**Coming out to Vote: The Construction of a Lesbian and Gay Electoral Constituency in the United States**

**(Supplementary Online Appendices)**

**Appendix A: Constitutive Group Mobilization and Gun Owners**

To address the generalizability of constitutive group mobilization, I apply the framework to the construction of gun owners as a group by the National Rifle Association (NRA) and party actors. Although the politics of each case are historically contingent and contextually specific, constitutive group mobilization provides a general framework for evaluating group and identity formation. By turning the lens to this case, I show how constitutive processes gave meaning to a gun owner identity that shaped mobilization in the party system. While a detailed analysis is beyond the scope of this paper, I build on existing research about gun owners as a political group with a brief analysis of party platforms and federal legislation.

Gun owners are another group in which activists-party interactions constituted collective identities and group boundaries. In a 2017 Pew Study, for example, 74 percent of gun owners said that the right to own guns was essential to their own sense of freedom (Parker et al. 2017). Relatedly, Kalesan et al. (2016) identify the existence of a social gun culture among gun owners. As Matthew Lacombe and colleagues show (2019), contact with the NRA is associated with a stronger gun owner identity. In addition, they find that this identity is associated with “one’s sense of freedom,” suggesting that “if the NRA or other actors manage to inculcate a sense of gun owner identity among citizens, those individuals will develop more intense attitudes about gun policy, perhaps partly accounting for gun supporters being so well mobilized” (2421). In other research, Lacombe (2019) shows how the NRA constructs gun owners as “average citizens who obey the law and love America” by constituting them as “law abiding, peaceable, patriotic, courageous, honest, average citizen(s), ordinary citizen(s), brave, freedom, loving, and reputable” (1347). Furthermore, he finds that the NRA’s constructions of a gun owners were mirrored in newspaper editorials by those who view themselves as part of this group. Thus, Lacombe’s (2019) research demonstrates how interest group actors create demands as they recruit a constituency “as a collective with a shared aim” (e.g., Disch 2011). The NRA, like other advocacy organizations detailed in the main manuscript, constituted gun owners as a political group with a collective identity.

But, as my theory lays out, constitutive group mobilization is a dynamic back-and-forth between interest group activists and political parties. In the gun owner case, Lilliana Mason (2017) shows that, among Republicans, those who perceive themselves as having a gun owner identity are more likely to participate in politics than those who do not. Thus, there is a link between one’s gun owner identity and partisan mobilization. Others have also identified a strong relationship between Republican partisanship and gun ownership (Lacombe et al. 2019; Parker et al. 2017; Spitzer 2016). Research has also found that the parties were slow to polarize on this issue (Karol 2009), but polarization has increased over time (Joslyn et al. 2017). How, then, did the Republican party come to be the party of gun owners?

In the context of constitutive group mobilization, the relationship to be explained is how the NRA and party actors constituted gun owner identity and group boundaries in the party system. While a full account of this case is not possible, Lacombe’s, Karol’s, and Mason’s research suggests interactions between the NRA and parties are an important site for observing constitutive group mobilization. Therefore, I identify whether party actors affirm or disaffirm the NRA’s gun owner constructions in party platforms and bills, using the constituting terms identified by Lacombe (2019) as the point of departure.

As Lacombe shows, after World War II, the NRA constructed gun registries as a threat to “loyal Americans” with “privately owned” firearms, constituting registries as Communist and fascist (1350). In the post-war period between 1948 and 1952, neither party platform mentioned gun regulations. The Republican Party platform in 1952, however, stated that “there are no Communists in the Republican Party” and constituted the Democratic Party as “disloyal” for appeasing domestic Communists. Thus, the Republican Party’s construction of the Democratic Party and Communism parallels the NRA’s construction of gun owners as “loyal Americans” and registries as a “pattern of Communist action.” Although the issues are not explicitly linked, Republican Party actors and the NRA use similar to language to construct people and policies they do not like as “Communist.” As this language starts to institutionalize in the party system, I find additional evidence that party actors affirmed the NRA’s construction of gun registries. For example, Edwin Arthur Hall, a Republican Congressman from New York, introduced a bill to prohibit gun registries in 1951 (82 H.R. 3032). The bill stated, “whereas during World War II, Nazi-minded officers attempted to pass laws abridging the constitutional right of a private citizen to bear arms; and whereas the same officers started their anti-American program by calling for registration of all privately owned firearms.” In doing so, Hall’s legislation constructed gun registries as “anti-American” and something done by Nazis. While the bill never became law, it constructs gun registries as something to be opposed. While this evidence is preliminary, it suggests a turn toward affirming the NRA’s constructions of gun owners among Republican Party actors.

