial decisions?
11. To what extent is it the responsibility of clergy to assist school-age congregants with schoolwork?
12. To what extent is it the responsibility of the clergy to help school-age congregants meet friends, and be socially accepted?
13. To what extent is it the responsibility of the clergy to prevent elderly congregants from engaging in potentially dangerous behaviors, such as driving at night?
14. To what extent is it the responsibility of the clergy to ensure that their congregants seek out medical care in a timely manner when the congregants are sick or injured?

Caregiver Paternalism:

Instructions: For the following questions, CHILDREN/KIDS refers to ADULT CHILDREN with aging parents. Please answer the following questions by indicating to what extent you consider certain behaviors to be acceptable using a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

1. It is a child's job to determine when it is no longer safe for an elderly parent to live alone and move the parent to a supervised living environment (such as an assisted living facility or moving in with family).
2. It is a child's job to prevent an elderly parent from eating foods that might jeopardize the parent's health.
3. It is a child's job to make sure their elderly parents are following doctor prescribed health care regimens and taking their medications.
4. A child should monitor the amount of time elderly parents spend watching television.
5. A child should monitor his/her elderly parents' spending and finances.
6. It is a child's responsibility to encourage elderly parents to engage in social activities.
7. It is a child's job to prevent parents from smoking.
8. It is a child's responsibility to prevent their elderly parents from drinking alcohol when alcohol might interfere or interact with the parents' medications.
9. Children should put a camera in the home of an elderly parent so that they can monitor their parent's safety and notify the authorities in case of emergency.
10. Children should intervene and find alternative arrangements for animal care when they determine the elderly parent is no longer capable of taking care of a pet.
11. It is the child's responsibility to take away an elderly parent's driver's license or car keys when the parent may no longer be capable of driving safely.
12. Children should monitor who their elderly parents are interacting with.
13. It is the children's job to ensure that their elderly parents receive regular physical examinations.
14. It is a child's responsibility to prevent their parents from engaging in physically demanding activities that risk physically harming the parent.

15. Children should be responsible for making sure their elderly parents attend church or other religious activities.
17. It is the children's job to determine an appropriate retirement age for their elderly parents.
18. Children should be in control of medical decisions for their elderly parents.

Coaching Paternalism

We are interested in your opinions regarding certain coaching behaviors. Please answer the following questions by indicating to what extent you consider certain behaviors to be acceptable. There are no right or wrong answers.

1- Not at all 2- To a small extent 3- To some extent 4- To a moderate extent

5- To a great extent 6- To a very great extent

1. To what extent is it a coach's job to prevent players from engaging in illegal behaviors?
2. To what extent is a coach's job to prevent players from abusing drugs or alcohol?
3. To what extent is a coach's job to ensure that his/her players do not make offensive comments to the media?
4. To what extent is a coach's job to make sure the player seeks medical attention for injuries?
5. To what extent is a coach's job to monitor the finances of his/her players?
6. To what extent is a coach's job to make sure that a player is eating healthily?
7. To what extent is a college coach's job to make sure that the players are turning in their homework/assignments on time?
8. To what extent is a college coach's job to make sure that the players attend class?
9. To what extent is a coach's job to make sure that the players are getting sufficient amounts of sleep?
10. To what extent is a coach's responsible for ensuring that married players don't have affairs/engage in adultery?
11. To what extent is a coach obligated to help players develop other skills that will enable them to make a living once their athletic career is over?
12. To what extent is it the coach's responsibility that the players are saving enough for retirement?

13. To what extent is it the coach's responsibility to prevent players from engaging in domestic violence?
14. To what extent is it the coach's job to make sure players do not injure themselves outside of practice and games?
15. To what extent is it the coach's job to ensure that players are not engaging in risky sexual behaviors?
16. To what extent is it the coach's job to monitor the players' social network to ensure that the players are not being unduly influenced by dangerous or unscrupulous individuals?
17. To what extent is it the coach's job to ensure the players are positive role models?
18. To what extent should the coach take an injured player out of a game to prevent exacerbating the injury, even if the player does not want to leave the game?

Peer-ternalism

We are interested in your opinions regarding certain behaviors. Please answer the following questions by indicating to what extent you agree or disagree with the statements. There are no right or wrong answers.

1- Not at all 2- To a small extent 3- To some extent 4- To a moderate extent

5- To a great extent 6- To a very great extent

1. To what extent is it a person's responsibility to ensure his/her friends do their homework?
2. To what extent is it a person's responsibility to ensure his/her friends get good grades?
3. To what extent is it a person's responsibility to prevent his/her friend from entering into an unhealthy romantic relationship?
4. To what extent is it a person's responsibility to stop his/her friends from taking illegal drugs?
5. To what extent is it a person's responsibility to make sure his/her friends get home safely at the end of a night out?
6. To what extent should friends monitor each other's alcohol intake?
7. To what extent is a friend responsible for stopping a friend from drunk driving by taking away their keys?
8. To what extent is it appropriate for somebody take away a friend's candy if the friend is on a diet?
9. To what extent is it appropriate for a person to take away a friend's phone to prevent them from calling an ex?
10. To what extent should a person be responsible for limiting a cash-strapped friend's spending by taking away their credit cards?
11. To what extent is it a person's responsibility to notify a friend of job opportunities that might be beneficial to that friend?

12. To what extent is it a person's responsibility to stop a friend from getting a tattoo when that friend is intoxicated?
13. To what extent is it a person's responsibility to protect a friend from being exposed to offensive or disturbing information?
14. To what extent is it a person's responsibility to intervene to prevent a friend from engaging in risky or dangerous hobbies?
15. To what extent is it a person's responsibility to prevent a friend from posting something on social media that will likely cause the friend embarrassment or harm in the future?
16. To what extent is it a person's responsibility to convince a friend to change out of an unflattering outfit?
17. To what extent is it a person's responsibility to stop their friends from engaging in immoral behaviors such as lying, cheating, or shoplifting?
18. To what extent is it a person's responsibility to insist that a sick or injured friend seek medical attention when that friend does not wish to?

Physician Paternalism

We are interested in your opinions on certain physician behaviors. Please rate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements. There are no right or wrong answers.

1- Not at all 2- To a small extent 3- To some extent 4- To a moderate extent

5- To a great extent 6- To a very great extent

1. To what extent should a doctor deliver life-saving treatment to a patient even if the patient has not consented to that treatment?
2. To what extent should a doctor deliver beneficial, but not lifesaving treatment even if the patient has not consented to the treatment?
3. To what extent should a doctor to refuse to perform an elective treatment/surgery a patient has requested if the doctor believes the treatment may have serious negative medical consequences?
4. To what extent is it the doctor's responsibility to look out for their patients' moral welfare?
5. To what extent is it the doctor's responsibility to limit drug addiction by refusing to prescribe/renew pain medications even if a patient is in pain and has requested them?
6. To what extent are doctors responsible for ensuring their patients do not have unhealthy diets?
7. To what extent is it a doctor's responsibility to ensure their patients get regular check-ups?
8. To what extent is it a doctor's responsibility to monitor a patient's health insurance coverage when determining a course of treatment, to ensure the patient will not receive unexpected medical bills?
9. To what extent should a doctor refuse to perform an expensive and unnecessary elective medical procedure to protect a patient's money, even if the patient has requested that procedure?

10. To what extent is a doctor responsible for ensuring a patient takes his/her medication and gets medication refilled in a timely manner?
11. To what extent is it a doctor's responsibility to make sure the spouse/partner of a patient is informed about the patient's medical situation?
12. To what extent should a doctor delay in telling patients about tentative negative test results until those test results have been confirmed?
13. To what extent is a doctor's job to ensure that patients engage in sufficient exercise?
14. To what extent is a doctor's job to prevent patients from consuming alcohol?
15. To what extent should a doctor teach a patient about medical conditions that may afflict the patient, and preventative actions that could be taken, even if the patient is not interested in learning this information?
16. To what extent is a doctor's job to inform a patient about the entire range of treatments available even if the patient does not want to know about certain types of treatment options?
17. To what extent is a doctor's job to hospitalize a patient with a non-contagious medical condition against his or her will if hospitalization is required to achieve full recovery?
18. To what extent is a doctor's job to prevent patients from engaging in risky hobbies that may have negative health consequences?
19. To what extent should doctors protect their patients from being exposed to stressful, disturbing or offensive medical information?
20. To what extent should doctors refuse to take on patients until the patients have been vaccinated
21. To what extent is it the doctor's job to vaccinate children, even when the parents do not desire the child to be vaccinated?

Appendix 2: Primes for Study 2a and Study 2b

Experimental Condition: Job Search Errors Related to Parenting

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Mom To Employer: "Do You Mind If I Sit in On My Son's Interview?"

More Than One-Third of Managers Annoyed When Job Seekers Get Help from Parents

MENLO PARK, Calif., Aug. 16, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- Do mom and dad know best when their children are looking for jobs? Not always, new research from staffing firm OfficeTeam suggests. More than one in three (35 percent) senior managers interviewed said they find it annoying when parents are involved in their kids' search for work.

Another one-third (34 percent) of respondents prefer mom and dad stay out of the job hunt but would let it slide. Only 29 percent said this parental guidance is not a problem. Managers were also asked to recount the most unusual or surprising behavior they've heard of or seen from parents of job seekers. Here are some of their responses:

"The candidate opened his laptop and had his mother Skype in for the interview."

"A woman brought a cake to try to convince us to hire her daughter."

"One parent asked if she could do the interview for her child because he had somewhere else to be."

"One mom knocked on the office door during an interview and asked if she could sit in."

"A job seeker was texting his parent the questions I was asking during the interview and waiting for a response."

"Once a father called us pretending, he was from the candidate's previous company and offered praise for his son."

"A father started filling out a job application on behalf of his kid."

"Parents want the best for their kids, but being overly involved in their child's job search can cause more harm than good," said Brandi Britton, a district president for OfficeTeam.

"It's a positive for mom and dad to help behind the scenes by reviewing resumes, conducting mock interviews and offering networking contacts. However, ultimately, companies seek employees who display self-sufficiency and maturity."

Control Condition 1: job search errors unrelated to parenting

Applicant To Employer: "Do you mind if I take off my shoes?"

More Than One-Third of Managers Annoyed When Job Seekers Dress Unprofessionally in Interviews.

MENLO PARK, Calif., Aug. 16, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- Do job seekers know best when it comes to professional attire when looking for work? Not always, new research from staffing firm OfficeTeam suggests. More than one in three (35 percent) senior managers interviewed said they regularly encounter job seekers who are inappropriately dressed while interviewing for a job. Another one-third (34 percent) of respondents suggested that they occasionally come across job seekers who are too informally dressed, but it is rare. Only 29 percent said that they have never had a problem with candidates clothing choices during interviews.

Managers were also asked to recount the most unusual or surprising fashion choices they've heard of or seen from job seekers. Here are some of their responses:

"The candidate was wearing a transparent shirt. Not an "Oops, I didn't know the light would do that" kind of shirt, but a clubbing/lingerie kind of see through shirt where you could see every detail of the applicant's bra"

“I once had a guy show up to an interview in gym clothes *post* workout. It was really easy to tell he had worked up a sweat, especially in the teeny tiny interview room”

“I had a candidate come in with glitter all over her face.”

“One Candidate asked about policy on piercings and is told they’re not a big deal. He then proceeds to re-insert all of his piercings *while in the interview*.”

“A candidate who showed up in full cowboy regalia, including spurs”

“We had a candidate for a department head job come in dressed like she was going clubbing – low cut dress, spiked heels, over the top makeup and jewelry.”

“We will never, ever forget Flip Flop Guy. He came in in flip flops, Bermuda shorts, and a t-shirt, arrived late, and we’re also pretty sure he was stoned.”

"Wearing unusual or unprofessional clothing can cause more harm than good," said Brandi Britton, a district president for OfficeTeam. "It's a positive for candidates to display their personalities during a job interview. However, ultimately, companies seek employees who display professionalism and maturity in their dress and mannerisms."

Experimental Condition: Non-Job Search Errors related to parenting

Mom To Mom: "Do You Mind Raising Your Kid Well?"

More Than One-Third of Parents Annoyed by Observing Others Engaging in Poor Parenting

MENLO PARK, Calif., Aug. 16, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- Do mom and dad know best when it comes to raising their children? Not always, new research from ParentTeam suggests. More than one in three (35 percent) parents interviewed said they are frequently annoyed at other parents' lack of parenting skills. Another one-third (34 percent) of respondents say they've observed moms and dads who could do better but would let it slide. Only 29 percent said that others' parenting skills are not a problem.

Parents were also asked to recount the most unusual or surprising behavior they've heard of or seen from other parents. Here are some of their responses:

"At a restaurant, a young girl orders milk. Her mom says "no, just give her a coke - there are no free refills on the milk."

"I was sitting on a bus and this 5-year-old kept tugging on my hair. I asked the mother to please get him to stop in a very polite manner. What does she do? Absolutely nothing."

"I saw a woman defended her 13-year-old son after he punched a 2 year-old by saying "He's got anger control issues, it's not his fault!"

“We once had five saves within 30 minutes at the wave pool of a water park I worked at, all from the same family, all kids who couldn't swim, and whose parents wouldn't take the FREE lifejackets.”

“This little girl, like 4 or 5 brings this book to her mom to ask if she can get it. Her mom says “Why would you want that? You have a perfectly good TV back home”.

“I watched two parents with their son pay for their cigarettes by emptying out his piggy bank on the counter in front of them.”

“I saw a father shove a gallon jug of milk in his daughter’s arms and she almost toppled over. She said, "it's heavy and I can't" to which her father said, “You want to drink milk, you have to earn it”.

"Parents want the best for their kids, but sometimes they don’t know what to do to be good parents, or they don’t realize their behaviors are harmful," said Brandi Britton, a district president for ParentTeam. "It's a positive for mom and dad to try to help their kids build self-sufficiency. However, they need to realize that kids are need more than that from their parents."

