**Supplementary Materials**

**Instructions for written prime (for all studies)**

Child interaction (all studies)

“Think of the last time you had a positive interaction with a child. This doesn't have to be your own child - it could be a family member, a friend's child, a neighbor, etc. Please spend 30 seconds thinking about this interaction.”

Adult interaction (all studies)

“Think of the last time you had a positive interaction with a work colleague. If you do not have a job, think about your last positive interaction with a neighbor. Please spend 30 seconds thinking about this interaction.”

Control (Study 2)

“Spend about 30 seconds thinking about what you do in the morning”

“Describe in two or three sentences what you usually do in the morning”

“Describe how you usually feel at this time”

*For participants in Child Interaction and Adult Interaction Conditions*

“Describe - in two or three sentences - what happened and why it was a pleasant experience,” and finally “Please write a few words describing how the interaction made you feel”

**Images for prime**

Left = child interaction (all studies); center = adult interaction (all studies); right = control (study 2)

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**Additional results and analyses**

**Study 1**

**Analysis of Individual Items**

Data from this study suggest that parenting motivation is associated with multiple aspects of social conservatism, not just family-related items. PCAT scores correlated in the predicted direction with all seven social conservatism items (all *r*s > .22, all *p*s < .001). Similarly, parents scored significantly higher on every Social Conservatism item than non-parents (all *r*s > .18, all *p*s < .002).

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| *Table S1: Bivariate correlations of conservatism items in Study 1* |
| Conservatism Items | Parenthood | PCAT |
| **1. Abortion Choice** |  **-.24\*\*\*** |  **-.24\*\*\*** |
| 2. Limited Govt | -.01 | .01 |
| **3. National Security** |  **.22\*\*\*** |  **.25\*\*\*** |
| **4. Religion** |  **.18\*\*** |  **.22\*\*\*** |
| 5. Welfare Benefits | -.09 | -.02 |
| 6. Gun Ownership |  .14\* | .04 |
| **7. Traditional Marriage** |  **.20\*\*\*** |  **.25\*\*\*** |
| **8. Traditional Values** |  **.23\*\*\*** |  **.25\*\*\*** |
| 9. Fiscal Responsibility | .08 |  .16\*\* |
| 10. Business | .03 |  .12\* |
| **11. The Family Unit** |  **.35\*\*\*** |  **.51\*\*\*** |
| **12. Patriotism** |  **.24\*\*\*** |  **.28\*\*\*** |

\*\*\* *p* < .001 (2-tailed); \*\* *p* < .01; \* *p* < .05. Items from the Social subscale in bold.

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| *Table S2: Bivariate correlations for PCAT subscales in Study 1* |
| PCAT Subscale | Social Conservatism | Economic Conservatism |
| Tenderness (Positive) | .30\*\*\* | .06 |
| Caring | .38\*\*\* | .05 |
| Liking | .25\*\*\* | .01 |
| Tenderness (Negative) | .34\*\*\* | .11 |
| Protection | .21\*\*\* |  .15\*\* |

\*\*\* *p* < .001 (2-tailed); \*\* *p* < .01; \* *p* < .05.

**Experimental Effects on PCAT**

In order to test whether the manipulation affected our parenting motivation measure, we ran a two-way ANOVA with condition and parenthood as fixed factors. There was a substantially effect of parenthood on PCAT scores, *F*(1, 301) = 75.97, *p* < .001, *η2* = .202, but no effect of experimental condition, *F*(1, 301) = 0.41, *p* = .52, *η2* = .012, and no condition-by-parenthood interaction, *F*(1, 301) = 1.44, *p* = .23, *η2* = .005.

It should be noted in the interpretation of these effects—as well as those for Studies 2 and 3—that the PCAT was completed in all three studies after the main outcome variables.

**Study 2**

Effects of parental status were not moderated by sex: a two-way ANOVA with parenthood and sex as independent variables showed no interaction effect on social conservatism, *F*(1, 759) = 0.48, *p* = .49.

We also conducted an exploratory analysis of individual items and found that PCAT scores correlated in the predicted direction with all seven social conservatism items (all *r*s > .24, all *p*s < .001). Similarly, parents scored significantly higher on every social conservatism item than non-parents (all *r*s > .19, all *p*s < .001).

