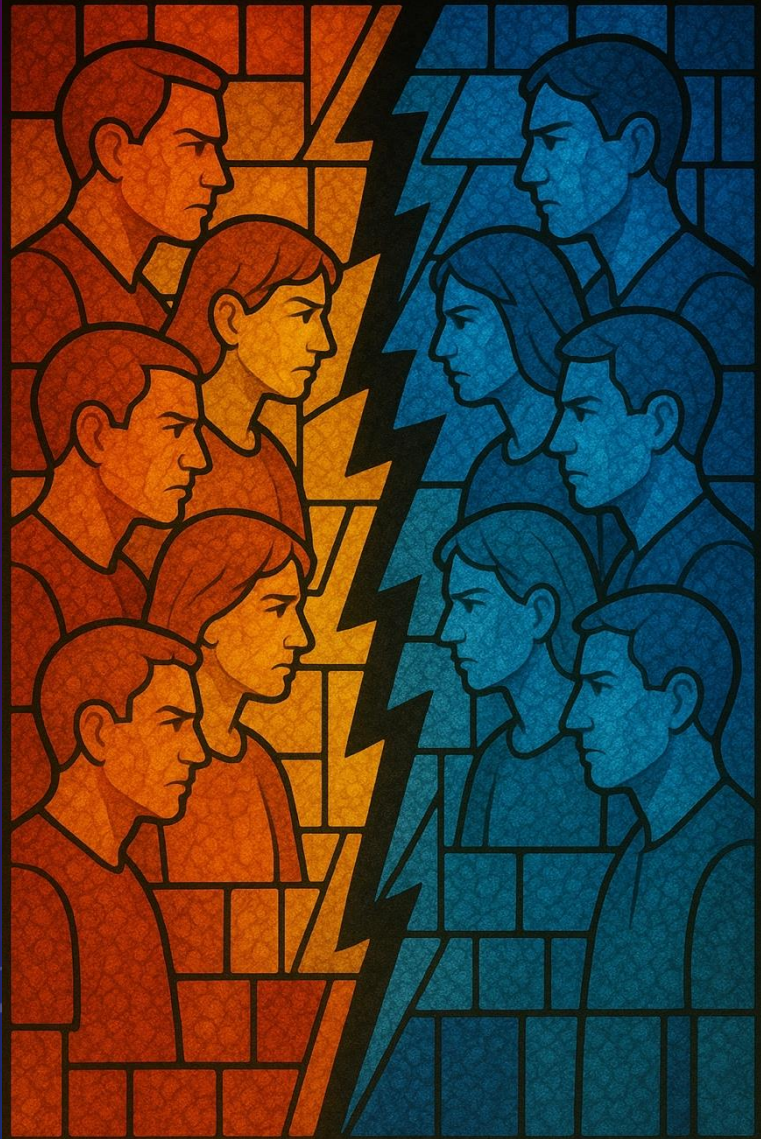


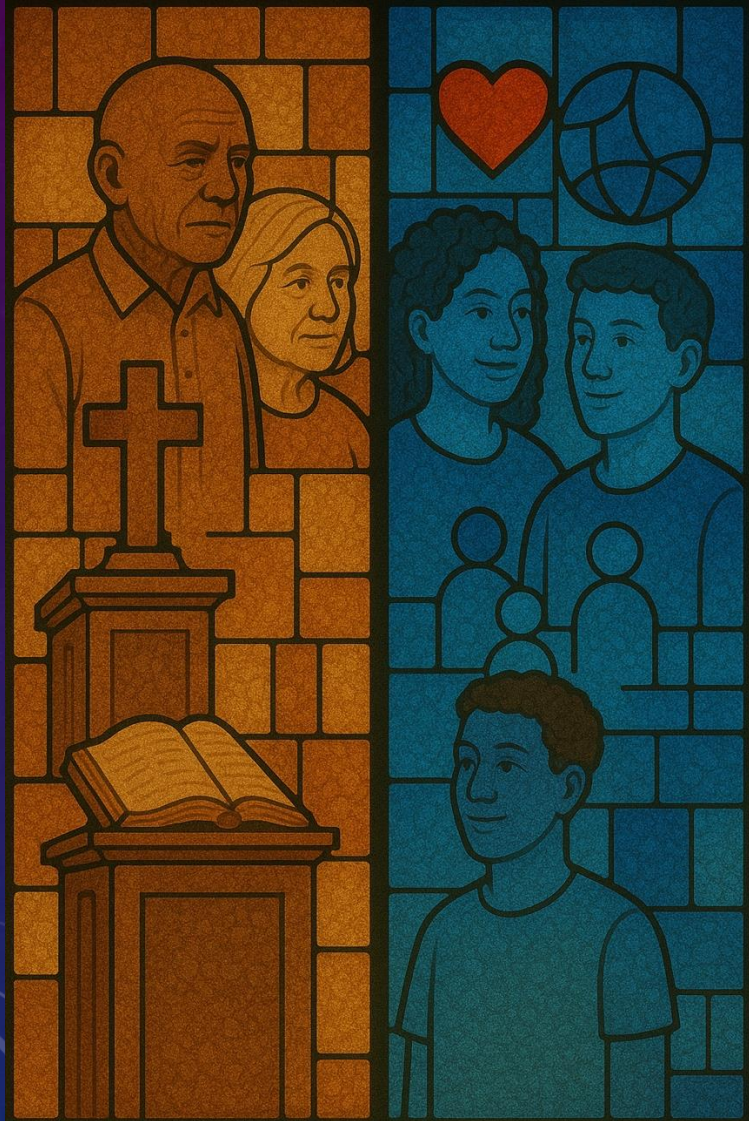
BEHAVIORAL INSIGHTS INTO POLITICAL POLARIZATION IN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES THROUGH COMPUTATIONAL MODELING

Eric Araújo

Computer Science – Calvin University



WHY STUDY POLARIZATION IN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES?



THE MULTIGENERATIONAL CHURCH CRISIS

Why We Don't Understand Each Other
and How to Unite in Mission



BRYAN CHAPPELL

Aspect	Older Generation (Fifties and Older)	Younger Generation (Forties and Younger)
Perception	"We are (were) a majority"	"We are a minority"
Mission	Take control of culture	Make credible our faith
Means	Bring a halt to: (1) abortion (2) homosexual agenda (3) Pornography (4) illegal drugs (5) Gambling (6) green movement (7) illegal immigration (8) racial discrimination	Help with: (1) adoption and foster care (2) care for and witness to LGBTQ+ persons (3) liberating victims of sex trafficking and sex addiction (4) substance addiction counseling and rescue (5) gaming and gambling addictions (6) creation care (7) refugee compassion and care (8) racial reconciliation and justice



The Great De church ing

Who's Leaving, Why Are
They Going, and What Will It
Take to Bring Them Back?



Jim Davis and
Michael Graham

with Ryan P. Burge

Foreword by Collin Hansen



The Great

De church ing

Who's Leaving, Why Are
They Going, and What Will It
Take to Bring Them Back?



Jim Davis and
Michael Graham

with Ryan P. Burge

Foreword by Collin Hansen

“The early church that used to cheerfully bring the poor and destitute into their lives now often serves them at a distance through benevolence programs without fully embracing them into their church family.” p. 27