Appendix 3 – Scree Plot for Study 3

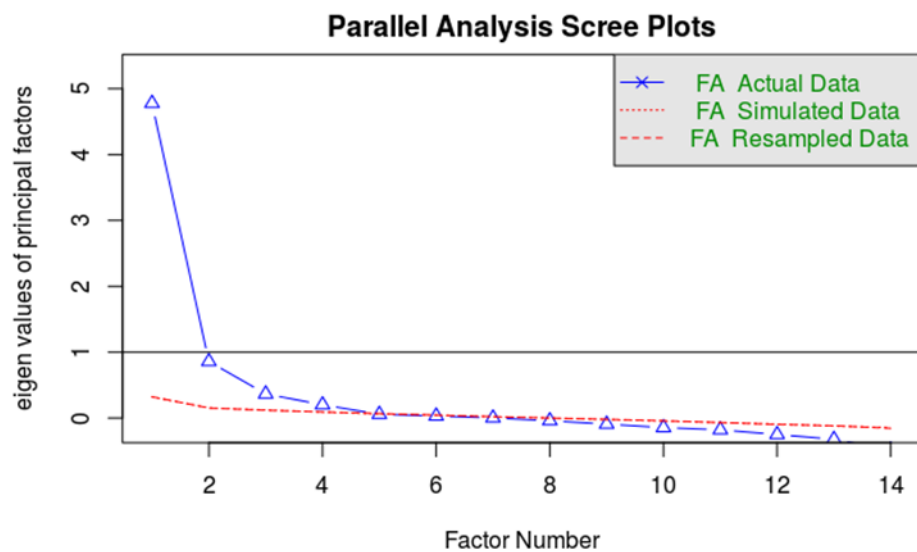


Figure 2.2– Parallel Analysis

Chapter 3: Yelling at the News: Parental Emotional Expression and the Intergenerational
Transmission of Partisan Affect

Abstract

Political socialization research has documented parental transmission of partisan identity, yet the affective mechanisms underlying this transmission remain poorly understood. This paper argues that affective polarization passes intergenerationally through the emotional climate parents create via partisan media environments, high-arousal political conversations, and the expressive tone parents use when discussing politics rather than through deliberative instruction. Drawing on three studies (2020 CCES, 2024 ANES, and an undergraduate survey), I examine distinct pathways through which paternal emotion shapes children's partisan affect. Fox News viewership is associated with greater out-party hostility and parents' belief that children perceive their negative tone. High-arousal emotions predict more frequent political discussion with children in the household. Parents yelling at Democratic news coverage is associated with cooler student feelings toward Democrats, while positive tone toward Republicans predicts warmth. This pattern is consistent with asymmetric affective polarization. Together, these findings suggest the emotional home environment is a meaningful site of partisan affect formation.

Introduction

Affective polarization, the tendency of partisans to view the opposing party with fear, anger, and contempt rather than mere policy disagreement, has grown sharply over the past three decades (Iyengar et al., 2019; McCarty, Poole, & Rosenthal, 2006).

Political socialization research has established that parents are one of the most influential transmitters of partisan identity across generations (Jennings & Niemi, 1974, 1981; Tyler & Iyengar, 2023), yet existing work focuses overwhelmingly on cognitive expressions of partisan identity through mechanisms like party identification and issue positions. How children come to feel the way their parents feel about political parties, the affective rather than merely cognitive dimension of partisanship, remains poorly understood.

In this paper, I argue that affective polarization is transmitted intergenerationally not through deliberate political instruction but through the emotional climate of the home. Three interconnected mechanisms drive this process: the partisan media environment parents maintain, the high-arousal emotional states that trigger political conversation with children, and the expressive tone parents use when discussing political parties. I test this argument with three studies that capture each mechanism in turn.

I refer to these three mechanisms collectively as the political-emotional-climate. This is the affective atmosphere parents create through the partisan media they have in the home, the emotional states they use when they discuss politics, and the tone they use when describing political actors or political issues. I also root my arguments around the concept of the emotional speed of political expression. This concept draws from appraisal theories of emotion and affective intelligence theory (Lazarus, 1991; Marcus, Neumann,

& MacKuen, 2000), I argue that high-arousal, approach-oriented emotions such as anger and outrage are expressive and quick to surface in conversation, whereas anxiety and fear are inward and searching and far less likely to be voiced as political talk. It is therefore the expressive emotions, and not negative emotions in general, that I expect to convert the home's emotional climate into observable socialization.

Study 1 draws on a module I fielded in the 2020 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES). Among parents of minor children ($n = 266$), Fox News viewership is associated with substantively warmer feelings toward Republicans and cooler feelings toward Democrats, and Fox-viewing parents believe their children perceive the tone they use when talking about the Democratic party to be more emotionally negative. Study 2 uses the 2024 American National Election Studies (ANES) emotion submodule with a filtered sample of parents ($n = 1,356$). Anger and outrage are positively associated with how frequently parents discuss politics with children, an association that persists after controlling for partisan identity and recent political arguments. Study 3 uses an undergraduate survey ($n = 107$) to examine whether parental tone and yelling at televised news predict students' affective orientations toward political parties. Yelling at Democratic news coverage is associated with a roughly 27-point reduction in warmth toward the Democratic Party and a generally positive tone toward Republicans is the primary predictor of warmth toward that party.

These findings contribute to two literatures that have developed largely in parallel. Scholars of affective polarization document rising inter-partisan hostility among adults but have not examined how that hostility is transmitted to the next generation. The

political socialization literature documents the transmission of partisan identification with precision but focuses on cognitive outcomes and says little about how children come to share their parents' partisan emotions. This paper bridges those literatures by showing that the emotional environment of the home is a meaningful and empirically tractable site of partisan affect formation. The paper proceeds as follows. I reviewed the relevant literature on emotional socialization, partisan media, and affective polarization. I then develop the theoretical argument and study-specific hypotheses, present each study in turn, and conclude with a discussion of implications and limitations.

In an earlier paper (Lindke, "Intergenerational Transmission of Partisan Affect in an Era of Low Political Polarization", 2026), I use data from three waves of the Jennings-Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Panel (1965-1997) to establish that parents transmit affective orientations toward the political out-party to their children, and that this transmission was already operating during a period of relatively low political polarization. That paper asks whether any mechanism of emotional transmission exists. This paper asks how this process works. The three studies below examine the household behaviors through which parental affect is converted into children's partisan feelings in the contemporary, high-polarization environment. These mechanisms are the partisan media environment provided by parents, political discourse by parents in high-arousal emotional states, and the expressive tone parents use when discussing the opposing party.

Emotional Foundations of Political Socialization

We are currently living in an era of increasing affective political polarization, and there has been a great deal of research in the past twenty years discussing the

phenomenon amongst both elites and the mass public (McCarty, Poole, & Rosenthal; 2006, Iyengar & Westwood, 2015, Mason 2018). When attempting to describe what causes affective polarization, the majority of scholarship has largely focused on factors like the increase in partisan media and social media and internet use (Lelkes et al., 2017), political elites and political campaigns (Sood & Iyengar, 2016; Huddy, Mason, Aarøe, 2015), partisan sorting and a reduction in cross cutting identities (Levendusky 2009; Mason 2015), and familial fortresses and parental transmission (Tyler & Iyengar, 2023; Iyengar, Konitzer, & Tedin, 2018; Achen, 2002). While some of this analysis focuses on the psychological mechanisms that lead to affective polarization, the research involving political socialization and parental transmission tends to apply rational choice or cognitive models to explain the acquisition of partisanship by the younger generation. This focus on cognitive transmission processes has remained strongly centered on policy preference correlations and party identity even though one of the earliest works on political socialization (Hess & Torney, 1967) highlighted the emotional connection of children with established partisan identities well before they developed coherent policy views.

The partisan youth in Hess and Torney's (1967) work showed strong emotional reactions when their party's candidate won or lost an election. This observation was overshadowed by the subsequent emphasis on neutral civic education and cognitive transmission, but it points toward a dimension of political socialization that the field has been slow to address systematically. Partisan identity is both a cognitive and an affective attachment to a political party (Green, Palmquist, & Schickler, 2002; Huddy, 2001, 2013;

Mason 2018), and people can retain attachment to the political party of their parents even as they evolve on social and political issues (Carmines & Stimson, 1990). The contemporary political environment, characterized by intense animosity and distrust across party lines (Iyengar et al., 2019; Druckman & Levendusky, 2019), makes the emotional dimension of socialization increasingly urgent to understand.

What we know from Political Socialization Research

It is well documented that the process of political socialization within the family is one of the most significant contributors to an individual's lifelong attitudes about politics, and with regards to the choice of partisan identity (Jennings, Stoker, & Bowers, 2009; Tedin, 1974). Classic studies by Hyman (1959), Jennings and Niemi (1974, 1981), and Niemi and Sobieszek (1977) argue that children acquire their partisan identities via a process of observation and interaction in which the family is the primary agent of transmission of partisan identity. Modern researchers like Iyengar, Tyler, and Konitzer have replicated and expanded this foundational work, using the data collected in the Jennings-Niemi landmark panel studies to re-affirm that there is a moderate to strong correlation between parents and children on partisan identification and issue attitudes (Tyler & Iyengar, 2022, 2023; Iyengar, Konitzer, & Tedin, 2018). These replications are significant not only for their substantive findings, but for their methodological contribution.

Yet these studies describe the outcomes of transmission more than the processes by which they occur. This was one of the reasons that Niemi (1995) called for a rebirth of the field of political socialization, one that emphasized contextual factors like the

influence of the media in attitude formation. The home may be a political fortress of selection where parents choose partners who share their politics and build echo chambers among family and friends (Iyengar et al., 2019), but the field has been less successful at explaining the emotional texture of how partisan affect passes from parent to child within that fortress. Achen's (2002) influential account of rational party identification via socialization exemplifies the bias towards analysis of cognitive processes in the literature. It elegantly explains why children end up aligned with their parents' parties but says little about how children come to *feel* the same way their parents *feel* about those parties.

Despite growing evidence of early partisan affect, the literature on political polarization and political socialization have developed largely in parallel without substantive crosstalk. Scholars of polarization (McCarty, Poole, & Rosenthal, 2006; Iyengar et al., 2019) document rising affective distance between partisans but tend to treat the origins of that affect as resulting from adult activities like media selection, partisan sorting, and partner choice. The socialization literature has documented parental transmission of party identification with precision (Jennings, Stoker, & Bowers, 2009) but has focused primarily on cognitive outcomes. The emotional dimension of partisanship, in particular negative partisanship, where one is hostile to the out-party independent of attachment to one's own party (Abramowitz & Webster, 2016; Ladd, 2017), has not been examined as a distinct object of intergenerational transmission. This paper bridges those literatures by asking how the emotional climate of the home (the media environment parents provide, the emotional states that trigger political conversation, and the expressive tone parents use) shapes children's partisan affect.

Affect, Tone, and the Home Media Environment

The connection between parental media consumption and the emotional tone of political communication in the home has received limited direct empirical attention, though several lines of research converge to suggest it is consequential. Arceneaux and Johnson (2013) argue that in the modern media landscape adults select polarized media as a matter of preference rather than as a cause of polarization; viewers are already partisan when they chose their media diet. This selectivity finding holds for adults, but children have not yet fully adopted their political positions, and they are not fully in charge of the media environment in the same way parents are. For children, inadvertent exposure to partisan media in the home when the child might prefer to watch entertainment while the parents have only politically charged news on can lead to greater political polarization through repeated exposure (De Benedictis-Kessner et al., 2019; Levendusky, 2013). The mechanism here is distinct from adult selectivity. It is ambient and unintentional on the part of the child and operates through the same household environment that shapes partisan identity more broadly.

Parental media behavior also interacts with parental awareness of children's emotional states. Nathanson and Eveland (2019) found that parents who engaged in active mediation of political media where they discussed content critically and contextualized what was seen tended to have greater curiosity about their children's mental states. By contrast, co-viewing without engagement, and highly restrictive mediation such as simply criticizing coverage, was more common among parents with weaker understanding of their children. This suggests that the parents most likely to

expose children to emotionally charged partisan media without discussion are precisely those least attentive to how the child is receiving it. The result may be an unintentional form of affective socialization. The children in these environments will absorb the emotional register of partisan media and their parents' reactions without any corrective or contextualizing communication.

People also have a strong tendency to project their own political preferences onto their social networks even when those networks have expressed opposing views (Orhun & Urmitsky, 2013). This projection bias, combined with the echo-chamber composition of politically active families (Iyengar et al., 2018), may produce parental awareness of how children are actually experiencing their political communications. If a parent assumes that family members share their views, they may not notice the emotional intensity with which they discuss political opponents. The work by Zaki (2020) on empathy and interpersonal emotional regulation reminds us that there are deliberative reasons to use negative emotional tones when shaping political attitudes, but there are equally strong reasons to expect that much of what parents communicate about politics is unintended and unreflective.

Taken together, this body of work suggests that parental awareness of the tone they use when discussing politics, and children's perception of that tone, is a meaningful but understudied dimension of political socialization. There is some direct evidence that children are sensitive to political tone. The Oxley et al. (2020) finding that today's children are affectively polarized against out-party presidents, while their 1960s counterparts were not, is consistent with a change in the emotional tone of parental

communication accompanying the rise of affective polarization. But no prior study has directly asked parents whether they believe their children perceive the tone of their political communications or tested whether that perception varies with parental media consumption. These are the questions which motivated Study 1.

Because partisan media exposure reinforces and intensifies affective orientations toward the out-party (Lelkes et al., 2017; Levendusky, 2013), parents who consume partisan media should not only feel more negatively towards the out-party but should express that negativity more openly and believe their children notice it. Research has demonstrated that this partisan negativity is often asymmetric depending on the political emotional environment, such as that created by a home with emotionally charged partisan media (Nair et al., 2025). This logic forms the foundation for two hypotheses:

H1: Children raised in homes where the parents provide a more partisan media environment will feel less warmly about their political out-party. H2: Partisan-aligned parents will report that their children would describe the tone they use to discuss the political out-party as more negative, and a partisan media environment will increase the perceived negativity.