Although the evidence is limited at the federal level, Congressman Hall’s bill identifies local and state politics as sites to identify contestation over gun owner identities and group boundaries in the 1940s and 50s. His bill stated that several states were engaged in “the revival of tyranny” through “proposals to register all legally issued private weapons with design to eventual seizure of firearms owned by individual citizens.” As a related example, in 1952, Congress approved a bill to allow the Washington D.C. police to destroy illegally owned firearms, if they were confiscated through legal processes (PL82-260). Of the 5 bills introduced on this issue in the 80th-82nd Congresses, four were by Democratic members (81 H.R. 2798; 81 S. 883; 82 H.R. 1759; 82 S. 493) and one was by a Republican (80 S. 2028). This evidence is suggestive that party actors in the Republican and Democratic parties differed in their approach to representing gun issues. Republican Members of Congress were not “leading the charge” to destroy guns in Washington D.C. Furthermore, the only bill introduced in Congress to oppose gun registries was sponsored by a Republican, who constructed them as “anti-American” to “loyal,” private citizens. Thus, the Republican Party and the NRA used similar language about Communism and Nazism to construct the Democratic Party and gun registries as “anti-American.”

Gun issues eventually made their way into party platforms in the 1960s. As David Karol (2009) notes, gun control emerged as a political issue among politicians in 1968 (84). In his account, the Republican Party held a moderate position, while the Democratic Party was split on the issue. As a result, he found that “differences between the parties on roll calls was not great” (85). The party platforms in 1968, however, show that the parties were constructing gun owners in different ways. On the one hand, the Republican Party called for the “enactment of legislation to control indiscriminate availability of firearms, safeguarding the right of responsible citizens to collect, own and use firearms for legitimate purposes” and leaving the issue up to states (Republican Party Platform 1968). This statement affirms the NRA’s construction of gun owners as “responsible citizens” with the legitimate right to own guns. On the other hand, the Democratic Party wanted to “promote the passage and enforcement of effective federal, state and local gun control legislation” (Democratic Party Platform 1968). This statement does not affirm the gun owner constructions put forth by the NRA. Thus, although both parties support gun control in their platform, Republican Party actors affirmed the NRA’s construction collective of gun owners as a group of “responsible citizens.”

Over the course of the 1970s, constructions of gun owners varied by party. The Republican Party continued to construct gun owners as a legitimate group whose rights should be protected. In 1972, their platform pledged to fight crime “to restore safety to our streets, and security to law-abiding citizens who have a right to enjoy their homes and communities free from fear.” The party called for intensifying “efforts to prevent criminal access to weapons, including special emphasis on cheap, readily available handguns, retaining primary responsibility at the state level.” It also called for the safeguarding of “the right of responsible citizens to collect, own, and use firearms for legitimate purposes, including hunting, target shooting and self-defense” (Republican Party Platform 1972). Again, this language constructs gun owners using the “law abiding citizen” construction put forth by the NRA. On the Democratic side, the platform said that:

there must be laws to control the improper use of hand guns. Four years ago a candidate for the presidency was slain by a handgun. Two months ago, another candidate for that office was gravely wounded. Three out of four police officers killed in the line of duty are slain with hand guns. Effective legislation must include a ban on the sale of hand guns known as Saturday night specials which are unsuitable for sporting purposes (Democratic Party Platform 1972).

