

# **American Conservatism: The Evolving Role of Social Issues in American Politics**

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## Abstract

*In American society there are certain controversial issues that have been debated for the better part of the past century. Same-sex marriage, abortion, gun ownership laws, divorce laws, and the legalization of marijuana have all come under fire on the political stage. Yet the role of these issues in recent elections is far different than just a few election cycles ago. I analyze the role of social issues among different groups of conservatives to assess the continuing impact of them on their political behavior. To do so I have analyzed the GSS 2012 from the University of Chicago. I have created an index of social issues for a more comprehensive evaluation of their role in contemporary conservative politics. I hypothesize that social issues will resonate less with younger conservatives and among those with higher socio-economic status, and that these groups are making up a larger share of the electorate.*

## **Introduction**

### **The History of American Christianity and Conservatism**

Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness were established as the foundation of the American constitution and its society. Religious Freedom has also been a huge part of that society. In this country everyone has the right to freedom of religion, as per the first amendment of the U.S. constitution. Here we have freedom in choices, we do not have to adhere to one church. Everyone can find their own niche or preach for themselves and create whole new religious sects (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2014). Those sects contain an assortment of Christian values, and also maintained a patriarchal system up until around the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

These various Christian sects became the focal point to how people interacted, which spilled over into politics. Again, not everyone has the same religion, however they're under the same protestant umbrella. As time progressed, these communities became more tightknit and well-established institutions valuing family, hard work, and God. American religions became more conservative by means of collective socialization. The collective socialization that occurred by through a majority of religious Americans being conservative in value, despite religious differences (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2014). Although these conservative people had their differences in faith, they were like-minded people that came together and created a political agenda (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2014).

## Literature Review

### Political Mobilization: Motivation, Means, and Opportunity

Before I can provide an analysis of how the Religious-Right made their political debut, I need to explain how political movements formulate. For a political movement to formulate there are three factors that need to work together: motivation, means, and opportunity (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2014). Think of these factors acting as a three-legged stool, if one or two of the legs breaks away the stool collapses. The type of political movement does not matter, every political party or interests group uses the same method for mobilization (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2014).

#### *Motivation*

Before World War I issues that pulsed religious conservatives were currency reform, women's suffrage, and regulation of corporate abuses, arbitration of international conflicts, and the adoption of a direct democracy system by means of the initiative, referendum, and recall election (Levine 1975). A group's motivation comes from the collective idea(s) they all share (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2014). The political affiliation reflects religious tradition and influence. During election years, both presidential and midterms, political movements take their political positions, priorities, and attitudes on issues (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2014). Social issues like same-sex marriage, abortion, and gun ownership are issues that conservatives are most concerned with.

#### *Means and Opportunity*

Means and opportunity can overlap at times, usually when it comes to presenting to a group of people or crowd, but can be defined as separate factors. The means is the ability to

bring like-minded people into one area or multiple areas (Wald and Calhuon-Brown 2014). Conventions, conferences, fundraisers, and in the case for religious right-wingers it was mostly churches or rallies. The presence of opportunity for a political movement changes over time as governments, public opinion, political parties, and socioeconomic conditions react towards shifts in activity (Tarrow 2012; Tilly and Tarrow 2007). The Religious Right obtains political momentum is normally through elite leadership, this way political movements have guidance to a means to an end. For political movements, opportunity is the ability to articulate interests and aggregate in formulating strategies to attain public policy goals (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2014).

### **Right-Wing Christianity Rises**

Those who are religious and conservative are known as the Religious Right (Conger 2009). Considered a mass movement, the Religious Right are social conservatives fueled by evangelical institutions, which in turn affects the interests and the political capacity of American conservatives (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2014). Momentum grew fast and the United States saw the formulation of the Christian Right during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Wald and Calhoun-brown 2014). The Christian Right has been successful in harnessing many white evangelical men and women towards the G.O.P. during elections.

