



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# PATRIOTISM AND EDUCATIONAL VALUES IN “STRANGER THINGS” AND “LINCOLN” FOR WRITING ANALYTICAL EXPOSITION

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**Abstract:** This study explores the themes of patriotism and educational values as depicted in the popular television series *Stranger Things* by the Duffer Brothers and the film *Lincoln* by Steven Spielberg. Utilizing a qualitative research approach and content analysis methodology, the research investigates how these narratives portray concepts of community loyalty, sacrifice, and ethical considerations in the context of patriotism. Additionally, it delves into the educational values demonstrated by the characters, including critical thinking, teamwork, and moral growth. The findings reveal that both *Stranger Things* and *Lincoln* employ nuanced narratives to highlight the interplay of cultural values and personal development, reflecting broader societal dynamics through character-driven storytelling. The research offers insights for educational institutions and content creators, emphasizing the potential of media to foster value-based learning and societal engagement.

**Keywords:** Patriotism values, educational values, cultural values, film analysis, character education

## PATRIOTISM DAN PENDIDIKAN DALAM “STRANGER THINGS” AND “LINCOLN” UNTUK MENULIS TEKS EKSPOSISI ANALISIS

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi tema patriotisme dan nilai-nilai pendidikan sebagaimana digambarkan dalam serial televisi populer *Stranger Things* oleh Duffer Brothers dan film *Lincoln* oleh Steven Spielberg. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan penelitian kualitatif dan metodologi analisis isi, penelitian ini menyelidiki bagaimana narasi-narasi ini menggambarkan konsep loyalitas komunitas, pengorbanan, dan pertimbangan etis dalam konteks patriotisme. Selain itu, penelitian ini menggali nilai-nilai pendidikan yang ditunjukkan oleh para karakter, termasuk pemikiran kritis, kerja sama tim, dan pertumbuhan moral. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa baik *Stranger Things* maupun *Lincoln* menggunakan narasi yang kaya nuansa untuk menyoroti interaksi antara nilai-nilai budaya dan pengembangan pribadi.



**Kata kunci:** Nilai patriotisme, nilai pendidikan, nilai budaya, analisis film, pendidikan karakter.

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## INTRODUCTION

Popular culture remains a powerful medium through which society's values, beliefs, and moral frameworks are both reflected and shaped. In contemporary media studies, films and television series are not merely sources of entertainment (Mollet, & Scott, 2021); they function as cultural texts that communicate socially constructed meanings, influence audience perceptions, and contribute to identity formation. Scholars have increasingly highlighted how media consumption affects young people's psychological development and value systems, showing that positive portrayals in popular content can help establish constructive values such as patriotism, friendship, and perseverance among adolescent and youth audiences. This body of work underscores the profound role that film and television play in everyday socialization processes, thereby positioning popular culture as an important site of informal moral and civic education.

One television series that vividly illustrates this connection between narrative media and cultural values is *Stranger Things*, created by the Duffer Brothers. Set in the nostalgic milieu of 1980s America, the series follows a close-knit group of extraordinary yet relatable young protagonists as they confront supernatural phenomena and institutional secrecy. Beyond its thrilling plot, *Stranger Things* resonates with audiences because it embeds core educational values such as loyalty, courage, and solidarity within its characters' relationships, enabling viewers to engage emotionally with ethical decision-making (Arnsperger, & Varoufakis, 2003; Kolers, 2011; Kapeller, & Wolkenstain, 2013). Moreover, the series' depiction of community efforts to protect one another and challenge corrupt authority figures opens space for considering more complex dimensions of national and local loyalty in narrative contexts.

Similarly, Steven Spielberg's film *Lincoln* presents a historically grounded exploration of patriotism through the political and moral struggles of President Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War. Rather than portraying patriotism in abstract or idealized terms, *Lincoln* contextualizes it within the contentious fight to pass the Thirteenth Amendment, emphasizing that loyalty to a nation can involve courageous confrontation with injustice and deep ethical reflection. The film thus prompts viewers to consider patriotism not simply as devotion to national symbols but as an active commitment to principles that uphold human dignity and democratic ideals. This approach aligns with contemporary research highlighting the importance of character education and moral reflection in media narratives, which can contribute to broader dialogues about civic responsibility and ethical citizenship in diverse cultural contexts.

