Applying Moral Politics Theory to the 2018 Midterms

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Road Map

This paper will begin with an abbreviated overview of the history of political polarization in the 1900s. First, it will suggest that polarization is in fact a real phenomenon by citing the D-NOMINATE method of measuring polarization among political elites. It will then go forward and suggest that the American public are living in a time of increased partisanship, that more or less corresponds with an ongoing “culture war” in some segments of American society, and an ongoing depopulation and political deemphasizing of the importance of the political center. The paper then suggests Lakoff’s conceptual metaphor theory, and more particularly Lakoff’s extension Moral Politics Theory as a way to look at modern political polarization. Lakoff’s “strict father” and “nurturant parent” moralities arise, and both moralities construct a model citizen and different demons to represent the ideal and nonideal type of people. This paper then uses the campaign speeches of Bernie Sanders, Ted Cruz, and Mike Huckabee to exemplify how these politicians’ used morality and identity-building to create ingroups and outgroups consistent with Moral Politics Theory. Next, the paper than focuses in on discourse regarding immigration, and notes how the “commonsensical” arguments of partisans on both the right and the left are moral, and that those morals are also consistent with Lakoff’s “nurturant parent” and “strict father” models. Lastly, the paper suggests further research to compensate based on some anomalous findings that Lakoff’s theory does not account for.

History of Partisan Identity
Then-candidate Donald J. Trump declared that “I could stand in the middle of 5th Avenue and shoot somebody and I wouldn’t lose voters.”¹ to an audience in Sioux Falls, IO during the 2016 United States presidential campaign. Trump’s trust in the loyalty of his supporters alludes to a not-new, expanding phenomenon in American political life, partisanship. Modern American partisanship vary and encompasses research. Political scientists and psychologists agree that as of weeks prior to the 2018 midterm elections, polarization is not just still present, but is continually getting stronger as it has been for at least several decades.² What may be more shocking to people not familiar with the history of animosity and compromise in American politics is that the 20th-century was by and large a period of historically low partisanship. In 1910, Lord James Bryce wrote, “[N]either party has any clean-cut principles, any distinctive tenets. . .the two great parties were like two bottles. Each bore a label denoting the kind of liquor it contained, but each was empty” (Layman, 2006). Sociologists and political scientists by-and-large were not convinced of the strength of the effect of ideology had on psychology, haven declared themselves witnesses of “the end of ideology”.³ In 1950, the Committee on Political Parties of the American Political Science Association lamented that “alternatives between the parties are defined so badly that it is often difficult to determine what the election has decided even in broadest terms,” and called for more programmatic, cohesive, and ‘responsible’ parties” (American Political Science Association 1950, pp. 3–4). Unlike any time in the past 50 or so years, partisan membership is now a meaningful and revealing part of

² Campbell, Polarized, 24.
³ Jost, The End of the End of Ideology, 2006
people’s identity. Now that the American political parties are more morally coherent and consistent, those morals can be attacked more coherently as well.

**Congressional Polarisation**

Methods of measuring polarization amongst members of congress already exist and are well established. Said methods of measuring polarization suggest that polarization is greater now than anytime in the past century, and is still increasing. Comparing the number of AYE or NAY votes to one’s partisan membership serves as an ideal way of measuring polarization among members of congress, and found that in 2014, the most liberal Republican was less liberal than the most conservative Democrat in congress. Predicting a congress member’s vote on any given bill, given their party identification, measures how much parties act in unison, and in disjunction with one another. Keith Poole pioneered a “D-NOMINATE” score that measures political polarization using this very tactic. Poole’s methodology produces results that suggest that Congress is in fact more polarized than it has been in over a century, and that the intensity of polarization is increasing as of 2014.

In the 21st century thus far, Americans can be more sure of a candidate's position on the importance of environmentalism simply by asking them about their position on gun control, gay rights, or their opinion on the US's role in United Nations. The political “litmus test” metaphor best exemplifies American political homogenization. Menand, too, wrote in *the New Yorker* that “Polls indicate much less volatility than usual, supporting the view that the public is divided into starkly antagonistic camps—the ‘red state—blue state’ paradigm.” If this is so, it suggests that we

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4 Campbell, Polarized, 25.
5 Poole and Rosenthal, A Spatial Model... 1985.
have at last moved past Converse’s picture of an electoral iceberg, in which ninety per cent of the population is politically underwater [moderate, non-active].”

Despite its usefulness, measuring partisanship in congress only provides a useful measure of partisan among political elites in Washington D.C., and does not necessarily suggest increased polarization or partisanship amongst the American public. After all, the evidence above could very well suggest that American voters have remained moderate but that the choices on their ballots have become increasingly polarized.

**Partisan Shift**

The partisan shift in the second half of the 20th century made partisan membership a substantial and meaningful source of identity for enough Americans. Partisan shift has left the party’s members more homogenous. The passing of the Voting Rights Act of 1964 under the Johnson Administration ignited a partisan shift that left the two main political parties more homogenized. Lyndon B. Johnson promoted the polarizing Voting Rights Act and by doing so, alienated southern Democrats who still favored segregation and tended to be more conservative than Democrats from other regions.\(^7\) The partisan shift that occurred was markedly significant because the process left the American south squarely in the hands of the Republican Party, while giving authoritarians an increasingly larger say in Republican Party affairs.

In 1973, the ruling of *Roe v. Wade* further polarized Americans and brought about one of the most heated and polemic issues to the center of the American “Culture Wars”.\(^7\) The partisan shift made the once conservative-leaning party consistently conservative, and the once liberal-leaning party

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\(^7\) Menand (2004), *The Unpolitical Animal*, *The New Yorker*

\(^8\) Campbell, *Polarized*, 169.
consistently liberal. That partisan shift also gave each party a corresponding side in the American culture war. The polarized nature of both parties and the cultural tribes that they correspond to has pulled moderate voters in congress towards the edges so much so, that between 1949 to 2005, the percent of moderates in Congress has dropped from near 50% of congress to a mere 10%. "The moderates have been washed out of both parties," said former Republican congressman Mickey Edwards of Oklahoma. That kind of polarization has not been the case since the beginnings of the American Culture Wars. The election of Newt Gingrich in 1994 and the Republican Contract with America. This “contract” included ten bills that the soon-to-become Speaker of the House promised to pass towards Bill Clinton’s desk within 100 days. Such bills included: The “Personal Responsibility Act” (targeted at reforming welfare), the “Taking Back our Streets Act” (aimed at allocating funds to construct prisons), the “Family Reinforcement Act”, and the “Job Creation and Wage Enhancement Act”. The names of those bills exemplify the type of framing that Gingrich sought to pass on to his fellow Republicans. Gingrich circulated a document called “Language: A Key Mechanism of Control” amongst his fellow Republicans. Part of Gingrich’s strategy included “Optimistic Positive” words to describe Republican actions like “pro-”, “family”, and “principled” while using “Contrasting” words to describe the action of political opponents like “anti-”, “traitors”, and “criminal rights”. The “Personal Responsibility” Act highlights the strict father belief in personal betterment in order to compete effectively. Strict fathers therefore deemphasize the role of social practices that may leave some subaltern demographic groups at a systematic disadvantage. Newt Gingrich’s time as

