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Information, Communication & Society
Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rics20

# Political influence across generations: partisanship and candidate evaluations in the 2008 election

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Published online: 02 Jan 2014.

To cite this article: Emily K. Vraga, Leticia Bode, JungHwan Yang, Stephanie Edgerly, Kjerstin Thorson, Chris Wells & Dhavan V. Shah , Information, Communication & Society (2014): Political influence across generations: partisanship and candidate evaluations in the 2008 election, Information, Communication & Society, DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2013.872162

To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2013.872162

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*Information, Communication & Society*, 2013
http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2013.872162

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# Political influence across generations: partisanship and candidate evaluations in the 2008 election

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(*Received 1 October 2013; accepted 2 December 2013*)

Recent scholarship in political socialization has moved beyond traditional transmission models of parent-driven socialization to consider alternative pathways, like trickle-up socialization and its predictors. However, these studies have paid less attention to the diverse ways in which parents and children develop discrete political orientations, especially during a competitive presidential campaign. In this study, we examine various pathways through which influence occurs across generations in terms of partisanship and candidate evaluations. Our results suggest that while harmonious attitudes remain the norm, there are substantial opportunities for youth to demonstrate their independence, particularly when gaining perspectives from schools and digital media sources. Our findings indicate the importance of exploring how youth and their parents come to understand politics and the forces that shape youth socialization.

**Keywords:** political socialization; party affiliation; candidate evaluations; civic education; social media

For many years, scholarship on political socialization endorsed the assumption that adolescents' political preferences were 'inherited' from parents (Jennings, Stoker, & Bowers, 2009; Niemi & Jennings, 1991; Plutzer, 2002). Early perspectives of youth civic education were dominated by studies establishing parents as the principal source of political socialization, in terms of both partisanship and political attitudes (Langton & Jennings, 1968).

Yet recent work has raised questions about the extent to which this unidirectional account of political socialization holds true. Pre-adult socialization into politics is context-specific, impacted both by 'the pressures of the times in which they first enter the electorate' (Beck & Jennings, 1991, p. 742) and 'intensive exposure to political events' (Sears & Valentino, 1997, p. 58) surrounding the process. Therefore, changes in the social, media, and political environment surrounding young adults have likely influenced the socialization process and provided new ways in which parents and children come to understand their political orientations.

In particular, recent work has led scholars to reconsider the contexts in which civic learning takes place, concluding that youth can learn about politics in diverse arenas, including media and

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schools (Lee, Shah, & McLeod, 2013). For example, changes in the media environment have created a shift from a mass media culture in which youth received the same messages from the same sources alongside their parents to a personalized communication culture in which youth have greater control over their media experiences. This change has produced a profound impact on how young people think about their own citizenship (Bennett, Freelon, Hussain, & Wells, 2012). Some schools are taking advantage of this environment, providing integrated and interactive lessons to encourage youth to explore news content and to form their own political beliefs and perspectives (McDevitt & Ostrowski, 2009). Moreover, digital media not only allow youth greater choice over their media consumption, but also reinforce the role of peers in developing norms of citizenship and partisanship (Glynn, Huge, & Lunney, 2009; McDevitt & Kiousis, 2007). Altogether, these external influences may embolden young people to be active participants in their own political socialization and lead them to exert 'trickle-up' influence by transforming family communication patterns (FCP) (Saphir & Chaffee, 2002) and affecting parents' political orientation (Linimon & Joslyn, 2002; McDevitt & Chaffee, 2002).

Further, the political environment itself may be contributing to new pathways of socialization. The availability of political information via a wide range of news outlets and social media networks coupled with the increased clarity of the parties' ideological positions allow youth to more readily select a party that matches their personal priorities (Abramowitz & Saunders, 1998; Bafami & Shapiro, 2009; Wolak, 2009).

These changes call for a reexamination of some longstanding questions in political psychology: how young adults develop partisan identities and attitudes and the relationship of these dynamics to the choices of their parents. To clarify these relationships, we use national panel data of parent–child dyads collected during the 2008 election cycle to explore different ways in which parents and children influenced each other in their partisanship and their electoral preferences for Democratic or Republican candidates. We go beyond both traditional transmission and 'trickle-up' models of socialization (Linimon & Joslyn, 2002; McDevitt & Chaffee, 2000) to examine a diverse range of ways in which the partisanship and candidate evaluations of parents and children may influence one another over the course of the campaign. Equally important, we examine how change within families occurs, why some dyads remain in partisan harmony whereas others change, and why some families move toward agreement while discord reigns in others. We pay special attention to the role of FCP, civic education, peer norms, and mediated communications in predicting these relationships.

## Literature review

### *Partisan socialization and the family*

Given the significance of partisanship to so many political choices, particular attention has been paid to understanding how this identification develops throughout life. The bulk of scholarly attention has focused on the role that parents play in encouraging their children to adopt a political identity in line with their own (Carmines, McIver, & Stimson, 1987; Jennings & Markus, 1984; Jennings et al., 2009; Niemi & Jennings, 1991). Partisanship has generally been viewed as a 'hand-me-down' orientation, with parental orientations predicting the partisan identities that children adopt (Campbell, Converse, Miller, & Stokes, 1960; Lane, 1962). This research has been verified with multiple generations over decades (Jennings & Markus, 1984; Jennings et al., 2009; Niemi & Jennings, 1991), with many scholars suggesting socialization occurs early and is reinforced over childhood and young adulthood (Van Deth, Abendschon, & Vollmar, 2011).

While less research has considered the role of parental influence in the development of short-term political attitudes such as candidate evaluations, themselves shaped by partisan

identification, parental perspectives provide important feedback for transitory political evaluations including candidate assessments (Jennings et al., 2009). Further, the same processes that influence the development of partisanship within families – direct learning of political cues and underlying characteristics like class (Beck & Jennings, 1991; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995) – should also play a role in shaping candidate evaluations.

### *Challenging the transmission model*

Efforts to expand the direct transmission model have focused on the 'trickle-up' socialization model, which suggests that children, motivated by external influences discussed above, may influence their parents by initiating political discussions (McDevitt & Chaffee, 2000, 2002). Extensions of this model have focused on circumstances under which children gain their political identities, including both internal (adolescent personality) and external (campaign context) influences (Wolak, 2009).

