

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF FAMILY TIES AND SUCCESS IN THE JOB MARKET

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## The Social Construction of Family Ties and Success in the Job Market

### ABSTRACT

The utility of social ties in the market for jobs is well-established, yet the underlying mechanisms have remained a matter of debate. Ties can be valuable because they act as conduits for the flow of information and other resources, but their value can also derive from their ability to serve as signals of identity, used by self and others, to gauge the otherwise difficult to observe underlying qualities of actors. In this paper, we clarify the mechanism responsible for network effects in the job market. But, more fundamentally, we argue that ties have taken on a reified quality in network theory, obscuring the fact that ties are socially constructed and can be the subject of dissensus as well as consensus. Using data from the market for head coaches in National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) men's basketball (2001-2007), we document the potentially divisive processes that underlie the social construction of "family ties" (i.e., ties to widely recognized and respected coaching families, such as the "Coach K. family" centered around the legendary Coach Krzyzewski), and we examine the implications of these processes for social identity and success in the market for jobs.

*Keywords:* Networks; Identity; Jobs

## The Social Construction of Family Ties and Success in the Job Market

The question of how people find a job is both commonplace and complex and this may be one reason why it has been the subject of such sustained scholarly interest. In neoclassical economics, for example, employment has been a variable of central and longstanding concern. The field of labor economics, in particular, has produced a vast and sophisticated literature on topics ranging from the causes and consequences of labor shortages and unemployment to the politics of minimum wage (for reviews, see, e.g., Kaufman and Hotchkiss, 2005; Ehrenberg and Smith, 2012). An important relational dimension of the question, meanwhile, has been taken up by sociologists who have emphasized that job-finding is more than a rational economic process—“it is heavily embedded in... social processes that closely constrain and determine its course and results” (Granovetter, 1995/1974: 39). This sociologically rooted line of work has produced extensive evidence of network advantage: Job seekers who are better connected are more likely to learn about new job opportunities (Granovetter, 1974), obtain higher-status positions (e.g., Lin, Vaughn, and Ensel, 1981), and be sought out by hiring organizations on the basis of employee referrals (e.g., Fernandez and Weinberg, 1997).

A well-established explanation for the utility of social ties emphasizes the role they play in facilitating resource flows— such as information, advice, referrals - between job seekers and potential employers. While this view of ties as pipes has arguably been the dominant one in network-oriented studies of the job market (for a review, see, e.g., Lin, Cook, and Burt, 2008) a contrasting theory has argued that ties are not just pipes along which resources flow; they are also prisms that “serve as the basis for splitting out and inducing differentiation” (Podolny, 2005: 5) among individuals. Ties, from this cognitively-oriented perspective, may be resources in the

job market because they serve as reputational signals of identity and underlying quality (Podolny, 2001), which are otherwise notoriously difficult to discern. Whereas the role of networks as conduits for information and resources has been much-studied, “we still know little about the role they play in creating and shaping identities” (Ibarra, Kilduff, and Tsai, 2005: 362). One of the objectives of our paper, therefore, is to distinguish, in our theory and analysis, the role of ties as prisms versus pipes in the job market. But what we especially want to draw attention to in this paper is the reified quality that ties have taken on in theoretical discussions about the utility of social networks. Network ties are often treated as un-problematically given when in fact, as our phenomenologically-oriented theory emphasizes, they can be the subject of dissensus as easily as consensus. Job seekers, for example, may strategically seek to claim ties that allow them to bask in the reflected glory of respected, legitimate others (cf. Kilduff and Krackhardt, 1994). But such ties, and the legitimating social identities they confer, are not simply there for the taking. Potentially beneficial claims to affiliation may be closely monitored, and claims perceived as unwarranted can backfire (cf. Burt, 2010: 1).

In building the case for ties as network resources that can be used by actors to enhance their competitiveness in the job market, we focus on a special class of ties: those to well-recognized, institutionally-legitimate groups (cf. Lin, 2001: 20). The setting of our study is the job-market for head coaches in NCAA men’s basketball. In this heavily institutionalized setting, ties to well-respected coaching families (“family ties” in the idiom of this setting) may not only provide access to strategic information and support they may also serve an important credentialing function (cf. Stuart, Hoang, and Hybels, 1998). To possess a tie to the Calipari family, for example, is to possess a highly desirable social identity in the NCAA, one that imparts the person with “a sheen of reliability” and competence (cf. Rao, 1994: 32). We note that while family ties

may be especially visible in the setting we examine they are hardly confined to it. In the market for corporate jobs, for example, there are frequent mentions of ties to the so-called “Paypal Mafia,” an amorphous group of people who were affiliated with the company PayPal before it was bought out by Ebay, in 2002 (see O’Brien, 2007). Similarly, ties to “Welch U” signal a much cherished identity, one connected to Jack Welch’s tenure at the helm of General Electric.

We argue that family ties benefit job seekers because they help signal a desirable identity in the market for jobs. But we also argue that whether these prismatic benefits are in fact realized can hinge on whether an individual’s claim to a family tie is credited or discredited by independent third-party observers (in our case, the professional sports media), who play an important role in shaping public opinion and discourse (Rindova, Pollock, and Hayward, 2006; cf. Goffman, 1959: 252 -253). The social tie may function as a prism that is used by third-parties to make inferences about the otherwise difficult to observe underlying qualities of actors. The point our study emphasizes is that to the extent the social tie is a prism, it is one that can be “messy and refractory, a shambles rather than a crystal” (White, 1992: 18). Our paper documents the potentially divisive processes that underlie the social construction of beneficial ties and it examines the implications of these processes for individuals in the market for jobs.

### **Ties and the Market for Jobs**

The idea that the knowledge and skills that individuals possess can be conceived of as a kind of capital can be traced to Adam Smith’s (1937) classic treatise on the wealth of nations (see Lin, 2009: 3-18). In more contemporary formulations, this notion of “human capital” has been conceptualized in terms of the value embedded in workers themselves; and it is most often measured using such variables as education, training, and experience. There is, of course, little

doubt that human capital is valuable in the market for jobs: Those with better human capital tend to find better jobs (e.g., Card, 1999), even if the value of this human capital does seem to vary in a complex interaction with the social environment, as when different genders and ethnicities receive different returns on similar skills. But a long line of sociological studies has shown that, even in heavily rationalized settings, the social ties that an individual possesses can—over and above the effects of the individual’s human capital— impact a range of outcomes, from job mobility and career success to health and job satisfaction (for a compact review, see Borgatti et al., 2009). One can, therefore, conceive of the investments people make in their social relations as constituting a kind of “social capital,” distinct from financial capital and human capital, but one that, like these other forms of capital, can be invested with an eye towards reaping a return in the marketplace (e.g., Burt, 1992; Lin, 2009).

Markets for jobs are rarely perfect even in a world where web-based tools for matching people with jobs have proliferated. Social ties help job-seekers in a myriad of ways, including access to relevant information, referrals, and simple favoritism. They can also benefit employers by reducing transaction costs that firms incur in their search for promising candidates. These conceptualizations of the role of social ties in the market for jobs emphasize their role as channels of favor and resources. A different conceptualization argues that the mechanism responsible for the salutary effects of social ties derives from the role ties can play as prisms that shape third-party perceptions (Podolny, 2001). From the prismatic perspective, ties can serve a credentialing function in the market for jobs by signaling to employers the otherwise difficult to discern underlying qualities of the job candidate. We argue that ties that are likely to be especially useful in this prismatic role are likely to possess two characteristics. First, the ties are likely to be to established entities in that field. Because such entities are already familiar, these

ties are more easily categorized; and ease of categorization is positively related to the allocation of attention (Zuckerman, 1999; Zuckerman, Kim, Ukanwa, and Rittman, 2003). Categorization is a basic and essential cognitive process (Neisser, 1976). To be able to readily categorize an individual is to be able to meaningfully anticipate the kind of person the individual is.

