

- 
0. Untitled introduction
    - A. Civil rights movement inspired women and homosexuals to organize for equal rights
    - B. This, in turn, triggered a backlash from traditionalists committed to the status quo in both laws and cultural norms
    - C. Women and gays are unique among minorities in the U.S. today because their subordinate positions in society are still justified by religious values long after theological arguments for racial and ethnic discrimination have been repudiated
    - D. As with the other dimensions of the cultural war, these conflicts are sharper among the elites than the masses of Americans
    - E. Cultural politics is just the politics of group conflict
  
  - I. Women, religion, and politics
    - A. Religion and social reform movements
      1. Women were heavily involved in reform movements long before they were guaranteed the right to vote nationwide in 1920
        - a. Abolition movement
        - b. Temperance movement (WCTU)
        - c. Progressive movement
      2. Key factor: Second Great Awakening (1820s-30s)
        - a. Introduced radical egalitarianism in to Christianity
        - b. Rejected Calvinist doctrine of predestination
        - c. Emphasized importance of free will and personal choice
      3. No clear post-suffrage women's-rights agenda until late 1960s and early 1970s
    - B. Women, religion and women's-rights issues: Framed by conservatives as threats to traditional values
      1. The ERA
        - a. Simple language: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."
        - b. Ambiguity allowed opponents to raise concerns about unisex public rest rooms, the end of same-sex schools, homosexual adoption, and forcing women into combat
        - c. Key opponents used a very successful grassroots mobilization strategy and were concentrated in 15 Southern and Rocky-Mountain states (3 more than the 12 needed to block ERA ratification)
          - (1) Phyllis Schlafly's *Eagle Forum*
          - (2) Beverly La Haye's *Concerned Women for America*
      2. Abortion
        - a. Political controversy is framed differently by issue activists and national public:
          - (1) Extreme feminists and ultra-liberals frame conflict solely as a woman's-right issue
          - (2) Extreme traditionalists and ultra-conservatives frame conflict solely as a fetal-right issue
          - (3) The national public is more accepting of compromise – legal access to abortion in many but not all circumstances
        - b. Electoral politics
          - (1) Internally divisive for both parties
            - (a) Country-club conservatives v. Christian-right conservatives
            - (b) Ultra-liberals v. moderate liberals
          - (2) The religion gap – since 1972
            - (a) Orthodox and traditionalistic are more Republican in id and voting
            - (b) Modernistic & seculars are more Democratic in id and voting
          - (3) The gender gap – since 1980 [the gender gap was just the opposite in the 1940s & 50s]
            - (a) Men are more Republican in id and voting
            - (b) Women are more Democratic in id and voting
          - (4) The interaction effect that explains the paradox of religion's impact on gender politics
            - (a) Women are more religious than men on every measure of orthodoxy and devotion
            - (b) Yet gender differences on nonreligious issues sustain the gender gap in party id and voting
            - (c) The gender gap in electoral politics exists in spite of greater female religiosity rather than because of it

- (d) Legal and cultural changes threaten the privileged place of white men more than women of any race
- (e) Religion is not invariably a conservative (priestly) force for women but can instead be a powerful (prophetic) force for change – female clergy are more liberal than male clergy and are more likely to be politically active and to focus on social-justice issues

## II. Homosexuals

### A. Political controversy is framed differently by issue activists and national public:

1. Extreme gay-rights activists and ultra-liberals frame conflict solely as an equal-rights issue
2. Extreme traditionalists and ultra-conservatives frame conflict solely as a morality issue
3. The national public is more accepting of compromise –
  - a. Some, but not unlimited, guarantees of gay rights – e.g., civil unions or partner benefits instead of gay marriages
  - b. Homosexuality probably has, at least partially, biological causes; it is not just an issue of personal choice

### B. Religion and homosexuality

1. Religious liberal churches
  - a. United Church of Christ, Unitarian Universalists, the Society of Friends, the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, and both Reform and Reconstructionist Jewish denominations
  - b. The issue has largely been settled in favor of equality
  - c. Scriptural passages are interpreted to prohibit homosexual rape or pagan rituals
2. Religious moderate churches
  - a. Most other mainline Protestant & Catholic churches are divided on homosexuality issues, as is , as well as Conservative Judaism (the largest Jewish denomination).
  - b. The issue is still under active debate – seeking to reconcile the divergent perspectives of liberals and conservatives within their denomination
  - c. Some denominations have come close to schism: United Methodists, Presbyterian Church USA, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the Episcopal Church.
  - d. Pragmatic approach: welcome homosexuals and give limited support to their civil rights without officially altering doctrinal positions on gay marriage and ordination
3. Religious conservative churches
  - a. Most evangelical, fundamentalist, or Pentecostal Protestant and Mormon denominations; Orthodox Judaism; and Sunni and Shiite Muslim denominations
  - b. The issue is settled: homosexuality is a sin and should be prohibited
  - c. No room for compromise
    - (1) On gay rights – active opposition is required to protect the moral fabric of American society
    - (2) Homosexuality is not natural and is a personal choice that must be repented and can be converted to heterosexuality

### C. Religion, homosexuality, and politics

1. Gay rights has emerged as a major issue since the 1960s
  - a. Sequence
    - (1) Local and state conflicts first
      - (a) Local ordinances
      - (b) State statutes, ballot initiatives/referendums, and litigation
    - (2) National conflicts more recently

- b. Coalitions
  - (1) Conservative and liberal activists are polarized
  - (2) Moderates are more internally divided in seeking compromise – but represent the majority of the national public
- c. Public opinion is increasingly liberal:
  - (1) A declining minority views homosexuality as morally wrong
  - (2) While an increasing majority rejects broad restrictions of their civil rights