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# American Motherhood: A Discursive and Quantitative Analysis of Abortion and Racialized Constructions of Family in Political Speech

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# **American Motherhood: A Discursive and Quantitative Analysis of Abortion and Racialized Constructions of Family in Political Speech**

Pauline Stanfiel

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Women's History

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at Sarah Lawrence College, May 2017

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## Introduction

In the 1950s, new images of fetuses via ultrasound helped change the public perception of fetal humanity. Where previously women had had little ability to view the internal progress of their pregnancies, this new technology “could reveal the fetus-as-homunculus”<sup>1</sup>: suddenly parents and doctors could see and identify the fetus’ more human-like features, giving more significance to the idea of mothers’ responsibility to their unborn children. One prominent doctor of the time forcefully summed up his assessment of that sense of maternal obligation: a pregnant woman, according to him, “is a uterus surrounded by a supporting organism and a directing personality.”<sup>2</sup>

A woman *is* a uterus. She is equated entirely with the possession and use of one organ, and the rest of her body and mind is just there to support it. Her whole value is placed in her reproductive capacity, effectively also presupposing cissexuality,<sup>3</sup> since so much emphasis is on biological markers of sex, and heterosexuality, as heterosexual sex is necessary to bear children at all. Having reproduction as her sole purpose also situates her inside of a nuclear family structure, with an emphasis on childbearing and childrearing--the relationship between abortion and motherhood, then, also becomes clear. A single sentence gives a remarkable level of insight into cultural ideas about women and what people felt was the “right” way for them to

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<sup>1</sup> Solinger, Rickie. “Extreme Danger: Women Abortions and their Clients Before Roe v. Wade.” In *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960*. Meyerowitz, Joanne, ed. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994). 351.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Cisgender: a person whose gender identity matches the sex they were assigned at birth.

be. To be sure, these are, as Rickie Solinger describes, “the strongest possible terms”<sup>4</sup> to express the sentiment, but the fact that this doctor’s words are so extreme makes them a good example of the extent to which the way people talk about the issue of abortion expresses how they think about women--and, to be frank, they are not particularly distant in tone from current discussions of abortion.

Discourse or rhetorical analyses identify the language used to discuss an issue as a point of entry for uncovering widespread cultural attitudes, and further recognize that that language in turn builds frames of reference that bring about those cultural ideas. When particular kinds of rhetoric have a national platform, that co-constructive process becomes a way to define and redefine how members of our society think of themselves and others in the context of the issue at hand. In those instances, the rhetoric that politicians use has been known to sway public opinion on issues ranging from taxes to immigration to same-sex marriage. Sociologist James Hawdon, for example, found a significant correlation between public support for particular drug policies and the way that Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush spoke about drug addicts. If drug addicts were characterized as people in need of help, public opinion tended toward rehabilitative drug policies; if they were described as people actively choosing an immoral lifestyle, public opinion swung to favoring punitive drug policies.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, rhetoric in the style of the latter could help create what Hawdon calls a “moral panic”: Americans started to feel that there was something terribly wrong in their society that could be attributed

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<sup>4</sup> Solinger, “Extreme Danger,” 351

<sup>5</sup> Hawdon, James E. “The Role of Presidential Rhetoric in the Creation of a Moral Panic: Reagan, Bush, and the War on Drugs.” *Deviant Behavior*. Vol.22, no. 5 (2001): 419-445.

to moral weakness in a specific group of people--in this case, drug users--and the feeling had little to do with the actual number of drug users in the US during the 1980s.<sup>6</sup>

It is obvious, then, that politicians and their rhetorical choices--certainly those made by presidents, as Hawdon shows, but also politicians more generally--can frame issues in ways that influence public opinion. They are able to redefine how the nation conceives of an issue, and how the public thinks about those whom a political issue will ultimately impact. This thesis focuses on 21<sup>st</sup> century conservative political speech on abortion. Conservative objections to the procedure have dominated the national conversation, and Republican politicians have been enormously successful at redefining foundational issues like the personhood of a fetus and the morality of the actual procedure of abortion. They have even changed the words we use to describe people and medical practices: pregnant women become "mothers," fetuses become "unborn children," "late-term abortions" become "partial birth abortions."

Abortion as an issue, because it is centered on (cis and able-bodied) women's reproductive capacity, necessarily involves related issues like motherhood and family. Those constructions become more widely important because, at their root, they involve children: how children are mothered and in what kind of families they grow up gains importance because those children are the next generation of citizens. It is in the family that the citizenry is both reproduced and socialized to enact citizenship. Motherhood and family both have to align with how we as a society--however that societal "we" identity is created or articulated--define those constructions. Several questions become apparent, then: how *is* that societal identity defined? Who is that "we"? How is that identity enforced? How does rhetoric help define constructions

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 420

of motherhood and family as they fit into our wider national identity? What is the response to that “threat” to the national identity?

As I researched for this thesis, I found that I was writing less and less about abortion itself and more and more about white supremacy. Though certainly in no way a new phenomenon, the performance of citizenship that dominated the 21<sup>st</sup> century was centered on whiteness. If motherhood and family must align with the American national identity so that those figures and structures can adequately instill “proper” values and behaviors in the nascent citizenry, the whiteness of that identity means that motherhood and family must align with whiteness as well. Recognizing racialized motherhood and racialized notions of family complicates an examination of the political rhetoric on abortion: the nation values motherhood and families in different ways because it values white women’s reproduction, but not black women’s reproduction. Different rhetorical frameworks in political speech may be applied, then, depending on whether that political speech is in reference to white or black women.<sup>7</sup>

That essentially constitutes the question at the center of this thesis: how, exactly, has abortion been popularized in political rhetoric in the 21<sup>st</sup> century relation to constructions of motherhood and family for white and black women? In pursuing this research question, I hope to provide insight into the recent progression of the ways in which our society views women, particularly in the context of our evolving views on the value of family and children and how they relate to norms of citizenship. Chapter 1 further outlines the mechanics of discourse analysis and the previous research done on the rhetoric surrounding abortion, as well as

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<sup>7</sup> I recognize that the reproduction of non-black women of color also is not valued in the United States. Because of particular developments in the 21<sup>st</sup> century that will be explained in Chapter 2, however, this thesis will focus on black women’s reproduction.



describes my own methodology for this thesis. Two analytical chapters follow: Chapter 2 will analyze two specific rhetorical frameworks, the “brutality” framework<sup>8</sup> and the “protection” framework, in the context of the sociopolitical landscape of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Chapter 3 offers a quantitative analysis that explores the relationship between the rise of hate groups and attacks on abortion clinics, and examines the factors that lead to increases in different varieties of clinic attacks.

I want to note a few features of this analysis at the outset as well: this thesis largely addresses a heteronormative female figure because that is the figure at the center of these frames and modes of thinking. A nationalistic concept of womanhood and female-ness assumes a cisgender, heterosexual woman, because that figure is geared toward procreation and built in reference to a cisgender, heterosexual man. While the topic of the ways in which the LGBT community has been excluded from the cultural definition of a citizen is undoubtedly fertile ground, it is outside the scope of this particular analysis. I will make note of those constructions at certain points, but I will not go into much detail outside of that. Similarly, though the US has a long history of intervening in, controlling, and preventing the reproduction of women of color as a whole, because of the election of President Barack Obama in 2008 and the particular relationship that the US has had with black women’s reproduction I would like this 21<sup>st</sup> century analysis to focus on what the rhetoric on abortion tells us about the value placed on black and white women’s reproduction. I do not mean to indicate that the effect is either more or less pronounced for black women, exactly; a more detailed analysis of the

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<sup>8</sup> This term is borrowed from Jessica Gerrity’s work, and will be discussed more in depth in Chapter 2. Gerrity, Jessica C. “Building a Framing Campaign: Interest Groups and the Debate on Partial-Birth Abortion.” In *Winning with Words: The Origins and Impact of Political Framing*. Schaffner, Brian F. and Patrick J. Sellers, eds. (New York: Routledge, 2009). 60-77.

experiences of different women of color would, again, be appropriate for a work with a larger scope.

To close on a more personal note: in the days after the 2016 presidential election results, my Facebook newsfeed was flooded with my friends' fear, anger, and attempts to cope with what lies ahead. Among them was a gay male friend of mine who wrote about his deep disappointment that all his efforts to demonstrate Donald Trump's disregard of basic human rights, including his, did not seem to move the people around him to vote against Trump. He supplied a link to a list of attacks that had already occurred in the brief period since the results were announced. A friend of his commented, asking what rights of his Trump had personally violated; if he had not actually attacked anyone, she asked, "shouldn't we be protesting the people doing [the attacks]?"

*This* is precisely the reason that it is important to understand the impact of rhetoric. Neither Trump nor anyone else has to commit violence themselves (although Trump certainly has): he instead provides a message that depends on people's understanding of themselves as Americans and their place in the world at the same time that it constructs that understanding. His supporters read the implications of what he is saying quite clearly; Trump creates the conditions for them to enforce that understanding, and some of his supporters choose to do it violently. Though Trump provides a particularly egregious example of the dangers that rhetoric can pose, other politicians have done the same: they have simultaneously created and taken advantage of ways of thinking about a variety of political issues. In the context of abortion, they have redefined the issue such that it speaks to Americans' nationalistic concerns. Outlining this

kind of “road map” of how the terms of the abortion debate were built in the 21<sup>st</sup> century may give activists, policymakers, and progressive politicians better tools to dismantle it.

## Chapter 1

# Rhetoric and Methodology

Discourse or rhetorical analyses recognize that social and political norms are both built and reproduced by the way that various actors speak about them. The way that any audience interprets political and sociopolitical issues is shaped by how the members of that audience view themselves and their place in the world, a perspective that cognitive linguist George Lakoff refers to as a “frame.”<sup>1</sup> When politicians, or the media, or any actor that disseminates information to an audience use rhetoric about an issue that considers those frames, they become more convincing to that audience, because they are communicating in a way that aligns with that sense of self. Their presentation will then ring more true for that group of people. Even further, rhetoric can help shape audiences’ frames such that those actors can also build the terms of an issue, keeping in mind what ways of thinking will appeal to their audience and thereby swaying that audience’s opinion. In essence, the rhetoric informs how an audience thinks of the issue at the same time as it takes advantage of frames of thinking already in place. That co-construction can help dictate public opinion, which in turn fuels political and social change, as James Hawdon’s study points out. The history of abortion rhetoric shows consistent ties to family, motherhood, and children, and the prevalence of these themes can give insight into how the abortion debate has been situated in the American cultural mindset.

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<sup>1</sup> Lakoff, George. *Don’t Think of an Elephant! Know Your Values and Frame the Debate: The Essential Guide for Progressives*. (Vermont: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2004). xv.

## RHETORIC, FAMILY, AND ABORTION: A HISTORIOGRAPHY

The materials I have seen that were written on the rhetoric surrounding abortion uniformly identify themes of family values and the “proper” performance of motherhood. Abortion is reconstructed and redefined as a part of that frame of understanding starting particularly from the 1980s on forward; coming from disciplines like political science, communications, and even cognitive linguistics, these researchers’ work spans from the 1960s to the early 2000s and shows how influences from television, news media, interest groups, and individual family structures helped build the issue of abortion as we know it today.

The aim of Celeste Condit’s 1990 work *Decoding Abortion Rhetoric* is to analyze the public discourse surrounding abortion as a “visible element” of the debate on the issue, rather than the “wide range of social forces”<sup>2</sup> that she asserts other scholars have investigated. She wishes to investigate the power that the rhetoric itself has to shape public opinion, using pieces like visual images, advertisements, television shows, and pamphlets as her points of analysis. Her text shows us how rhetoric becomes a part of cultural production, and what that reflects about the views people hold and what behaviors vis a vis abortion would be considered “proper.” Studying the period from 1965-1980, among her findings is a complex relationship between women and the role of motherhood: Condit tells the story of how humanizing images of the fetus came to dominate the national conversation on abortion. Late-term fetuses were centered in the images, since they look the most human, but establishing them as human at

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<sup>2</sup> Condit, Celeste Michelle. *Decoding Abortion Rhetoric: Communicating Social Change*. (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1990). 1

that point helps do the same to earlier stages of pregnancy: even a two-week-old collection of cells, then, can become a “ball of life.”<sup>3</sup>

Condit found that popular depictions of women’s responsibility to that rhetorically-created life were impacted by both pro-choice and pro-life schools of thought. Television shows after *Roe v. Wade*<sup>4</sup> tended to either feature doctors or policemen supporting the new laws surrounding abortion; women who were pregnant, decided against an abortion, and then either discovered that they were not pregnant after all or experienced a miscarriage, thus sidestepping the consequences of the decision; or women who did have abortions, and felt terribly guilty afterward.<sup>5</sup> Abortion was frequently only coded as permissible (though always morally difficult) if it “did not conflict with the values of family and motherhood,” even if the female character was allowed to assert her desires for independence--no married woman with a financially stable husband, for example, ever aborted a healthy fetus.<sup>6</sup> Condit does find that abortion is culturally situated such that values of family and the view of the fetus as a human win out.

S.J. Ball-Rokeach et al., in their 1990 study *Value-Framing Abortion in the United States: An Application of Media System Dependency Theory*, take a different route from Condit’s and examine the impact of activist organizations on the media’s framing of the abortion debate. Ball-Rokeach et al. recognize interest groups’ interactions with the media as part of a Media System Dependency Theory (MSD Theory), which posits that the media system constitutes an “information system” whose resources include “gathering or creating, processing, and

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<sup>3</sup> Condit, *Decoding Abortion Rhetoric*, 86

<sup>4</sup> The 1973 Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion.

<sup>5</sup> Condit, *Decoding Abortion Rhetoric*, 125

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 138-139

dissemination of information.”<sup>7</sup> It has its own “goals, values, roles, and technologies” that separate it from other systems.<sup>8</sup> An MSD relation, like the one that Ball-Rokeach et al. examine between interest groups and the media, describes the degree to which a group or individual actor’s ability to further their goals is dependent on their ability to disseminate information on their cause through the media system and its resources.<sup>9</sup> The study defines the abortion debate as a “symbolic communication conflict” that serves as a battleground between two different “definitions of morality,” and groups or actors compete to have their definition define the issue and the decisions made about it.<sup>10</sup> Part of that definition can be traced to how the debate is discussed in the media.

Covering the mid-1960s through 1989, the study set out to measure the extent to which these organizations could dictate what they call the “value-frames” used in the media coverage of abortion, or the “substantive” theme used to distinguish between “good” and “bad.”<sup>11</sup> As one of the kinds of frame used in discussions of “moral” debates like abortion, value-frames can serve as the “criterion by which people, events, and issues are evaluated.”<sup>12</sup> The study asserts that the changes in value-frames that they identify can be attributed specifically to changes in media treatment brought about by interest groups’ influence, and not by changes in public opinion.<sup>13</sup> Ball-Rokeach et al. found that from the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s, the issue of abortion was considered to be part of the issue of women’s rights more generally: interest

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<sup>7</sup> Ball-Rokeach, S.J., Gerard J. Power, K. Kendall Guthrie, and H. Ross Waring. “Value-Framing Abortion in the United States: An Application of Media System Dependency Theory.” *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* Vol. 2, no. 3 (1990): 249-273. 250

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 250

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 254

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 249

<sup>12</sup> Ball-Rokeach and Rokeach, 1987; Guthrie, 1989, as cited by Ball-Rokeach et al., 255.

<sup>13</sup> Ball-Rokeach et al., “Value-Framing Abortion,” 256

groups, the media, and policymakers all spoke of abortion in the context of women's equality and freedom, so anti-abortion activists who spoke out risked seeming like they were in opposition to those rights. Most of anti-abortion activists' rhetorical energy, then, was more dedicated to defending themselves from those accusations rather than on gaining a foothold in the media system.<sup>14</sup>

The study found a "turning point," however, in the mid-1980s, when anti-abortion activist organizations changed tack and settled into a rhetoric that situated the issue inside of the value-frame of "family."<sup>15</sup> In response, what would become the "pro-choice" faction largely kept their original women's rights frame, but made a slight shift in emphasis so that "freedom" was more central than "equality." Not only did that turning point transform the debate from a singular issue of being for or against women's rights into a transitional dual "Pro-Life/Women's Rights" value-frame, but it also removed support for abortion rights from the context of a more socialist emphasis on "equality" and situated it instead in the capitalist emphasis on "freedom." As the new "pro-life" value-frame took shape, it more concretely adopted "Salvation, Obedience, and Family Security" as its core values, allowing anti-abortion advocates to take a positive position (being "pro-" rather than "anti-" something), and in a context or entity already thought to be morally legitimate. The new emphasis on freedom blossomed into the pro-choice movement we know today, effectively creating two positive, "pro" positions: in other words, creating two positively-oriented versions of morality with regard to the abortion debate.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ball-Rokeach et al, "Value-Framing Abortion," 258

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 258-259



Jessica Gerrity too considers the power of interest groups, demonstrating that their influence extends past the time period of Ball-Rokeach et al's analysis and into the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. Gerrity expands her analysis beyond interest groups' impact on media framing, examining their overall role in the construction of the issue of Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2003.<sup>17</sup> As organizations that deliberately set out to develop frames that "influence the way the public and decision makers prioritize and conceptualize policy issues,"<sup>18</sup> interest groups can have an enormous impact on how the terms of issues like abortion are built in the minds of politicians and the public. Gerrity asserts that the issue of partial-birth abortion in particular gave conservative interest groups the opportunity to discuss the actual procedure of abortion for, in their view, the first time, shifting the national conversation out of the territory of a general discussion of women's rights and morality and into more visceral territory.<sup>19</sup> That shift gave rise to what Gerrity calls the "brutality frame," a frame that concentrates "on the procedure and the pain felt by the 'unborn baby'" and uses visual imagery to describe both.<sup>20</sup>

Based on interviews with group members and on research in their archives, Gerrity explains that conservative, anti-abortion interest groups targeted three interdependent audiences with their messages: the public, the media (as Ball-Rokeach et al. also discussed), and the political elite.<sup>21</sup> Her description of interest groups' strategies for cultivating public support for a partial-birth abortion ban perfectly reflects the idea of co-construction: interest groups take their cues from what the public already thinks about abortion--essentially, from their

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<sup>17</sup> Gerrity, Jessica C. "Building a Framing Campaign: Interest Groups and the Debate on Partial-Birth Abortion." In *Winning with Words: The Origins and Impact of Political Framing*. Schaffner, Brian F. and Patrick J. Sellers, eds. (New York: Routledge, 2009). 60-77.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 62, 68.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 64

“frames” or frames of reference already in place--but then also attempt to redefine elements of that frame in order to change the public’s mind. They found ideas with “resonance,” which “build on a core belief, grab the public's attention, or cause the public to think about an issue in a new way,”<sup>22</sup> and then used their own language on partial-birth abortion to communicate their views within the context of that resonant idea.

In order to have a platform from which to distribute those ideas to the public, interest groups developed relationships with the media. Their language was crafted with care here, too: they perceived a distinct pro-abortion bias in mainstream media that indicated to them that their views would be reduced to a “single quote.”<sup>23</sup> If that is the case, then the contents of that quote become vitally important, as it is entirely up to that very small sound bite to carry their message. Though some maintained connections with mainstream media in order to combat the effects of that perceived bias, many others also reached out to religious media outlets<sup>24</sup>--a revealing strategy given the extent to which religious objections to abortion have become a major part of the abortion debate. Outreach to religious media gives interest groups access to religious audiences.

Gerrity’s account of interest groups’ reliance on politicians is particularly relevant for this thesis. Not only is politicians’ participation needed in directly backing legislation, but their attention to an issue also garners media attention for the debate, which interest groups can then use to promote their frames to the public.<sup>25</sup> In addition, having politicians using language that frames interest groups’ positions in certain ways also gives those groups a credible source

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<sup>22</sup> Gerrity, “Building a Framing Campaign,” 65

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 70

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 71

or figurehead for their words--in essence, politicians can legitimize ways of thinking about an issue in the media and for the public. As Gerrity puts it, “[a]t the heart of research on framing lie questions about the ability of political elites to affect the role and structure of issue debates.”<sup>26</sup> Since many consider interest groups to represent an extreme, having that credibility can make a substantial difference in the success or failure of a frame. Gerrity reports as well that, at least for the issue of partial-birth abortion, some members of Congress actively worked with interest groups in regular meetings to discuss how to “develop a message.”<sup>27</sup> Even traditionally pro-choice politicians were either themselves convinced by the conservative framing (Gerrity points to Democratic senator Pat Moynihan’s 1996 declaration that “[Partial-birth abortion] is just too close to infanticide”<sup>28</sup>), or were simply unable to effectively challenge the anti-abortion rhetoric and felt pressured by their constituents to support a ban.<sup>29</sup> Clearly, then, this process of framing and redefinition was no accident: interest groups calculated which groups they needed to target and how, and they understood how both framing devices and the public’s understanding of an issue co-construct the terms of a political debate.

Gerrity gives an excellent account of conservative interest groups’ intentional integration of the “brutality frame” into the American cultural consciousness during the debate over the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act, and Ball-Rokeach et al. provide important insight into the evolution of frames used to discuss the abortion debate. All these authors acknowledge that certain actors were able to define the terms of the debate with certain frames. One

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<sup>26</sup> Gerrity, “Building a Framing Campaign,” 74.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 73. Even just the name--“partial-birth” abortion as opposed to “late term” abortion--contributes to that pressure to vote a certain way. Much like it must be difficult to vote against something called the Clean Water Act (what politician would want to go on record as have voted *for* dirty water?), I imagine it would be politically difficult to vote for something that recalls this kind of warping of birth, or the dismembering of a living child.

question that presents itself, then, is why or how any one frame is able to take hold with the American public. Why is that frame or set of values--or any other--able to captivate the national imaginary? Part of it is, as Ball-Rokeach et al. point out, interest groups' access to the media. But, as Gerrity says, none of these actors are working in a vacuum; though Ball-Rokeach may still be correct that the primary reason for these changes is not because of evolving public opinion, there must be a reason that when the media changed, the new frame took hold in the the public consciousness afterward.