Categorization therefore renders the world more predictable and it allows one to plan effective action (e.g., Hogg, 2004). Second, the ties are likely to be to entities that confer legitimacy in the marketplace. Because how a person is viewed can be influenced by those with whom the person is connected (Cialdini, 1989: 45; Thye, 2000), ties to institutionally legitimate groups, we argue, offer job seekers the potential to burnish their identity in the eyes of potential employers. Not only do such ties function as signals of identity they may also serve a prophylactic function in that they allow the hiring organization to “provide an account of its activities that protects the organization from having its conduct questioned” (Meyer and Rowan, 1977: 349).

### **Coaching Careers in NCAA Basketball**

Considerations of legitimacy vary considerably across institutional settings. They loom large in the one we selected for testing our arguments: The market for head basketball coaches in the NCAA. The NCAA is a non-profit association founded over a hundred years ago with the primary goal of protecting student-athletes participating in college sports ([www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)).

College sports are the subject of intense public fascination drawing millions of viewers each year. They also generate huge revenues, both for the NCAA and for the colleges that belong to it. Media rights alone earn the NCAA hundreds of millions of dollars each year. Some college basketball programs generate annual profits in the tens of millions. Given the importance of sports programs to colleges, it is perhaps unsurprising that the salaries of some head coaches in the NCAA rival those of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) in the for-profit sector. John Calipari,

head coach of the University of Kentucky's basketball team, for example, is paid \$5.39 million annually and receives additional incentives that reach \$800,000 annually (Schnaars and DeRamus 2012). Leading sports commentator Dick Vitale explicitly equated NCAA coaches with corporate executives: "If you're a leading coach at a major institution, you're a CEO. You're worth millions to that university" (McCollough, 2008).

The typical NCAA basketball coach begins in an assistant coaching position and moves from college to college with the goal of promotion to a head coaching position at an elite organization. But like corporate executives, coaches of struggling teams are often fired and forced to find employment at a different university. The overall annual turnover rate approaches 17% in the market for head coaches in NCAA basketball.

One consequence of the high turnover in this highly institutionalized field is the formation of a web of interpersonal ties connecting coaches with prior mentors and colleagues (cf. Kleinbaum, 2012). This web of co-worker relations is represented as a network diagram in Figure 1. Some of the clusters of connected coaches (e.g., coaches who worked for the same mentor, or overlapped on the same staff) are recognized and labeled by NCAA basketball media experts (and fans) as "coaching families." There is considerable evidence that the media plays a key role in "setting the agenda of public discourse and directing the public's attention toward particular actors and issues" (Rindova, Pollock, and Hayward, 2006: 52). We therefore rely in this study on the professional sports media as an "institutionally rich" source of society-wide perceptions that not only reflect but also influence the opinion of the public (Deephouse and Suchman, 2008: 55). Coaching families are well-established institutions in the NCAA: they are widely recognized and respected. Families typically form around a legendary coach. An example is the Coach Calhoun family, named after NCAA Hall of Fame member Jim Calhoun, who was the head



coach at UConn from 1986 to 2012. Some– but not all – of the coaches who have served as his assistants have come to be recognized by the media as members of the Coach Calhoun family.

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

There is a noteworthy tension here between family ties as social interaction and family ties as cognitive constructs in the mind (cf. Burt, Kilduff, Tasselli, 2012). Not all individuals who claim a family tie are recognized as belonging to the family by expert observers. And not all individuals who the media recognizes as a member of a coaching family make a claim to a family tie. A coach may have directly worked with a legendary coach in the past, but this does not automatically lead to the conferral of a family tie in the eyes of the media (this is illustrated in Figure 2, which zooms in on the co-location network around Coach Calhoun within the complete co-location network of NCAA men’s basketball coaches). In addition, two coaches who never worked directly with each other can nevertheless be recognized by media experts as possessing ties to the same coaching family. Some of the family ties claimed by coaches are corroborated by the media, while others are not. Coaches describe their family tie as a “bond of trust” (Solomon and Segrest, 2010) and sharply differentiate it from their other work-related ties. Coach Wojciechowski of Duke stated, for example, that “We are part of the same family so it’s not a co-worker relationship. It’s in our blood” (Beard, 2008).

[Insert Figure 2 about here]

### **Prismatic Benefits**

The process of securing a job requires, among other things, that individuals clearly signal who they are and what differentiates them from others (cf. Spence, 1973). Competencies such as prior work experience and performance no doubt matter. But research shows that organizations judge applicants on how effectively they are able to communicate the relevance of such

competencies to the job at hand (e.g., MacDougall, 1986; DeBell and Dinger, 1997). Getting a job involves effective impression management: candidates who successfully project an identity that wins them conferrals of competency tend to experience favorable returns in the competition for jobs (e.g., Stevens and Kristof, 1995; Silvester, 1997). We argue that family ties can be an important resource in this task of identity construction and projection, for at least three reasons. First, ties to well-recognized and respected groups make the job candidate easier to categorize, thereby reducing uncertainty for the hiring organization. People tend to categorize others in terms of categories that are readily accessible in memory. Once activated, these categorizations can become a basis for processes of perceptual accentuation that help induce differentiation and maximize separateness and clarity (e.g., Tajfel and Turner, 1979; Zuckerman, 1999). To categorize a candidate as a member of the Coach K. family, for example, is to see the person as embodying the prototypic characteristics of Coach K's family (i.e., style of defense/offense; approach to managing conflicts among players; etc.). Not all family members, of course, possess these attributes; but people nonetheless have a tendency to attribute such characteristics to all family members (cf. Turner, 1979). To possess a tie to a recognized family, therefore, is to possess a clear, readily-categorized social identity; and this clarity of identity, we argue, should be related to positive outcomes in the market for jobs.

Second, family ties allow individuals to engage in positive impression management by allowing them to “boast, not about one's own accomplishments, but about one's link to someone else of accomplishment” (Cialdini, 1989: 50). And, third, as briefly noted earlier, family ties should lead to better outcomes in the market for jobs because individuals with such ties provide hiring organizations a measure of insurance in the event of poor subsequent performance by the individual (Meyer and Rowan, 1977). A participant in a study of the market for legal services

hinted at this function when s/he observed that hiring a legal firm with the right social credentials is desirable because “there’s less to justify before the deal and after the fact if something goes wrong” (Uzzi and Lancaster, 2004).

This reasoning suggests that, even controlling for past performance, individuals with family ties, will enjoy a distinct advantage in the market for jobs. This advantage should translate into greater relative bargaining power, allowing candidates with family ties to secure better jobs than candidates lacking such ties.

*Hypothesis 1:* Job candidates with family ties will find more prestigious jobs than candidates who lack family ties.