In academic discourse, patriotism is understood as a deep-rooted love and loyalty to one's country that often involves a willingness to make sacrifices for collective well-being and national identity. As a construct, it is represented along a spectrum from constructive ideals (rooted in justice and communal responsibility) to more symbolic or uncritical forms of national pride. In narrative media, patriotism can be articulated through character actions, symbolic representations, and plot resolutions that invite audiences to engage with multiple facets of national identity and civic duty. Parallel to this, *educational values*; such as honesty, bravery, respect, and self-discipline, serve as foundational

principles guiding protagonists' decisions and moral growth. These values contribute to viewers' holistic understanding of personal and social responsibility, resonating with research showing how media influences the formation of values among young audiences.

Examining the interaction of patriotism and educational values in texts like *Stranger Things* and *Lincoln* thus provides a fertile analytical lens for understanding how popular culture reflects and possibly shapes contemporary cultural norms. Recent studies suggest that film and television work not only as mirrors of social attitudes but also as active agents that contribute to how audiences, especially young people, internalize norms related to loyalty, civic engagement, and ethical conduct. Building on this research, the present study investigates how these values are depicted and intertwined within selected media narratives, exploring how they contribute to character development, plot depth, and cultural meaning-making. Through this analysis, the study aims to deepen our understanding of the ways that popular culture participates in shaping societal values in the 21st century.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employed a qualitative research approach with a content analysis methodology. According to Creswell (2014), a qualitative approach involves exploring and comprehending the meanings attributed by individuals or groups to a social or human problem. Content analysis serves the purpose of acquiring information that is helpful in evaluating or explaining social and educational practices by examining documentary materials, including verbal content, both spoken and printed (Best & Kahn, 2006). The primary data sources for this research were the television series *Stranger Things* (Season 1) by the Duffer Brothers and the film *Lincoln* (2012) by Steven Spielberg. The data collection technique involved repeated viewings of the source material to identify and document scenes, dialogues, and actions relevant to patriotism and educational values. The data analysis followed a systematic process of organizing the collected data, identifying key themes and patterns related to the research focus, and interpreting these findings within the theoretical framework of patriotism as defined by Primoratz (2010) and educational values as categorized by Mubarok (2008).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The analysis revealed numerous instances of patriotism and educational values across both narratives. These values were not merely incidental but were central to the plot and character development. In *Stranger Things*, patriotism was primarily manifested through the four components identified by Primoratz (2010): a strong sense of personal identification with the community, special affection for one's community, a special concern for its well-being, and a willingness to sacrifice for the common good. For example, the town residents and Police Chief Hopper immediately form a search party for Will Byers, demonstrating community solidarity and a shared concern for well-being. The main child characters consistently display loyalty and bravery in their quest to protect their friends and their town from supernatural threats. This is seen when Mike, despite the danger, hides Eleven from government agents, showing a willingness to sacrifice his own safety. Educational values from Mubarok's (2008) framework, such as bravery, loyalty, honesty, and friendship, were central to the character arcs. Mike Wheeler's decision to protect Eleven exemplifies bravery and loyalty, while Joyce Byers's unwavering belief that her son is alive, despite all evidence to the contrary, shows profound confidence and love.

### **Patriotism Values**

#### ***A Sense of Personal Identification With the Community***

*“We're not going back. Just stay close.”*

This demonstrates a strong sense of belonging to the community, as Mike identifies with the community's collective effort to find Will, one of their own. His determination to keep searching shows his responsibility and emotional connection to the situation, putting the community's need to find Will above personal safety. Mike's commitment to the group's shared goal reflects the value of personal identification with the community.