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9 Bishop, Big Sort, 246.
10 Bishop, Big Sort, 247.
Speaker of the House is notable in the history of modern polarization because of his instructions to Republican members of Congress: Don’t Meddle with Democrats. Where before, members of Congress bought homes in Washington D.C., raised their children together and used each other as familiar support, Gingrich insisted that his party members should not live in the capital, and instead opt to move back and forth between their district and their D.C. office on a weekly basis. Two current consequences of that trend, is that congress typically works three days a week as opposed to five beforehand, giving them less time to do the legislative parts of their jobs: writing bills, sponsoring each other’s bills, compromising, and just existing alongside their Democratic counterparts. Secondly, new Republican members of Congress did not make personal relationships with Democrats, whereas before, their children would attend the same schools, or they participated in the same neighborhood organizations. Roe v. Wade, and the alienation of House representatives from each other helps rationalize why congressmen in Washington D.C. have a harder time finding sources of agreement. Partisan identity is now a more powerful, salient, and potentially polarizing self-descriptor among congressmen in Washington D.C.

**Culture War as Evidence of Popular Polarization**

Popular polarization, to be distinguished from congressional polarization, can be more difficult to quantify, because voting records by themselves have much potential to be misleading. The reasons for why someone might notice consistently consistent or consistently inconsistent voting records are subject to so many variables, including variables potentially irrelevant to partisan polarization. Popular voting records do not tell the whole story by themselves, but they can give us hints. More congressional districts are landslide districts where a large majority of counties voted for one presidential candidate over the other. The voters that live in landslide
counties accounted for 38% of the voting population in 1992, the landslide counties from 2016 account for 60% of the voting population. In 1976, 38% of US counties had a spread of 20 percentage points or more, by 2004 that percentage had increased to 60%. Surveys from after and during the 2016 elections showed that American partisans are feeling increasingly negative about their political opponents. Only 21% of Democrats and 17% of Republicans viewed the other party as “very unfavorable” in 1994. Those numbers increased to 58% and 55% respectively in reiteration of the same survey. That same survey reported that over 40% of surveyed partisans were recorded having said that they thought that the other party was a threat to the nation’s well-being. Different reporters and academics have found sources of political polarization leaking into cable television, listening to talk radio shows, books we choose to buy and read online, which sports we watch, and which television sitcoms are most popular. A MorningConsult survey even created a survey to find out which American brands were the most polarizing (ie which had the largest differences in likeability between Democrats and Republicans) and found that Trump Hotels, CNN, NBC, Fox, and the New York Times most polarize Americans, not surprisingly 4 of the top 5 most polarizing brands are news outlets. Non-news organizations that polarize, despite not strictly being political entities include Chick-Fil-A, Starbucks, NASCAR, and the NFL. Layman talks about “conflict expansion” as tearing apart American legislators on a ever-growing list of distinct politically salient “hot-topic” issues. I would argue that Layman does not go far enough, and that conflict expansion has been taking place consuming more sections of the American news-entertainment

12 Aisch, Pearce, Yourish, The Divide Between Red and Blue American Grow Even Deeper in 2016, NYT
14 Bishop, Big Sort, 45.
16 M. Brewer, The Rise of Partisanship and the Expansion of Partisan Conflict within the American Electorate
complex. One should not expect Americans to fall neatly into one party or the other, but the two parties, and their media apparatuses have created two parallel mainstreams, and with two parallel political realities. Americans, living in one of their two societies should not be surprised when the two parties seem to be talking (or hurling insults) past each other and a distinct lack of compromise. A 2018 study even found some minimal correlation of partisan sex fantasies focused around what is taboo in each individual morality. Extramarital sex activities such as cuckolding and swinging were more present in conservatives, while liberals were more likely to fantasize about situations of unequal power relations in sex such as BDSM and dom-sub sex play.17 Partisan identity can now be indicative of lifestyle choices seemingly independent of political opinion. The more lifestyle choices that one can infer by your partisan identity, the more potential there is to feel alienated your partisan identity does not align with your own.

Matthew Dowd, George W. Bush’s 2004 campaign chief strategist remarked on how his successfully-managed campaign exploited the United States’s partisanship. Dowd directed Bush’s campaign to not focus on swaying the opinions of independent, undecided voters. In fact, competitor John Kerry’s 2004 campaigned increased the percentage of moderates won for the Democratic Party, but Down instead used 80% of his resources on simply getting partisan Republicans to vote instead.1819 Dowd said “What I think has happened, is the general anxiety of the country feels is building. We’re no longer anchored”20, indicating that he understands and describes the geographic and partisan sorting of the United States as a defense mechanism a decreased sense of security in the future, and heightened anxiety. Campaigners now have less

17 Lehmiller, Tell Me What You Want, 2018
18 Bishop, Big Sort, 252.
19 Bishop, Big Sort, 254.
20 Bishop, Big Sort 255
incentive to try to appeal to a withering pool of moderates, and more incentive to campaign to their partisan base instead. A larger percentage of the Republican and Democratic partisan bases live in a fewer number of counties and zip codes. I speculate that the decreased necessariness of appealing to moderates increases the political payout to politicians that can motivate their own base without having to engage with members of the other political “tribe”, and therefore weaken the power of moderate campaigns.

**Central Metaphor Theory**

George Lakoff, amongst others, has helped pioneer the study of metaphor usage in natural language as in intricate aspect to psycholinguistic and cognitive research. Lakoff remarks about metaphors being a kind of “window” into your brain’s subconscious way of organizing information. Co-authors George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, writes in their 1980 book *Metaphors We Live By* that “metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another.”

Lakoff and Johnson distinguish “conceptual metaphor” from “poetic metaphor”. Whereas poetic metaphor are consciously generated, humans subconsciously produce conceptual metaphors that provide a structure for humans to conceive of the world around us. Lakoff utilizes ARGUMENT IS WAR to exemplify the phenomenon of a conceptual metaphor. English speakers constantly produce metaphors that liken argument to war: We (used to) *concede* to well-made opposing viewpoints, we *attack* an argument’s weak points, we *defend* our position, and *gain ground, win* and *lose* arguments, our brain’s thought process is inherently metaphorical, and therefore applies our expectations of war to our expectations of arguments. The trade-off to metaphorical thinking is that it can highlight and obscure different aspects of our actions. For

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21 Metaphors We Live By page 3 1980
example, by treating argument as a war that should be won, we can deemphasize the importance of cooperation in argument. If humans conceptualized argument as a dance, the debaters could be performers, and the goal could be conceptualized as synchronization, and not victory.22 The metaphor ability to highlight and obscure, in addition to the fact that metaphors rarely perfectly map onto reality, urges Lakoff and Johnson to call them “partial” metaphor as opposed to “total” metaphors.23 With the state of research today, it would be difficult for one to convincingly argue that our understanding of the world is not rooted in metaphor.