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| *Table S3: Bivariate correlations for conservatism items in Study 2* |
| Conservatism Items | Parenthood | PCAT |
| **1. Abortion Choice** |  **-.29\*\*\*** |  **-.30\*\*\*** |
| 2. Limited Govt |  .09\*\* | .04 |
| **3. National Security** |  **.19\*\*\*** |  **.25\*\*\*** |
| **4. Religion** |  **.21\*\*\*** |  **.33\*\*\*** |
| 5. Welfare Benefits |  -.14\*\*\* | .02 |
| 6. Gun Ownership |  .14\*\*\* |  .12\*\*\* |
| **7. Traditional Marriage** |  **.22\*\*\*** |  **.28\*\*\*** |
| **8. Traditional Values** |  **.27\*\*\*** |  **.33\*\*\*** |
| 9. Fiscal Responsibility |  .09\*\* |  .16\*\*\* |
| 10. Business |  .02 |  .16\*\*\* |
| **11. The Family Unit** |  **.31\*\*\*** |  **.47\*\*\*** |
| **12. Patriotism** |  **.23\*\*\*** |  **.30\*\*\*** |

\*\*\* *p* < .001 (2-tailed); \*\* *p* < .01; \* *p* < .05. Items from the Social subscale in bold.

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| *Table S4: Bivariate correlations for PCAT subscales in Study 2* |
| PCAT Subscale | Social Conservatism | Economic Conservatism |
| Tenderness (Positive) | .31\*\*\* |  .14\*\*\* |
| Caring | .37\*\*\* |  .07\* |
| Liking | .34\*\*\* |  .06 |
| Tenderness (Negative) | .34\*\*\* |  .09\*\* |
| Protection | .20\*\*\* |  .17\*\* |

\*\*\* *p* < .001 (2-tailed); \*\* *p* < .01; \* *p* < .05.

**Life-History Measures**

Life-history theory is based on the biological premise that there is necessarily a trade-off of time and resources between mating effort and parental investment, meaning that animals (in this case humans) can either follow a ‘fast’ strategy which focuses on quantity of offspring or a ‘slow’ strategy, focusing more on the quality of offspring (Del Giudice, Gangestad, & Kaplan, 2016). Given the obvious relationship between the parental investment aspect of life-history theory and parenting motivation, a possible objection to the current work is that social conservatism might be better predicted by life-history indicators, with parenting motivation simply related to social conservatism as a result of being a proxy of life-history strategy.

We included four indicators of life history which are based on life experiences, physiological development, and behavior. First there were two single-item measures which assessed age of puberty, and age of first penetrative sex (participants simply entered a number). We also used a three-item childhood socioeconomic status scale (CSES – Griskevicius, Delton, Robertson, & Tybur, 2011), which featured items such as ‘My family usually had enough money for things when I was growing up’. Finally, we also included a three-item, seven-point scale for childhood unpredictability, in which participants rated agreement with statements like ‘Things were often chaotic in my house’ (Griskevicius, Tybur, Delton, Robertson, 2011).

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| *Table S5: Bivariate correlations for life-history items in study 2*  |   |   |   |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 1. PCAT | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. Social Conservatism | .40\*\* | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3. Economic Conservatism | .13\*\* | .59\*\* | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. Age | .18\*\* | .25\*\* | .14\*\*\* | 1 |  |  |  |  |
| 5. Age at Puberty | -.08\* | .00 | -.02 | .05 | 1 |  |  |  |
| 6. Age of first sex | .01 | .10\*\* | .03 | .09\* | .15\*\*\* | 1 |  |  |
| 7. Childhood SES | .04 | .05 | .00 | -.04 | .02 | -.03 | 1 |  |
| 8. C. Unpredictability | -.08\* | .13\*\*\* | -.09\*\* | .12\*\*\* | -.03 | .14\*\*\* | .19\*\*\* | 1 |

\*\*\* *p* < .001 (2-tailed); \*\* *p* < .01; \* *p* < .05.

Relationships between the four life-history measures and both parenting motivation and social conservatism were either non-significant or very weak, suggesting that life-history measures do not offer a better account of our results. There was no strong evidence for a consistent relationship between life-history variables and PCAT: there were correlations between PCAT and age of puberty, *r*(755) = -.08, *p* = .02, and childhood unpredictability, *r*(755) = -.08, *p* = .03, but not only were these correlations very small (and non-significant after family-wise correction), they are also in opposing directions in terms of life-history strategy (i.e. higher age of puberty is associated with a slower strategy, while higher childhood unpredictability is associated with a faster strategy). Controlling for these life-history variables makes no substantial difference to the relationships between parenthood, parenting, and social conservatism, in terms of either significance or correlation size.