*"Just ring me up, Donald."*

Joyce's connection to her workplace and the community it serves is shown through her determination to get the lights, even under unusual circumstances. Her actions reveal a deeper connection with the town and the people around her, as she turns to them for support in her effort to communicate with Will. Her persistence exemplifies her identification with the community, relying on shared resources during a crisis.

*"[Hopper] So, Gary, tell me about these troopers that brought in Will... Claimed jurisdiction kicked me out."*

Hopper's suspicion and desire to oversee the investigation into Will's death showcase his identification with the local community. As chief of police, he feels a personal responsibility to protect the town's interests, standing against outside forces (the government) that might not prioritize the local community. His commitment to ensuring that the truth is uncovered demonstrates his strong connection to his community.

*"All right, let's go."*

Hopper's quick decision to rescue the children shows his sense of responsibility for the safety of the town's residents. His actions align with his role as a protector of the community, showing how he identifies with the town's collective well-being, particularly the children who are directly involved in the crisis.

### ***Special Affection for one's own community***

*"Hey, Troy! You think this is funny? I saw you guys laughing over there. And I think that's a real messed up thing to do."*

Mike's confrontation of Troy highlights his deep care and affection for his friend Will and the community of those mourning his loss. By standing up against Troy's disrespect, Mike demonstrates his emotional connection to Will and his community, defending their shared values in a time of grief. His loyalty and bravery reflect the value of protecting and respecting those within his circle.

*"[gun cocking] Hands up. Hands up! Forgot all the cameras, bub? Look, Dr. Brenner asked for me specifically. Okay? How else do you think I got in here?"*

Hopper's bold actions and attempt to infiltrate the laboratory reflect his special affection for his community as he seeks to uncover the truth and protect the town from external threats. His determination to expose the wrongdoings of Hawkins Laboratory, despite personal risk, shows his commitment to the safety and well-being of his fellow citizens.

*"I told you everything that I saw, there was a laboratory. There was this kid's room, the size of the bed, there was a drawing, there was a stuffed animal."*

Hopper's dedication to searching for answers and assisting Joyce in her desperate attempt to find her son reflects his deep bond with the community. His efforts highlight how his affection for the people of Hawkins drives him to go beyond conventional means to protect them and uncover the truth.

*"You know what, Byers? I'm actually kind of impressed. I always took you for a queer, but I guess you're just a little screw-up like your father."*

Jonathan's anger at Steve's insults demonstrates his strong sense of attachment to his family and, by extension, the community he belongs to. Defending his family, even when they are criticized or mocked,

shows his love and loyalty, which stems from a deep affection for his personal circle. His confrontation with Steve illustrates how Jonathan’s identity is shaped by his family and his refusal to allow them to be disrespected.

*“Only love makes you that crazy, sweetheart. And that damn stupid.”*

Jonathan’s actions reveal his willingness to take extreme measures out of love for his family, illustrating how his affection for them drives him to act impulsively. The statement acknowledges that his actions, while reckless, are rooted in deep love and care for his brother, Will, which reflects his strong emotional ties to those closest to him within the community.

### ***Special Concern for well-being of the community***

*“I want to get a search party together. All the volunteers she can muster. Bring flashlights, too.”*

The Police Chief’s decision to rally the community and conduct a coordinated search demonstrates his deep concern for the safety of the town’s children. By calling for volunteers and organizing resources, he shows his dedication to the well-being of both Will and the larger community. His willingness to involve everyone in the search reflects a strong sense of responsibility for the protection of his town, embodying the value of community care and cooperation.

*“[Powell] What are you thinking? I don't know, but they're lying.”*

Hopper’s suspicion and resolve to uncover the truth for the sake of his community show his commitment to protecting the residents from deception and potential danger. His willingness to challenge powerful institutions to safeguard his town reflects a profound concern for their well-being, as he does not allow the lies of the laboratory to go unquestioned.