Moral Politics Theory

George Lakoff’s book Moral Politics, where he introduces Moral Politics Theory serves as a centerpiece to understanding the underlying morality of American political ideologies. George Lakoff, a linguist and cognitive scientist, theorizes that possess a neural connection between their conceptualizations of “family” with “nation”, thus making the NATION AS FAMILY metaphor. The NATION AS FAMILY metaphor makes phrases such as sending our sons and daughters to war, founding fathers, big brother, Uncle Sam, motherland, fatherland, and fraternité commonsensical.24 These metaphors do not strike most Americans as odd because we all contain an innate understanding of our nation as being a projected version of our own family. The NATION AS FAMILY metaphor is broken down into the GOVERNMENT AS PARENT and CITIZEN AS CHILD metaphors. Conservatives and Liberals have different preferred family models. As a result of the NATION AS FAMILY metaphor, those different preferred family models result in different preferred visions of government.

22 Johnson Lakoff, Metaphors We Live By, 4.
23 Johnson Lakoff, Metaphors We Live By, 13.
24 Lakoff, Moral Politics, 155.
Lakoff attributes the difference between the liberal’s ideal government and the conservative’s ideal government as the result of two distinct family models. Lakoff calls the liberal and conservative family models nurturant parent and strict father moralities, respectively. Strict father morality corresponds with conservatives, and nurturant parent with liberals.

**Moral Politics Theory: Strict Father Morality**

Lakoff theorizes that model conservatism follows a morality where loving a child is manifested through “tough love”. A morally upstanding (specifically) male takes helm of a family by providing a livelihood and serving as the ultimate authority. They must be strict and must punish their children for their misbehaviour, and the punishment must be sufficiently painful as to dissuade future rebellion. As a result of their instilled discipline, children will be able to grow up and compete for their self-interest in a difficult world in order to become self-sufficient, self-reliant, and prosperous. Failure to punish the child (failure to demonstrate *tough love*) sufficiently equates to not loving your child and failure to teach a child right from wrong constitutes a moral failure on the part of the parents. Undisciplined children will fail to be self-sufficient, and live a needy, dependent adulthood. Only the self-disciplined and self-sufficient members of society can make a claim for themselves and accrue material wealth, and those that failed to gather wealth were either not disciplined, or not talented enough. The inability to earn wealth implies that poorer people as less moral than their richer counterparts. By extension, the government should not protect its citizens from their bad decisions because protective coddling creates dependency in adulthood, which constitutes a moral failure. Conservative ideology also internalizes a hierarchy moral order that has God over man, man over women, adults over children, humans over nature. Jonathan Haidt in his book *The Righteous*
Mind. (2012) notes that conservative morality is rooted in a prioritization of subservience to legitimate moral authority, sanctity, and the importance of loyalty, and that conservative parents emphasize respect to elders and proper etiquette when raising their children.25

Conservative “demons” would include people who get in the way, or “interfere” with people in pursuit of their self-interests. After all, interference in someone’s life would constitute and overreach into their attempts to prove their self-discipline and their morality. Strict father morality also demonizes those who oppose the moral order such as atheists, feminists, and members of groups that oppose the actions military and/or law enforcement.26 In 1996, Lakoff holds anti-war protesters as a prime example. In 2018, the Black Lives Matter movement would occupy that space as a modern embodiment of that model conservative demon.

Moral Politics Theory: Nurturant Parent Morality

On the other hand, Lakoff theorizes that liberals also maintain an internally consistent morality based on what Lakoff calls the nurturant parent morality. Nurturer parent morality exists despite liberals being less aware of the source of their own morality. Nurturant parent morality is based on a family model where the parents respect and nurture their children and will comfort them in order to bring out their potential. They will try to ensure that a child respects themself, which will in turn make them responsible and empathetic in their adult life. Greed, and harm done in the name of self-interests and personal enrichment constitute moral failures. Unhappy people can not be empathetic, so it is important to be happy and fulfilled so that you can care for others. Fulfillment requires freedom to take advantage of one’s opportunities. Jonathan Haidt recounts that liberal’s morality is most predicated on issuing “care” to those most

26 Lakoff, Moral Politics, 170-171.
in need, and preventing “harm”, even if it means committing to sacrificing part of one’s own well-being. Lakoff also theorizes that modern nurturant parent morality’s insistence on a pluralistic democratic government stems from its origins in the enlightenment. The innate rationality of humans is treated as a given: people are rational beings so people will never be against their economic interests. Because people are rational, they only need to be presented the facts. The veil of rationalism has therefore blinded liberals from acknowledging their own internally consistent, albeit irrational moralities. Psychologist Jonathan Haidt notes that liberal ideology focuses most on maximizing care, reducing harm, and promoting equality and egalitarianism.

**Moral Politics Theory and Political Speech**

George Lakoff’s theory would predict that liberal and conservative politicians would favor metaphors that frame an issue as someone else’s moral failure. Democrats would frame issues as a lack of nurturance or a failure to protect citizens from social ills by those in a position of power. On the other hand, Republicans would produce metaphors that would emphasize the leader’s responsibility to provide protection and security, follow tradition, respect sanctity, and favor members of the ingroup as commonsense solutions.

In this section, I have pointed out that George Lakoff and Mark Johnson ushered *Central Metaphor Theory*, which proposes that our understanding of concepts is rooted in experience and metaphor. Our experiences have helped create several *metaphorical concepts* that help guide our thinking, including guiding our political opinions. Lakoff than expanded on the *Family as Nation* metaphorical concept for his *moral politics theory*. Moral politics theory suggests that our lived experiences in regards to parenting guide our political beliefs. Modern liberals and
conservatives’ morality stem from two distinct parenting styles, “Strict Father” and “Nurturant Parent”. I then hypothesize that this difference between liberals and conservatives would cause followers of either group to misrepresent the other. These differences are then exploited by politicians to engage one’s own base come election time.

**Nature of the Analysis**

I will dedicate the following section to attempt to explain what exactly am I looking for when analyzing the political discourse. This section will describe how I search for examples of demonization, and how demonizations are applied in the contexts of political rallies, debates, and by American civilians towards other Americans. I then add disclaimers about the various limitations of this type of analysis.

Firstly, this study takes as fact the existence of two different, but related, child-rearing moralities as a source of misunderstanding between liberal and conservative speech. I compare how each group constructs in-group identity by metaphorically circling around sacred ideals, and attributing virtuous attributes to preferred segments of society. Sacred ideals can be understood as “nonnegotiable convictions… resisting tradeoffs with other values” as described by Morgan Marietta.\(^\text{27}\) I also focus on how politicians, either explicitly or implicitly, attribute negative qualities to the other party or their supporters, or “demonize” them. I then try to deduce if those demonizations used by politicians neatly correspond to the “model demons” that Lakoff’s theory predicts. If people truly are conceptualizing their political opponents as threats to the well-being of the nation, then perhaps such an analysis could guide future speculation about the question: what does language look like when transitioning your treatment of political opponents from

“opponents” to “enemies”? In order to find these instances of appeals to a shared morality, I search for when politicians use language to justify some moral position as being “commonsensical”. Because the “other” side must not be acting morally, I also search for instances of how politicians rationalize the motives of those that oppose them. I would expect that politicians tell their supporters that their opponents are motivated by being “against” one of their own values as opposed to acting in support of their own morals. I seek to examine natural language use from partisan Americans, to see how they use metaphors to describe members of another “tribe”, and how they rationalize the motives of those that oppose them.