While predictions regarding the effects of parenthood and parenting motivation are informed by life-history theory, parenting motivation is conceptually much more specific, and the results presented here suggest that parenting motivation can have, in some situations (such as this one), greater predictive utility than broader measures of ‘fast’ versus ‘slow’ strategy. We should note, though, that our proxy measures of life-history strategy are not comprehensive, and it is possible that a more attitude-based measure of life-history strategy, such as the Mini-k, would produce different results. However, this, to some extent, is the point: life-history measures such as the mini-k can be very useful, but life-history strategy encompasses multiple distinct motivational processes, and measures of life-history strategy in humans often produce different results. In the case of political attitudes, it seems that parenthood and parenting motivation are more accurate than many proxies of life-history strategy.

**Experimental Effects on PCAT**

As in Study 1, we ran a two way ANOVA with condition (dichotomous version) and parenthood as fixed factors and PCAT scores as the dependent variable. This revealed a large effect of parenthood, *F*(1, 797) = 52.99, *p* < .001, *η2* = .116, but no significant effect of experimental condition, *F*(1, 797) = 3.57, *p* = .059, *η2* = .004, and no condition-by-parenthood interaction, *F*(1, 797) = 0.81 *p* = .37, *η2* = .001.

**Study 3**

As shown in Table 3, the lowest correlation between PCAT and any social conservatism item was again larger than the largest correlation between PCAT and any economic conservatism item.

Parenthood alone has a small-to-moderate effect on BDW, *β* = .15, *p* < .001. Entering both parenthood and parenting motivation as predictors of BDW yielded significant independent effects of both parenthood (*β* = .09, *p* = .03) and (PCAT *β* = .13, *p* = .001). A bootstrapping mediation analysis using the PROCESS macro with parenthood as the independent variable and PCAT as the mediator, showed a significant indirect effect on BDW (indirect effect *b*= .14, SE = .05, 95%CI [0.05, 0.23]).

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| *Table S6: Bivariate correlations for conservatism items in Study 3* |
| Conservatism Items | Parenthood | PCAT |
| **1. Abortion Choice** |  **-.24\*\*\*** |  **-.28\*\*\*** |
| 2. Limited Govt | .01 | -.02 |
| **3. National Security** |  **.24\*\*\*** |  **.28\*\*\*** |
| **4. Religion** |  **.23\*\*\*** |  **.29\*\*\*** |
| 5. Welfare Benefits |  -.06 | .01 |
| 6. Gun Ownership |  .18\*\*\* | .11\*\* |
| **7. Traditional Marriage** |  **.24\*\*\*** |  **.27\*\*\*** |
| **8. Traditional Values** |  **.28\*\*\*** |  **.32\*\*\*** |
| 9. Fiscal Responsibility | .03 |  .11\* |
| 10. Business | .12\*\* |  .17\*\*\* |
| **11. The Family Unit** |  **.33\*\*\*** |  **.45\*\*\*** |
| **12. Patriotism** |  **.25\*\*\*** |  **.32\*\*\*** |

\*\*\* *p* < .001 (2-tailed); \*\* *p* < .01; \* *p* < .05. Items from the Social subscale in bold.

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| *Table S7: Bivariate correlations for PCAT subscales in Study 3* |
| PCAT Subscale | Social Conservatism | Economic Conservatism |
| Tenderness (Positive) | .31\*\*\* |  .10\*\* |
| Caring | .39\*\*\* |  .09\* |
| Liking | .32\*\*\* |  .07 |
| Tenderness (Negative) | .34\*\*\* |  .08\* |
| Protection | .19\*\*\* |  .11\*\* |

\*\*\* *p* < .001 (2-tailed); \*\* *p* < .01; \* *p* < .05.

For STMO, parenthood alone had a moderate negative effect, *β* = -.24, *p* < .001. With both parenthood and PCAT entered as predictors, both parenthood (*β* = -.15, *p* < .001) and PCAT (*β* = -.21, *p* < .001) independently predicted STMO. Again, the mediation of the effect of parenthood on STMO by PCAT was significant (indirect effect *b* = -.32, SE = .06, 95%CI [-0.45, -0.20]).

Exploratory analyses tested whether STMO and BDW mediated the relationship between PCAT and social conservatism. To test the significance of the indirect effects, we used model 4 of the PROCESS macro for SPSS to run a bootstrapping procedure with 5000 samples, including BDW and STMO as mediators. As shown in Figure 3, this revealed a significant indirect effect of STMO (*b* = 2.29, SE = .41, 95% CI [1.53, 3.16]), and a concurrent indirect effect of BDW (*b* = 1.75, SE = .43, 95% CI [0.97, 2.65)].