We have argued that family ties will be valuable to job candidates because they make candidates easier to categorize, help project a positive social identity, and provide hiring organizations with a kind of insurance to help protect them from criticism in the event that the person hired fails to perform. If these are the functions served by family ties in the market for jobs, then family ties should be especially valuable to two classes of people: (1) those who are relatively early in their careers, and so do not yet have an established track record of actual performance that could be used to gauge their quality; and (2) those who have been fired from their previous job. When a person is a relatively new entrant in the field, that person’s social credentials may be especially valuable signals of the person’s underlying potential and quality. Suggestive evidence for this reasoning can be found in studies of the market for academic jobs— the value of credentialing social affiliations, such as ties to well-known mentors tends to become less important for securing prestigious jobs as careers unfold over time (e.g., Cable and Murray, 1999; Miller, Glick, and Cardinal, 2005). Similarly, inter-organizational relationships with prominent

organizations appear to enhance perceptions of the underlying quality of young firms for whom unambiguous measures of quality do not exist or are difficult to reliably observe (Stuart, Hoang, and Hybels, 1999).

The second class of people who are likely to benefit from family ties is made up of those seeking to offset the effects of stigma and the identity threat it provokes (cf. Crocker and Major, 1989). Stigmatized individuals are marked by some attribute with the potential to discredit them in the eyes of others, turning them “from a whole and usual person to a tainted discounted one” (Goffman, 1963: 3). Not only can stigma lead others to de-value an individual’s ability and potential it can damage the individual’s self-esteem and health (for an excellent review of the underlying phenomenology and effects of social stigma, see Major and O’Brien, 2005). In the market for jobs, one particularly visible form of stigma involves being fired from one’s job. To be fired from a job puts one’s reputation and career at risk both because of the social stigma associated with being fired and because of the of negative effect on one’s confidence and sense of self (cf. Goffman, 1963). At minimum, individuals who have been fired bear the burden of creating an identity narrative that helps reassure potential new employers of their abilities and resourcefulness. Family ties, we argue, are likely to be useful resources for the purposes of this identity construction and repair. The legitimacy such ties confer can help reassure the hiring organization about the candidate’s underlying qualities; and it can help the organization defend its decision in the event that the new hire fails to perform well.

*Hypothesis 2a:* Family ties will be especially valuable to job seekers who are relatively new entrants in the market.

*Hypothesis 2b:* Family ties will be especially valuable to job seekers who were fired from their previous job.

### **Contested Ties**

Given the potential benefits of family ties, it should be unsurprising to find individuals claiming them. Claims to family ties, however, can backfire. Family ties that are confirmed in the court of opinion (i.e., in the eyes of important third-parties that reflect and shape the perceptions of the public at large) are credible identity signals that are likely to benefit job seekers, as summarized in hypotheses 1 and 2. But our core argument is that these benefits are unlikely to materialize when the claim to a family tie goes unrecognized and unsupported. Claims to family ties that fail to find support in the eyes of the media are akin to failed product certification contests organized by independent intermediaries (e.g., Rao, 1994). Rather than conferring legitimacy and a clear social identity, unsupported claims to family ties may instead “muddy their identities” (Pontikes, 2012: 82) and may even suggest to potential employers that the person is desperate or dishonest enough to be making a false or tenuous claim for personal gain. When claims to a family tie are contested, they do not ease categorization, project a credible identity, or provide the hiring organization with insurance benefits in the event of failure. We therefore predict that whereas a coach’s uncontested claims to family ties will be valuable network resources in the market for jobs; a coach’s uncorroborated claims to family ties will not.

*Hypothesis 3:* The value of family ties to job seekers will be contingent on whether claims to family ties find support in the eyes of the public: uncontested ties will yield benefits; contested ties will not.

## METHODS

The head coach market for NCAA Men's basketball offers several advantages for investigating the career implications of ties to legitimate groups. First, there is enormous media attention directed towards NCAA men's basketball coaches. Coaching families are well-recognized and much discussed by professionals in the sports media. Coaches also maintain individual websites with biographies stating their prior performance, institutional affiliations, and ties with coaching families. The professional media are a rich and varied source of unobtrusive data that serve as an indicator of "legitimation by society-at-large and as a source of legitimacy in their own stead" (Deephouse and Schuman, 2008: 56). We therefore relied on reports in the professional media to distinguish between claims to family ties by coaches and the conferrals of such ties by the public. Second, this setting allows us access to well-archived and clear performance metrics. Coaches are annually evaluated on winning percentage, team ranking, and whether or not their teams advance to the NCAA tournament. These objective performance metrics allow us to control for the likely effects of an individual's prior performance on the individual's success in the job market. Third, the setting we selected offers a relatively bounded sample of job candidates and open jobs. At the end of each season, unsuccessful head coaches are publicly fired creating equal awareness of all available head coaching positions. Very rarely are candidates selected from outside of the active group of NCAA coaches. And, crucially, fourth, because there are detailed, publically-available records on where a coach had worked with another coach (on a coaching staff) in the past, we are able to control in our analyses for the possibility that the effects we are ascribing to the signaling effects of family ties are in fact due to their already well-known as pipes that transmit job-relevant information and resources.

At the time of the research, there were 341 colleges and universities participating in NCAA's Division I men's basketball. We examined voluntary and involuntary changes in head coaching positions between October, 2001 and October, 2007. During this time period, there were 282 changes in head coaching positions and 151 firings. Data on job outcomes came from the publically accessible archives of the NCAA. Data on family ties were collected unobtrusively by scouring the professional websites of the head coaches and by doing extensive key-word searches of articles written by the professional sports media (cf. Deephouse, 1996; Pollock and Rindova, 2003).

### **Coaching Families**

We conducted a textual analysis of industry articles to identify coaching families that were recognized by media experts as active during the study time period. In this industry, sportswriters serve as opinion-leaders or critics who categorize the industry in ways similar to how "sell-side" analysts provide investment guidance to investors. We used the Factiva<sup>1</sup> database and Google News to search for articles containing "NCAA basketball" AND "coaching tree" OR "coaching family." Results included Katz's (2004) article "When it comes to family, Heathcote [of Michigan State] is at head of table," Doyel's (2004) article "Trees grow in coaching: Who's the most fertile?" and Korheiser's (1997) article "Six degrees of Dean Smith." Other articles on coaching families described coaches with ties to Rick Pitino as "Pitino's pupils," "Li'l Ricks," and "Pitinoites" (Kirkpartick 2007), coaches with ties to John Calipari as "Calipari's basketball disciples" (Tipton 2009) and coaches with ties to the Dean Smith UNC family as "a living,

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<sup>1</sup> The Dow Jones Factiva database includes more than 14,000 leading news and business sources (available at [www.factiva.com](http://www.factiva.com), accessed November 26, 2008).

breathing entity, linking the past to the present” (2004). Some articles on coaching families discussed the distinctive strategies associated with each family such as the “Princeton tradition” of ball control (Danley 2008), and the Dribble-Drive motion offense shared by Calipari disciples (Winn 2008). This text-based analysis led to the identification of 16 coaching families recognized by the sports media. We then interviewed three individuals who worked as Division I men’s basketball coaches to check the reliability of our findings. The three experts confirmed the 16 recognized coaching families, but one of the three industry experts questioned the inclusion of one of the families. We ran models excluding this family and obtained results consistent with those reported in the paper.