However, existing research does not go far enough in exploring the variety of pathways by which parents and children may shift their political orientations over the course of the election. To remedy this, we build on the insight of Carmines et al. (1987), which recognized a variety of possible routes of parent–child agreement and disagreement. Specifically, we examine what factors increase the likelihood that a given parent–child dyad will follow any one of eight routes of socialization over the course of the election:

(1) *Harmony*, in which parent–child dyads agree at early and late stages of the election.
(2) *Independent child*, in which the child moves from initial agreement with the parent toward independence.
(3) *Independent parent*, in which the parent moves from initial agreement with the child toward independence.
(4) *Co-divergence*, in which parent–child dyads both change their views from initial agreement to disagreement.
(5) *Discord*, in which parent–child dyads disagree at early and late stages of the election cycle.
(6) *Indoctrination*, in which the child abandons initial independence in favor of agreement.
(7) *Trickle-up*, in which the parent abandons initial independence in favor of agreement.
(8) *Co-adoption*, in which parent–child dyads both change their views from initial disagreement to agreement.

We explore the distribution of parent–child dyads into these categories for several socialization outcomes and then test demographic, structural, and communicative antecedents to these parent–child relationships.

### *Agents of socialization*

Socialization research has long emphasized the role that parents play in predicting children's political orientations. Research has consistently shown that the clarity and strength of parental attitudes toward politics contribute to socialization (Beck & Jennings, 1991; Carmines et al., 1987; Jennings et al., 2009), making it more likely that children will adopt parental attitudes.

> *H1*: Parents with stronger partisanship will encourage greater agreement with their children (e.g. more harmony, more indoctrination, less independent child, less discord) and will be less susceptible to children's influence (e.g. trickle-up).

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However, recent work in socialization has established a number of challenges to the transmission model and to the assumption that family is the dominant socialization agent, emphasizing the importance of multiple socialization influences, including family communication, schools, and media habits (Lee et al., 2013).

Communication is central to theoretical models linking together various agents of political socialization. The value of schools, peers, and families has been conceptualized as primarily sites for political discussion, which in turn both motivates and is further motivated by news media use. Early research on family interactions suggested the importance of conversation for socialization, but primarily viewed it as parent-driven (Saphir & Chaffee, 2002). However, it has been argued that when children have been socialized by external influences, they have the potential to shape parents' perspectives if FCP reflect a concept-orientation, in which disagreement between parents and children is allowed as part of an open exchange of ideas, rather than a socio-orientation, which value conformity and adherence to parental authority (Chaffee, Ward, & Tipton, 1970; McDevitt & Chaffee, 2002; McLeod & Chaffee, 1972; McLeod & Shah, 2009).

> *H2*: Families who discuss politics more frequently will be more likely to maintain or come into agreement about politics (e.g. more harmony, less discord, less independent child).

The role of family communication may be reinforced by other opportunities for political learning. In a study comparing the effects of school-based civics curricula on political discussion and socialization outcomes, McDevitt and Kiousis (2007) argue that systematically different socialization outcomes emerge depending on whether the influence of school-based civics interventions is channeled through the home or by peer groups. Because adolescents' motivation to differentiate the self is more salient with peers, peer-based interactions about politics are more likely to produce interest in non-conventional activism while interaction with the family tends to reproduce existing values. Conversation, then, has the possibility of reinforcing parental norms or introducing children's political sentiments to parents.

> *RQ2*: Will families who communicate more frequently about politics be more likely to experience trickle-up or indoctrination routes of socialization?

Schools and civic classrooms are another centrally important source of socializing influence. Work by McDevitt and colleagues suggests that schools can be 'staging grounds' for influence when applying a civics-based curriculum, as students integrate lessons learned from the interconnected relationships between peers, mass media, and parents (Hess, 2009; Kiousis, McDevitt, & Wu, 2005; McDevitt & Chaffee, 2000; McDevitt & Kiousis, 2007). Children who partake in these types of classroom activities hone their civic skills and gain confidence in their abilities (Kiousis et al., 2005; McDevitt & Kiousis, 2007), giving them the agency to develop their own attitudes about the political world. Schools may offer young adults opportunities to explore new identities, whereas parents and families tend to validate and reinforce existing identities (McDevitt & Ostrowski, 2009). Moreover, as McDevitt and Chaffee (2000) suggest, children can play an active role by influencing their parents' attitudes about politics. Therefore, we expect that exposure to civics curricula will encourage children to demonstrate more freedom and power in the political socialization process.

> *H3*: Civic education will contribute to children having more independence from parents (e.g. less harmony, less indoctrination, more discord, more independent child) and more likely to impact parents' attitudes (e.g. more trickle-up).

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Outside of traditional agents of socialization in the home and schools, research has emphasized the role of the media in helping to solidify political orientations. The news media can provide young adults with an opportunity to hear a broader range of perspectives to validate or challenge their political values and opinions (Kiousis et al., 2005; Mutz, 2002). Social media are an important new source of mediated socialization, and we expect social media to act as the more traditional media which predated them – providing information and encouraging the acceptance of shared norms of political awareness and participation (Chaffee et al., 1970; Lee et al., 2013; Plutzer, 2002). This is especially true in 2008 when campaign strategists extensively used social media to promote youth engagement, offering an additional means through which peer socialization may take place (Campbell, 1980; Glynn et al., 2009). Evidence suggests that political uses of social media play a role in the political lives of young people, leading us to view them as a potential factor in youth socialization (Bode, Vraga, Borah, & Shah, 2013; Pew, 2012).

But beyond presenting young people with additional opportunities to learn about and experience political information, social media spaces are first and foremost *social* – they are places in which peers interact with, and share information with, friends. Although many people are exposed to political content on social media, only a small minority post themselves, often due to concerns about the reaction of peers within one's network (Pew, 2012; Thorson, Vraga, & Kligler-Vilenchik, in press). The role of peer relationships as a setting for everyday encounters with political content cannot be understated, as many of the settings where youth peers interact may serve as platforms for the emergence of political talk. McDevitt and Kiousis (2007) showed that civics interventions in schools can prompt youth to increase the amount of political talk both within their families and within their peer social networks. In a survey of Swedish youth, Ekstrom and Ostman (2013) found that civic talk among peers is a particularly important predictor of a number of democratic outcomes, including participation, knowledge, and attention to political information. These findings hold in studies exploring the impact of political uses of social media on participatory outcomes (Bode, Vraga, et al., 2013; Vitak et al., 2011). Therefore, political social media use should derive part of its power to encourage children to deviate from parents' political attitudes by heightening the salience of peer relationships.

All of these forces should offer children additional information and exposure to norms outside of their family, leading to greater independence and agency among children.

*H4*: Children's political Facebook use will contribute to children having more independence from parental influence (e.g. less harmony, less indoctrination, more discord, more independent child), and produce greater influence on parents' attitudes (e.g. more trickle-up).

## Methods and measures

### *Data and design*

We test the different proposed routes of socialization by analyzing data from a two-wave national panel survey of adolescent–parent pairs collected by Synovate, a commercial survey firm. Four-page mailed surveys were collected from a single panel of respondents in two waves (1st wave: 20 May – 25 June; 2nd wave: 5 November – 10 December) during 2008. Small incentives were offered for participation.