*Figure 3: Path model showing mediation by BDW and STMO*



Note: All direct paths significant at *p* < .001

**Experimental Effects on PCAT**

To test for possible effects on parenting motivation, we ran a two-way ANOVA with condition and parenthood as fixed factors, with PCAT as the dependent variable. This analysis yielded a large effect of parenthood, *F*(1, 759) = 79.76, *p* < .001, *η2* = .201, a significant effect of experimental condition *F*(1, 759) = 13.84, *p* < .001, *η2* = .018, parenthood, and also a significant condition-by-parenthood interaction, *F*(1, 759) = 4.85, *p* = .028, *η2* = .006, such that both parents and non-parents scored higher in the child interaction condition, but the effect was larger for non-parents.

**Meta-analysis of experimental effects**

Due to the inconsistency in effects across studies, we ran a mini-meta-analysis of all three by simply combining data into a single file and running a two-way ANOVA with condition (coded dichotomously with both control conditions from study 2 coded as ‘0’) and parenthood as fixed factors. This revealed a very small main effect of condition, *F*(1, 1863) = 8.39, *p* = .004, *η2 =* .004, a large effect of parenthood, *F*(1, 1863) = 214.41, *p* < .001, *η2 =* .103, and no interaction, *F*(1, 1863) = 0.60, *p* = .44, *η2 =* .000.

Exploratory analyses revealed that this effect was driven almost entirely by participants aged 25-35. For this group examined separately (*n*=764), social conservatism scores were significantly higher in the child interaction group (59.88 vs 54.79, *p* = .003, *d* = 0.22), while scores for other age-groups (*n*=1104) did not differ across conditions (62.53 vs 61.36, *p* = .41, *d* = 0.05).

**Interactions of Condition Effect with Age**

In study 3 we pre-registered the prediction that we would observe experimental effects in the 25-45 age range. This was based on the fact that we had seen effects driven by 25-35 year-olds in the first two studies, but we decided to broaden that age range somewhat in order to retain sufficient power (without having to pay for an age-filter on participants). The effect in this age-range (25-45) did not approach significance (*F* < 1, *p* =.47). However, the marginal main effect observed overall did seem to be driven by the 25-35 group, as in the first two studies.

Whilst post-hoc, these analyses suggest the possibility that there was a real experimental effect, but that this was moderated by age, and an ANOVA with a dichotomous age variable (age 25-25 or not) shows a marginal Condition\*Age-Group interaction, *F*(1, 1859) = 3.22, *p* = .07, *η2 = .*002, such that all age groups score higher in the child interaction condition, but that the simple effect of condition is stronger for 25-35 year-olds. For 25-35 year-olds, the effect is significant, *F*(1, 760) = 10.10, *p* = .002, *η2 = .*013, while there is almost zero effect among participants outside of this age range, *F*(1, 1099) = 1.05, *p* = .31, *η2 = .*001. These analyses are entirely post-hoc. We simply include them to a) explain why we pre-registered an effect within one age group, and b) to inform other researchers who might use them to guide their own analyses and predictions.

As with the experimental effects in the main studies, the effect of condition on parenting motivation in the manipulation check study was driven by participants aged 25-35—roughly the age range in which many Americans have children or begin to consider it. This finding could be informative for future research. Similarly, the manipulation-check showed effects of condition only in this age range.

Importantly, there were no effects of condition or condition by parenthood interaction on economic conservatism (*F*’s < 1.0, *p*’s > .34).

**Differences between Studies**

To test whether the interaction in Study 1 was the result of chance allocation of more conservative parents, but fewer conservative non-parents, to the experimental condition, we conducted a condition\*party affiliation chi-squared test for parents and non-parents respectively (where the dichotomous variable was whether people had voted Democrat or Republican in the last election – something which should not be influenced by an experimental manipulation). Consistent with the idea that the interaction in Study 1 was due to uneven allocations, there was a significantly higher chance of Republican-voting parents being in the experimental condition, *χ2*(1, *N* = 139) = 5.22, *p* =.02, but a significantly lower chance of Republican-voting non-parents being in the experimental condition *χ2*(1, *N* = 102) = 8.27, *p* = .004). This suggests the interaction in Study 1 was a type 1 error. There was no evidence of disproportionate allocation of Republicans or Democrats to different conditions in Studies 2 or 3.

**References**

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