*Claimed Ties.* After compiling a list of coaching families we examined the personal web pages of all coaches who changed jobs or were fired during our time period to determine whether the coach publicly claimed a tie to one of the recognized families<sup>2</sup>. Personal websites may provide an ideal context in which to examine interpersonal perception processes associated with identity claims (Vazire and Gosling 2004). In NCAA basketball, coaches use websites to highlight their educational histories, career accomplishments, and connections to others in the industry. For instance, John Thompson III’s webpage states:

“Coached by the legendary Carrill as a student at Princeton and then working under him as an assistant coach at his alma mater for five years, Thompson brought a Princeton touch to Georgetown’s rich basketball history...”

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<sup>2</sup> Only 1 of the coaches had no webpage. We searched all articles about this individual and could not find any claim of family membership.



*Family Ties.* We classified ties to coaching families that were claimed by coaches and supported by the professional sports media as *confirmed* family ties. We define the professional sports media as recognized experts at Sports Illustrated, ESPN.com, CBS Sports, Yahoo Sports, and The New York Times. These five websites have all won or have been nominated for Webby awards for online journalism and were considered leading national sports journalism websites during the study time period. We searched articles in these outlets to investigate whether the focal coach was mentioned by at least one expert source as being connected with the head family member before or during the year of his job change. We also ran models requiring that the tie be confirmed by at least two expert sources-- the pattern of results was unchanged. We classified ties as *contested claims* if they were claimed by coaches but not supported by at least one of these major news sources. For example, Coach Steve Lavin's website claimed ties to the Coach K. family; but this claim was not corroborated in any of the expert professional sports media sources. Therefore, we coded this as a contested family tie.

### **Job Outcomes**

*Job Prestige.* For every coach who voluntarily secured a new job between 2001 and 2007, we assessed the prestige of the hiring institution. Our coding of this variable was based directly on numerical rankings by industry experts at ESPN.com, which is widely regarded as the leading media source for sports news<sup>3</sup>. The rankings are based on various historical performance and visibility measures including team performance, appearances in high profile tournaments, team success in developing players for the NBA, and team success in developing players who were

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<sup>3</sup> ESPN.com is a three-time Webby Award winner, six-time People's Voice Award winner, two-time Online Journalism Award winner, two-time Editor and Publisher Award winner for online sports service, and averages 20.2 million unique users per month, more than any other sports Web site, according to Nielsen ratings (information available at [http://www.espnmediazone.com/corp\\_info/](http://www.espnmediazone.com/corp_info/)).

subsequently awarded All-American status. We reverse coded the original rankings so that they ranged from 1 (least prestigious) to 300 (most prestigious). Any school that was not included in the ESPN ranking (e.g., schools that only recently became Division I programs) was assigned a prestige score of 1. (For more information on the justification of the ranking metrics, see Shelton, Loucks and Fallica, 2008.)

*Job Resilience.* We also analyzed the job outcomes involved with involuntary turnover. For all head coaches (n = 151) who were fired during the observation window, we examined whether the head coach went on to secure a new job. The variable was coded as: “0” if the coach dropped out of the coaching profession; “1” if the coach was hired as an assistant coach at another institution (a demotion in rank); and “2” if the coach was hired in the head coach position by another institution.

## **Controls**

Our focus in this paper is on the credentialing potential of family ties in the market for jobs. But we do not deny that job outcomes can be influenced by other social ties a coach may possess. For example, the ties that a coach may have to professional colleagues could directly influence how well the coach does in the job market. A coach who has worked closely with a large number of coaches in the past is likely to have a larger network of professional colleagues on which the coach could draw for job-related information and support (cf. Corredoira and Rosenkopf, 2010; Kleinbaum, 2012). Such relationships could provide the coach with a potential tie that could be activated as a potent resource in the job market (cf. Levin, Walter, and Murnighan, 2011). Similarly, coaches with more recent working relationships are likely to have greater access to needed resources. We therefore determined the *network size* for coaches who claimed or were

granted a tie to a family. This was coded as the number of active head coaches with recent collocation ties to the focal coach (i.e., they both worked on the same staff in the prior three years) and who also shared a historical collocation tie with one of the recognized family leaders. To calculate these measures, we compiled the career histories of each coach and created historical collocation networks to assess where, when, and with whom each coach had worked at the time of job change and at the time of firing. For example, when Coach Kevin Willard (a confirmed member of the Pitino coaching family) obtained the head coaching position at Iona College he had recent overlaps with fellow family members Marvin Menzies, Reggie Theus and Rick Pitino making his network size equal 3<sup>4</sup>.

Past performance is likely to influence job outcomes. We therefore controlled for the *cumulative winning percentage* of each coach as a head coach and as an assistant coach, the cumulative number of appearances in the prestigious post-season NCAA tournament (*cumulative NCAA appearances*), and for the prestige of the coach's previous employer (*prestige of prior employer*). To capture winning percentages we utilized the NCAA Statistics Archive (available at <http://www.ncaa.org>). We also controlled for the career experience (*tenure*) of each coach by calculating the total number of games coached prior to changing positions or being fired. In our analysis of voluntary changes we controlled for whether the coach was accepting his first head coaching position (*first*). Finally, we controlled in all analyses for *year* of position change to account for variance attributable to time.

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<sup>4</sup> Our measure of family network size focused on relatively recent collocation ties as such ties are likely to have the greatest potential to serve as conduits for resources. However, we also computed a time-invariant measure of network size which counted the number of collocation ties a coach had with other coaches irrespective of when in time they had been collocated. This variable was not significant in any of the analyses, and the pattern of results, available upon request, was identical to that reported in the paper.

## Model Specification

We used ordinary least squared regression for our analysis of the subsequent employer prestige (H1, H2a, H3) of all coaches who voluntarily changed jobs during the time period ( $n = 282$ )<sup>5</sup>. In H2b and H3, the cases were all coaches fired during the study period ( $n=151$ ), (involuntary turnover), and the dependent variable was job resilience, which was measured as an ordinal variable (see description above). Therefore, an ordered logistic regression model was used to test the hypotheses. In all analyses we used Stata 10.1 to calculate regression models, and UCINET VI (Borgatti, Everett, and Freeman, 2002) to calculate network statistics.

## RESULTS

Tables 1 and 2 present the means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations of our study variables. The mean subsequent employer prestige for coaches who voluntarily changed positions was 138.74 ( $SD = 91.1$ ). Seventy-seven of the 282 new positions were obtained by coaches who claimed a tie to a coaching family. Of these 77 claims, sixty-six were confirmed and eleven were contested ties. Nine coaches who changed jobs were nominated by media experts as family members but did not claim the family tie. One hundred and fifty one coaches were fired during the same time period. Of the 151 fired coaches, 57 failed to obtain subsequent work, 58 obtained work as an assistant coach, and 36 obtained work as a head coach within the study time period. Twenty-three of the fired coaches claimed a family tie; seventeen of these claims were confirmed and six were contested. Two of the fired coaches were nominated by media experts as family members, but did not claim the tie.

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<sup>5</sup> For coaches with duplicate entries we treated each entry independently but also ran models with the most recent data year only. The results were consistent.

[Insert Tables 1 & 2 about here]

Hypothesis 1 predicted that coaches with family ties would obtain more prestigious jobs than those who lack family ties. The results of an ordinary least squares regression are presented in Model 2 of Table 3. Controlling for the direct effects of other network ties (i.e., network size) and human capital measures (i.e., prior performance, work experience), we find that coaches with confirmed family ties obtained more prestigious jobs than coaches without family ties, providing support for hypothesis 1 ( $b = 33.15$   $p < 0.05$ ). We also ran models using an alternative measure of job prestige, namely average home attendance of the hiring school in the prior year. The pattern of results was unchanged when we used this alternate measure (results available upon request).