Right-Wing Conservatives were voting Republican during the 1950s for their fundamentalist values (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2014). In fact evangelists have become the most pro-Republican of all major religious traditions and are considered the base of conservatism during elections. There are instances of evangelists voting Republican during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but the Religious Right's movement began to develop after the 1960s (Woodberry

and Smith 1998, 42-43; Manza and Brooks 1997; Legee et al. 2002). The Religious Right encouraged changes that were already taking place by teaching many evangelicals to weigh social issues on religious morality. For many of these fundamentalists, voting Republican had become as natural as breathing (Hammond, Shibley, and Solow 1994; Johnson 1994; Layman and Carmines 1997).

The Religious Right have been very influential in American politics by having a very strong base in the Republican Party. Like any other political action group, the Religious Right's mobilization comes from three factors: motivation, means, and opportunity (Wald and Calhoun-Brown). Using tactics such as television programs promoting conservative values that helped propel the social conservative agenda. In political participation, there are patterns that are found among citizen groups (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2014). Whether the issue is war or policy initiatives, people with a common identity interact to formulate a political movement. This is exactly how the Religious Right came to power.

### *Jerry Falwell and the Moral Majority*

*"We're fighting a holy war."* - Jerry Falwell to his congregation in 1980, right when the Moral Majority initially started (Banwart 2013).

*"When a group of nine idiots can pass a ruling down that it is illegal to read the Bible in our public schools, they need to be called 'Idiots'"* - Jerry Falwell's opinion on the Supreme Court's ruling of school prayer is unconstitutional (Banwart 2013).

About 35 years ago there was a man of great influence for the Religious Right, Jerry Falwell. Born in Lynchburg, Virginia, Jerry Falwell was an elite political leader, a pastor, and famous televangelist. In 1979, Falwell helped establish a movement called the Moral Majority

(Banwart 2013). This was a political movement made up of evangelical Christians whose aim was to increase Christian influence in American politics (Banwart 2013). According to Falwell, they were “fighting a holy war” (Banwart 2013). On a similar note, President Reagan stated in 1984, “Religion and politics are necessarily related.” (Wald and Calhoun-Brown).

The Moral Majority was quite influential during the 1980 Presidential Election, and supported Ronald Reagan to victory. Falwell’s way of gaining a large following was through preaching to his congregation, but ultimately through televising his conservative values. He was able to inspire religious conservatives into becoming more politically active. Falwell helped with (if not led) the formation of the Moral Majority (Banwart 2013). This was a politically active group made up of evangelical institutions of the conservative wing. Some of the Moral Majority’s strength was its direct access to local preachers by means of a church network associated with the Baptist Bible Fellowship (Liebman 1983). Falwell’s mission was to keep religion and politics under the same roof. The concept of secularism was foreign to Falwell.

Falwell and the Moral Majority are a great example of Wald’s and Calhoun-Brown’s political mobilization. Religious people had the opportunity to express their religious conservative views because they were motivated politically by means of conservative talks from Jerry Falwell (via televangelism) When targeted to the right crowd, that kind of message can inspire to people to mobilize, and that’s exactly what happened. They had the means and opportunity, all they needed to do was motivate people. Falwell and other televangelists knew what they were doing, and what they were doing was mobilizing a new Christian Right.

## **Modern Movement of the Religious-Right**

### *Leadership*

The influence of the Religious Right is still strong in the Republican Party, but their reputation has been affected. A decrease of influence by the Religious Right has become more noticeable in politics. During the 2012 Presidential Election we saw what some in the GOP had been thinking. Missouri (R) Representative Todd Akin's claim in the 2012 elections that a woman's body will shut down pregnancy from "legitimate rape" (Moore 2012). Akin's statement may have hurt the GOP's reputation for that time. The comment received negative repercussions from the media and even more criticism from women's rights groups (Moore 2014).

According to an article by Trip Gabriel of *The New York Times*, much of the Religious-Right are not too keen on Jeb Bush. Many feel that the GOP lost the last two presidential elections by being "too moderate" (Gabriel, Trip. March 25, 2015). Instead, they're seeking leadership from someone who would hold the same opposition views towards social issues today. One man in particular, Ted Cruz has been on many peoples' minds. The Religious-Right sees him as their next possible leader, and not Jeb Bush (Gabriel, Trip. March 25, 2015). Cruz has the same fiery passion of his predecessors, making him and the Religious-Right still a viable and influential political movement.