*“What's taking so long? Well, everything's been a bit chaotic around here without Gary. Without Gary? Where's Gary? Well, I thought you knew. Those men from State, they sent Gary home last night. So who did the autopsy? Someone from State.”*

Hopper’s concern over the integrity of the autopsy reflects his broader care for the well-being of the town. By questioning the procedures and personnel involved, he shows a strong desire to ensure transparency and accountability, which is critical for maintaining trust within the community. His actions highlight his protective instincts toward the citizens of Hawkins.

*“What's your problem, bud? I don't have a problem. I'm just a concerned citizen.”*

This exchange demonstrates that Hopper and others in the town are motivated by concern for the truth and the well-being of the community. Hopper’s investigation into the citizen’s claim reflects his dedication to ensuring that all who are involved in the case have the town’s best interests at heart. The individual’s statement of being “just a concerned citizen” also reinforces the idea of collective responsibility within the community.

*“Do you know anything about sensory deprivation tanks?”*

Dustin’s proactive approach in enlisting Mr. Clark’s help demonstrates his concern for Will’s well-being and his willingness to go beyond conventional methods to assist his friend. His request shows how the community members come together in creative ways to solve problems and protect one another, reflecting a collective sense of care and responsibility.

*“Listen to me. I'm gonna find him. All right? You gotta trust me on this.”*

Hopper’s determination to find Will and Jonathan’s support reflect their shared concern for Will’s safety and the community’s well-being. Their willingness to do whatever it takes to create the isolation tank

shows their strong commitment to protecting the vulnerable members of the community, even if it involves bending the rules for a greater good.

### ***Willingness to sacrifice to promote the community's good***

*"No... you don't want my mom to get help? You're in trouble, aren't you? Who are you in trouble with?"* Mike's question and concern for Eleven's well-being demonstrate his willingness to take risks and keep her safe, even though he knows she's in trouble with dangerous people. His actions show his readiness to sacrifice his safety to protect his friend from harm, reflecting a deep sense of loyalty and selflessness.

*"Will, is that you? It's Mike! Do you copy? Will, are you there?"*

Despite the pain caused by using her powers, Eleven's decision to help her friends locate Will highlights her willingness to sacrifice her own comfort for the greater good of the group. Her utterance and the action it accompanies underscore her selfless nature, as she suffers in order to bring hope to the others.

*"Tell me where you are! How do I get to you? It's like home, but it's so dark. Listen to me! I swear I'm gonna get to you, okay? But right now, I need you to hide. I will find you, but you have to run now!"*

Will's mother's utterance reflects her fierce resolve and willingness to endure any hardship to rescue her son. Her determination to find Will, even at great personal cost, embodies the value of sacrifice for the well-being of her family and community. Her promise reinforces her commitment to ensuring Will's safety, no matter the obstacles.

*"I went to the morgue last night, Joyce. It wasn't him, Will's body, it was a fake. You were right. This whole time, you were right."*

This moment showcases Eleven's ultimate act of selflessness, as she uses her powers to ensure the safety of her friends and Will's return, even though it results in her own disappearance. Her actions reflect the highest form of sacrifice for the greater good, as she puts her own life at risk for the community's well-being, embodying the spirit of courage and altruism (Vincent, 2014).

*"All right, just hold on! Hold on!"*

Mike's willingness to risk his own life to rescue Dustin from danger highlights his readiness to sacrifice his safety for the well-being of his friend. His brave action in this perilous situation underscores the value of sacrifice for the good of the community, demonstrating that he values Dustin's life as much as his own.

## **Educational Values**

### ***Brave***

*"Guys, I really think we should turn back. Seriously, Dustin? You wanna be a baby, then go home already!"*

Mike's words encourage his friends to persist despite their fear, showing that he is brave and determined to find Will. His leadership in this dangerous situation demonstrates his willingness to put fear aside and motivate his friends to do the same. This bravery is key to fostering community loyalty and resilience, highlighting a form of patriotism that values courage for the good of the group.