As in 1968, the parties share the same position – supporting modest gun control, particularly regulating “Saturday night specials” (i.e., cheap, readily available handguns) – yet the Republican Party constitutes gun owners as responsible citizens. Similarly, in 1976, the Republican Party supported “the right of citizens to keep and bear arms” and opposed “federal registration of firearms” (Republican Party Platform 1976). The Democratic Party called for ways to “curtail the availability” of handguns, which “simplify and intensify violent crime,” and affirmed “the right of sportsmen to possess guns for purely hunting and target-shooting purposes” (Democratic Party Platform 1976). Both parties supported mandatory minimum sentences for crimes committed with guns, but they affirmed different constructions of gun owners. The Republican Party speaks broadly about citizens’ rights to own guns, while the Democratic party narrowly constructs support for “sportsmen.”

These dynamics continued into the 1980s and 1990s. The Republican Party platform in 1980 again affirmed “citizens’ rights to keep and bear arms” and opposed provisions in the Gun Control Act of 1968 that do nothing but “restrain the law-abiding citizen in his legitimate use of firearms” (Republican Party Platform 1980). There is similar language in their 1984 platform. In 1988, “the right to gun ownership” was its own section in the Republican Party platform, further reflecting the institutionalization of gun owners as a party constituency (Republican Party Platform 1988). The 1992 platform also stated that “those who seek to disarm citizens in their homes are the same liberals who tried to disarm our Nation during the Cold War and are today seeking to cut our national defense below safe levels” (Republican Party Platform 1992). Thus, the Republican Party platform now connected its position on guns to Communism, harkening back to the constructions put forth by the NRA in the 1940s. In all of these ways, the Republican Party constructs gun owners as responsible and “law-abiding” citizens, affirming the collective identity of gun owners put forth by the NRA.

The Democratic Party platform in 1980 was similar to its platform in 1976. It supported the narrow construction of “sportsmen” to possess guns while also curtailing the availability of handguns (Democratic Party Platform 1980). The 1984 platform supported “tough restraints on the manufacture, transportation, and sale of snub-nosed handguns, which has no legitimate sporting use and are used in a high proportion of violent crimes” (Democratic Party Platform 1984). In 1988, the party made no statement about its position on gun issues. The 1992 Democratic Party platform called for background checks on handguns and a ban on assault weapons, while opposing restrictions on “weapons used for legitimate hunting and sporting purposes” (Democratic Party Platform 1992). Thus, the Democratic Party engaged in affirming representation by narrowly constructing part of its agenda in relation to “sportsmen.” In contrast, the Republican Party broadly constructed gun owners as “law-abiding” citizens whose rights deserve protection.

The construction of gun owners as “responsible citizens” in Republican Party platforms coincides with racial dynamics in the party system and the development of racist “law and order” rhetoric (Alexander 2010). As Michelle Alexander explains, law and order rhetoric is “colorblind” coded language used to perpetuate the subjugation of BIPOC after Jim Crow. In particular, it formed the basis for the War on Drugs, the expansion of the carceral state, and the continued economic deprivation of communities of color. Thus, the Republican Party platform, by calling gun owners “responsible citizens” at the same time that they called for “law and order,” constituted gun owners as a white political group. In doing so, racial dynamics within the party system constituted boundaries around who could be recognized as a “responsible” gun owner and as part of the Republican Party.

The Democratic Party’s construction of gun owners as “sportsmen” and “hunters” is also embedded within broader racial dynamics in the two-party system. As the Republican Party dominated elections, the two major parties appealed for white voters (Frymer 1999). The construction of gun owners as “sportsmen” demonstrate one way that party actors constructed gun owners as white people who, unlike BIPOC in cities that were affected by gun violence, had a legitimate basis – as hunters or sportsmen – to own guns. Although this construction of gun owners is narrower than the Republican Party’s construction of “responsible” and “law abiding” citizens, it similarly recognizes gun owners as a white constituency by distinguishing between those who violate “law and order” and those who are “hunters” or “sportsmen.” This variation across parties facilitated the institutionalization of gun owners as a white political group within the Republican Party.

