

# A Conceptual Approach to the Role of Family in Policymaking

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# Key Questions

What is Family?

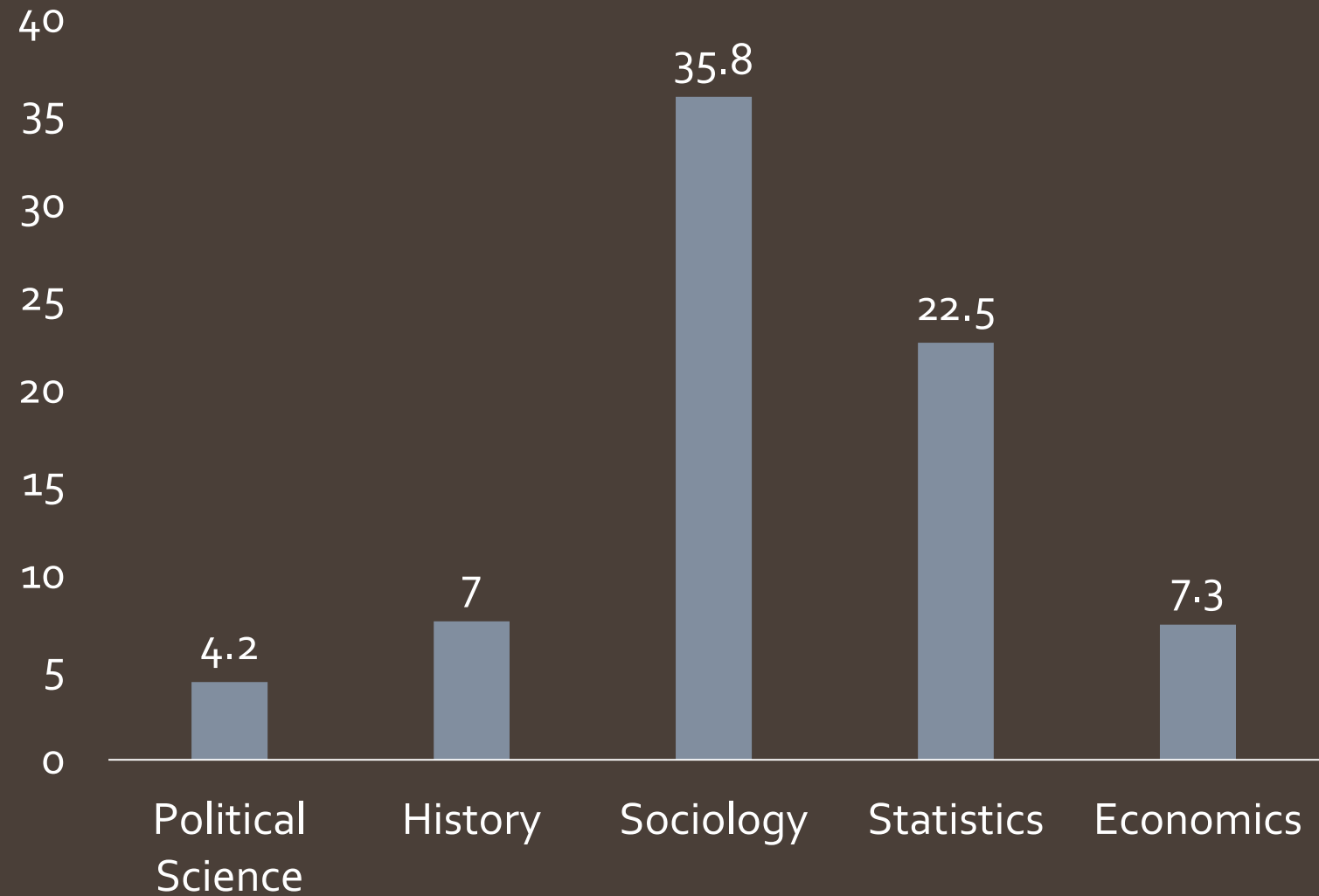
Why should scholars make room for it an already crowded field of public policy?