I would also like to note how audience and context influence demonization. Campaign rallies are done in front of an audience that comprises of friendly partisans. Debates occur in front of a mixed audience of liberals, conservatives, and undecided voters. I would expect partisan politicians to make more of an effort to differentiate themselves from their opponent during intraparty debates, and to emphasize intraparty commonalities during their campaign rallies. Part of my reasoning for these hypotheses stems from Grace Deason and Marti Gonzales’s past research centered on an analysis of John McCain’s and Barack Obama’s acceptance speeches at their respective party conventions. As Deacon and Gonzalez noted, “Convention speeches are prime territory for the use of strict father and nurturant parent themes. Speakers at political conventions are subject to the “keynoter’s dilemma”: They must appeal both to the enthusiastic crowd of partisans who fill the convention hall and to undecided viewers who watch the debates from their living rooms (Deacon, 2008).” The duo also noted that candidates may be more motivated to utilize metaphors that highlight the commonalities between

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all party members in order to mend divides that may have occurred over the intrapartisan primary campaign season. This present study will be made up of: campaign kick-offs, where a candidate attempts to introduce themselves and establish a message, campaign rallies, where a candidate is speaking to partisan loyalists and trying to distinguish themselves from other party members, interparty debates, where the candidates are speaking to a mixed partisan crowd and to undecided voters by distinguishing themselves from a member of the opposing party, and excerpts from C-SPAN’s *Washington Journal*, a show where Americans are encouraged to call-in to speak on-air to a mixed partisan audience. The goal of these different situations is to try to find differences in how political elites use metaphor as opposed to the partisan members of the American public, and to see if different traits of metaphor use can be found among political elites based on the partisan makeup of their audience.

Readers should take note of a phenomenon called the “McClosky Difference” before attempting a discourse analysis of political speech. As people become more informed, we would expect them to have more opinions and more sources of disagreement. On the other end of the spectrum, we would not expect disagreement from people who are absolutely not politically active and therefore would have less strong opinions and less sources of disagreement. In conclusion, by looking at language use from perhaps the most politically active members of American society (press corps, congress, president, presidential nominees, party members), we should not expect the conclusions to perfectly apply to phenomenon amongst the American public. This does not say that the American electorate is or is not polarized, but that these examples of discourse give us more insight into polarization among political elites and their media apparatuses. James Campbell speaks about this phenomenon (21) which is referred to as
the McClosky difference: “ideological and issue differences are greater between party leaders than between their followers”.\textsuperscript{29} As a result of this phenomenon, I will have to take into account that the demonizations and outgrouping mechanisms that partisans use may not necessarily represent the beliefs of all Americans. However, the importance of such demonizations can not be understated given that more politically active members of American society have a proportionally more influential voice than their less politically active compatriots. In conclusion, I would predict that political elites would use demonizations more often, or more strong demonizations than would the average American, however I can not confidently conclude that political elites will be more or less likely than highly partisan American civilians to use metaphor in demonizing the political “other”. As a result of this possible difference, I have looked at the speech of political elites as well as partisan non-politicians via the C-SPAN show \textit{Washington Journal}.

As we begin, it is absolutely necessary to discuss the difficulty of unambiguously determining that some argument or policy opinion is appealing to a moral framework. Metaphors resist being aptly categorized because they can be arguably interpreted multiple ways. I find it not just difficult, but near impossible to make rigid classifications as to what constitutes or fails to constitute as a metaphor or as an appeal to a morality. Due to these circumstances, I will refrain from making quantitative claims about the strength of Lakoff’s theory on moral politics. Instead, this paper will highlight the most obvious and egregious examples of identity-building, outgrouping, and appeals to strict father or nurturant parent child-rearing morals. While searching for scholarly papers that include a discourse analysis component \textit{and} acknowledge

\textsuperscript{29} Campbell, Polarized, 21.
Lakoff’s moral politics theory, I was able to come across one study conducted by psychologists Dr. Rebecca G. Deason and Marti Hope Gonzales. The duo make quantitative claims as to the amount of times strict father morality or nurturant parent morality are mentioned. They choose to focus on American campaign advertisements from 1952 to 2012. They also noted that “When they discuss issues that already carry with them a dominant frame, candidates may inadvertently or purposefully revert to the language of the opposition.”\textsuperscript{30} They note that certain issues simply lend themselves better to one moral framework over the other. They have found that while both Democrats and Republicans switch back and forth between both ideal family models, Republicans tend to favor strict father metaphors while Democrats more frequently utilize nurturant parent metaphors.\textsuperscript{31} Further research on Moral Politics theory helped cement the central claim that lived experiences and reflections on parenting help guide people’s present political opinions.\textsuperscript{32} For the sake of this study, it should be taken into account that Deacon and Gonzales also fail to make a rigid definition for what counts as a metaphorical appeal to moral politics and what does not. Their methods included having their students code speech transcripts looking for appeals to broad concepts such as “empathy-openness” or “self-reliance”. The duo claims that there was much agreement between several individual coders about what constituted as an appeal to moral politics, but no examples of what obviously counted as an appeal and what did not. On the other hand, Damien Pfister and his team did a clearer job of describing what constituted strict father reasoning as opposed to a “nurturant parent” reasoning. The team described strict fathers reasoning as reasoning that “danger comes from human agents”, an “us vs. them mentality”, as

\textsuperscript{30} Deason, Gonzales, Moral Politics in the 2008 Presidential Convention Acceptance Speeches, 257
\textsuperscript{31} Deason, Gonzales, Moral Politics in the 2008 Presidential Convention Acceptance Speeches, 257
\textsuperscript{32} Feinburg, Wehling, A Moral House Divided: How idealized family models impact political cognition, 2018
“opposing illegitimate authority”, “emphasizing reward and punishment”, “emphasizing moral strength”, “belief in moral decay”, “promoting integrity”, and “promoting courage”.

The team then described “nurturant parent” reasoning as reasoning that “danger comes from a bad environment”, “emphasizing community”, “leading by example”, “encouraging cooperation, compassion, and self-nurturance”, “promoting fairness”, and “promoting self-determination”.

In this section, I have indicated how I plan to analyze the amassed discourse. I discussed how I search for identity-building in political speech, and the elevating of the ingroup. I then search for negative attributes assigned to members of the outgroup, and how outgroup actions are rationalized. I then acknowledge the potential distinctions between demonizations done in rallies versus in debates. Afterwards, I bring up the McCLonsky Difference which states that the American political elite should consistently be more polarized than the general American public. I use this theory to conclude that the speech of political elite does not necessarily have to reflect the socio-political beliefs of Americans at large. My final disclaimer as to why it is difficult to ever completely designate any given portion of speech as a metaphor. In doing so, I used Deason and Gonzales’s paper as an example of discourse analysis being performed in relation with Lakoff’s theory in mind, and pointed out how those psychologists avoided giving a rigid definition for what counts as an appeal to these metaphorical concepts and what does not. I then contrast Gonzales and Deason with Pfister, who does describe the “categories” so to say of nurturant parent and strict father moralities. In conclusion, this paper will be undoubtedly related but undeniably distinct from Deason and Pfister’s studies. This study will closely analyze

33 Pfister et. al 2013, 496
34 Pfister et. al 2013, 496
relatively clear examples of metaphorical speech and identity-building, in political speech, and will highlight how each of these unique examples constitute appeals to moral politics.