However, GOP struggled to keep many conservatives close as the 2014-midterm elections took place (Gonyea 2014). The struggle occurred from the mistrust of the government being at the bottom (Gonyea 2014). How the GOP plans on sustaining its footwork for the future is unclear. The works will provide an insight to finding out the interworking parts of the social



conservatism think-tank. Social issues like same-sex marriage rights, abortion rights, and gun rights are examples of qualities in conservative social thinking seem to be waning.

### **Waning Social Issues**

The political structure of the United States, an attachment to libertarian social values, the political diversity of American Christians are constraints on the successes of the Religious Right (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2014). Conservative Christian activists who moved into GOP circles brought different values, priorities, and styles of politics. Compared to other GOP “regulars” (meaning non-evangelical Republicans, Libertarians, or economic conservatives), the Religious Right was much more religious in a different and more intense manner (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2014). The Religious Right tends to attach more with social issues than did the “regulars”, despite sharing economic conservatism (Knuckey 1999). Due to the aforementioned differences between the non-evangelical Republicans and the Religious Right have created a gap between the two groups (Miller and Schofield 2008).

When evangelical activists entered the Republican Party, the harmony and electoral prospects were threatened (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2014). Social and economic conservatives disagree fundamentally on the role of the state, and the individual and society, and also the position of women (Klatch 1988). The “regulars” believe society will survive when individuals are free to pursue self-interest. The social conservatives maintain that “society brings the individual under the moral authority of God, the church, and the family, thereby restraining man’s instinct and curbing individual self-interest” (Klatch 1988). Proposals of regulating entertainment media, setting federal standards towards sex education, and restricted access to

birth control appeal towards the social conservatives, but conflict with economic conservative's idea of small government (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2014).

Also according to Klatch, social conservatives defend a traditional role for women as housewives and caregivers. This means that day cares, legalized abortion, and same-sex marriage rights are seen as threats to what social conservatives view as traditional sex roles. The differences among the "regulars" and the Religious Right has extended into the larger population (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2014). This will prove to be difficult for the GOP to contain two contradictory views in the same caucus.

Over time, the challenge to appeal non-evangelical voters with the Religious Right's core social issues has waned. These non-evangelical voters are needed to create an electoral majority and respond to economic conservatism, but take a liberal side to social issues (Miller and Levitin 1976). The potential demise of the Religious Right's influence comes may come from a younger age group. As the American public becomes more and more accepting of the social issues once considered uncivilized by the Religious Right, the GOP could be losing ground. Unless current members of the Religious Right are able to rally enough support from millennials, all of the support will come from older generations.

## **Methods and Analysis**

### **Hypothesis**

Among conservatives, younger age groups will be more liberal on social issues than older age groups.

The following GSS2012 variables are used: "age" (independent), "polview" (used for exclusion), "marhomo" (dependent), abany (dependent), gunlaw (dependent), divlaw

(dependent), and grass (dependent). The dependent variables have been chosen because they are five examples of social issues that have been relevant of the last 35 years.

To analyze the relationship between social conservatives and their concern of social issues, I have conducted five cross tabulation tests. Each test will help me determine the feelings conservatives have for social. The tests are between the independent variable “age” and a dependent variable such as “divlaw”. The independent variable “age” has been recoded into two groups: a *younger group* of conservative responders between the years of 18-49, and an *older group* consisting of conservative responders of years 50 or more. The reason for using two age groups is because when I attempted to split the age groups further, the cell sizes became too small for meaningful analysis. However, since Falwell and his Moral Majority were around 35 years ago, maybe having the age groups set like this will work to my advantage.

All five tests are controlled by the variable of “age”. The conservative categories in the “polview” variable have been renamed: slightly conservative is now “weak”, conservative is now “moderate”, and extremely conservative is now “strong”. Conservatism was subcategorized to show the differences between conservatives, some will be stronger than others. Renaming the categories will help make reading the tables more clearly and provide a variety of responses instead of one line of conservative data.