*"You are out of your mind! She knows about Will. She pointed at him, at his picture. She knew he was missing. I could tell."*

Eleven's brave act of using her powers, despite the physical risks, shows her determination to help her new friends. This act of bravery highlights her willingness to sacrifice her own safety to provide crucial

information. Her bravery also aligns with patriotism as she puts the group's mission ahead of her personal well-being, exemplifying selfless courage for a greater cause.

*“He was talking with these, and then I made this so he could talk to me, 'cause he was hiding from that... that thing. He's in danger. We have to find him!”*

Joyce's brave confrontation with the police, insisting that her son is in danger, shows her unwavering resolve in the face of fear and skepticism. Her courage to speak up and act, even when others doubt her, reflects her dedication to protecting her family and her community. This bravery mirrors the patriotic spirit of standing up for what is right, even when facing opposition.

*“I don't know what you think that thing is in there, but that is not my son!”*

Joyce's refusal to give up on Will, even when faced with overwhelming evidence that others believe to be true, is a powerful act of bravery. Her firm stance, driven by a mother's intuition and love, exemplifies courage in the face of adversity. This kind of bravery highlights the value of standing firm for one's beliefs and loved ones, aligning with patriotic ideals of defending those who matter most, even when the odds seem insurmountable.

### **Confidence**

*“He is... close. I know it. I feel it in my heart. You have to trust me.”*

Joyce's confidence in her intuition about Will's safety drives her actions, even in the face of doubt from others. Her unwavering belief inspires trust, showing her strength of character. This confidence aligns with patriotism as it reflects the values of trust and determination when protecting and guiding loved ones, standing firm in the belief that her community (family) needs her to be resolute.

*“It's Will. It's Will, he's trying to talk to me through... through the lights.”*

Despite the skepticism surrounding her, Joyce's belief that Will is trying to communicate with her keeps her determined to find him. Her confidence in what others can't see is a sign of her resilience and faith, which are essential elements of patriotism, as they reflect the courage to hold on to hope and fight for the truth, no matter the opposition.

*“Whoever you found is not my boy. No, you don't understand, I talked to him a half hour ago.”*

Joyce's confidence in her communication with Will gives her the strength to reject the police's conclusion that her son has been found dead. Her certainty reflects her deep commitment to the truth and to her family, which is central to the values of patriotism—standing up for what is right and protecting those you care about, even when the situation seems hopeless.

*“He has a birthmark on his right arm. Can you show that to me, please?”*

Joyce's confidence in her knowledge of Will, and her insistence on seeing proof, demonstrates her deep conviction that the body isn't her son's. This reflects her unwavering dedication to finding the truth, which aligns with the patriotic spirit of protecting and fighting for what matters most—her child and her community—by standing firm in her beliefs.

### **Fair**

*We should've never brought her here. So you just wanted to leave her out in that storm? Who's crazy now?”*

Mike's utterance highlights his sense of fairness, as he refuses to abandon someone in a vulnerable state, regardless of the judgments of others. He treats Eleven with compassion and equality, ensuring she's

given a fair chance and not discarded due to fear or misunderstanding. This sense of fairness aligns with patriotism because it reflects the idea of defending and protecting the weak or those in need, much like the patriotic duty of ensuring that all members of a community are treated justly, no matter their circumstances.

*“Once all this is over and Will's back and you're not a secret anymore, my parents can get you an actual bed for the basement. Or you can take my room if you want, since I'm down there all the time anyways. My point is, they'll take care of you.”*

Mike's willingness to share his space and ensure Eleven's well-being reflects his deep sense of fairness. He treats her with respect and equality, recognizing her need for safety and belonging. This fairness reflects patriotism by showing Mike's commitment to supporting others, particularly those who have helped him (as Eleven has), demonstrating a spirit of community care and responsibility that is central to patriotic values.

### ***Friendly***

*“That's weird. I don't see him.” [Lucas] “I'm telling you, his mom's right. He probably just went to class early again.”*

This utterance reflects the value of friendship and concern. Lucas and the others are worried about Will's absence, showing their care for him. Lucas's initial confusion and the reassurance that he might be in class demonstrates the support and camaraderie among friends. Their dialogue emphasizes their bond and collective concern for their missing friend, underscoring the essence of friendship in times of uncertainty (Juričková, 2014).