In addition, analysis of these dynamics demonstrates how Republican and Democratic party actors constructed gun owners in different ways, despite similar positions on issues. This variation shows how identity and group constructions polarized – that is one party affirmed gun owners broadly while the other did not – before issue position change. Constitutive group mobilization, therefore, provides new insight into the sequencing of group and identity formation in the party system. After a group received legitimation, particularly one-side legitimation, issue position change occurred. By affirming the NRA’s construction of gun owners, the Republican Party constituted boundaries around partisanship that recognized white, responsible gun owners as a group, leading to their institutionalization as an identity group in the party system.

One of the key differences between the lesbian and gay and gun owner cases is how Republican Party actors affirmed gun owners as a civil libertarian constituency. This demonstrates how party actors selectively recognize groups and collective identities regardless of ideological alignment. Moreover, which groups and identities are recognized and legitimated is an outcome of power dynamics shaped by race and sexuality among groups vying for recognition and legitimation. Relatedly, while the Democratic Party generally did not affirm gun owners as a group, they did not pathologize gun owners in the same way that lesbians and gay men were constructed as illegitimate within both parties. This is because power operates differently across these cases. While lesbians and gay men were making claims against heterosexism and morality politics, gun owners entered the political arena as a group constructed through its whiteness. In addition, as Parker et al. (2017) explain, “the U.S. has a deep and enduring connection to guns. Integrated into the fabric of American society since the country’s earliest days, guns remain a point of pride for many Americans.” Sexual minorities did not enter the political arena with the a “deep and enduring connection” in the “fabric of American society.” Thus, differences in the “relations of power” shape how constitutive group mobilization and the recognition of group boundaries and identities varied across these two cases. In sum, this variation shows how constitutive group mobilization can be applied as a general theory of group and identity formation in American political parties.

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**Appendix B: Exclusion and Invisibility in Party Organizations, 1972-1976**

When activists mobilized in the party system in 1972 and 1976, there were openings within both parties but neither legitimated gay men and lesbians. On the Democratic side, activists were able to gain a small, visible presence at the 1972 national convention after the McGovern-Fraser reforms opened the primary process (Cohen et al. 2008). When gay activists called for affirmation of their “right to participate in the life of this country on an equal basis with every citizen” on the convention floor (Faderman 2016, 283), Kathy Wilch of the McGovern campaign constituted lesbian and gay people as child molesters and linked gay rights to prostitution and anti-white slavery laws. Convention delegates then rejected the gay rights minority report that activists brought to the floor. The platform committee also voted 54 to 34 against a sexual orientation plank (Faderman 2016, 281), but the platform did state that “Americans should be free to make their own choice of life-style and private habits without being subject to discrimination or prosecution” (Democratic Party Platform 1972). This statement is partially aligned with the civil libertarian collective identity, linking “private habits” to discrimination. However, by not explicitly recognizing gay men or lesbians, party actors established relations of power that kept them from visibility.

Activists were less visible in the Democratic Party in 1976 as party actors disaffirmed gay men and lesbians as a legitimate political group. Party actors were so concerned about lesbian and gay visibility that they locked activists out of a platform committee hearing (Leavitt and Keen 1980). As the GSDC president explained in a letter to lesbian and gay Americans, activists were rebuffed on ten occasions during the platform process (Lesbian Herstory Archives, Folder 04150). The Democratic National Committee (DNC) also increased “the percentage of platform committee signatures” to bring a minority report to convention floor to keep controversial issues from visibility (Lesbian Herstory Archives, Folder 04150). Activists believed “with considerable justification” that this was designed to exclude gay men and lesbians because Democratic Party leadership and the Carter campaign had pressured delegates not to support lesbian and gay issues. The platform committee voted 57 to 27 against a gay rights plank and there was no statement about “private habits and lifestyle” (*Washington Blade* 1976). Thus, activists concluded that “the hopes of those of us who believe the Democratic Party would respond to our struggle for individual dignity and personal freedom as gay citizens were crushed as platform committee members led by the Carter organization and party officials rushed to accommodate themselves to political expediency” (Lesbian Herstory Archives, Folder 04150). Thus, straight party actors engaged in disaffirming representation that delegitimized lesbian and gay visibility, casting doubt on a clear or natural alignment with the Democratic Party.