*Same-Sex Marriage*

Age Groups by Year			Levels of Conservatism			Total
			Weak	Moderate	Strong	
Younger Age (18-49)	Should homosexuals have the right to marriage?	Strongly Agree	15 16.1%	5 5.7%	4 23.5%	24 12.2%
		Agree	32 34.4%	16 18.4%	1 5.9%	49 24.9%
		Undecided	16 17.2%	11 12.6%	0 0.0%	27 13.7%
		Disagree	14 15.1%	15 17.2%	4 23.5%	33 16.8%
		Strongly Disagree	16 17.2%	40 46.0%	8 47.1%	64 32.5%
		Total	93 100.0%	87 100.0%	17 100.0%	197 100.0%
Older Age (50+)	Should homosexuals have the right to marriage?	Strongly Agree	5 6.4%	7 6.5%	0 0.0%	12 5.7%
		Agree	13 16.7%	11 10.2%	3 12.0%	27 12.8%
		Undecided	15 19.2%	9 8.3%	1 4.0%	25 11.8%
		Disagree	26 33.3%	27 25.0%	0 0.0%	53 25.1%
		Strongly Disagree	19 24.4%	54 50.0%	21 84.0%	94 44.5%
		Total	78 100.0%	108 100.0%	25 100.0%	211 100.0%
Total	Should homosexuals have the right to marriage?	Strongly Agree	20 11.7%	12 6.2%	4 9.5%	36 8.8%
		Agree	45 26.3%	27 13.8%	4 9.5%	76 18.6%
		Undecided	31 18.1%	20 10.3%	1 2.4%	52 12.7%
		Disagree	40 23.4%	42 21.5%	4 9.5%	86 21.1%
		Strongly Disagree	35 20.5%	94 48.2%	29 69.0%	158 38.7%
		Total	171 100.0%	195 100.0%	42 100.0%	408 100.0%

Chi-Square: 29.819 (Younger) 34.095 (Older) = 53.592 (Total)

Asymp. Sig.: .000 (Younger) .000 (Older)

Cramer's V: .275 (Younger) .285 (Older) = .256 (Total)

Approx. Sig: .000 (Younger) .000 (Older)

The first test is with dependent variable “marhomo” (Table 1). The question is asking the conservative respondents whether they agree or disagree with same-sex marriage. In this test there are a total of five response the respondents could choose from: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, or strongly disagree. The test results show the relationship between younger conservatives and same-sex marriage is weak due to Cramer’s V being between 0-0.29, and the same is true for older conservatives. Both groups in the independent variable share a similar relationship with the dependent variable when looking at Cramer’s V. In the older age group, 84% of strong conservatives said same-sex marriage ought to be illegal vs 47.1% of the younger strong conservative age group. This shows here that regarding same-sex marriage, younger conservatives are more liberal than the older age group, thus supporting my hypothesis.

*Legalized Marijuana*

Age Groups by Year			Level of Conservatism			Total
			Weak	Moderate	Strong	
Younger Age (18-49)	Should marijuana be legal or illegal?	Legal	34 38.2%	36 43.9%	5 29.4%	75 39.9%
		Illegal	55 61.8%	46 56.1%	12 70.6%	113 60.1%
	Total		89 100%	82 100.0%	17 100.0%	188 100.0%
Older Age (50+)	Should marijuana be legal or illegal?	Legal	37 39.8%	29 29.0%	4 13.3%	70 31.4%
		Illegal	56 60.2%	71 71.0%	26 86.7%	153 68.6%
	Total		93 100%	100 100.0%	30 100.0%	223 100.0%
Total	Should marijuana be legal or illegal?	Legal	71 39.0%	65 35.7%	9 19.1%	145 35.3%
		Illegal	111 61.0%	117 64.3%	38 80.9%	266 64.7%
	Total		182 100%	182 100.0%	47 100.0%	411 100.0%

Chi-Square: 1.435 (Younger) 7.850 (Older) = 6.481 (Total)  
 Asymp. Sig.: .488 (Younger) .020 (Older) = .039 (Total)  
 Cramer’s V: .087 (Younger) .188 (Older) = .126 (Total)  
 Approx. Sig.: .488 (Younger) .020 (Older) = .039 (Total)

The second test is with dependent variable “grass” (Table 2). The questions asks conservative respondents if they think marijuana ought to be legal or illegal. In this test there are only two response choices: legal or illegal. The test results are showing the relationship between younger conservatives and marijuana legalization is weak, Cramer’s V is below 0.29. The relationship between older conservatives and legalization is also weak, Cramer’s v is below 0.29, yet stronger than younger conservative Cramer’s V. In this test, the idea that marijuana should be illegal was shared between both age groups in the weak category. However moving over to the strong category, the younger age group looks to be more liberal than the older age group making this another case supporting my hypothesis.