Emotion, Political Engagement, and Discussion with Children

A second gap in the literature concerns the relationship between emotional states and the frequency of political discussions with children. The socialization literature has established that parental socialization cues are most effective when they are salient (Jennings & Niemi, 1974), and that emotional salience enhances the transmission of political beliefs (Jennings & Niemi, 1974, 1981). What remains underexplored is whether

specific emotional states make parents more likely to initiate political conversation with children in the first place and whether the timing of political socialization is itself emotionally driven.

It is likely that parental emotional socialization is partly driven by rational considerations aimed at helping children understand and process their political environment. But it is also true that a significant portion of emotional socialization occurs when parents are overwhelmed by emotion. For example, they may process their feelings of anger by expressing them in front of their children, without necessarily intending them to be a formal lesson in emotional socialization such as when parents discuss the appropriate reaction to falling off a bicycle or talking calmly about how a film or television (Eisenberg, Cumberland, & Spinrad, 1998; Morris et al., 2017). The question of whether political emotional socialization reflects spontaneous emotional responses or deliberative reasoning is therefore not only theoretical. It also has implications for what kinds of interventions could moderate the transmission of affective polarization.

High action-tendency emotions are particularly relevant here. These are emotions whose primary motivational orientation is toward expressive action and confrontation. Lazarus's Cognitive-Motivational-Relational theory argues that different emotional states elicit different action tendencies. For example, anger and outrage generate a drive to express, confront, or seek outlets for perceived threat or injustice. Anxiety, on the other hand, tends to direct attention toward careful information-seeking and threat monitoring rather than expressive action (Marcus, Neuman, & MacKuen, 2000). Enthusiasm generates approach behavior toward desired goals. Since anger and outrage specifically

motivate expression and confrontation, this action tendency is likely to manifest as political discussion in the home environment. Such action is socially acceptable, even welcome, in the home so if one needed to take action it seems natural that some of that action would take place there. Thus, we would expect parents experiencing high levels of political anger and outrage to engage in more political discussion with children in the household, independent of their general partisan orientation.

According to the tripartite model of emotional socialization (Morris et al., 2017), children learn to regulate emotions based on observation of their parents' emotional regulation, the emotion related practices of their parents, and the overall emotional climate of the family. Families for whom outrage or anger are common emotional registers may not just transmit partisan content, but an emotional style. They might transmit a disposition toward high-arousal negative affect in response to political stimuli. If a child repeatedly observes a parent becoming angry or outraged in response to political news, and if that anger is occasionally directed into political discussion, the child may come to associate political engagement itself with high-arousal negative affect.

This is a mechanism through which affective polarization could be transmitted without explicit instruction, operating through the emotional texture of everyday family life rather than deliberate political education.

H3: High-arousal emotions, specifically anger and outrage about politics, will be positively associated with the frequency with which parents discuss politics with children in the household, regardless of partisan identity.

Parental Tone and Children's Affective Orientation Toward Political Parties

The third dimension of the literature concerns how the emotional tone parents use when discussing political parties shapes children's affective orientations towards those parties. Children acquire the biases of their parents via a process of modeling and transmission (Tedin, 1974; Tyler & Iyengar, 2023) and the emotional valence of that transmission matters. When parental communication about the out-party is consistently negative, hostile or contemptuous, children are not merely receiving information about political positions. They are also receiving cues on how to feel about members of the out-party as a social group.

Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979) provides a direct mechanism for how parental tone translates into child partisan affect. Partisan identity, for strong partisans, functions as a social identity that generates in-group loyalty and out-group hostility comparable to other social identity categories like race and religion (Huddy, 2001; 2013; Huddy & Bankert, 2017). When parents express hostility toward the out-party, they are modeling the emotional boundary between the in-group and out-group, they are learning who "we" are and who "they" are. The emotional valence of this socialization shapes subsequent in-group favoritism and out-group derogation. Mere exposure effects compound this process. Even in the absence of explicit instruction, repeated affective pairing of political figures or parties with a parent's negative emotional reactions can generate negative associations in the child through classical conditioning processes (Zajonc, 1968,1980; Gawronski & Corneille, 2004). Because partisan media reinforces negative affect toward the out-party (Lelkes et al., 2017), the home media

environment may amplify the tone of parental political communication and create a feedback loop between media exposure, emotional expression, and child affect transmission.

Social Identity Theory further implies the transmission of group norms from one generation to the next. In modeling hostility toward the out-party, parents convey not only the boundaries between in-group and out-group, but how one is expected to react toward each. There is reason to expect this norm transmission may be asymmetric depending on the media environment. Conservative Republican political rhetoric often frames politics in oppositional “paternal” terms while Democratic rhetoric more often uses nurturant “maternal” terms (Lakoff, 2002). This oppositional language might lead to higher reports of out-group antipathy in homes with more conservative media oriented political emotional environments as an extension of Hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis 1a: Consistent with asymmetric affective polarization and Lakoff’s metaphor theory, the association between a partisan media environment and out-party hostility will be stronger and more consistent for a Republican aligned media environment (Fox News) than for a Democratic-aligned one (MSNBC).

Children’s developing sensitivity to parental political tone is also suggested by the broader emotional socialization literature. Gottman, Katz, and Hooven’s (1996) meta-emotional philosophy framework identifies parental awareness of their own and their children’s emotions as central to effective emotional socialization. Parents who are unaware of the emotional signals they send, or who have a derogatory meta-emotional philosophy that does not prioritize their children’s emotional reactions, may inadvertently

transmit high levels of partisan hostility without any corrective communication.

Conversely, parents who are attentive to how their children receive political communications may modulate their tone or provide contextualizing conversations after reactive outbursts. The degree to which parents are aware of how their tone is perceived is therefore both an empirical question and a theoretically significant variable in understanding the process of affective political socialization.

Existing work on familial fortresses and partner selection (Iyengar et al., 2018,2019) shows that families have increasingly become politically homogeneous, with children finding it easier to form interpersonal relationships within the ideological community (Chopik & Motyl, 2016) and social pressure within these communities reinforcing partisan affect (Connors, 2023). The emotional climate of the home is not insulated from this broader social context but is reinforced by it. The hypotheses for Study 3 are concerned with feeling thermometer ratings and the willingness to befriend or date members of the out-party as outcome variables, since Social Identity Theory predicts that out-group hostility extends from affective ratings into behavioral avoidance of out-group members.

H4: Youth who describe their parents' tone as more negative to the parents' political out-party will be more likely to have negative feelings about the out-party.

H5: Youth will be more likely to be friends with, or date people, who are members of an out-party if they describe their parents as using a more positive tone towards that out-party.

Study 1: Partisan Media, Parental Affect, and Perceived Tone

Sample

Study 1 draws on a module I fielded in the 2020 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES). The full module included 1,000 respondents, and 266 (26.6%) reported having at least one child under the age of 18 in the household. These 266 respondents constitute the full Study 1 sample. The analytic sample for the partisan-media models is a subset of 68 parents who reported watching television news and indicated which networks they viewed (detailed below). Women made up 60.5% of the full sample (n = 161) and men 39.5% (n = 105). The racial composition was 68.4% non-Hispanic white (n = 182), 14.3% Black (n = 38), 9.0% Hispanic (n = 24), 1.8% Asian or Pacific Islander (n = 5) and 4.5% two or more races (n = 12). Educational attainment ranged from less than a high school diploma (3.0% n = 8) to post-graduate degrees (15.0%, n = 40). Of the 266 respondents who reported that they had children under the age of 18, there were 113 who responded that they had not watched television news in the past 24 hours. Of those who reported watching television news, 62 did not report watching Fox News or MSNBC. This resulted in small sample sizes for media effects of approximately 68 respondents. This loss of roughly 58% of respondents due to not watching news at all is greater than the loss in the main CCES sample where the respondent pool shrank by 29% after screening for television viewership (from 51,551 post-election respondents down to 36,958). However, the 75% loss of respondents when limiting the sample to Fox News and MSNBC viewers is slightly less than the 80% loss for limiting to Fox News viewership alone in the main sample (51,551 to 10,494).

Measures and Analytic Approach

The primary dependent variables in Study 1 were traditional feeling thermometer scores toward political candidates, parties, and the average members of those political parties (0 = very cold, 100 = very warm) as well as how they believed their children would describe the tone they used when speaking about the Democratic and Republican political parties. Tone, which measures how parents believe their children would characterize their tone when they are discussing the Democratic and Republican parties. The CCES contained baseline feeling thermometers about political candidates and the Republican and Democratic parties and my module added a question with a slight variation asking warmth toward “People who consider themselves Republicans/Democrats” in addition to the parties themselves. The perceived tone items measure a conceptually distinct factor from the feeling thermometer items. They do not measure how the parents feel about a political party, rather they measure how their children would characterize the tone of their political communications. This is a direct test of H2 and a measure of parental self-awareness about the emotional register of political communication in the home.

The verbal tone question asked respondents to describe how the children in their home would perceive the tone used when discussing political parties: “The verbal tones we use when discussing politics with children are an important component of effectively conveying our feelings about politicians and political parties. When you are discussing politics with the children in your household, how would they describe the tone you use when talking about the following political parties? The Republican Party The

Democratic Party “ Respondents then rated their perceived tone on a scale of 1 = Very Negative to 5 = Very Positive.

Because this item asks specifically about the tone parents use when discussing politics with children, rather than about political talk in the household, it is a conservative measure of the home’s expressive climate. Any association detected with this narrowly framed item might be larger with more general wording.

Two of the primary independent variables were Fox News viewership and MSNBC viewership, each coded (1 = viewer, 0 = non-viewer). Fox and MSNBC (now MSNOW) were selected because they are the most explicitly partisan news outlets in the sample. This interpretation was based on their AllSides partisan ratings (AllSides, 2025) which rate both as highly partisan. Their audiences have long been more strongly sorted than other outlets (Arceneaux & Johnson, 2013) which makes them the strongest test of partisan media effects on parental affect and perceived tone. I did not use CNN because it occupies a more centrist position (a Lean Left on AllSides) and thus its effects would be expected to be weaker and less consistent. While Study 1 focused on examining the effect of tone in environments of highly polarized media environments, examining the effect in less polarized media environments would potentially allow researchers to isolate the effect of tone and so it would be useful for future studies to include tonal responses in more centrist media environments.

Because the network battery asks respondents to mark every news source they have watched in the past 24 hours, the Fox News and MSNBC indicators are not mutually exclusive. A parent may report watching both, and many report watching

neither. Each coefficient is therefore interpreted relative to an omitted reference group of television-news watchers who report watching neither Fox nor MSNBC. To make that reference explicit, and to rule out the possibility that the contrast merely reflects centrist viewers, I re-estimated the models adding an indicator for CNN viewership, so that the omitted category comprises the sixteen parents who watch television news, but don't watch Fox, MSNBC, or CNN (Table 11 in the Appendix). Within the 68-parent analytic sample, 34 identify as Democrats, 25 as Republicans, and 9 as pure Independents on a 7-point scale.

All models are estimated using ordinary least squares regression weighted by the module team weight. Gender is coded as a binary dummy variable (0 = male, 1 = female). Additional control variables include Social Media Intensity that asked how many political social media activities the person engaged in, partisan identification measure with the 7-point party identification scale (coded Democrat for scores of 1 to 3 and Republican for scores of 5 to 7, with Independents as the omitted category), political interest, age, education, and household income.

Results

Partisan Media and Parental Affect (H1)

Study 1 tests whether parental affective orientations towards political parties and candidates were related to the partisan media environment in the home and whether that environment shapes how parents believe their children perceive their political tone. It examines the political environment their children live within and whether the parents believe their children pick up on the valence of that environment.

Table 3.1 -- Partisan Media Viewership and Parental Affect Towards Candidates and Parties

Partisan Media and Feeling Thermometers: Candidates and Parties				
	Feeling Thermometer (0=Very Cold, 100=Very Warm)			
	Biden (1)	Trump (2)	Democratic Party (3)	Republican Party (4)
Female	-1.336 p = 0.838	2.258 p = 0.715	-3.159 p = 0.646	0.354 p = 0.942
Education	-3.369 p = 0.193	0.685 p = 0.778	0.758 p = 0.779	-1.293 p = 0.499
Age	0.147 p = 0.606	0.058 p = 0.831	-0.201 p = 0.502	-0.098 p = 0.643
Household Income	0.003 p = 0.999	-0.451 p = 0.654	-2.211 p = 0.052	0.503 p = 0.525
MSNBC Viewer	5.166 p = 0.445	0.268 p = 0.967	8.458 p = 0.237	3.670 p = 0.466
Fox News Viewer	-15.274* p = 0.037	23.439** p = 0.002	-4.297 p = 0.571	15.465** p = 0.006
Social Media Intensity	-3.466 p = 0.113	3.597 p = 0.083	-2.979 p = 0.194	-1.783 p = 0.270
Democrat	35.992*** p = 0.001	-28.424** p = 0.005	43.548*** p = 0.0002	-12.825 p = 0.097
Republican	-21.450* p = 0.027	40.628*** p = 0.00003	-13.542 p = 0.177	48.347*** p = 0.000
Political Attention	9.637 p = 0.059	-0.414 p = 0.931	7.858 p = 0.140	-4.130 p = 0.271
Constant	30.020 p = 0.151	17.054 p = 0.387	37.579 p = 0.089	38.367* p = 0.016
Observations	68	68	68	68
R ²	0.685	0.778	0.617	0.803
Adjusted R ²	0.630	0.739	0.550	0.769
Residual Std. Error (df = 57)	22.494	21.303	23.679	16.740
F Statistic (df = 10; 57)	12.418***	19.967***	9.201***	23.266***

Note:

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

OLS with UCR module team weights (teamweight). Gender coded 0=Male, 1=Female.

