2017

Television and the Cultivation of Authoritarianism: A Return Visit From an Unexpected Friend

Michael Morgan
University of Massachusetts Amherst, mmorgan@comm.umass.edu

James Shanahan
Indiana University, jes30@indiana.edu

Television and the Cultivation of Authoritarianism: A Return Visit from an Unexpected Friend

Michael Morgan and James Shanahan

March 2017

Michael Morgan is a Professor Emeritus of Communication at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. James Shanahan is the Dean of the Media School at Indiana University.

Television and the Cultivation of Authoritarianism: A Return Visit from an Unexpected Friend

The emergence and victory of Donald Trump in the tumultuous 2016 Presidential election raises many critical and challenging questions for communication scholars. At the outset of the Republican political primary season, no political expert or pundit predicted that Trump would last long. He was widely seen as an amusing distraction in an otherwise crowded field, one who was sure to fizzle out quickly. Trump dumped all forms and rules of traditional campaigning and immediately began an assault on immigration, targeting Mexicans as "criminals, drug dealers, rapists, etc." and proposing to build a wall (to be paid for by Mexico) to keep out future undocumented immigrants. He went on to offer a barrage of "politically incorrect" proposals, insults, offenses, and inconsistencies that normally would have derailed a campaign. He quickly evolved a strategy based on a "strongman" personality that many saw as raising the specter of a dangerous authoritarianism moving to the forefront of American politics. In the end, to the surprise of most, this strategy worked.

Trump's success in the 2016 election reintroduced a factor that we have not thought much about recently: the role of media in creating fervent support for one perceived as a strong leader. Historically, leaders identified as "authoritarian" (such as Hitler, Perón, or Berlusconi) may represent sharply distinct political philosophies and regimes, ranging from traditional fascism to nationalism to right-wing populism. But what such leaders share in common are their efforts to control and manipulate the media. Those efforts in turn raise questions about the power of media to generate allegiance to those leaders and consent for their actions. With populism and nationalism on the rise around the world, these questions take on additional urgency.

Indeed, Trump's use of media and the role of media in his election have been the focus of extensive attention. Many pundits and social observers have pointed to his use of social media to

bolster his personal charisma and build his movement. Tweeting in particular allowed him to circumvent the gatekeeping role of traditional news media, even while he exploited their near fixation with him, giving him an enormous amount of free (and for the media, ratings-rich) coverage.

The specific media tactics used by Trump, along with the practices of media institutions during the campaign, deserve and will certainly receive serious scholarly study. Our concern here, however, is with a broader and more subtle issue: what are the dynamics within the media cultural environment that may have contributed to Trump's popularity? Could television – which continues to occupy more of Americans' leisure time than any other activity or medium (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016) – play a role in cultivating a cultural climate that made Trump's triumph possible? We are not talking about news and campaign coverage, but about the role of general, everyday programming, about television content, largely entertainment, that carries no *explicit* political messages and few if any direct references whatsoever to Trump. Following the theoretical assumptions, methodological procedures, and previous findings of cultivation analysis (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1982; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, Signorielli, & Shanahan. 2002; Shanahan & Morgan, 1999), this study asks if heavy television viewing contributes to the kind of authoritarian mindset that may have helped elect Donald Trump.

Theories of Authoritarianism

Authoritarianism has been a much-studied (and much contested) construct since the 1950s. Gaining impetus and momentum from the events of World War II and the rise of worldwide Fascist movements, it has been adduced as a "root cause" of attitudes such as ethnocentrism, nationalism, and anti-Semitism. The idea is that the authoritarian "personality" is

one who is subservient to power above him or her, and abusive of power to those below. Authoritarians favor conformity; liberal attitudes that support and celebrate freedom of speech or social diversity are abhorrent to authoritarians' sense of things. They also prize law and order, and believe force and power are often necessary to create it. Strong leaders are seen as more desirable than those who work toward consensus or compromise through democratic means (see Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950; Altemeyer, 1988; Hetherington & Weiler, 2009).

The basics of authoritarianism were most famously laid out by Adorno et al. in *The Authoritarian Personality* (1950). They developed a scale (the "F" scale, for Fascism) that was intended to measure persons' tendencies toward authoritarian values. The scale assessed responses to statements such as "Obedience and respect for authority are the most important virtues children should learn," "What this country needs most, more than laws and political programs, is a few courageous, tireless, devoted leaders in whom the people can put their faith," and "The true American way of life is disappearing so fast that force may be necessary to preserve it." These questions tapped supposed numerous sub-dimensions of authoritarianism such as conventionalism, submission, and preoccupation with power, among others. This work became one of the most well-traveled lanes of the social-psychological research highway.

Many different versions and re-workings of the idea have appeared in the literature (Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightsman, 2013). Adorno et al.'s version, as indicated by the use of the word "personality" in their title, sought to describe a psychological trait acquired very early in life. There were Freudian tinges to their analysis:

A basically hierarchical, authoritarian, exploitive parent-child relationship is apt to carry

over into a power-oriented, exploitively dependent attitude towards one's sex partner and

one's God and may well culminate in a political philosophy and social outlook which has

no room for anything but a desperate clinging to what appears to be strong and a

disdainful rejection of whatever is relegated to the bottom ... [and] the formation of

stereotypes and of ingroup-outgroup cleavages. (Adorno et al., 1950, p. 971)

Not surprisingly, there have been many critiques of this work. Martin (2001) has called it

"the most deeply flawed work of prominence in political psychology" (p. 1). Because the work

was one of the earliest to use scaling methods, there were methodological problems that are less

likely to be seen in more modern analyses. Also, with the benefit of hindsight, we can see that

Adorno et al. were greatly affected by a "confirmation bias" (Martin, 2001, p. 5) in their

approach, using data selectively and asymmetrically to confirm something that they already

knew existed.

Improvements were made by Altemeyer, both conceptually and in terms of measurement,

as he focused on something he called "right-wing authoritarianism" (Altemeyer, 1988). Apart

from the narrowed focus, Altemeyer proposed a different psychological mechanism from Adorno

et al.: social learning. He adopted Bandura's theories to argue that authoritarianism was

something that could be learned (or unlearned):

… students were probably pretty authoritarian as children, submitting to authority,

learning whom to fear and dislike, and usually doing what they were supposed to do. But

when adolescence struck with all its hormones, urges, and desires for autonomy, some of

them began to have new experiences that could have shaken up their early learnings. If

the experiences reinforced the parents', teachers', and clergies' teachings…, authoritarian

attitudes would likely remain high. But if the experiences indicated the teachings were

wrong (e.g. 'Sex isn't bad. It's great!'), the teen is likely to become less authoritarian. (Altemeyer, 2006, p. 61)

A third stance comes from the work of Stenner and others who argue that authoritarianism is a predisposition that can be catalyzed by events:

Authoritarians prove to be relentlessly 'sociotropic' boundary-maintainers, norm-enforcers, and cheerleaders for authority, whose classic defensive stances are activated by the experience or perception of threat to… boundaries, norms, and authorities. (Stenner, 2009, p. 143)

When external threats disturb authoritarians' perception of equilibrium, latent tendencies are activated and they respond with attitudes and behavior that we typically associate with authoritarianism.

