

[Thesis: Surprising Religious and Republican Roots to Planned Parenthood: An Arizona Case Study](#) ^[1]

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Editor's note:

Claudia Nunez-Eddy defended her thesis titled "Surprising Religious and Republican Roots to Planned Parenthood: An Arizona Case Study" in April 2016 in front of committee members Jane Maienschein, Erica O'Neil, and Alexis Abboud earning her a Bachelor's degree from Barrett, the Honors College. <https://repository.asu.edu/items/37290> ^[4]

Abstract:

Planned Parenthood, one of the United States' largest providers of reproductive health services, has campaigned for decades to secure women's [reproductive rights](#) ^[5] in the political sphere. However, few scholars have written on the social and political history that preceded the general religious and Republican hostility toward the [organization](#) ^[6] in the twenty-first century. Through Planned Parenthood's growth in the mid-twentieth century, both political parties and many religious organizations pushed for [family planning](#) ^[7] and access to [contraception](#) ^[8] as solutions to population growth and poverty. Arizona was used as a case study to examine the broader context of the shift in the ideas of political parties and religious organizations surrounding the [reproductive rights](#) ^[5] movement from the start of the twentieth century until the 1980s. The historical trajectory of the shifting religious and political support for Planned Parenthood Arizona was demonstrated using both a literature review and archival research.

Throughout the early 1900s, Republicans advocated for limited governmental intrusion into citizens' lives, which extended to women's reproduction, where [contraception](#) ^[8] was seen as a private decision between a woman and her doctor. That changed in the late twentieth century when religious concerns exacerbated the political discussion following the legalization of [abortion](#) ^[9] in 1973 and the appointment of Ronald Regan in 1981, one of the first outspoken pro-life presidents. Planned Parenthood faced increasing criticism from religious organizations and the Republican Party. The social and political history surrounding Planned Parenthood Arizona illustrates the interplay between politics and the [reproductive rights](#) ^[5] movement throughout the twentieth century. The contextualization of major historical events during the development of Planned Parenthood Arizona gives insight into the current political and religious beliefs regarding the [reproductive rights](#) ^[5] movement.

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