Ball-Rokeach et al. partially address the question in the analysis of their results, positing that three processes in conjunction with one another produced an environment that allowed the frame of "equality" to lose ground. First, they assert, equality as a concept became less important to Americans in the 1980s, a phenomenon perhaps related to a decrease in the perceived importance of social equality movements overall: a 1981 survey of Americans' views on 18 values put equality in 12th place, down from its fourth place position ten years earlier.<sup>30</sup> Combined with the "stigma" associated with liberalism and liberal politics in the 1980s and the aftermath of the defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment, equality as a frame became less convincing to Americans.<sup>31</sup> Second, less time and attention was devoted to abortion on the left after *Roe* passed because for them it was absorbed into a larger platform of women's rights, while for anti-abortion activists, it became a centerpiece of single-issue organizations. They put more effort into the media depiction of abortion, then, allowing them to better reach the public and dictate the terms of the debate.<sup>32</sup> Lastly, in the view of Ball-Rokeach et al., the frame of

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<sup>30</sup> Ball-Rokeach et al., "Value-Framing Abortion," 261

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 262

“freedom” simply was not an effective rhetorical counter-argument to the frame of “life.” The pro-choice movement was still vulnerable to accusations of being “anti-Life” as well as of putting the interests of women ahead of those of “unborn children.”<sup>33</sup>

That analysis helps us understand why a frame of “freedom” could not compete with a frame of “family/life,” but it only shows one half of the picture--it discusses only what went wrong with the frame of “freedom,” not what went right with the frame of “family.” The same themes are consistently visible in these discussions: Condit reports images of family and brutalization of fetuses used toward the same ends in the 1970s and 80s. Ball-Rokeach et al. could identify the reconstruction of the issue around family values and biomedical advances as a significant turning point for the abortion debate. Gerrity follows with an analysis from a more recent time period that rests on those same assumptions. “Babies’” pain, their “mothers’” cruelty, and the rejection of family values come into play time and time again from conservative activists, interest groups, and politicians alike. It must then be asked: why is a baby’s pain but not a woman’s pain more convincing or worthy of cultural attention, and why does it serve as such a good focal point for the pro-life position? What is it about the family that lends the abortion debate such moral and emotional gravitas in the mind of the American public? To *what* is that frame appealing such that it could transform the debate to the extent that it has?

George Lakoff’s book *Don’t Think of an Elephant! Know your Values and Frame the Debate: The Essential Guide for Progressives* comes a little closer to answering the question. Lakoff maps the social structure of the family onto the mechanics of the abortion controversy as well as on those of virtually every other modern political debate, asserting that conservatives

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<sup>33</sup> Ball-Rokeach et al., “Value-Framing Abortion,” 263

and liberals each adhere to a different moral code that creates a context for understanding current hot-button debates--what he, like many others, refers to as “frames”, or the “mental structures that shape the way we see the world.”<sup>34</sup> His case is that those moral codes are articulated by particular family structures: both a potential literal way that conservatives and liberals choose to run their families<sup>35</sup> and a metaphorical embodiment of a set of values, those family structures give insight into the premises--the frames--with which people begin when they form an opinion on a political issue.

Conservatives, Lakoff says, operate under a “strict father” family model, which assumes that the world is dangerous and competitive, and children, who are not born with an instinct to do what is right, must be disciplined into developing a sense of moral responsibility by a “strict father.” The strict father requires complete obedience and uses physical punishment on his children from a young age, so that eventually they develop their own internal discipline. That way, the children will be able to both tell right from wrong and pursue their self-interest in order to succeed in a difficult world.<sup>36</sup> By contrast, liberals follow a “nurturing parent” model, which assumes that both parents are responsible for instilling empathy and responsibility toward others in their children, who are “born good and can be made better.”<sup>37</sup> The nurturing parents want to protect their children and raise them to be happy and fulfilled, with plenty of opportunity available to them.

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<sup>34</sup> Lakoff, George. *Don't Think of an Elephant! Know Your Values and Frame the Debate: The Essential Guide for Progressives*. (Vermont: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2004). xv.

<sup>35</sup> Indeed, the “strict father” model that Lakoff outlines is lifted almost directly from a set of bestselling conservative parenting books written by evangelical Christian author and psychologist James Dobson. Lakoff, *Don't Think of an Elephant*, 12-13.

<sup>36</sup> Lakoff, *Don't Think of an Elephant*, 7-8

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 12

According to Lakoff, then, these models explain the way that both conservatives and liberals present their sides of an issue, like marriage or abortion, making them important tools for understanding conservative political rhetoric in the 21st century. By Lakoff's theory, for example, the "strict father" model creates an exclusively heterosexual view of marriage that positions the father as a "manly, strong, decisive, dominating" central figure whom sons can emulate and to whom daughters can look to as an example of what a man should be.<sup>38</sup> The marriage begins a family life, which carries with it the expectation of children.<sup>39</sup> Abortion, relatedly, is a violation of those same constructions of marriage and family: Lakoff asserts that unmarried teenagers and "career women" looking to raise children later in life are the stereotypical cultural figures who get abortions. Teenagers have broken the strict father's "rules," and career women pose a threat to the strict father's authority within the family. Both, therefore, must be "punished" by being forced to carry and raise the child; they should face the "consequences of their actions," which will instill that internal discipline in them. In this way, Lakoff describes both marriage and abortion as proxies for conservative political values with a basis in this sense of morality.<sup>40</sup> The elements of punishment are clearly present in policies that make it more difficult for women to obtain abortions, or in laws that require women to see medically unnecessary ultrasounds of the fetus prior to getting an abortion. We see the shaming and the need for discipline in comments like those of Newt Gingrich in the 2012 GOP debate in Arizona, in which he asserted that in the 2008 election "not once did anybody in the

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<sup>38</sup> Lakoff, *Don't Think of an Elephant*, 48

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 46

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 84-85

elite media ask why Barack Obama voted in favor of legalizing infanticide.”<sup>41</sup> Greg Brannon, the medical director for a non-profit that runs several pregnancy crisis centers in North Carolina, once said that the pregnant women he sees are "little girls [who] don't understand what's going on to their bodies," and he often encourages them to marry their boyfriends.<sup>42</sup> These political issues gain their power from being situated inside of particular understandings of morality, and certain obligations follow from that internal code.

Lakoff’s text provides a good framework for connecting views on seemingly unrelated issues and creates a coherent worldview that can lead to a better understanding of conservative and liberal voting habits; it also gives some insight into why the themes of babies and families are able to gain such traction in the American cultural understanding of abortion. The implications of that framework, however, can be made much more explicit. First, the “nation as family” is by no means a concept that Lakoff himself invented: it is a common societal construction and the metaphorical basis for virtually all nationalist campaigns, and so must be historicized in a way that Lakoff does not offer in his book. In particular, the place that family occupies in nationalist movements or ideas is derived from the fact that the family is the site of both reproduction and socialization of the citizenry. Who is reproducing; with whom they are reproducing; and whether or not those reproducing can instill the “correct” values in their children, defined in this reckoning as the next wave of citizens, all become vitally important questions from the perspective of national identity. Certain appearances, behaviors,

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<sup>41</sup> Presidential Candidates Debates: "Republican Candidates Debate in Mesa, Arizona," February 22, 2012. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*.

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=99556>.

<sup>42</sup> Redden, Molly. “Rand Paul-Backed GOP Senate Candidate Held Rally With Secessionist Group.” *Mother Jones*, December 16, 2013. Accessed November 30, 2016.

<http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2013/12/rand-paul-endorse-greg-brannon-secessionist-rally>



and gender roles become ways to adequately demonstrate “proper” citizenship.<sup>43</sup> That means the rhetorical significance of this family structure metaphor and of the cultural power of the figure of “children” is not just in that it indicates people’s different ideas of themselves as moral agents independent of any context. It reveals competing ideas of what it means to be a member of this nation--what it means to be a citizen and who is enacting that meaning properly. Examining the rhetoric surrounding abortion and family, and the cultural/political backdrop against which that rhetoric is presented, with the explicit goal of uncovering those meanings makes evident what defines a US citizen and who does or does not fit into that definition.

## **METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE**

Clearly, this process of actors responding to and shaping established norms through rhetoric takes place in several arenas that work in concert with one another. This thesis, however, focuses solely on political rhetoric: what conservative politicians’ speech on the topic of abortion indicates about how Americans think of themselves as a nation, and what our society expects women to do to help the nation maintain that sense of self. This is not intended to be an assertion that political discussion is the only or even greatest influence on how we shape the terms of our political issues, or on how the public perceives the abortion debate more specifically. It is worth noting that political rhetoric is itself shaped by the filter of the media, for example: most members of the American public are not usually at the rally, debate, or press conference where these political speeches are taking place--they instead hear

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<sup>43</sup> This point will be discussed further in Chapter 2.

those speeches through the news. As Gerrity pointed out as well, the political rhetoric and media framing combine to create a presentation that legitimizes or undermines certain political ideas--hence the accusation, to give a current example, that news outlets airing large, unmediated excerpts of President Donald Trump's speeches during the presidential election contributed to normalizing his exclusionary and oppressive rhetoric.<sup>44</sup> An academic work with a larger scope would certainly analyze that combined effect, but this thesis had neither the time nor the resources to compile enough news clips to get an accurate measure of how the media presented political issues.

Nevertheless, an examination of rhetoric at a more, in a sense, "macro" level also reveals our cultural sense of who we are as a nation and how we feel we should move forward in the future. Language in the political realm, especially as it relates to public policy, implicitly defines a way that a nation's citizens "ought" to be. If, for example, the US were to pass a law that prohibits abortion--or if US politicians continuously state on a national platform that there is a need for such a law--then, to state the obvious, that is at bottom an assertion that people in the United States should not be able to have abortions. Implicit in the idea that people should not be able to have abortions is that abortions are bad and wrong--that is the reason that they should not be allowed, the reason that societies make laws against certain actions at all. When abortion or any other social issue gets discussed in the political sphere, then, one of the reasons that it is important to see how and to what extent rhetoric impacts how the public thinks about

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<sup>44</sup> For more information, see the Harvard Kennedy School's Shorenstein Center article on the media coverage of candidates in the 2016 presidential election. Patterson, Thomas E. "Pre-Primary News Coverage of the 2016 Presidential Race: Trump's Rise, Sanders' Emergence, Clinton's Struggle." The Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics, and Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. June 13, 2016. Accessed April 27, 2017. <https://shorensteincenter.org/pre-primary-news-coverage-2016-trump-clinton-sanders/>

issues is that the rhetoric reifies certain constructions of how people “ought” to behave. We as a nation, then, take those constructions for granted when deciding what is and is not lawful, or what is and is not right and just. If our societal measure of how people “ought” to be is influenced by how we see them fitting into an exclusive national identity, we perpetuate existing inequalities socially, politically, and legally.

This thesis analyzes specifically 21<sup>st</sup> century conservative political rhetoric on abortion. Between the September 11th terrorist attacks, the Iraq War, the 2008 economic recession, the election of our first black president, and our most recent presidential election, the last sixteen years have been marked by significant social, political, and economic upheaval. Extreme conservatism, sometimes to the level of neo-Nazism, has gained an increasing level of influence both socially and politically over the last few decades and in particular in the last few years. I hope to provide a road map for our evolving sense of self as a nation through the lens of the abortion issue up to the present day in order to come to a better understanding of our current moment.

## Chapter 2

# Frames and Constructions of Citizenship<sup>1</sup>

Rhetoric has real power in political speech. The different frames it uses both appeal to and build underlying ways that the American public understands itself and others, and how they both relate to the nation. If rhetoric simultaneously speaks to and creates a certain national self-image, then where do women fit into that image? What can we discover about American ideas of women and national identity by turning that rhetorical lens toward abortion? In this section, I identify two major frames in use on the topic of abortion during the 21st century: the “brutality” frame and the “protection” frame. Though certainly not the only two frames in use, these two give a good sense of how political rhetoric operates to have a coded discussion of how particular women fit in as members of the nation. Furthermore, they highlight the ways in which women’s place in the nation and value as citizens is racialized--not all women’s reproduction is valued the same way, because not all women or their children are valued as “true” citizens in this country.

### **THE BRUTALITY AND PROTECTION FRAMES**

The dominant rhetorical frame in discussions of abortion is the “brutality” frame that Jessica Gerrity outlines in her essay on “partial-birth” abortion from the last chapter: focusing on harm done to the fetus and the inhumanity of the abortion procedure, at its root it takes the form of the “abortion is murder” assertion with which most people are familiar. Though Gerrity

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix A for a list of significant reproductive rights court cases and laws, 1965-2016, to help orient the reader for Chapter 2.

does not explicitly say so herself, the ability to emphasize the “brutality” of abortion must hinge on the ability to humanize the fetus that is so discussed in the literature--there is nothing to brutalize, after all, if the fetus is viewed only as a mass of cells. Certainly this is plain in President George W. Bush’s (2000-2008) regular use of the phrase “unborn children” and the reference to pregnant women as “mothers”; through humanizing the fetus he was then able to recast late-term abortions as “partial-birth abortions,” and describe it as “a terrible form of violence” that is “directed against children who are inches from birth.”<sup>2</sup> He took care to emphasize the fetus’ defenselessness and he appealed to American values, once telling the Southern Baptist Convention’s annual meeting that “in defending the lives of the weakest and the most vulnerable members of our society, we reflect the compassion and humanity of America.”<sup>3</sup> Bush was not alone: Mike Huckabee once asked,

If you felt something incredibly powerful at Auschwitz and Birkenau over the 11 million killed worldwide and the 1.5 million killed on those grounds, cannot we feel something extraordinary about 55 million murdered in our own country in the wombs of their mothers? Does that not speak to us?<sup>4</sup>

To compare abortion to the Holocaust speaks to a remarkable villainization of abortion and essentially charges the women who choose to obtain them as mass murderers. The fetus is redefined as a small, defenseless person getting brutalized by abortion supporters who do not have within them “the compassion and humanity of America.”

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<sup>2</sup> Bush, George W. “Remarks on Signing the Partial-Birth Abortion ban Act of 2003,” November 5, 2003. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=851&st=culture+of+life&st1=abortion>

<sup>3</sup> Bush, George W. “Satellite Remarks to the Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting,” June 13, 2007. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=75323&st=abortion&st1=>

<sup>4</sup> Brinker, Luke. “Mike Huckabee: Abortion worse than Holocaust, U.S. will “pay the consequences” of gay marriage.” *Salon*, November 25, 2014. [http://www.salon.com/2014/11/25/mike\\_huckabee\\_abortion\\_worse\\_than\\_holocaust\\_u\\_s\\_will\\_pay\\_the\\_consequences\\_of\\_gay\\_marriage/](http://www.salon.com/2014/11/25/mike_huckabee_abortion_worse_than_holocaust_u_s_will_pay_the_consequences_of_gay_marriage/)

More recently, the 2015 videos that circulated from the Center for Medical Progress that supposedly depicted Planned Parenthood officials discussing the sale of fetal tissue led politicians to particularly highlight the the “horror” of the abortion procedure. The GOP candidates in that September’s presidential primary debate almost seemed to be in competition to find the most repulsive way to describe the procedure: “[Hillary Clinton] believes in the systematic murder of children in the womb to preserve their body parts,” claimed Chris Christie. Carly Fiorina followed up, challenging Americans to “watch a fully formed fetus [in the videos] on the table, its heart beating, its legs kicking while someone says we have to keep it alive to harvest its brain.” Not only is the personified fetus--labeled a living “child” here--combined with extreme violence in the description of the procedure itself, but American values are again explicitly called into question. Ted Cruz said a little later, “I would encourage every American to watch the videos. See -- seeing your Planned Parenthood officials callously, heartlessly bartering and selling the body parts of human beings, and then ask yourself, ‘are these my values?’”<sup>5</sup> In the past, George Bush’s answer had always been a resounding “no,” as he hoped that prohibiting late-term abortions would be an important step toward a “culture of life”<sup>6</sup> in America, and that those values would be “affirmed” by “protecting the vulnerable and the weak, the imperfect and the unwanted.”<sup>7</sup> American values thus became united with the pro-life position. Implicit in this kind of discussion on a procedure that

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<sup>5</sup> All quotes from the Washington Post’s transcript of the debate. Washington Post Staff, “Wednesday’s GOP debate transcript, annotated.” *The Washington Post*, September 16, 2016. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2015/09/16/annotated-transcript-september-16-gop-debate/?utm\\_term=.bd2740d4e3d0](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2015/09/16/annotated-transcript-september-16-gop-debate/?utm_term=.bd2740d4e3d0)

<sup>6</sup> Bush, George W. “Remarks on Signing the Partial-Birth Abortion ban Act of 2003”

<sup>7</sup> Bush, George W. “Remarks on Signing the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act of 2002 in Pittsburgh,” August 5, 2002. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=64657&st=Remarks+on+Signing+the+Born-Alive+Infants+Protection+Act+of+2002+in+Pittsburgh&st1=> Indeed, the phrase “culture of life” is a recurring one in a number of his speeches on the topic of abortion.

apparently causes such pain to “unborn children” is the question of what kind of mother would do such a thing to her child--as the fetus is humanized, women who elect to have abortions are demonized.

The tenor of the discussion changes drastically, however, when discussing TRAP laws, or the Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers, which impose regulations that are “different and more burdensome than those imposed on other medical practices.”<sup>8</sup> Two of the more common ones are requiring that abortion clinics meet the same standards as ambulatory surgical clinics and requiring that they have admitting privileges at local hospitals,<sup>9</sup> but they can also include constraints on abortions performed using medication, prohibitions on abortions after 20 weeks or earlier, waiting periods, and rules that make it more difficult for teenagers to obtain abortions without parental consent.<sup>10</sup> These regulations are not in the least necessary: abortion is more safe than a colonoscopy,<sup>11</sup> and so these requirements only represent obstacles to women’s access to healthcare. The modifications that a facility would need to adhere to the standards of ambulatory surgical clinics are expensive or sometimes simply not possible because of how the building is already structured,<sup>12</sup> and can involve specifications as mundane and unnecessary as the size of closets and the color of the paint on the walls.<sup>13</sup> Gaining admitting privileges at a hospital, too, can be next to impossible: hospitals may refuse admitting privileges because they object to abortions, for example. Some hospitals require that doctors

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<sup>8</sup> Center for Reproductive Rights. “Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers (TRAP).” <https://www.reproductiverights.org/project/targeted-regulation-of-abortion-providers-trap>.

<sup>9</sup> Center for Reproductive Rights. “Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers (TRAP).”

<sup>10</sup> Martin, Nina, “The Supreme Court Decision That Made a Mess of Abortion Rights.” *Mother Jones*, February 29, 2016. <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2016/02/supreme-court-decision-mess-abortion-rights>

<sup>11</sup> American Civil Liberties Union. “TRAP Laws FAQ Fact Sheet.” 2. [https://www.aclu.org/files/assets/TRAP\\_FAQ\\_FactSheet.pdf](https://www.aclu.org/files/assets/TRAP_FAQ_FactSheet.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Center for Reproductive Rights. “Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers (TRAP).”

<sup>13</sup> American Civil Liberties Union. “TRAP Laws FAQ Fact Sheet.” 1.

with admitting privileges send a certain number of patients per year to that hospital--since abortion is such a safe procedure, abortion providers could never admit that number. The end result is that clinics that cannot satisfy the requirements are shut down, reducing women's access to abortions and other forms of reproductive healthcare.<sup>14</sup>

Despite that reality, proponents of TRAP laws steadfastly insist that the regulations should be put in place for the sake of women's health and safety, in what I refer to as the "protection" frame. Texas House Bill 2, the bill at the center of the 2016 Supreme Court case *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*, contained a number of these regulations and provides an excellent example of the frame. The bill itself specifies that Health Codes must "contain minimum standards to protect the health and safety of a patient of an abortion facility"<sup>15</sup>; Jodie Laubenberg, the Texas representative behind the bill, also asserted that "House Bill 2...addresses the health and safety for a woman who undergoes an abortion procedure."<sup>16</sup> In the face of repeated questioning about the challenges HB2 would pose to women's access to healthcare, the possibility that women would be unable to return to the clinic for necessary follow-up visits, that the cost would be too burdensome, or that certain medical complications would not count toward exceptions for easier access,<sup>17</sup> Laubenberg refused to answer and simply kept insisting that abortion would be safer. "If there are complications [in the abortion], they would be much closer to a place, or in a facility where they could get better care," she

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<sup>14</sup> American Civil Liberties Union. "TRAP Laws FAQ Fact Sheet." 1.

<sup>15</sup> Texas State Legislature, *House Bill No. 2*, 2013. 1-20. 12.  
<http://www.legis.state.tx.us/tlodocs/832/billtext/pdf/HB00002F.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> "Texas House Session on July 9, 2013. The House Amendments Proposed for House Bill 2." Transcribed by K. Seldon. Copyright 2013, Ana Mardoll. 1-265.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1m189STaj8pnOMm73HHwaaw74Yd6BGooyFHYLki8qRMc/edit>

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* Representative Jessica Farrar's questioning of Laubenberg takes place pages 7-15 in the Google Doc transcript.



claimed; even when presented with questions about the dangers of inaccessibility, she maintained that the “benefit is for the health of the woman.”<sup>18</sup> When the bill was first upheld in the Fifth Circuit, a spokesperson for Greg Abbott, then a Texas gubernatorial candidate, called it “a vindication of the careful deliberation by the Texas Legislature to craft a law to protect the health and safety of Texas women.”<sup>19</sup> Rick Perry summed it up nicely in 2013: “Texans value life and want to protect women and the unborn.”<sup>20</sup> In some ways, it is not so very distant from the brutality frame--it too discusses the cultural “value” on life, humanizes the fetus, and assumes that abortion is at minimum at dangerous procedure, if not a brutal one--but it centers the health and safety of the very same women who in the brutality frame are positioned as murderers. However disingenuously, the rhetorical focus is on women’s health.

## FRAMING AND NATIONALISM

Two rhetorical frames are evident in 21<sup>st</sup> century conservative political speech, then: on the one hand, a “brutality” frame that paints abortion as a gruesome atrocity and villainizes the women who get them, and on the other, a “protection” frame that purports to be altruistically concerned about those same “villainous” women’s health and welfare. It was made clear in the last chapter that different rhetorical devices and frames rely on different frames of reference built both by and for the public. In that case, is it possible that these two frames indicate different frames of reference from which conservative politicians and the American public base

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<sup>18</sup> “Texas House Session,” 10

<sup>19</sup> Sullivan, Gail, “Court upholds Texas’s abortion law, closing 13 clinics.” *The Washington Post*, October 3, 2014. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2014/10/03/court-upholds-texas-abortion-law-closing-13-clinics/?utm\\_term=.2d91e6433865](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2014/10/03/court-upholds-texas-abortion-law-closing-13-clinics/?utm_term=.2d91e6433865)

<sup>20</sup> Marcotte, Amanda, “Abortion and the Myth of ‘Protecting’ Women.” *Los Angeles Times*, August 21, 2015. <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-0821-marcotte-abortion-coercion-20150821-story.html>

their opinions of abortion as a sociopolitical issue? What motivates or builds these two frames, then, and what is the difference between them?