In total then, we have views that authoritarianism is a personality trait (Adorno et al.), a socially learned construct (Altemeyer), or a predisposition that only emerges under certain conditions (Stenner). While authoritarianism is no longer thought to reflect a personality "type" (Roiser & Willig, 2002), the consistency across these views is that authoritarians are seen as "rigid thinkers who perceive the world in black-and-white terms.... Authoritarians obey. They seek order. They follow authoritarian leaders. They eschew diversity, fear 'the other,' act aggressively toward others…." (MacWilliams, 2016b, p. 717).

Culture and Authoritarianism: The Role of Television

Given that Bandura and others have noted that social learning can involve vicarious agents of socialization (Bandura & Walters, 1977), the role of media in fostering authoritarianism has received some attention. Amongst well-known theories of media effects, cultivation analysis (Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Gerbner, et al., 2002) offers a close complement to

the social learning perspective that Altemeyer favored. Moreover, media images can contribute

to our conceptions of social reality, in ways that structure our perceptions and give us frames of

meaning; this may fit with Stenner's concept of authoritarianism as a "predisposition." Thus,

authoritarianism may be "acquired" through social learning processes, but still remain latent

unless and until the "right" conditions emerge; television may be one source of that social

learning and one basis for that predisposition.

Gerbner and his colleagues argued that heavy viewers of television drama tended, over

time, to absorb images and lessons from the consistent messages of television's story system.

Noting that television messages often tend toward a formulaic demonstration of power that

includes the frequent use of violence, Gerbner et al. showed that heavy television exposure

cultivates a sense of fear, anxiety, and mistrust, with worrisome implications. Although most

public debate about television violence had focused on sensational cases of possible imitation,

they argued that "We should look at the majority of people who become more afraid, anxious,

and reliant on authority; they may grow up asking for more protection or worse to gain security"

(Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, Signorielli, & Jackson-Beeck, 1979, p. 196). These words have a

certain prescience to them in the midst of the Trump phenomenon.

From an initial focus on violence and victimization, cultivation research expanded in the

1980s to examine a far broader range of topics and issues. Thus it is not surprising that

cultivation theorists eventually tended to focus more explicitly on the issue of authoritarianism

and political outlooks in general. Gerbner, et al. first outlined a view of television's relation to

ideology in a piece called "Charting the mainstream: Television's contributions to political

orientations" (1982). They found that heavier viewers of television were more likely to blend and

converge toward a conservative view of the world on such issues as freedom of speech, minority

rights, race, and sexuality, although they tended to define themselves as "moderates." This process, called "mainstreaming," means that "otherwise" disparate social groups are more similar to each other when they are heavy viewers. For instance, liberals and conservatives are more likely to hold similar views about social issues such as abortion when they are heavy viewers. The implication is that television cultivates a shared cultural mainstream. These mainstreaming patterns have been consistently observed in replications of the original work (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999).

The first cultivation study to explicitly examine whether heavy exposure to the culture of television could be tied specifically to authoritarian values was conducted in Argentina (Morgan & Shanahan, 1991). The study began as part of a series of replications of U.S. cultivation research among adolescents in several countries. When the survey data were collected in the mid-1980s, Argentina was just emerging from a brutal authoritarian military regime, so it was decided to include questions that tapped support for nascent "democratic" values, such as freedom of speech, attitudes toward conformity, and so on. The study found that heavy viewing adolescents in Argentina were indeed more likely to support authoritarian over democratic values.

This work was replicated with American adolescents (Shanahan, 1995, 1998), and linked back to Gerbner's mainstreaming ideas regarding the homogenizing role of television (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1980). Shanahan noted that "Television apparently holds back political development for heavy viewers" (1998, p. 494). In this view, adolescents – as they mature – progress from a fairly normal state of "adolescent authoritarianism" (Duriez, Soenens, & Vansteenkiste, 2007) toward a more nuanced understanding of the world that involves solving problems by other-than-authoritarian means. Heavy adolescent viewers show less of this

progression; Shanahan (1998) termed this a "retardation" of political attitude development, with the attitudes of older heavy viewing adolescents generally in line with those of their younger counterparts.

What is the relevance of the rise of Donald Trump to this earlier research on television and the cultivation of authoritarian perspectives? Many in the popular press and the public eye have criticized Trump for having authoritarian tendencies, or have decried the authoritarianism of his supporters. When it became clear that he would be the candidate, Senator Elizabeth Warren tweeted that Trump "incites supporters to violence, praises Putin, and is 'Cool with being called an authoritarian'" (Warren, 2016). Similarly, Shapiro (2016) condemned him as "the embodiment of the authoritarian temptation that has imperiled liberty since the days of the Roman Republic." (para. 5). Stanley (2016) writes that Trump employs a narrative of "wild disorder... as a display of strength, showing he is able to define reality and lead others to accept his authoritarian value system" (para. 13). Hundreds, if not thousands, of statements denouncing Trump for his authoritarian qualities can easily be found.

MacWilliams (2016a) goes further, arguing that authoritarianism was really the *only* predictor of support for Donald Trump during the primary campaign:

> Political pollsters have missed this key component of Trump's support because they simply don't include questions about authoritarianism in their polls. … my poll asked a set of four simple survey questions that political scientists have employed since 1992 to measure inclination toward authoritarianism. … Based on these questions, Trump was the only candidate—Republican or Democrat—whose support among authoritarians was statistically significant. (2016a, para. 8-9)

MacWilliams found that no other variable – including education, income, gender, age, ideology, and religiosity – significantly predicted support for Trump. Moreover, in a book that some see as uncannily forecasting the rise of Trump, Hetherington and Weiler (2009) found authoritarianism to be a primary driver of polarization in American politics, based on an obsession with law and order, immigration, fear of change, and the need for a strongman leader to meet an array of threats. MacWilliams (2016b) argues that this authoritarian-driven partisan polarization, along with "increasing fear of real and imagined threats, and terrorist incidents abroad and at home," (p. 716) is exactly what has propelled Trump (see also Choma & Hanoch, 2016). Although racial and gender attitudes played an important role (Blair, 2016), along with education and many other factors (Rothwell & Diego-Rosell, 2016), authoritarianism is especially deeply implicated in the emergence of support for Trump.

Accordingly, the question arises: if (1) television viewing cultivates values and perspectives conducive to authoritarianism, and if (2) authoritarianism is a driving force behind support for Trump, then might television viewing – directly, or indirectly through authoritarianism – contribute to the level of support for the candidacy of Donald Trump? That is what the current study investigates.