The feeling thermometer analysis provides strong support for H1 with respect to Fox News viewership (Table 1). On feeling thermometers scaled from 0 (very cold) to 100 (very warm), parents who watched Fox News were on average 15.274 (p = 0.037)

points colder towards Joe Biden than non-Fox Viewers, 23.439 ($p = 0.002$) points warmer towards Donald Trump, and 15.465 ($p = 0.006$) points warmer towards the Republican Party. These are large effects relative to the 100-point thermometer scale and are consistent with Arceneaux and Johnson's (2013) selectivity model. These are highly partisan viewers who chose media that affirmed their existing preferences, and the home media environment reflects those preferences. Notably, Fox News viewership does not reach statistical significance as a predictor of Democratic Party thermometer scores ($b = -4.297$, $p = 0.571$) when controlling for partisan identification. Fox viewership in this sample is more strongly associated with warmth toward the Republican candidates and the Republican Party than with direct cooling toward the Democratic Party as an institution. The negative affect toward Biden though, demonstrates significant negative partisanship.

MSNBC viewership was not significantly associated with cooler feelings toward Donald Trump ($b = 5.166$, $p = 0.445$) compared to non-MSNBC viewers when controlling for party identification. The association between coolness towards the Republican Party ($b = 3.670$, $p = 0.466$) falls well short of conventional significance which given the sample size ($n = 68$). MSNBC viewers did not feel significantly warmer toward the Democratic Party ($b = 8.458$, $p = 0.237$). The coefficients for those who identified as Democrats were very large for warmth toward Biden ($b = 35.992$, $p = 0.001$), coolness toward Trump ($b = -28.424$, $p = 0.005$), and warmth toward the Democratic Party ($b = 43.548$, $b = 0.0002$). There was also a large, but not statistically significant, relationship between identifying as a Democrat and coolness toward the Republican Party ($b = -$

12.825, $p = 0.097$). Given the small sample size, this suggests there might be a relationship, but the magnitude of negative partisanship is not as large as that of positive partisanship. Fox News operates as a consistently sorted outlet while MSNBC's effects are not significant when controlling for party identification. These results provide support for H1. The partisan media environment is associated with parental affect, but the effects are stronger and more consistent for Fox News viewers than for MSNBC viewers, especially with regards to political candidates aligning with theories of asymmetric polarization.

When looking beyond political candidates and parties and at how people felt about the average member of the opposing political party, I found (see Table 2) that Fox Viewers continued this trend and felt more warmly towards Republicans by 22.890 points ($p = 0.0003$) and colder towards members of Democratic Party by 8.341 points ($p = 0.190$), but the coolness towards Democrats did not reach statistical significance though the effect size is large enough that a larger sample might have been significant. MSNBC viewership showed no significant association with thermometer scores toward ordinary partisans, further enhancing asymmetrical partisanship.

Table 3.2 -- Partisan Media Viewership and Parental Affect Toward Ordinary Partisans

Partisan Media and Feeling Thermometers: Ordinary Partisans		
	Feeling Thermometer Toward People Who Consider Themselves	
	Republicans (1)	Democrats (2)
Female	0.115 p = 0.984	5.492 p = 0.339
Education	3.324 p = 0.122	-3.033 p = 0.182
Age	0.096 p = 0.682	0.364 p = 0.147
Household Income	1.070 p = 0.227	0.678 p = 0.468
MSNBC Viewer	0.165 p = 0.977	-8.102 p = 0.176
Fox News Viewer	22.890*** p = 0.0003	-8.341 p = 0.190
Social Media Intensity	-4.614* p = 0.013	0.865 p = 0.649
Democrat	-12.808 p = 0.136	36.516*** p = 0.0002
Republican	31.651*** p = 0.0002	-11.886 p = 0.156
Political Attention	-7.669 p = 0.069	-1.378 p = 0.755
Constant	43.327* p = 0.015	40.580* p = 0.030
Observations	68	68
R ²	0.706	0.639
Adjusted R ²	0.654	0.576
Residual Std. Error (df = 57)	18.649	19.765
F Statistic (df = 10; 57)	13.665***	10.088***

Note:

OLS with UCR module team weights (teamweight). CORRECTED: weights now applied consistently to naive and full models. Gender coded 0=Male, 1=Female.
*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

These findings are consistent with Social Identity Theory and provide partial support for Hypothesis 1, support that reflects documented patterns of asymmetric affective polarization (Nair et al., 2025). Hypothesis 1 argued that how parents feel about political parties is related to the partisan media environment they provide in the home, and the partisan in-group/out-group boundary is clearly visible in a Fox News media environment while absent in the MSNBC environment. Is this partisan media environment reflected in how parents think their children perceive their tone when talking about politics in the home?

Partisan Media and Perceived Tone (H2)

Hypothesis 2 predicted that partisan-aligned parents will believe that their children would describe their tone toward the out-party when talking to family and friends as negative, and that a partisan media environment will increase that perceived negativity. Because partisan media exposure reinforces and intensifies affective orientations toward the out-party (Lelkes et al., 2017; Levendusky, 2013), parents who consume partisan media should not only feel more negatively toward the out-party but should also express that negativity more openly. They should also believe their children notice it.

Table 3.3 -- Partisan Media Viewership and Perceived Tone Toward Political Parties

Partisan Media and Perceived Tone: How Children Would Describe Respondent's Tone		
	Perceived Tone Toward	
	Republicans (1)	Democrats (2)
Female	-0.094 p = 0.637	-0.150 p = 0.488
Education	0.126 p = 0.111	0.013 p = 0.877
Age	-0.029** p = 0.005	0.014 p = 0.177
Household Income	0.024 p = 0.474	-0.015 p = 0.675
MSNBC Viewer	0.380 p = 0.090	-0.412 p = 0.087
Fox News Viewer	0.377 p = 0.097	-0.471 p = 0.057
Social Media Intensity	-0.216** p = 0.003	-0.077 p = 0.298
Democrat	-0.725* p = 0.034	1.637*** p = 0.00004
Republican	1.682*** p = 0.00001	-0.675 p = 0.057
Political Attention	0.115 p = 0.542	-0.088 p = 0.667
Constant	2.616*** p = 0.0005	3.134*** p = 0.0002
Observations	63	64
R ²	0.780	0.732
Adjusted R ²	0.738	0.682
Residual Std. Error	0.678 (df = 52)	0.738 (df = 53)
F Statistic	18.423*** (df = 10; 52)	14.508*** (df = 10; 53)

Note:

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001
OLS with UCR module team weights (teamweight). Tone scale: 1=Very Negative to 5=Very Positive. Gender coded 0=Male, 1=Female.

The perceived tone analysis in Table 3 provides support for Hypothesis 2 with respect to partisan identity and perceived tone. Fox News and MSNBC viewership were not significantly associated with a perceived negative tone when controlling for political party. Identifying as a Republican was associated with a 1.682-point increase (p = 0.00001) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 was the highly positive. . This is a substantial, as well as statistically significant, shift. Fox viewership was not statistically associated with positive tone toward Republicans (b = 0.377, p = 0.097) or negative tone toward Democrats (b = -0.471, p = 0.057) though both approach significance and the sample size

is very small. Frequent social media use is associated with more negative tone toward Republicans ($b = -0.216, p = 0.003$) but not significantly related to tone toward Democrats. MSNBC viewership showed no significant relationship with perceived tone toward either party ($b = 0.380, p = 0.090$ for tone toward Republicans and $b = -0.412, p = 0.087$), but the effect sizes and p-values suggest that this might be a power issue due to sample size. Identifying with the Democratic Party was associated with negative feelings toward Republicans ($b = -0.725, p = 0.034$) and positive feelings toward Democrats ($b = 1.337, p = 0.00004$). The pattern reflects the negative partisanship exists, but those identifying with both parties have larger positive coefficients for their own party than negative coefficients for the out-party. The effect size for Fox viewing and tone appears to be stronger when measuring hostility toward the out-party rather than by warmth toward the in-party, but that is hard to distinguish with a sample of this size. If that holds, it is consistent with research showing that negative partisanship is the more powerful and politically consequential dimension of contemporary partisan identity (Abramowitz & Webster, 2016; Ladd, 2017) and asymmetric between the parties (Nair et al. 2025) These results provide partial support for Hypothesis 2 because of possible power effects and the fact that social media use was associated with negative tone toward Republicans.

A parallel analysis using perceived tone toward ordinary citizens (Table 4) who identify with the opposing party, as distinct from the party as an institution or party elites, some similar patterns. There is no significant association between Fox viewing and a perceived negative tone toward Democratic identifying citizens ($b = -0.301, p = 0.151$), nor was Fox viewing associated with more positive tone toward Republicans ($b = 0.039$,

$p = 0.867$). Those who identified as Republicans were still strongly associated with a likely reported positive tone toward fellow Republicans ($b = 1.133$, $p = 0.002$), but the effect size and significance of negative tone towards people who consider themselves Democrats ($b = -0.481$, $p = 0.117$) was weaker than for the Democratic Party above. Identifying as a Democrat was still associated with a more positive tone ($b = 0.726$, $p = 0.024$) toward fellow Democrats, but the association of negative tone towards Republicans ($b = -0.584$, $p = 0.109$) was smaller than the association for elites and failed to reach significance. The coefficients for negative affect for people who think of themselves as Republicans and Democrats were smaller than for the political parties. The attenuation of the effect sizes from the party-level results is consistent with research showing that hostility toward party symbols and elites tends to be more intense than hostility toward ordinary out-party members (Krupnikov & Ryan, 2022). MSNBC viewership again shows no significant relationship with perceived tone toward ordinary partisans, but that might be a product of sample size

Table 3.4 -- Partisan Media Viewership and Perceived Tone Toward Ordinary Partisans

	Tone with Public Thermometer Controls	
	Perceived Tone Toward People who Consider Themselves	
	Republicans (1)	Democrats (2)
Female	-0.102 p = 0.579	-0.288 p = 0.081
Education	0.077 p = 0.305	0.097 p = 0.151
Age	-0.028** p = 0.003	0.005 p = 0.491
Household Income	0.008 p = 0.806	-0.035 p = 0.200
MSNBC Viewer	0.366 p = 0.079	-0.299 p = 0.099
Fox News Viewer	0.039 p = 0.867	-0.301 p = 0.151
Social Media Intensity	-0.141* p = 0.038	-0.097 p = 0.103
Democrat	-0.584 p = 0.109	0.726* p = 0.024
Republican	1.133** p = 0.002	-0.481 p = 0.117
Political Attention	0.227 p = 0.200	0.030 p = 0.850
GOP Public Thermometer	0.015** p = 0.002	0.001 p = 0.841
Dem Public Thermometer	0.0001 p = 0.985	0.025*** p = 0.00000
Constant	1.926** p = 0.010	1.838** p = 0.005
Observations	63	64
R ²	0.822	0.856
Adjusted R ²	0.780	0.822
Residual Std. Error	0.622 (df = 50)	0.553 (df = 51)
F Statistic	19.267*** (df = 12; 50)	25.166*** (df = 12; 51)

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001
OLS with teamweight. Gender coded 0=Male, 1=Female.

Taken together, the Study 1 results support both Hypothesis 1 and potentially Hypothesis 2 for Fox News viewership if the lack of significance is a power issue. with effects that are stronger and more consistent than MSNBC viewership with the exception of perceived tone toward people who identify with a political party. The asymmetry between Fox and MSNBC is relatively consistent with documented patterns of asymmetric affective polarization and does not undermine either hypothesis. The predicted partisan media effects are present, and clearly so for the stronger partisan signal. In the re-estimation which includes CNN viewership as a control, the Fox News coefficients are essentially unchanged (for example, +15.401 points on the Republican Party thermometer, $p = .006$), while CNN is null (-0.822 , $p = .880$), indicating that the association is specific to the strongly sorted outlets rather than to television news generally (Table 3.11 in the Appendix).. The key finding is that the partisan media environment parents create in the home is associated both with how they feel about the opposing party and might be associated with the tone they believe their children perceive in their political communications. These results partially establish a link between the media environment and affective tone in the home. Study 2 turns to the question of when parents are most likely to translate that affective environment into active political discussion with their children.

Study 2

Anger, Outrage, and Political Discussion with Children

Sample

Study 2 draws on the 2024 American National Election Studies (ANES) time series survey. The 2024 time series included a post-election emotion submodule that asked respondents how strongly they felt a set of political emotions that include afraid, outraged, angry, hopeful, worried, and others. They also asked about how they felt things are going in the country. The specific wording on the questions was, “How _____ do you feel about how things are going in the country?[Not at all, a little, somewhat, very, extremely / Extremely, very, somewhat, a little, not at all]?”. The blank in the question was replaced with emotional states that included afraid outraged, angry, hopeful, worried, as well as a few other emotional states. All these variables were rated on a five-point scale (1 = Not at All, 5 = Extremely). The survey also included a post-election item asking how frequently the respondent had discussed government and politics with children or teenagers in the household (1 – All the time to 5 Never). This is the first ANES time series between 1992 and 2024 to include a question expressly linking political discussion to children in the household.

The full 2024 ANES time series sample consisted of 5,521 respondents. I filtered this sample to limit it to exclude those who had no children or teenagers in the household as well as those with no post-election interview or who did not complete the post-election wave. I also removed a further 16 respondents who had missing values on control variables. This left me with a final analysis sample of 1,356 respondents. Women made

up 57.2% of the subsample (n = 776) and men 42.8% (n = 580). The racial composition was 67.7% non-Hispanic white (n = 918), 9.6% non-Hispanic Black (n = 130), 13.6% Hispanic (n = 185), 4.6% Asian or Pacific Islander (n = 63), and 3.7% two or more races (n = 50).