Our second set of hypotheses predicted that two classes of people would be likely to especially benefit from family ties in the market for jobs: coaches who were relative newcomers to the field (H2a) and coaches who had been fired from their previous jobs (H2b)<sup>6</sup>. The results of an ordinary least squares regression presented in Model 4 Table 3 indicate that the benefits of confirmed family ties decline with coach tenure, as predicted ( $b = -0.13$   $p < 0.05$ ). The significant interaction effect is plotted in Figure 3. Hypothesis 2b was tested using an ordered logistic regression. The results of our analysis of involuntary turnover presented in Model 2 Table 4, support the hypothesis: Coaches with confirmed family ties were more likely to obtain

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<sup>6</sup> Because many of the fired coaches had tenures of greater than three years in their ousted position, we utilized the total number of historical overlaps with family members to control for network size.

employment as a head or assistant coach after being fired than others (Model 2,  $b = 1.75$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Hypotheses 2a and 2b were both supported.

[Insert Tables 3 and 4 and Figure 3 about here]

Our third hypothesis predicted that the beneficial effects of claiming a family tie would only materialize if the tie was uncontested. To test this hypothesis, we identified all coaches who made a contested claim to a coaching family and compared their career successes with all other coaches (those with family ties and those with no ties). Model 3 in Table 3 indicates that among all coaches who changed jobs, those with contested claimed ties obtained less prestigious jobs than all others, controlling for those with no claimed ties ( $b = -69.53$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Similarly, the results shown in Model 3 in Table 4 indicate that, among all fired coaches, those with contested claimed ties did not receive job market benefits, whereas those with confirmed ties did ( $b = -1.04$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). There were a small number of coaches who were assigned a family tie by media experts but did not claim the tie. In results not presented here, we found that these types of contested ties also failed to provide benefits. This pattern of results provides support for hypothesis 3 and indicates that the value of family ties in the market for jobs is contingent on whether the claim is contested. Contested ties not only failed to help they in fact hurt coaches in the job market.

### **Supplementary Analyses**

We have argued that family ties can be valuable network resources because they render candidates easier to categorize, help candidate's project a positive social identity, and provide hiring organizations with a kind of insurance that helps protect them from potential criticism in

the event that the person hired fails to perform. But the question arises as to whether this insurance is actually needed: perhaps having family ties is a consequence of quality and individuals with family ties are less prone to failure.

To answer this question, we investigated the post-hiring performance of the 282 head coaches who obtained new positions. Controlling for job difficulty (as captured by the employer's number of wins in the prior year), the results in Table 5 indicate that coaches with family ties did not perform any better after being hired than coaches lacking such ties (Model 1,  $b = 0.05$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). We also ran models that did not control for prior individual coaching performance and the pattern of results was unchanged (results available upon request). Overall, these results support our theoretical stance that the value of family ties may lie more in their signaling value as indicators of identity and legitimacy than in actual differences in performance ability (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; cf. Greenwood, Oliver, Sahlin, and Suddaby, 2008), or, for that matter, in differences in the ability to call on other coaches for help and advice. The lack of support for a positive relationship between family ties and subsequent job performance suggests that family ties are not serving as pipes that transmit performance-enhancing resources from coaching families to their members; rather, they appear to act as prisms that influence perceptions of job seekers underlying qualities.

[Insert Table 5 about here]

## **DISCUSSION**

Our study of the market for head coaching positions in NCAA basketball found evidence of the prismatic benefits of “family ties.” Coaches who were tied to one of the elite coaching families

in the field (e.g., the Coach K. family built around the legendary Coach Krzyzewski of Duke University) were more likely to secure head-coaching positions at prestigious programs. The benefits of family ties were especially pronounced among coaches suffering from a deficit of legitimacy—i.e., coaches with unproven track records, and coaches who had been fired from their previous jobs. Family ties were clearly beneficial, but they were not simply there for the taking—not all claimed ties were corroborated by third-party observers (i.e., the professional sports media), and those coaches whose claims to family ties failed to find support not only failed to benefit but were in fact hurt in the market for jobs. Unwarranted claims to family ties seemed to backfire.

### **Implications for Theory and Research**

The argument that social ties can be valuable network resources in the market for jobs is, of course, a familiar one. It is also an idea that is well-supported in the empirical literature. The challenge for theory has been to understand the mechanisms responsible for these network effects. The predominant tendency in previous work on the subject has been to conceive of ties as pipes along which information and other resources can flow. Our study, in contrast, has focused on the prismatic or signaling aspects of social ties. We are not suggesting that the value of family ties derives solely from their symbolic utility as signals of quality and not at all from their more familiar function as pipes for resource transmission (e.g., family members providing each other with information and assistance). However, it seems unlikely that resource flows were the mechanism responsible for the effects we observed because we controlled in our analyses for the number of co-location/co-worker ties a coach had with other family members in the past. Prior working relationships create a potential for future flows of information and aid (cf. Kleinbaum, 2012). The results of our study showed that family ties explained significant



variance in job outcomes even after accounting for their role as potential conduits for resource flows. Moreover, in supplementary analyses we found that family ties were not a significant predictor of subsequent performance, which further suggests that family ties were not conduits for the flow of best practices and other resources that enabled coaches to create winning teams. Taken together, these results suggest that the mechanism responsible for the observed network effects was a cognitive one grounded in processes of categorization<sup>7</sup>.

The claims that a person makes to a family tie are also claims that a person makes to being a certain kind of person, to possessing a certain social identity. The self is both individual and social in character (Cooley, 1902). The ties we claim, and the ties that are attributed to us, help define who we are and how we should behave (Stryker, 1980; 2002; cf. Podolny and Baron, 1997). Such ties, and the social identities they imply, are, however, precarious and subject to support or discrediting (Goffman, 1963: 135). Family ties represent especially good sites for studying the struggles for control around the leveraging of ties that are the focus of our paper. But competing claims over ties are hardly confined to the special case of family ties. Even the familiar case of a friendship tie between two individuals presents numerous possibilities for dissensus (Krackhardt, 1987). Two individuals in a relationship can characterize the relationships differently; as can third-party observers. As White has noted, “each tie that persists encapsulates struggles for control...” (1992: 28). To treat social ties as given is to ignore that there is a great deal of social construction (and conflict) that goes into their formation and persistence (Mische, 2011). We are suggesting that rather than viewing competing claims

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<sup>7</sup> It is possible that some families are better positioned to provide resources to their members. We tried to account for this possibility by computing two network measures of resourcefulness at the group (i.e., family) level: family size (measured as number of family members with confirmed ties to the family), and the structural cohesiveness of a family (measured as the density of intra-family ties within the co-worker network). Analyses indicated that the value of family ties to job seekers did not vary significantly as a function of the size or density of the job seeker’s family.

around social ties as methodological error (e.g., Newman, 2001) or as symptoms of mental bias in social perception (e.g., Heider, 1958) we could interpret them as the meaningful consequence of individuals attempting, and sometimes failing, to benefit from their network ties. This perspective highlights the importance to social network theory of research on how people use and misuse social ties to forge identities to accomplish their pragmatic goals (for a discussion of different strategies that individuals can use to manage the identity implications of their social ties, see Cialdini, 1989: 49-52).