Methods

The data analyzed here come from an online survey conducted by the research firm Qualtrics from May 16-18, 2016 (N = 1053), about two months before the party conventions were held and six months before the general election. Qualtrics maintains panels of respondents from which stratified and quota samples can be drawn. Our sample was drawn to represent gender equally and insure variance across age. The sample is not a simple random sample, nor was it intended to be used for predicting election outcomes. The sample is nearly evenly split

between males (49.9%) and females (50.1%). The average age of the sample is 43.93 (*SD* =

14.47), with terciles at 35 and 50 years old. The racial breakdown of the sample is as follows:

82.5% white, 6.6% African American, 5.9% Hispanic, 2.4% Asian-American, and 1.2% Native

American. Education was measured with a nine-point scale, from less than high school to

professional degree (*M* = 4.33, *SD* = 1.93); about a fifth (22.2%) have no more than a high

school education, while 28.0% have at least some college and 37.8% a two- or four-year college

degree.

Participants were asked questions designed to tap into a range of political beliefs and

values. To measure authoritarianism, we used the same four-item measure as MacWilliams

(2016b). This scale comes from the 1992 National Election Study and has been used as a

measure of authoritarianism by dozens of political science scholars (e.g., Federico & Tagar,

2014; Feldman & Stenner, 1997; Henry, 2011; Sears, Van Laar, Carrillo, & Kosterman, 1997).

We asked respondents:

> Although there are a number of qualities that people feel that children should have, every
>
> person thinks that some are more important than others. Here are some pairs of desirable
>
> qualities. For each pair, which one do you think is more important for a child to have:
>
> – independence (25.5%) or respect for their elders (74.5%)?
>
> – curiosity (32.5%) or good manners (67.5%)?
>
> – self-reliance (68.9%) or obedience (31.1%)?
>
> – being considerate (74.6%) or being well-behaved (25.4)?

The percent of respondents selecting each option is given in parentheses. In each case, the first

answer indicates an emphasis on autonomy in child-rearing, while the second is considered to

reflect more authoritarian child-rearing values.

The four items are solidly inter-correlated (*r*'s range between .18 and .33, all *p* <. 001), and principal components analysis (varimax rotation) produces a single factor, accounting for 44.4% of the variance (eigenvalue = 1.78, with component loadings ranging from .62 to .70). Although Cronbach's *alpha* is .58, this is in line with many other studies that use this index (e.g., Brant & Reyna, 2014; Feldman & Stenner, 1997; MacWilliams, 2016b). Brandt and Henry (2012) argue that the index would have higher reliability if it included more items, while Hetherington and Suhay (2011) note that this alpha is "acceptable for such a short scale" (p. 551). These arguments and the fact that it is so widely used gives us confidence in the index. Across the four items, respondents gave a mean of 1.98 authoritarian responses (*SD* = 1.20).

The index has many favorable qualities that account for its appeal among political scientists and psychologists. In particular, as Brandy and Henry (2012) point out, it is not confounded by religious or political factors. MacWilliams (2016b) observes that the four items "neatly divorce the measurement of authoritarians from the dependent variables authoritarianism is supposed to explain, while capturing the hypothesized predispositional foundation of authoritarianism" (p. 718); he also quotes Stenner's comment that they "effectively and unobtrusively reflect *one's fundamental orientations* toward authority/uniformity versus autonomy/difference" (2005, p. 24; emphasis in original). The index predicts intolerance toward outgroups, racism, moral absolutism, less trust, support for limits on freedom of speech, punitive policies toward crime, an emphasis on law and order, and more. It has also been found to be stable over time (Gerber, Huber, Doherty, & Dowling, 2013).

At the time our data were collected (May 2016), among major party candidates only Hillary Clinton, Bernie Sanders, and Donald Trump were still in the race. The few remaining Republicans, including Ted Cruz, had just recently dropped out; Trump was the presumptive

nominee although he had not yet been formally named. We asked respondents which of those remaining three they would most likely vote for if the Presidential election were to be held "today." Response options also included "Don't Know," "Other" (with a write-in) and "Don't know but leaning toward" (with a write-in). About five percent of the sample said they didn't know, but were leaning toward one of the three candidates; including those "leaning towards," 32.3% said they would vote for Trump, 24.8% for Sanders, and 24.1% for Clinton. Most of the rest either said they didn't know for whom they would vote (12.6%) or wrote in some other candidate (2.6%).

To measure television viewing, we asked respondents: "Think about all the ways that you may watch television these days – including on a TV set live or on a DVR or On Demand, or streaming on a laptop, and so on. Altogether – taking all these into account – on an average day, how many hours would you say you spend watching TV?"

Respondents answered for four dayparts: between 6 AM and noon ($M = 1.32$, $SD = 1.5$), between noon and 6 PM ($M = 1.70$, $SD = 1.6$), between 6 PM and midnight ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 1.5$), and between midnight and 6 AM ($M = 0.90$, $SD = 1.4$). Totaling these gives a result that is higher than some estimates of daily viewing ($M = 7.09$, $SD = 4.46$). Asking for viewing self-reports in these four time periods and on all devices may inflate the total somewhat, but not by much; Nielsen (2016) reports that average viewing is about 40 hours a week on a television or with a TV-connected device (DVD, game console, or multimedia device such as Chromecast or Roku), plus 2 hours of video viewing on a PC, smartphone, or tablet. (Nielsen does not measure Subscription Video on Demand services such as Netflix or Amazon.) In any case, cultivation analysis treats self-reports of viewing hours as a relative, not absolute, measure.

Although news viewing is not centrally relevant to cultivation research in general, it clearly may play an important role in the case of electoral politics. Accordingly, we asked respondents how often they watch the news on each of the broadcast networks (ABC, CBS, and NBC, combined here into a single measure) and cable news channels (Fox, MSNBC, and CNN, analyzed individually). These were 5-point scale responses that ranged from "never" to "very often." All news exposure measures are strongly intercorrelated, ranging from $r = .29$ (Fox and MSNBC) to $r = .61$ (CNN and MSNBC; all $p < .001$), suggesting that those who watch more news in general tend to watch it on all channels (of course, there are many devotees of specific news channels who rarely or never watch any others). The news measures are also all related to overall amount of viewing (r's range from .16 to .32, all $p < .001$).

There are few differences across networks other than relatively lower viewership for MSNBC ($M = 2.15$, $SD = 1.06$). Frequency of viewing CNN ($M = 2.49$, $SD = 1.17$) and Fox News ($M = 2.46$, $SD = 1.28$) are roughly comparable, with exposure to broadcast news (averaged across all three networks) slightly higher ($M = 2.60$, SD = 1.03). Roughly 20-25% of respondents said they watch each channel "Often" or "Very Often" (except for MSNBC, for which the figure is only about 10%). About 50% of respondents say they "Never" or "Rarely" watch these news channels (with the highest rate of non-viewing for MSNBC, at about 65%). In this study, news viewing is analyzed for comparative purposes and is used as an important control, but since this is a cultivation analysis, our major focus is on overall television exposure.