To fully understand these two frames it is necessary to very briefly return to a discussion of how the family fits into nationalist movements. Since the French Revolution, Western European nations have thought of themselves as a national “family,” a tendency that many Asian countries also shared: as a structure that inspires emotional attachment as well as one that includes traditional gender hierarchies, the family could help form a national identity and, in turn, loyalty to that identity.<sup>21</sup> This connection is evident even in references to the fatherland or motherland, or to the mother tongue<sup>22</sup>--the nation itself is a family. Because women were excluded from male-dominated actions like military service and voting that became markers of citizenship, true, full citizenship was often perceived as masculine.<sup>23</sup> Women still, however, occupied places of national importance as the mothers of the nation. In particular, when a nation is united over “language, culture and ethnic descent,” mothers become crucial as “as bearer and educator of the young.”<sup>24</sup> As women’s reproductive capacities are necessary for the continuation of the nation, birth becomes a responsibility, as Theodore Roosevelt made quite plain when he called women who opted out of motherhood “cowardly” and “selfish.” Even more revealing, he compared them to “the man who ‘fears to do his duty in battle when the country calls him.’”<sup>25</sup> In essence, then, as military service is the duty of the male citizen,

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<sup>21</sup> Blom, Ida. “Gender and Nation in International Comparison.” In *Gendered Nations: Nationalisms and Gender Order in the Long Nineteenth Century*. Blom, Ida, Karen Hagemann, and Catherine Hall, eds. 3-26. 8.

<sup>22</sup> Blom, “Gender and Nation in International Comparison,” 16

<sup>23</sup> Pierson, Ruth Roach. “Nations: Gendered, Racialized, Crossed with Empire.” In *Gendered Nations: Nationalisms and Gender Order in the Long Nineteenth Century*. Blom, Ida, Karen Hagemann, and Catherine Hall, eds. 41-61. 45.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 47

<sup>25</sup> Blom, “Gender and Nation in International Comparison,” 17

childbearing becomes the duty of the female citizen, the indication that she is performing citizenship “properly”--she continues the family of the nation on the micro level in her reproduction of her own family. Then, as in, for example, the case of India, it falls to mothers to “generat[e] cultural strength” by “educating children to respect national norms of gendered behavior.”<sup>26</sup>

Families, then, become about the reproduction and socialization of whoever is defined as the citizenry. Loretta Ross observes the impact of this orientation toward reproduction in the modern age: “reproductive politics are about who decides ‘whether, when, and which woman can reproduce legitimately and *also* the struggles over which women have the right to be mothers of the children they bear.”<sup>27</sup> Citizenship, the family, and women’s reproduction are inextricably linked.

## WHITE CITIZENSHIP AND THE BRUTALITY FRAME

Lauren Berlant’s 2005 essay *The Epistemology of State Emotion* argues that political language from the Cold War era forward has been marked by appeals to emotion that encourage the public to consider political ideas to be combinations of “reflexive opinion and visceral or ‘gut’ feeling.”<sup>28</sup> Nuance--most notably in George W. Bush’s presidency, Berlant asserts--is rejected as a “way of knowing” political facts.<sup>29</sup> Far from viewing our political sphere as a location of rational thought, Berlant asserts that it is in fact where an “orchestration of

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<sup>26</sup> Blom, “Gender and Nation in International Comparison,” 9

<sup>27</sup> Ross, Loretta. “The Color of Choice: White Supremacy and Reproductive Justice.” In *The Color of Violence: The INCITE! Anthology*. Sudbury, Julia *et al.* (Cambridge: South End Press, 2006). 61.

<sup>28</sup> Berlant, Lauren. “The Epistemology of State Emotion,” in *Dissent in Dangerous Times*, ed. Austin Sarat. (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2005). 47

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 46-47

*public feelings*” takes place.<sup>30</sup> It is not exactly that emotions have no place in political debates, or that they are not in some contexts valuable modes of understanding to bring to an issue-- rather, Berlant analyzes a style of speech that combines emotion with moral statements about what is true and what is just.<sup>31</sup> In doing so, these politicians then bring an emotional and inarguable “moral clarity” to political issues that does not allow for any kind of “nuance,” as Berlant notes.<sup>32</sup> These emotions either play on the idea of some personal threat, or they emphasize one particular experience as the “correct,” civic way to respond to an event or to that threat.<sup>33</sup> This way, politicians can create a scenario where there is one correct reaction and one correct reality with which to approach these debates, and “good” American citizens will participate in it. In essence, the rhetoric defines the actions and characteristics of American citizenship.

In this style of rhetoric, mass media as well as politicians on both sides of the aisle “mark” certain events-- Berlant takes the September 11th attacks as an example--as significant moments in a collectively understood and shared history.<sup>34</sup> That categorization presumes that the public understands and agrees to interpreting the experience of the event in the same way, and creates a collective out of those who do have that assigned emotional experience of the event (or who adequately perform that experience). When political rhetoric outlines a certain emotional experience as the “way of knowing” or understanding a national event, then, those participating in that emotion are included as members of the nation. They are demonstrating

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<sup>30</sup> Berlant, “State Emotion,” 47. Italics in original.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 48

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 73

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 51

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 49

their citizenship by agreeing to this collective experience of the shared event.<sup>35</sup> If they follow that emotional lead, they are placed in the “emotional stream of collective life,”<sup>36</sup> and their experience of the event will be mediated by “normative moral hierarchies.”<sup>37</sup>

In essence, the rhetorical building of events, ideas, and concepts with this political language is not about facts. Rather, it is about how we as a national collective feel about an event, what defines the national collective, and how it impacts our performance of the citizenship that comes with being a part of that collective. As we have seen with other examinations of rhetoric, it plays on public emotion just as it builds it, and it creates a marker of national identity that “true Americans” follow.

For the purposes of her essay, Berlant examines this style of political speech in order to address what made it possible for Bush to declare war against “Terror,” a feeling, rather than against “terrorists” or “terrorism” as physical people and concepts. Certainly, the 9/11 attacks represent a significant turning point for how we speak about political issues. In that recognition, however, is also a statement about how the event of 9/11 and the surrounding emotional rhetoric opened the door for how the nation perceived (and still perceives) the “American identity” in the rest of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. That same lens sheds light on how George W. Bush and other conservative politicians built the concept of the “family,” how participation in that structure creates certain notions of who belongs to the nation as a “true American citizen,” and what that means for the abortion debate.

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<sup>35</sup> Berlant, “State Emotion,” 49

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 50

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 51

President George W. Bush spoke of families in a way that oriented them toward the national interest during this time of crisis. Nine days after September 11, he addressed a joint session of Congress, along with his “fellow Americans,” and discussed American citizens’ roles in the aftermath of the attacks. He claimed that “Americans are asking, ‘What is expected of us?’”; the primary answer, it turned out, is that the expectation was “to live your lives, and hug your children.”<sup>38</sup> In this way, the family is positioned as a refuge for Americans during a tragedy. That tragedy was made all the more stark by the frequent mentions of sacrifices made by particularly female members of the nation: in his conclusion to that address, he proclaimed, “And I will carry this: It is the police shield of a man named George Howard, who died at the World Trade Center trying to save others. It was given to me by his mom, Arlene, as a proud memorial to her son.”<sup>39</sup> In his 2002 State of the Union address a few months later, he stressed American strength in the face of adversity, opening with the observation that “[a]s we gather tonight, our nation is at war, our economy is in recession, and the civilized world faces unprecedented dangers. Yet the state of our Union has never been stronger.”<sup>40</sup> He went on to discuss the national healing process and victories over the terrorists over the course of the previous four months, and then highlighted the one woman’s loss of her husband in Afghanistan. “Last month, at the grave of her husband, Michael, a CIA officer and Marine who died in Mazur-e-Sharif, Shannon Spann said these words of farewell: ‘Semper Fi, my love.’”<sup>41</sup>

Not only does this rhetorical device effectively recall traditional nationalistic gender roles of

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<sup>38</sup> Bush, George W. “Address to Joint Session of Congress Following 9/11 Attacks,” September 20, 2001. <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbush911jointsessionspeech.htm>

<sup>39</sup> Bush, “Address to Joint Session of Congress”

<sup>40</sup> Bush, George W. “2002 State of the Union Address,” January 29, 2002. <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/stateoftheunion2002.htm>

<sup>41</sup> Bush, “2002 State of the Union Address.” “Semper Fi” is a shortened version of the phrase “Semper Fidelis,” Latin for “always faithful” and the motto of the US Marine Corps.

men protecting the nation and women managing the loss, but it also implies that this national crisis poses a threat to the family that is meant to act as a refuge during that same crisis. When families appeared in his speeches, it was about what was happening to the nation; they became entrenched in the national interest.

Because this family arrangement has such specific roles set aside for men and for women, it is clear that the couple at the head the family must also be heterosexual. It is well known that Bush himself did not support same-sex marriage: in one case, for example, the Supreme Court struck down outdated Texas sodomy laws in *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003), a ruling meant specifically to protect personal relationships.<sup>42</sup> George Bush never commented directly on the case itself, but the issue of same-sex marriage was nevertheless brought to national attention<sup>43</sup>--a few months after the ruling he remarked, "I believe marriage is between a man and a woman, and I think we ought to codify that one way or another."<sup>44</sup>

Representative Jack Kingston of Georgia highlighted the rhetorical connections between same-sex marriage and "proper" families in an appearance on *Real Time with Bill Maher* four days before the midterm elections in 2006: in defending his proposal for abstinence-based sex education up to the age of 29, he claimed that unmarried women aged 19-29 had had 998,000 babies in 2004. Since "we've got birth control everywhere you turn," in his mind, perhaps abstinence would be more effective. Maher asked him why having children born to unmarried

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<sup>42</sup> "Case Briefs," *Lawrence v. Texas*. Accessed May 4, 2016. <http://www.casebriefs.com/blog/law/constitutional-law/constitutional-law-keyed-to-chemerinsky/fundamental-fights-under-due-process-and-equal-protection/lawrence-v-texas/2/>

<sup>43</sup> Greenhouse, Linda. "The Supreme Court: Homosexual Rights; Justices, 6-3, Legalize Gay Sexual Conduct in Sweeping Reversal of Court's '86 Ruling." *New York Times*. June 27, 2003. <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/06/27/us/supreme-court-homosexual-rights-justices-6-3-legalize-gay-sexual-conduct.html?pagewanted=all>

<sup>44</sup> "Bush wants marriage reserved for heterosexuals: 'We ought to codify that.'" *CNN*. October 28, 2003. <http://www.cnn.com/2003/ALLPOLITICS/07/30/bush.gay.marriage/index.html?eref=sitesearch>

mothers might be negative; Kingston responded that, though it may be “old-fashioned” of him, he believes that “Mom and Dad are the best way to raise a child.” “Mom and Dad” must be married, too--when Maher said that people can still be parents without being married, Kingston replied bluntly, “I think they should be married.” Nor can they be a same-sex couple: when Alec Baldwin, also a member of the panel, asked Kingston if it was a “problem for [him] if the dad’s name is Ellen,” Kingston confirmed, “Yup, I’ve got some concerns with that one.” Earlier in the clip, it was pointed out to him that some heterosexual couples also cannot or will not have children. Since his stated objection to same-sex marriage was the couple’s inability to produce biological children, did that mean he would prefer to outlaw those childless heterosexual couples’ marriages as well? Kingston dodged the question, returning to his statistic on 998,000 children born out of wedlock; when pressed further, he flatly stated, “I don’t want to answer your question.”<sup>45</sup> According to this model, the family is all about raising children. If Kingston was not explicit enough on his position, the emphasis on heterosexuality even further orients the nuclear family toward reproduction. It is notable too that Mom and Dad are the best “way” to raise a child, rather than the best “people”--this is about the legitimacy of the reproductive, nuclear unit that “Mom and Dad” represent, rather than about the actual people involved. Again, the rhetoric highlights the absorption of the family’s reproductive power into the national interest.

The family structure that Bush and Kingston rhetorically create bears a remarkable resemblance to the ideal American family post-World War II and into the Cold War. In his

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<sup>45</sup> *Real Time with Bill Maher*. “Alec Baldwin, Roseanne Barr.” Episode 88. Directed by Hal Grant. Written by Carter, Scott, David Feldman, Matt Gunn, and Danny Vermont. HBO, November 3, 2006. 48:13-53:43. Accessed on 10/30/16 from the Paley Center for Media.



famous 1959 “kitchen debate” with Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, then-Vice President Richard Nixon used the traditional American family to assert American superiority over Russia. In his view, the American way of life was defined by the “model” suburban home, which included a male breadwinner and female homemaker who enacted traditional gender roles.<sup>46</sup> Quite different from the generations both before and after them who pushed against the social mores of their day,<sup>47</sup> these Americans were searching for security in an uncertain world, as the Red Scare spread fear of an internal communist threat.<sup>48</sup> The traditional family structure with plenty of children was to provide a refuge and to function as a protection against this communist threat,<sup>49</sup> and Americans were to exert influence over social forces through participating in the home.<sup>50</sup> It is no accident, then, that this was the family unit used to express American superiority. Americans even believed that their marriages “strengthened their patriotism and morals, instilling them with ‘responsibility, community spirit, respect for children and family life, reverence for a Supreme Being, humility, love of country.’”<sup>51</sup> Participating in this family structure “was bolstered by a powerful political culture that rewarded its adherents and marginalized its detractors.”<sup>52</sup> In particular it must be noted that this “middle-class family ideal” was almost exclusively white, and it was white middle class values that formed and

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<sup>46</sup> May, Elaine Tyler. *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*. (Basic Books: 1999). 16.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 9

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>49</sup> May, *Homeward Bound*, 23. In part children were meant to be a comfort, but, even though parents likely wouldn't have said so as such, there was a sense that children were needed to increase the population after so many had died at war.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 14

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 30. From the Kelly Longitudinal Study (KLS), a University of Michigan “survey of 600 white middle-class men and women who formed families” in the early 1940s and were raising their children by the 1950s. (11; 11-12)

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 14

influenced “dominant political and economic institutions” of the time.<sup>53</sup> In essence, white, middle-class nuclear families centered on reproduction became what it meant to be American--they formed the root of the performance of good citizenship.

Clear parallels can be seen between George W. Bush’s idealized family construction and its Cold War predecessor: the same emphasis is placed on the nuclear family and children as a protection against a threat, this time the threat of “Terror.” Rhetoric that positions “Terror” as the enemy, as Berlant points out, dislocates the threat from a specific point and generalizes it so that a nonspecific threat permeates all aspects of American life<sup>54</sup>; in this way, it seems that terrorism becomes the new communism, and must be contained--through participation in family life--just as communism did during the Cold War. Again, then, a white, middle-class family ideal becomes the appropriate way to help contain the threat to the American way of life, once more forming the basis of “proper” civic participation.

An additional layer to that family structure was the thread of evangelical religiosity that Bush brought to his public addresses and to the construction of the ideal citizen. Though the religious Right now seems like an established part of modern politics, evangelicals actually eschewed politics entirely for a large part of the 20th century; Bush’s reliance on and relationship with them was the culmination of several decades of effort to bring those religious figures into the political sphere. From the 1930s to the 1960s, evangelicals avoided political participation and secular society more generally,<sup>55</sup> despite a few lukewarm Republican attempts to take advantage of the community of the church to build a mass movement as a

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<sup>53</sup> May, *Homeward Bound*, 13

<sup>54</sup> Berlant, “State Emotion,” 67

<sup>55</sup> Fetner, Tina. “The Profamily Movement.” In *Handbook of the New Sexuality Studies*, eds. Seidman, Steven, Nancy Fischer, and Chet Meeks. (London: Routledge, 2006), 424.

conservative alternative to labor unions.<sup>56</sup> Fearing the influence of an immoral, sexualized culture, they built their own schools, libraries, and media to propagate their values instead.<sup>57</sup> But in the 1970s, a new religious wave surged in the US, and leaders like Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell, both conservative preachers and businessmen, restarted the effort to bring evangelical Christians into politics.<sup>58</sup> Anti-government rhetoric that spoke out both against economic policies that would supposedly threaten church values<sup>59</sup> and against politicized “emotional” issues like abortion<sup>60</sup> made this new outreach attempt successful. Politically active evangelicals describe their aim as “building strong families”--indeed, they are also referred to as the pro-family movement--but that goal manifests itself in a broader range of conservative political goals and values, from ending stem cell research to allowing prayer in schools.<sup>61</sup> Many of their stated beliefs and objectives focus on sexuality; they are adamantly against abortion.<sup>62</sup>

These groups are so much against abortion, in fact, that “abortionists” were even partially blamed for 9/11. Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson, the same two political leaders who were so instrumental in bringing evangelical Christians into the political sphere, discussed the matter on a September 13, 2001 episode of Robertson’s Christian talk show *The 700 Club*. They claimed that the the 9/11 attacks are only the beginning of the terror to come, and that the attacks were no surprise given how America has angered God. In fact, that and any further

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<sup>56</sup> Phillips-Fein, Kim. *Invisible Hands: The Businessmen’s Crusade Against the New Deal*. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2009), 226.

<sup>57</sup> Fetner, “Profamily,” 424

<sup>58</sup> Phillips-Fein, “Invisible Hands,” 227

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 220-221, 231

<sup>61</sup> Fetner, “Profamily,” 424

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 427

attacks would be “probably what we deserve.” Jerry Falwell blamed the ACLU, along with many other groups:

I know I’ll hear from them [the ACLU] for this, but, uh--throwing out God successfully with the help of the federal court system, throwing God out of the public square, out of the schools--uh, the abortionists have got to bear some of the burden for this because God will not be mocked, and when we destroy 40 million little innocent babies, we make God mad. I-I really believe that the pagans and the abortionists and the feminists and the gays and the lesbians who are actively trying to make that an alternative lifestyle, the ACLU, People for the American Way, *all* of them, who tried to secularize America...I point the finger in their face and say, “You helped this happen.”<sup>63</sup>

Falwell’s pointing finger is fascinatingly telling. All of these groups represent threats to traditional evangelical values, particularly values of marriage and family: the pagans are not Christian, of course; feminists advocate for women to be able to choose non-traditional roles, if they wish. The “gays and the lesbians” present a view of marriage that is contrary to one that is traditionally heterosexual, destabilizing gender roles within that marriage and the concept of the nuclear family. Organizations like the ACLU legally advocate for marginalized groups.

Falwell certainly appeals to a sense of morality in his discussion of these topics, which, as we know from Berlant, is common. More remarkable, though, is the charge that Americans “behaving” the way that these groups do angers God and leaves the country vulnerable to large-scale physical acts of terror. His comments go beyond morality to say that including people in the definition of “American” who have “tried to secularize America” and create an “alternative lifestyle” to those who value God in a particular way will bring about a doomsday-esque wave of terrorist attacks.<sup>64</sup> Clearly, being Christian is positioned as part of being

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<sup>63</sup> The 700 Club with Pat Robertson. September 13, 2001. 1:22. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H-CAdta\\_8I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H-CAdta_8I)

<sup>64</sup> At the very beginning of the segment, Jerry Falwell declares, “What we saw on Tuesday [September 11], as *terrible* as it is, could be miniscule if in fact--if in fact God continues to lift the curtain and allow the enemies of America to give us what we probably deserve.” Pat Robertson follows with “Jerry, that’s my feeling, I think we’ve just seen the, the antechamber to terror, we haven’t even begun to see what they can do to the major population.” The 700 Club with Pat Robertson. September 13, 2001.

American. That “the abortionists” are included in groups of people who more actively reconstruct notions of marriage and family then becomes highly significant: abortion, too, represents a real threat to Christian values that are aligned with what it means to be a “good American.” It becomes one of the ways in which Americans reject a moral and secure family structure and the gendered roles within them.

Falwell and Robertson, it is true, are not themselves politicians, though they were and are heavily involved in politics and Falwell’s organization the Moral Majority was involved in Ronald Reagan’s campaign.<sup>65</sup> Views like theirs, however, were reinforced by the rhetoric of politicians on national platforms. George Bush’s personal and political life were both tightly intertwined with this new religious political movement: in 1985, after years of Bush’s drinking, his career and marriage both doing badly, Bush Sr. and Billy Graham took him aside for a few days of talking through the problems he was facing. By the end of the intervention, Bush had turned to evangelical Christianity and considered himself now “born-again.” Evangelicals remained a central focus of his political attention as well: he assisted his father in reaching out to them during Bush Sr.’s 1988 presidential campaign, and they comprised 40% of his voter base during his own 2000 presidential run.<sup>66</sup> His political speeches reflected this part of his personal life--in that same address to the joint session of Congress, for example, he ended by saying, “In all that lies before us, may God grant us wisdom, and may He watch over the United States of America.”<sup>67</sup> In his 2002 State of the Union Address, he positioned God as a source of comfort during this national tragedy: “...many have discovered again that even in tragedy --

<sup>65</sup> Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands*, 255-256

<sup>66</sup> Wead, Doug. “Interview Doug Wead.” *PBS News*, November 18, 2003. Accessed December 1, 2016. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/jesus/interviews/wead.html>. Doug Wead is “a motivational speaker, a Bush family friend, and was a campaign adviser to George H.W. Bush in the 1988 presidential election.”

<sup>67</sup> Bush, George W. “Speech to Joint Session of Congress”

especially in tragedy -- God is near,"<sup>68</sup> he said solemnly to great applause. His very next sentence was that "[i]n a single instant, we realized that this will be a decisive decade in the history of liberty, that we've been called to a unique role in human events"<sup>69</sup>--his language, especially after the remark about God being near, recalls the idea of being "called" to serve God. Interestingly, he also follows that up with an assertion of the "enemy's" utter disregard for the lives of children, in opposition to American values, proclaiming, "Our enemies send other people's children on missions of suicide and murder. They embrace tyranny and death as a cause and a creed."<sup>70</sup>

One of the more telling examples of this centering of Christianity came shortly after the September 11 attacks: on September 13, 2001, Bush proclaimed that the following day would be a National Day of Prayer and Remembrance. He offered up Christian prayer as a way for the country to mourn together, asking that "the people of the United States" participate in noontime services, vigils, an hourly bell toll. "Every American family and the family of America"--a significant distinction--were to observe the day in order to "[honor] the memory" of the victims, "[comfort] those who lost loved ones," and "find healing and recovery" as we "remain strong and united, 'one Nation under God.'"<sup>71</sup>

Bush's institution of a National Day of Prayer certainly follows from his political background and from the historical increase in the political influence of the religious right, but it is also a clear example of asking Americans to have a specific emotional response to 9/11.

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<sup>68</sup> Bush, George W. "2002 State of the Union Address"

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Bush, George W. "2002 State of the Union Address"

<sup>71</sup> Bush, George W. "Proclamation of the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for the Victims Of the Terrorist Attacks", September 13, 2001.