**POLITICAL POLARIZATION AND THE CHURCHES:
TOCQUEVILLE ON RELIGION, DEMOCRACY
AND THE FUTURE OF CHRISTIANITY**

Charles A. McDaniel, Jr.
Baylor University



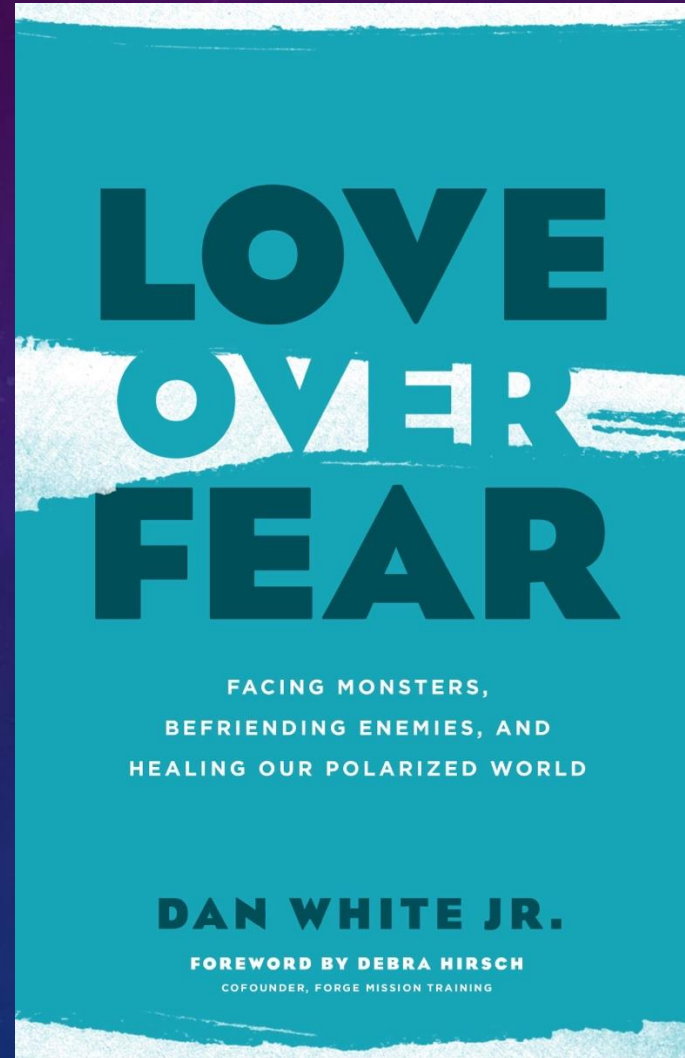
**POLITICAL POLARIZATION AND THE CHURCHES:
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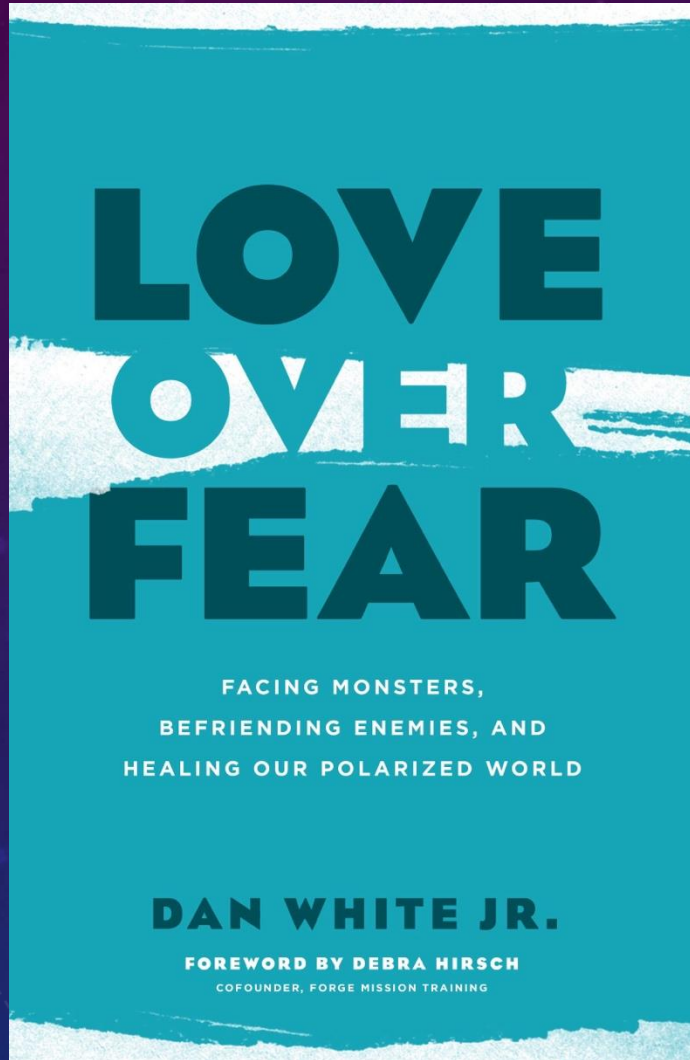
Charles A. McDaniel, Jr.
Baylor University