**Nurturant Parents in Speech**

Lakoff’s Moral Politics Theory predicts that that people of a nurturant parent moral preference would seek to nurture those who are at most potential of being harmed, and look for those who need help the most. Their primary ideological focus is showing care and preventing harm. Bernie Sander’s “The Political Revolution Continues”, spoken to an audience of his supporters in Burlington, VT exemplifies the nurturant parent’s characteristic empathy.

“**It is about ending the pain** of a young single mother in Nevada, in tears, telling me that she doesn’t know how she and her daughter can make it on $10.45 an hour. And the reality that today millions of our fellow Americans are working at starvation wages. **It is about ending the disgrace** of a mother in Flint, Michigan, telling me what has happened to the intellectual development of her child as a result of lead in the water in that city” - Bernie Sanders, Democrat from Vermont

Bernie Sanders makes a choice in the above quote to humanize and dedicate the message of his campaign to mothers. I believe that he purposefully chooses to humanize and victimize American mothers because he understands the importance of family in political speech. These mothers are victims of the modern capitalism (“starvation wages”) and the environment, respectively. He also uses language to call the Flint Water Crisis a “disgrace”, a moral failure by the government to not sufficiently protect people from social and environmental harm. His speech then continues to list a number of “disgraces”, most of which are consistent with Lakoff

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35 Jonathan Haidt, Righteous Mind, xxx.
nurturant parent morality. In the following quotes taken from the same speech, Bernie Sanders outgroups “corporations”, and attributes corporations as being selfish and greedy. They are framed below as social actors avoiding their responsibility to pay taxes, and “stashing” away their hidden loot like a thief. Not only are these corporations being selfish by not paying taxes, but by doing so are “damaging our country” and causing undue harm. Lakoff calls this a “Category 1 Liberal Demon: The mean-spirited, selfish and unfair—those who have no empathy and show no sense of social responsibility.”

“It is about ending the disgrace that, in a given year, corporations making billions in profit avoid paying a nickel in taxes because they stash their money” - Bernie Sanders

“...we showed the world that we could run a strong national campaign without being dependent on the big-money interests whose greed has done so much to damage our country.” - Bernie Sanders

“It is about ending a campaign finance system which is corrupt and allows billionaires to buy elections. It is about ending the grotesque level of wealth and income inequality that we are experiencing...” - Bernie Sanders

Interestingly, the third quote from above also utilizes the frame of “buying elections”. That frame is used by members of both parties, and I take as interesting since politicians on both sides seem to sanctify the democratic process (as I will show later on in this paper). Therefore, the frame of some small, rich, elite “buying” an election from the voting public serves to create moral outrage against wealthy, irresponsible social actors.

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36 Lakoff, Moral Politics, 174
Democratic candidates Andrew Gillum and Stacey Abrams pointed to low wages for public workers as a moral failure by society. Take the following examples. The first, spoken by Democrat Andrew Gillum, was in response to a debate question about increasing educational opportunities in his home state, Florida,

"...it is going to begin by paying teachers a wage they can live on. Right now in the state of Florida, teachers make an average salary that is the 45th lowest of all the 50 states. If my grandmother was here, she wouldn't say it's a 'shame', she'd say it's a 'crying shame'" - Andrew Gillum from Florida

Fellow Democrat, Stacey Abrams also makes a plea for increasing the wages of Georgia’s rural law enforcement using a very similar line of reasoning. Firstly, she asked this very question of her Republican opponent during a debate.

"Why is it not the governor's responsibility to ensure law enforcement that are protecting our families are paid a living wage?" - Stacey Abrams from Georgia

"No one is more outraged at drug trafficking than I am... but I will never ask a law enforcement to do something without standing with them and making sure they can put food on their table while we ask them to protect our families" - Stacey Abrams from Georgia

Democrats have used wages (particularly those of mothers, teachers, and police) as a moral rally cry during the 2016 and 2018 national elections in United States. What Stacey Abrams is asking is, “Is it not the parent’s responsibility to make sure that you’re children (particularly the children that are assigned the very critical household chore of protecting the house) are well taken care of?” Abrams utilizes a powerful frame by invoking the idea of the underpaid police officers
struggling to provide for their own families. By her question, the well-being of a police officer’s family is not just a responsibility of the police themself, but is a social responsibility shared by all members of society, shouldered and represented by the governor. Part of the nurturant parent reasoning is that by helping people who can’t help themself (or in Abram’s case, people who can’t support their families), those people will then be able to be more fulfilled and more able to effectively help others in the future. She expresses literal “outrage” and places care for police families as a high priority in fighting drug trafficking. These quotes from Andrew Gillum and Stacey Abrams exemplify the importance of nurturance in society, care for your neighbors (or brothers and sisters), and they will better be able to take care of you and your shared society.

In this section, I have coalesced some examples of nurturant parent speech. I have showed how these speeches constantly appeal to society’s moral obligation to care for their needy citizens and their families, and that by doing so, those families in turn will be able to nurture others and make their society better by doing so. Bernie Sanders evoked the image of the struggling single mother, Stacey Abrams evoked the families of police officers, and Andrew Gillum evoked the image of underpaid teachers teaching your own children, as well as the words of his own grandmother. The constant appeals to family, and the social responsibility to take care of these families constitute appeals to nurturant parent morality.

**Strict Fathers in Speech**

After noting instances where nurturant parents use moral outrage to invoke a reaction from the voting public, it is only natural to do the same with strict father speech. In the previous section, I felt obliged to use Bernie Sanders’s speech because he particularly utilizes appeals to nurturant parent morality. Democrats do not reliably utilize moral arguments in their speech. On
the other hand, Republican politicians seem to allude to family morality much more than their Democrat counterparts. Because of this, almost any speech from a Republican can be used to exemplify strict father morality in a way that is not true on the American left. Pfister et al’s paper supports this generalization. In their study, they quantified appeals to family morals in campaign ads and found that Republicans vastly outpace Democrats in using strict father morality messages, and Democrats just barely outpace Republicans in use of nurturant parent messages. They found that in total, Republicans use family moral arguments as a whole more often than Democrats.37 Take some segments from Mike Huckabee’s campaign kickoff speech prior to the 2016 Republican Party primary:

“We can never create prosperity for working people, grow our economy out of the bottomless pit of debt, and move America back to the greatest economy on Earth if we punish productivity and subsidize reckless irresponsibility” - Mike Huckabee “Hope to Higher Ground”

“Instead of a tax code that crushes innovation... imagine a simple flat tax” - Ted Cruz
“Campaign Kickoff”