Results

This study tests the mediation model presented in Figure 1, by looking at the direct and indirect (through authoritarianism) effects of television viewing on intending to vote for Donald

Trump. We used the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2012, 2013) to test the model for

overall viewing and, for comparison, for exposure to broadcast and cable news programming.

In this "classic" mediation model, path *a* is the statistical effect of the independent

variable (X) on the presumed mediator variable (M), and path *b* is the effect of M on the

dependent variable (Y). Path c *'* is the direct effect of X on Y (in this case, the statistical

relationship between amount of television viewing and the intention to vote for Trump), with the

mediator (authoritarianism) in the model. The indirect effect, if any (i.e., TV → Authoritarianism

→ Trump), is the product of *a*b*.

<div align="center">FIGURE 1 HERE</div>

There are a variety of ways to estimate the statistical significance of the *a*b* indirect

effect (some of them controversial). We used the method currently seen as state-of-the-art, based

on bootstrapping the 95% confidence interval with the Hayes' PROCESS macro. This method

can be used with data that are not normally distributed and with a binary dependent variable. We

used 1000 bootstrap samples, meaning the confidence intervals of the model coefficients were

based on 1000 samples from the full dataset. The macro provides the lower and upper bounds of

the (bias corrected) confidence intervals; if zero is not included in the range, the estimate is

deemed to be statistically significant at *p* < .05.

First, to provide some baseline data, Table 1 presents the simple and partial correlations

among key media and outcome variables. The partials control for age, sex, education, political

ideology (a 7-point scale from "Extremely liberal" to "Extremely conservative"; *M* = 3.92, *SD* =

1.50), and race (white/non-white); for the partials involving the news exposure measures, overall

amount of television viewing is also controlled. Confirming earlier cultivation research, heavy

overall television viewers score significantly higher on the scale of authoritarianism (partial *r* =

.19, $p < .001$). Heavier viewers of broadcast network news are also significantly more authoritarian, as are viewers of Fox News; exposure to neither CNN nor MSNBC is related to authoritarianism.

There is no association between overall amount of viewing and expressing an intention to vote for Trump, although heavy viewers tend to lean towards Clinton and against Sanders. With controls, viewers of broadcast network news, CNN, MSNBC tend to lean towards Clinton, while viewers of Fox News are more likely to support Trump and to oppose Sanders. Somewhat surprisingly, exposure to Fox News was unrelated to support (or lack of it) for Clinton, at least at that moment.

These correlations support the first part of the model (path *a*): amount of television viewing is positively and significantly related to authoritarianism (as is the viewing of broadcast news and Fox News). The second part of the model (path *b*) is also supported, with a significant link between authoritarianism and intention to vote for Trump (simple $r = .21$, partial $r = .12$, with the same controls as above; both $p < .001$).

<center>TABLE 1 HERE</center>

On the other hand, the partials show that there is no association between television viewing and supporting Trump (with the exception of watching Fox News). At first glance, this would seem to preclude any further testing of the model on the grounds that, if television viewing is not related to voting for Trump overall, then there could be no indirect effect of television viewing on voting for Trump through authoritarianism. Conventionally, researchers have assumed that there could not possibly be an X→M→Y mediation process if there is no X→Y relationship, often following the guidance of Baron and Kenny (1986). Hayes (2009) has demonstrated, however, that this is a false assumption (see also Zhao, Lynch, & Chen, 2010).

That is, television viewing could well have an indirect effect on voting for Trump through authoritarianism, even though there is no apparent TV→Trump association. Moreover, the bootstrapping technique of his PROCESS model overcomes many significant flaws and limitations of other ways to assess the significance of the *a*b* indirect effect.

The PROCESS results (based on bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals drawn from 1000 bootstrap samples) confirm the association between amount of viewing and authoritarianism ($b = .060$, $SE = .008$, $p = .000$) (95% bc CI: 044; .075) and between authoritarianism and saying one will vote for Trump ($b = .398$, $SE = .060$, $p = .000$) (95% bc CI: .282; .515). The direct effect of amount of television viewing on voting for Trump is nonsignificant ($b = -.019$, $SE = .016$, $p = .23$) (95% bc CI: -.049; .012). Nonetheless, the indirect effect of television viewing on supporting Trump through authoritarianism *is* significant ($b = .025$, $SE = .005$) (95% CI: .015; .034); the 95% confidence interval does not include zero. Using the partial posterior method to estimate the significance of the indirect effect (Falk & Biesanz, 2016), an approach with high power and good Type I error control, $p = .000$. When the controls used above (i.e., sex, age, education, political ideology, and race) are included as covariates, the indirect effect remains significant ($b = .024$, $SE = .004$) (95% CI: .006; .060); it also remains significant when the news exposure measures are included as an additional covariates. We also ran these analyses just for the 80% of the sample who said they were either "somewhat" or "extremely" likely to vote; all the observed coefficients are even stronger among likely voters.

Table 2 presents the results of the same analysis, using each news source as the independent variable. Sex, age, education, race, political ideology, and overall television viewing are included as covariates.

Exposure to broadcast network news and Fox News are significantly related to authoritarianism (path *a*). As with the correlations in Table 1, exposure to CNN shows no relationship with authoritarianism, but here the association with MSNBC is negative and significant. Further, cable news viewing (in contrast to overall viewing and to exposure to broadcast network news) does appear to be significantly related to supporting Trump (path *c'*) – negatively for CNN and MSNBC, and positively (and strongly) for Fox News.

PROCESS does not provide specific p-values for estimates of indirect effects, but again, if the 95% confidence interval does not include zero, we can conclude that it is significant at *p* < .05. The data show that the indirect effect is significant for the broadcast networks and Fox News. There is no such indirect effect in the case of watching CNN; it is *negative* and significant for MSNBC, although the upper CI limit is very close to zero. But clearly, the indirect effect model positing that television viewing contributes to favoring Trump *through authoritarianism* is supported for overall viewing, for watching news on the broadcast networks, and for watching Fox News.

TABLE 2 HERE

Finally, we examined the extent to which the indirect effect observed here varies across various subpopulations. The indirect effect may interact with other factors, producing "moderated mediation," in which the indirect effect may be stronger or weaker for different groups. The PROCESS macro calculates an Index of Moderated Mediation, also through bootstrapping. If zero is not included in the confidence interval, then "any two conditional indirect effects estimated at different values of the moderator are significantly different from each other" (Hayes, 2015, p. 2). We used Hayes' Model 8 which adds variable W to Figure 1, to test if it moderates the effects of X on M and X on Y.