To achieve a representative pool of respondents, stratified quota sampling procedures were employed.[1] The sample was drawn to reflect the properties of the population within each of the nine Census divisions in terms of household income, population density, age, and household size; then adjusted within a range of subcategories including race, gender, and marital status to compensate for differences in return rates (see Shah, Cho, Eveland, & Kwak, 2005).

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This technique generated a sample of 4000 households with children aged 12–17. A parent in each household was contacted via mail, asked to complete an introductory portion of the survey, and then to pass it to the 12–17-year-old child in the household who most recently celebrated a birthday. This child completed survey content and then returned the survey to the parent to complete a closing portion and return the survey. Of the 4000 mail surveys distributed, 1325 responses were received in Wave 1, a response rate of 33.1%.[2] A handful of responses were omitted due to incomplete or inconsistent information, resulting in 1255 questionnaires mailed on 4 November. Of these, 738 were returned, for a panel retention rate of 55.7% and a second wave response rate of 60.4%.[3] After dropping mismatches in the age of the child and the gender of a parent who completed the first and second surveys,[4] we had a final sample of $N = 531$.

## ***Dependent variables***

### *Political orientations*

We test three related political outcomes: party affiliation, evaluations of John McCain, and evaluations of Barack Obama. All three variables are measured for both parents and children in both waves. Partisan identifications of parents and children were measured using a five-point scale that ranges from 'Strong Democrat' (1) to 'Strong Republican' (5), converted to a three-point scale by collapsing the strong Democrat/Democrat and strong Republican/Republican categories together.[5] Candidate favorability was measured by asking 'How favorable is your impression of John McCain/Barack Obama' with five-point scales ranging from 'Very Favorable' (1) to 'Very Unfavorable' (5), converted to a three-point scale by collapsing the very favorable/favorable and very unfavorable/unfavorable responses together.[6]

Next, we compared the parent–child agreement on each measure in each wave of the data collection and determined which route described the socialization process. Each route is calculated as a dichotomous measure – either the parent–child dyad took that route (coded 1) or they did not (e.g. took any other route, 0) – reflecting whether the parent and child began in agreement or disagreement and whether one or both moved over the course of the election (as described earlier). Descriptive statistics of these routes are presented in Table 1.

## ***Independent variables***

### *Demographics*

In our analyses, we controlled for parental education and child gender, measured in Wave 1, as well as child's age in Wave 2. See Table 2 for descriptive statistics. All variables were measured in Wave 2 of the survey, unless otherwise noted.

### *Party identification*

To measure party identification, parent and child were each asked in Wave 1, on the five-point scale ranging from 'Strongly Democrat' (1) to 'Strongly Republican' (5), which option best described their party affiliation. Partisan strength variables were constructed by folding the same item on a scale of 1–3, such that a higher number indicates greater partisan strength.

### *News media use*

To measure news consumption, we asked how many days in a typical week both parent and child respondents used particular media. Traditional news use included broadcast news use, comprising

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Table 1. Descriptive statistics for socialization routes.

| | | | Political party affiliation | | | McCain favorability | | | Obama favorability | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Process description | Wave 1 | Wave 2 | *N* | % of subset | % of total | *N* | % of subset | % of total | *N* | % of subset | % of total |
| Harmony | Matched | Continue to match | 270 | 81.3 | 50.8 | 234 | 77.0 | 44.1 | 278 | 78.3 | 52.3 |
| Independent child | | Parent remains same, child changed | 44 | 13.3 | 8.3 | 30 | 9.9 | 5.6 | 35 | 9.9 | 6.6 |
| Independent parent | | Child remains same, parent changed | 14 | 4.2 | 2.6 | 26 | 8.6 | 4.9 | 28 | 7.6 | 5.3 |
| Co-diverge | | Both change to be different | 4 | 1.2 | 0.8 | 14 | 4.6 | 2.6 | 15 | 4.2 | 2.8 |
| | | Total beginning matched | 332 | | 62.5 | 304 | | 57.3 | 356 | | 67.0 |
| Discord | Not | Continue to not match | 72 | 58.1 | 13.6 | 84 | 42.6 | 15.8 | 55 | 37.2 | 10.4 |
| Indoctrination | Matched | Parent remains same, child moves to parent | 32 | 25.8 | 6.0 | 63 | 32.0 | 11.9 | 45 | 30.4 | 8.5 |
| Trickle-up | | Child remains same, parent moves to child | 15 | 12.1 | 2.8 | 27 | 13.7 | 5.1 | 28 | 18.9 | 5.3 |
| Co-adopt | | Both change to match | 5 | 4.0 | 0.9 | 23 | 11.7 | 4.3 | 20 | 13.5 | 3.8 |
| | | Total beginning not matched | 124 | | 23.4 | 197 | | 37.1 | 148 | | 27.9 |
| No answer | | | 75 | | 14.1 | 30 | | 5.6 | 27 | | 5.2 |

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for key predictors.

| Variables | *N* | Min | Max | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Parent | | | | | |
| Education[a] | 527 | 1 | 5 | 3.31 | 1.11 |
| Traditional news use | 530 | 0 | 7 | 2.84 | 1.42 |
| Online news use | 530 | 0 | 7 | 0.57 | 0.89 |
| Party ID[a] (1: Strong Democrat, 5: Strong Republican) | 507 | 1 | 5 | 3.00 | 1.07 |
| Strength of Party ID[a] | 507 | 1 | 3 | 1.88 | 0.61 |
| Family | | | | | |
| Concept-orientation | 531 | 1 | 5 | 3.82 | 0.85 |
| Socio-orientation | 531 | 1 | 5 | 2.86 | 1.04 |
| Family political talk | 531 | 1 | 6.50 | 4.15 | 1.37 |
| Child | | | | | |
| Age | 531 | 12 | 18 | 14.90 | 1.64 |
| Gender (1: male)[a] | 531 | 0 | 1 | 0.48 | 0.50 |
| Traditional news use | 529 | 0 | 7 | 1.34 | 1.22 |
| Online news use | 528 | 0 | 7 | 0.34 | 0.73 |
| Political social media use | 528 | 1 | 4 | 1.27 | 0.53 |
| Social media posting | 527 | 1 | 4 | 1.80 | 1.02 |
| Party ID[a] (1: Strong Democrat, 5: Strong Republican) | 471 | 1 | 5 | 2.89 | 0.92 |
| Strength of Party ID[a] | 471 | 1 | 3 | 1.71 | 0.59 |
| School/friend | | | | | |
| Civic education | 528 | 1 | 8 | 3.56 | 1.99 |
| Enjoy civic education | 529 | 1 | 5 | 2.99 | 1.06 |

[a]Variables measured in Wave 1 of the panel. All other variables were measured at Wave 2.