A conceptual  
approach

Family as subject of policy  
Family as means of policy

# Who's talking about family?

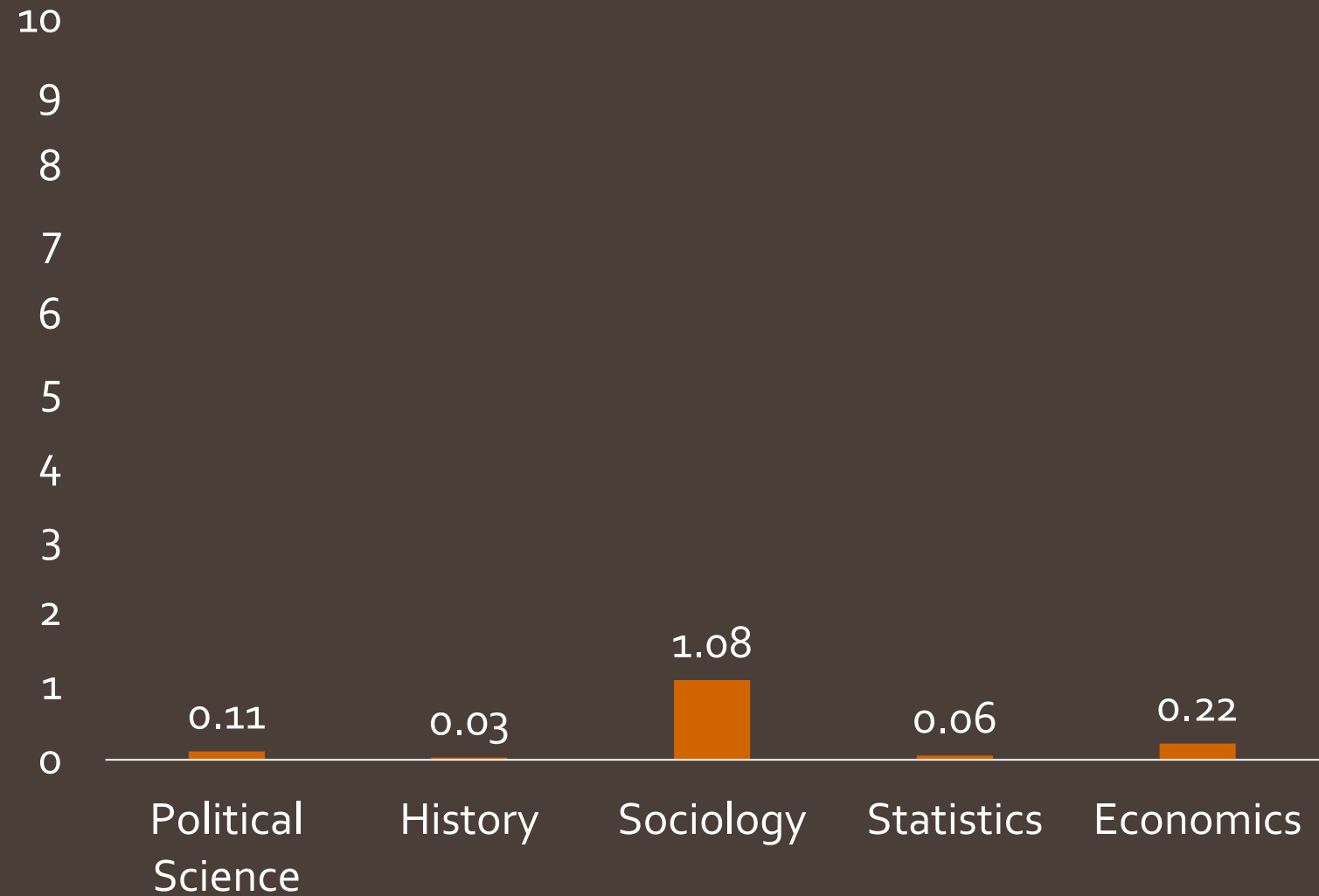


Note: Data generated from an October 2017 JSTOR search for *family* in the article title for all journals in the given field. Results are the proportion of article titles out of the total number of journals searched for the entire time. In political science, for example, there are 740 articles with family in the title in 319 journals between 1907 and 2016 (for an average of 4.2 articles per journal over the past century).