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbush911memonationaldayofprayerandremembrance.htm>

Creating a National Day of Prayer positions Christian ritual as the “proper” way to mourn, the “proper” way for, to use Bush’s category, “the people of the United States” to respond to the collective national experience of 9/11. Praying and looking to God as a response to the attacks takes on an importance more primary than other daily concerns, even superseding workplace policies (he said that he “encourage[s] employers to permit their workers time off during the lunch hour to attend the noontime services to pray for our land”).<sup>72</sup> This tactic, of course, most directly serves to normalize Christianity and define Muslims both in the US and abroad as the “other.” Offering Christianity as a salve for Muslim terrorists’ “despicable” acts that “seared” “all our hearts”<sup>73</sup> made it quite clear that Christianity stood for US justice and would punish Islam’s wrongdoing. Evangelical Christianity and rituals associated with that faith, then, became a component of a “correct,” civic response that identifies participants as part of a national collective in opposition to Muslims.

The impact of religion being centered in the definition of American citizenship is two-fold: first, it legitimizes the religious view of morality in the public sphere, lending credence to their views of how the nation should conduct itself more widely. The Day of Prayer defines real, patriotic Americans as Christian, and implicitly evangelical; evangelical Christian ideas of permissible marriages or family units being only heterosexual<sup>74</sup> then become legitimized. Their related moral objections to abortion--“visceral...feeling,”<sup>75</sup> rather than nuanced debate--become an accepted “way of knowing” about the issue. Born-again Christianity becomes a

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<sup>72</sup> Bush, “National Day of Prayer”

<sup>73</sup> Bush, “National Day of Prayer.” That phrasing is even itself a way to group Americans together in a single emotional experience.

<sup>74</sup> Fetner, “Profamily,” 427

<sup>75</sup> Berlant, “State Emotion,” 47

recognized political framework and moral authority in a time when issues are fueled by emotional rhetoric instead of fact, and it is that mechanism that allows Bush and other conservative politicians to make flatly false statements about abortion. It does not matter what late term abortions actually are or who gets them, and it does not matter whether there is any scientific backing for the idea that abortion constitutes murder: it matters only that people feel a certain way about abortion, a “moral clarity” of the sort that Berlant points out which becomes interconnected with other measures and performances of “true citizenship.”

Second, this particular brand of evangelical Christianity also reinforces whiteness as a prerequisite for citizenship. Most evangelicals are white--the most recent Pew Research Center poll puts white members at 76% of evangelical Christians<sup>76</sup>--whereas in the minds of the American public, Muslims generally are not. A 2011 report from the Department of Justice details the investigation of more than 800 threats and attacks in the first 6 years after 9/11 against “persons perceived to be Muslim or Sikh, or of Arab, Middle Eastern, or South Asian origin.”<sup>77</sup> Somali-American schoolchildren were even targeted.<sup>78</sup> Religious affiliation and non-white racial or ethnic descriptors are tellingly equated here such that it is clear the two are linked for many Americans. As Chapter 3 will outline further, having an identity like whiteness so thoroughly integrated into the definition of citizenship is not only socially exclusionary but physically dangerous: the same report demonstrates that hate crimes against Muslims

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<sup>76</sup> Pew Research Center. “Evangelical Protestants.” Accessed December 2, 2016.

<http://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/religious-tradition/evangelical-protestant/>

<sup>77</sup> Department of Justice, “Confronting Discrimination in the Post-9/11 Era: Challenges and Opportunities Ten Years Later” (report, Civil Rights Division’s Post-9/11 Civil Rights Summit, George Washington University Law School, October 19, 2011). 8.

[https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/crt/legacy/2012/04/16/post911summit\\_report\\_2012-04.pdf](https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/crt/legacy/2012/04/16/post911summit_report_2012-04.pdf)

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 9. The report does not mention whether those students were actually Muslim, so it is unclear to me whether this was a factor of both race and religion or just of race. It is certainly significant either way, though.



increased by an astounding 1,600% in 2001 as part of a post-9/11 backlash. Much of the violence occurred in the first three weeks after 9/11; though it eventually wound down it never returned to pre-9/11 levels, and after those three weeks regular incidences of violence were replaced with other instances of “discrimination in education, employment, and religious land use.”<sup>79</sup>

A clear picture of the “ideal” citizen of the United States emerges from this analysis: white, heterosexual, middle- to upper-class cisgender men and women who participate in a nuclear family centered on reproduction. Certainly this construction impacts our national perception of the issue of abortion, because moral and religious viewpoints are rhetorically built into the debate. Even further, though, according to the nationalist theory outlined earlier in the chapter, we as a society will value those who can reproduce this “ideal” citizenry. Only one group is able to satisfy that requirement: white middle- to upper-class women. The full implications of these consistent themes of family, children, and violence found in the brutality frame suddenly come into view: the mainstream conversation on abortion focuses on brutalization of “children” by women who are warping what it means to be a “mother” in an effort to pressure white women out of having abortions, because that means fewer white babies born. It is also much less surprising, then, that the brutality frame has become a hallmark of the mainstream conversation about abortion--the issue becomes centered on white women’s experience with it because it is their reproduction in particular that is valued in terms of constructions of white citizenship. Equating fetuses with the children that, as per Bush’s description, we are supposed to protect if we are being “true Americans” combines with

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<sup>79</sup> Department of Justice, “Confronting Discrimination,” 4

framing abortion as “terrible form of violence,”<sup>80</sup> and casts women who get abortions as people who don’t “value life” and don’t protect (their) children like they should. It is shaming--a disciplining tool meant to shame women into following the norms of white motherhood and thereby the norms of white citizenship.

## **BLACK WOMEN’S REPRODUCTION AND THE PROTECTION FRAME**

The brutality frame is by no means unique to the 21st century, and clearly is not unremarked upon in the literature. It does not, however, commonly seem to be recognized as having a racialized component. If the brutality framework can be interpreted as one primarily directed toward white women, the protection framework seems likely to be directed toward non-white women. The TRAP laws that so often serve as the backdrop for rhetoric that falls under the category of the protection framework certainly make abortions far less accessible for everyone, but they particularly impact, among other groups, low-income women<sup>81</sup> and women of color<sup>82</sup>: since TRAP laws so frequently force clinics to close down, women seeking abortions must travel to a different clinic, perhaps up to 200 or 300 miles away.<sup>83</sup> That means they must take several days off work, arrange for childcare, wait at least 24 hours after counseling to receive an abortion<sup>84</sup> (which likely requires time spent in and money spent on a hotel), and drive back. Especially with the addition of other procedures, like the ultrasound that is also often required as a component of women’s “informed consent”--and which can add \$50-\$200

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<sup>80</sup> Bush, “Remarks on Signing the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act”

<sup>81</sup> Planned Parenthood. “TRAP Laws.” <https://www.plannedparenthoodaction.org/issues/abortion/trap-laws>

<sup>82</sup> Omara, Atima. “SCOTUS Abortion Ruling Benefits Women of Color, Low-Income Women.” The American Prospect. <http://prospect.org/blog/tapped/scotus-abortion-ruling-benefits-women-color-low-income-women>

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> The Guttmacher Institute. “Counseling and Waiting Periods for Abortion.” <https://www.guttmacher.org/state-policy/explore/counseling-and-waiting-periods-abortion>

to their bill--women spend a substantial amount of time and money during the process.<sup>85</sup> Very few people are likely to be able to take that in stride, but low-income women of color will be even less likely to have the resources necessary to make those arrangements.

Though women of color as a whole feel the impact of these TRAP laws particularly acutely, I am going to focus specifically on black women and their families. In part it is because the United States has historically had a particular relationship with and desire for control over black women's fertility, from plantation owners using enslaved women's children to increase their sources of labor<sup>86</sup> to the modern preoccupation with the black "welfare queen" and the kind of example she supposedly sets for her children.<sup>87</sup> Much of the state intervention in black women's families is predicated on the notion that they are incapable of caring for and maintaining their own families, and so they must be monitored and their children removed from their care through institutions like the foster care system.<sup>88</sup> The fact that TRAP laws are justified with such paternalistic and protectionist language, then, strengthens the conceptual link to state treatment of black families in particular. In addition, the election of President

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<sup>85</sup> Nash, Elizabeth, and Rachel Benson Gold. "State Abortion Counseling Policies and the Fundamental Principles of Informed Consent." *Guttmacher Policy Review*, Vol. 1, no. 4.

<https://www.guttmacher.org/gpr/2007/11/state-abortion-counseling-policies-and-fundamental-principles-informed-consent>

<sup>86</sup> Roberts, Dorothy. *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1997). 56.

<sup>87</sup> This 1999 study from UCLA's Professor Franklin D. Gilliam, Jr. examines exactly how strong the link between black mothers and welfare really is for white Americans, and finds that the connection is so prevalent that subjects misremembered a news story about a white female welfare recipient as being about a black female welfare recipient. It discusses the intersections of race and gender that the "welfare queen" represents and how the crux of the issue is that these women are seen as un-American people who cannot pass on good values to their children. Gilliam Jr., Franklin D. "The 'Welfare Queen' Experiment: How Viewers React to Images of African-American Mothers on Welfare." *The Nieman Report*, Summer 1999. Distributed by the Nieman Foundation at Harvard. Online version. <http://niemanreports.org/articles/the-welfare-queen-experiment/>

<sup>88</sup> See Roberts, Dorothy. "Feminism, Race, and Adoption Policy." In *The Color of Violence: The INCITE! Anthology*. Sudbury, Julia *et al.* (Cambridge: South End Press, 2006). 42-52. For specific notes about how foster care functions as a racist regulation of black families, see pages 42, 45-46, and 51-52.

Barack Obama in 2008 as our first black president was such a historic moment that took place within this time period, and the backlash to that event thrust America's relationship with black families into the spotlight. I will therefore limit my analysis to how TRAP laws contribute to a systematic devaluation specifically of black families.

President Obama's entry into office meant that for the first time, even though America views itself as a white nation--metaphorically represented by a white family--a black family was actually the figurehead, the global representation of the United States. That disconnect in the national self-image clearly manifested itself in racist comments about Obama and his family that denied his citizenship and took issue with his family's performance of their roles. The "birther movement," for example, was a conspiracy theory that Obama was actually born in Kenya rather than in Hawaii. Part of the conspiracy turned on the assumption that if he were born in Kenya, not only would he be ineligible to be president, but he would very likely be Muslim, even though he has stated many times that he is a Christian. Nearly a year after Obama first took office, Sarah Palin went on a conservative talk show and discussed the idea that Obama's birth certificate should be an issue. Subtly pointing to the American public as the reason it was still under discussion, she commented, "I think the public rightfully is still making it an issue. I don't have a problem with that...I think that members of the electorate still want answers."<sup>89</sup> A forged Kenyan birth certificate for Obama circulated around the internet in the early years of his first term, and despite obvious historical mistakes on the document members

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<sup>89</sup> Smith, Ben. "Palin: Obama birth certificate 'a fair question.'" *Politico*, December 3, 2009. <http://www.politico.com/blogs/ben-smith/2009/12/palin-obama-birth-certificate-a-fair-question-023233>

of the birther movement latched onto it as proof that Obama was not a citizen.<sup>90</sup> The Clinton campaign even disseminated a picture of Obama in Somali dress during a trip to Kenya as a senator in 2006, contributing to other false internet claims that Obama was a Muslim:<sup>91</sup> a YouTube video entitled “Obama Admits He is a Muslim” has well over 17 million views since 2009, and there were even rumors that Obama had been sworn in as a senator on a Quran.<sup>92</sup> Current president Donald Trump was also an enthusiastic participant in the birther movement, once saying,

He doesn't have a birth certificate, or if he does, there's something on that certificate that is very bad for him. Now, somebody told me -- and I have no idea if this is bad for him or not, but perhaps it would be -- that where it says 'religion,' it might have 'Muslim.' And if you're a Muslim, you don't change your religion, by the way.<sup>93</sup>

Over a year after Obama was eventually compelled to release his birth certificate to lay the rumors to rest, Trump sent out a tweet reading, “An 'extremely credible source' has called my office and told me that @BarackObama's birth certificate is a fraud.”<sup>94</sup> Again and again, as the first new president after 9/11 and the first black president in the nation’s history, Obama was accused of being a Muslim and not a proper citizen of the United States. Racist comments made clear the lack of value the country places on his citizenship and his national belonging, and they take on a particularly exclusionary tone given the extent to which Muslims had previously been made into the “other” in this country after 9/11.

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<sup>90</sup> Weiner, Rachel. “Kenyan Birth Certificate: Obama Birthers Latch On To Forgery.” *The Huffington Post*, September 3, 2009. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/08/03/kenyan-birth-certificate\\_n\\_249850.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/08/03/kenyan-birth-certificate_n_249850.html)

<sup>91</sup> MacAskill, Evan. “Clinton aides claim Obama photo wasn't intended as a smear.” *The Guardian*, February 25, 2008. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/feb/25/barackobama.hillaryclinton>

<sup>92</sup> Gore, D’Angelo. “Eight Years of Trolling Obama.” *FactCheck.org*, January 19, 2017. <http://www.factcheck.org/2017/01/eight-years-of-trolling-obama/> This source includes 8 years of examples of attempted smears against President Obama.

<sup>93</sup> Krieg, Gregory. “14 of Trump's most outrageous 'birther' claims -- half from after 2011.” *CNN*, September 16, 2016. <http://www.cnn.com/2016/09/09/politics/donald-trump-birther/>

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

It didn't stop there: Obama's wife and children were also recipients of criticism centered on their performance of citizenship. Michelle Obama was the repeated target of racist commentary, such as being referred to as, among other things, an "ape in heels."<sup>95</sup> Questions of her propriety as First Lady appeared in comments on, of all things, whether or not her clothing showed her arms too much.<sup>96</sup> When photos of the Obama children looking bored at the 2014 turkey pardoning ceremony surfaced, a GOP staffer posted on Facebook,

Dear Sasha and Malia: I get you're both in those awful teen years, but you're a part of the First Family, try showing a little class. At least respect the part you play. Then again, your mother and father don't respect their positions very much, or the nation for that matter. So I'm guessing you're coming up a little short in the 'good role model' department.<sup>97</sup>

There was a clear negative reaction to the idea of a black family being the First Family--consistent effort was obvious from throughout Obama's presidency to discredit their performance as a family and as citizens, despite their personal lives remaining scandal-free. Christianity is not-so-subtly equated once more with citizenship, since Obama's supposed Muslim faith was in part intended to be proof of his citizenship elsewhere. In this last comment, Barack and Michelle's parenting was called into question--it clearly implied that they were unable to properly enact the nationalistic socialization of the new generation of citizens. Obama's family was at the center of a renegotiation of the American self-image. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that the incidence of the TRAP laws that so badly impact women of color soared shortly after he took office: according to the Guttmacher Institute, the 334 regulations

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<sup>95</sup> Narayan, Chandrika. "Official who called Michelle Obama 'ape in heels' gets job back." *CNN*, December 14, 2016. <http://www.cnn.com/2016/12/13/us/official-racist-post-return-trnd/>

<sup>96</sup> Ibanga, Imaeyen. "Obama's Choice to Bare Arms Causes Uproar." *ABC*, March 2, 2009. <http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/story?id=6986019>

<sup>97</sup> "Obama daughters: Malia and Sasha Thanksgiving row apology." *BBC News*, November 30, 2014. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-30265373>

passed between 2010 and 2016 comprise 30% of all the restrictions that have been passed in total since *Roe v. Wade* passed in 1973.<sup>98</sup>

Something of a paradox does emerge from this analysis, however: if we as a society do not value black families and we do not consider them to be aligned with what it means to be a proper citizen--as evidenced in part by how the Obama family was treated and how many TRAP laws passed during after President Obama was elected--then why make it *more* difficult for black women to obtain abortions? The answer is multifaceted, and requires a recognition that there is not a purely linear relationship at work. It is not that society's exclusion of black people in the definition of "citizen" only prevents the reproduction of their families in a singular way--black women and their families are undermined and hampered in their reproduction from several different directions. TRAP laws become part of a long history of reproductive interference from the state that leaves many black women with no real choice to make and few resources to enact any kind of agency over their reproductive decisions. When politicians push for laws that particularly impact black women (and women of color more generally), and the language they use to justify those laws relies so much on paternalistic protectionism, it is difficult not to recall that history. Restricting access to abortion is *an* aspect of state interference, but it is part of a wider system.<sup>99</sup>

The dominant narrative about abortion and family planning focuses on what is not made available or what is regulated to the point of being no longer accessible, but for black women

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<sup>98</sup> Nash, Elizabeth, Rachel Benson Gold, Zohra Ansari-Thomas, Olivia Cappello, and Lizamarie Mohammed. "Laws Affecting Reproductive Health and Rights: State Trends at Midyear, 2016." Guttmacher Institute. <https://www.guttmacher.org/article/2016/07/laws-affecting-reproductive-health-and-rights-state-trends-midyear-2016>

<sup>99</sup> Special thanks to Velvet Ross for suggesting Dorothy Roberts and Loretta Ross to me, as their works were crucial for this section.

the story sounds markedly different. As historian and activist Loretta Ross writes, white women often contend with policies and impediments designed to encourage birth, like lack of access to or restrictions on abortion and birth control, poor sex education, and over-regulation of abortion. Women of color and poor women, on the other hand, have undergone forced sterilization, family caps as a condition of being on welfare, and forced contraception, policies that devalue their motherhood and make it nearly impossible to maintain a family.<sup>100</sup> Ross asserts that birth control and abortion rights movements in both the US and abroad have frequently amounted to blatant population control efforts against people of color, drawing connections between antinatalist policies and efforts abroad by both the Right and the Left to “impose population controls” on developing nations.<sup>101</sup> The Left tends to favor family planning (even if it’s forced) and the Right generally opposes it, but they both use population control to forestall civil conflict led by disaffected young people who find themselves economically disenfranchised as a result of “deliberate underdevelopment.”<sup>102</sup> Black women as people and the children they produce have long been systematically devalued and maligned in this country and abroad.

Far from forcing births, then, black women and teenagers have often found themselves at the receiving end of state-sanctioned attempts to prevent pregnancy. In her book *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*, Dorothy Roberts analyzes the dubious history of Norplant, a contraceptive that consisted of six silicone capsules

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<sup>100</sup> Ross, “The Color of Choice,” 55-56

<sup>101</sup> Ross, “The Color of Choice,” 56

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.



inserted under the skin in a minor surgery.<sup>103</sup> For up to five years, the capsules released small doses of hormones into the user's bloodstream, preventing ovulation and thickening cervical mucus to prevent sperm from reaching the egg.<sup>104</sup> As a contraceptive tool that was 99% effective over the five years, it constituted, as Roberts points out, "a form of temporary sterilization."<sup>105</sup> Mere days after after Norplant was officially approved by the FDA in December 1990, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* published an op-ed proposing that black women should be given financial incentives to use it--since the "[black] people having the most children are the ones least capable of supporting them," author Donald Kimelman claimed, using Norplant could help reduce black poverty. Despite the immediate public backlash from the black community and the *Inquirer's* subsequent apology, journalists and policymakers alike continued to advocate for long-lasting birth control as a population control effort.<sup>106</sup>

Just two years after these initial suggestions, in fact, Baltimore middle and high schools began offering Norplant to their students from the school clinic. Programs that offered Norplant tended to be implemented in schools with primarily black students: in the first school to distribute Norplant (a middle school, no less), 345 of the 350 students were black. Borne from the flatly false assertion that teen pregnancy is a problem particular to the black community and that black single mothers dominate welfare rolls, the contraceptive effort was offered without any need for their parents' consent. Schools pressured black teenagers to use

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<sup>103</sup> As a note: Norplant was discontinued in 2002, and is not the same implant that is now available as a birth control device.

<sup>104</sup> Roberts, Dorothy. *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1997). 105-106.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 106

<sup>106</sup> Roberts, *Killing the Black Body*, 106-107

Norplant rather than other contraceptives.<sup>107</sup> Throughout the 90s black women experienced coercion or pressure to use Norplant--many were not informed of how it worked or what the side effects might be, and one South Carolina study found a significant number of women whose doctors had forced them to put it in after delivering children.<sup>108</sup> Black women were frequently given money for using it and discouraged from coming forward with health problems.<sup>109</sup> It could be also very difficult to persuade clinics to remove the capsules: many doctors refused to remove Norplant even when their patients were experiencing any number of the alarming amount of side effects,<sup>110</sup> or told women they would have to pay for the costly removal themselves.<sup>111</sup> In effect, black women were stripped of their agency and forced or tricked into participating in policies designed to limit their reproduction--and, in the process, were subjected to terrible medical side effects.

Abortion, too, has been used or viewed as a form of population control. Former Secretary of Education William Bennett, for example, once announced in 2005 that "if 'you wanted to reduce crime...you could abort every Black baby in this country, and your crime rates would go down.'"<sup>112</sup> Even pro-choice advocates have frequently asserted the value of abortion as a tool to reduce crime by preventing the birth of future criminals whose mothers were, of course, poor women of color. They have even attributed the drop in crime 18 years after *Roe v. Wade* to the legalization of abortion, under the assumption that, as one often-cited study put it, "women who have abortions are those most at risk to give birth to children who would

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<sup>107</sup> Roberts, *Killing the Black Body*, 113-114

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 125, 129

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 125

<sup>110</sup> Roberts lists "headaches, depression, nervousness, change in appetite, weight gain, hair loss, nausea, dizziness, acne, breast tenderness, swelling of the ovaries, and ovarian cysts." (*Killing the Black Body*, 122).

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 131

<sup>112</sup> Ross, "The Color of Choice," 57

engage in criminal activity.”<sup>113</sup> At risk of stating the ludicrously obvious, these comments and views betray stunning racism: at a time when the mass incarceration of the black community and other communities of color has become such a widespread phenomenon, creating these rhetorical links between black Americans and crime opens a dangerous door. Between 2006 and 2010 at least 148 women in California prisons were forcibly sterilized, with one doctor defending his actions by saying the sterilizations would save the state money in welfare in the future.<sup>114</sup>

Comments and views like these that demonize black women and brand their children as criminal consistently tie back to policies concerning black women’s reproduction. Because they do not align with the whiteness of the construction of the “ideal” citizen, black women’s families and reproduction are sabotaged and villainized. As Roberts notes, the state usually has an interest in protecting fetuses--when fetuses are not protected, then, it is because the state does not value them.<sup>115</sup> Ross reports that the state frequently interferes with the integrity of families of color through forcibly removing children from the home and through the foster care system as well; at the same time, regulations like the Hyde Amendment,<sup>116</sup> which forbids the use of federal funds for abortions, impact poor women of color in particular if they do elect to terminate a pregnancy.<sup>117</sup> Ross asserts that these policies and activist efforts in combination create a system in which poor women of color effectively cannot make any choice about family planning and experience a significant lack of resources. Black women’s reproduction is clearly

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<sup>113</sup> Ross, “The Color of Choice,” 58-59

<sup>114</sup> Johnson, Corey G. “Female inmates sterilized in California prisons without approval.” *The Center for Investigative Reporting*, July 7, 2013. <http://cironline.org/reports/female-inmates-sterilized-california-prisons-without-approval-4917>

<sup>115</sup> Roberts, *Killing the Black Body*, 154

<sup>116</sup> See Appendix 1.