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national, local, and cable TV news, and print news media use, reading a print copy of national or local newspapers ($\alpha = .58$ for parent; $\alpha = .70$ for child). Online news use measures news consumption via websites of mainstream news organizations and via liberal and conservative political blogs ($\alpha = .63$ for parent; $\alpha = .78$ for child).

### *Family communication patterns*

Two dimensions of FCP were constructed combining responses from parents and children within the same family. Concept-oriented family communication measured the acceptance of disagreement between kids and adults, asking both parents and children on a five-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree 'In our family, kids learn it's OK to disagree with adults' ideas about the world.' These measures were averaged to create an index ($r = .43$, $p < .001$). Socio-oriented family communication examined parents' dominance in decision-making, using agreement with the statement: 'In our family, kids are taught not to upset adults,' averaged across parents and children ($r = .47$, $p < .001$).

### *Family political talk*

Family political talk averaged two items from parent and child: 'I often encourage my child to talk about politics' (parent) and 'Talked about news and current events with family members' (child) ($r = .34$, $p < .001$).

*Civic education*

Children were asked on an eight-point scale from 'not at all' to 'frequently' how often during the past three months they had: 'followed the news as part of a class assignment', 'learned about how government works in class', 'discussed/debated political or social issues in class', 'participated in political role playing in class (mock trials, elections)', and 'encouraged to make up your own mind about issues in class', combined into an index ($\alpha = .90$).

*Enjoyment of civic education*

Children were also asked how much they enjoyed and how much they participated in classroom activities about politics and current events, on a five-point scale ($r = .67$, $p < .001$).

*Political social media use*

We measured adolescents' social media use by asking how frequently respondents had participated in a variety of activities on 'Facebook, MySpace, or other social-networking sites' on a four-point scale, from never to regularly. An exploratory factor analysis using Promax rotation produced two factors. The first factor, explaining 47% of the variance, was labeled *political Facebook use*, including 'displayed your political preferences on your profile', 'became a "fan" or "friend" of a politician', 'joined a "cause" or political "group"', 'used a news or politics application/widget', 'exchanged political views on a discussion board or group wall', and 'been invited to a political event by a friend', which were combined into an index ($\alpha = .86$). A second factor, accounting for an additional 15% of variance, was labeled *social media posting* and combined 'sharing your photos or videos online' and 'updated a blog or journal' into an index ($r = .68$, $p < .001$). These two factors were moderately correlated ($r = .40$, $p < .001$).[7]

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## Results

### *Predicting socialization routes*

In examining the processes of parent–child socialization of political orientations, we begin by noting that for all three orientations, the majority of parent–child dyads report agreement in their party affiliation, evaluations of McCain, and evaluations of Obama. Thus, those routes that begin with agreement are necessarily more likely to occur.

Looking specifically at party affiliation, we see that *harmony*, or when a parent and child remain in agreement, dominates the pathways across political orientations. Meanwhile, *discord*, or remaining in disagreement throughout the campaign, is the second most common pathway. Across the models, those routes in which a parent adjusts their political orientations – either away from agreement with the child in the *independent parent* route or to match the child in the *trickle-up* route – are less common than a child changing their position, either to come into agreement with the parent via *indoctrination* or to move away from initial agreement via the *independent child* route. Further, it is worth noting that the independent child route, which increases disagreement with parental attitudes, is roughly as common as the indoctrination route, where children adopt parental attitudes to create agreement. Finally, routes in which both parents and children change their attitudes during the campaign, either through *co-adoption* or *co-divergence*, prove very uncommon.

### *Understanding different routes*

Next we turn to our primary interest: *why* these different processes occur and the factors that predict socialization patterns. We examine the most common routes for political orientations,

excluding the rare cases of independent parent, co-divergence, and co-adoption. For each dependent variable reflecting a specific path that a parent–child dyad may take, we estimate a separate logistic regression.

To test our first set of hypotheses, we examine the role that parental partisanship played in encouraging routes that produce greater agreement with their children in political orientations. This hypothesis is largely supported for party affiliation (Table 3). Parents with stronger partisanship inhibit the independent child ($\beta = -0.80$, $p < .05$) and trickle-up ($\beta = -2.29$, $p < .01$) routes of socialization, while marginally increasing the likelihood that indoctrination ($\beta = .70$, $p < .10$) will occur for party affiliation. However, in contrast to our expectations, stronger parental partisanship also predicted discord ($\beta = .85$, $p < .01$) in party affiliation. The role of parental partisanship is much less clear for predicting which routes explain candidate evaluations, only emerging to significantly predict an increased likelihood of indoctrination ($\beta = .69$, $p < .05$) in evaluations of McCain (Table 4).

Next, we examine the role that family discussion of news and politics plays in encouraging agreement between parents and children, as well as its contributions to trickle-up vs. indoctrination processes to limit disagreement. H2 receives limited support: while more family communication marginally increases the odds of harmony ($\beta = .18$, $p < .10$) and decreases the odds of discord ($\beta = -0.27$, $p < .05$) in evaluations of McCain, it has little impact on other pathways. One other significant relationship emerges: families that talk about politics more frequently ($\beta = .61$, $p < .05$) – and who also engage in more pluralistic styles of communication ($\beta = -.76$, $p < .01$) – have greater odds of seeing trickle-up socialization for party affiliation. However, the role of family communication in determining how socialization occurs is limited overall, except for evaluations of McCain.

Our third hypothesis predicted that civic education would increase child independence in socialization patterns. While we find consistent support that civic education increases the odds that children will move away from their parents in their evaluations of both McCain ($\beta = .24$, $p < .05$) and Obama ($\beta = .25$, $p < .05$; Table 5), as well as decreases the odds of a harmonious relationship in evaluating McCain ($\beta = -.13$, $p < .05$), it does not significantly predict one route over another for those dyads that start with disagreement, nor does it explain which routes occur for socialization of party affiliation. Therefore, civic education contributes to a child's independence from their parents for candidate evaluations, as suggested in H3, but does not appear to explain socialization more broadly.

Turning to the role that political social media use plays in socialization, we find stronger support for our hypotheses. Children who engage in more political Facebook use are less likely to maintain harmony with parents in party affiliation ($\beta = -.49$, $p < .05$), and are instead more likely to experience discord ($\beta = .59$, $p < .10$). This heightened potential for discord among youth using more political social media is also evident for evaluations of John McCain ($\beta = .76$, $p < .01$), where it also lessens the potential for indoctrination to occur ($\beta = -.82$, $p < .10$). However, political social media use does not help explain socialization pathways in evaluations of Obama. Therefore, we find mixed support for H4. Further, posting non-political updates on social media never significantly predicts which pathways occur in the socialization of these political orientations.

