

Embryo Fundamentalism

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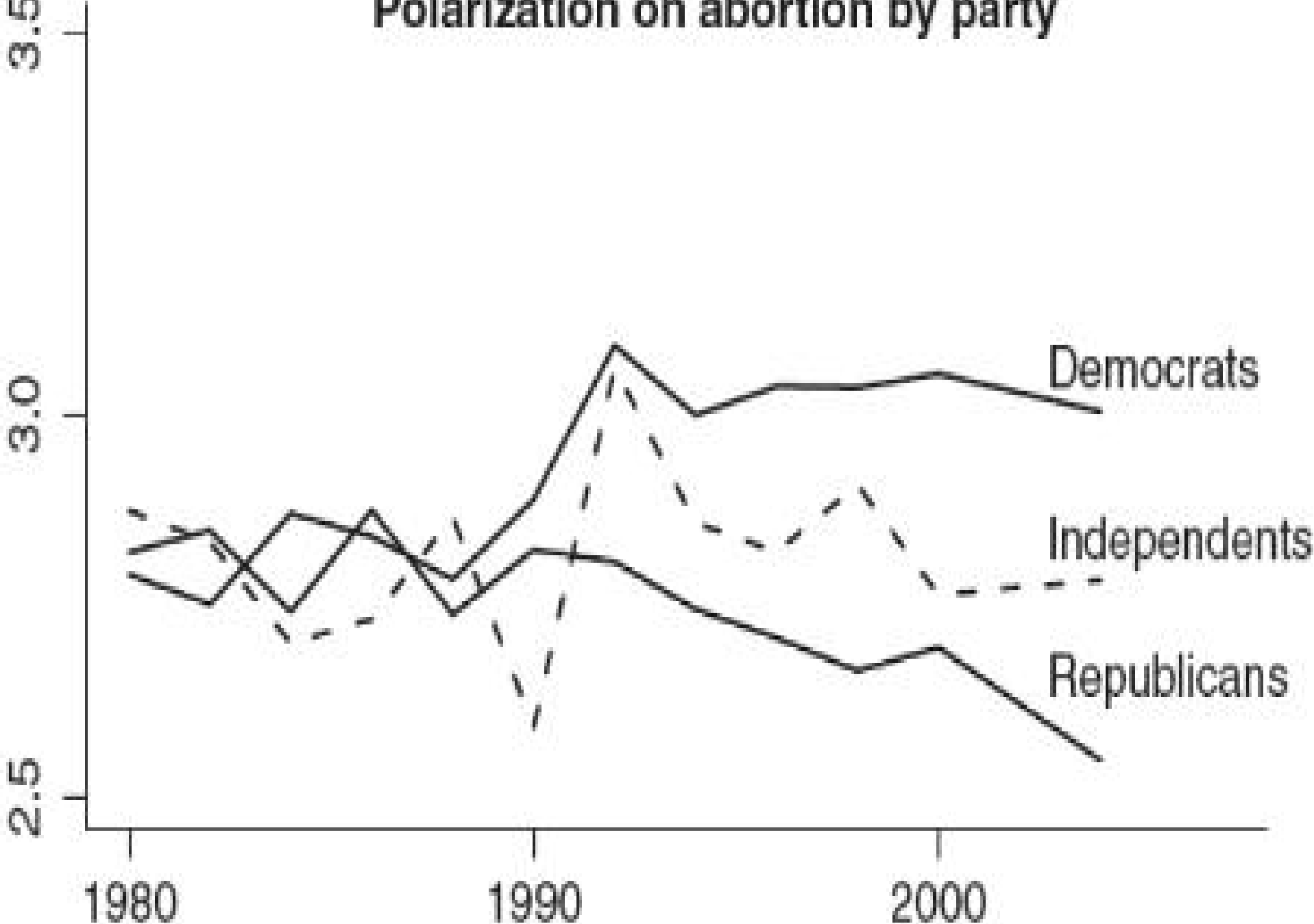