<sup>117</sup> Ross, “The Color of Choice,” 60-61

not valued in the way white women's reproduction just as clearly is, and it is because black women and their children are not viewed as worthwhile citizens of the nation.

In a certain sense, though, both of those brutal pieces of history still seem to indicate that the ultimate goal is solely to prevent reproduction. Since contraceptives and abortion have both been used as tools of population control, why promote TRAP laws that make them less accessible for black women? It seems likely that part of the answer lies in the rhetoric--this thesis argues that abortion as an issue was deliberately cultivated and built to rely on moral and emotional frames, but the purposefulness of the political speech does not mean that for some members of the listening public it is not genuinely a moral question. This creates a few practical concerns for politicians who actively speak or create policy on the issue: as much as they attempt to shape public opinion, politicians are at least to certain extent also beholden to it. They are limited, then, in openly creating laws that facilitate abortions because of the perception of the issue as a moral concern. Because the dominant narrative *is* that abortion is morally wrong and should be prohibited, it becomes difficult to find a legal reason that abortion should be wrong for some women but not for others. In addition, the reality is that abortion does offer women more agency, more space to decide what roles they wish to fill and when; it is highly unlikely that that agency would be afforded to black women when white women cannot have it. Social scientist Barbara Perry reports, for example, that white supremacist hate groups and activists explicitly reject abortion in part because of the freedom it gives white women to reject traditional family roles.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Perry, Barbara. "Defenders of the Faith: Hate Groups and Ideologies of Power in the United States." *Patterns of Prejudice*. Vol. 32, no. 3 (1998). 32-54. 44.

The Guttmacher Institute also reports that unintended pregnancy rates are much higher among poor and low-income women and minority women. In 2011, the unintended pregnancy rate for higher-income white women was less than half that of low-income women; the pregnancy rate for black women was more than double the pregnancy rate for white women. Additionally, the unintended birth rate of poor women was nearly 7 times higher than the rate for higher-income women.<sup>119</sup> A separate, earlier study from the Guttmacher Institute also found that one of the most common reasons women sought abortions was that a baby would inhibit their “education, work or ability to care for dependents.”<sup>120</sup> According to a 2012 ANSIRH<sup>121</sup> study discussed by the New York Times, women who were denied an abortion over the course of the study--and who, after they were turned away from nearby clinics, did not have any other clinics to turn to within 150 miles--were found to be three times more likely to be in poverty in the future.<sup>122</sup> The findings of these studies taken together create a disturbing systemic disadvantage. If many more unintended pregnancies occur in lower-income and minority groups, and being unable to obtain an abortion increases the risk of poverty for women, TRAP laws that make it particularly difficult for low-income women and women of color to obtain abortions creates and/or reinforces poverty in those groups. It also does force them into having more children, which is then rhetorically used as a reason that these women

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<sup>119</sup> “Fact Sheet: Unintended Pregnancy in the United States.” September 2016. Distributed by the Guttmacher Institute. <https://www.guttmacher.org/fact-sheet/unintended-pregnancy-united-states>

<sup>120</sup> Finer, Lawrence R, Lori F. Frohworth, Lindsay A Dauphinee, Susheela Singh, and Ann M. Moore. “Reasons U.S. Women Have Abortions: Quantitative and Qualitative Perspectives.” *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, Vol. 37, no. 3. 2005. 110-118. 110. <https://www.guttmacher.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/journals/3711005.pdf>

<sup>121</sup> ANSIRH: Advancing New Studies in Reproductive Health, an organization working out of the University of California San Francisco.

<sup>122</sup> Lang, Joshua. “What Happens to Women Who Are Denied Abortions?” *The New York Times*, June 12, 2013. <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/16/magazine/study-women-denied-abortion.html?emc=tnt&tntemail0=y&r=0>

are irresponsible and unable to regulate or control their own reproduction. In this way, politicians and interest groups working to make abortion less accessible condemn some women, many of them low-income or black women, to poverty and then villainize them for being impoverished.

It is also sickeningly true that when women who want or need abortions cannot get them legally they will often get them illegally, and when they do it frequently kills them. Stories abound of women with perforated cervixes and peritonitis,<sup>123</sup> some even still pregnant at the end of the ordeal, dying in hospitals from infection<sup>124</sup>: another study from the Guttmacher Institute reports that between the 1920s and the passage of *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, complications from illegal abortions often accounted for 17-18% of all pregnancy-related deaths for all women. Notably, that's just what's reported; the actual number is likely much higher. Worse still, the same study outlines that many more women of color who get illegal abortions die from them than do white women. In the early 1960s in New York City, 1 in 4 childbirth-related deaths in white women were from abortion--a horrifying enough statistic, it rises to 1 in 2 for non-white and Puerto Rican women in the same time and location. Even once abortion became legal for many women it was still not accessible, and from 1972-1974 the mortality rate from illegal abortion for women of color was 12 times the mortality rate for white women.<sup>125</sup> Clearly, then, deaths from illegal abortion are a serious problem when

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<sup>123</sup> Peritonitis: inflammation of the peritoneum, the membrane lining the inner abdominal wall and the organs in the abdomen.

<sup>124</sup> Rickie Solinger provides a particularly grisly example in the story of Estelle Harris, woman in 1955 who died from an illegal abortion after suffering from a severed intestine, a perforated uterus, low blood pressure, shock, peritonitis, inflammation in her abdomen, and more. She "lingered near death" in the hospital for almost a month before she died. Solinger, "Extreme Danger," 339-341.

<sup>125</sup> Gold, Rachel Benson. "Lessons from Before Roe: Will Past be Prologue?" Guttmacher Institute. <https://www.guttmacher.org/gpr/2003/03/lessons-roe-will-past-be-prologue>

abortion is not legal or accessible: in the case of black women in particular, at the same time that black births are prevented through illegal abortions black women die at incredible rates.

Black women and other non-black women of color must navigate a more complex relationship with abortion: as Loretta Ross puts it, they are left fighting for the right both to have and to not have a child.<sup>126</sup> It's a fight for freedom of choice in a way that is completely different from white women, because white women already have the right--really more of a societal imperative--to have children. Over-regulation of abortion certainly serves to encourage white births, as Ross noted, but it also has a clear hand in black deaths. Making abortion less accessible has dire consequences, and for women of color in particular; TRAP laws then become part of a web of policies and social constructs that serve to interfere with black women's reproductive autonomy, and make clear the societal devaluation of their families despite not directly preventing black births. As Dorothy Roberts points out, part of the power of racist family planning policies meant as population control measures is (even "primarily," she says) ideological: these policies legitimize an "oppressive social structure" by rooting the social problems the black community faces in their reproduction, because they distract from other forces that maintain a racial hierarchy in America.<sup>127</sup> It places the blame for black women's oppression on them and their reproductive capacity, in stark opposition to the same reproductive capacity in white women that is so closely connected to performances of "ideal" citizenship.

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<sup>126</sup> Ross, "The Color of Choice," 62

<sup>127</sup> Roberts, *Killing the Black Body*, 102

The brutality and protection frames, though certainly not the sole ones in use, do highlight how we discipline middle- to upper-class white women and adopt paternalistic, punitive attitudes toward low-income black women, and how that relates to the value they have as citizens of this nation. The scope of this analysis only encompassed two categories: middle- to upper-class white women who are encouraged to reproduce but refused, and lower-income black women who were discouraged from reproducing but wanted to. It is important to remember, however, that this construction extends further. Certainly Native American, Mexican American, and Puerto Rican women have also been victims of similar sterilization abuses from the federal government.<sup>128</sup> Homosexuality becomes a force destabilizing traditional constructions of marriage and family that produce certain valued citizens. Class and race combine in this idealized performance of citizenship--certainly being upper-class did not save the Obamas, for example, from being devalued on a national scale. Poor white and black women alike have had their pregnancies criminalized in laws as recent as Alabama's 2006 chemical-endangerment laws<sup>129</sup> or in the fervor over "crack babies"<sup>130</sup>--both extend child endangerment statutes to pregnancies. Mentally ill women have also been forcibly sterilized: among the more famous cases is *Buck v. Bell* in 1927, centered on a white woman named Carrie Buck who was sterilized in a Virginia mental institution, procedures that were performed in order to promote the "health of the patient and the welfare of society." It was concluded that the sterilization did not violate her 14th Amendment rights; one Supreme Court justice even asserted that without laws like Virginia's, the nation would be "swamped with incompetence,"

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<sup>128</sup> Silliman, Jael, Marlene Garber Fried, Loretta Ross, and Elena R. Gutiérrez. *Undivided Rights: Women of Color Organize for Reproductive Justice*. (Cambridge: South End Press, 2004). 9.

<sup>129</sup> Martin, Nina. "Take a Valium, Lose Your Kid, Go to Jail." *ProPublica*, September 23, 2015.

<https://www.propublica.org/article/when-the-womb-is-a-crime-scene>

<sup>130</sup> Roberts, *Killing the Black Body*, Chapter 4.



and furthermore, that “three generations of imbeciles are enough.”<sup>131</sup> In 1973, fourteen-year-old Mary Alice Relf and twelve-year-old Minnie Relf became one of the 100,000 to 150,000 women annually who were forcibly sterilized in federally-funded programs: in the case of the Relf sisters, their illiterate mother had been led to believe that her two mentally ill daughters would be given birth control shots. The young black girls were instead surgically sterilized.<sup>132</sup>

The reorientation of abortion rhetoric to center on the nuclear family is linked to a nationalistic idea of whose families matter and who truly counts as a citizen of the United States. Clearly, this construction of idealized female citizenship only extends fully to white middle- to upper-class women who are able-bodied, participating in the nuclear family, and reproducing white citizens. Since those are the women whose reproduction is valued, this nation places impediments to their ability to prevent or terminate a pregnancy and uses rhetoric in the brutality frame to shame them out of having abortions, lest they be labeled as murderous monsters. For other women, the tactic is quite different: though they negatively impact most women without means, TRAP laws particularly become part of the horrible history of extensive state interference in poor black women’s reproductive choices. Laws that are intended to block access to abortions<sup>133</sup> are justified by supposed aims to ensure women’s health and safety using rhetoric in the protection frame, even though black women and other

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<sup>131</sup> Carrie’s condition was one shared by other members of her family. “Buck v. Bell.” Oyez, <https://www.oyez.org/cases/1900-1940/274us200>

<sup>132</sup> Ko, Lisa. “Unwanted Sterilization and Eugenics Programs in the United States.” PBS, January 29, 2016. <http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/blog/unwanted-sterilization-and-eugenics-programs-in-the-united-states/> and “Relf v. Weinberger.” Southern Poverty Law Center. Accessed April 22, 2017. <https://www.splcenter.org/seeking-justice/case-docket/relf-v-weinberger>

<sup>133</sup> This is no unfounded assertion of mine--listen to the words of Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant when he signed a 2012 admitting privileges bill into law: “Today you see the first step in a movement to ... try and end abortion in Mississippi.” His intentions could not be clearer. Center for Reproductive Rights. “Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers (TRAP).”

women of color die at alarming rates when they do not have access to safe and legal abortions. White families are encouraged so as to reproduce a white citizenry, while black families are hobbled from multiple standpoints to create a hostile environment and to make difficult attempts to have or maintain them.

It is vitally important to understand the differences between the rhetoric brutality and protection frames and to whom they are directed--we need to understand and address the value judgments on our citizens that these frames both reflect and build. Those judgments certainly serve to justify the persecution of non-valued groups, like the black women labeled as incapable, lazy mothers; the black children labeled as criminals; and the same-sex couples who are not centered on reproduction and who redefine the nuclear family. It is also true that blocking abortion access to the "valued" white woman does not do her any favors either. Allowing these value judgments on our citizens to form the bedrock of how we as a nation understand ourselves builds misogyny, racism, classism, and their intersections into our political and legal system. We can never hope to rid ourselves of it if we do not become more literate on the rhetorical frames used to discuss abortion and work to change them.

## Chapter 3

# Hate Groups and Clinic Attacks: A Quantitative Analysis

Most of this thesis has been dedicated to qualitatively analyzing the exertion of power and control over women's choices through the reconstruction of the emotional and sociopolitical terms of the issue of abortion, and what that reconstruction means for other, racialized ideas that Americans hold about citizenship. The discourse around abortion gives insight into an underlying understanding of citizenship and what black and white women's roles are within that understanding--what constitutes their "proper" enactment of citizenship, or if citizenship is even meant to be extended to them at all. In this section, however, I hope to make it clear that the consequences of what a rhetorical analysis can demonstrate do not and cannot simply stay in a more academic realm: there are concrete repercussions that come about from politicians speaking about the issue this way, from that co-constructive process of taking advantage of already-present frames of reference and at the same time building and redefining those frames. Discussing the issue of abortion in a way that recalls those underlying assumptions about who belongs to this nation will produce a continuum of reactions, and some of them will be violent. As such, this chapter primarily uses the rise of hate groups, here used as a proxy for the growth of a far-right, nationalist movement or sentiment, to examine the impact on the number of attacks on abortion clinics and the number of abortions performed in a year. It then secondarily explores other factors that contribute to either disruptive or violent attacks on abortion clinics. It hypothesizes that as the number of active hate groups increases, attacks on abortion clinics will increase and the number of abortions performed will decrease. It

further hypothesizes that if a Republican president is in office or if the previous year was an election year, disruptive and violent attacks will increase.

## INTRODUCTION TO QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

This chapter will begin with an introduction to quantitative analyses and common terms and concepts they use for the benefit of readers who do not have a quantitative background. Though brief and by no means comprehensive, it should be satisfactory for allowing readers to understand the analysis made later on in the chapter. Readers who are more familiar with quantitative work may wish to skip this section.

Quantitative analyses are based on equations called regressions, which measure the extent to which variation over time in a dependent variable can be explained by variation over time in an independent variable or set of independent variables. If a study finds that the movement in the dependent variable is indeed connected to movement in the independent variable(s) over the same period of time, those variables are said to be *correlated* with one another. Any movement that cannot be explained by the independent variable(s) is absorbed by the *y-intercept* (marked as “c” in the charts in this study).

Regressions have several measures of strength, both for the regression as a whole and for its constituent parts. The *adjusted R<sup>2</sup>* gives a sense of the strength of the regression in its entirety: it ranges from 0 to 1, and gives the percentage of the variation in the dependent variable that is explained by the variation in the independent variables. That percentage, then, can demonstrate how strong the connection is between the independent variables and the dependent variable into which the study attempts to gain insight. The closer the adjusted R<sup>2</sup> is

to 1, the stronger the regression is: if, for example, a regression's adjusted  $R^2$  were .80, that would indicate that 80% of the variation in the dependent variable is explained by the variation in the independent variable(s)--in short, that regression would give a good idea of what factors contribute to changes in the dependent variable over time. The number of independent variables in the regression makes a difference for how one should read the adjusted  $R^2$ , though: if a study uses a bivariate regression<sup>1</sup> or regressions that have a small number of independent variables, the adjusted  $R^2$  will likely be lower, as it is unlikely that a singular variable or only two variables explain most or all of the changes in a dependent variable.

Different tests measure the likelihood that individual independent variables in the regression really do impact the dependent variable as hypothesized. When researchers run a regression, they might find that an increase in an independent variable X changes the values of the dependent variable Y by a certain amount; the number in that amount is called a *coefficient*. I assume here that, based on the theoretical reasons explained in previous chapters, there is indeed a relationship between my variables, and so that coefficient will not be equal to zero.<sup>2</sup> A procedure called a *t-test* will find the extent to which that coefficient is in fact *statistically significantly* different from zero. The result of that test, the probability value or *p-value*, indicates the lowest level at which it is true that the coefficient is statistically significant. Different researchers use different levels of likelihood as their cutoff for whether or not a variable is statistically significant, but a common one--and the one that this study uses--is if the p-value is less than 0.05. That means that in repeated samplings, the coefficient in the regression is only likely to randomly come out to be statistically significantly different from zero

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<sup>1</sup> Bivariate regression: a regression with only one independent variable.

<sup>2</sup> That is not always the assumption in every study, but it is the case here.

in 5 cases out of 100, or 5% of the time. At a likelihood that low, it is more plausible that the coefficient really is not equal to zero, rather than that my case is one of the 5 unlikely chance occurrences.

Though regressions can give insight into contributors to events and patterns, it is worth quickly noting that there are limits to the information they can provide. Nothing that a regression can outline is completely certain: there is always the possibility, however small, that the dependent and independent variables are not connected to each other, and the data simply capture an exceedingly improbable event. Even if one concludes that the likelihood of that event is small enough that it is fairly safe to assume that the variables are indeed correlated with one another, however, any correlation found does not denote cause. To use a less academic example, you might create a regression that shows that when it is Wednesday, all of your neighbors put their trash out by the curb. It is not, though, that your neighbors are putting their trash out because of the sheer fact that it's Wednesday--it is because the next day is trash day. The incidence of Wednesday and your neighbors putting their trash out by the curb are correlated, and if the regression is strong enough you might feel secure in establishing that relationship; you must also recognize, though, that no property of Wednesday in itself causes your neighbors to put out their trash. Researchers can often explore various degrees of direct or indirect theoretical connections between variables in their studies, but they have to be careful not to assign direct cause unless there is a very strong theoretical reason for making a causal statement.

## DATA AND METHODS<sup>3</sup>

Though this study pursues several lines of inquiry based on its first findings, its central hypothesis is that hate groups, here used as a proxy for the growth of an extreme far-right, nationalist movement (the dependent variable), will be correlated with a nationwide increase in the number of attacks on abortion clinics and a nationwide decrease in the number of abortions performed (the independent variables). Data for attacks on abortion clinics was taken from the National Abortion Federation<sup>4</sup> and includes both disruptive<sup>5</sup> and violent<sup>6</sup> attacks; data on the number of abortions performed in a year were taken from the Center for Disease Control.<sup>7</sup> All hate groups included in this study are from the Southern Poverty Law Center's database and hate map, and are defined by the SPLC as organizations that "have beliefs or practices that attack or malign an entire class of people, typically for their immutable

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<sup>3</sup> For those interested in the diagnostic tests for these regressions, Appendix B contains test results for serial correlation, heteroskedasticity, and normality of the residuals.

<sup>4</sup> *2015 Violence and Disruption Statistics: a Dramatic Escalation in Hate Speech, Threats, and Violence*. Distributed by the National Abortion Federation. April 2016. Notes on the database are included later in the chapter. <https://5aa1b2xfmfh2e2mk03kk8rsx-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2015-NAF-Violence-Disruption-Stats.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Defined as hate mail/harassing calls, email/internet harassment, hoax device/suspicious package, bomb threats, picketing, and obstruction.

<sup>6</sup> Defined as murder, attempted murder, bombing, arson, attempted bomb/arson, invasion, vandalism, trespassing, butyric acid attacks, anthrax/bioterrorism threats, assault and battery, death threats, kidnapping, burglary, and stalking.

<sup>7</sup> From a combination of the 2004 Abortion Surveillance and the 2013 Abortion Surveillance from the CDC. They continue this study from year to year and add to their previous findings, so the database is continuous despite being from two different documents.

2004: Strauss, Lilo T. , Sonya B. Gamble, Wilda Y. Parker, Douglas A. Cook, Suzanne B. Zane, and Saeed Hamdan. "Abortion Surveillance --- United States, 2004." National Health Statistics Reports. Hyattsville, MD: Division of Reproductive Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. 2007. [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5609a1.htm?s\\_cid=ss5609a1\\_e#tab1](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5609a1.htm?s_cid=ss5609a1_e#tab1)

2013: Jatlaoui, Tara C., Alexander Ewing, Michele G. Mandel, Katharine B. Simmons, Danielle B. Suchdev, Denise J. Jamieson, and Karen Pazol. "Abortion Surveillance — United States, 2013." National Health Statistics Reports, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. Hyattsville, MD. 2016. [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/ss/ss6512a1.htm#T1\\_down](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/ss/ss6512a1.htm#T1_down)

characteristics.”<sup>8</sup> The database includes groups with a variety of social and political motivations, many white supremacist. Specific categories are as follows:<sup>9</sup>

- Klu Klux Klan
- Neo-Nazi
- White Nationalist
- Racist Skinhead
- Christian Identity
- Neo-Confederate
- Black Separatist
- Anti-LGBT
- Anti-Muslim
- General Hate<sup>10</sup>

Worth noting about this database as well is that it does not include groups that exist primarily online.<sup>11</sup> These groups instead are ones that have all participated “real-world” activities such as “criminal acts, marches, rallies, speeches, meetings, [and] leafleting or publishing.”<sup>12</sup> The database also, presumably for these reasons, does not include the online group Army of God, the nation’s most prominent hate group with an entirely anti-abortion platform (as opposed to having abortion be a component of a wider white supremacist ideology).

The study investigates the years between 1997 and 2013<sup>13</sup>: though my databases include data up to 2015 for most variables, the Center for Disease Control only has abortion

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<sup>8</sup> *Hate Groups*. Distributed by the Southern Poverty Law Center. <https://www.splcenter.org/hate-map>

<sup>9</sup> *Active Hate Groups 2016*. The Intelligence Report, Feb. 15, 2017. Distributed by the Southern Poverty Law Center. <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/intelligence-report/2017/active-hate-groups-2016#general>

<sup>10</sup> The “General Hate” category includes “anti-immigrant, hate music, Holocaust denial, and radical traditional Catholic groups. A final ‘other’ sub-category includes groups espousing a variety of hateful doctrines.” *Active Hate Groups 2016*, The Intelligence Report, Southern Poverty Law Center.

<sup>11</sup> *Hate Groups Increase for Second Consecutive Year as Trump Electrifies Radical Right*. The Intelligence Report, Feb. 15, 2017. Distributed by the Southern Poverty Law Center. <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/intelligence-report/2017/active-hate-groups-2016#general>

<sup>12</sup> *Hate Groups*, Southern Poverty Law Center.