## Discussion

This project sought to deepen our understanding of the ways in which parents and children orient themselves toward politics. Building on traditional models of socialization (see Carmines et al., 1987; Jennings et al., 2009; McDevitt & Chaffee, 2002), we began by exploring a wide range of

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Table 3. Logistic regression analyses predicting dyadic influence routes for party identification.

| | Harmony | | Independent child | | Discord | | Indoctrination | | Trickle-up | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *B* (SE) | OR | *B* (SE) | OR | *B* (SE) | OR | *B* (SE) | OR | *B* (SE) | OR |
| Parental controls | | | | | | | | | | |
| Education | −0.13 (0.11) | 0.88 | 0.01 (0.16) | 1.01 | 0.17 (0.14) | 1.18 | 0.16 (0.21) | 1.18 | 0.39 (0.31) | 1.47 |
| Party ID | −0.47** (0.15) | 0.63 | 0.15 (0.27) | 1.17 | 0.55** (0.18) | 1.73 | 0.19 (0.24) | 1.21 | 0.85 (0.53) | 2.33 |
| Strength of Party ID | −0.02 (0.21) | 0.98 | −0.80* (0.34) | 0.45 | 0.85** (0.27) | 2.34 | 0.70† (0.37) | 2.02 | −2.29** (0.69) | 0.10 |
| Traditional news use | −0.10 (0.09) | 0.90 | −0.03 (0.14) | 0.97 | 0.15 (0.12) | 1.16 | −0.01 (0.17) | 0.99 | −0.26 (0.28) | 0.78 |
| Online news use | 0.32* (0.15) | 1.38 | −0.18 (0.25) | 0.83 | −0.26 (0.21) | 0.77 | −0.02 (0.27) | 0.98 | −0.24 (0.48) | 0.79 |
| Child controls | | | | | | | | | | |
| Age | 0.04 (0.07) | 1.04 | −0.13 (0.11) | 0.88 | 0.06 (0.09) | 1.06 | 0.01 (0.13) | 1.01 | −0.08 (0.22) | 0.92 |
| Gender (1: male) | −0.13 (0.22) | 0.87 | 0.40 (0.35) | 1.49 | 0.02 (0.30) | 1.02 | −0.33 (0.44) | 0.72 | 1.09 (0.70) | 2.97 |
| Party ID | 0.47* (0.19) | 1.59 | 0.53† (0.29) | 1.71 | −0.90** (0.29) | 0.41 | −1.11† (0.61) | 0.33 | −0.65 (0.42) | 0.53 |
| Strength of Party ID | 1.64*** (0.24) | 5.16 | −0.20 (0.35) | 0.82 | −2.01*** (0.34) | 0.13 | −2.66*** (0.65) | 0.07 | 1.63* (0.66) | 5.10 |
| Traditional news use | 0.01 (0.12) | 1.00 | 0.10 (0.19) | 1.11 | −0.05 (0.15) | 0.95 | 0.11 (0.21) | 1.12 | −0.08 (0.42) | 0.92 |
| Online news use | 0.06 (0.18) | 1.07 | −0.20 (0.30) | 0.82 | 0.06 (0.24) | 1.06 | −1.39* (0.72) | 0.25 | −0.82 (0.91) | 0.55 |
| Family communication | | | | | | | | | | |
| Concept-orientation | −0.17 (0.34) | 0.85 | 0.28 (0.57) | 1.33 | −0.31 (0.44) | 0.74 | −1.19† (0.69) | 0.30 | 1.67 (1.07) | 5.28 |
| Socio-orientation | −0.07 (0.46) | 0.98 | 0.09 (0.80) | 1.09 | −1.03 (0.66) | 0.36 | −0.80 (0.79) | 0.45 | 3.31** (1.21) | 27.47 |
| Socio × concept | 0.05 (0.11) | 1.05 | −0.04 (0.19) | 0.96 | 0.16 (0.16) | 1.17 | 0.32 (0.20) | 1.37 | −0.76** (0.29) | 0.47 |
| Family political talk | 0.05 (0.10) | 0.95 | 0.01 (0.16) | 1.01 | −0.09 (0.14) | 0.91 | 0.01 (0.21) | 1.01 | 0.61* (0.31) | 1.83 |
| Child social media | | | | | | | | | | |
| Political Facebook use | −0.49* (0.24) | 0.62 | 0.35 (0.35) | 1.43 | 0.59† (0.31) | 1.80 | 0.39 (0.44) | 1.47 | −0.61 (0.91) | 0.54 |
| Facebook updates | −0.18 (0.12) | 0.84 | 0.28 (0.18) | 1.33 | −0.14 (0.17) | 0.86 | 0.03 (0.23) | 1.03 | −0.27 (0.45) | 0.77 |
| Child school | | | | | | | | | | |
| Civic Education | 0.00 (0.07) | 1.00 | −0.06 (0.10) | 0.94 | 0.02 (0.09) | 1.02 | 0.06 (0.13) | 0.64 | −0.11 (0.19) | 0.90 |
| Enjoy civic education | 0.02 (0.12) | 1.02 | −0.05 (0.19) | 0.95 | −0.09 (0.16) | 0.91 | 0.35 (0.23) | 1.42 | −0.26 (0.36) | 0.78 |
| Constant | −0.87 (1.86) | | −2.34 (3.09) | | 1.60 (2.53) | | 3.51 (3.89) | | −11.32† (5.96) | |
| | *N* = 448 | | | | | | | | | |

†$p < .10$.
*$p < .05$.
**$p < .01$.
***$p < .001$.

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Table 4. Logistic regression analyses predicting dyadic influence routes for McCain evaluations.