# Family as subject of policy

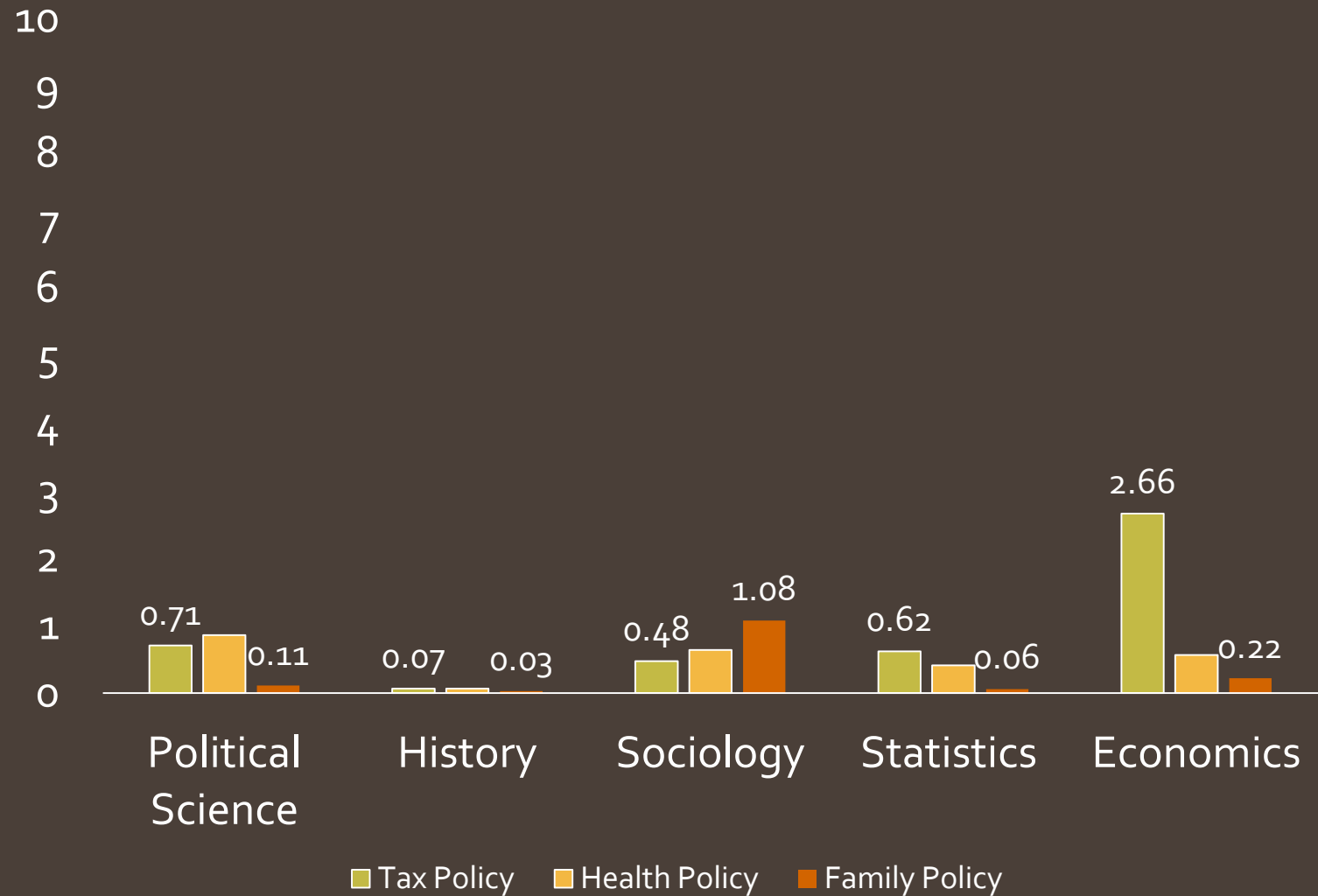


# Who's talking about "family policy"?



Note: Data generated from an October 2017 JSTOR search for *family policy* in the article title and article abstract for all journals in the given field. Results are the proportion of articles out of the total number of journals searched for the entire time. In political science, for example, there are 20 articles in 177 journals between 1907 and 2016 (for an average of .11 articles per journal over the time period).