We tested the potential moderating role of age, sex, education, political ideology, race, and the individual news outlets. (That is, the indirect effect of Overall TV → Authoritarianism → Trump may vary for people of different education levels, or who are watching different news channels, and so on.) The indirect effect is fairly stable and robust; it does not vary by age, education, race, or watching network news (or MSNBC). But four cases of significant moderated mediation were found: for political ideology, sex, watching Fox News, and watching CNN. The results are shown in Table 3.

The subgroup breakdown shows that the indirect effect remains significant in all cases; none of the 95% confidence intervals include zero. However, the significant index of moderated mediation shows that there are differences in the strength of the indirect effect. For example, the size of the indirect effect decreases from the liberal to the conservative side of the political spectrum. This decrease is reminiscent of a classic and common mainstreaming pattern, in which cultivation on political issues (toward conservative views) is much more pronounced among liberals (Gerbner, et al., 1982).

TABLE 3 HERE

The indirect effect is also larger for females than for males. Finally, the indirect effect of television viewing on backing Trump by way of authoritarianism is moderated by watching either Fox News or CNN, but in opposite ways. The indirect effect is greater for those who rarely watch Fox News and for those who more frequently watch CNN.

In these four cases, the stronger indirect effect is found within the group that is "otherwise" least likely to say they will vote for Trump: liberals, females, light viewers of Fox News, and heavy viewers of CNN. This finding suggests a complex kind of mainstreaming, given that support for Trump is "already" high for males, conservatives, and Fox News viewers.

Yet, this is not a simple ceiling effect; it must be stressed that we are talking about moderation of the *indirect* effect; there is no overall association between amount of viewing and saying one will vote for Trump, and few subgroups show any hint of such a relationship. The association between amount of viewing and support for Trump remains zero at all levels of authoritarianism, education, age, news viewing, and so on.

Other Models

While the data are consistent with the notion that TV Viewing → Authoritarianism → support for Trump, there may be other models that better explain the relationships among these three variables. For example, it is possible that having an authoritarian mindset leads one to spend more time watching television; television's tendency to present complex issues in simple packages and to glorify the use of violence to solve problems might appeal to authoritarians, or they just might prefer watching television to other activities. If authoritarians are drawn to television, for whatever reason, then what they see there could in turn bolster support for Trump. In other words, it may be that Authoritarianism → TV → support for Trump.

The data do not support this model. The basic relationships are replicated (as above, authoritarianism is significantly related to both amount of television viewing and to support for Trump, and television viewing shows no association with support for Trump). Nevertheless, as seen on Table 4, there is no significant indirect effect of authoritarianism, through amount of viewing, on support for Trump ($b = -.022$, $SE = .017$).

<div align="center">TABLE 4 HERE</div>

Another possibility is that authoritarianism leads to support for Trump, which in turn leads to heavier viewing, with viewers then perhaps searching out television content that confirms and supports that political preference (that is, Authoritarianism → Trump → TV). This

possible model could perhaps be plausible in the case of content that directly focuses on Trump,

as opposed to overall viewing. However, this model cannot be tested directly, since PROCESS

cannot test a mediation model with a dichotomous mediator (such as "intent to vote for Trump").

Similarly, the other potential model in which support for Trump mediates the relationship

between television viewing and authoritarianism (that is, TV→ Trump → Authoritarianism)

cannot be tested for the same reason; moreover, we see no particular theoretical rationale that

would make this particularly plausible. Another potential model, in which television viewing

mediates the association between support for Trump and authoritarianism (that it, Trump → TV

→ Authoritarianism) is also not especially plausible; in any case, Table 4 shows that this indirect

effect is not significant and this alternative can be rejected.

The final conceivable possible model posits amount of viewing as the outcome variable,

with support for Trump affecting amount of viewing through authoritarianism (that is, Trump →

Authoritarianism → TV). This is, of course, the exact reverse of our hypothesized model; since

the data are cross-sectional (and the $a*b$ path is identical to the $b*a$ path), this indirect effect is

significant as well ($b = .123$, $SE = .050$).

Discussion

There have been thousands of studies on authoritarianism, including many in the U.S.

political context, not to mention studies of the innumerable cases of authoritarian political

structures around the world. But, at least in the United States, there has been a strong and

longstanding assumption that, despite occasional ripples, the rise of an authoritarian political

regime simply "can't happen here." That is, we have believed that while a *caudillo*-type ruler

espousing nationalistic and racist sentiments might appeal to a few (or more) on the marginal

fringes, such a figure could never gain serious traction as a possible leader of the US. The 2016

election has challenged that assumption and brings a need for understanding.

We explored the relationships among amount of overall television viewing,

authoritarianism, and support for Donald Trump in the 2016 election. Authoritarianism was

measured with a scale of attitudes toward childrearing that has no explicit political or religious

dimensions, a scale that is very commonly used for this purpose by political scientists. There was

no association between amount of viewing and the intention to vote for Trump, but we found a

significant and consistent indirect effect of television viewing, through authoritarianism, on

supporting him. This indirect effect holds under a variety of important controls, and appears to

be even stronger among liberals, females, light Fox News viewers, and heavy CNN viewers.

These patterns are consistent with the notion of mainstreaming, but with a twist: whereas

mainstreaming has previously been observed when associations between amount of viewing and

some attitude show a convergence across counterpart subgroups, in this case it is a mediated,

indirect association that is moderated.

Other possible models of the association among these three variables were tested and

none were supported, but we did find a significant indirect effect of support for Trump, through

authoritarianism, on amount of television viewing (Trump → Authoritarianism → TV). This is

the exact reverse of our hypothesized model (TV → Authoritarianism → Trump); since the data

are cross-sectional, these two models can only be differentiated on conceptual, and not statistical,

grounds. If this alternative model explains the observed data, then authoritarianism would be a

result of support for Trump; it does not seem likely, however, that wanting to vote for Donald

Trump would lead to having certain views on childrearing (especially if those views reflect

"fundamental orientations," as Stenner argued). Being favorably disposed toward Trump very

likely affects what specific news channels one prefers, but we are using a measure of *overall* television exposure. While we cannot definitely reject this explanation, the weight of theory and previous research would give more credence to our hypothesized model. Again, the other testable models that offer alternative explanations do not hold up conceptually or statistically.

It is important to stress that we use the term "effect" throughout this paper in a purely statistical sense. These are cross-sectional data and the causal order among these variables cannot be determined. From a cultivation theory standpoint, our results are consistent with the idea that television viewing in the U.S. context provides a supportive environment for authoritarian values. Viewing broadcast news or Fox News, but not CNN or MSNBC, also tends to be positively related to authoritarianism. Of course, we are not arguing that television viewing is the dominant or determining factor driving authoritarianism. Obviously, we have had the same type of television system in place for many years without authoritarians coming to power. And while we found that this association holds up under controls for sex, age, education, race, and political ideology, it could still be explained by other, untested, variables.