*Gun Permits*

Age groups by Year			Level of Conservatism			Total
			Weak	Moderate	Strong	
Younger Age (18-49)	Gun ownership must require a permit	Agree	59 64.8%	45 51.7%	13 72.2%	117 59.7%
		Disagree	32 35.2%	42 48.3%	5 27.8%	79 40.3%
	Total	91 100.0%	87 100.0%	18 100.0%	196 100.0%	
Older Age (50+)	Gun ownership must require a permit	Agree	64 82.1%	66 61.7%	15 60.0%	145 69.0%
		Disagree	14 17.9%	41 38.3%	10 40.0%	65 31.0%
	Total	78 100.0%	107 100.0%	25 100.0%	210 100.0%	
Total	Gun ownership must require a permit	Agree	123 72.8%	111 57.2%	28 65.1%	262 64.5%
		Disagree	46 27.2%	83 42.8%	15 34.9%	144 35.5%
	Total	169 100.0%	194 100.0%	43 100.0%	406 100.0%	

Chi-Square: 4.471 (Younger) 9.845 (Older) = 9.567 (Total)  
Asymp. Sig.: .107 (Younger) .007 (Older) = .008 (Total)  
Cramer's V: .151 (Younger) .217 (Older) = .154 (Total)  
Approx. Sig.: .107 (Younger) .007 (Older) = .008 (Total)

The third test is with dependent variable "gunlaw" (Table 3). The question asks the conservative respondents what their opinions are on required permits for gun owners. The two available responses are: agree or disagree. The results of the test show the relationship between younger conservatives and required gun permits is also weak because Cramer's V is below 0.29. The relationship is also weak between older conservatives and required gun permits because Cramer's V is between 0-0.29. The groups in the independent variable share a similar relationship with dependent variable "gunlaw" when observing Cramer's V. Interestingly in this test, the younger stronger conservatives had more in common with the older weaker conservatives. Then those same older weaker conservatives outweighed the younger weaker conservatives by a margin of 17.3%. 72.2% of younger stronger conservatives claimed gun permits are a must whereas only 60% of the older stronger conservatives also agreed. This test shows that even weak conservatives can show a liberal side.

*Divorce Laws*

Age Groups by Year			Level of Conservatism			Total
			Weak	Moderate	Strong	
Younger Age (18-49)	Should divorce laws be easier, difficult, or stay the same?	Easier	25 29.8%	25 30.1%	9 45.0%	59 31.6%
		More Difficult	38 45.2%	37 44.6%	10 50.0%	85 45.5%
		Stay the Same	21 25.0%	21 25.3%	1 5.0%	43 23.0%
	Total	84 100.0%	83 100.0%	20 100.0%	187 100.0%	
Older Age (50+)	Should divorce laws be easier, difficult, or stay the same?	Easier	18 25.0%	21 23.3%	5 23.8%	44 24.0%
		More Difficult	33 45.8%	56 62.2%	14 66.7%	103 56.3%
		Stay the Same	21 29.2%	13 14.4%	2 9.5%	36 19.7%
	Total	72 100.0%	90 100.0%	21 100.0%	183 100.0%	
Total	Should divorce laws be easier, difficult, or stay the same?	Easier	43 27.6%	46 26.6%	14 34.1%	103 27.8%
		More Difficult	71 45.5%	93 53.8%	24 58.5%	188 50.8%
		Stay the Same	42 26.9%	34 19.7%	3 7.3%	79 21.4%
	Total	156 100.0%	173 100.0%	41 100.0%	370 100.0%	

Chi-Square: 4.547 (Younger) 8.059 (Older) = 8.610 (Total)

Asymp. Sig.: .337 (Younger) .089 (Older) = .072 (Total)

Cramer's V: .110 (Younger) .148 (Older) = .108 (Total)

Approx. Sig.: .337 (Younger) .089 (Older) = .072 (Total)