Here we begin to see textbook examples of how followers of strict father morality would adversely react to the government (or someone’s father) intrusive behaviour. The idea of an obtrusive parent rewarding bad behaviour corresponds with a conservative type 3 demon. According to Lakoff, a category 3 conservative demon are “Protectors of the ‘public good’. Included here are environmentalists, consumer advocates, advocates of affirmative action, and

37 Pfister et al, Lakoff’s Theory of Moral Politics in Presidential Campaign Advertisements, 497-498
advocates of government-supported universal health care who want the government to interfere with the pursuit of self-interest and thus constrain the business activities of the conservatives’ model citizens.\textsuperscript{38}

"Washington is more dysfunctional than ever and has become so \textit{beholden to the donor class} who fills the campaign coffers... Our federal policies for affordable housing aren’t designed to \textit{protect families}, but to \textit{protect bureaucrats}... I don’t judge the success of government by how many people are on assistance, but by how many people have good jobs and don’t need government assistance... we don’t create good jobs... by looking the other way as \textit{the law is ignored} so we can import low wage labor" - Mike Huckabee

"Hope to Higher Ground"

Interestingly, Mike Huckabee and Bernie Sanders constantly identify themselves as fighting the all-powerful “donor class”, “special interests”, or other euphemisms for political opponents with financial capital. Huckabee does this again later on in his speech by in-grouping blue-collar workers and out-grouping career politicians. He also demonizes the Obama administration and Democrats of “protecting bureaucrats” over “families” and characterizing liberals as “judging the success of government by how many people are on assistance”. Huckabee also claims that the “law is being ignored”, which would be a clear red-flag to strict fathers who emphasize a respect for rules, customs, and authority as being paramount when raising a child. Metaphorically, Huckabee metaphorically attributes Democrats as being parents that fail to follow the rules themselves. If the parents fail to follow the rules, how could they possibly ever teach their children to follow the rules? And if those children don’t follow the

\textsuperscript{38} Lakoff, Moral Politics, 171.
rules, they will not learn discipline or learn right from wrong. In this narrative, Democrat leaders are protecting outsiders over American families, all while breaking the rules. Those actions constitute moral failures that should disqualify someone from being considered a good parent or a strong leader.

“I never have been and won’t be the favored candidate of those in the ‘Washington to Wall Street’ corridor of power. I will be funded and fueled not by billionaires, but by working people across America... I grew up blue collar, not blue blood.” - Mike Huckabee “Hope to Higher Ground”

Here, Mike Huckabee uses his blue-collar, working class background to build a common identity with his audience of supporters in rural Hope, AK, while at the same time outcasting billionaires as the immoral, detached “other”. Republican Scott Wagner from Pennsylvania also alludes to a blue-collar upbringing as a point of virtue and as a point of contention with his opponent during a live televised debate.

“As a business person growing up on a farm, working hard, building my businesses, discovering how difficult it was to operate a business in Pennsylvania, I made a decision to run for state senate in 2014... I grew up on a farm. I am a blue-collar guy. [Democrat Tom Wolf] had a very different upbringing and a very different lifestyle than I.” - Scott Wagner from Pennsylvania

The appeal to “the working class” and “working Americans” sits as an incredible point of convergence in both Democrat and Republican speech. Even wealthy candidates constantly appeal to “middle-class” identity they try to construct their ingroups and outgroups. Lakoff’s
theory does not account for such a convergence. Conservative model citizens act morally, and in support of other moral citizens and the moral order. Liberal model citizens are empathetic, take care of themselves and take care of others. I believe that this convergence can be accounted for by acknowledging the makeup of the audience. Lakoff’s theory does not account for, but also does not prohibit working class identification by the part of political elites.

Take note of how Ted Cruz described the virtues of his mother, father, and wife, in that order.

“Imagine a little girl growing up... the daughter of Irish and Italian Catholic family, working class... and yet this young girl, pretty and shy, was driven, was bright, was inquisitive... Imagine a teenage boy... Imagine for a second the hope that was in his heart... coming to the one land on Earth that was welcomed so many millions... A colleague from the oil and gas business invited him to a Bible study... and there my father [the teenage boy] gave his life to Jesus Christ... Imagine another little girl growing up in Africa... she starts a small business when she’s in grade school... She and her brother compete baking bread... She goes on to a career in business.” - Ted Cruz “Presidential Campaign Kickoff”

He also describes in detail about how he took risks and worked to pay off his law school tuition. The way he ingroups, and signals what should be considered virtuous is by emphasizing each member’s ability to work hard, to excel, and to have faith. Otherwise, how they embody the conservative model citizen: “They are those who have conservative values and act to support them... are self-disciplined and self-reliant... who uphold the morality of reward and punishment and act in support of the moral order.”39

39 Lakoff, Moral Politics, 169.
According to Lakoff, strict fathers prioritize protection above other familiar duties, unlike nurturant parents who also protect, but normally prioritize nurturance above all else. Florida’s Republican candidate for senate Desantis clearly prioritizes public safety over other government services clearly during a televised debate with Democrat Andrew Gillum:

“My agenda has something that a vast majority of Floridians can get behind. Number one, I don’t want to raise taxes like Andrew wants to do, I want to keep it going [referring to a favorable economic situation]... I also want to protect the environment Floridians enjoy. We want to have clean water... if we don’t get that right, Florida’s future is in jeopardy. I want to protect education opportunities... [vocational and technical training] are the jobs of the 21st century, and I also want to protect our communities because if you don’t have safe communities, then a lot of that doesn’t matter, so we’ll stand with law enforcement and make sure that we protect for this future.” - Ron Desantis, Republican from Florida

Desantis’s speech, and his insistence that educational opportunities have to be “protected” may strike many as common sense, but actually constitutes a large number of assumptions as to the expectations of elected government officials, and even the nature of education. Unsurprisingly, education’s value is framed through a strict father morality where the purpose of a child’s upbringing is in part to teach the child how to effectively compete in the marketplace. Desantis’s statement that “if you don’t have safe communities, then a lot of that [other stuff] doesn’t matter” is a relatively unambiguous prioritization of law and order over other government duties as a strict father might prioritize protecting the home over other parental duties.

In Texas, Democratic senate candidate Beto O’Rourke used strict father arguments when responding to a question of potential foreign interference in American elections. He uses the
language of protection in order to protect a democratic process that he explicitly calls “sacred”.

He told a crowd of mixed liberals, conservatives, and undecided voters:

“Yes, the integrity of our ballot box, 242 years into this experiment. The American democracy, that is the exception, not the rule in foreign history, is sacred. It is essential that we continue to protect it. It is under attack unlike any other time in this nation’s past... they will attack us again in this election and in the next, unless we stand up to them now” -Beto O’Rourke, Democrat from Texas

“Everyone will get a fair shake, but I will not bow down to the altar of political correctness” - Ron Desantis from Florida

This particular utterance from Desantis strikes me as revealing about the metaphor usage in regards how partisans rationalize the political and social preferences of their political opponents. In this case, political correctness is likened to an altar to which one might pray, worship, or circle around. Finding what one community or ideology finds holy or sacred is key to discovering what are the priorities of said community. Desantis seems to indicate that he will not “bow down to the altar of political correctness” by “giving everyone a fair shake”. This particular quote was extracted from a part of their debate where both candidates were calling the other “liers”, and arguing about whose workplace ethics gaff was most egregious.