Family ties appear to help people secure more prestigious jobs. Even if not all people who secure such jobs remain there for long, the question arises as to whether this results over time in a stratified labor market in which individuals who desire a job at prestigious programs have to be tied to an established family. We found that the beneficial effects of family ties appeared to wane as the tenure of the coach in the field increased, suggesting that individual achievement and ability matter more than social credentials as time passes and careers unfold (a similar pattern is reported in a study of the market for academic jobs in organization studies— Miller, Glick, and Cardinal, 2005). It is also possible that the claims to family ties that find support at one point in time could fail to do so at some future time. The media, after all, do not merely report information about people and events, they seek out information that helps them highlight change and construct dramatic narratives for public consumption (Rindova, Pollock, and Hayward, 2006). Modeling why the media legitimate certain ties and not others may be a fruitful topic for future research.

It also seems likely that there was individual-level heterogeneity in interpersonal influence behaviors that went unobserved in our study. Individuals lacking a family tie may be able to find an alternate path to a prestigious job by relying, for example, on ingratiation tactics, such as

flattery and opinion conformity (Westphal and Stern, 2006); or they could rely on their narrative construction skills to resourcefully interpret and construct their work history (Pennington and Hastie, 1992). Similarly, there may be considerable individual-level variance in whether and how people use the social credentialing function of family ties to overcome deficits of legitimacy. For example, individuals are known to differ in their chronic sensitivity to being stigmatized (Pinnel, 1999, 2002). Individuals who are chronically sensitive to being stigmatized may be especially prone to claiming family ties to help combat the effects of perceived stigma on their social identity. There is also likely to be meaningful variation in how different individuals cope with the identity threat that results when one's claim to a family tie fails to win public support (cf. Seyle and Swann, 2007: 210-211). Some may attribute the lack of support to discrimination and redouble their claims to the family tie whereas others may withdraw effort from the identity-threatening field. How different people cope when their claims to a family tie fail to win public support is a topic that deserves attention.

We have argued that to possess a family tie is to have a readily categorized, legitimate identity. Our results are consistent with this argument but we cannot credibly determine whether the value of family ties was due to their ability to render individuals more readily categorizable (cf. Zuckerman, 1999) or whether it was because the tie enhanced perceived quality of the job seeker (cf. Meyer and Rowan, 1977). There was restricted variance in the perceived quality of the different families we examined—all 16 families were much noted in media reports, which not only reflect but also shape public opinion (Fombrun and Shanley, 1990)<sup>8</sup>. To sort this out we call

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<sup>8</sup> We also checked to see if possible differences in family prestige influenced our result by creating a measure of family prestige based on the number of articles written by media experts about the head of a family. This variable was not significantly related to our outcome variables, and the pattern of results for other variables was unchanged if this variable was included (results available upon request).

for studies in settings in which families could be reliably distinguished in terms of both their institutional legitimacy and their cognitive categorizability. Research in other institutional settings is also needed to better understand the effects of hiring individuals with family ties on the hiring organizations. In our study, supplementary analyses showed that whereas individuals with family ties are more likely to secure prestigious jobs they do not actually perform better (relative to those lacking family ties) once in those jobs. It may be that prestigious organizations nonetheless prefer to hire individuals with family ties because hiring coaches with the right ties enhances organizational legitimacy and improves the organization's ability to garner resources (e.g., donations from alumni and other stakeholders, better players for the program) that enhance the organization's survivability (cf. Gulati and Higgins 2003). Of course, while family ties can be beneficial to both individuals and the organizations that hire them, what is one day a blessing can turn the next into a curse. Family ties can turn from legitimacy enhancing devices that help make up for a deficit of legitimacy into ones that rob one of legitimacy instead. This could happen, for example, if a family were to fall into disrepute because of revelations of the illegal or immoral actions of one or more of its prominent members (as happened recently in the field of college football to the Paterno family with the conviction of Jerry Sandusky, a key member of the Paterno family). How individuals and organizations manage ties that once enhanced credibility but now serve to erode it strikes us a fruitful subject for investigation.

Our study relied exclusively on unobtrusive methods of data collection (cf. Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, and Sechrest, 1966). In studying professional media reports, we were able to tap an institutionally rich indicator of public support and legitimacy (e.g., Deephouse, 1996; Pollock and Rindova, 2003). Similarly, we relied on coaches' websites for evidence of claims to family ties. This methodological approach is eminently feasible, and has the virtue of non-reactivity,

which may be especially important when collecting data with implications for one's self-concept (cf. Kelly, 1955). Our investigative strategy also capitalized on the fact that people are leaving an ever richer repertoire of online digital traces to their identity. The disadvantage of our approach is that it makes it difficult to rule out the possibility that what we are treating as intentional claims to a family tie were in fact less than intentional. We treated the absence of mentions to a family tie on a coach's website as the absence of a claim to a family tie when in fact the omission could have been for other reasons, such as a heightened sense of propriety among some coaches. Similarly, our reliance on unobtrusive methods meant that we inferred rather than directly examined the processes that ensued when claims to family ties were supported or not supported by the professional media. Finally, it is important to recognize that social ties have histories, they represent obligations sustained over time, and they have projected futures. To ignore this is to engage in a form of "temporal reductionism" (Granovetter, 1992: 34). It may be valuable for future work to supplement the traditional tools of network analysis with approaches that can better capture the rhetorical construction of social ties over time (White, 1995; Mische and White, 1998).

Family ties may have been especially visible in the setting we examined but they can also be found in other settings. In the market for corporate jobs, for example, there are frequent mentions of "Xooglers" and "ex-Yahoos," loosely defined groups of people associated with the companies Google and Yahoo respectively (see, for example: [xooglers.blogspot.com](http://xooglers.blogspot.com)). Similarly, ties to "Welch U" have long signaled membership in the family that arose around Jack Welch during his much-heralded years at the helm of General Electric (e.g., Jones, 2007). These ties may no longer be active, but the accumulated relational experience they embody can serve as a kind of "shadow of the past" that projects "a structural overhang over the present" (Soda, Usai, and

Zaheer, 2004: 893; cf. Kilduff, Tsai, and Hanke, 2006, on “ghost ties”). The bonds that are forged between members of an organization during pivotal or foundational times may be especially strong and sticky (cf. Stinchcombe, 1965), making them easier to activate and reactivate over time (cf. Levin, Walter, and Murnighan, 2011).

## **Conclusion**

Ties have come to take on a reified quality in much network research, one that ignores or severely downplays their rhetorical and socially contested nature (cf. Breiger, 2002). There are, of course, many advantages to theorizing ties as un-problematically in existence (cf. Nadel, 1958). For one thing, it simplifies analysis and allows researchers to get on with the business of explaining how networks influence outcomes of interest, such as success in the job market. What our analysis of family ties in the NCAA suggests, however, is that there is theoretical leverage to be gained by recognizing and emphasizing the socially constructed nature of many (but certainly not all—for a discussion of types of social ties, see Borgatti et al., 2009) social ties. The competing claims that can swirl around ties should be conceived neither as methodological irritant nor symptom of mental bias but as a genuine reflection of people attempting, and sometimes failing, to leverage their ties for pragmatic purposes. Individuals can claim ties, but these claims may or may not be supported by important third-parties, with verifiable implications for individuals’ success in the market for jobs.