"The less religion and its ministers are mixed up with government... the more influential religious ideas will become."



ASA
2025





"Polarization takes people that have something in common, emphasizes their differences, hardens their differences into disgust, and turns their disgust into blatant hatred... shaping us for only two options—'our side' or 'their side.'"



"Entertaining, illuminating, and — when you recognize yourself
in the stories it tells — mortifying." — *Wall Street Journal*

MISTAKES WERE MADE

(but not by *me*)

WHY WE JUSTIFY FOOLISH BELIEFS,
BAD DECISIONS, AND HURTFUL ACTS

UPDATED, WITH A NEW CHAPTER:
"DISSONANCE, DEMOCRACY, AND THE DEMAGOGUE"

Carol Tavris *and* Elliot Aronson

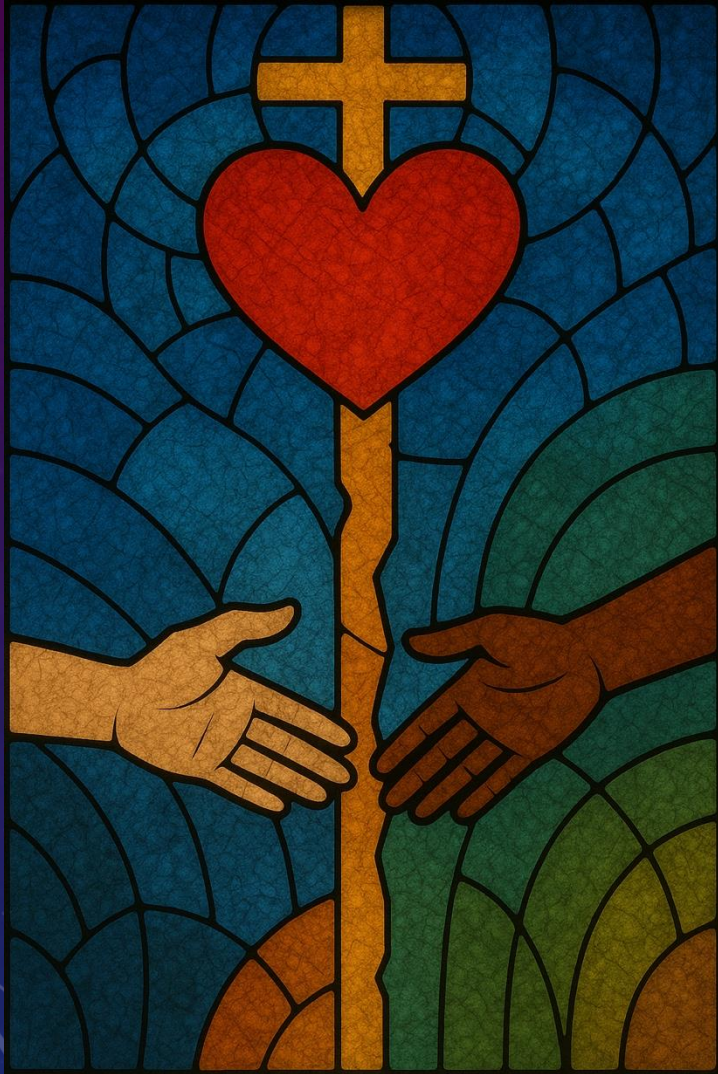
THE NEW SCIENCE OF HOW
WE CONNECT WITH OTHERS