More fundamentally, cultivation theory would not assume in the first place that the association between overall exposure and authoritarianism represents a one-way causal relationship, either from amount of viewing to authoritarianism or vice-versa. Rather, cultivation relationships are assumed to be reciprocal and dynamic. If authoritarians are drawn to television viewing, the overall content patterns they absorb are likely in turn to stabilize, reinforce, and strengthen authoritarian tendencies and outlooks, which then means further heavy viewing; and so on. In cultivation theory, both television viewing and conceptions (such as authoritarianism) are seen as mutually embedded in styles of life in which they are systematically reflected, expressed, and reproduced. This assumption cannot be tested with the data at hand, but we argue

that it is more reasonable than assuming that either television viewing or authoritarianism is "purely" an outcome of the other, with no subsequent consequences or repercussions.

Cultivation suggests that message systems contribute to background tendencies and factors that can emerge when conditions are ripe. Authoritarianism behaves in much the same way, remaining latent and then emerging in times of crisis. In the current situation, many complex factors and processes explain both authoritarianism and the rise of Trump. Although television is not likely to be the most powerful or decisive among these, the indirect effect we have uncovered is persistent, significant, and theoretically coherent.

Others are beginning to explore the importance of culture in conditioning support (or lack thereof) for someone like Trump. For example, Mutz (2016) found that *Harry Potter* readership apparently acts as something of an antidote against him, based on the series' "messages of tolerance for difference and opposition to violence and punitive policies" (p. 728). Writing in the online magazine *Slate*, Canfield (2016) argued that prime-time television is in many ways dominated by "Trump's America," that is, filled with programming that is "xenophobic," "fearmongering," "billionaire-boosting," and "science-rejecting" – especially on ratings leader CBS, with its older and whiter audience. Although television appears to offer "broad and depoliticized entertainment," and "harmless prime-time escapism," he argues that it actually "reinforces the exclusionary agenda put forth by the Trump campaign."

Our data suggest that television in the U.S. commercial model continues to play an important role in the cultivation of authoritarianism. Over twenty years ago, in reference to Argentina, we wrote: "Television asks people to be receptive to strong government" (Morgan & Shanahan, 1995, p. 198). We can say the same about the US today. Again, authoritarianism tends to be more latent than manifest for many; it is only under conditions of threat or fear of threat

that the "resort" to authoritarianism comes. As MacWilliams (2016b) claims, Trump's support came both from those who were already disposed to authoritarianism and from those who were activated to it by fear. The long-standing claim of cultivation research that heavy viewing contributes to fear and mistrust comes to mind.

In the US, the fear that marked the post-9/11 environment meant support for Bush administration policies that were certainly more militaristic than average, and in which conventional regard for civil liberties was sometimes disregarded. In other words, threat brought about tendencies toward a slightly more manifest authoritarianism. The move to the Obama administration seemed to be a softening, but at the same time political polarization was heating up and seemed to create even more of a safe communication space for authoritarianism, at least within some base political subgroups. It now seems clear that there is a substantial segment of the American population that will quite readily support these views under the right conditions.

Our findings about news exposure are likely due to a large extent to selective exposure, especially for the cable channels. What is more relevant to us is the cultural substrate of all of this, which is where our broad cultivation findings are most pertinent, and where issues of self-selection fade into the background.

Following the theory and methods of cultivation analysis, our primary independent variable is overall amount of television viewing – a measure that has long been contentious in critiques of cultivation research (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999; Morgan, Shanahan, & Signorielli, 2015). We acknowledge that this measure does not tell us exactly what people are watching, and in today's media environment, people can be heavy viewers of very specific and distinct types of programming. While cultivation does not assume that all programming imparts identical messages or that differences among types of programs are trivial or irrelevant, the argument is

simply that most regular, heavy viewers, over time, will tend to be more exposed to entertainment programs that present certain common, consistent, and stable messages about life and society that cut across many different channels and types of programs. These programs routinely present formulaic violence, along with gender and ethnic/racial stereotypes that persist despite substantial changes. They also have historically created and in- and out-groups; all of these are features that would tend to nourish latent manifest authoritarianism among heavy viewers.

Even in an era when television is increasingly less "mass" than it used to be, the cultivation perspective suggests that message commonalities still exist that are more or less resistant to change and that contribute to the cultivation of insecurity, fear, and mistrust. Where the minorities who are tagged as outgroups may change (women, gays, blacks), new ones (Hispanics, Muslims) emerge that provide the grist for the fear factory that television can still embody. Interestingly, Trump has chosen the two outgroups that allow him to cover two bases: Muslims provide the security threat and Mexicans the economic and crime threat (see Hellwig & Sinno, 2016, for an interesting parallel in Britain); these two groups are also linked with crime, violence, and terror in television entertainment. This may also feed into the common dramatic theme of the strong leader-hero who single-handedly will protect us from danger and restore the rightful order of things.

Obviously there are limitations to our data and arguments. Our media exposure measures are at best imprecise. We assume that those on the higher ends of our viewing measures do watch more than those on the lower ends, but we do not see self-reported hours of viewing as "accurate," and more exact measures would indeed be useful. We also assume that for most heavy viewers, dramatic and fictional programming constitutes the bulk of their viewing over

long periods of time. Also, it is possible that, prior to the 2016 election season, heavy viewers had more exposure to Trump, possibly through *The Apprentice* or his general status as a media personality. We would argue that such exposure to direct references to Trump would be a tiny fraction of all television fare consumed by most heavy viewers over time, but we have no way of knowing whether his history as a TV personality plays a role in our results. Despite ample limitations, we think that our reliance on tested theory and the convergence of our findings with previous theory and results will provide greater confidence to our interpretations.

We hope this study helps counter the common notion that cultivation implies a one-way causal influence from television to attitude or behavior. From the start, Gerbner envisioned cultivation as a systemic process, both reflecting and reproducing cultural patterns. Again, our findings are quite consistent with Gerbner's arguments about television violence and support for strong law-and-order policies. Moreover, they also open the door to the idea that cultivation can operate in an indirect, mediated manner, beyond any direct evidence of associations between amount of exposure and attitudes. In the same way, the study suggests that these "indirect cultivation" patterns may themselves reveal mainstreaming, as shown by our analysis of moderated mediation. We think these findings point cultivation research in some new and intriguing directions.