In this section I have consolidated examples of strict father speech from debates and political speeches from the 2016 presidential primaries up to the debates prior to the 2018 midterm elections. In this section I have showed how Ted Cruz offered his immediate family as examples of conservative model citizens, and how Mike Huckabee and Scott Wagner used
identity-building to ingroup himself and rural, blue-collar Americans, while outgrouping career politicians. I have also showed how Ron Desantis from Florida explicitly prioritized protection in line with strict father morality.

Immigration

In the following section, I compare the expression of metaphor and morality when speaking about immigration. I choose to focus on immigration for two reasons. The first is that immigration constitutes a stark area of disagreement between strict fathers and nurturant parents, and is crucial in dividing people in the American culture war. The second reason is that in the weeks leading up to the 2018 midterm election, immigration was particularly salient in a way that other usually hot-button culture war issues such as abortion rights were not. President Donald Trump, when asked about a caravan of migrants travelling northwards to the United States, said in a press conference that

“*At this very moment large well organized caravans of migrants are marching towards our southern border. Some people call it an invasion, it’s an invasion... [Central American migrants] broke in to Mexico and you look at what is happening in Guatemala, just to mention Guatemala along with El Salvador and Honduras. It is disgraceful those countries aren’t able to stop this cause they should be able to stop this before it starts*.”

- Donald Trump

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40 Gallup, Most Important Problem, https://news.gallup.com/poll/1675/most-important-problem.aspx
Donald Trump likens the migrant caravan as an invading army by categorizing their movement as “marching”. Trump also attributes criminality to the caravan by saying that the caravan “broke in” to Mexico, much like a home invader “breaks in” a house. This section is dedicated to trying to categorize what metaphors and morals people appeal to, and how Lakoff’s theory would explain such phenomenon.

In addition to politicians, I also access a politically-active cross-section of American public opinion via C-SPAN’s *Washington Journal* which encourages people to call into the show to voice their opinions on a wide array of subject matter. One caller states:

“Anyone with common sense should be for [ending birthright citizenship]. It makes no sense and we cannot take care of the whole world. Everybody has locks on their doors, don’t they? They have locks on their doors, don’t they? That’s because it makes no sense for someone to come over here and have a baby and we have to take care of the medical. We are defending the whole world”woo - Blake from Mississippi

“My problem is United States we spend too much time taking care of other countries first, if you have a family, you make sure that they’re fed, clothed, housed and that you are providing for them. That their needs are taken care of first, and if you have anything left over, you take care of others.”w - Wendy from Michigan

This quote was uttered following Donald Trump’s suggestion that he could unilaterally end the practice of granting citizenship to all children born in American territory. The reasoning being used is likening a country to a house, and borders as walls and doors with locks. Here, we see NATION AS FAMILY metaphor being extended and built upon with the COUNTRY AS HOUSE

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43 C-SPAN. *Washington Journal*. November 22, 2018
metaphor. This metaphor’s commonsensuality helps make it a powerful metaphor that can guide thinking and opinion and policy. Blake also alludes to the perceived cost that the children of non-citizens bear on American taxpayers, as would other speakers below.

“This idea that we can have these Central Americans and you look at that caravan and a lot of them are women of childbearing age and they are going to come here and have how many anchor babies?... To have undocumented aliens, to have people flying in here from China and Russia having children, and their kids automatically become citizens, to me that’s total insanity.”

—Mark from Pennsylvania

“I think we should end the birthright. The illegals are absolutely abusing our country’s laws. We do not mind the legal... A country has to protect its borders. That is the responsibility of a government, and Trump needs to fix this... But remember, a lot of ISIS people and dangerous MS-13, and you know everyone is saying ‘these people are so skinny and so poor’, they look pretty fed to me! They are not very thin. They are coming into this country as an invasion.”

—Cathy from Texas

The above quote is interesting, partly because she characterizes a nurturant parent argument. In this case, she mentions how “everyone is saying ‘these people are so skinny and so poor’”, clearly alluding to the nurturant parent morality’s tendency to seek out those most in need of help, so it would not be surprising to find someone point out how impoverished some potential immigrants are when making a moral argument for allowing. Cathy would not be the only person that referred to immigrants as an invasion during this segment of Washington Journal. If one could agree that anchor babies carries the connotation for a baby that will not be able to be

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44 C-SPAN. Washington Journal. October 31, 2018
45 C-SPAN. Washington Journal. October 31, 2018
supported by its immigrant mother, then “anchor” babies and their immigrant mothers may possibly be included in Category 1 demons alongside the “welfare babies” of the 1990’s, Category 1 demons being people “whose lack of self-discipline has led to a lack of self-reliance.”

For strict fathers anchor babies represent how not following immigration laws leads to children dependent on American taxpayers. According to Lakoff, repetition would reinforce the frame. Many declared independents used strict father morality during this segment of the Washington Journal, emphasizing the point that “strict father” and “nurturant parent” are not synonymous with “Republican” and “Democrat”.

“This is not a military invasion, this is an economic invasion. These people come to our country, they take jobs Americans would like to do, and then they send their money back to their home countries. It is an economic thing... It is just another instance of Washington for these immigrants. They don’t have the American citizen in their minds”

This thesis also takes an interest in how American partisans harbour ill-will towards their political opponents. In the quote below, I have highlighted examples of how the opposing political tribe is metonymically referred to via a person or place. In the following example “Hollywood” and “L.A” stand in as a metonymic shorthand for liberals and the entertainment industry, and are thoroughly outgrouped.

\[\text{Lakoff, Moral Politics, 171.}\]
\[\text{C-SPAN Washington Journal}\]
"I hope every immigrant allowed across the border go straight to LA and Hollywood and lives with those people. I hope they get all of them" - Unnamed speaker from Colorado

Of course, the conversation of immigration was not limited to Americans tuning in to C-SPAN, but was also spoken about by political elites while on camera. In the context of a political debate, participants seemed to always fit in a sentence or more about how their opponent not only fails to act in accordance to one’s morals, but actively works against them. Note the following example:

“I think we need to continue to [“put Georgians first”] unlike Ms. Abrams [Democrat opponent] who wants to give the Hopes Scholarship and free college tuition to those who are [here illegally]. I think that is the wrong position to go. I think we need to continue to fight for our own people for our own state that are citizens of our state...” -Brian Kemp from Georgia

Here, we see a linguistic manifestation of what polarization does to people’s perception. As touched upon in Pew Research’s research into political polarization, people by and large believe that their political opponents actions are inspired by being against one’s own values.

Later on in the segment, a Democrat called in to a phone line specifically set aside for first-generation Americans.

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48 C-SPAN, Washington Journal, Oct 31 2018
"Our country is about accepting people whose lives are in danger. You have to allow for these people who feel threatened to come into this country and enjoy freedom. It is too important in this country." - Susan, from New York

Her appeal to empathy with those most in-need epitomizes the nurturant parent morality’s preferred course of action in regards to impoverished potential immigrants.