*“[Mike] We should be out there right now. We should be helping look for him. We have to do something. Will can be in danger.”*

Mike's statement exemplifies the value of proactive support and loyalty in friendship. He expresses frustration over the lack of action in searching for Will, emphasizing that true friends are those who take initiative to help each other. Mike's urgency to act illustrates his deep concern for Will's safety and highlights the responsibility friends feel toward one another, reinforcing the moral value of loyalty in their friendship.

*“You were supposed to help us find him alive. You said he was alive! Why did you lie to us? What's wrong with you?”*

This utterance reflects feelings of betrayal and disillusionment in friendship. The confrontation indicates that the friends relied on Eleven's guidance and believed in her ability to help. When confronted with the painful reality of Will's death, they feel let down. This moment underscores the importance of honesty and trust among friends, illustrating how these values can be tested during dire circumstances.

### ***Honest***

*“Do you know where he is?” [Mike] “I don't understand! Will is hiding from the bad men?”*

In this exchange, Mike's confusion highlights the importance of clarity and communication in relationships. Eleven's honesty about Will's situation serves to alleviate some of the fear and uncertainty faced by Mike and his friends. This moment underscores the value of honesty, as it builds trust among the group. Mike's desire to understand the situation reflects the importance of open dialogue in their friendship, reinforcing the idea that honest communication is vital in times of crisis.

*“I swear to you, I know what I saw. And I'm not crazy.”*

Joyce’s declaration illustrates the moral value of truthfulness and conviction in one’s beliefs. Despite being dismissed by others, she stands firm in her experience and insists on the truth of what she witnessed. This moment emphasizes the strength of honest conviction, as Joyce’s determination to speak her truth reflects the struggles of those who are often marginalized or not believed. Her commitment to honesty, even in the face of skepticism, embodies the importance of integrity.

*“Mike... I’m sorry. Sorry? What are you sorry for? The gate I opened it. I’m the monster.”*

Eleven’s confession reveals deep self-awareness and honesty. By admitting her role in opening the gate, she demonstrates a willingness to confront her mistakes and take responsibility for her actions. This moment illustrates how honesty can be a powerful tool for personal growth and relationship healing. Eleven’s acknowledgment of her actions is crucial for rebuilding trust with Mike, highlighting the significance of honesty in maintaining strong interpersonal connections.

*“Is this gate underground?” [Eleven] “Yes.”*

Eleven’s straightforward answer reinforces the value of directness and clarity in communication. By providing a simple and honest response, she contributes to the understanding of the complex situation they face. This moment emphasizes the necessity of clear and truthful communication in relationships, as it fosters a sense of safety and clarity among friends who are navigating dangerous circumstances.

### ***Love and Affection***

*“Mom, wait, just 20 more minutes!” [Karen] “It’s a school night, Michael.”*

This exchange between Mike and his mother illustrates the value of care and nurturing in familial relationships. Karen’s insistence on Mike ending the game reflects her love and concern for his well-being, ensuring he gets enough rest for school. Mike’s plea for more time shows his desire to enjoy time with his friends, highlighting the balance between parental care and a child’s need for play. This moment underscores the affectionate dynamic between parent and child, emphasizing that love often comes with rules and boundaries meant to protect and nurture.

*“Will didn’t spend the night?” [Karen] “No, he left here a little bit after 8:00.”*

Joyce’s inquiry about Will’s whereabouts demonstrates her deep concern and affection for her son. This moment highlights a mother’s instinct to stay connected and informed about her child’s safety. Karen’s response indicates the trust and openness in their community, where parents look out for each other’s children. This interaction emphasizes the theme of community love and care for children, portraying how affectionate relationships extend beyond immediate family ties.