The largely unexpected ascendance of Donald Trump is a complex phenomenon, a product of many factors, forces, and currents coming together in a unique way. This study suggests that plain-old, regular, everyday television viewing should be considered a piece of the larger puzzle. There were many other media factors in the election – endless months of campaign coverage, intense scrutiny of the role of new and traditional media, "real" and "fake" news and much more. In terms of media cultivating support for authoritarian values, our data point to a

very real effect of media and "entertainment" in American culture and politics. It remains to be seen whether the cultivation of support for Trump through authoritarianism is part of a one-time historical anomaly or signals a deeper and more long-lasting trend that will translate into authoritarian leaders and policies in the future.

References

Adorno, T. W., Frenkel-Brunswik, E., Levinson, D. J., & Sanford, R. N. (1950). *The authoritarian personality.* New York: Harper & Row.

Altemeyer, B. (1998). The other "authoritarian personality." *Advances in experimental social psychology*, **30**, 47-92.

Altemeyer, B. (2006). *The authoritarians.* Retrieved from http://members.shaw.ca/jeanaltemeyer/drbob/TheAuthoritarians.pdf

Bandura, A., & Walters, R. H. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, **51**, 1173-1182.

Blair, K. L. (2016). A 'basket of deplorables'? A new study finds that Trump supporters are more likely to be Islamophobic, racist, transphobic and homophobic. *USApp–American Politics and Policy Blog*. Retrieved from http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/usappblog/2016/10/10/a-basket-of-deplorables-a-new-study-finds-that-trump-supporters-are-more-likely-to-be-islamophobic-racist-transphobic-and-homophobic/

Choma, B. L., & Hanoch, Y. (2016). Cognitive ability and authoritarianism: Understanding support for Trump and Clinton. *Personality and Individual Differences*, **106**, 287–291.

Duriez, B., Soenens, B., & Vansteenkiste, M. (2007). In search of the antecedents of adolescent authoritarianism: The relative contribution of parental goal promotion and parenting style dimensions. *European Journal of Personality*, **21**(4), 507-527.

Falk, C.F., & Biesanz, J.C. (2016). Two cross-platform programs for inferences and interval

    estimation about indirect effects in mediational models. *SAGE Open,*

    6*.* http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/ 2158244015625445

Federico, C. M., & Tagar, M. R. (2014). Zeroing in on the right: Education and the partisan

    expression of authoritarianism in the United States. *Political Behavior*, **36**(3), 581-603.

Feldman, S., & Stenner, K. (1997). Perceived threat and authoritarianism. *Political Psychology*,

    18, 741–70.

Gerbner, G., & Gross, L. (1976). Living with television: The violence profile. *Journal of*

    Communication, **26**(2), 173-199.

Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Morgan, M., & Signorielli, N. (1980). The "Mainstreaming" of America:

    Violence profile No. 11. *Journal of Communication*, **30**(3), 10-29.

Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Morgan, M., & Signorielli, N. (1982). Charting the mainstream:

    Television's contributions to political orientations. *Journal of Communication*, **32**(2),

    100-127.

Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Morgan, M., Signorielli, N., & Jackson-Beeck, M. (1979). The

    demonstration of power: Violence Profile No. 10. *Journal of Communication*, **29**(3), 177-

    196.

Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Morgan, M., Signorielli, N., & Shanahan, J. (2002). Growing up with

    television: Cultivation processes. In J. Bryant & D. Zillman (Eds.), *Media effects:*

    Advances in theory and research (2nd ed., pp. 43-67). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Hayes, A. F. (2009). Beyond Baron and Kenny: Statistical mediation analysis in the new

    millennium. *Communication monographs*, **76**(4), 408-420.

Hayes, A. F. (2012). PROCESS: A versatile computational tool for observed variable mediation,

    moderation, and conditional process modeling [White paper]. Retrieved from

    http://www.afhayes.com/ public/process2012.pdf

Hayes, A. F. (2013). *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: A*

    regression-based approach. New York: Guilford Press.

Hayes, A. F. (2015). An index and test of linear moderated mediation. *Multivariate Behavioral*

    Research, **50**(1), 1-22.

Hellwig, T., & Sinno, A. (2016). Different groups, different threats: public attitudes towards

    immigrants. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 1-20.

    https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183x.2016.1202749

Henry, P. J. (2011). The role of stigma in understanding ethnicity differences in

    authoritarianism. *Political Psychology*, **32**(3), 419-438.

Hetherington, M. J., & Weiler, J. D. (2009). *Authoritarianism and polarization in American*

    politics. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hetherington, M. J., & Suhay, E. (2011). Authoritarianism, threat, and Americans' support for

    the war on terror. *American Journal of Political Science*, **55**(3), 546-560.

MacWilliams, M. (2016a, Jan 17). The one weird trait that predicts whether you're a Trump

    supporter. *Politico Magazine.* Retrieved from

    http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/01/donald-trump-2016-authoritarian-

    213533

MacWilliams, M. C. (2016b). Who decides when the party doesn't? Authoritarian voters and the

    rise of Donald Trump. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, **49**(4), 716-721.

Martin, J. L. (2001). The authoritarian personality, 50 years later: What questions are there for

  political psychology? *Political Psychology,* **22**(1), 1-26.

Morgan, M. & Shanahan, J. (1991). Television and the cultivation of political attitudes in

  Argentina. *Journal of Communication*, **41**(1), 88-103.

Morgan, M., & Shanahan, J. (1995). *Democracy tango: Television, adolescents, and*

  authoritarian tensions in Argentina. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

Michael Morgan, James Shanahan, & Nancy Signorielli. Yesterday's New Cultivation,

  Tomorrow. *Mass Communication and Society*, 2015, **18**(5), 674-699.

Mutz. D. (2016). Harry Potter and the Deathly Donald. *PS: Political Science and Politics,* **49**(4),

  722-729.

Nielsen. (2016). *The comparable metrics report: Q1 2016.* Retrieved from

  http://www.nielsen.com/content/dam/corporate/us/en/reports-downloads/2016-reports/q1-

  2016-comparable-metrics-report.pdf

Robinson, J. P., Shaver, P. R., & Wrightsman, L. S. (Eds.). (2013). *Measures of Personality and*

  Social Psychological Attitudes: Measures of Social Psychological Attitudes (Vol. 1). San

  Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Roiser, M., & Willig, C. (2002). The strange death of the authoritarian personality: 50 years of

  psychological and political debate. *History of the Human Sciences,* **15**(4), 71-96.

Rothwell, J. T., & Diego-Rosell, P. (2016). Explaining nationalist political views: The case of

  Donald Trump. Retrieved from

  https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2822059

Sears, D. O., Van Laar, C., Carrillo, M., & Kosterman, R. (1997). Is it really racism?: The origins of white Americans' opposition to race-targeted policies. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, **61**(1), 16-53.

Shanahan, J. (1995). Television viewing and adolescent authoritarianism. *Journal of Adolescence*, **18**(3), 271-288.

Shanahan, James. (1998). Television and Authoritarianism: Exploring the Concept of Mainstreaming. *Political Communication*, **15**, 483-496.