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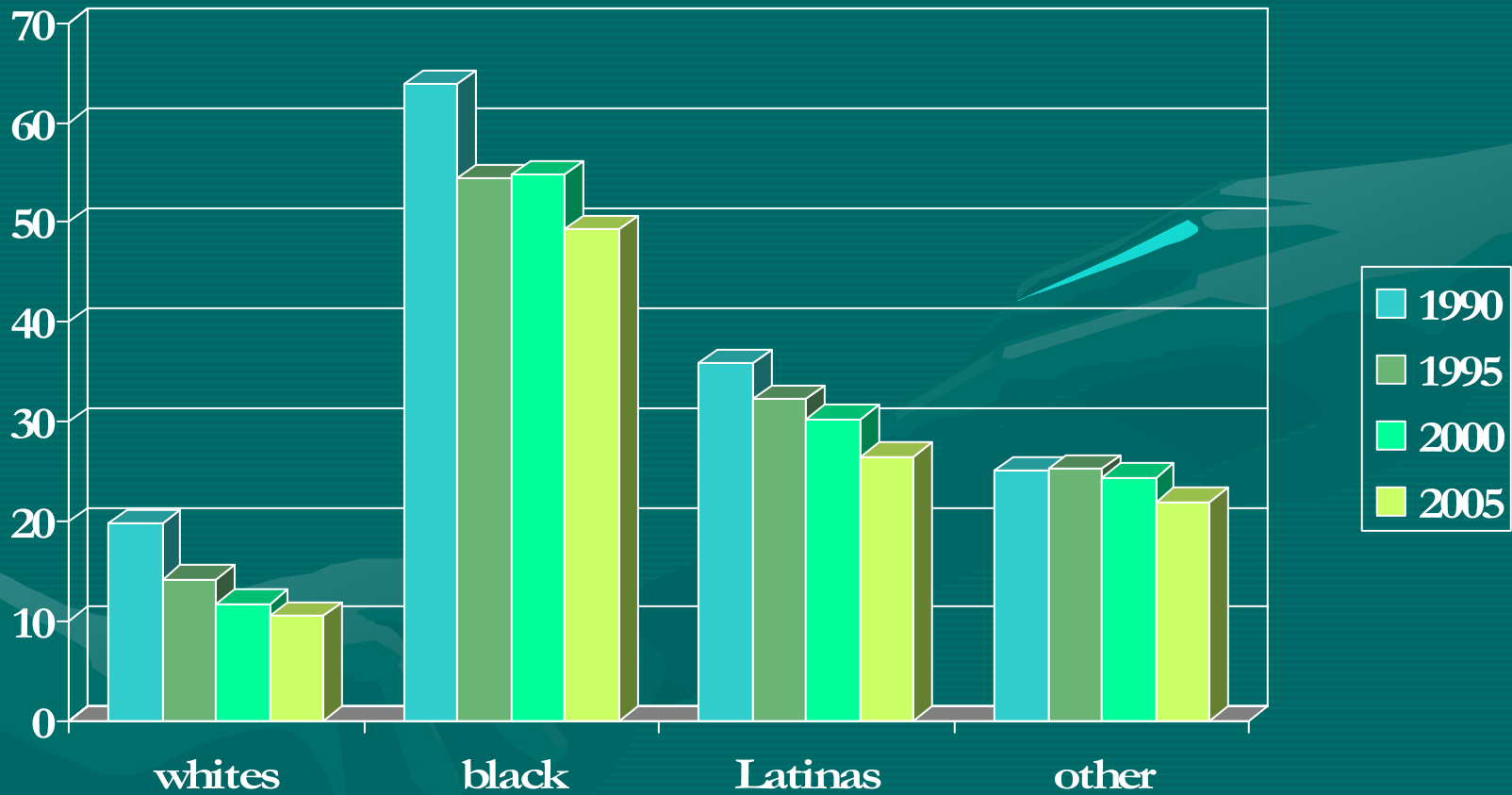
Embryos and Political Identity