Measures and Analytic Approach

The primary dependent variable for Study 2 was the frequency with which respondents discussed government and politics with children or teenagers in the household. I recoded the variable so that higher values reflect more frequent discussion because it made more descriptive sense than the coding in the codebook which had higher numbers reflect less political conversation. My recoding of the variable ranged from 1 = Never to 5 = All the Time. In the sample, 21.5% never (n = 302) talked with their children about politics, 24.5% did so rarely (n = 350), 35.9% sometimes had conversations (n = 512), 14.0% often talked with their children (n = 200), and 5.3% reported talking with their children about politics all the time (n = 75). The sample had a weighted mean of 2.58, with the average parent falling between Rarely and Sometimes. All models use the recoded variable so that positive coefficients indicate more frequent discussion throughout.

The primary independent variable is a created Anger/Outrage Index, constructed as the mean of the variables measuring how angry and how outraged the respondent felt about how things are going in the country. The two items are highly correlated ($r = 0.760$, $p < 0.001$) and yield a two-item Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha = 0.864$, well above the conventional 0.70 threshold, justifying their combination into a single scale. Using the

mean rather than an additive sum preserves the original 1–5 metric so that a one-unit increase represents moving one step higher on both the anger and outrage items simultaneously. Preliminary models treating anger and outrage as separate predictors are presented in Appendix 2.

I included control variables for reported gender (coded 0 = Male and 1 = Female) to account for the established finding that mothers are stronger agents of political socialization than fathers (Jennings & Niemi, 1974, 1981), partisan identity operationalized as binary indicators for Democrat and Republican with Independents as the reference category, out-party negative affect, computed as 100 minus the feeling thermometer score for the opposing party, so that higher values reflect greater hostility toward the out-party, and whether the respondent had engaged in a political argument in the past 12 months (1 = Yes, 0 = No). Interaction terms between partisan identity and out-party negative affect test whether the association between out-party hostility and discussion frequency differs by party. Model 1 also includes feeling thermometer controls for the Democratic and Republican parties as a naive baseline specification. All models are estimated using survey-weighted ordinary least squares analysis with the ANES 2024 post-election full-sample weight. Study 2 tests whether high-arousal political emotions regarding the general state of the country predict the frequency with which parents discuss politics with children in the household.

Results

Examining the connection between the active emotion of anger and political discussion with children is conceptually important. If those who are angry about the state

of politics are more likely to discuss politics with children than those who aren't, then anger based affective polarization might make up a larger share of political discussions than it would if those who are angry are no more likely to discuss politics than anyone else. I began the examination with a simple model combining the anger and outrage variables into a single Anger/Outrage Index with control variables for how the respondents felt about different political parties and party membership. This analysis (Table 5) found that there was a significant relationship between the Anger/Outrage Index and parents talking with their children about politics ($b = 0.114$, $p = 0.026$) and that women ($b = 0.170$, $p = .003$) were more likely than men to engage in such discussions. The fact that the coefficient was positive indicates that anger and outrage are associated with more frequent political discussion with children. Each one-unit increase of the index, equivalent of moving up one step higher in both anger and outrage, is associated with a 0.072 increase on the 5-point discussion frequency scale. This is a small, but statistically significant value that might not be substantively significant. Identifying with a political party, whether the Democratic ($b = 0.555$, $p < 0.00001$) or Republican ($b = 0.379$, $p < 0.002$) was associated with substantially more frequent political discussion than from political Independents and the effect of party membership was roughly 5 times the size of the Anger/Outrage Index. Warmth towards the Republican Party is negatively associated with discussion frequency ($b = -0.004$, $p < 0.002$) while warmth towards the Democratic Party was positively associated with discussion frequency, but not significant ($b = 0.002$, $p < 0.320$).

Table 3.5 -- Anger/Outrage Index and Frequency of Discussing Politics with Children in the Household

Anger/Outrage Index and Frequency of Discussing Politics with Children in the Household			
	Discuss Politics with Children (1=Never to 5=All the Time)		
	Discussion Frequency		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Female	0.264*** p = 0.00001	0.267*** p = 0.00001	0.283*** p = 0.00001
Age	0.005* p = 0.034	0.005* p = 0.049	0.005* p = 0.017
Income	0.001 p = 0.857	0.0002 p = 0.963	-0.001 p = 0.834
Education	0.023 p = 0.431	0.025 p = 0.384	0.010 p = 0.735
'Political Interest'	0.230*** p = 0.000	0.224*** p = 0.000	0.189*** p = 0.000
'Anger/Outrage Index'	0.072** p = 0.007	0.068* p = 0.014	0.050 p = 0.064
'Warmth Toward Democrats'	0.002 p = 0.320	0.004* p = 0.047	0.004* p = 0.041
'Warmth Toward Republicans'	-0.004** p = 0.002	-0.006** p = 0.005	-0.005** p = 0.008
Democrat	0.555*** p = 0.00001	0.378 p = 0.314	0.370 p = 0.314
Republican	0.379** p = 0.002	-0.222 p = 0.574	-0.161 p = 0.677
'Out-Party Negative Affect'		-0.004 p = 0.534	-0.002 p = 0.685
'Had Political Argument'			0.490*** p = 0.000
'Democrat x Out-Party Negative'		0.002 p = 0.744	0.0002 p = 0.968
'Republican x Out-Party Negative'		0.010 p = 0.132	0.008 p = 0.216
Constant	0.757*** p = 0.0004	0.964* p = 0.033	0.963* p = 0.029
Observations	1,356	1,356	1,356
R ²	0.147	0.150	0.190
Adjusted R ²	0.141	0.142	0.182
Residual Std. Error	1.110 (df = 1345)	1.109 (df = 1342)	1.083 (df = 1341)
F Statistic	23.155*** (df = 10; 1345)	18.205*** (df = 13; 1342)	22.474*** (df = 14; 1341)

Note:

*p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Weighted OLS, ANES 2024 post-election weight (V240107b).

DV = 6 - V242027; 1=Never to 5=All the Time; positive coefficients = more frequent discussion.

Anger/Outrage Index = mean(V241121, V241120), each 1=Not at All to 5=Extremely.

Female: 1=female, 0=male. Age in years (18-80).

Income: V241566x 28-category (1=<5k to 28=250k+).

Education: V241465x 5-category (1=Political Interest: reverse-coded V241004 (1=Never to 5=Always pays attention)).

Model 2 adds controls for out-party negative affect, and partisan interaction terms. This better allowed me to look directly at the effects of anger, even controlling for negative out-party affect. Female respondents were still significantly more likely to discuss politics with children (b = 0.267, p = 0.00001), consistent with prior

socialization research that argues mothers play a stronger role in socialization. The Anger/Outrage Index remains positive and significant ($b = 0.068$, $p = 0.014$) though the effect size is still extremely small. Neither the out-party negative affect main effect nor the partisan interaction terms reach conventional significance and identification with a political party drops out of significance with relation to political discussion.

In Model 3 I add an additional specification considering whether the respondent had engaged in a political argument in the past 12 months. This allowed me to account for situations when the individual didn't merely feel upset about the world but had engaged in outward activity manifesting that emotive state. When this was added, it became the strongest predictor in the model ($b = 0.490$, $p < 0.000$) and is associated with more than a half point increase in the five-point discussion frequency scale. Given the likelihood that a conversation with a child has the possibility of being an argument, this is not surprising and the arguing and talking with children are correlated ($a = 0.26$). With this control in place, the Anger/Outrage Index drops out of statistical significance ($b = 0.050$, $p = 0.064$). Women were still significantly and positively predicted to talk with their children ($b = 0.283$, $p = 0.00001$) and the partisan identity and interaction terms fail to reach significance in this fully specified model.

Taken together, these results provide very soft support for Hypothesis 3. The Anger/Outrage Index is a significant, but extremely small, positive predictor of more frequent political discussion with children across all model specifications. However, having political arguments in the past year is the strongest predictor. Whether this is due to a parent wanting to talk with the child after arguing with someone else, or arguing in

front of/with the child cannot be discerned from this data. Women respondents consistently show higher rates of political discussion across all three models, replicating the Jennings and Niemi socialization pattern.

I ran several specification checks to see if these conclusions are supported and to clarify the role of the covariates (Table 3.12 in the Appendix). Gender is included because the literature has demonstrated women to be stronger socializing agents in general, and the out-party negative affect covariate and partisan interaction terms are included so that any anger effect is not merely standing in for partisan hostility. Interacting gender with the Anger/Outrage Index returns a null interaction ($b = -0.074$, $p = 0.12$), indicating anger predicts discussion similarly for mothers and fathers. The Anger/Outrage index results are not an artifact of how the index is built because a version of the index using an additive design (Table 3.13 in the Appendix) yields the same direction and significance as the averaged version (both have $p = 0.007$). The averaged design was selected because Anger and Outrage, while distinct, measure similar emotional expressions. Controlling for age using its square (Table 3.12 in the Appendix) reveals a curvilinear relationship. Discussion rises with age, peaks near age 48, and then declines. This is consistent with the age when it is likely for school-age children to be in the home. Most important to the theory, the effect is specific to expressive emotions. The 2024 battery also measured afraid, worried, nervous, happy, hopeful, and proud; entering an anxiety index (afraid, worried, nervous) alongside anger and outrage (Table 3.12 in the Appendix) leaves anxiety null ($p = 0.84$) while anger and outrage remain positive and significant ($p = 0.04$). Anxiety, an inward and information-seeking emotion, does not

translate into political talk the way expressive emotions do. A positive-emotion index also associated with more discussion, however, so the precise claim is that expressive emotions like anger drive discussion while anxiety does not.

Study 3

Parental Tone, Yelling, and Children's Partisan Affect

Sample

Study 3 draws on survey data collected from undergraduate political science students at a Mountain West educational institution (N = 107). Of the 107 respondents, 75.0% identified as White or Caucasian (n = 72) and 25.0% as a different race or ethnicity (n = 24), based on the 96 respondents who provided race information. Gender composition among the 96 respondents with data was 52.1% female (n = 50), 44.8% male (n = 43), with 3.1% selecting a non-binary or unlisted category (n = 3). Partisan composition was markedly Democratic-leaning: 60.7% identified with the Democratic Party at some level (n = 65), 36.4% with the Republican Party (n = 39), and 2.8% as Independent (n = 3), based on the full seven-point party identification scale.

This undergraduate sample is not representative of the state's population or the national population. The educational institution is in a heavily Republican metropolitan area, which likely shapes the distribution of parental political orientations reported by students and may skew the yelling results in particular. In the case of this sample, parents who yell at Republican politicians may be expressing displeasure at intra-party defectors rather than cross-party hostility. Study 3 should therefore be treated as exploratory. Its

primary appropriate use is for identifying patterns and generating hypotheses that future, more representative studies can confirm.

Study 3 serves a specific theoretical purpose. Studies 1 and 2 locate the emotional climate and its expressive triggers in the parent. Study 3 asks whether that climate registers in the next generation's partisan affect. It does so across three conceptionally distinct domains: feelings toward the parties as institutions (the Party in Government), feelings towards ordinary partisans as people (the Party in the Electorate), and comfort entering friendships and romantic relationships across party lines. Examining all three of these matters because they trace how political affect migrates from the organizational to the social and finally to the interpersonal. It analyzes the issue at different levels of abstraction from immediate personal experience. A hostility that begins as feelings about the Democratic Party but ends as reluctance to befriend or date a Democrat is the interpersonal residue of affective polarization. It has literally turned the political into the personal. When the transmission becomes personal and is transmitted across generations, it helps explain how the partisan electorate reproduces itself. In this articulation, the cross-party social comfort observed in this study is plausibly the downstream product of an emotional socialization process that has operated, household by household, for at least a generation.

Measures and Analytic Approach

In this study, I asked students to reflect on the tone their parents use when discussing both Republicans and Democrats. Students characterized the tone their parents use when discussing Republican and Democratic politicians and parties on a seven-point

scale (1 = Very Negative, 2 = Negative, 3 = Moderately Negative, 4 = Neither Positive nor Negative, 5 = Moderately Positive, 6 = Positive, 7 = Very Positive). Separate items were asked for Republican tone and Democratic tone. A simpler five-point out-party tone item was also collected and used in simplified alternative specifications. The primary analyses use the seven-point items. Students also reported whether their parents yelled at political news on television, which party their parents tended to yell at, and how frequently yelling occurred (Rarely=1, Two-three times per month=2, Once a week=3, Every day=4). Respondents whose parents did not yell were assigned 0 on all yelling variables. Yelling at televised news is treated as a reactive behavioral expression of tone, conceptually distinct from the general seven-point tone scale. Among the 88 respondents with yelling data, 33 (37.5%) reported that their parents yelled at news. Of those who yelled, exactly 16 yelled at Democrats and 16 at Republicans. The most common frequency was rarely (n = 18), followed by once a week (n = 10) and two-three times per month (n = 5).

These measures were generated as follows. Students were asked to rate, on separate 7-point items, the tone their parents use when discussing Republicans and when discussing Democrats (1 = Very Negative to 7 = Very Positive). The yelling measures came from a branching sequence where students were first asked whether their parents yell at political news on the television. Those who answered no were coded zero on all yelling variables, while those who answered yes were asked which party their parents yell at. This was used to construct the yell at Democrats and yell at Republicans indicators.

They were also asked how often their parents yell, which was recoded so that higher values indicate more frequent yelling.

Outcome variables included feeling thermometers toward the Democratic Party, Republican Party, Democratic voters, Republican voters, Democratic candidates, and Republican candidates (0 = Very Cold to 100 = Very Warm), comfort with having an out-party friend (1 = Very Uncomfortable to 5 = Very Comfortable), and comfort with dating an out-party member (recoded so higher = more comfortable). A parent political involvement scale was constructed as the additive sum of seven binary items (discussed politics, worked for a party, donated, wrote a letter, subscribed to newsletter, commented on news sites, attended demonstration; range 0–7). All models are estimated using OLS regression. No survey weights are applied because the sample is a convenience sample with no available design weights.

Study 3 examines whether the emotional tone parents use when discussing political parties, including reactive behaviors like yelling at televised news, is associated with students' affective orientations toward those parties and their social comfort with out-party members.