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Table 1

## Descriptive statistics and correlation of variables in position prestige analysis (n =282)

	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Prestige of new employer	138.74	91.1											
2. Employer wins in prior year	12.59	6.24	0.50 <sup>***</sup>										
3. Prestige of prior employer	166.54	110.6	0.17 <sup>**</sup>	0.10									
4. Wins by coach in first year at new job	13.48	5.81	0.42 <sup>***</sup>	0.50 <sup>***</sup>	0.14 <sup>**</sup>								
5. Cumulative past winning percentage as a head	46.19	20.45	0.30 <sup>***</sup>	0.29 <sup>***</sup>	-0.03	0.50 <sup>***</sup>							
6. Cumulative past winning percentage as an assistant	59.59	13.56	0.14 <sup>*</sup>	0.14 <sup>*</sup>	0.10	0.16 <sup>**</sup>	0.08						
7. Cumulative NCAA tournament appearances	4.28	4.37	0.22 <sup>***</sup>	0.12 <sup>*</sup>	0.18 <sup>**</sup>	0.23 <sup>***</sup>	0.46 <sup>***</sup>	0.30 <sup>***</sup>					
8. Tenure (total games)	496.3	212.77	0.00	0.12 <sup>*</sup>	-0.10	0.13 <sup>*</sup>	0.29 <sup>***</sup>	0.26 <sup>***</sup>	0.53 <sup>***</sup>				
9. Network size	0.23	0.70	0.18 <sup>**</sup>	0.09	0.25 <sup>***</sup>	0.12 <sup>*</sup>	0.06	0.11	0.18 <sup>***</sup>	-0.05			
10. Family tie: no claim	-	-	-0.23 <sup>***</sup>	-0.16 <sup>**</sup>	-0.17 <sup>**</sup>	-0.15 <sup>*</sup>	-0.13 <sup>*</sup>	-0.15 <sup>*</sup>	-0.21 <sup>***</sup>	-0.02	-0.48 <sup>***</sup>		
11. Family tie: contested claim	-	-	-0.12 <sup>*</sup>	0.00	-0.01	0.01	-0.05	0.00	-0.10	0.00	0.12 <sup>*</sup>	-0.33 <sup>***</sup>	
12. Family tie: confirmed	-	-	0.30 <sup>***</sup>	0.17 <sup>**</sup>	0.19 <sup>**</sup>	0.15 <sup>*</sup>	0.16 <sup>**</sup>	0.15 <sup>**</sup>	0.26 <sup>***</sup>	0.03	0.46 <sup>***</sup>	-0.90 <sup>***</sup>	-0.11

\*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

Note: Family tie: contested claim - coach claims a family tie but the tie is not supported by at least one media expert source.

Family tie: confirmed - coach is assigned a family tie by at least one media expert source and also claims the family tie.



Table 2  
Descriptive statistics and correlations of variables in job resilience analysis (n= 151)

		Mean	S.D	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	Job resilience	0.86	0.77									
2.	Prestige ranking of former school	124.02	90.6	0.29***								
3.	Cumulative past winning percentage as head coach	46.47	12.06	0.37***	0.56***							
4.	Cumulative past winning percentage as assistant coach	57.15	16.79	0.11	0.16	0.15						
5.	Cumulative NCAA appearances	4.15	3.63	0.33***	0.48***	0.44***	0.28***					
6.	Tenure (total games)	550.44	199.08	0.17*	0.11	0.36***	0.28***	0.43***				
7.	Network size	0.61	1.36	0.22**	0.24**	0.15	0.20*	0.38***	0.08			
8.	Family tie: no claim	-	-	-0.31	-0.24**	-0.17*	-0.18*	-0.28***	0.07	-0.57***		
9.	Family tie: contested claim	-	-	0.04	0.08	-0.01	0.03	0.06	-0.13	0.03	-0.48***	
10.	Family tie: confirmed	-	-	0.34***	0.22***	0.20*	0.18*	0.29***	0.00	0.63***	-0.84***	-0.07

\*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

Note: Family tie: contested claim - coach claims a family tie but the tie is not supported by at least one media expert source.

Family tie: confirmed - coach is assigned a family tie by at least one media expert source and also claims the family tie.

Table 3

OLS regression models predicting the prestige of new head coaching positions (N = 282)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Family tie: confirmed		33.15* (14.03)		100.19** (32.54)
Family tie: contested claim			-69.53* (27.63)	
Family tie: no claim			-29.73* (14.18)	
Interaction of family tie confirmed and tenure				-0.13* (0.06)
Network size	15.17* (7.54)	6.51 (8.32)	9.07 (8.47)	2.59 (8.44)
Cumulative past winning percentage as head coach	1.01** (0.31)	1.01** (0.31)	1.01** (0.31)	1.00** (0.31)
Cumulative past winning percentage as assistant coach	0.78* (0.31)	0.70 (0.39)	0.72 (0.39)	0.67 (0.39)
Cumulative NCAA appearances	1.96 (1.58)	1.37 (1.59)	1.11 (1.59)	2.67 (1.67)
Prestige of prior employer	0.11 (0.05)	0.10* (0.05)	0.11* (0.05)	0.09 (0.05)
First head coaching job?	-37.26** (12.76)	-30.04* (13.01)	-30.25* (12.99)	-25.26 (13.08)
Tenure (total games)	-0.10** (0.03)	-0.09** (0.04)	-0.08** (0.03)	-0.06* (0.03)
Year of job change	2.71 (2.49)	1.77 (2.50)	1.76 (2.50)	1.76 (2.48)
R-squared	0.19	0.22	0.22	0.22

\*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

Note: Entries represent parameter estimates; standard errors are in parentheses. The intercept was included in the OLS regression models but is not reported here.

Table 4

Ordinal Logistic Regression models predicting the job resilience of coaches who were fired (N = 151)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Family tie: confirmed		1.75** (0.69)	
Family tie: contested claim			-1.04 (1.02)
Family tie: no claim			-1.84** (0.70)
Network size	0.21 (0.13)	-0.04 (0.17)	-0.05 (0.17)
Cumulative past winning percentage as head coach	0.05** (0.02)	0.04* (0.02)	0.04* (0.02)
Cumulative past winning percentage as assistant coach	-0.001 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
Cumulative NCAA appearances	0.10 (0.06)	0.08 (0.06)	0.07 (0.06)
Prestige of prior employer	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)
Tenure (total games)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)
Year of firing	-0.14 (0.10)	-0.16 (0.10)	-0.16 (0.10)
Log likelihood	-144.89	-141.50	-141.07

\*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

Note: Entries represent parameter estimates; standard errors are in parentheses. The intercept was included in the OLS regression models but is not reported here.

