

# Framing Of Culture War Issues In Congressional Campaign Websites

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# Framing

The **framing** of an issue refers the choice of words which encourages an audience to view the issue from a particular perspective.

## Framing affects our opinions.

“Is the American government spending too little on...  
Welfare?” 23%  
Assistance to the poor?” 63%

How do politicians frame their discussion of culture-war issues?

# The Data

- .txt files of web-pages of House of Representative candidates from 2008–2018
- 1,371 pages discussing abortion
- Covariates for each candidate/year combination including:
  - Party
  - Gender
  - District religiosity
  - District political-lean

## Structural Topic Modeling

- “Bag-of-words” model
- Topics are mixtures over words
- Documents are mixtures over topics
- Able to include document-level meta-data in model-fitting process

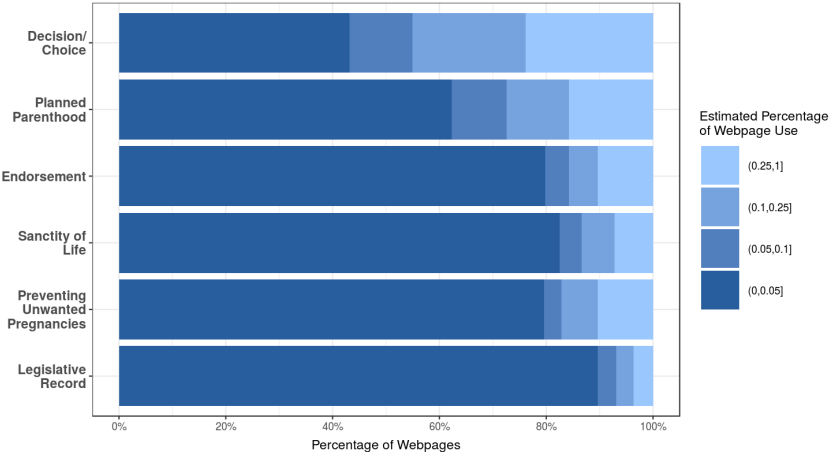
## Document Generative Process

- 1 Draw document-level attention to each topic
- 2 Draw each word's topic assignment
- 3 Draw a word from the assigned topic

# Results: Democrats

## Democrats Candidates' Framing of Abortion

From 2008–2018 House of Representatives Campaign Webpages

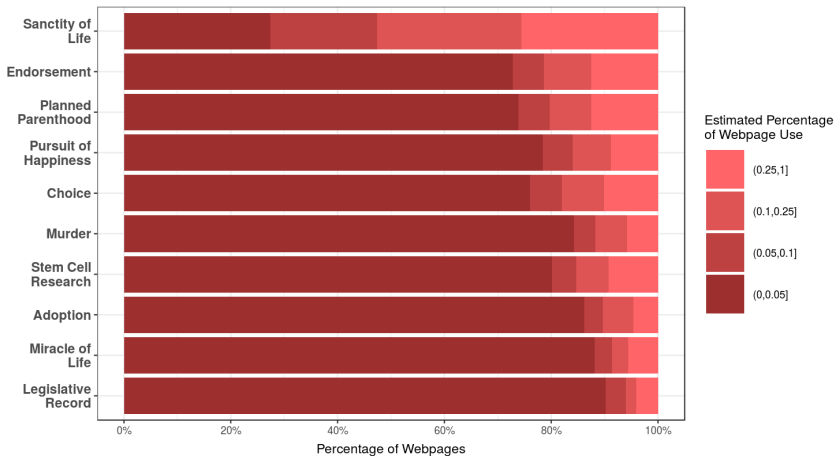




# Results: Republicans

## Republican Candidates' Framing of Abortion

From 2008–2018 House of Representatives Campaign Webpages



# Thank you!

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slides: `http://bit.ly/JSMFrame`

## References

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