Results

Republican Party Thermometer

General parental tone, and not yelling, drives Republican Party affect (Table 6). Controlling for all yelling variables, the Republican tone coefficient borders on statistical significance ($b = 5.212$, $p = 0.052$), but general Democratic tone had no statistically significant influence on sentiment towards Republicans. None of the yelling variables

reach significance as predictors of Republican Party thermometer scores in any specification. Given the limited nature of the sample, which came from a heavily Republican area, parental warmth toward Republicans appears to accumulate through ongoing positive framing of the favored party

Democratic Party Thermometer

The effects of parental tone and yelling on student feelings toward the Democratic Party reveal that yelling, and not general tone, is the primary mechanism associated with warmth or coolness toward the Democratic Party (Table 6)..Students whose parents yelled at Democrats on television scored 27.421 points lower on the Democratic Party feeling thermometer compared to students whose parents did not yell at Democrats ($p = 0.024$). The asymmetric pattern, yelling shaping Democratic Party affect, tone shaping Republican Party affect, is consistent with theories of asymmetric affective polarization where Republicans are more likely to be highly polarized in the current environment (Nair et al., 2025) and with the political context of a predominantly Republican surrounding community. Where more friendly Republican tones equated with more positive feelings about Republicans, parents reactively yelling at Democrat-featuring news equates with sharp negative affect toward the Democratic party. These two mechanisms operate through distinct channels: one gradual and tonal, one reactive and event driven.

Given the sample size, and composition, these patterns are best read as establishing face validity and a plausible relationship rather than as definitive estimates, and the simple between-group comparisons in the data are instructive. Republican tone tracks

Republican Party warmth for both parties. Students who describe their parents' tone toward Republicans as positive rate the Republican party (Table 3.15 in the Appendix) at 51.4 on the thermometer, against 20.9 for those describing a negative tone ($t = 4.4$, $p < 0.001$). The yelling association depends more on the controls. Students whose parents yell at Democrats rate the Democratic Party about eight points lower on average (37.8 vs. 45.8), a gap that is not significant on its own and reaches the reported magnitude only once tone and involvement are held constant. The distributions of the new measures also differ by the students' own partisanship. Republican identifying students report less variation in parental tone and a lower rate of parental yelling (22 percent), whereas Democratic identifying students report both more yelling (47 percent) and more variance. This greater variance helps account for why the yell-at-Democrats coefficient is estimable here. Finally, the parental involvement scale is an additive count of activities. When it is expressed as a mean rather than as a sum, the rescaling leaves the model fit unchanged, consistent with the averaging index used in Study 2 (Table 3.16 in the Appendix) .

Table 3.6 -- Parental Tone and Yelling Predicting Student Feelings Toward the Republican and Democratic Parties
Effect of Variables on Feelings Toward Republican and Democratic Parties

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Republican Affect (1)	Democratic Affect (2)
Parent Republican Tone	5.212 p = 0.052	0.168 p = 0.929
Parent Democratic Tone	-1.076 p = 0.706	3.231 p = 0.120
Parent Political Involvement	-0.110 p = 0.967	1.422 p = 0.424
Parents Yell at Democrats	6.101 p = 0.720	-27.421* p = 0.024
Parents Yell at Republicans	-2.498 p = 0.873	-17.305 p = 0.110
Frequency of Yelling	-2.307 p = 0.744	11.187* p = 0.020
Constant	20.158 p = 0.323	30.901* p = 0.037
Observations	95	99
R ²	0.126	0.118
Adjusted R ²	0.066	0.061
Residual Std. Error	31.010 (df = 88)	22.664 (df = 92)
F Statistic	2.112 (df = 6; 88)	2.057 (df = 6; 92)
<i>Note:</i>		* ** *** p<0.001

This is the largest and most robust effect in the Study 3 analysis. Yelling at Republicans is associated with a 17.305-point reduction in Democratic Party warmth in , but this does not reach statistical significance (p = 0.110). Yelling frequency shows a counterintuitive positive association with Democratic Party warmth (b = 11.187, p =

0.020), but this could be because I coded non-yellers with a frequency score of 0, making frequency comparisons meaningful only among yelling households. Future analyses should restrict the frequency analysis to the yelling subsample. When I ran the analysis limited to just those who yelled, I had only 27 with measured Republican Affect and 31 with measured Democratic Affect. None of the coefficients in that model (Table 3.16 in Appendix 2) reached statistical significance. These results provide support for H4 with respect to the yelling mechanism. Reactive parental behavior toward Democrats on television is associated with substantially cooler student feelings toward the Democratic Party.

Social Comfort with Out-Party Members

The out-party dating and friendship results are directionally consistent with the thermometer findings but are weaker and largely below conventional significance thresholds, likely reflecting low statistical power at $n = 39$ for Republican respondents and $n = 65$ for Democratic. For Republican student out-party friendship (Table 7), parental Democratic tone is the primary predictor. Each one-point increase on the seven-point Democratic tone scale is associated with a 0.402-point increase in out-party friendship comfort in Model 1 ($p = 0.005$). This effect remains significant in Model 2 ($b = 0.307$, $p = 0.034$) when yelling variables are added and is marginally significant ($b = 0.275$, $p = 0.055$) when the interactions between tone and yelling are added. Having parents who yelled at news television is associated with a strong reduction in out-party friendship comfort for Republican respondents ($b = -1.272$, $p = 0.002$ in Model 1), consistent with Social Identity Theory, Reactive parental hostility toward the out-party

reduces children's comfort forming relationships with members of that group. For Democratic students, it was parental tone towards Republicans that mattered the most ($b = 0.212, p = 0.057$) though the finding was only marginally significant. This supports Hypothesis 5 regarding out-party friends being associated with more favorable tone by parents toward the outparty.

Table 3.7-- Parental Tone and Yelling Predicting Republican Student Comfort with Out-Party Members

Outparty Friendship - Republican Respondents Only			
	Dependent variable:		
	Comfortable with Outparty Friends (1=Very Uncomfortable, 5=Very Comfortable)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Republican Tone (1-7)	0.106 p = 0.389	0.119 p = 0.366	0.139 p = 0.287
Democratic Tone (1-7)	0.402** p = 0.005	0.307* p = 0.034	0.275 p = 0.055
Political Involvement	0.154 p = 0.181	0.135 p = 0.243	0.120 p = 0.292
Yell at TV	-1.272** p = 0.002	-0.468 p = 0.654	-0.827 p = 0.435
Yell at Democrats		-2.016 p = 0.067	2.472 p = 0.455
Yell at Republicans			
Yelling Frequency		0.565 p = 0.174	1.071 p = 0.052
Rep Tone * Yell at Democrats			-0.892 p = 0.157
Dem Tone * Yell at Republicans			
Constant	2.594** p = 0.009	2.822** p = 0.008	2.827** p = 0.007
Observations	39	39	39
R ²	0.344	0.424	0.461
Adjusted R ²	0.267	0.316	0.339
Residual Std. Error	0.855 (df = 34)	0.826 (df = 32)	0.812 (df = 31)
F Statistic	4.461** (df = 4; 34)	3.925** (df = 6; 32)	3.782** (df = 7; 31)

Note: * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 *** p < 0.001
Republican respondents only (is = 1). OLS, no survey weights. Yell-target terms rest on very few cases.

Table 3.8-- Parental Tone and Yelling Predicting Democratic Student Comfort with Out-Party Members

Outparty Friendship - Democratic Respondents Only			
	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Comfortable with Outparty Friends (1=Very Uncomfortable, 5=Very Comfortable)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Republican Tone (1-7)	0.212 p = 0.057	0.147 p = 0.213	0.161 p = 0.181
Democratic Tone (1-7)	0.144 p = 0.257	0.157 p = 0.240	0.213 p = 0.151
Political Involvement	-0.061 p = 0.591	-0.085 p = 0.460	-0.082 p = 0.497
Yell at TV	0.134 p = 0.677	-1.514 p = 0.227	-1.483 p = 0.241
Yell at Democrats		1.800 p = 0.173	1.407 p = 0.646
Yell at Republicans		1.121 p = 0.374	2.650 p = 0.189
Yelling Frequency		0.158 p = 0.569	0.190 p = 0.500
Rep Tone * Yell at Democrats			0.059 p = 0.898
Dem Tone * Yell at Republicans			-0.309 p = 0.325
Constant	2.271* p = 0.017	2.532** p = 0.009	2.252* p = 0.026
Observations	65	65	65
R ²	0.066	0.116	0.132
Adjusted R ²	0.003	0.008	-0.010
Residual Std. Error	1.170 (df = 60)	1.167 (df = 57)	1.177 (df = 55)
F Statistic	1.056 (df = 4; 60)	1.073 (df = 7; 57)	0.930 (df = 9; 55)
<i>Note:</i>			* ** *** p<0.001
Democratic respondents only (is== 1). OLS, no survey weights.			

For out-party dating, Republican respondents were once again more likely to be comfortable dating members of the out-party if their parents used a more positive tone when talking about them (b = 0.229, p = 0.01 in Model 1; b = 0.259, p = 0.01 in Model 2; b = 0.259, p = 0.01 in Model 3). (Table 9). The directional pattern is consistent with the friendship results; positive parental tone is associated with more comfort dating the out-

party suggesting that Republican youth from less polarized homes are more likely to consider dating a Democrat. For Democratic students, there was no relationship between parental tone and comfort with dating a member of the out-party under any of the models ($b = 0.050$, $p = 0.498$ in Model 1; $b = 0.028$, $p = 0.725$ in Model 2, $b = 0.022$, $p = 0.784$). The effect size of positive parental tone on Democratic youth was small and none of them came close to being statistically significant.

Table 3.9 -- Effect of Tone and Yelling on Out-Party Dating

Outparty Dating - Republican Respondents Only			
	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Comfortable Dating Outparty (1=Very Uncomfortable, 4=Very Comfortable)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Republican Tone (1-7)	-0.093 $p = 0.237$	-0.107 $p = 0.232$	-0.107 $p = 0.232$
Democratic Tone (1-7)	0.229** $p = 0.010$	0.259** $p = 0.010$	0.259** $p = 0.010$
Political Involvement	0.076 $p = 0.285$	0.088 $p = 0.261$	0.088 $p = 0.261$
Yell at Democrats			-0.681 $p = 0.338$
Yell at Republicans		-0.109 $p = 0.843$	0.572 $p = 0.433$
Yelling Frequency		-0.681 $p = 0.338$	
Yell at TV		-0.023 $p = 0.935$	-0.023 $p = 0.935$
Constant	3.353*** $p = 0.00001$	3.363*** $p = 0.00002$	3.363*** $p = 0.00002$
Observations	39	39	39
R ²	0.298	0.330	0.330
Adjusted R ²	0.238	0.204	0.204
Residual Std. Error	0.548 (df = 35)	0.560 (df = 32)	0.560 (df = 32)
F Statistic	4.949** (df = 3; 35)	2.627* (df = 6; 32)	2.627* (df = 6; 32)

Note: Republican respondents only (is== 1). OLS, no survey weights. Yell-target terms rest on very few cases.
*** p<0.001
** p<0.01
* p<0.05

Table 3.10 -- Effect of Tone and Yelling on Out-Party Dating

Outparty Dating - Democratic Respondents Only			
	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Comfortable Dating Outparty (1=Very Uncomfortable, 4=Very Comfortable)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Republican Tone (1-7)	0.050 p = 0.498	0.028 p = 0.725	0.022 p = 0.784
Democratic Tone (1-7)	0.023 p = 0.791	0.049 p = 0.586	0.044 p = 0.637
Political Involvement	-0.083 p = 0.256	-0.101 p = 0.205	-0.101 p = 0.209
Yell at Democrats			-0.315 p = 0.717
Yell at Republicans		0.218 p = 0.667	0.492 p = 0.590
Yelling Frequency		-0.213 p = 0.614	0.065 p = 0.941
Yell at TV		0.059 p = 0.751	0.075 p = 0.697
Constant	3.107*** p = 0.00001	3.089*** p = 0.00001	3.142*** p = 0.00001
Observations	65	65	65
R ²	0.031	0.052	0.054
Adjusted R ²	-0.017	-0.046	-0.062
Residual Std. Error	0.796 (df = 61)	0.807 (df = 58)	0.813 (df = 57)
F Statistic	0.645 (df = 3; 61)	0.532 (df = 6; 58)	0.468 (df = 7; 57)
<i>Note:</i> *p < 0.05 **p < 0.01 ***p < 0.001 Democratic respondents only (is = 1). OLS, no survey weights.			

Summary

Study 3 provides support for Hypothesis 4 and Hypothesis 5, with significant qualifications. Parental tone and yelling at televised news are both associated with students' affective orientations toward political parties, but they operate through distinct pathways and produce their strongest effects on different party targets. Specifically, parental yelling at Democratic news coverage is the dominant predictor of cooler feelings

toward the Democratic Party, while a generally positive parental tone toward Republicans, rather than yelling, is the main predictor of warmth toward the Republican Party. The social comfort outcomes, comfort with out-party friends and with dating an out-party member, are directionally consistent with these thermometer patterns but are weaker and largely underpowered given the small partisan subsamples. Read together, the results suggest that reactive, event-driven hostility and gradual, tonal warmth are distinct channels of emotional socialization that register most strongly on different parties.

The limitations of Study 3 are significant. The sample is small, geographically concentrated in a heavily Republican metropolitan area, and composed entirely of undergraduate students whose reports of parental behavior reflect retrospective perception rather than direct observation. The gender and racial composition of the sample differ from the national population. Future work should use a larger, nationally representative sample, include direct parental reports alongside child reports, and attend to racial heterogeneity in how parental tone affects partisan affect. This is a question this sample cannot adequately address.