| | Harmony | | Independent child | | Discord | | Indoctrination | | Trickle-up | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *B* (SE) | OR | *B* (SE) | OR | *B* (SE) | OR | *B* (SE) | OR | *B* (SE) | OR |
| Parental controls | | | | | | | | | | |
| Education | −0.14 (0.10) | 0.88 | −0.31 (0.20) | 0.73 | −0.02 (0.13) | 0.98 | 0.30† (0.16) | 1.35 | 0.32 (0.22) | 2.02 |
| Party ID | −0.05 (0.14) | 0.95 | 0.04 (0.29) | 1.04 | 0.20 (0.18) | 1.22 | 0.13 (0.22) | 1.14 | 0.09 (0.31) | 1.10 |
| Strength of Party ID | 0.03 (0.19) | 1.03 | −0.01 (0.39) | 0.99 | −0.05 (0.25) | 0.95 | 0.69* (0.30) | 1.80 | −0.20 (0.41) | 0.82 |
| Traditional news use | 0.13 (0.08) | 1.14 | −0.00 (0.17) | 1.00 | −0.01 (0.11) | 1.00 | −0.08 (0.13) | 0.93 | −0.23 (0.19) | 0.80 |
| Online news use | 0.12 (0.13) | 1.13 | −0.70† (0.38) | 0.50 | −0.05 (0.20) | 0.95 | 0.21 (0.20) | 1.24 | −0.07 (0.29) | 0.94 |
| Child controls | | | | | | | | | | |
| Age | −0.03 (0.06) | 0.97 | −0.08 (0.13) | 0.93 | 0.02 (0.08) | 0.78 | 0.08 (0.10) | 1.08 | −0.33* (0.16) | 0.72 |
| Gender (1: male) | 0.06 (0.21) | 1.06 | −0.38 (0.44) | 0.69 | −0.06 (0.28) | 0.83 | −0.35 (0.34) | 0.71 | −0.14 (0.47) | 0.87 |
| Party ID | 0.08 (0.17) | 1.09 | −0.14 (0.38) | 0.96 | −0.30 (0.23) | 0.74 | −0.17 (0.29) | 0.85 | 0.11 (0.33) | 1.11 |
| Strength of Party ID | 0.35† (0.20) | 1.43 | −0.72† (0.43) | 0.49 | −0.29 (0.27) | 0.29 | −0.36 (0.32) | 0.70 | 0.30 (0.42) | 1.35 |
| Traditional news use | −0.01 (0.11) | 0.99 | −0.07 (0.21) | 0.94 | −0.09 (0.15) | 0.91 | −0.24 (0.19) | 0.79 | 0.46* (0.22) | 1.59 |
| Online news use | 0.24 (0.18) | 1.27 | 0.03 (0.28) | 0.49 | −0.83* (0.39) | 0.44 | 0.12 (0.32) | 1.12 | 0.14 (0.31) | 1.16 |
| Family communication | | | | | | | | | | |
| Concept-orientation | 0.01 (0.33) | 1.01 | 0.07 (0.67) | 1.08 | 0.09 (0.45) | 1.10 | −0.43 (0.52) | 0.65 | −0.69 (0.71) | 0.50 |
| Socio-orientation | −0.13 (0.42) | 0.88 | 0.28 (0.82) | 1.33 | 0.12 (0.58) | 1.13 | −0.27 (0.64) | 0.76 | −0.38 (0.78) | 0.68 |
| Socio × concept | 0.02 (0.10) | 1.02 | −0.08 (0.20) | 0.92 | −0.04 (0.14) | 0.96 | 0.12 (0.16) | 1.12 | 0.10 (0.20) | 1.10 |
| Family political talk | 0.18† (0.10) | 1.20 | 0.06 (0.19) | 1.07 | −0.27* (0.13) | 0.76 | 0.03 9.16) | 1.03 | 0.04 (0.23) | 1.04 |
| Child social media | | | | | | | | | | |
| Political Facebook use | −0.14 (0.22) | 0.87 | 0.45 (0.41) | 1.56 | 0.76** (0.29) | 2.13 | −0.82† (0.49) | 0.44 | −0.65 (0.58) | 0.52 |
| Facebook updates | 0.12 (0.11) | 1.13 | −0.16 (0.24) | 0.86 | −0.17 (0.16) | 0.85 | 0.10 (0.18) | 1.11 | −0.28 (0.30) | 0.75 |
| Child school | | | | | | | | | | |
| Civic education | −0.13* (0.06) | 0.88 | 0.24* (0.12) | 1.26 | 0.08 (0.08) | 1.08 | −0.09 (0.10) | 0.91 | 0.12 (0.13) | 1.13 |
| Enjoy civic education | 0.08 (0.11) | 1.09 | −0.29 (0.22) | 0.75 | 1.9 (0.15) | 1.21 | −0.09 (0.18) | 0.91 | 0.31 (0.27) | 1.36 |
| Constant | −0.97 (1.72) | | 0.46 (3.49) | | −1.36 (2.35) | | | | 2.26 (3.72) | |
| | | | | | $N = 435$ | | | | | |

†$p < .10$.
*$p < .05$.
**$p < .01$.
***$p < .001$.

Table 5. Logistic regression analyses predicting dyadic influence routes for Obama evaluations.

| | Harmony | | Independent child | | Discord | | Indoctrination | | Trickle-up | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *B* (SE) | OR | *B* (SE) | OR | *B* (SE) | OR | *B* (SE) | OR | *B* (SE) | OR |
| Parental controls | | | | | | | | | | |
| Education | −0.11 (0.10) | 0.90 | 0.23 (0.19) | 1.26 | −0.03 (0.15) | 0.97 | 0.10 (0.18) | 1.10 | 0.18 (0.21) | 1.20 |
| Party ID | −0.33* (0.14) | 0.72 | 0.23 (0.26) | 1.26 | 0.16 (0.23) | 1.17 | 0.57* (0.26) | 1.77 | 0.12 (0.31) | 1.13 |
| Strength of Party ID | 0.28 (0.19) | 1.32 | −0.15 (0.37) | 0.86 | −0.32 (0.31) | 0.73 | −0.03 (0.36) | 0.97 | −0.41 (0.41) | 0.67 |
| Traditional news use | 0.04 (0.08) | 1.04 | −0.17 (0.16) | 0.85 | 0.01 (0.13) | 1.01 | −0.18 (0.15) | 0.84 | −0.21 (0.17) | 0.81 |
| Online news use | −0.06 (0.14) | 0.95 | 0.17 (0.27) | 1.18 | −0.20 (0.25) | 0.82 | 0.05 (0.30) | 1.05 | 0.44† (0.24) | 1.56 |
| Child controls | | | | | | | | | | |
| Age | −0.02 (0.06) | 0.98 | 0.26* (0.13) | 1.30 | 0.08 (0.10) | 1.09 | −0.09 (0.12) | 0.91 | 0.20 (0.14) | 1.22 |
| Gender (1: male) | 0.11 (0.21) | 1.11 | 0.10 (0.40) | 1.10 | −0.49 (0.34) | 0.61 | 0.27 (0.39) | 1.31 | −0.54 (0.45) | 0.58 |
| Party ID | 0.44* (0.18) | 1.54 | −0.64† (0.38) | 0.53 | −0.10 (0.28) | 0.91 | −0.74* (0.32) | 0.48 | −0.51 (0.39) | 0.60 |
| Strength of Party ID | 0.62*** (0.21) | 1.86 | −0.83* (0.43) | 0.44 | −0.34 (0.32) | 0.72 | −0.08 (0.38) | 0.92 | −0.23 (0.45) | 0.79 |
| Traditional news use | 0.18 (0.11) | 1.19 | −0.12 (0.22) | 0.89 | −0.16 (0.18) | 0.85 | 0.10 (0.21) | 1.11 | 0.06 (0.23) | 1.06 |
| Online news use | 0.03 (0.18) | 1.03 | −0.07 (0.36) | 0.93 | 0.06 (0.28) | 1.06 | −0.98 (0.69) | 0.37 | −0.18 (0.38) | 0.83 |
| Family communication | | | | | | | | | | |
| Concept-orientation | −0.05 (0.33) | 0.95 | 0.30 (0.64) | 1.34 | 0.02 (0.52) | 1.02 | 0.08 (0.63) | 1.08 | −0.15 (0.75) | 0.86 |
| Socio-orientation | −0.06 (0.43) | 0.94 | 0.46 (0.75) | 1.58 | 0.04 (0.69) | 1.05 | −0.03 (0.82) | 0.98 | −0.38 (1.06) | 0.69 |
| Socio × concept | 0.00 (0.10) | 1.00 | −0.10 (0.18) | 0.91 | −0.01 (0.17) | 0.99 | 0.02 (0.20) | 1.02 | 0.11 (0.25) | 1.12 |
| Family political talk | 0.15 (0.10) | 1.16 | −0.23 (0.19) | 0.78 | 0.10 (0.15) | 1.10 | −0.25 (0.18) | 0.78 | −0.02 (0.20) | 0.98 |
| Child social media | | | | | | | | | | |
| Political Facebook use | −0.25 (0.22) | 0.78 | −0.04 (0.42) | 0.96 | 0.40 (0.34) | 1.49 | −0.53 (0.55) | 0.38 | −0.10 (0.47) | 0.90 |
| Facebook updates | 0.05 (0.12) | 1.05 | −0.09 (0.22) | 0.91 | −0.22 (0.19) | 0.81 | 0.22 (0.20) | 1.25 | −0.14 (0.25) | 0.87 |
| Child school | | | | | | | | | | |
| Civic education | −0.07 (0.06) | 0.94 | 0.25* (0.12) | 1.30 | 0.03 (0.10) | 1.03 | −0.01 (0.12) | 0.99 | −0.07 (0.13) | 0.93 |
| Enjoy civic education | −0.05 (0.11) | 0.95 | 0.18 (0.22) | 1.20 | −0.19 (0.17) | 0.83 | 0.01 (0.20) | 1.01 | 0.13 (0.23) | 1.14 |
| Constant | −0.84 (1.73) | | −5.89 (3.56)† | | −0.205 (2.72) | | 0.27 (3.39) | | −2.94 (3.92) | |
| | *N* = 437 | | | | | | | | | |

