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Democrat Pro-Choice and Republican Pro-Life Abortion Politics: The By-Product of The Supposed Existence of a Binary Between The Church and State

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CONCLUSIONS

INTRODUCTION

- The growth of the state and its area of legislation has invaded the private space of its citizenry. Religion is reduced to belief while negating its essential practice in worship and outward everyday behaviour.
- Abortion concerns the vital and fundamental values of human life, morality, and personal liberty which are aspects concerning the responsibilities of the state, the church, and religious communities to a broader extent. As the state becomes preoccupied with such fundamental values, which some consider to be out of its scope, its power becomes increasingly intermeshed with those of a religious institution.
- American laws and legal traditions are the result of a process of generational transmission of various influences such as Christianity, Enlightenment philosophies, and Greco-Roman governing styles (Copson, 2019 ; Gorski, 2017). These influences contribute to the argument of a secular democracy being an actualized, realistic, and existing form of governance.
- Considering the sacred and fundamental values that concern abortion, an interaction between state and church propagate a lack of delineation between the two because the state is overreaching its purpose to fulfill the role of an established church but with liberal values. In this way, politics, law, elections, and governance is becoming more value-laden and more publicly important than Christianity. Fundamentally, politics has become sacred and concerned itself with the realm of the transcendent, morality, and human purpose because the spiritual void has been replaced with a political secularized transcendent conceptualization of ultimate authority.

- **Significance:** This research provides deeper insight into the determination of which institution has legitimacy over human life, bodily autonomy, freedom of choice, and religious liberty. Thus, understanding how various narrative arguments interact exposes the political and religious implications that are the result of the abortion debate.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Objective: The broader research objective is to determine to the extent to which religion and politics are, or are not, two different entities.

To what extent can the abortion issue be a by-product of the Christian conceptualization of human life and the decline of the proposed secularity between the state and church?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

- A discourse analysis of literature in the examination of discourse surrounding abortion politics.
- This research focuses on Evangelical Americans (with slight references to Catholic Americans) and secular Americans who do not identify with any religion in order to contrast religious and secular abortion attitudes. This paper excludes the effect of other religious traditions on American politics because Protestantism and Protestant Evangelicals had a prominent effect on American law and politics more broadly.

RESULTS: Liberal and Republican Principles: The Conceptualization of Fundamental Sacred Values, Morality, and Taboo Violations Concerning Abortion

- Public outrage is often the result of a taboo trade-off which becomes even more apparent during a struggle between the sacred and secular (Schoemaker & Tetlock, 2012).
- The Republican Evangelical pro-life illegalization of abortion is correlated to an overall attempt to control and prevent reckless sexual behaviour, especially amongst young women, with the primary goal of propagating marriage (Cook et al., 2018).
- The Democrat pro-choice narrative is consistent with liberal principles such as harm prevention and fairness both of which are considered moral foundations that an individual may use to decide upon what constitutes a good or bad decision (Haidt, 2013).
- Moral foundations provide the backdrop for community, a sense of self-identity, and create social order and norms in order to maintain the social hierarchy and social roles (Haidt, 2013; Schoemaker & Tetlock, 2012).

DISCUSSION: The Significance and Future Political Implications of Secularity and the Abortion Debate

- Aggregate public opinion, personal religiosity, and the upholding of fundamental sacred values produce a stronger effect that impacts abortion policy, especially its legality (Minkenberg, 2002). This marginalizes the proposed strict adherence to a secularized binary between the church and state in a Western liberal democracy (such as the United States) because both institutions necessitate participation, a terms of exchange, and community. Rather, the church and state may be an indirect extension of each other as religious communities.
- The future impact on policy and legislation will depend on the attitudes of Americans identifying as secularists who are a growing voting bloc (Whitehead & Perry, 2020). It is yet to be determined to what extent that secular Americans will conserve and maintain any sacred values that impact abortion policy through public attitudes.
- However, one thing is clear, American's aggregate opinion in regard to abortion attempts to find a middle ground between an all-out abortion ban and a legalization of unrestricted abortions (for any reason) (Whitehead & Perry, 2020; Jelen & Wilcox, 2003; Cook et al., 2018).
- This is in contestation with the secular thesis that posits that the more individuals become increasingly secular, as a reaction to modernization, the social and political significance of the church will diminish entirely alongside the sacred fundamental values that the church propagates (Stark & Finke, 2000).
- However, individual religiosity (or lack thereof) is not an accurate indicator of secularization because one can commit to religious beliefs regardless of action which is known as the "believing without belonging" phenomenon (Stark & Finke, 2000).

- This research offered critical insight into fundamental sacred moral values which include the sanctity of life, religious liberty, bodily autonomy, and sexuality. This is significant because abortion politics is a significant and growing concern for religious institutions, governments, and citizen alike because the issue, is not only evolving from a religious conceptualization but to a more secular one, but also questions the fundamental values of human-life and liberty of choice in regards to sexuality. It is pertinent issue which voters consider in elections, it can cause mass mobilization, and political polarization. Although most Americans are in favour of some restrictions on abortions, particularly in the third trimester, the minority who believe it should be allowed or banned in all circumstances exist (Cook et al., 2018).
- Consequently, this signifies the importance in the consideration of who, the church or state, defines the value, sanctity, and status of human life and including to what extent one's liberty can impede on the life of another. This fundamental consideration has been regulated by both governmental and religious institutions causing an uncomfortable interaction between the church and the state which highlights the blurring of the separation between the two. In this respect, secularity is privileged as the ultimate arbiter of the protection and definition of human life, religious liberty (in worship, belief, and practice).

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