# Tax policy, health policy, family policy



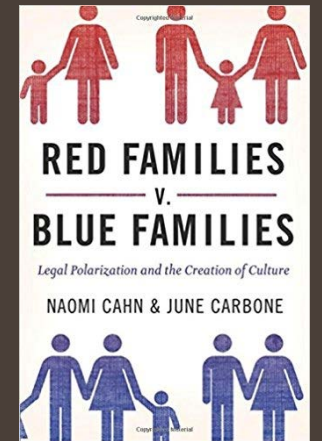
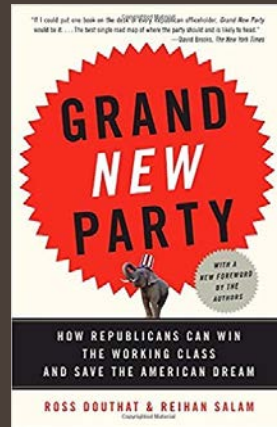
Note: Data generated from an October 2017 JSTOR search for *tax policy*, *health policy*, and *family policy* in the article title for all journals in the given field. Results are the proportion of articles out of the total number of journals searched for the entire time.

# Family as means of policy

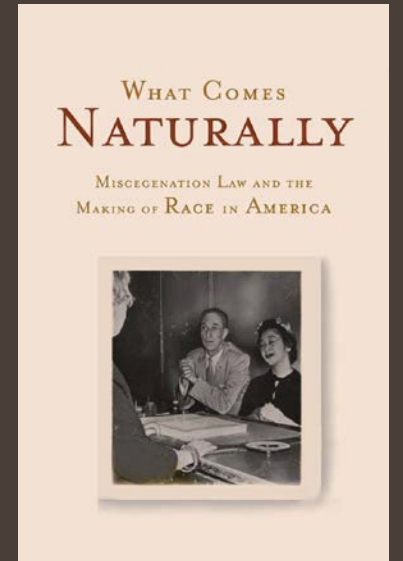
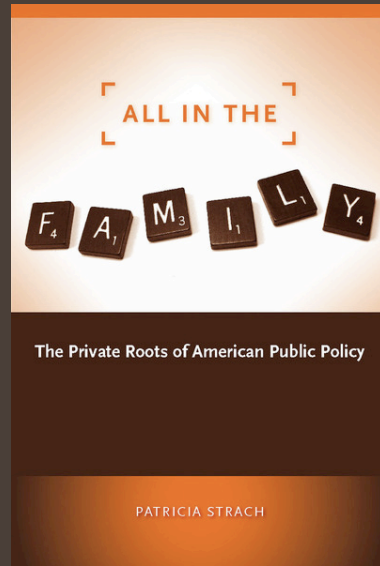