On the Republican side, activists testified before platform committees in 1972 and 1976 but did not receive recognition in either platform. In 1972, Frank Kameny’s platform testimony constructed lesbian and gay issues around civil libertarian and civil rights collective identities, calling for the repeal of laws that regulated private sexual acts as well as group-based protections through civil rights laws (*Washington Blade* 1972, 2). In 1976, activists mobilized to “make it possible for local gay representatives to gain admittance to the Republican Platform Committee” to “bring the plight of gay people to the attention of the general public” and “elected delegates to the Republican Convention” (NGLTF, Box 172, Folder 9). Activists called for “total mobilization” that would “give the Democrats a scare from the Republicans.” These archival materials make clear that a pre-formed political group did not exist as neither party affirmed lesbian and gay people or their collective identities.

Activists' testimonies in 1976 further demonstrate that gay men and lesbians were not a politically pre-formed group. Frank Kameny, for example, constructed lesbians and gay men as a group whose “votes will go to [the party] most likely to” give them equality, dignity, and freedom from discrimination (NGLTF, Box 172, Folder 9). According to Kameny, the Republican Party had “a golden opportunity to pick up a very sizable number of votes” by “giving explicit recognition” to lesbians and gay men in the platform. Activist Craig Howell, the president of the Gay Activists Alliance in Washington D.C., also constituted lesbians and gay men as a viable Republican constituency and described his organization as fighting for civil liberties (NGLTF, Box 172, Folder 9). Like Kameny and other activists, he constructed gay men and lesbians as a diverse group of “Republicans as well as Democrats, Conservatives as well as Radicals, Libertarians as well as Socialists.” Thus, their issues were not “solely a ‘Democrats’ issue’ or a ‘liberal issues’” to be “ignored by the Republican National Platform.” Howell also said that “Republicans are often…among [lesbians’ and gay men’s] strongest supporters…at the city level” and that “there are many cases…where the most strident opposition to pro-gay reforms has come from entrenched elements of the Democratic Party.” As a result, activists must “press for [lesbian and gay] recognition” from “all political parties and candidates.” Thus, it was not obvious that a lesbian and gay constituency would align with the Democratic Party as a civil rights group, especially if Republicans legitimated them in their platform. In the end, neither affirmed lesbian and gay collective identities through visibility and recognition.

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**Appendix C: Republican Party Dynamics under Reagan**

In the 1980s, the Republican Party institutionalized its relationship to the Christian Right, constituting heterosexist boundaries around partisanship. Because party actors and Christian Right activists pathologized lesbians and gay men as illegitimate humans, their interactions simultaneously foreclosed civil libertarian constructions of lesbian and gay people from the party system and rejected gay men and lesbians as a civil rights group. This distinction matters because it is one thing to contest whether “individual” or “group” rights constitute the basis of a collective identity and another to constitute lesbian and gay people’s existence as inhuman. Thus, while the Democratic Party wanted to keep lesbians and gay men invisible, the Republican Party actively constituted itself as a party of straight people.