Conclusions and Weaknesses

At the beginning of this study, I argued in favor of three processes that would contribute to the transmission of negative polarization from one generation to the next. I argued that there was a connection between how people felt about political parties and the media environment they surround themselves with. That the combination of this media environment and their emotional expressed feelings toward political parties would be

noticed by their children, or that the parents' perceptions of how children perceived them would align with that environment. Finally, I argued that the tone that parents use would influence how their children felt about political parties. The three studies I engaged in to support these arguments have demonstrated these connections, but they have also demonstrated that how parents emotionally socialize their children politically is extremely complex. The associations of political arguments with the likelihood of talking about politics with children and the different relationships of yelling and positive tone on feelings towards political figures and non-political members of the out-party highlight the complexity of how differing emotional expressions result in different affective outcomes.

There is room for significant improvement in all the analysis and two of the studies suffered from significant issues of power. Though the CCES study started with a population of 1,000 respondents by the time this was narrowed to those with children who had responded to media environment questions, the sample shrank significantly. The effect sizes of various factors were large enough that there were still significant results, but further analysis of a sample made up of parents is very much warranted. The study of university undergraduate political science students was done after several attempts to create student parent dyads, both in a large Southern California school district and in the largest school district in a Mountain West State. Issues of privacy, the current political environment educators find themselves in today, and the Covid-19 pandemic hindered my ability to field a survey with parents and students, but this is something that would add great richness to the intersection between emotional socialization and political polarization.

The main result of these studies is that there is a deep need to examine the connection between parenting styles, emotional socialization techniques, the emotional and media environments of the home, and the transmission of affective polarization. Political questions are important questions, and politically active parents are likely very intentional in the messages they attempt to pass on to their children, but the literature on emotional socialization combined with the results in this paper suggest that the emotional socialization component of political socialization may be less intentional than otherwise assumed. This was particularly evident to me in the different effects of tone and yelling on students' willingness to make friends or date outside political parties. These interactions suggested that when talking just about tone, it was positive tone that had the most influence but when it came to yelling it was anger/outrage that ruled the day. If this is the case, I might be shining light inside the black box of socialization and revealing one of the many (and there are certainly many) causes of affective polarization.

More broadly, treating out-group antipathy as a product of cognition alone misses the mechanism these studies foreground. If the emotional tenor of partisanship is learned at home, alongside and often ahead of political issue content, then contemporary affective polarization is in part an inheritance of political-emotional socialization across generations. That is a more complete story of how the electorate became sorted as it is, and it locates one lever for change in the emotional climate of the household. If sorting theory (Levendusky, 2009) is correct and partisans change their policy preferences to match their affective associations, then the family's transmission of emotional partisan attachments is an important part of the story.

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Appendix 1: Supplemental Visualizations for CCES Study

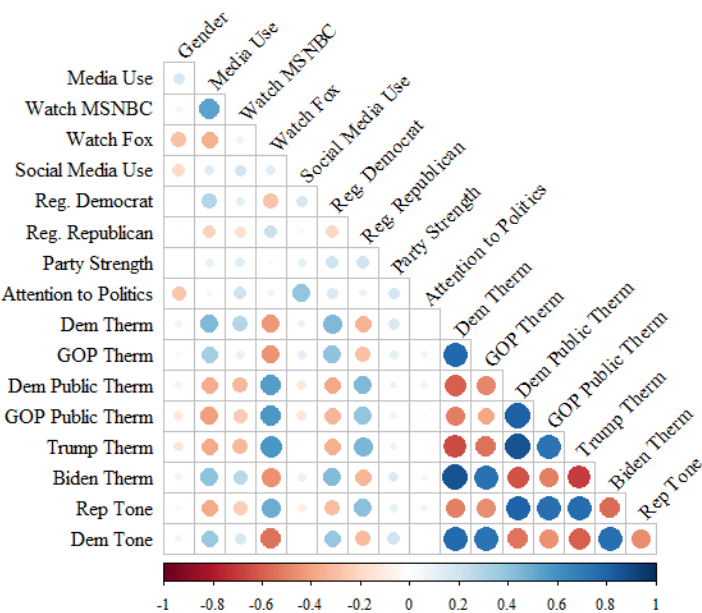


Figure 3.1 -- Correlation Matrix

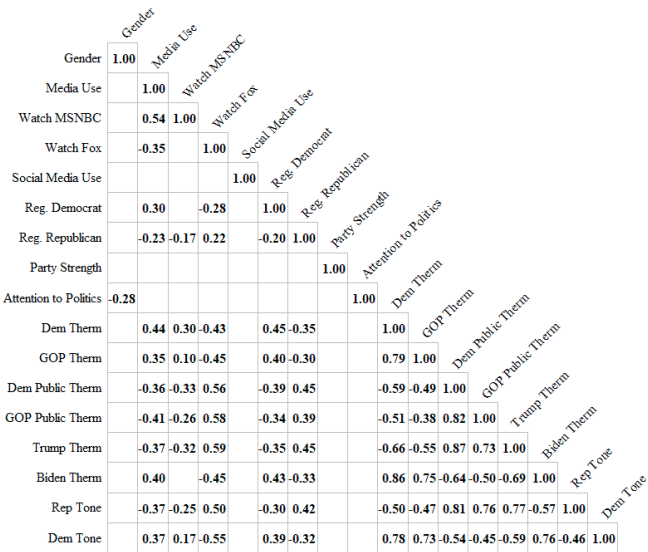


Figure 3.2 – Numeric Correlation Matrix

Appendix 2 – Yeller Only Sample

Table 3.11 – Partisan Media Effects Including CNN

Appendix: Partisan Media and Parental Affect, CNN Indicator Added (reference = watches TV news but none of Fox/MSNBC/CNN)				
	Dependent variable:			
	Biden (1)	Trump (2)	Dem Party (3)	GOP Party (4)
Female	-1.452 p = 0.826	1.637 p = 0.790	-2.920 p = 0.674	0.407 p = 0.934
Education	-3.351 p = 0.199	0.779 p = 0.747	0.722 p = 0.791	-1.301 p = 0.500
Age	0.161 p = 0.582	0.132 p = 0.626	-0.230 p = 0.455	-0.104 p = 0.631
Household Income	0.004 p = 0.998	-0.444 p = 0.656	-2.214 p = 0.053	0.502 p = 0.529
MSNBC Viewer	4.438 p = 0.551	-3.643 p = 0.599	9.965 p = 0.205	4.004 p = 0.470
Fox News Viewer	-15.136* p = 0.041	24.181*** p = 0.001	-4.583 p = 0.549	15.401** p = 0.006
CNN Viewer	1.792 p = 0.806	9.626 p = 0.159	-3.709 p = 0.628	-0.822 p = 0.880
Social Media Intensity	-3.484 p = 0.114	3.504 p = 0.089	-2.943 p = 0.203	-1.775 p = 0.277
Democrat	36.960** p = 0.002	-23.226* p = 0.028	41.545*** p = 0.001	-13.269 p = 0.112
Republican	-20.409 p = 0.055	46.221*** p = 0.00002	-15.697 p = 0.156	47.869*** p = 0.00000
Political Attention	9.833 p = 0.059	0.643 p = 0.893	7.451 p = 0.170	-4.220 p = 0.270
Constant	27.320 p = 0.250	2.549 p = 0.908	43.168 p = 0.086	39.606* p = 0.028
Observations	68	68	68	68
R ²	0.686	0.786	0.619	0.803
Adjusted R ²	0.624	0.744	0.544	0.765
Residual Std. Error (df = 56)	22.681	21.110	23.839	16.885
F Statistic (df = 11; 56)	11.109***	18.671***	8.274***	20.791***

Note:

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

OLS with UCR module team weights. Fox/MSNBC/CNN are mark-all-that-apply indicators; reference group watches TV news but none of the three.

Table 3.12 – Study 2 Specification Checks

Appendix B: Study 2 Specification Checks				
	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Discussion Frequency			
	Age-squared (1)	Anxiety contrast (2)	Positive emotion (3)	Female x Anger (4)
Female	0.268*** p = 0.00001	0.265*** p = 0.00001	0.296*** p = 0.00000	0.501** p = 0.002
Age	0.065*** p = 0.00000	0.005* p = 0.034	0.004 p = 0.064	0.005* p = 0.030
Age2	-0.001*** p = 0.00000			
Income	-0.002 p = 0.627	0.001 p = 0.852	0.0005 p = 0.908	0.001 p = 0.856
Education	0.002 p = 0.941	0.023 p = 0.426	0.001 p = 0.981	0.025 p = 0.385
`Political Interest`	0.229*** p = 0.000	0.230*** p = 0.000	0.244*** p = 0.000	0.226*** p = 0.000
`Anger/Outrage Index`	0.072** p = 0.007	0.078* p = 0.043		0.110** p = 0.003
`Anxiety Index`		-0.008 p = 0.841		
`Positive Index`			0.090* p = 0.014	
`Female x Anger/Outrage`				-0.074 p = 0.117
`Warmth Toward Democrats`	0.002 p = 0.223	0.002 p = 0.318	-0.001 p = 0.510	0.001 p = 0.355
`Warmth Toward Republicans`	-0.004** p = 0.006	-0.004** p = 0.002	-0.005** p = 0.002	-0.004** p = 0.002
Democrat	0.549*** p = 0.00001	0.554*** p = 0.00001	0.558*** p = 0.00001	0.561*** p = 0.00001
Republican	0.365** p = 0.003	0.378** p = 0.002	0.373** p = 0.002	0.379** p = 0.002
Constant	-0.341 p = 0.263	0.764*** p = 0.0004	0.955*** p = 0.00000	0.641** p = 0.004
Observations	1,356	1,356	1,356	1,356
R ²	0.162	0.147	0.146	0.148
Adjusted R ²	0.155	0.140	0.140	0.141
Residual Std. Error	1.100 (df = 1344)	1.110 (df = 1344)	1.111 (df = 1345)	1.109 (df = 1344)
F Statistic	23.626*** (df = 11; 1344)	21.039*** (df = 11; 1344)	22.991*** (df = 10; 1345)	21.297*** (df = 11; 1344)
<i>Note:</i> *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 Weighted OLS, ANES 2024 post-election weight (V240107b), N = 1,356.				

Table 3.13 – Study 2 Anger/Outrage Index Robustness

Appendix B: Anger/Outrage Index, Averaging vs. Additive (robustness)

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Discussion Frequency	
	Averaging (mean) (1)	Additive (sum) (2)
Female	0.264*** p = 0.00001	0.264*** p = 0.00001
Age	0.005* p = 0.034	0.005* p = 0.034
Income	0.001 p = 0.857	0.001 p = 0.857
Education	0.023 p = 0.431	0.023 p = 0.431
‘Political Interest’	0.230*** p = 0.000	0.230*** p = 0.000
‘Anger/Outrage Index’	0.072** p = 0.007	
‘Anger/Outrage (Additive)’		0.036** p = 0.007
‘Warmth Toward Democrats’	0.002 p = 0.320	0.002 p = 0.320
‘Warmth Toward Republicans’	-0.004** p = 0.002	-0.004** p = 0.002
Democrat	0.555*** p = 0.00001	0.555*** p = 0.00001
Republican	0.379** p = 0.002	0.379** p = 0.002
Constant	0.757*** p = 0.0004	0.757*** p = 0.0004
Observations	1,356	1,356
R ²	0.147	0.147
Adjusted R ²	0.141	0.141
Residual Std. Error (df = 1345)	1.110	1.110
F Statistic (df = 10; 1345)	23.155***	23.155***

Note: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001
Same direction and significance under both operationalizations.

Table 3.14 – Study 2 Separate Anger Outrage Test

Appendix A: Separate Anger and Outrage Models				
	Discuss Politics with Children (1=Never to 5=All the Time)			
	Discussion Frequency			
	A1: Anger (1)	A2: Outrage (2)	A3: Both (3)	A4: Full Sep. (4)
Female	0.270*** p = 0.00001	0.267*** p = 0.00001	0.266*** p = 0.00001	0.278*** p = 0.00001
Age	0.005* p = 0.030	0.005* p = 0.039	0.005* p = 0.039	0.006* p = 0.013
Income	0.001 p = 0.902	0.001 p = 0.818	0.001 p = 0.821	-0.001 p = 0.824
Education	0.019 p = 0.504	0.023 p = 0.427	0.023 p = 0.425	0.012 p = 0.667
'Political Interest'	0.234*** p = 0.000	0.231*** p = 0.000	0.230*** p = 0.000	0.195*** p = 0.000
Angry	0.052* p = 0.035		0.003 p = 0.927	-0.010 p = 0.760
Outraged		0.071** p = 0.004	0.068* p = 0.044	0.044 p = 0.189
'Warmth Toward Democrats'	0.001 p = 0.487	0.002 p = 0.280	0.002 p = 0.280	
'Warmth Toward Republicans'	-0.004** p = 0.002	-0.004** p = 0.002	-0.004** p = 0.002	
Democrat	0.564*** p = 0.00001	0.551*** p = 0.00001	0.551*** p = 0.00001	0.246 p = 0.500
Republican	0.381** p = 0.002	0.383** p = 0.002	0.382** p = 0.002	0.235 p = 0.522
'Out-Party Negative Affect'				0.0003 p = 0.952
'Had Political Argument'				0.493*** p = 0.000
'Democrat x Out-Party Negative'				0.004 p = 0.510
'Republican x Out-Party Negative'				-0.001 p = 0.896
Constant	0.832*** p = 0.0001	0.754*** p = 0.0003	0.751*** p = 0.0004	0.779* p = 0.031
Observations	1,356	1,356	1,356	1,356
R ²	0.145	0.148	0.148	0.184
Adjusted R ²	0.139	0.141	0.141	0.176
Residual Std. Error	1.111 (df = 1345)	1.110 (df = 1345)	1.110 (df = 1344)	1.087 (df = 1342)
F Statistic	22.803*** (df = 10; 1345)	23.280*** (df = 10; 1345)	21.148*** (df = 11; 1344)	23.232*** (df = 13; 1342)
Note:	*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 Weighted OLS. ANES 2024 post-election weight (V240107b).			