- Siegel and Post: Protestant churches, who had previously seen the issue as a Catholic concern, reframed the abortion question in terms of changing gender roles, and family values.
- Dolgin: in part due to the greater appeal of arguments about embryonic personhood as compared with arguments about women's status, pro-life adherents are more reluctant than ever to compromise . . . Their rhetoric, their tactics, and their underlying agenda all have come to depend increasingly on the notion that abortion constitutes murder.

Polarization on abortion by party



Guttmacher, 2006



The Politics of Art

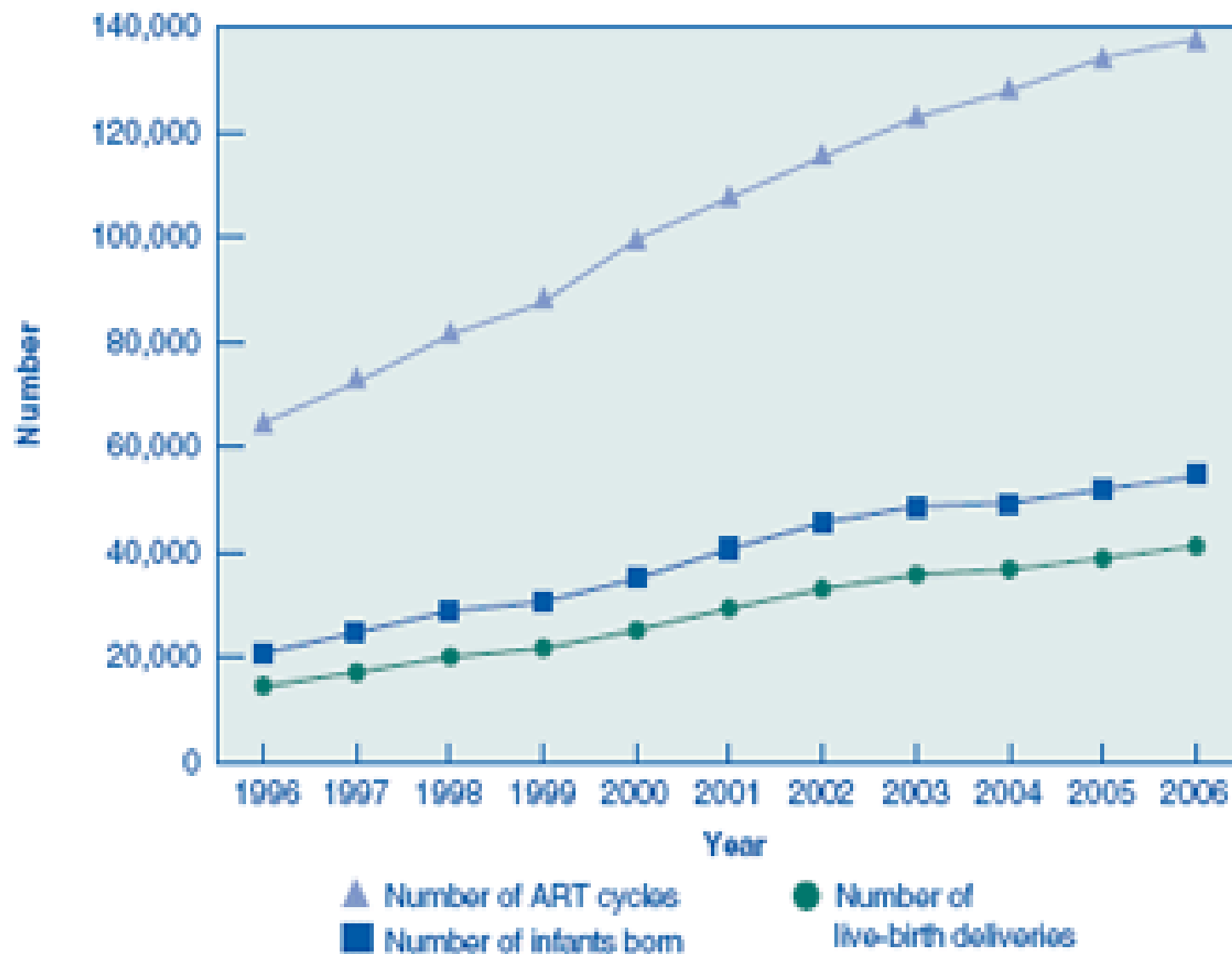
- No law shall be passed that explicitly or implicitly authorizes the destruction of embryos
- No law shall be passed that explicitly or implicitly intrudes on the profits of the fertility industry – an industry by the well off, for the well off.