As discussed in the main analysis, there was a shift in the Republican Party’s use of “family values” in the party platform that linked the term to “homosexuality” between 1976 and 1980. The language of family values further institutionalized in the 1984 and 1988 platforms. In 1984, platform sections on “our constitutional system” and “security for the individual” construct traditional family values and morality as things that the Republican Party is fighting to protect (Republican Party Platform 1984). Thus, the platform constituted lesbian and gay people as illegitimate because “homosexuality” was a constructed as a violation of traditional morality. By 1988, family values were mentioned in platform planks on: adoption, “healthy children, healthy families,” the equal rights subsection of constitutional government and individual rights, restoring the constitution, education for the future, and “strong families, strong communities” (Republican Party Platform 1988). In each of these sections, the party platform constructed the Republican Party as a party of straight people who were opposed to the recognition and legitimation of lesbians and gay men. Thus, the expansion of family values language in the party platform from 1980 to 1988 demonstrates how heterosexist boundaries were constituted around Republican partisanship.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic also facilitated the Republican Party’s heterosexism. The platform in 1984 did not mention the virus, in line with the federal government’s and Reagan administration’s silence on the issue. In 1988, the “AIDS” platform plank stated that the party’s priority was to “protect those who do not have the disease” and that abstinence outside of marriage was the best way to avoid infection (Republican Party Platform 1988). By stating that the party priority was to “protect those who do not have the disease,” the platform makes an implicit reference to protecting straight people. This is because the HIV/AIDS virus was predominantly killing gay men, with gay men of color disproportionately affected. In addition, marriage was not open to gay men and lesbians, so by definition the party did not recognize gay men and lesbians in proscribing its approach to HIV/AIDS. Relatedly, the platform section on “education for the future” called for a “moral foundation” rooted in values to protect young people from AIDS (Republican Party Platform 1988). Thus, the platform also uses “traditional values” language to construct HIV/AIDS as a problem rooted in the gay community without recognizing gay men and lesbians.

Other evidence from the 1980s further demonstrates the institutionalization of heterosexist boundaries around Republican partisanship. The Family Protection Act (FPA), which was introduced twice in the House and once in the Senate in 1981 is one example (97 H.R. 311; 97 H.R. 3955; 97 S. 1378). The FPA was a bill to “strengthen the American family and promote the virtues of family life through education, tax assistance, and related measures.” It explicitly constructed “homosexuality” as an illegitimate lifestyle. For example, Section 507, titled “homosexual advocacy,” would prohibit federal funding to any “public or private individual, group, foundation, commission, corporation, association, or other entity which presents homosexuality, male or female, as an acceptable alternative life style or suggests that it can be an acceptable life style” (97 H.R. 311). Section 508 would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to state that “unlawful employment practice” would not include “any action or measure taken by an employer, labor organization, joint labor-management committee, or employment agency with respect to an individual who is a homosexual or proclaims homosexual tendencies.” It would also ban government agencies from enforcing nondiscrimination policies for gay men and lesbians. Thus, Republican Party actors constituted “homosexuality” as beyond the scope of civil rights law and rejected gay men and lesbians as a group by referring to them as “individuals who are homosexual or who proclaim homosexual tendencies.” This disaffirming representation is different from the ways in which the Democratic Party opposed civil rights legislation through inaction rather than visible attacks. The FPA never became law, but its introduction within the first six months of the Reagan presidency set the tone for the ways in which the Republican Party would constitute itself as a heterosexist party of straight people.