Family as means  
*a way to understand  
American politics*



Family as means  
*a vehicle to achieve  
public policy aims*

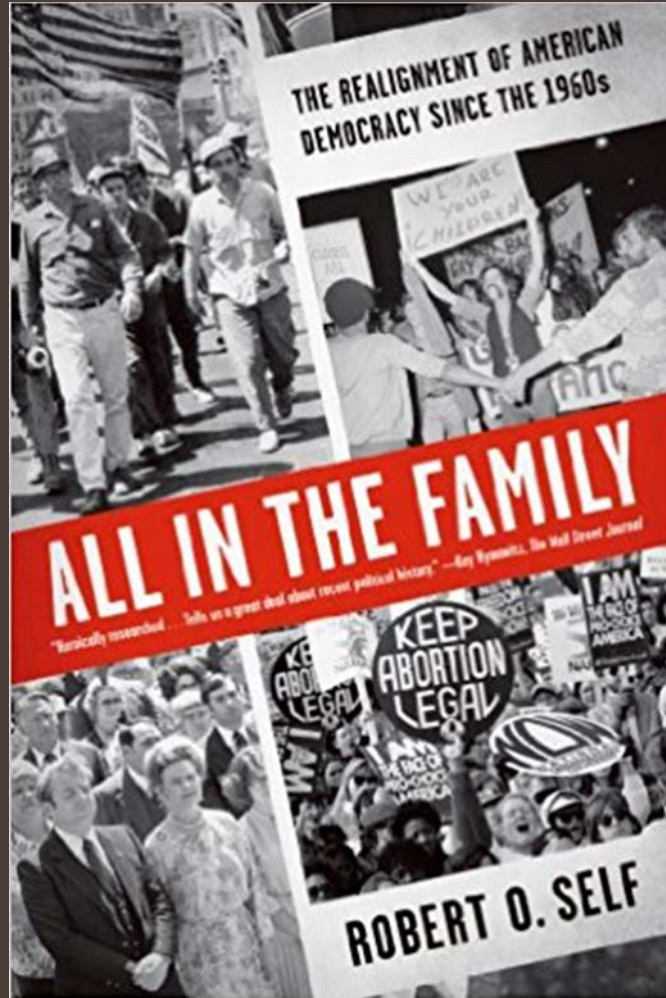


## Anti-miscegenation laws in 1940



Source: Loving Day, <http://www.lovingday.org/legal-map>

Family as means  
*a way to recognize  
size and scope of the  
state itself*



# The Sexual *Contract*

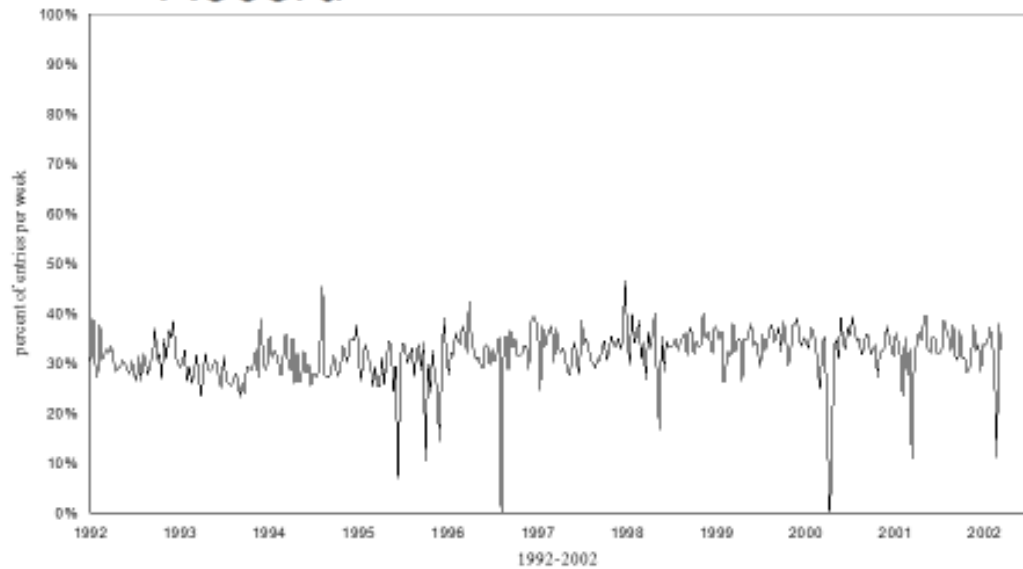
CAROLE PATEMAN



## Anti-miscegenation laws in 1940



## Percent of “Family” Entries per Week in the *Congressional Record*



## “Family” in the U.S. Code (Top Ten Titles)

Title	Name	Chapters with Family Words (N)	Percent chapters with family words
38	Veteran's Benefits	(31)	74
3	The President	(3)	60
11	Bankruptcy	(5)	56
26	Internal Revenue Code	(33)	52
25	Indians	(23)	52
14	Coast Guard	(7)	50
32	National Guard	(2)	50
42	Public Health and Welfare	(70)	48
12	Banks and Banking	(7)	47
5	Government Organization and Employees	(20)	43

Source: Author's analysis of the *U.S. Code*



## The future of family policy

The next generation of scholarship can answer...

- **descriptive questions** about where family is used: in what policies, for what purposes?
- **causal questions** about why: under what circumstances?
- **“so what” questions**: with what effects?

# Appendix

# Who's talking about family and policy?