IVF at The Crossroads

- IVF poses grave ethical problems, at least for prolife Christians, when it involves creating multiple embryos, destroying some of those embryos because of possible birth defects, or indulging in "fetal reduction" (destroying some developing children *after* they are returned to a woman's body). -- Christianity Today

Figure 49

Numbers of ART Cycles Performed, Live-Birth Deliveries, and Infants Born Using ART, 1996–2006



Frozen embryos surveys

- The more embryos seem like children, the less willing the “parents” are to donate them to infertile couples
- Respondents who ascribed high importance to concerns about the health or well-being of the embryo, fetus, or future child were more likely to discard embryos or freeze them indefinitely
- But those who ascribe higher moral status to embryos are more likely to use the embryos themselves, donate to another couple, or use an alternative disposition
- Those who ascribe lower status were more likely to thaw and discard or donate them for research

Louisiana

- § 9:123. Capacity: An in vitro fertilized human ovum exists as a juridical person until such time as the in vitro fertilized ovum is implanted in the womb.

§ 9:131. Judicial standard. In disputes arising regarding the fertilized ovum, the judicial standard for resolving such disputes is to be in the best interest of the in vitro fertilized ovum.

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§ 9:126. **Ownership** An in vitro fertilized human ovum is a biological human being. . . . If the in vitro fertilization patients express their identity, then their rights as parents will be preserved. If the in vitro fertilization patients fail to express their identity, then the physician shall be deemed to be temporary guardian . . . until adoptive implantation can occur.

- § 9:130. Duties of donors: If the in vitro fertilization patients renounce their parental rights . . . , then the fertilized ovum shall be available for adoptive implantation. The patients may renounce their parental rights in favor of another married couple, but only if the other couple is willing and able to receive the in vitro fertilized ovum. . . . Constructive fulfillment of the statutory provisions for adoption shall occur when a married couple executes a notarial act of adoption of the in vitro fertilized ovum and birth occurs.

What about legislation?

- Oklahoma: The written consent of the husband and wife desiring to receive the human embryo transfer shall be executed and acknowledged by both the husband and wife, by the physician who is to perform the technique, and by any judge of a court having *adoption* jurisdiction in this state (emphasis added) 10 Okl. St. § 556 (2) (2009)

Oklahoma

- Embryo transfer is not “trafficking in children” if no sale involved
- The consents of the recipient and donating couple must be filed with the court
- The recipients’ consent must be “executed and acknowledged” by “any judge having adoption jurisdiction in this state”

Georgia – “Option of Adoption Act” (2009)

- amends the Georgia code relating to adoption
- “legal embryo custodian” means the people who have the “legal rights and responsibilities for a human embryo”
- “a recipient intended parent may petition the superior court for an expedited order of adoption” or parentage

New Networks?

- Bethany Christian Services, a Christian adoption and orphan care agency with more than 75 offices in the United States, offers a full range of embryo adoption and [Embryo Donation](#) services. Embryo adoption services include education and counseling related to the embryo adoption, Home Studies, facilitation of the medical transfer of the embryos to the adopting couple, assistance with openness choice, post-transfer support, and post-birth visits.

Nightlight, Anaheim Hills, CA

- Our mission is to share God's love by:
- Assisting birthparents and genetic parents in making a wise and loving plan for their child's future
- Preparing families to be committed and effective parents to adoptive children
- Recognizing and advocating the personhood of pre-born children.
- We are committed to carrying out our mission in a way that will bring glory and honor to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The Future of ART?



Snow Baby *a life FOCUS production*

From the deep freeze of a science lab
to the warm arms of a *mother and father...*

Join us for the unforgettable, heartwarming stories of embryo donors who share a life-promising gift with couples longing to have a child.

Bethany presents Snow Baby, airing on PBS, TBN, and TLN stations near you.
Find your local station at *www.lifefocus.tv*

Rainbow Flag Health Services (Alameda, CA) is unique in four ways:

- We are the only sperm bank in North America to actively recruit Gay and Bisexual sperm donors.
- We are the only sperm bank to tell the mother who the donor is when the child is three months old.
- We limit our donors to have children by only 4-6 different women. Some banks have no limits!
- [W]e believe that a child's human rights are paramount. We ethically cannot offer our services to those who intend to harm their children through the practice of ritual or "medical" genital mutilation (of either gender, commonly known as circumcision).

Fertility Tourism?



Onward . . .

- Separate networks
- Fertility tourism
- The well off v. the struggling middle class
- Fundamentalists v. secularists
- Convergence?