<sup>13</sup> Though the rest of this thesis examines solely the 21<sup>st</sup> century, quantitative studies need larger samples to ensure that they’re seeing a fuller picture. Quantitative analysis does not always mathematically work when the sample is too small, but also a too-small sample can make it look like certain trends might be visible that look vastly different when contextualized in a longer period of time.



surveillance data up to 2013. Each regression includes the number of abortions performed in a year as a control variable--it is an effort to capture the extent to which this violence can be attributed to a more objective measure of how prevalent or common the procedure is in the US. The regressions, therefore, must stop at 2013. Many of these regressions also include what are known as *dummy variables* in order to address *serial correlation*. Time series data can sometimes be correlated with itself, since usually a variable does not change substantially over time<sup>14</sup>; one of the ways to eliminate the effect that has on a regression is to add dummy variables, or variables that capture whether or not something is true during a particular year (i.e., is a Republican in office, is it the year 2011, etc). Dummy variables for specific years mark years in the times series data with an obvious spike or drop, both to address serial correlation and to pull out the impact of years that appear to be outliers. Another way to address serial correlation is through *lags*, or variables that capture the relationship between one year in the dependent variable and the value of the independent variable for the previous year. Those variables are marked with a (-1) (i.e., `hate_groups(-1)` is the number of hate groups in the previous year).

## **HATE GROUPS AS A PROXY FOR NATIONALISM**

Hate groups in the United States can function as an excellent proxy for the growth of a right-wing, nationalist sentiment in large part because their very existence is fueled by explicitly nationalist ideology. Hate groups in the SPLC's database certainly embody a racially-motivated nationalist agenda, and even those groups that do not have a specifically anti-abortion platform

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<sup>14</sup> Take, for example, a country's GDP: most of the time, unless something either very good or very bad happens, the GDP will not be identical, but it will be in the same range of values from year to year. That creates a kind of relationship between values in a time series dataset that can impact the accuracy of a regression.

oppose the procedure based on the desire to regain or maintain racial dominance. In her 1998 article “Defenders of the Faith: Hate Groups and Ideologies of Power in the United States,” Barbara Perry asserts that hate groups proliferate when the American identity feels contested, and no longer fully aligns with what the hate group members feel is their collective identity.<sup>15</sup> As they feel that increased immigration, feminism, and other civil rights movements carry the accepted American identity further and further away from the “ideal” of white, heterosexual, Christian men, they “[mobilize] in order to reassert” that “exclusive” identity, sometimes violently.<sup>16</sup> Indeed, Matthew Lyons corroborates her findings in a more recent article that finds that hate groups like ones that could be considered part of what is referred to (rather euphemistically) as the “Alt-Right” are almost exclusively made up of white men.<sup>17</sup> The SPLC finds as well that hate groups’ numbers tend to rise particularly during periods of anti-immigration sentiment,<sup>18</sup> and in just the last two years alone at least 144 newly-formed “nativist extremist” groups have moved away from just protesting against certain immigration policies to take violent action against individual immigrants.<sup>19</sup> These findings are perhaps unsurprising when one considers that 565 out of the 917 groups outlined in the SPLC’s Intelligence Report for active hate groups in 2016 were either the KKK, Neo-Nazi groups, White Nationalists, Neo-Confederates, Racist Skinheads, or anti-immigrant groups. An additional 86

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<sup>15</sup> Perry, Barbara. “Defenders of the Faith: Hate Groups and Ideologies of Power in the United States.” *Patterns of Prejudice*. Vol. 32, no. 3 (1998). 32-54. 32

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Lyons, Matthew N. “Cntrl-Alt-Delete: The Origins and Ideology of the Alternative Right.” Distributed by *Political Research Associates* as an excerpt from the book *Insurgent Supremacists: The U.S. Far Right’s Challenge to State and Empire*. PM Press and Kersplebedeb Publishing. January 2017. 1-22.

<sup>18</sup> *What Fuels Increasing Number of Hate Groups?* The Intelligence Report, Feb. 15, 2017. Distributed by the Southern Poverty Law Center.

<https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/intelligence-report/2007/what-fuels-increasing-number-hate-groups>

<sup>19</sup> Those groups in particular have been known to “popularize bigoted theories and dubious statistics.” *What Fuels Increasing Number of Hate Groups?* The Intelligence Report, Southern Poverty Law Center.

groups were part of that final General Hate category and include racist ideologies as well.<sup>20</sup>

Clearly, then, these hate groups' origins, actions, and ideologies are rooted in an exclusive, white (and particularly male) identity.

Hate groups are an additionally useful proxy for the purposes of this study because hateful or exclusionary rhetoric creates a nurturing environment for hate crime. Perry also asserts that "state practices, policy, and rhetoric have often provided the formal framework from within which hate crime--as an informal mechanism of control--emerges," creating an "enabling environment" that allows hate crime to "flourish."<sup>21</sup> State-level rhetoric that creates a certain public image for marginalized groups, in fact, "legitimizes the mistreatment of these same groups."<sup>22</sup> It has been shown as well that hate groups rhetoric, legitimized by politicians' rhetoric, "speaks to existing popular concerns,"<sup>23</sup> and it is from those concerns that they draw their power--concerns that, as we know from James Hawdon's study (first cited in the introduction) are actively built by the terms that politicians use to speak about groups, issues, or debates. Political rhetoric creates frames of reference for the public, legitimizes hateful frames of reference for hate groups, and allows hateful sentiments to incubate and spread until they incite actual violence.

Lastly, hate groups can indicate components of race and gender in nationalism because those groups recognize the relationship between race and abortion, and they often specifically outline racial "purity" as a reason to engage in anti-abortion violence: they wish to "save the

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<sup>20</sup> My own calculation.

<sup>21</sup> Perry, Barbara. "Anti-Muslim Retaliatory Violence Following the 9/11 Terrorist Attacks." In *Hate and Bias Crime: A Reader*, ed. Barbara Perry. Psychology Press, 2003. 183-201. 189.

<sup>22</sup> Perry, "Anti-Muslim Retaliatory Violence," 188.

<sup>23</sup> Perry, Barbara. "'Button-Down Terror': The Metamorphosis of the Hate Movement." *Sociological Focus*. Vol. 33, no. 2 (2000). 113-131. 119.

white race by controlling the behavior of white women.”<sup>24</sup> Echoing traditional nationalist roles for men and women, hate group members have described men’s roles as that of “providers and protectors,” and women’s roles as that “nurturers” who find fulfillment only through motherhood.<sup>25</sup> As Perry notes, that idea creates the figure of a woman as a “disembodied vessel” for children, a role which these groups believe too many women have chosen to forgo<sup>26</sup>; abortion allows them to have the agency necessary to reject that role, resulting in the loss of valuable white children.<sup>27</sup> Because these roles are co-dependent and created to be complementary to one another, though, if white women do not fulfill their roles, white men’s are also threatened, and it is this instability that helps bring about violent reactions.<sup>28</sup>

In essence, hate groups can operate as an appropriate independent variable for this study because they represent the intersection between nationalist sentiment, the impact of rhetoric, and an understanding of abortion as a racialized concept. When they attack abortion clinics, then, that can be interpreted as an expression of nationalist panic related to white women and women of color’s roles in the national identity; violence becomes a disciplining tool just as the rhetoric does.

## **NATIONAL ABORTION FEDERATION CLINIC VIOLENCE DATABASE**

In order to properly contextualize its results, this study must give a few notes about the National Abortion Federation’s clinic violence database: it is a prominent part of the analysis,

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<sup>24</sup> Center for Democratic Renewal website, as cited by Perry, “Defenders”, 43.

<sup>25</sup> Perry, “Defenders,” 44

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 44, 45

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 45

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 46. Incidentally, it is also clear once again that this nationalist model of gender and family roles requires heterosexuality and cissexuality.

but it has a few caveats that must be considered when examining these regressions. The National Abortion Federation (NAF) is an association of abortion providers in North America. With members including “private and non-profit clinics, Planned Parenthood affiliates, women’s health centers, physicians’ offices, and hospitals” in the US and Canada as well as some hospitals and clinics in Mexico City and Colombia, the organization addresses a wide variety of the needs of women and of these clinics--they provide resources to women wishing to obtain abortions, they create educational programs for those working in healthcare,<sup>29</sup> they develop their own databases on clinic attacks from reports from their members,<sup>30</sup> and they act as a policy advocate for abortion issues.<sup>31</sup>

Their clinic violence database is thorough and consistent: NAF both distinguishes between violent and disruptive attacks in their work and breaks down statistics for varieties of each kind of attack within that category. They release a yearly report that gives the number of attacks in each of these categories in a singular table, and include past findings in each report such that the 2015 study, the most recent study available, has yearly data from 1990 on forwards.<sup>32</sup> These characteristics made it an excellent candidate for use in this study--many other databases either did not have yearly reports, did not make the raw data available, did not have such a thorough collection of types of violence (recording only some types of violent attacks and no disruptive attacks, for example), did not have as many clinics participating in their study, or some combination of all four.

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<sup>29</sup> “About NAF: History.” National Abortion Federation. <https://prochoice.org/about-naf/history/>

<sup>30</sup> *2015 Violence and Disruption Statistics*, National Abortion Federation.

<sup>31</sup> “About NAF: History.” National Abortion Federation.

<sup>32</sup> NAF has been collecting data since 1977, but the table in their now-yearly reports only gives data by year from 1990--all data prior to that is in one entry.

Unfortunately, NAF does not disaggregate their data--statistics from the US and Canada are in the report together. Starting in 2013, NAF adds statistics from Colombia into the same database, again opting not to note which attacks were coming from which source. I contacted both NAF US and NAF Canada to request disaggregated data and was told by both that they do not, as a practice, answer student requests for any additional information than what is on their website. NAF US did not respond at all to my adviser when he made contact.

Despite these shortcomings, from my own research into the database it appears that it is still useful for this study. NARAL Pro-Choice America<sup>33</sup> cites NAF's 2015 study in their webpage on anti-abortion violence, noting that though the database includes entries for both the US and Canada, NAF's members, who supply the statistics for their reports, are mostly from the US.<sup>34</sup> The database, then, should be mainly US data. In addition, a separate page on NAF's website does break down violent attacks by year (starting from 1977) and location, among other variables: it appears to be at least a portion of the same data in the table in their 2015 study, as the page includes a subsection of the same varieties of violent attack noted in the study. By my own calculation, of the 386 attacks included in the categories of Extreme Violence, Murders and Shootings, Arsons and Bombings, and Butyric Acid Attacks on that additional webpage, only 8 occurred in Canada. Only 4 of those 8 incidences happened between 1997 and 2015, the time period used in this study. The total number of anthrax attacks listed, 654, is the same as the number of anthrax attacks NAF has listed for the US as of

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<sup>33</sup> NARAL Pro-Choice America is dedicated to political organization to advocate for abortion rights. They work to mobilize their members and allies to gain the attention of politicians, educate both private citizens and politicians about abortion, create relationships with state-level allies, and support pro-choice politicians in political races. Its sister organization, NARAL Pro-Choice America Foundation, operates as a "policy and education component" to NARAL Pro-Choice America. <https://www.prochoiceamerica.org/about/>

<sup>34</sup> NARAL Pro-Choice America. "Anti-Abortion Violence." <https://www.prochoiceamerica.org/issue/anti-abortion-violence/>

2002--presumably, then, all the anthrax attacks for which the organization has data occurred in the United States. Their 2015 study has anthrax attacks included under the more general heading of “Anthrax/Bioterrorism Threats”; the data on that table matches up with the data on the other webpage until 2002, and lists from there an additional 8 incidences that one might assume are other bioterrorism threats. As Anthrax Attacks is the one heading on the separate webpage that does not break down incidences by location and it only extends to 2002, there does not seem to be any way to easily confirm that those 8 attacks occurred in the US.

Nevertheless, between NARAL’s assertion and my calculations it does seem overall that data from the US overwhelmingly dominates this dataset. I will, therefore, still use it for this study. The major caveat to keep in mind is that however convincing the evidence that the data seem to come mainly from the US, because this data is unavoidably aggregated any findings from this study that rely on that database can function as a starting point but cannot be taken as the final word on the topic.

## RESULTS

Variable	Definition
ALL_ATTACKS	All clinic attacks, both violent and disruptive, that occurred in a year
HATE_GROUPS	The number of hate groups in a year
NUM_ABORT_CDC	The number of abortions performed in a year (according to the CDC)
YR_[YEAR IN STUDY]	A dummy variable for whether or not it is a particular year (i.e. YR1999 is whether or not it is 1999)
DISRUPTIVE_ATTACKS	The number of disruptive clinic attacks that occurred in a year
VIOLENT_ATTACKS	The number of violent attacks that occurred in a year
REPUB_PRES	A dummy variable for whether or not a Republican president is in office
ELECTION_YEAR	A dummy variable for whether or not it is an election year

The first two regressions run initially seemed to confirm this study's central hypothesis: an increase in the number of hate groups does indeed appear to be correlated with a nationwide increase in the number of attacks on abortion clinics and a nationwide decrease in the number of abortions performed in a year.<sup>35</sup>

**Figure 1: All Clinic Attacks and Number of Hate Groups**

Dependent Variable: ALL\_ATTACKS  
Method: Least Squares  
Date: 04/02/17 Time: 15:58  
Sample (adjusted): 1997 2013  
Included observations: 17 after adjustments

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	-53736.74	17108.43	-3.140952	0.0072
HATE_GROUPS	18.35686	5.919688	3.100984	0.0078
NUM_ABORT_CDC	0.061048	0.016265	3.753229	0.0021
R-squared	0.501769	Mean dependent var		9915.824
Adjusted R-squared	0.430593	S.D. dependent var		3420.285
S.E. of regression	2580.916	Akaike info criterion		18.70846
Sum squared resid	93255780	Schwarz criterion		18.85550
Log likelihood	-156.0219	Hannan-Quinn criter.		18.72308
F-statistic	7.049696	Durbin-Watson stat		1.230925
Prob(F-statistic)	0.007621			

**Figure 2: All Clinic Attacks and Number of Abortions Performed<sup>36</sup>**

Dependent Variable: NUM\_ABORT\_CDC  
Method: Least Squares  
Date: 04/19/17 Time: 09:15  
Sample (adjusted): 1998 2013  
Included observations: 16 after adjustments

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	1035895.	36585.29	28.31452	0.0000
HATE_GROUPS(-1)	-311.6173	46.46338	-6.706730	0.0000
YR2006	48948.79	34335.04	1.425622	0.1795
YR2008	57586.26	34767.89	1.656306	0.1236
R-squared	0.794395	Mean dependent var		801303.1
Adjusted R-squared	0.742994	S.D. dependent var		65339.89
S.E. of regression	33124.58	Akaike info criterion		23.86626
Sum squared resid	1.32E+10	Schwarz criterion		24.05940
Log likelihood	-186.9301	Hannan-Quinn criter.		23.87615
F-statistic	15.45477	Durbin-Watson stat		0.936669
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000201			

<sup>35</sup> Note: p-values in these charts are in the column marked "Prob." at the far right in the top section.

<sup>36</sup> YR2006 and YR2008 are examples of the dummy variables included to reduce serial correlation mentioned at the end of the Data and Methods section. Though they are insignificant, the dummy variables remain in the regression because they represent years in which the number of abortions suddenly sharply increased from their overall downward trajectory. Including them allows me to regulate the regression such that I can eliminate serial correlation, even if the coefficients of the variables themselves are insignificant.



Figure 1 demonstrates that each new hate group that formed the previous year brought 18 more attacks on abortion clinics; Figure 2 demonstrates that each new hate group formed in a year resulted in nearly 312 fewer abortions. For regressions with so few independent variables, both are quite strong: the adjusted  $R^2$  suggests that hate groups (with a very small contribution from the number of abortions performed) account for 43% of the variation over time in the number of attacks nationwide and a remarkable 74% of the variation over time in the number of legal abortions performed nationwide.

A new pattern begins to emerge between number of clinic attacks and hate groups, however, when running a regression for either violent or disruptive attacks individually.<sup>37</sup> There are 18 more disruptive attacks on clinics for every new hate group (with, again, a fairly high adjusted  $R^2$  of .45), but there does not seem to be any relationship at all between violent attacks and hate groups: the variable for hate groups is statistically insignificant.

**Figure 3: Disruptive Attacks and Hate Groups**

Dependent Variable: DISRUPTIVE_ATTACKS				
Method: Least Squares				
Date: 04/02/17 Time: 15:59				
Sample (adjusted): 1997 2013				
Included observations: 17 after adjustments				
Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	-53564.12	16360.18	-3.274054	0.0055
HATE_GROUPS	18.37087	5.660788	3.245284	0.0059
NUM_ABORT_CDC	0.060478	0.015554	3.888211	0.0016
R-squared	0.519690	Mean dependent var		9639.118
Adjusted R-squared	0.451075	S.D. dependent var		3331.159
S.E. of regression	2468.039	Akaike info criterion		18.61902
Sum squared resid	85276999	Schwarz criterion		18.76606
Log likelihood	-155.2617	Hannan-Quinn criter.		18.63364
F-statistic	7.573935	Durbin-Watson stat		1.258575
Prob(F-statistic)	0.005897			

<sup>37</sup> Again, for reference, disruptive attacks are defined as hate mail/harassing calls, email/internet harassment, hoax device/suspicious package, bomb threats, picketing, and obstruction. Violent attacks are defined as murder, attempted murder, bombing, arson, attempted bomb/arson, invasion, vandalism, trespassing, butyric acid attacks, anthrax/bioterrorism threats, assault and battery, death threats, kidnapping, burglary, and stalking.

**Figure 4: Violent Attacks and Hate Groups**

Dependent Variable: VIOLENT\_ATTACKS  
Method: Least Squares  
Date: 04/19/17 Time: 22:27  
Sample (adjusted): 1998 2013  
Included observations: 16 after adjustments

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	-339.2428	839.3476	-0.404174	0.6938
HATE_GROUPS(-1)	0.107087	0.285320	0.375322	0.7146
NUM_ABORT_CDC	0.000581	0.000803	0.723899	0.4842
YR2001	578.9859	115.2527	5.023620	0.0004
YR2005	549.0363	111.5213	4.923153	0.0005
R-squared	0.818660	Mean dependent var	280.0625	
Adjusted R-squared	0.752718	S.D. dependent var	216.4986	
S.E. of regression	107.6593	Akaike info criterion	12.44613	
Sum squared resid	127495.7	Schwarz criterion	12.68756	
Log likelihood	-94.56901	Hannan-Quinn criter.	12.45849	
F-statistic	12.41487	Durbin-Watson stat	1.635598	
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000460			

It would appear, then, that the central hypothesis was in fact only partially correct: though there is undoubtedly a substantial correlation between disruptive attacks and the number of active hate groups, there is no correlation at all between violent attacks and hate groups. A new question becomes apparent: what *does* contribute to disruptive and violent attacks if they respond to such differing factors? This study's secondary hypotheses are that if the previous year was an election year disruptive and violent attacks will increase, and that if a Republican president was in office the previous year disruptive and violent attacks will also increase. It does not subscribe to the hypothesis that the number of abortions performed in a year will be statistically significant for either type of attack.

## CONTRIBUTORS TO DISRUPTIVE ATTACKS

These findings show that disruptive attacks are correlated with only two of the contributors tested in this study: the first is hate groups, as demonstrated in the last section, and the second is whether or not a Republican president was in office the previous year. The coefficient in this regression indicates that there are an astounding 3,337 more attacks on

clinics in a year if the nation is under a Republican presidency. The adjusted  $R^2$  is about .82, which is impressively high:

**Figure 5: Disruptive Attacks and Republican Presidency**

Dependent Variable: DISRUPTIVE\_ATTACKS  
 Method: Least Squares  
 Date: 04/19/17 Time: 11:50  
 Sample (adjusted): 1997 2013  
 Included observations: 17 after adjustments

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	-4953.263	4615.134	-1.073265	0.3027
REPUB_PRES	3337.159	779.3410	4.282026	0.0009
NUM_ABORT_CDC	0.016683	0.005899	2.828019	0.0142
YR1999	-7485.125	1593.680	-4.696756	0.0004
R-squared	0.849804	Mean dependent var		9639.118
Adjusted R-squared	0.815143	S.D. dependent var		3331.159
S.E. of regression	1432.231	Akaike info criterion		17.57418
Sum squared resid	26666720	Schwarz criterion		17.77023
Log likelihood	-145.3805	Hannan-Quinn criter.		17.59367
F-statistic	24.51782	Durbin-Watson stat		1.292466
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000013			

The relationship also holds if the regression is run with a variable representing whether or not a Republican president was in office the previous year:

**Figure 6: Disruptive Attacks and Republican Presidency, Lagged<sup>38</sup>**

Dependent Variable: DISRUPTIVE\_ATTACKS  
 Method: Least Squares  
 Date: 04/19/17 Time: 09:23  
 Sample (adjusted): 1998 2013  
 Included observations: 16 after adjustments

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	-6998.995	4515.019	-1.550158	0.1471
REPUB_PRES(-1)	3484.097	741.8763	4.696332	0.0005
NUM_ABORT_CDC	0.019116	0.005830	3.278834	0.0066
YR1999	-7529.995	1493.503	-5.041834	0.0003
R-squared	0.883762	Mean dependent var		9589.938
Adjusted R-squared	0.854703	S.D. dependent var		3434.026
S.E. of regression	1308.978	Akaike info criterion		17.40420
Sum squared resid	20561092	Schwarz criterion		17.59735
Log likelihood	-135.2336	Hannan-Quinn criter.		17.41409
F-statistic	30.41219	Durbin-Watson stat		1.765819
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000007			

Here the regression shows that a Republican president in the previous year is correlated with 3,484 more attacks on abortion clinics in a year, with an even higher adjusted  $R^2$  of .85. In

<sup>38</sup> There's still a slight amount of serial correlation there that I couldn't eliminate--the Durbin-Watson statistic in the lower right corner should be between 0.82 and 1.75, but it's very close.

reading and interpreting this regression, though, it is important to remember that this study encompasses 1997-2013, and George W. Bush was the only Republican president in office during that period. It is unclear from the results of the study whether this pattern would continue with other Republican presidents.

Contrary to the study's hypothesis, the incidence of election years was statistically insignificant,<sup>39</sup> though, as expected, the number of abortions performed in a year was also a statistically insignificant variable: it had no impact at all on the number of disruptive attacks.<sup>40</sup>

## **CONTRIBUTORS TO VIOLENT ATTACKS**

Violent attacks, notably, appeared to be unrelated to most variables this study tested: it was not correlated with the number of active hate groups in the United States or whether or not a Republican president was in office (in either the current year or the previous year); as with disruptive attacks, how many abortions were performed in a year was also insignificant.