“A quarter of those that I represent were born in another country. Chose us, came here to this country and by their very presence made it better. No wall is going to solve legitimate security concerns but smart policy will” - Beto O’Rourke from Texas

The idea that someone or something can make something better by simply existing contrasts greatly with the strict father view of immigrants as potential threats or undeserving outsiders. This description of immigrants fits perfectly within a nurturant parent philosophy that promotes belief in the potential of everyone to lead fulfilling lives given the right upbringing and environment.

“We are a nation and a state of borders. We also believe that we are a nation and a state of values. We don’t separate babies, put them in cages, and separate them from their mothers” - Andrew Gillum from Florida

Gillum then responded to the question about immigration by suggesting that border patrol operations should be absorbed into the US Department of Justice. This response however, appeals to efficiency more than any type of morality. This paper does not focus on matters of

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50 C-SPAN, Washington Journal 31 Oct, 2018
rationalism, but instead is more focused on the moral values used by each side to differentiate themselves from the political “other”, and to give one’s own political base a coherent identity. One should take note of the instances where Gillum accepts an opposing frame before answering a question. This seems to happen when a politician can not tastefully disagree with a given statement. This kind of interaction occurs exclusively in debates where someone is having to instantly respond to an opponent that is there with you and who has just finished speaking.

In this section I have reviewed a mix of discourse from political elites and the American public regarding an America-bound caravan of migrants in Fall of 2018. The analysis found many commonsensical strict father arguments against the policy of birthright citizenship with a repeated frame of the “anchor baby”. Americans also repeat the characterization that says that Washington D.C. policymakers care more about immigrants than they do about U.S.-born Americans. Lastly, there was a repeated nurturant parent narrative about the value that immigrants have for their respective communities, and the social responsibility to welcome the most impoverished and desperate. A deeper analysis around a narrower issue helps confirm and support my findings during the “Nurturant Parents in Speech” and “Strict Fathers in Speech” sections, that liberals and conservatives’ disagreements are fundamentally issues of different moral prioritizations. Strict fathers reason that the United States cannot accept the Central Americans because of the cost that undisciplined mothers would place on taxpayers. Nurturant parents reason that we can not outright reject the Central Americans because they do constitute a threat, but instead are people in need of nurture. These findings are consistent with Lakoff’s theory of how these morality sets would reason about immigration in general.

Conclusion
In this paper, I have suggested that polarization in facts exist, and that we have been able to measure polarization by counting roll votes. Poole’s D-NOMINATE method of measuring how effective partisan identity is at predicting member’s votes shows that congress is more polarized that it has been, and is continually getting more polarized. I then suggested that partisan identity now correlates with a lifestyle. I made this suggestion by attributing the phenomenon where each party’s model members now neatly correspond with a corresponding side in an explicit, and increasingly salient culture war. I then suggest that abortion and immigration represent the most divisive of the culture war issues. I then mention Lakoff and Johnson’s *Central Metaphor Theory*. *Central Metaphor Theory* suggests that our lived experiences inform our understanding, and that we construct our reality using metaphorical concepts. Lakoff expands on *Central Metaphor Theory* with *Moral Politics Theory*. *Moral Politics Theory* suggests that our lived experience on the ideal mode of parenting informs our political opinions. I then conduct a look at an admittingly arbitrary corpus of partisan speech from the few months prior to the 2018 national midterm elections in search for speech that either confirms or does not agree with Lakoff’s theory.

That analysis reveals some interesting productive metaphors being used by politicians. Firstly, I did find evidence of appeals to ideals that correspond to both strict father and nurturant parent moralities. Nurturant mother appeals include moral arguments in support of raising the wages of mothers, families, police, and healthcare workers. The appeals made by the likes of Bernie Sanders, Andrew Gillum, Stacey Abrams, and Beto O’Rourke centered on the “commonsense” notion of taking care of those who take care of society, or can not effectively take care of themselves. Strict father appeals made productive use of portraying the federal
government of being too intrusive, and protecting people who do not deserve protection: immigrants, criminals, and people who behave "recklessly" (which I take to mean poor or unmarried people who don't already subscribe to strict father morality). Strict father morality also prioritizes public safety and protection as their primary prerogative, consistent with Moral Politics Theory.

However, as far as I have been able to find, Lakoff's theories do not account for why candidates from both parties would appeal to working class Americans for building ingroup identity. In fact, Lakoff's theory suggests that model conservative citizens are, among other traits, wealthy businessmen because their wealth and success represents the fruits of their self-discipline, and by extension their good morality. Perhaps conservative politicians need to juxtapose their working-class origins with their current wealth in order to exemplify just how much wealth they have amassed to show their virtuosity to their constituents and potential voters. Perhaps the politician needs the constituent to believe that despite their own current working-class status, that a trust in the process will eventually lead to them eventually acquiring wealth. I understand that the candidates are both trying to relate to their political bases in order to build a rapport with their potential voters.

Further Research

Further research can be conducted on strict father and nurturant parent usage of the word "protect" to refer to one of the primary moral obligations of the responsible, moral, parent. Lakoff's theory recognizes how both nurturant parents and strict fathers from both moralities have the prerogative of protecting the family. By extension, both Democrat and Republican

\[footnote{Lakoff, Moral Politics, 168} \]
politicians make sure to emphasize their ability to protect their constituents. The nurturant parent use of “protect” focuses on protecting civil rights advances such as right to for marriage equality, and access to abortion. Bernie Sanders mentions “protecting our gay brothers and sisters” in his speech “The Political Revolution Continues”, which also happens to suggest the validity of the NATION AS FAMILY metaphorical concept, by referring to fellow citizens as siblings. This research would be useful as it could show the linguistics community a very real misunderstanding of the same word, in the same language, in an ongoing political conversation between two parties.

Further research can be done comparing the expression of metaphor and morality when speaking about abortion, much in the same way that this paper focused on immigration. Pfister and Ohl found that time period had little effect on the arguments made by strict fathers and nurturant parents.53 Theoretically, one could find debate transcripts from a past election where abortion was more salient a topic, such as during the debates prior to the 1976 presidential election.

Research can also be done on what I suspect to be larger narrative in American politics: as we push our political opponents from the sphere of “opponents” to “enemies”, we are pushing our parties from being our “team” to being our “army”. This study left me with the impression that party as army metaphors are more common around election time. However, I did find evidence of campaigns being likened to uprisings, or army’s with ranks, and the need for strategy and recruitment.

53 Pfister and Ohl (2013)
Lastly, I would suggest more analyses of intraparty debates in an attempt to make better-defined distinctions between different camps within the same party. Sociologists have put forth evidence of a new “victimhood” culture that holds victimhood as a virtue, in contrast to “dignity” cultures and “honor” cultures. I suspect that Lakoff’s theory, originally written in 1998, and does not sufficiently yet account for such a shift in culture, and the new activist-culture brand of leftist politics that arises from said culture.

54 Campbell and Manning, Microaggressions and Moral Culture, 2014
Bibliography