*“I have been waiting here over an hour, Hopper. I’m going out of my mind! Look, boy his age, he’s probably just playing hookie, okay? No, not my Will. He’s not like that.”*

Joyce’s emotional plea to Chief Hopper showcases her desperation and profound love for Will. Her insistence that Will would never just skip school reflects her understanding of her son’s character and her deep emotional connection to him. This moment reveals a mother’s unwavering belief in her child’s integrity, highlighting the strength of maternal love in times of crisis. Joyce’s passion and urgency emphasize how love drives parents to take action and seek help when their children are in danger.

*“[voice breaking] Just find my son, Hop. Find him!”*

In this heartfelt plea, Joyce expresses the rawness of her emotional turmoil and maternal love. Her voice breaking illustrates the depth of her fear and desperation for Will’s safety. This utterance epitomizes the lengths a mother will go to protect her child, showcasing love as a powerful motivator in seeking help.

Joyce's appeal to Chief Hopper reflects a broader theme of love and affection in the face of adversity, emphasizing that love fuels hope and action during the darkest times.

### ***Loyal***

*"We just wanted to find our friend. What is 'friend'? Is someone that you'd do anything for. And they never break a promise."*

At this moment, Mike's definition of friendship emphasizes the value of loyalty and commitment. By explaining that friends are people who would do anything for each other and never break promises, he highlights the foundational principles of loyalty. This reflects the strong bond among the group, showcasing their determination to support each other in their mission to find Will. Mike's reassurance to Eleven reinforces their commitment to her safety, illustrating how loyalty strengthens their collective resolve in the face of adversity.

*"What did I tell you? She's been playing us from the beginning! That's not true. She helped us find Will! Just think about it, Mike."*

This exchange illustrates the tension that can arise within friendships when loyalty is questioned. Mike defends Eleven against Lucas's accusations, showcasing his steadfast loyalty to her. This moment emphasizes the importance of standing by friends during challenging times, even when doubts arise. Mike's defense reflects his commitment to the group's unity and trust in Eleven, underscoring how loyalty can foster resilience in friendships, particularly when external pressures threaten to create division.

*"[sighs] How much further? These only tell direction, not distance. You really need to learn more about compasses."*

This utterance reflects a moment of frustration and loyalty to the mission. While Mike expresses annoyance, he also demonstrates his commitment to the group's goal of finding Will. His reminder about the compass signifies the importance of teamwork and shared knowledge in overcoming obstacles. This highlights how loyalty to a common goal can encourage friends to support one another by sharing knowledge and remaining focused on their mission, reinforcing their bond as they navigate challenges together.

### ***Respect***

*"[Mike] Is there a number we can call for your parents? Are you in some kind of trouble?"*

At this moment, Mike demonstrates respect for Eleven's well-being by showing concern for her situation. His inquiry about her parents indicates that he recognizes her vulnerability and wants to ensure she has support. This action exemplifies respect in relationships, as Mike is not only offering her shelter but also acknowledging her needs and potential fears. His approach reflects an understanding of her circumstances and a commitment to helping her feel safe and cared for, which fosters a respectful and nurturing environment.

*"Mike! Yeah? Turn back. What? Why? I'm tired. Look, I'm sure we're almost there. Just hold on a little longer, okay?"*

Here, Eleven insists on continuing their mission despite her exhaustion, which reflects her respect for the shared goal and the sacrifices they make for one another. By expressing her desire to keep going, she acknowledges the importance of their friendship and the kindness Mike has shown her. This moment highlights mutual respect, as Eleven is willing to put herself at risk for the sake of their mission, demonstrating a deep appreciation for the bond they share. Her insistence also implies that she respects

Mike's determination and trust in their abilities to succeed together, reinforcing the value of collaboration in their friendship.

