



The Politics of Parenthood: Causes and Consequences of the Politicization and Polarization of the American Family

Laurel Elder, Steven Greene

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Traces the rising emphasis on parenthood in contemporary American politics.

Certain events in one's life, such as marriage, joining the workforce, and growing older, can become important determinants of political attitudes and voting choice. Each of these events has been the subject of considerable study, but in *The Politics of Parenthood*, Laurel Elder and Steven Greene look at the political impact of one of life's most challenging adult experiences—having and raising children. Using a comprehensive array of both quantitative and qualitative analyses, Elder and Greene systematically reveal for the first time how the very personal act of raising a family is also a politically defining experience, one that shapes the political attitudes of Americans on a range of important policy issues. They document how political parties, presidential candidates, and the news media have politicized parenthood and the family over not just one election year, but the last several decades. They conclude that the way the themes of parenthood and the family have evolved as partisan issues at the mass and elite levels has been driven by, and reflects fundamental shifts in, American society and the structure of the American family.

“Elder and Greene’s work does much to advance our understanding of political socialization and ventures to new territory in emphasizing the role of parenthood, while past studies have focused on other life events, like marriage ... The authors make a very valuable contribution.” — *Politics and Gender*

“...the book is a good read for FCS [family and consumer sciences] professionals ... Interestingly, the authors employed a mix method approach, which ... speaks volumes as to the power of this approach in assessing both attitudes and behaviors.” — *Journal of Family & Consumer Sciences*

“...the important findings on gender difference, parenting, and politics make this an important resource.” — *CHOICE*

“...*The Politics of Parenthood* offers insight into how parenthood changes one’s political beliefs and how parenthood has become politicized in our modern world.” — *San Francisco Book Review*

Laurel Elder is Associate Professor of Political Science at Hartwick College.

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Joan Munoz:

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