

Issues:

Abortion & Gay Rights

Types of Issues

- Economic & social welfare issues
- Social & morality issues
- Civil rights and racial issues
- Democratic values & civil liberties
- Foreign policy issues

Abortion

- Pro-choice v. Pro-life
- Party Activists & Platforms
- Congressional Record
- Public Opinion
- Issue Evolution

Republican 2008 Party Platform

- Faithful to the first guarantee of the Declaration of Independence, we assert the inherent dignity and sanctity of all human life and affirm that the unborn child has a fundamental individual right to life which cannot be infringed. We support a human life amendment to the Constitution, and we endorse legislation to make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment's protections apply to unborn children. We oppose using public revenues to promote or perform abortion and will not fund organizations which advocate it. We support the appointment of judges who respect traditional family values and the sanctity and dignity of innocent human life.

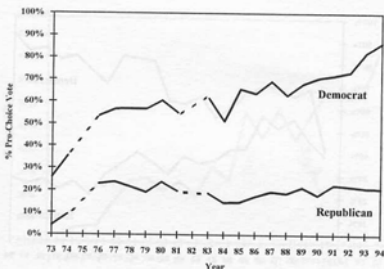
2008 Democratic Platform

Choice

The Democratic Party strongly and unequivocally supports *Roe v. Wade* and a woman's right to choose a safe and legal abortion, regardless of ability to pay, and we oppose any and all efforts to weaken or undermine that right.

Elite Polarization: US House

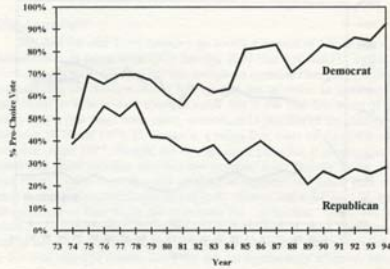
Figure 1A. Percentage of House Abortion Votes That Are Pro-Choice



Source: Greg D. Adams, "Abortion: Evidence of Issue Evolution," *American Journal of Political Science* 41 (July, 1997): 718-139.

Elite Polarization: Senate

Figure 1B. Percentage of Senate Abortion Votes That Are Pro-Choice



Survey Questions on Abortion

- Gallup poll
- “Do you think abortions should be legal under any circumstances, legal only under certain circumstances, or never legal under any circumstance?”

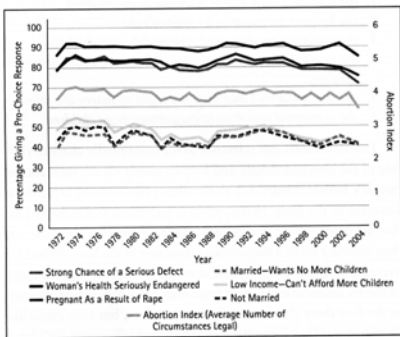
National Election Studies

- “There has been some discussion about abortion during recent years. Which one of the opinions on this page best agrees with your view? You can just tell me the number of the opinion you choose.
- (1) By law, abortion should never be permitted;
- (2) The law should permit abortion only in case of rape, incest, or when the woman’s life is in danger;
- (3) The law should permit abortion for reasons other than rape, incest or danger to the woman’s life, but only after the need for the abortion has been clearly established;
- (4) By law, a woman should always be able to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice.”

General Social Survey

- “Please tell me whether or not you think it should be possible for a pregnant woman to obtain a legal abortion if ...
- If there is a strong chance of serious defect in the baby?
- If the woman’s own health is seriously endangered by the pregnancy?
- If the family has a very low income and cannot afford any more children?
- If she is pregnant as a result of rape?
- If she is unmarried and does not want to marry the man?
- If she is married and does not wants any more children?”

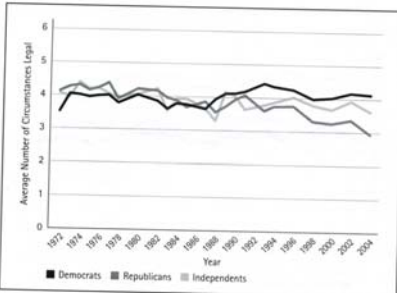
FIGURE 5.2
Popular Attitudes Toward Abortion Have Been Remarkably Stable Since *Roe v. Wade*



Source: Fiorina

Source: Calculated from the General Social Surveys.