Mirroring People

MARCO
IACOBONI







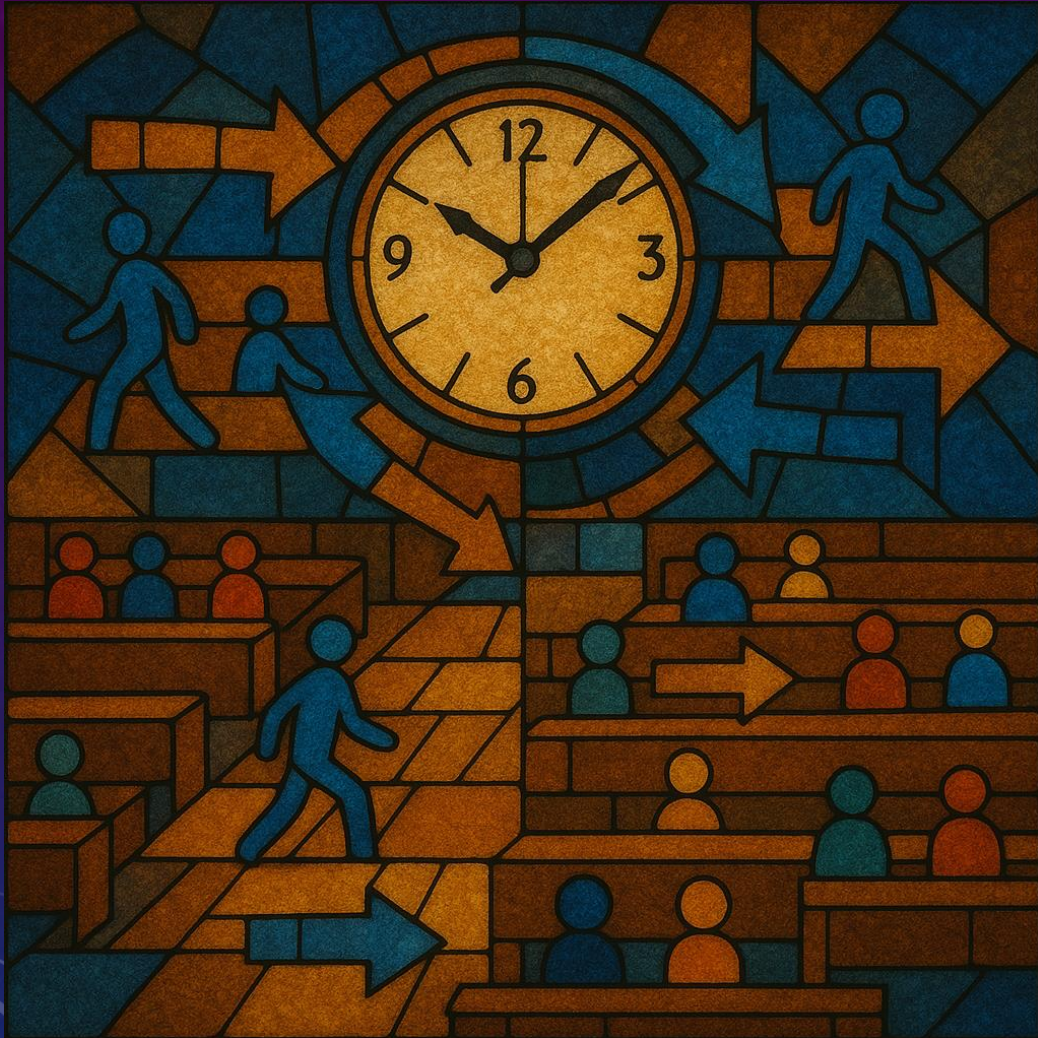
"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who hurt you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven... if you love those who love you, what reward will you get? . . . And if you are hospitable to only your own people, what are you doing more than others?" (Matt. 5:1, 43–48, Msg)