The fourth test is with dependent variable "divlaw" (Table 4). The question is asking conservative respondents what their opinion is of divorce laws. The possible responses are: easier, more difficult, or stay the same. The results of the test conclude that the relationship between younger conservatives/older conservatives and divorce laws is weak because each Cramer's V is between 0-0.29. The older conservative Cramer's V is slightly stronger than the younger conservative Cramer's V, but a share a similar relationship with dependent variable



“divlaw”. This test has pretty low percentages compared to the other tests, yet the majority of moderate and strong conservatives in the older age group believe divorce laws ought to be stricter, indicating a traditional marriage ideal. The younger age group doesn’t necessarily share this ideal with the older age group as 50% of stronger conservatives say divorce laws ought to be stricter. Despite lower numbers in this test, it does give support to my hypothesis.

*Abortion*

Age groups by Year			Level of Conservatism			Total
			Weak	Moderate	Strong	
Younger Age (18-49)	Should women have the right to an abortion?	Yes	43 47.3%	18 20.5%	5 27.8%	66 33.5%
		No	48 52.7%	70 79.5%	13 72.2%	131 66.5%
	Total		91 100.0%	88 100.0%	18 100.0%	197 100%
Older Age (50+)	Should women have the right to an abortion?	Yes	26 35.1%	25 24.3%	5 20.8%	56 27.9%
		No	48 64.9%	78 75.7%	19 79.2%	145 72.1%
	Total		74 100.0%	103 100.0%	24 100.0%	201 100%
Total	Should women have the right to an abortion?	Yes	69 41.8%	43 22.5%	10 23.8%	122 30.7%
		No	96 58.2%	148 77.5%	32 76.2%	276 69.3%
	Total		165 100.0%	191 100.0%	42 100.0%	398 100%

Chi-Square: 14.713 (Younger) 3.198 (Older) = 16.555 (Total)  
 Asymp. Sig.: .001 (Younger) .202 (Older) = .000 (Total)  
 Cramer’s V: .273 (Younger) .126 (Older) = .204 (Total)  
 Approx. Sig.: .001 (Younger) .202 (Older) = .000 (Total)

The fifth and final test is with dependent variable “abany” (Table 5). The question asks conservative respondents if women should have the right to an abortion or not. The responses possible are simply yes or no. The results of the test are showing the relationship between both

younger conservatives and older conservatives with abortion is weak because Cramer's V is below 0.29. However, in this case the younger conservative Cramer's V is much stronger than the older conservative Cramer's V. This test had the highest difference between the two groups in the independent variable's relationship with dependent variable "abany". This test shows that there is little difference between the younger age group and the older age group of social conservatives. The two weak conservatives are only differentiated by a margin of 12.2%. Then the two strong conservatives only differentiate by a margin 7%. Although these margins are small between the two age groups, it still shows that younger conservatives tend to be more liberal on social issues than do older conservatives.

## Conclusion

The concluding results of the five tests I ran indicate that there is a strong relationship between the younger age group and social issues. This relationship is more liberal than the relationship between the older age groups and social issues. It was difficult to separate the age groups further simply because the number of respondents would be significantly cut. However it was clear that the younger age group was more liberal in regards to today's social issues. The differences may have been small in some occasions, but my hypothesis was correct.

The ability to maintain a solid foundation among younger people in the GOP, as well as American politics, will be key in the Religious Right's future political endeavors. If this political movement wants to regain momentum, they'll have to adjust to accommodate for a new generation. The future of the GOP may come down to the battle between social conservatives (the Religious Right) and the "regulars" and economic conservatives (non-evangelical conservatives). The influence of the Religious Right has waned over the last couple decades, but their presence is still known. The Religious Right will not only be battling others in the GOP, but a large number of liberals, Democrats, and other third parties across the nation.

Most of these political groups have a socially liberal agenda and much of the country is starting to more accepting of these social issues. Many states have legalized same-sex marriage and have loosened abortion restrictions. Some states have legalized marijuana use for either medicinal usage or recreational usage. Gun laws are certainly a huge issue in the United States, but not so much for divorce laws. The fact is social issues change over time, people become accepting of them eventually. They used to be women's suffrage and currency reform (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2014), and now those aren't even concerns. Social issues drive political movements in America, and when those issues change so does the political landscape.

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