†$p < .10$.
*$p < .05$.
**$p < .01$.
***$p < .001$.

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diverse pathways that parents and children can travel during the election as they navigate their attitudes toward political candidates and their party affiliation.

Our results indicate that for most dyads, orientations toward politics were established before the 2008 general election. For party affiliation, 64% of dyads maintain their co-orientation during the campaign – a percentage largely replicated for candidate evaluations. With roughly half of the dyads entering the campaign in agreement in their political attitudes, the most common outcome is to preserve a harmonious relationship, which may explain the long-time dominance of the transmission model of socialization (Jennings et al., 2009; Van Deth et al., 2011).

But our results also show that political orientations are not immutable. Contrary to the transmission model, the *independent child* route (in which children move away from initial agreement with their parent) is just as prominent as *indoctrination* (in which children move to align with parents). Similarly, many teens are willing to remain in discord with their parents throughout the election, rather than bowing to pressures to adopt a parent's attitudes. Thus, transmission of political orientations often does not overwhelm disagreement between a parent and a child – and teens as often move away from or maintain disagreement with their parents' beliefs over the course of the election as they move into alignment.

In our investigation of the factors that predict one socialization route over another, we found parental partisanship to play an important, but not defining, role in socialization – in line with previous literature (Jennings et al., 2009). More partisan parents tended to be more successful in transmitting their party affiliation to their child during the election, and limited the potential for a child to move away from their parent or influence their parents' political identity. But parental partisanship also increased the odds that discord remained in party affiliation throughout the campaign, a finding that ran counter to initial predictions. It may be that strong parental partisanship is especially likely to encourage children to adopt a parent's party affiliation before the general campaign, but those partisan parents who have *not* successfully transmitted this strong party affiliation to children by the end of a contentious primary remain unable to do so during the general election.

This study primarily focused on the role of influences outside the home, and our results largely support the contention that civic education in the classroom and political social media use promote greater independence of the child in their political orientations. Children who used social media for political purposes demonstrated greater autonomy in their political orientations: social media use increased the likelihood that children would maintain existing disagreements with their parents, reduced the likelihood of being recruited to a parent's position (at least when considering evaluations of McCain), and lessened the odds that the family would maintain a harmonious relationship with regards to party affiliation. Altogether, these results point strongly to the conclusion that engagement in political discussion and activity through social media offers children an alternative way to understand their political identity to what is available at home.

Civic education showed similar patterns, particularly for evaluations of presidential candidates. Civic education increased the odds that children moved away from initial agreement with parents in evaluating both McCain and Obama. It is intuitive that civic education should be more potent in influencing candidate evaluations than party affiliation. Civic education is designed to facilitate an understanding of the political process, and current events information including that related to presidential candidates, provide independent information to children to consider in developing political preferences (Lee et al., 2013; McDevitt & Ostrowski, 2009), yet not necessarily making the link to longstanding party affiliations.

In contrast to social media use and civic education, our work provides little evidence that family communication about politics and news explains socialization pathways, with a notable exception. Frequent, pluralistic family discussions of news and politics were more likely to produce trickle-up socialization for party affiliation, wherein a child's political orientation

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influenced their parents. But given how few families in our sample experienced this route (less than 3% of dyads), this finding must be considered exploratory.

There is an alternative reading of these findings. From one perspective, the observed relationships support the view that the rapidly changing communications landscape, particularly the rise of digital media sources and an increased emphasis on civic education, may enhance youth agency in parent–child dyads compared to previous generations. However, this begs the question of whether earlier researchers examined the possibility of mutual influence. It may be that young people in previous generations who actively consumed information sources (reading newspapers, listening to radio, going to movies, watching television), who talked about this information with peers, or who participated in more civic activities in school exercised more agency in their parent–child relationships. It may be possible to reexamine these relationships in existing data-sets, depending on whether relevant questions are asked of parents and children at multiple points in time. It is also possible that this burst of youth agency was a feature of this particular election context, which was historic in many respects, reinforcing the need for future research on parent–child dyads, inside and outside of presidential election contexts.

While our work provides several new insights into the political socialization process, it also illuminates gaps in our knowledge. We employed a unique methodology to gather responses from a nationally representative panel survey of parent–child dyads, but the complexity of the processes that we examined limited our ability to discern effects. Especially in studying party affiliation, for several of the theoretically proposed pathways, the small number of dyads that reported a given pattern precluded us from performing statistical analyses to explore predictors of these pathways. Furthermore, unequal sample size among the remaining pathways may have heightened our statistical power in some cases but not others, limiting comparability. Although those pathways that include the fewest dyads – in particular, those which had parents shifting in their party affiliation or candidate preferences – are theoretically expected (Campbell et al., 1960; Green et al., 2002), future research should investigate in more detail what contributes to those cases in which this pathway does occur.