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<sup>39</sup> P-value: 0.3504; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup>: 0.098; Coefficient: 1898.365

<sup>40</sup> P-value: 0.1137; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup>: 0.102; Coefficient: 0.019663

**Figure 7: Violent Attacks and Republican Presidency<sup>41</sup>**

Dependent Variable: VIOLENT\_ATTACKS  
Method: Least Squares  
Date: 04/19/17 Time: 22:29  
Sample (adjusted): 1997 2013  
Included observations: 17 after adjustments

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	57.79016	306.4147	0.188601	0.8536
REPUB_PRES	65.50740	54.48138	1.202381	0.2524
NUM_ABORT_CDC	0.000156	0.000387	0.404047	0.6933
YR2001	539.6188	106.0857	5.086631	0.0003
YR2005	511.3200	106.3496	4.807916	0.0004
R-squared	0.836445	Mean dependent var		276.7059
Adjusted R-squared	0.781926	S.D. dependent var		210.0803
S.E. of regression	98.10411	Akaike info criterion		12.24986
Sum squared resid	115493.0	Schwarz criterion		12.49493
Log likelihood	-99.12385	Hannan-Quinn criter.		12.27422
F-statistic	15.34240	Durbin-Watson stat		1.757608
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000115			

**Figure 8: Violent Attacks and Number of Abortions Performed**

Dependent Variable: VIOLENT\_ATTACKS  
Method: Least Squares  
Date: 04/19/17 Time: 22:30  
Sample (adjusted): 1997 2013  
Included observations: 17 after adjustments

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	-34.04990	301.7862	-0.112828	0.9119
NUM_ABORT_CDC	0.000303	0.000374	0.811204	0.4319
YR2001	573.0995	104.1062	5.504953	0.0001
YR2005	550.1472	103.0510	5.338592	0.0001
R-squared	0.816740	Mean dependent var		276.7059
Adjusted R-squared	0.774449	S.D. dependent var		210.0803
S.E. of regression	99.77175	Akaike info criterion		12.24597
Sum squared resid	129407.2	Schwarz criterion		12.44202
Log likelihood	-100.0908	Hannan-Quinn criter.		12.26546
F-statistic	19.31247	Durbin-Watson stat		1.674860
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000045			

The only variable that was significant was whether or not the previous year was a presidential election year: the study found there are 330 more violent attacks in the year after a presidential election (that is, more violent attacks occurred in 2001, 2005, 2009, and 2013). With a very low p-value of 0.0028 and a fairly high adjusted  $R^2$  of 0.44, the relationship seems

<sup>41</sup> YR2001 and YR2005 serve the same purpose that YR2006 and YR2008 did for Fig. 2, but here they also prove to be statistically significant in addition to assisting with eliminating serial correlation.

quite strong. An additional regression separating individual years post-election<sup>42</sup> shows further that most of that impact comes from 2001 and 2004: those each have a very low p-value of 0.0001 and show an increase of over 560 attacks each, while the two dummy variables for 2009 and 2013 are insignificant. The regression becomes even stronger, showing an adjusted  $R^2$  of nearly 0.80.<sup>43</sup>

**Figure 9: Violent Attacks and Years Post-Election<sup>44</sup>**

Dependent Variable: VIOLENT\_ATTACKS  
Method: Least Squares  
Date: 04/19/17 Time: 09:26  
Sample (adjusted): 1998 2014  
Included observations: 17 after adjustments

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	-631.4496	482.6273	-1.308359	0.2118
ELECTION_YEAR(-1)	330.1365	91.44468	3.610232	0.0028
NUM_ABORT_CDC(-1)	0.001020	0.000593	1.720090	0.1074
R-squared	0.516443	Mean dependent var		269.4118
Adjusted R-squared	0.447364	S.D. dependent var		214.1743
S.E. of regression	159.2161	Akaike info criterion		13.13719
Sum squared resid	354896.7	Schwarz criterion		13.28422
Log likelihood	-108.6661	Hannan-Quinn criter.		13.15180
F-statistic	7.476074	Durbin-Watson stat		1.547171
Prob(F-statistic)	0.006182			

<sup>42</sup> I ran one regression with a dummy variable for all election years and another with dummy variables for individual years immediately post-election to investigate the differences between each of those years.

<sup>43</sup> Interestingly, if I remove the variable YR2009 from Figure 10, the adjusted  $R^2$  rises to 0.81. While 2013 is not significant at the 5% level, it is at the 10% level, so it may be having some impact as well.

<sup>44</sup> This is one of the aforementioned lagged variables--this states that the previous year was an election year (so although the variable itself signifies whether or not it is an election year, lagging it--adding the (-1)-- means that functionally it notes whether or not it is 2001, 2005, 2009, or 2013). The number of abortions in a year is also lagged here where it was not in other regressions in a successful effort to eliminate serial correlation.

**Figure 10: Violent Attacks and Years Post-Election (individual variables)<sup>45</sup>**

Dependent Variable: VIOLENT\_ATTACKS  
Method: Least Squares  
Date: 04/20/17 Time: 10:34  
Sample (adjusted): 1997 2013  
Included observations: 17 after adjustments

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	-437.8326	366.7302	-1.193882	0.2576
NUM_ABORT_CDC	0.000786	0.000447	1.756788	0.1067
YR2001	569.7502	99.28207	5.738702	0.0001
YR2005	564.3712	98.70406	5.717811	0.0001
YR2009	12.68200	100.1073	0.126684	0.9015
YR2013	224.2062	123.2670	1.818866	0.0962
R-squared	0.859386	Mean dependent var		276.7059
Adjusted R-squared	0.795470	S.D. dependent var		210.0803
S.E. of regression	95.00875	Akaike info criterion		12.21638
Sum squared resid	99293.28	Schwarz criterion		12.51045
Log likelihood	-97.83922	Hannan-Quinn criter.		12.24561
F-statistic	13.44564	Durbin-Watson stat		1.634464
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000225			

Recall that this was the one variable that proved insignificant for disruptive attacks-- violent and disruptive attacks clearly have very different contributors, and violent attacks in particular seem to be traceable to something more narrowly defined. Of the variables tested here, violent attacks are exclusively correlated with whether or not the previous year was an election year, and disruptive attacks are correlated with the presence of active hate groups and whether or not a Republican is currently or was recently president. This study of course cannot provide an exhaustive list of all the variables that might have a role in either variety of attack, but the relationships between these variables and violent and disruptive attacks seem quite clear nonetheless.

## ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

Overall, the study's initial hypotheses were proven to be correct: a rise in the number of active hate groups is indeed correlated with an increase the number of clinic attacks and a

<sup>45</sup> Something to keep in mind for this regression is that, as one can see in Appendix A, there is possible heteroskedasticity and the residuals are not normally distributed, indicating potential structural issues that make it a bit weaker than the other regressions in this study.

decrease in the number of abortions performed. Upon closer examination, however, it appears that an increase in the number of hate groups, along with the presence of a Republican president, is in fact only correlated with a rise in specifically disruptive clinic attacks. Hate groups have no impact at all on the number of violent attacks, which are instead correlated only with whether or not the previous year was a presidential election year. Significantly, neither type of attack was correlated with the number of abortions performed in a year--that is, neither attack is connected to a measure of the objective extent of the "problem" (as anti-abortion movement members may perceive it).

It may be less surprising that violent attacks are not associated with hate groups upon a more in-depth look into the perpetrators of those crimes. Many of the most violent attacks, like the murders and attempted murders, were committed by individuals who were either not associated with any hate groups or were associated with Army of God, an anti-abortion hate group not included in the database likely because of its primarily online existence and lack of physical chapters.<sup>46</sup> Similarly, by far the biggest incidence of an anthrax threat was in 2001, when Army of God member Clayton Waagner sent a total of 554 anthrax threats to Planned Parenthood across the nation.<sup>47</sup> Their involvement, then, is something that these regressions would not capture. Unaffiliated attackers and Army of God members did, however, seem to parrot the brutality framework rhetoric evident in the last chapter: Clayton Waagner claims in his religious anti-abortion manifesto on the Army of God website a few months before his threats that he will "make war on those who profit from the merciless murder of [God's]

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<sup>46</sup> A selection of attacks as an offer of evidence is included in Appendix C, to avoid including a large footnote here.

<sup>47</sup> *2015 Violence and Disruption Statistics*, National Abortion Federation.



children” and that he would kill anyone who “work[s] for the murderous abortionist.”<sup>48</sup> He also announced loyalty to President Bush, because Bush “hates abortion as I do.”<sup>49</sup> Robert Dear, who shot and killed 3 people and injured 9 more in a 2015 attack on the Colorado Springs Planned Parenthood,<sup>50</sup> also clearly absorbed the Republican rhetoric on the hoax videos distributed by the Center for Medical Progress earlier that year. He reportedly told law enforcement officials “no more baby parts” during questioning,<sup>51</sup> similar to quotes like Arizona Republican Representative Trent Franks’ assertion that “[Planned Parenthood] want[s] to sell the body parts of these little children after they’ve murdered them.”<sup>52</sup> The 2016 Republican party platform, too, states that the party opposes funding Planned Parenthood as long as the organization “sell[s] fetal body parts.”<sup>53</sup> Even though these regressions cannot capture the actions of individual or unaffiliated actors like Waagner and Dear, it is still clear that their violence is influenced by conservative Republican political rhetoric of the time.

It is also reasonable that specifically the hate groups in this database might be connected more to disruptive attacks than to violent attacks. The bulk of the disruptive attacks in the database was picketing--in every year, the incidences of picketing rose into the thousands, sometimes up to 13,000 or more, where there would usually be a few hundred

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<sup>48</sup> Clayton Waagner, “Clayton Waagner's message to the United States,” *Army of God*, June 18, 2001. <http://www.armyofgod.com/Claytonsmessage.html>

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> NARAL, Pro-Choice America. “Anti-Choice Violence and Intimidation.” 1-23. 5. <https://www.prochoiceamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/1.-Anti-Choice-Violence-and-Intimidation.pdf>

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 5, as well as Williams, Pete and Andrew Blankstein, “Planned Parenthood SHooting Suspect Made Comment about ‘No More Baby Parts.’: Sources.” *NBC News*, November 28, 2015. <http://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/planned-parenthood-shooting-suspect-made-comment-about-no-more-baby-n470706>

<sup>52</sup> Bassett, Laura. “The GOP’s War On Planned Parenthood Just Got Awkward.” *The Huffington Post*, March 29, 2017. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/gop-planned-parenthood\\_us\\_58dbfbd7e4b0546370646fd9](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/gop-planned-parenthood_us_58dbfbd7e4b0546370646fd9)

<sup>53</sup> “Republican Platform, 2016.” The Republican Party. [https://prod-static-ngop-pbl.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/DRAFT\\_12\\_FINAL%5b1%5d-ben\\_1468872234.pdf?mid=76323&rid=13486486](https://prod-static-ngop-pbl.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/DRAFT_12_FINAL%5b1%5d-ben_1468872234.pdf?mid=76323&rid=13486486)

harassing calls and perhaps a few dozen incidences of hate mail, internet harassment, suspicious packages, or bomb threats.<sup>54</sup> Again, the groups in the SPLC database are ones that have physical chapters and have participated in “criminal acts, marches, rallies, speeches, meetings, [and] leafleting or publishing”<sup>55</sup>: in other words, a category of actions under which picketing would also fall. That overlap, then, may explain why this study found such a strong correlation between hate groups and disruptive attacks against abortion clinics.

The overlap could also account for why hate groups seem to have such an impact on the number of abortions performed in a year. It is important to remember that the incidences of clinic violence noted in the database are against abortion *providers*, not against any individual patient--one might assume, then, that these disruptive attacks would impact the number of abortions performed, the abortion rate, etc. only insofar as they make clinic workers either unable or unwilling to provide services for pregnant women. Picketing is exactly the kind of attack that would pose difficulty for both parties, however: the prospect of facing off with angry picketers<sup>56</sup> may be enough to convince some women not to come to their appointments, or to hesitate to make an appointment at all. These picketers also frequently try to redirect women to pseudo-medical pregnancy crisis centers that are anti-abortion.<sup>57</sup> Furthermore, picketing can foster bigger incidences of violence that can target the providers. One abortion provider, Dr. James Britten, needed a volunteer escort to enter the clinic where he worked; Reverend Paul Hill, director of the anti-abortion organization Defensive Action, was in the protesting crowd

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<sup>54</sup> *2015 Violence and Disruption Statistics*, National Abortion Federation.

<sup>55</sup> *Hate Groups*, Southern Poverty Law Center.

<sup>56</sup> Picketers who, as per *Madsen v. Women’s Health Center* (1994), have no limits on the kinds of images they can bring to these protests, and as of recently (*McCullen v. Coakley*, 2014) can be very close to the clinic entrances.

<sup>57</sup> NARAL Pro-Choice America. “Anti-Abortion Violence.”

outside the clinic and shot and killed both Britten and the escort. A second escort was injured in the same attack.<sup>58</sup> A year earlier, Dr. David Gunn was also killed during a protest outside the Pensacola clinic where he provided abortions.<sup>59</sup> The threat of this kind of violence discourages physicians from providing abortions and has caused others to stop providing those services as well--retention of staff and physicians alike is a substantial problem for clinics, leaving 89% of counties in the US without an abortion provider.<sup>60</sup>

In 2014, the abortion rate<sup>61</sup> fell to its lowest level since *Roe v. Wade* was passed. A recent study from the Guttmacher Institute shows that this decrease in the abortion rate is correlated with greater contraceptive use and a lower incidence of unintended pregnancies, as opposed to the implementation of draconian new abortion restrictions.<sup>62</sup> This study's findings, however, may complicate this outlook by pointing to some of the more negative reasons that the abortion rate or the numbers of abortions may be falling as well: it seems that legal forces are not the only ones that can make an impact. Informal social controls like this kind of violence (and, perhaps, like rhetoric) can also effectively decrease the number of abortions performed. Though certainly many of these abortions were avoided by the increase in contraceptive use and decrease in unintended pregnancies that the Guttmacher Institute highlights, some of that decrease also seems to be a result of the actions of these hate groups.

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<sup>58</sup> NARAL Pro-Choice America, "Anti-Abortion Violence and Intimidation," 6-7

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 7

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 4

<sup>61</sup> Note that this section addresses the abortion *rate*; the *number* of abortions was the variable used in this study.

<sup>62</sup> Dreweke, Joerg. "U.S. Abortion Rate Reaches Record Low Amidst Looming Onslaught Against Reproductive Health and Rights." Guttmacher Policy Review, Vol. 20. January 17, 2017.  
<https://www.guttmacher.org/gpr/2017/01/us-abortion-rate-reaches-record-low-amidst-looming-onslaught-against-reproductive-health>

The main takeaways from this study are threefold: first, an increase in the number of active hate groups is correlated with a decrease in the number of abortions performed. Second, a rise in hate groups as well as a Republican presidency is linked to a rise in the number of disruptive attacks on abortion clinics. Third, violent attacks are correlated with whether or not the previous year was an election year, but with no other independent variable tested in this study.

Each component of these findings suggests that social factors have more to do with the measurable impact on abortion providers and their patients than is often attributed to them. Certainly it is important to note that neither variety of attack is correlated in the least with the actual number of abortions performed in the same time period, indicating that the perpetrators of these attacks are not motivated by the extent of the “problem,” as they would understand it, itself--that is, the number of abortions may or may not be rising, but it makes no difference in their attempt at exerting an informal social control over the process and over those seeking the procedure. It must be asked, then, what does motivate that direct action. The results that show Republican presidencies and election years as contributors to disruptive and violent attacks may suggest that rhetoric plays a role here--it has already been established that hate groups respond to political rhetoric, and election years could plausibly be a time where that rhetoric is both more forceful and more visible.

The contents of that rhetoric, then, become crucial. When politicians rhetorically construct exclusive versions of citizenship that center a white, middle-class person in a nuclear family as the ideal citizen, hate groups are listening. These groups already recognize the connection between race and abortion and are at least in part explicitly motivated by the idea

that they need to keep the white race “pure,” and are willing to respond violently if the reality of the “average American citizen” strays from the rhetorical political image. Family planning tools like abortion are taken out of the hands of women through unofficial channels of social control like these violent and disruptive attacks, and according to this study they apparently have an impact on the number of abortions performed nationwide. Women are then forced to carry unwanted pregnancies to term, and, since these clinics also provide a certain amount of prenatal care,<sup>63</sup> that also renders them unable to access proper medical care during their pregnancies. The United States, unlike most of the rest of the international community, has doubled its maternal mortality rate between 2000 and 2014; Texas in particular saw a doubling of its maternal mortality rate between 2011 and 2012 alone. Though the researchers responsible for the study noted that it was unlikely to be the sole reason for the increase in deaths, they did discuss the closing of women’s health clinics in Texas from restrictive laws as a possible factor in that sudden change.<sup>64</sup>

Abortion restrictions justified by rhetoric that rests on racialized assumptions about citizenship contribute to increased maternal mortality rates; that same rhetoric legitimizes hate groups’ views and gives them space to enact violent social control over women in order to discipline them into participating in a certain kind of nationalistic family. They react in this way

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<sup>63</sup> See, for example, Planned Parenthood’s web page on the prenatal care they offer: Planned Parenthood, “Prenatal Care.” <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/pregnancy/prenatal-care>

<sup>64</sup> MacDorman, Marian, F., Eugene Declercq, Howard Cabral, and Christine Morton. “Is the United States Maternal Mortality Rate Increasing? Disentangling Trends from Measurement Issues.” *Obstet Gynecol*, Vol 138, no. 3. September 2016. 447-455. Author Manuscript: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5001799/> Study included 48 states and DC. California was not included because it notes maternal mortality rates differently on death certificates, and it actually experienced a decrease in maternal mortality rates. Texas was analyzed separately because its results were so markedly different from the rest of the country, and its high population allowed the researchers to make accurate measurements in that state by itself.

irrespective of whether or not the number of abortions performed is actually increasing--it's a philosophical and social assertion of control. The knowledge that each kind of attack has different factors associated with it--and that none of those factors have anything to do with the frequency of the procedure of abortion being performed--changes the way that we understand the problem and how to address it.

This study should make it clear, though, that there are concrete consequences to speaking about the issue of abortion with this racialized, exclusive understanding of citizenship. Though it is certainly true that not everyone who is swayed by this rhetoric will choose to attack or harass an abortion clinic, these rhetorical constructions do create a continuum of reactions. Hate groups may represent one extreme end of that spectrum, but at the other end are still people who, unconsciously or otherwise, view women as centers of nationalistic reproduction in a racialized context. That perception impacts other aspects of their lives, from how they interact with the people around them to what policies and political candidates they are likely to vote for. The rhetoric used to discuss abortion matters, both on the individual level and on the national level, and we cannot ignore its effects.

## Conclusion

In truth, for much of this process I was having trouble trying to conceptualize what a conclusion to this thesis might look like. This project was meant to function as a road map of the 21<sup>st</sup> century--I aimed to show how a certain performance of citizenship centered on the white family took shape, and how it impacts the way we speak about abortion in that context. Since white families are valued, the mainstream conversation about abortion is designed to shame white women out of having them; black women are more generally hobbled at every turn by laws and systems put in place to “protect women,” so that there is no good reproductive choice to make. When our (particularly conservative) politicians legitimize thinking of black and white women in the context of national belonging, abortion clinics see vast increases in violence, providing substantial evidence that the modes of thinking brought on by this rhetoric and actual human suffering are not unrelated to one another.

But where does that leave us now? My road map leads to this past year, which has seen the rise of a president unlike any other in living memory: his election drastically altered the implications of this project. Writing of such recent history has already been a challenge, since it can be difficult to have the kind of perspective on it that distance can afford and that is necessary to fully evaluate these events’ historical impact. Particularly given President Trump’s unpredictability, it becomes even harder to assess what might happen next.

Certainly, though, it is clear that Trump’s election represents quite the culmination of the 21<sup>st</sup> century’s constant reinforcement of white citizenship and white national belonging. A

national crisis early in the century helped lay the groundwork for a traditional, exclusionary, religious, and white form of citizenship; backlash to having our first black president in part took the form of an increase in laws that further interfere with black women's reproductive autonomy; and directly afterward Americans elected a reality TV star who was one of the loudest voices in the birther movement against that same president. The question of who counted as an American citizen was at the center of Trump's campaign. Right in his announcement of his candidacy, Mexicans were deemed criminals and rapists,<sup>1</sup> and later, once he took office, "bad hombres."<sup>2</sup> Episodes of violent attacks, including one against a homeless Hispanic man that was specifically in response to Trump's anti-immigrant stance, were dismissed as simply a result of the "passion" of his supporters.<sup>3</sup> He promised to be tough on immigration with a wall on the Mexican border<sup>4</sup>; he discussed putting Muslims on a registry<sup>5</sup> and that he would institute a travel ban on them as well (a campaign promise he did in fact keep).<sup>6</sup> Trump's views on race and religion are made quite plain, then, but he also fully confirmed his views on women when the Hollywood Access tape was leaked shortly before election day, showing him talking about being able to "grab" women "by the pussy" because he

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<sup>1</sup> Washington Post Staff. "Full text: Donald Trump announces a presidential bid." *The Washington Post*, June 16, 2015. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2015/06/16/full-text-donald-trump-announces-a-presidential-bid/?utm\\_term=.ef90a7ee4fea](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2015/06/16/full-text-donald-trump-announces-a-presidential-bid/?utm_term=.ef90a7ee4fea)

<sup>2</sup> Agren, David. "'Bad hombres': reports claim Trump spoke of sending troops to Mexico." *The Washington Post*, February 1, 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/feb/02/bad-hombres-reports-claim-trump-threatened-to-send-troops-to-mexico>

<sup>3</sup> Rappoport, Alan. "A Beating in Boston, Said to Be Inspired by Donald Trump's Immigrant Comments." *The New York Times*, August 20, 2015. <https://www.nytimes.com/politics/first-draft/2015/08/20/a-beating-in-boston-said-to-be-inspired-by-donald-trumps-immigrant-comments/>

<sup>4</sup> Washington Post Staff, "Full text: Donald Trump announces a presidential bid."