Table 5

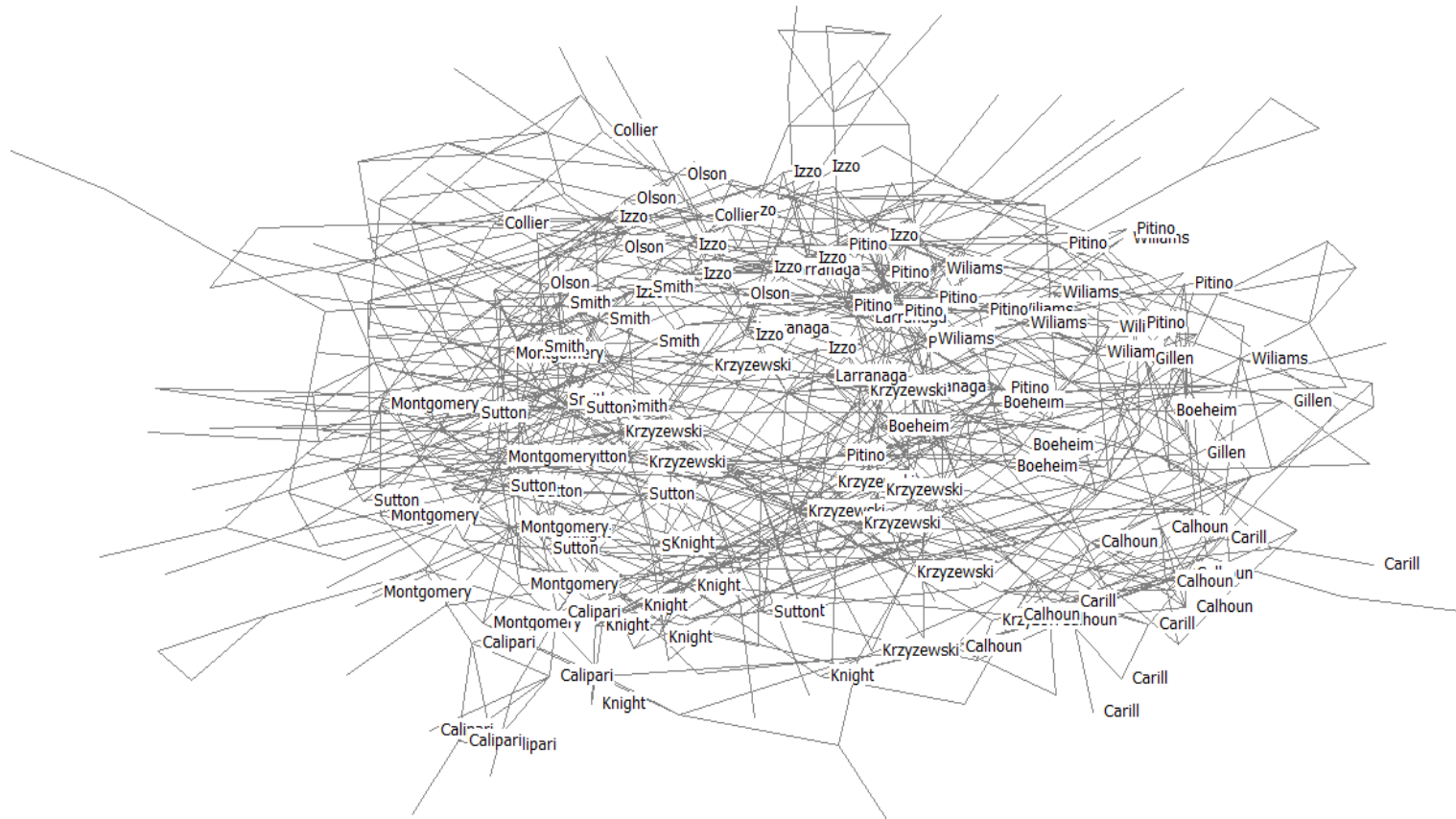
Negative binomial regression models predicting number of head coaching wins in the first year after a coach accepted a new job (N = 282)

	Model 1	Model 2
Family tie: confirmed	0.05 (0.06)	
Family tie: contested claim		-0.001 (0.11)
Family tie: no claim		-0.05 (0.06)
Network size	-0.001 (0.03)	-0.001 (0.01)
Cumulative past winning percentage as head coach	0.01*** (0.001)	0.01*** (0.001)
Cumulative past winning percentage as assistant coach	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)
Cumulative NCAA appearances	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
Prestige of prior employer	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)
First head coaching job?	0.16** (0.05)	0.16** (0.05)
Tenure (total games)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)
Year of job change	0.01 (0.01)	0.02 (0.001)
Employer wins in prior year	0.02*** (0.00)	0.02*** (0.00)
R-squared	0.09	0.09

\*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

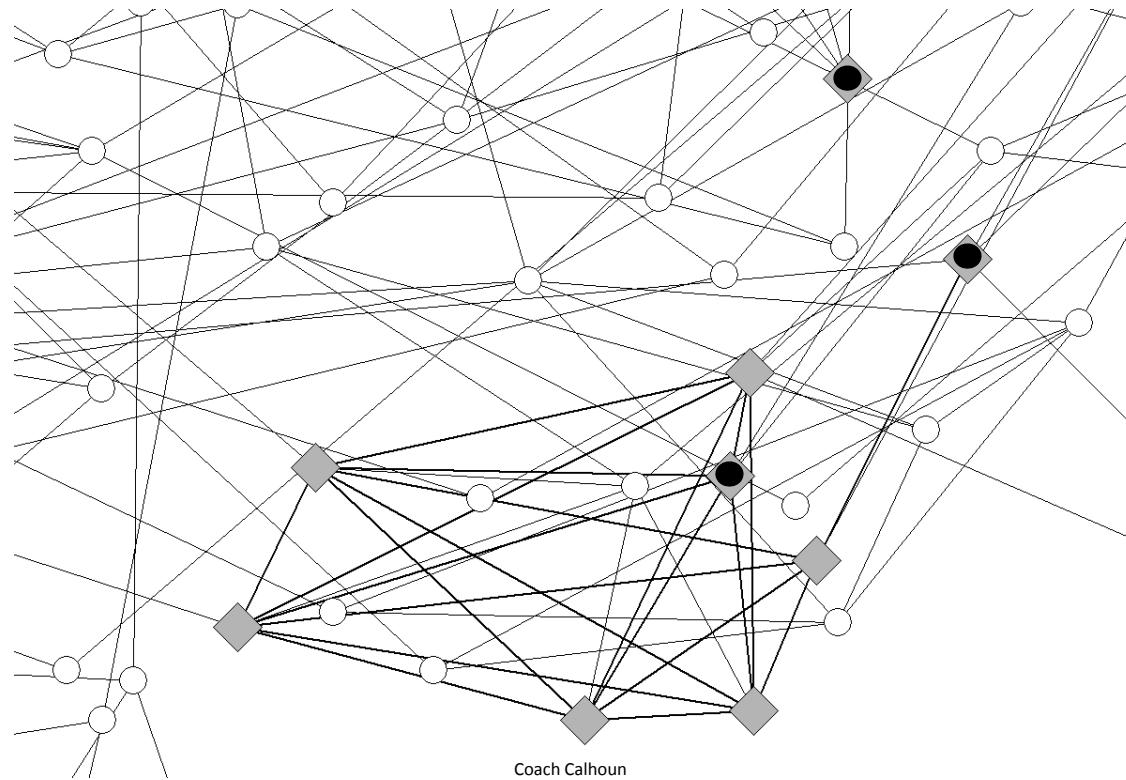
Note: Entries represent parameter estimates; standard errors are in parentheses. The intercept was included in the negative binomial regression models but is not reported here.

Figure 1  
Co-worker network (2001-2007)\*



\*Main component (n = 448) of the collocation network of coaches who were active between 2001 and 2007 (total network = 463). Coaches who were recognized as family members are labeled according to family membership.

Figure 2  
The Coach Calhoun Family



Note: This is a closer look at the complete Jim Calhoun Coaching Family within the overall collocation network. Confirmed family members are indicated by the shaded diamonds. Three coaches who made contested claims to this coaching family are indicated by a dark circle within the diamond. Solid lines indicate coworker ties. The node representing Coach Calhoun is labelled accordingly. Unshaded circles represent coaches who are not part of the Calhoun Coaching Family.

Figure 3  
The waning effects of confirmed family ties on prestige of position attained.