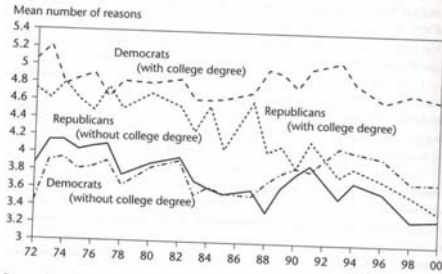
FIGURE 5.6
Partisans in the General Public Do Not Differ Much on Abortion



Source: Fiorina

Source: Calculated from the General Social Surveys.
Note: Partisans include strong and weak identifiers.

Figure 6-3 Abortion Attitudes by Party and Education, 1972-2000



Source: General Social Survey, 1972-2000.

Note: Data are the average number out of six reasons to allow abortion, for Republicans with a college degree, Republicans with less than a college degree, Democrats with a college degree, and Democrats with less than a college degree.

Clyde Wilcox & Barbara Norrander, "Of Moods and Morals: The Dynamics of Opinion on Abortion and Gay Rights," in Barbara Norrander & Clyde Wilcox, *Understanding Public Opinion*, 2nd edition, (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2002).

Process of change

- Conversion of attitudes to match partisanship
- Conversion of partisanship to match abortion attitudes

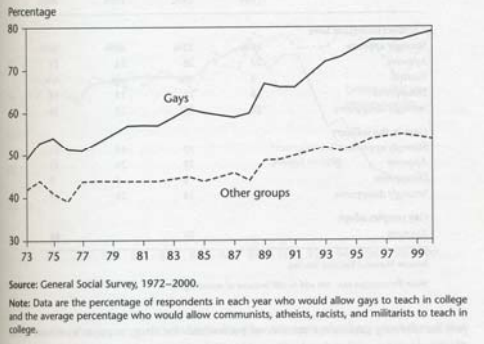
Explaining Abortion Attitudes

- SETUPS
- <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/SETUPS/>
- NES abortion question = V121
- Independent variables: v143 sex; v145 religion, v144 religiosity, v146 age, v148 education, v165 race, v007 party (x435-pid), v068 (x435-ideo) ideology

Attitudes toward Gay Rights

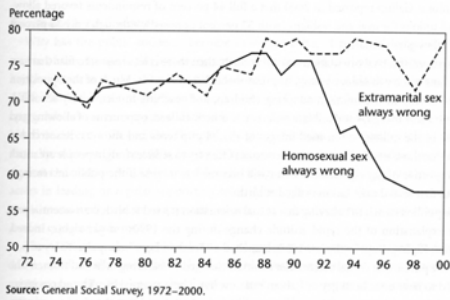
- More change in attitudes
- Opinion depends on specific issue
 - Employment
 - Military
 - Adoption
 - Marriage

Figure 6-4 Support for Gays and Members of Other Groups Teaching in College, 1973–2000 (in percent)



Source: Wilcox and Norrander

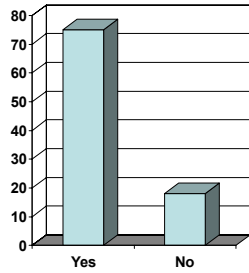
Figure 6-5 Attitudes Toward Homosexual Sex and Extramarital Sex, 1972–2000 (in percent)



Source: Wilcox and Norrander

Military

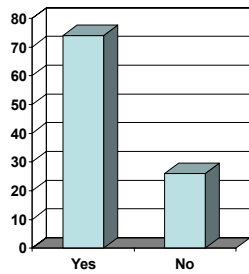
- “Do you favor or oppose allowing homosexuals to serve in the United States Armed Forces?”



Source: 2004 NES

Job Protection

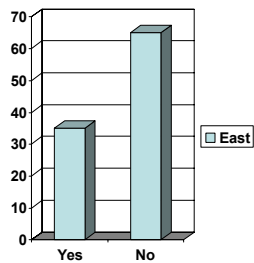
- “Do you favor or oppose laws to protect homosexuals against job discrimination?”



Source: 2004 NES

Gay Marriage

- “Should same-sex couples be allowed to marry?”



Source: 2004 NES

SETUP: New Variable

- V125 – gay marriage (1)yes (3)no
- V126 – gay job (1 & 2) yes (3 & 4) no
- New variable = x435gay
- Recode scheme

Value	Label	Var 1	Var 2
4	Both	1	1-2
3	Only mar	1	3-4
2	Only job	3	1-2
1	Neither	3	3-4

<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/SETUPS/>

Explaining Attitudes toward Gay Rights

- SETUPS
- <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/SETUPS/>
- Combined gay question = x435gay
- Independent variables: v143 sex; v145 religion, v144 religiosity, v146 age, v148 education, v165 race, v007 party (x435-pid), v068 (x435-ideo) ideology

What Should You Know