<sup>5</sup> Phillip, Abby and Abigail Hauslohner. "Trump on the future of proposed Muslim ban, registry: 'You know my plans.'" *The Washington Post*, December 22, 2016. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2016/12/21/trump-on-the-future-of-proposed-muslim-ban-registry-you-know-my-plans/?utm\\_term=.cf9133c51eac](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2016/12/21/trump-on-the-future-of-proposed-muslim-ban-registry-you-know-my-plans/?utm_term=.cf9133c51eac)

<sup>6</sup> "Full text of Trump's executive order on 7-nation ban, refugee suspension." *CNN*, January 28, 2017. <http://www.cnn.com/2017/01/28/politics/text-of-trump-executive-order-nation-ban-refugees/index.html>



was famous.<sup>7</sup> All this, he proclaimed, would “Make America Great Again.” His positions won the support of several white supremacist groups, including none other than David Duke, the former Imperial Wizard of the Klu Klux Klan.<sup>8</sup> Over and over, the whiteness of citizenship and a degradation of women inside that white citizenship are unmistakably highlighted--and so it is no coincidence that this is the same man who made full use of the brutality framework in describing late-term abortion as “ripping the baby out of the womb” during a live debate.<sup>9</sup>

It is certainly true that the popular votes in the 2016 election were split between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, and by the time counting was finished Clinton outstripped Trump in the popular vote by close to 3 million.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, Trump was able to be elected as president of the United States, and it is an inescapable fact that white people<sup>11</sup>--even white women<sup>12</sup>--overwhelmingly voted for Trump. The power of the white voter put a candidate running on a platform of white supremacy into America’s highest office, and that makes a real statement about white Americans’ resistance to a non-white America.

As it became clear how large a role white voters had in electing Trump, several studies emerged that attempted to explain how and why, and over and over again they found links to

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<sup>7</sup> “Transcript: Donald Trump’s Taped Comments About Women.” *The New York Times*, October 8, 2016. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/08/us/donald-trump-tape-transcript.html>

<sup>8</sup> Cancryn, Adam. “David Duke: Trump win a great victory for 'our people.'” *Politico*, November 9, 2016. <http://www.politico.com/story/2016/11/david-duke-trump-victory-2016-election-231072>

<sup>9</sup> Paquette, Danielle. “‘Rip the baby out of the womb’: What Donald Trump got wrong about abortion in America.” *The Washington Post*, October 20, 2016. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/10/20/rip-the-baby-out-of-the-womb-what-donald-trump-got-wrong-about-abortion-in-america/?utm\\_term=.615ea68e7251](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/10/20/rip-the-baby-out-of-the-womb-what-donald-trump-got-wrong-about-abortion-in-america/?utm_term=.615ea68e7251)

<sup>10</sup> Begley, Sarah. “Hillary Clinton Leads by 2.8 Million in Final Popular Vote Count.” *TIME*, December 20, 2016. <http://time.com/4608555/hillary-clinton-popular-vote-final/>

<sup>11</sup> “Reality Check: Who Voted for Donald Trump?” *BBC News*, November 9, 2016. <http://www.bbc.com/news/election-us-2016-37922587>

<sup>12</sup> Chira, Susan. “‘You Focus on the Good’: Women Who Voted for Trump, in Their Own Words.” *The New York Times*, January 14, 2017. [https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/14/us/women-voters-trump.html?utm\\_source=huffingtonpost.com&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_campaign=pubexchange\\_article&mtrf=www.huffingtonpost.com&gwh=3594A4FE952D2FC37FFDC926B3A17699&gwt=pay](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/14/us/women-voters-trump.html?utm_source=huffingtonpost.com&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=pubexchange_article&mtrf=www.huffingtonpost.com&gwh=3594A4FE952D2FC37FFDC926B3A17699&gwt=pay)

underlying hostilities to people of color and women. One study found that the best predictor for whether or not someone voted for Trump was if they believed Obama was a Muslim: an overwhelming 89% of those who did thought more highly of Trump than Clinton, making it a better predictor of voting choice than perceptions of economic mobility, opposition to trade deals, or thinking the economy is worse than it was last year. It even slightly outperformed the variable of whether or not the voter was a Republican.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, once a set of white voters was told that white people would become the minority by 2042, they became much more likely to vote for Trump.<sup>14</sup>

A specific and dangerous form of sexism also seems to have made its mark in a way that almost seems to represent a turning point. Researchers found that Trump was not playing on traditional ideas of gender roles and family values anymore: “benevolently” sexist notions of men’s obligation to protect women were not much correlated with support for Trump,<sup>15</sup> though a separate study did find that belief in traditional gender roles did reduce support for Hillary Clinton in both 2008 and 2012.<sup>16</sup> “Hostile sexism” was closely connected, though: whether or not respondents agreed with statements like “most women interpret innocent remarks or acts as being sexist” and “many women are actually seeking special favors, such as

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<sup>13</sup> Klinkner, Philip. “The easiest way to guess if someone supports Trump? Ask if Obama is a Muslim.” *Vox*, June 2, 2016. <http://www.vox.com/2016/6/2/11833548/donald-trump-support-race-religion-economy>

<sup>14</sup> Major, Brenda, Alison Blodorn, and Gregory Major Blascovich. “The threat of increasing diversity: Why many White Americans support Trump in the 2016 presidential election.” *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, October 20, 2016. <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1368430216677304>

<sup>15</sup> Nelson, Libby. “Hostility toward women is one of the strongest predictors of Trump support.” *Vox*, November 1, 2016. <http://www.vox.com/2016/11/1/13480416/trump-supporters-sexism>

<sup>16</sup> McThomas, Mary, and Michael Tesler. “The Growing Influence of Gender Attitudes on Public Support for Hillary Clinton, 2008-2012.” *Politics and Gender*, Vol. 12, no. 1. March 2016. 28-49. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/politics-and-gender/article/the-growing-influence-of-gender-attitudes-on-public-support-for-hillary-clinton-20082012/883A6387D1D3C581E71D7676A9FD630B>

hiring policies that favor women over men, under the guise of asking for equality” was nearly as accurate in predicting support for Trump as party identification.<sup>17</sup>

I noted in Appendix A, which gives a legal background on the abortion debate and shows an aggressive use of the courts to undermine *Roe*, that the history was not exactly linear-- *Madsen v. Women’s Health Center* in 1994 successfully created a buffer zone outside clinic entrances only to have it effectively overturned twenty years later in *McCullen v. Coakley*. *Stenberg v. Carhart* ruled against prohibiting late-term abortions, but the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act got around the ruling just three years later. So too can we see steps backward from the *Whole Woman’s Health v. Hellerstedt* ruling in 2016: almost immediately after the presidential election results came in, the Ohio legislature attempted to pass a ban on abortions if a fetal heartbeat could be detected, which could be as early as six weeks. Known as the “Heartbeat Bill,” it was a clear use of the brutality framework, and though Ohio governor John Kasich ultimately vetoed the bill he did pass one that prohibited abortion after 20 weeks, making Ohio the 16<sup>th</sup> state to pass such a ban.<sup>18</sup> After the year-long congressional deadlock resulting from the attempt to instate Merrick Garland as a Supreme Court justice, Neil Gorsuch was confirmed instead; though his precise position on abortion is unclear, he is known for his tendency toward originalism in reading the Constitution (which does not protect the right to an abortion)<sup>19</sup> and is

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<sup>17</sup> Nelson, “Hostility toward women is one of the strongest predictors of Trump support”

<sup>18</sup> Somashekhar, Sandhya. “Ohio Governor Vetoes ‘Heartbeat Bill’ But Signs Another Abortion Restriction Into Law.” *The Washington Post*, December 13, 2016. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2016/12/13/ohio-governor-vetoes-heartbeat-bill-but-signs-into-law-another-abortion-restriction/?utm\\_term=.485002f3eb9a](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2016/12/13/ohio-governor-vetoes-heartbeat-bill-but-signs-into-law-another-abortion-restriction/?utm_term=.485002f3eb9a)

<sup>19</sup> De Vogue, Ariane. “Neil Gorsuch on the issues.” *CNN*, March 20, 2017.

<http://www.cnn.com/2017/03/20/politics/neil-gorsuch-abortion-religious-liberty-environment-gun-control/>

described as a “reliable conservative.”<sup>20</sup> As someone who could remain in the Supreme Court for 30 years or more, Gorsuch could make a real difference in where the legal history of abortion goes from here.

We may also be able to expect more attacks on abortion clinics. The results of my study demonstrated that hate groups and unaffiliated actors alike do respond to conservative rhetoric on abortion, and the incidence of attacks increases at times when that rhetoric may be more prevalent. The Southern Poverty Law Center logged 1,372 reported bias incidents between November 9, 2016 and February 7, 2017. Mosques and synagogues have been targeted; queer couples have been harassed; white nationalist flyers are circulating. Anti-immigrant incidents were the most reported in their list.<sup>21</sup> Given the clear links between race and abortion in the view of white supremacist groups, it is not far-fetched to prepare for further attacks.

A value judgment on citizens of the United States is made clear in the treatment of the issue of abortion and beyond. We have arrived at a moment where these judgments and assessments are particularly blatant, though certainly not new--activism and advocacy truly are key in the US political climate as of this writing. But activist movements should be mindful of what the rhetoric can show about national assumptions of citizenship that are at work in order to dismantle them--and part of that dismantling is to ensure that the same assumptions and centering of whiteness do not happen within the movements themselves. As Loretta Ross has already written, reproductive rights movements need to move to a “reproductive justice”

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<sup>20</sup> Liptak, Adam and Matt Flegenheimer. “Neil Gorsuch Confirmed by Senate as Supreme Court Justice.” *The New York Times*, April 7, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/07/us/politics/neil-gorsuch-supreme-court.html>

<sup>21</sup> Hatewatch Staff. “Post-Election Bias Incidents Up to 1,372; New Collaboration with ProPublica.” The Southern Poverty Law Center: Hatewatch. <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2017/02/10/post-election-bias-incidents-1372-new-collaboration-propublica>

framework, including the needs of women of color and recognizing the differences in how groups of women interact with the issue of abortion.<sup>22</sup> Understanding how conservative rhetoric on abortion speaks to racialized constructions of citizenship and motherhood, and creating inclusive movements to address those constructions, is crucial for future abortion advocacy.

Those constructions are just as visible, in some cases perhaps even more blatant, in the present day. In February 2017, Justin Humphrey, a Republican member of the Oklahoma state legislature, introduced a bill that required women seeking an abortion to first obtain consent from their partners. According to him, women far too often make the decision by themselves with the idea that they control their own bodies:

“I understand that they feel like that is their body. I feel like it is a separate — what I call them is, is you’re a ‘host.’ And you know when you enter into a relationship you’re going to be that host and so, you know, if you pre-know that then take all precautions and don’t get pregnant. So that’s where I’m at. I’m like, hey, your body is your body and be responsible with it. But after you’re irresponsible then don’t claim, well, I can just go and do this with another body, when you’re the host and you invited that in.”<sup>23</sup>

Pregnancy again strips women of their agency and ownership of their bodies: they are now considered “irresponsible” “hosts,” just as our doctor from the 1950s in the introduction thought of them as “uterus[es] surrounded by a supporting organism and a directing personality.” Precisely the same ideas are still vocalized over 50 years later. These notions of womanhood and women’s place have not gone anywhere. It is now imperative to be cognizant of this rhetoric, understand the persuasive power it has, and work against the underlying ideas of women, motherhood, and racialized notions of citizenship that it clearly shows.

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<sup>22</sup> Ross, “The Color of Choice,” 62-65

<sup>23</sup> Ryan, Lisa. “Oklahoma Anti-Abortion Lawmaker Says Women Are Merely ‘Hosts.’” *New York Magazine: The Cut*, February 13, 2017. <http://nymag.com/thecut/2017/02/oklahoma-anti-abortion-lawmaker-says-women-are-hosts.html>

## Appendix A: Significant Reproductive Rights Cases and Laws, 1965-2016

This brief section provides a selection of cases to serve as a historical guide for Chapter 2.<sup>1</sup>

*Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965): Ruled that married couples had the right to privacy in their marriages and could therefore use contraception.

*Eisenstadt v. Baird* (1972): Extended the right to contraceptives to single people.

*Roe v. Wade* (1973): Landmark case legalizing abortion, establishing abortion as a right before fetus is “viable.”

*Doe v. Bolton*: (1973): Ruled same day as *Roe v. Wade*, and confirmed the right to an abortion. It struck down several of Georgia’s restrictions on abortion, including the prohibition of abortions in Georgia for non-residents as well as laws that only allowed abortion under certain extreme circumstances.

*Hyde Amendment* (1976): Prohibited the use of federal funds for abortion except in cases of rape or incest, or if woman’s life is in danger.<sup>2</sup>

*Webster v. Reproductive Health Services* (1989): Upheld a number of Missouri regulations in a statute that began with the assertion that “[t]he life of each human being begins at conception.” The regulations had been struck down in lower courts, but the Supreme Court upheld that public employees and facilities did not have to perform abortions as well as laws requiring viability testing and counseling for the woman seeking an abortion. The Court asserted the ruling was not meant to undermine *Roe*.

*Rust v. Sullivan* (1991): Upheld restrictions on funding for abortions, ruling that the fact that the government assists with family planning services does not make it responsible for financially assisting with abortions.

*Planned Parenthood of Southern Pennsylvania v. Casey* (1992): Upheld most of a list of recent Pennsylvania regulations, including requiring “informed consent,” a 24-hour waiting period, and parental consent for minors. Overall, the Court ruled that abortion regulations in general can

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<sup>1</sup> All case summaries, unless otherwise noted, are from *Oyez*, a project from Cornell’s Legal Information Institute, the Chicago-Kent College of Law, and Justia.com that provides court decisions for Supreme Court cases (<https://www.oyez.org/>). For a more in-depth legal history, see Hull, N.E.H. and Peter Charles Hoffer. *Roe v. Wade: The Abortion Rights Controversy in American History* (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 2001). Note that Hull and Hoffer’s work only includes the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>2</sup> Rovner, Julie. “Abortion Funding Ban Has Evolved Over The Years.” *NPR*, December 14, 2009. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=121402281>

stand as long as they don't pose an "undue burden" to the right to an abortion, vague wording that opened the door to future heavy regulations on abortion.

*Bray v. Alexandria Women's Health Clinic* (1993): Ruled that protesters obstructing abortion clinics in DC did not prevent women from accessing their right to abortion. As it was a federally-assured right, private citizens couldn't violate it.

*Madsen v. Women's Health Center* (1994): Approved 36-foot buffer outside abortion clinic entrances to allow patients and workers to enter and exit, but not around back and sides. Also upheld noise restriction, but not restrictions on images.

*Stenberg v. Carhart* (2000): Narrowly (5-4) ruled that late-term abortions (termed "partial-birth abortions" by conservative politicians) cannot be banned, as that represents an undue burden on a woman's right to an abortion.

*Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act* (2003): A Congressional bill prohibiting the form of late-term abortion called intact dilation and extraction that had been referred to as "partial-birth abortion." The bill could act in opposition to the *Stenberg* ruling because Congress can gather its own factual findings, and the Supreme Court must defer to those. It was decided that this form of abortion was "never necessary to preserve the health of a woman, poses significant health risks to a woman upon whom the procedure is performed and is outside the standard of medical care."<sup>3</sup>

*Gonzales v. Carhart* (2007): Upheld 2003 Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act, as it was found to apply solely to intact dilation and extraction, a procedure used in the later stages of pregnancy, rather than also including intact dilation and evacuation, a procedure used in much earlier stages of pregnancy.

*McCullen v. Coakley* (2014): Ruled that Massachusetts law putting 35-foot buffer zones around abortion clinics interfered with protesters' First Amendment rights.

*Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt* (2016): Ruled that Texas regulations on abortion clinics that required admitting privileges at hospitals and for clinics to adhere to the requirements for ambulatory surgical clinics were unconstitutional, as they caused many clinics to close and therefore placed too "substantial" a burden on the right to an abortion.

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These cases show an aggressive use of the courts to undermine *Roe v. Wade* rather than overturn it directly. It is also true, though, that this history is not a linear narrative of the victory of *Roe v. Wade* followed by several more victories, nor the story of a victory followed by crushing defeat. This feeling of legal whiplash speaks to work being done, undone, and then sometimes done and undone again.

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<sup>3</sup> Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2003. 18 USC 1531. (2003). Copy from the Government Publishing Office: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-108publ105/html/PLAW-108publ105.htm>

## Appendix B: Diagnostic Tests

Overall, the regressions passed diagnostic tests for serial correlation, heteroskedasticity, and normality of the residuals. Two regressions had slight serial correlation; one had possible heteroskedasticity; two did not have normal residuals. With the potential exception of Figure 10, the regressions seem sound.

Regression	Necessary Ranges or P-values	Regression Output	Conclusion
Figure 1	<b>Serial Correlation:</b> $D_L=1.02$ , $D_U=1.54$ <b>Heteroskedasticity:</b> $> 0.05$ <b>Normality of residuals:</b> $> 0.05$	<b>Durbin Watson Statistic:</b> 1.23 <b>White Test:</b> 0.0903 <b>JB Test (p-val):</b> 0.8187	Passes all tests
Figure 2	<b>Serial Correlation:</b> $D_L=0.86$ , $D_U=1.73$ <b>Heteroskedasticity:</b> $> 0.05$ <b>Normality of residuals:</b> $> 0.05$	<b>Durbin Watson Statistic:</b> 0.94 <b>White Test:</b> 0.4732 <b>JB Test (p-val):</b> 0.0621	Passes all tests
Figure 3	<b>Serial Correlation:</b> $D_L=1.02$ , $D_U=1.54$ <b>Heteroskedasticity:</b> $> 0.05$ <b>Normality of residuals:</b> $> 0.05$	<b>Durbin Watson Statistic:</b> 1.25 <b>White Test:</b> 0.0630 <b>JB Test (p-val):</b> 0.6831	Passes all tests
Figure 4	<b>Serial Correlation:</b> $D_L=0.74$ , $D_U=1.93$ <b>Heteroskedasticity:</b> $> 0.05$ <b>Normality of residuals:</b> $> 0.05$	<b>Durbin Watson Statistic:</b> 1.64 <b>White Test:</b> 0.7716 <b>JB Test (p-val):</b> 0.0767	Passes all tests
Figure 5	<b>Serial Correlation:</b> $D_L=0.90$ , $D_U=1.71$ <b>Heteroskedasticity:</b> $> 0.05$ <b>Normality of residuals:</b> $> 0.05$	<b>Durbin Watson Statistic:</b> 1.29 <b>White Test:</b> 0.4802 <b>JB Test (p-val):</b> 0.8518	Passes all tests
Figure 6	<b>Serial Correlation:</b> $D_L=0.86$ , $D_U=1.73$ <b>Heteroskedasticity:</b> $> 0.05$ <b>Normality of residuals:</b> $> 0.05$	<b>Durbin Watson Statistic:</b> 1.77 (1.765) <b>White Test:</b> 0.7361 <b>JB Test (p-val):</b> 0.8419	Slight serial correlation; otherwise passes tests
Figure 7	<b>Serial Correlation:</b> $D_L=0.78$ , $D_U=1.90$ <b>Heteroskedasticity:</b> $> 0.05$ <b>Normality of residuals:</b> $> 0.05$	<b>Durbin Watson Statistic:</b> 1.76 <b>White Test:</b> 0.6246 <b>JB Test (p-val):</b> 0.1518	Passes all tests
Figure 8	<b>Serial Correlation:</b> $D_L=0.90$ , $D_U=1.71$ <b>Heteroskedasticity:</b> $> 0.05$ <b>Normality of residuals:</b> $> 0.05$	<b>Durbin Watson Statistic:</b> 1.67 <b>White Test:</b> 0.9502 <b>JB Test (p-val):</b> 0.0166	Resids not normal; otherwise passes tests
Figure 9	<b>Serial Correlation:</b> $D_L=1.02$ , $D_U=1.54$ <b>Heteroskedasticity:</b> $> 0.05$ <b>Normality of residuals:</b> $> 0.05$	<b>Durbin Watson Statistic:</b> 1.55 (1.547) <b>White Test:</b> 0.0726 <b>JB Test (p-val):</b> 0.9087	Very slight serial correlation; otherwise passes tests
Figure 10	<b>Serial Correlation:</b> $D_L=0.67$ , $D_U=2.10$ <b>Heteroskedasticity:</b> $> 0.05$ <b>Normality of residuals:</b> $> 0.05$	<b>Durbin Watson Statistic:</b> 1.63 <b>White Test:</b> N/A (insufficient # of observations, test not possible) <b>JB Test (p-val):</b> 0.000001	No serial correlation, but possible heteroskedasticity and resids not normal (less strong regression)



## Appendix C: Selected Number of Perpetrators of Violent Clinic Attacks

In Chapter 3, I asserted that many of the more recent or prominent violent attacks against clinics had been committed by individuals who were unaffiliated with any particular hate group; were affiliated with Army of God, a hate group not included in the Southern Poverty Law Center's database; or were with other hate groups not in the database. This may be one reason that my analysis did not find a connection between hate groups and violent attacks. Below is a list of a small selection of those attacks and the perpetrators, in addition to the examples of Robert Dear and Clayton Waagner that I have already provided, so as to offer more evidence for my claim.<sup>1</sup>

**2012 Arson Attack:** Francis Grady started a fire at a Wisconsin clinic in order to “release the children.” The court record for his case in the Seventh Circuit does not mention an affiliation with a group or with Army of God.<sup>2</sup>

**2011 Attempted Murder:** Ralph Lang planned to kill an abortion provider at a Wisconsin clinic, but was caught beforehand when his gun went off in his motel room. No news report I can find mentions any affiliation with a hate group or with Army of God.

**2009 Murder of Dr. George Tiller:** The perpetrator, Scott Roeder, considered himself a member of Army of God.<sup>3</sup>

**1998 Murder of Dr. Barnett Slepian:** The perpetrator, activist James Kopp, was a member of the anti-abortion group Lambs of Christ and has been associated with Army of God.<sup>4</sup>

**1998 Murder of Clinic Security Guard Robert Sanderson:** Eric Rudolph set off a bomb at an Alabama clinic that killed a security guard and injured and blinded a nurse. He was associated with Army of God.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For details on the particulars of these cases and others, see NARAL, Pro-Choice America, “Anti-Choice Violence and Intimidation.”

<sup>2</sup> United States of America v. Francis G. Grady, 2013 Wisc. App. <http://media.ca7.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/rssExec.pl?Submit=Display&Path=Y2014/D03-27/C:13-1390:J:Kanne:aut:T:fnOp:N:1315153:S:0>

<sup>3</sup> “Slaying suspect ‘obsessed’ with Kansas doctor, ex-roommate says.” *CNN*, February 2, 1998. <http://www.cnn.com/2009/CRIME/06/04/kansas.doctor.killed/>

<sup>4</sup> Risen, James. “Tracing the Path of a Hard-Line Foe of Abortion.” *The New York Times*, November 6, 1998. <http://www.nytimes.com/1998/11/06/nyregion/tracing-the-path-of-a-hard-line-foe-of-abortion.html>

<sup>5</sup> “‘Army of God’ letters claim responsibility for clinic bombing.” *CNN*, February 2, 1998. <http://www.cnn.com/US/9802/02/clinic.bombing.530pm/>

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