Table 3.15 – Average Tone t-Test

Republican Tone and Republican Party Warmth: Welch Two-Sample t-test

Group	N	Mean Rep. Party Therm	Welch t	df	p-value
Positive tone (5-7)	50	51.420			
Negative tone (1-3)	26	20.880			
Difference		30.540	4.380	64.600	0.00004

BSU undergraduate sample. Welch two-sample t-test of the Republican Party feeling thermometer by parental Republican-tone group (positive = 5-7 vs. negative = 1-3 on the 7-point tone scale; neutral tone = 4 excluded).

Table 3.16 – Test of Different Involvement Specifications

Parent Political Involvement: Additive Count vs. Mean (Democratic Party Thermometer)		
	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Democratic Party Thermometer	
	Additive count (0-7) (1)	Mean (0-1) (2)
ParentsRepTone_Numeric	0.168 p = 0.929	0.168 p = 0.929
ParentsDemTone_Numeric	3.231 p = 0.120	3.231 p = 0.120
Parent.Political.Involvement	1.422 p = 0.424	
Parent.Political.Involvement.Mean		9.957 p = 0.424
ParentsYellDemocrats	-27.421* p = 0.024	-27.421* p = 0.024
ParentsYellRepublicans	-17.305 p = 0.110	-17.305 p = 0.110
HowOftenYellNumeric	11.187* p = 0.020	11.187* p = 0.020
Constant	30.901* p = 0.037	30.901* p = 0.037
Observations	99	99
R ²	0.118	0.118
Adjusted R ²	0.061	0.061
Residual Std. Error (df = 92)	22.664	22.664
F Statistic (df = 6; 92)	2.057	2.057

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001
 OLS, no survey weights. The two specifications differ only in whether parent political involvement enters as an additive count (0-7) or its mean (0-1).
 Fit is identical; the involvement coefficient scales by a factor of 7.

Table 3.17 – Warmth Toward Parties by Those Who Have Yelled

Yellers Only: Republican Party and Democratic Party Warmth (Model 2)

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Republican Affect (1)	Democratic Affect (2)
Republican Tone (1-7)	-1.054 p = 0.884	5.233 p = 0.357
Democratic Tone (1-7)	2.038 p = 0.726	3.594 p = 0.456
Political Involvement	-8.472 p = 0.144	1.280 p = 0.735
Yell at Democrats	48.048 p = 0.179	-57.657 p = 0.076
Yell at Republicans	1.110 p = 0.973	-29.495 p = 0.310
Yelling Frequency	-0.217 p = 0.976	9.764 p = 0.092
Constant	20.737 p = 0.637	32.473 p = 0.392
Observations	27	31
R ²	0.353	0.257
Adjusted R ²	0.159	0.071
Residual Std. Error	28.331 (df = 20)	25.633 (df = 24)
F Statistic	1.819 (df = 6; 20)	1.382 (df = 6; 24)

Note:

* ** *** p<0.001

Yellers only (HowOftenYell > 0). OLS, no survey weights.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation centers on a relatively simple question: “What is the relationship between parenting and our nation’s politics?” The three papers written in response to this question provide a rich picture of the mechanisms, constraints, and extensions of a combination of processes that have been recently underexamined by most of the political science literature. The political socialization literature is robust, but it is also cyclical and goes through phases where less analysis is done. Taken together, these papers, make a few important arguments that put the socialization literature into more direct conversation with the political psychology and political partisanship literatures. In these papers, I argue that the family is one of the primary generative sites of affective polarization, that the transmission of partisan emotion operates through household behaviors that are often unintentional and emotionally driven, that the philosophy of governance embedded in parenting styles has a measurable connection to the philosophy of governance embedded in policy preferences; and that all of this was operating long before the current era of acute polarization made it visible to researchers.

This concluding chapter summarizes the contributions of each paper, describes what they say together, considers the theoretical and practical implications of those collective findings, and maps the directions that future research in this space should pursue.

What I Found

"Before the Storm" uses three generations of panel data from a period of relatively low but rising polarization to demonstrate that parents were already transmitting affective orientations toward political outgroups to their children during an era of low political polarization. The mothers in the Jennings-Niemi data who expressed cool attitudes toward the opposing party in 1973 produced children who expressed similar coolness in

1997. Those children's friend networks in 1997 reflected the partisan compositions consistent with the affective dispositions their mothers had modeled fifteen years earlier. The socialization window for this process is in early childhood rather than adolescence, a finding consistent with Oxley et al.'s (2020) evidence that affective polarization is now visible in elementary-school-age children. The acceleration of polarization visible in ANES data from the 1990s onward was not the ignition of an affective transmission process, it was the visible product of a process already in motion during a period of political realignment.

"Hovering at the Polls" establishes that the connection between parenting and politics extends beyond the transmission of partisan identity and into the transmission of a governing philosophy. The person who believes that children need protection from the consequences of their choices and that good parenting requires hovering, supervising, and intervening, is significantly more likely to believe that citizens need analogous protection through paternalistic government policy. This relationship is stronger than ideology and cuts across all partisan identities. The factor-analytic findings in Study 3 of that paper add an important dimension. They demonstrate that predisposition toward paternalism appears to be domain-general rather than domain-specific, organizing attitudes toward parental, governmental, medical, educational, and business authority into a coherent underlying construct. Parenting philosophy and political philosophy are not two separate things, rather they are quite possibly two expressions of the same construct.

"Yelling at the News" closes the loop by asking how the transmission documented in "Before the Storm" happens in the contemporary highly polarized environment. The three studies that constitute this paper point to mechanisms that are casual and affective rather than cognitive and deliberate. They are the ambient partisan media environment that parents construct in the home, the high-arousal emotional states that trigger political

conversation with children, and the expressive tonal choices parents make when discussing the opposing party. Parents who watch Fox News believe their children are more likely to perceive them as using negative tones when discussing the Democratic Party. Parents who are angry and outraged about the state of the country discuss politics with their children more frequently. This association persists after controlling for partisan identity, out-party hostility, and political argument. Students whose parents yell at Democratic television coverage rate the Democratic Party roughly 27 points colder than students whose parents do not. The emotional home environment is a significant, if unguided, site of partisan affect formation.

What the Papers Say Together

The three papers can be read as stand-alone arguments, but they are more powerful when read as parts of a cohesive whole. 'Before the Storm' establishes the fact of the transmission of affective preferences across generations; 'Hovering at the Polls' establishes a deep connection between parenting styles and political values; 'Yelling at the News' proposes and examines the behavioral mechanisms through which transmission occurs in real time. Together, they make an argument about the relationship between the private domestic world and the public political world that connects the analysis of socialization researchers with that of polarization researchers.

The socialization literature has been primarily interested in the cognitive dimensions of political transmission. It has deeply examined the transmission of party identification, issue attitudes, and political knowledge. This dissertation demonstrates that the emotional dimensions of that transmission are equally consequential and are connected to the affective polarization that defines contemporary American politics. Children do not just learn which party to join, they also learn how to feel about people who belong to the other one. They learn this not through deliberate instruction but

through observation of parental behavior. The media environment parents provide, how parents react emotionally to political news, and the tonal choices parents make when the outgroup comes up in conversation all influence how children will feel.

The polarization literature, meanwhile, has primarily looked at affective polarization as an adult phenomenon with adult causes. These causes include partisan sorting, elite cue-taking, selective media exposure, and geographic self-segregation. This dissertation agrees that all of these mechanisms matter, but it adds a prior stage to the causal story. Adult partisans do not arrive at their affective orientations for the first time when they consume partisan media or sort into politically homogeneous communities. When Johnson and Arceneaux argue that the media doesn't cause affective polarization because people are already polarized when they choose the media they prefer, they don't answer how people came to prefer that media. I argue that it is, in part, due to the media environment their parents provided. Voters arrive at adulthood already equipped with the emotional foundations that make those processes resonate. Those foundations were laid in the socialization window, by parents who may not have known they were doing it, and the evidence that these emotional foundations were already operating during a period of relatively low polarization suggests that the mechanism is robust. It does not require a highly polarized environment to transmit partisan hostility and is instead a part of what creates one.

Theoretical Implications

The findings carry implications for several theoretical traditions in political science and psychology. For political socialization literature, the central implication is that the unit of analysis for studying transmission should be expanded beyond the cognitive socialization literature and incorporate more of the emotional socialization literature and especially the mere exposure effect. The classic design of transmission

studies which compare parent and child party identification scores captures only the most visible layer of what is being transmitted. Beneath that layer lies an affective substrate whose transmission may be more consequential for the political order than the transmission of party labels, particularly in an era when partisan hostility is a stronger predictor of political behavior than positive in-group identification. We are beginning to see studies that are incorporating emotional measures for children, but we need more of these.

For the polarization literature, the implication is that any complete account of how affective polarization reproduces across time must incorporate a socialization stage. The standard account focuses on within-generation processes. There are numerous articles on partisan sorting, media selection, and identity crystallization. These processes matter and operate throughout adulthood, but they operate on individuals who arrived at adulthood pre-equipped with affective orientations formed in childhood, through household mechanisms that may be more amenable to intervention than adult-stage polarization processes. The mother's out-party thermometer in 1982, captured in a period of relatively mild political polarization, predicted the partisan composition of her children's friend networks fifteen years later. The policy implications of that finding are different from those of a finding about adult media selection.

For Lakoff's 'government as family' framework, the domain-general paternalism finding in 'Hovering at the Polls' suggests that the analogy between family governance and political governance may have a stronger psychological foundation than Lakoff's original linguistic argument implied. Lakoff's claim was that family metaphors structure political thought and that different parental roles were associated with different political parties. The finding here was that the party metaphor wasn't partisan. Instead, party metaphors were a part of a common underlying disposition that organized attitudes

toward authority across family, government, medicine, and education. This is a stronger claim. It isn't merely that people use similar language in domestic and political contexts, but that they bring the same underlying psychological structure to both. The parental style (authoritarian, free range, authoritative, permissive) that adults use to raise their children is related to their policy preferences.

Limitations

Each of the three papers carries its own limitations that are addressed in detail within those chapters, but there are also limitations that run across the dissertation as a whole that are worth naming here. The most significant structural limitation is the absence of a contemporary multi-generation panel study comparable to the Jennings-Niemi Youth-Parent Socialization Survey. The data used in "Before the Storm" ended in 1997, before the rapid acceleration of affective polarization that defines the contemporary environment. The Oxley et al. (2020) findings and the studies in "Yelling at the News" suggest that the processes examined in 'Before the Storm' may be operating more powerfully today, but direct evidence for that hypothesis would require panel data that does not currently exist. The absence of a new representative Youth-Parent Socialization Survey is the most significant unresolved data gap in this area of research.

A second limitation is sample size in several of the studies. The MTurk studies in "Hovering at the Polls," were useful for establishing initial relationships, but are not nationally representative. The undergraduate sample in Study 3 of "Yelling at the News" is explicitly treated as exploratory. The CCES module in Study 1 of that paper, while drawing on a relatively large baseline sample, contains only 266 parents of minor children after filtering. The findings are consistent across studies and datasets, which suggests that the findings are robust, but larger and more representative samples would strengthen inference.

A third limitation is causal. The correlational designs in most of the studies, including the panel designs in “Before the Storm, cannot fully exclude alternative explanations for the observed relationships. Genetic transmission of affective temperament, shared environment effects, and selection into politically homogeneous households all represent alternative pathways that the designs used here cannot rule out. The null result in the priming experiment in “Hovering at the Polls” is itself a reminder that the naturalistic correlations between parenting and political attitudes may not operate through real-time causal pathways of the sort that lab studies can detect.

Future Directions

The most urgent priority for future research in this space is the development of a new multi-generation panel study of political socialization. The Jennings-Niemi panel was an extraordinary scientific investment, and its value is still being realized nearly six decades after the first wave. A comparable study that began with high school students in the early 2000s and followed them, their parents, and their children through multiple waves would have provided analytical leverage that no other design could have matched. We cannot travel back in time, but we should attempt to create one in the current era. Such a study could directly test whether the transmission mechanisms documented in “Before the Storm” are stronger in a high-polarization environment, whether the socialization window has moved earlier in childhood as the Oxley et al.(2020) evidence suggests, and whether the party-switching patterns that complicated the 1997 analysis have continued or reversed.

Second, the domain-general paternalism construct identified in “Hovering at the Polls” deserves further development as a psychological measurement instrument. The factor analysis in Study 3 of that paper provides preliminary evidence for a general paternalism factor, but the scales used there were developed for that study and have not

been validated in subsequent independent research. A program of scale development and validation, followed by studies examining the construct's relationship to parenting behavior, political behavior, and social outcomes, would significantly advance understanding of how authority preferences are organized in individuals.

Finally, the asymmetry documented across multiple studies deserves sustained theoretical attention. The papers frequently found that negative partisanship, hostility toward the outgroup, is more powerfully transmitted and more consequential than positive partisanship, warmth toward one's own group. If the goal is to reduce affective polarization, the evidence here suggests that increasing in-group warmth may be less effective than reducing out-group hostility, and that the origins of out-group hostility are located earlier in the developmental process than most polarization researchers have assumed.

A Final Note

Anthony Downs worried in 1957 about what a highly polarized electorate would mean for democratic governance. The Columbia School worried, a decade earlier, about what happens to political stability when partisan identity consumes social life and political cross-pressures are reduced. Those concerns have proven prescient. What neither fully anticipated was that the transmission of partisan hostility across generations could be through mundane actions such as a mother's offhand remarks, the television being left on in the living room, or through the emotional register of families who did not think of themselves as doing politics. This dissertation argues that these are mechanisms that contribute to the condition they feared.

The family teaches politics whether it does so through intentional conversations or through mere exposure to mundane interactions. It transmits feelings about the other team before children know there is a game. It models a philosophy of governance in

every choice about how much autonomy to grant children, how much protection to provide them, and how loudly to express displeasure at those who see the world differently. Understanding that process is important for understanding how democratic citizens are made and how the conditions for democratic conflict are planted, quietly, in the homes that raise them.