- (1) Political leaning, from progressive to conservative
- (2) Tolerance for political difference
- (3) Activity level, which affects how often they attend
- (4) Emotional state, which reflects their well-being



Attendance



Interactions



Emotional
State



Ties Evolve



CORE OF THE MODEL

$$E = B + \alpha C - \beta D$$

Where:

E = Emotional State

B = Base (baseline emotional state)

α = weight for positive connections

C = Connection Score

β = weight for negative interactions

D = Dissimilarity Penalty

Setup

Go

Go Forever

On

Off

show-links?

num-members

400

alpha

0.5

beta

0.3

base-emotional-state

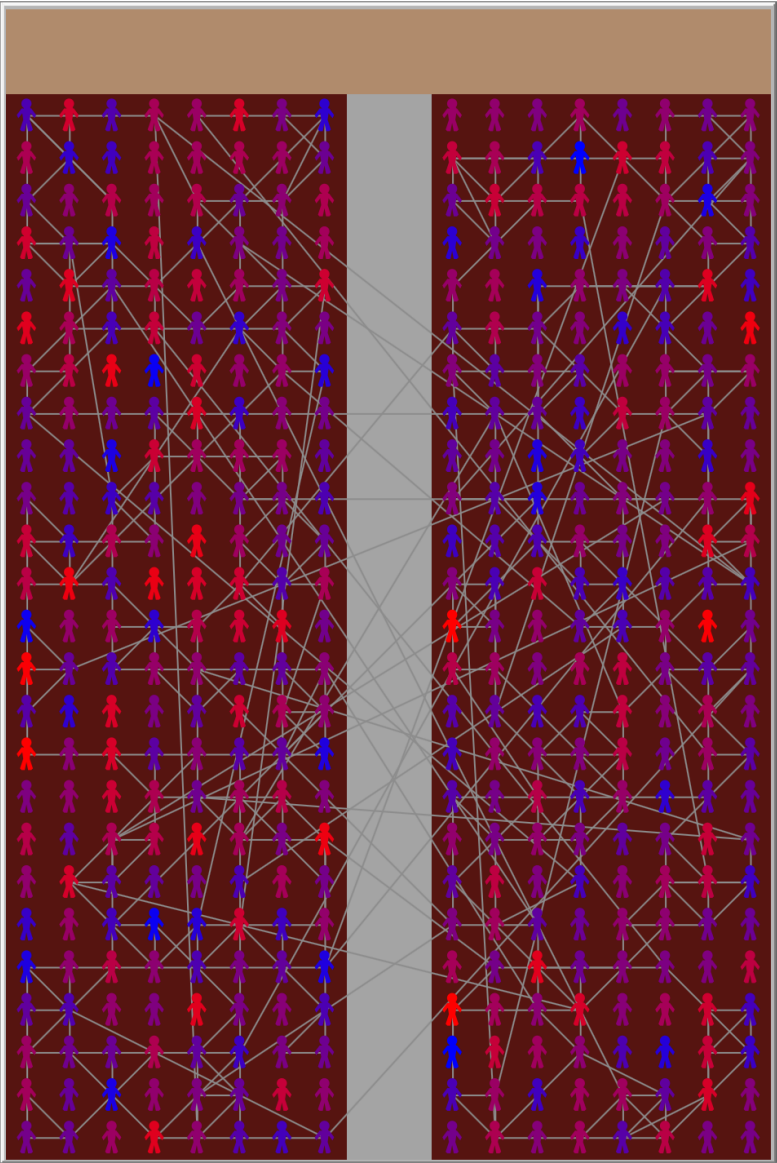
0.5

Model Parameters:

– Alpha: Weight for connection score

– Beta: Weight for dissimilarity penalty

– Base Emotional State: Baseline mood



Current Attendees

400

Avg Political Leaning

0.022

Homophily Index

0.758

Active Members

400

Political Polarization

0.411

Strong Tie Ratio

0.702

Departed Members

0

Avg Emotional State

0.497

At Risk Members

0

Attendance Rate

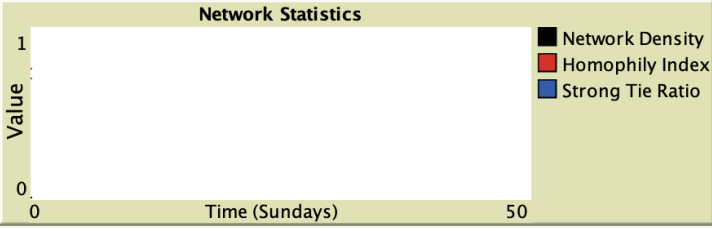
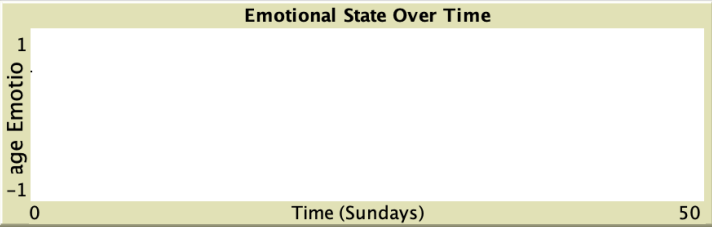
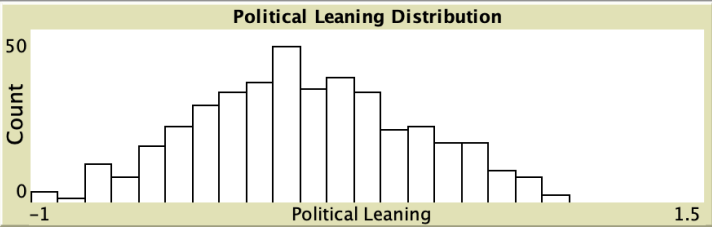
100

Network Density

0.007

Avg Weeks Absent

0



Church Polarization Model

This model simulates political polarization in a church community over time.

- Instructions:

1. Adjust sliders for desired parameters

2. Click Setup to initialize the model

3. Click Go to run one Sunday

4. Click Go Forever for continuous simulation

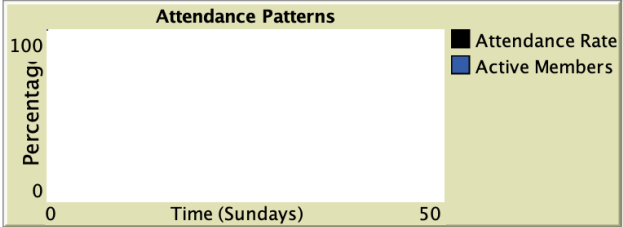
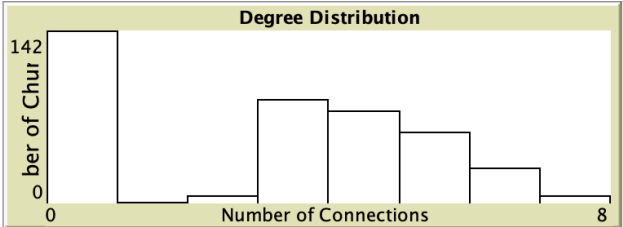
- Visualization:

– Red agents = Conservative

– Blue agents = Progressive

– Purple agents = Moderate

– Links show social connections



NETWORK FRAGMENTATION OR CLUSTERING



LIMITATIONS AND THE FUTURE OF THE MODEL







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