Finally, Table C.1 presents statements from Christian Right activists and Republican Party actors that constitute lesbians and gay men as illegitimate and the Republican Party as heterosexist. They are not an exhaustive account of statements made by party officials or activists, but they provide further evidence of how activist-party dynamics constitute groups and identities. The statements further support that “protecting those who do not have the disease” meant protecting straight people. For example, the second statement in the table, made by Cleveland Sparrow, shows that Christian Right activists viewed supporting AIDS legislation as legitimation of lesbians and gay men as people. Similarly, Republican Senator Jesse Helms (NC) attempted to block AIDS funding from going to lesbian and gay organizations. In fact, Jesse Helms routinely attached amendments to legislation – famously called the “Helms Amendment” – to block lesbian and gay organizations from government assistance. This was happening at the height of the AIDS epidemic. Thus, when the Republican Party says it wants to “protect those who do not have the virus” while also blocking lesbian and gay organizations from funding, it is constituting itself as a heterosexist party of straight people. The Republican Party did not want gay men and lesbians to have resources to fight a virus disproportionately killing them.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table C.1: Statements by Republican Party actors and Christian Right activists that constitute lesbians and gay men as an illegitimate constituency** | | | |
| **Statement** | **Actor** | **Date** | **Context** |
| “[A vote against defeating the AIDS insurance bill] will be counted as a vote to legitimize the homosexual lifestyle and to make the poor and average working families pay a bonus to AIDS virus carriers.” (Chibbaro 1986). | Cleveland Sparrow, head of Moral Majority | July 1986 | Statement is from the “Committee to Protect the Family” about opposing an anti-discrimination bill that prevented insurance companies from discriminating against people with AIDS in Washington D.C. House Member William Dannemeyer lead the charge to block the bill in the House |
| “Their [gay men and lesbians] goal for America is to change the cultural basis of our society so as to equate the homosexual lifestyle on a par with the heterosexual lifestyle” (Chibbaro 1986). | Representative William Dannemeyer (R-CA) | July 1986 | Speech on the House floor, prior to the rejection of Representative Dannemeyer’s amendment to block funding for D.C. AIDS legislation |
| “No funds shall go for the development of materials or activities that promote or encourage, directly or indirectly, homosexual activity; all materials and activities must emphasize abstinence outside of marriage, including abstinence from homosexual sexual activity, and abstinence from illegal drug use” (NGLTF, Box 118, Folder 11). | Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) | 1987-1988 (exact date unknown) | Text of S1220 Helms Amendment attached to the Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome Research and Information Act of 1987 |
| “The health education law of each state should mandate the teaching sexual abstinence until marriage. [Other views are] an offense against the First Amendment rights of children whose religion teaches nonmarital sex acts are wrong” (*Update* 1987). | Phyllis Schlafly | July 1987 | Schlafly’s Eagle Forum newsletter called for the elimination teaching about “value free” sexual acts. |
| “any information developed by the federal government [should] encourage responsible sexual behavior – based on fidelity, commitment, and maturity, placing sexuality in the context of marriage.” (*Gaze* 1987). | President Ronald Reagan | February 1987 | Statement is from a memo from President Reagan on AIDS education |
| “None of the 31 PSAs [public service announcements] specifically mentions Gays or homosexuality, and none identifies any of the men or women appearing on the videotaped messages as being gay” (Chibbaro 1987a). | Department of Health and Human Services | October 1987 | The federal government released its first public service announcements on AIDS. |
| “in addition, we must polarize the debate. We must not seek ‘consensus’,’ we must confront…AIDS is not a civil rights or privacy issue, but one of public health and safety. While care must be taken to protect civil rights, we must take appropriately designed measures to protect communities against the threats posed by AIDS” (ACT UP, Box 162, Folder 1). | Assistant Attorney General William Bradford Reynolds | February 1988 | An internal Justice Department memo telling official within the Reagan administration to continue to set the terms of debate over issues such as AIDS. |
| “…those acts generally responsible for transmitting the virus are often illegal and have traditionally been morally proscribed…Sodomy is against the law in 26 jurisdictions, and prohibitions against homosexual sodomy were recently upheld in *Bowers v Hardwick*…See also 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, “Do not be deceived…neither the effeminate nor homosexuals nor the thieves nor the covetous shall inherit the kingdom of God.”; 1 Timothy 1:9-10, “law is not made for righteous man, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane…and immoral men and homosexuals.” (NGLTF, Box 128, Folder 29). | Chairman U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Clarence M. Pendleton, Jr. | January 1988 | These statements come from an internal memorandum outlining the “project proposal” for “Civil Rights Aspects of Public Health Policies and Initiatives to Control AIDS” that was organized by the U.S. Commission on civil rights. |

This evidence shows how dynamic back-and-forth between Christian Right activists and the Republican Party constituted lesbian and gay people as illegitimate and heterosexist boundaries around Republican partisanship. The evolution of “family values” language in the platform and statements by Christian Right activists and party actors demonstrate increasing hostility toward gay men and lesbians. Thus, despite brief openings in the party system in 1972, 1976, and 1980, broader movement-party forces constituted conservatism around “traditional values,” rather than civil libertarianism (at least in the lesbian and gay case). Moreover, as the Republican Party dominated national elections, these heterosexist dynamics pushed the Democratic Party into conflict over lesbian and gay mobilization and their demands for civil rights. As I discuss in the main manuscript, this meant that the Democratic Party was constituted as a party of “special interests” for its recognition of marginalized groups.

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