### *Self-discipline*

*"What's taking so long? Well, everything's been a bit chaotic around here without Gary. Without Gary? Where's Gary? Well, I thought you knew. Those men from State, they sent Gary home last night. So who did the autopsy? Someone from State."*

In this scene, Hopper's questioning about the autopsy delay reflects his self-discipline and determination to uncover the truth. Despite the chaotic situation and the unexpected absence of his friend Gary, Hopper remains focused on his role as chief of police and is dedicated to understanding what is happening. His patience in waiting for the autopsy, despite feeling frustrated and anxious, highlights his commitment to his responsibilities. This moment emphasizes how self-discipline involves not only controlling one's emotions and reactions but also maintaining a sense of purpose and duty, especially in challenging situations.

In Lincoln, patriotism is portrayed on a national scale, reflecting the same core components. Abraham Lincoln's actions are driven by a special affection for his country and a profound concern for its moral well-being. His relentless effort to pass the Thirteenth Amendment, even at great political and personal cost, showcases an ultimate willingness to sacrifice for the nation's future. The film is also rich with educational values. Lincoln's character embodies bravery in confronting a divided Congress, confidence in his moral convictions, honesty in his political dealings, and immense self-discipline in the face of pressure. His interactions with both allies and opponents reflect respect for the democratic process and a deep sense of loyalty to the principles of justice and equality (Katzenbach, & Smith, 1993). His storytelling and empathy, even towards his adversaries, demonstrate the value of friendliness as a tool for leadership.

The findings indicate that both *Stranger Things* and *Lincoln*, despite their vastly different genres and settings, serve as powerful mediums for conveying complex values. The patriotism depicted in *Stranger Things* is localized and community-centric. The residents of Hawkins display loyalty to their town, a form of patriotism rooted in immediate, personal connections (Mamadzhanov, 2021). This is a grassroots patriotism, born out of a direct threat to their community's well-being. This aligns with the idea that patriotism often begins with love for one's immediate community (Volkov, Vereshchagina, & Lubskey, 2018). The children's friendship and unwavering support for one another become a microcosm of this community-based patriotism, where loyalty and sacrifice are paramount for survival against a threat that the national government itself created and covered up (Hojjat & Moyer, 2017; Sardoč, 2020). The narrative positions the local community as the true patriots, defending themselves when the larger national institution has failed them.

Conversely, *Lincoln* explores patriotism as a national, principled commitment enacted from the highest level of government. Lincoln's actions are guided by a vision for the entire nation, rooted in the country's founding ideals of liberty and justice. His patriotism is not based on blind loyalty but on a moral imperative to hold the nation to its highest standards, a concept supported by Formosa (2009). He works within the system, using political strategy and moral persuasion to reform the nation from its core. This represents a top-down form of patriotism, where a leader sacrifices personal ease and political capital to steer the country toward a more just future.

The educational values embedded in both narratives are fundamental to character development. The values of being, such as bravery, honesty, and confidence, shown by the children in *Stranger Things* are essential for their survival and moral growth. In *Lincoln*, these same values are portrayed as the cornerstones of effective and ethical leadership. The film suggests that personal virtues are inseparable from public service and national progress. Similarly, the values of giving, like loyalty and respect, are what bind the community together in *Stranger Things* and what allow Lincoln to navigate the

treacherous political landscape (Kumar, & Rani, 2019). The implication for education is significant; these narratives can be used as tools to facilitate discussions on complex moral and civic issues, making abstract values tangible and relatable for students by showing their application in both fantastical and historical contexts (Suryati, 2018).

## CONCLUSIONS

This research concludes that both *Stranger Things* and *Lincoln* are rich texts for analyzing patriotism and educational values. *Stranger Things* portrays patriotism through the lens of community solidarity and friendship, emphasizing loyalty and sacrifice on a local level. *Lincoln* presents patriotism as a principled, moral commitment to a nation's ideals, embodied by a leader willing to make profound sacrifices for the greater good. Both narratives effectively demonstrate educational values such as bravery, honesty, loyalty, and respect, highlighting their importance in personal development and ethical leadership. These findings suggest that popular media can serve as an effective tool in educational settings for teaching complex social and moral concepts, encouraging critical thinking and character development among students. Future research could expand upon this by analyzing other forms of media or exploring the direct impact of such narratives on audience perceptions of these values.

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