Shanahan, J., & Morgan, M. (1999). *Television and its viewers: Cultivation theory and research*. London: Cambridge University Press.

Shapiro, W. (2016, Sept. 5). "Dear Republican Sirs: It's up to you to save the republic." *Roll Call.* Retrieved from http://www.rollcall.com/opinion-analysis/319/?dcz=

Stanley, J. (2016, Nov. 4). "Beyond lying: Donald Trump's authoritarian reality." *New York Times*. Retrieved from http://nyti.ms/2eacuoC

Stenner, K. (2005). *The authoritarian dynamic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stenner, K. (2009). Three kinds of conservatism. *Psychological Inquiry*, **20**(2-3), 142–159.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2016). "American time use survey summary." Retrieved from https://www.bls.gov/news.release/atus.nr0.htm

Warren, E. [elizabethforma]. (2016, May 04). .@realDonaldTrump incites supporters to violence, praises Putin, and is "cool with being called an authoritarian." [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/elizabethforma/status/727691296727519233?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw

Zhao, X., Lynch, J. G., & Chen, Q. (2010). Reconsidering Baron and Kenny: Myths and truths about mediation analysis. *Journal of consumer research*, **37**(2), 197-206.

Table 1 Simple and Partial Correlations between Television Viewing, Authoritarianism, and Vote Intention

Simple *r*	TV Hours	Broadcast News	CNN	MSNBC	FOX News
Simple *r*					
Authoritarianism	.22***	.17***	.00	-.04	.21***
Trump	.01	-.05	-.11**	-.14***	.27***
Clinton	.10**	.12***	.20***	.23***	-.05
Sanders	-.10**	-.01	.05	.03	-.17***
Partial *r*					
Authoritarianism	.19***	.12***	.03	-.01	.09**
Trump	.06	-.03	-.04	-.06	.19***
Clinton	.09*	.08**	.13***	.16***	-.01
Sanders	-.14***	.03	.03	-.01	-.08**

Partials control for age, sex, education, political ideology, and race; overall television viewing also controlled for news measures.

p < .05, **p* < .01, ***p* < .001

Table 2 PROCESS results for each news source[1]

	Path *a* (TVNEWS → Authoritarianism)		Path *c'* (TVNEWS → Trump)		Indirect Effect (TVNEWS→Auth→Trump)	
	b	*(SE)*	*b*	*(SE)*	*b*	*(SE)*
Broadcast News	.046***	(.011)	-.022	(.027)	.013	(.005)
	[.023, .068]		[-.075, .030]		[.005, .024]	
CNN	-.021	(.031)	-.227***	(.062)	-.009	(.013)
	[-.081, .039]		[-.348, -.106]		[-.037, .015]	
MSNBC	-.073*	(.034)	-.296***	(.069)	-.030	(.015)
	[-.139, -.007]		[-.433, -.160]		[-.061, -.001]	
FOX	.161***	(.028)	.429***	(.058)	.057	(.014)
	[.105, .215]		[.315, .543]		[.034, .091]	

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .01$

[1] Sex, age, education, race, political ideology, and overall television viewing are included as covariates. PROCESS does not provide specific p-values for indirect effects. 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals presented in brackets.

Table 3 Index of moderated mediation and subgroup patterns for the indirect effect of television viewing on intending to vote for Trump through authoritarianism

|	b	SE	LL95	UL95
Index of Moderated Mediation:				
Pol. Ideology	-.004	.002	-.008	-.001
Sex	.012	.007	.001	.027
Fox News	-.007	.003	-.012	-.003
CNN	.006	.003	.002	.012
Subgroup Analysis:				
Liberal	.019	.007	.007	.033
Moderate	.013	.005	.004	.022
Conservative	.007	.003	.002	.015
Males	.018	.005	.008	.029
Females	.030	.006	.019	.045
Low Fox News	.026	.006	.015	.040
Med Fox News	.017	.004	.009	.026
High Fox News	.008	.004	.002	.017
Low CNN	.017	.005	.008	.028
Med CNN	.024	.005	.016	.035
High CNN	.032	.006	.021	.046

Note: Categories for political ideology, Fox News exposure, and CNN exposure represent the mean and plus/minus one SD from mean. LL95 and UL95 indicate 95% bias-corrected lower and upper limits based on 1000 bootstrap samples.

Table 4 Alternative models of indirect effects among amount of television viewing, authoritarianism, and support for Trump (based on 1000 bias-corrected bootstrap samples)[1]

	b	SE	LL95	UL95
TV → Authoritarianism → Trump	.025	.005	.015	.034*
Authoritarianism → TV → Trump	-.022	.017	-.015	.054
Trump → TV → Authoritarianism	.011	.014	-.017	.038
Trump → Authoritarianism → TV	.123	.050	.046	.238*

[1]Because "Trump" is dichotomous, models treating it as a mediator (i.e., either "Authoritarianism → Trump → TV" or "TV → Trump → Authoritarianism") cannot be tested with PROCESS.

*Significant indirect effect; 95% CI does not include 0.
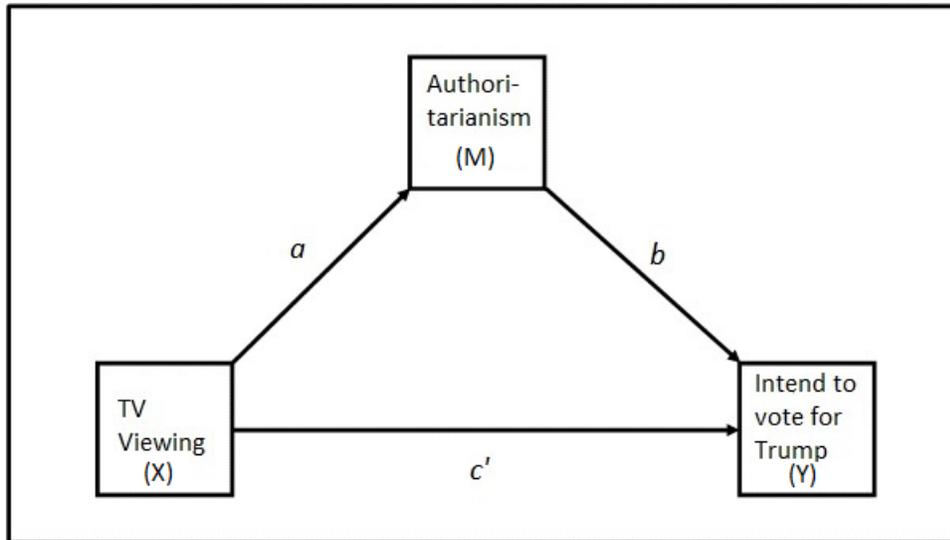
Figure 1 Mediation model of television viewing, authoritarianism, and intention to vote for Donald Trump.