Further, we choose to explore these questions of political socialization during a salient event – the 2008 presidential election – when dyads are likely to be most focused on the political process (Sears & Valentino, 1997; Valentino & Sears, 1998). Given this limited window, it is notable that the effects we uncovered were detectable; but our results also suggest that many young adults – over two-thirds in our sample – entered the general election campaign with their political orientations vis-a-vis their parents established. This may have been exacerbated by the fact that our initial wave of data collection occurred after an already vocal political discussion surrounding the 2008 primary campaigns. The clear need here is for research designs that can consider potential interactions and pathways for co-orientation over wider time periods that include times of heightened political awareness and discussion, as well as more quiet periods.

The particular context of the 2008 campaign also bears mentioning. In describing the socialization pathways that occurred across three types of political orientations, our models and key predictors functioned less well in explaining which pathways dominated for evaluations of Obama. Barack Obama was not a typical candidate and did not run a typical campaign (Dalton, 2009; Walker, 2008). Further, the long-fought Democratic primary, which kept Obama in the media spotlight longer than his political adversary, may have meant that attitudes toward Obama's candidacy were solidified before the period of our study, as evidenced by greater agreement among dyads in Wave 1 in evaluations of Obama.

Political socialization can also be studied from multiple vantage points. Two research agendas seem particularly important: expanding the types of democratic orientations studied and broadening the lens of inquiry outside the family. Individuals, young and old, have a wide array of tools at their disposal to facilitate individual and collective forms of participation (Ekman & Amna,

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2012). As such, the different socialization routes can be expanded to consider various acts of participation, like political consumerism or civic participation (Bode, Edgerly, et al., 2013). It is likely that when looking at different outcomes, new relationships between parent and child will emerge and the importance of diverse socialization agents will shift (Thorson, 2012). Similarly, this study remained focused on examining the routes of socialization within the family unit. However, the pathways and dynamics uncovered here may function similarly – or very differently – within peer relationships. Future research should continue to expand the lens in which pathways to socialization are studied to gain more insight into this complex, yet important, process.

Ultimately, this research provides an important step in theoretically establishing and testing the diverse ways in which parents and children establish political orientations during elections. Transmission and trickle-up socialization are only two of many potential pathways through which parents and children develop and adjust their political attitudes and identities. As we have seen, which pathway is followed is largely dependent on the characteristics of both parents and children, the ways in which they engage each other, and a range of other potential socialization agents. This study thus supports and challenges classic political socialization research, encouraging political communication scholars to consider a wider range of processes that shape socialization norms. In particular, information and communication technologies play an important role in socializing political attitudes, challenging parental dominance, and rivaling classroom influences.

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## Acknowledgments

The research team acknowledges support from the following sources: the Diane D. Blair Center of Southern Politics at the University of Arkansas: the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications and the Robert J. Dole Institute of Politics at the University of Kansas; the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Scholars in Health Policy Research Program at the University of Michigan; the Reynolds Journalism Institute at the University of Missouri; the University of Texas Office of the Vice President for Research; and the Hamel Faculty Fellowship, the Graduate School, and the Department of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin. Dhavan Shah of Wisconsin is principal investigator for this survey panel. The authors of this paper received additional support from the Spencer Foundation to conduct further analyses of these data. Any conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the supporting sources or participating faculty.

## Notes

1. Rates of agreement vary across demographic categories. For example, 5–10% of middle-class recruits typically consent compared to less than 1% of urban minorities. It is from this pre-recruited group of roughly 500,000 people that demographically balanced samples are constructed for collection.
2. We acknowledge that this is not an ideal means by which to sample both children and parents. Ideally, we would conduct separate interviews or send separate surveys to parents and children. However, this would dramatically lower our response rate of complete parent–child dyads (as it would be more likely that either parent or child would complete their survey but not both), which would therefore increase non-response bias, already a growing concern in survey research (Groves, 2006). We acknowledge that privacy concerns are valid in this context, and that parents and children completing a joint survey may lead to more biased answers from both, as they try to please or meet expectations of their family members. Despite these concerns, fairly high concept-oriented family communication patterns ($M = 3.82$, SD = 0.85 in a five-point scale) among our sample indicates that the parents are very open to their children's disagreement, which alleviates potential bias in children's response. This survey met ethical guidelines, including approval from the Institutional Review Board at University of Wisconsin–Madison.
3. To see if our final panel might be subject to selection bias, we compared those respondents in our final panel ($n = 531$) with those who completed only our first-wave survey ($n = 517$). The final panel and the first-wave-only participants were not different in terms of age, gender, or other demographic and

political orientations. The only difference discovered was in household income, with panel participants slightly lower than non-participants.

4. About a third of the mismatches are due to adolescent respondents failing to provide information on their age in either wave. We also compared our panel respondents with the second-wave respondents whose responses were discarded in the panel data analysis due to mismatches of their personal information between the two waves of data collection ($n = 207$). Panel respondents were not different in terms of other demographic and social-structural variables from those second-wave respondents whose responses were dropped from the analysis. With proper controls, we have little reason to believe that the nature of the relationships among our key variables is different in the general population than it is in our matched panel respondents.
5. Democrat: 36%, Independent 23.9%, Republican 35.6% (Wave 1), Democrat: 37.5%, Independent: 23.7%, Republican: 36.3% (Wave 2) for parent; Democrat: 32.6%, Independent 32.4%, Republican: 23.7% (Wave 1), Democrat: 39.2%, Independent 27.7%, Republican: 30.1% (Wave 2) for child.
6. McCain favorability: Favorable: 34.7%, Neutral: 26.9%, Unfavorable: 35.4% (Wave 1), Favorable: 33.5%, Neutral: 18.6%, Unfavorable: 46.5% (Wave 2) for parent; Favorable 34.8%, Neutral: 35.2%, Unfavorable: 27.3% (Wave 1), Favorable: 40.8%, Neutral: 22%, Unfavorable: 36.3% (Wave 2) for child. Obama favorability: Favorable: 42.4%, Neutral: 21.3%, Unfavorable: 33.7% (Wave 1), Favorable: 38.6%, Neutral: 15.6%, Unfavorable: 44.6% (Wave 2) for parent; Favorable: 38.1%, Neutral: 25.4%, Unfavorable: 34.3% (Wave 1), Favorable: 31.6%, Neutral: 18.5%, Unfavorable: 48.9% (Wave 2) for child.
7. One item – organized as a group activity – was dropped from these indices, as it cross-loaded with both factors.

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