

A House Divided: Partisan Mismatch, Abortion Bans, and Relationship Duration*

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PRELIMINARY AND INCOMPLETE

Abstract

This paper studies politically mismatched couples among American voters. We assemble registration records for around 60 million couples between 2014 and 2024 and document that those with different party registrations are over 14% less likely to remain together by the following election. This pattern is consistent across states and robust to a host of other couple characteristics and local conditions. We identify the role of politically salient environments using the sudden criminalization of abortion in 13 states between the 2020 and 2022 elections. Compared to states that did not ban abortion, newly formed mismatched couples were over 11% less likely to remain together in 2022, with no significant previous or subsequent differences. Matched couples are not more likely to separate in treated states, and mismatched couples in states with abortion bans in 2023 and 2024 are not affected in 2022.

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1 Introduction

A growing body of studies across disciplines documents the multiple ways in which political preferences impact outcomes outside of the electoral arena. Political preferences influence, among other phenomena, decision-making in hiring (Gift and Gift, 2015), residential sorting (Brown and Enos, 2021; Gimpel and Hui, 2015), and friendships (Algan et al., 2026), affecting the composition of firms, social networks, and neighborhoods. With levels of affective and ideological polarization rising in different countries, there is also renewed interest from the media in how political preferences contribute to social sorting (Pinsker, 2021; Moore, 2025; The Economist, 2025).

In particular, there is an emerging literature studying romantic relationships and politics. Recent evidence, relying mainly on survey data, indicates that political differences affect couple formation and strain relationships (Huber and Malhotra, 2017; Fangmeier et al., 2020; Easton and Holbein, 2021; Harvard Institute of Politics, 2025; Taflinger and Hudde, 2026; Güngör and Ditto, 2026). It is unclear, however, whether these survey results correlate with behavior, are representative of US voters at large, and fit in the general evolution of mismatched couples. We fill this gap by measuring the prevalence of couples with different party registrations and comparing their relationship durations to couples with shared party registration. We do this by tracking couples of registered voters using the L2 voter file.¹

Correlationally, we find that politically mismatched couples are around 0.6 percentage point (14% of the mean biennial separation rate) less likely to remain together. This difference is robust when accounting for their county of residence, as well as couple-level characteristics such as the type of partnership, time together, mean age, age gap, income, and whether the couple is ethnically mismatched. The effects are stronger during years when turnout was higher in the couple’s county, suggesting that political differences become more relevant when politics are more salient.

As with existing evidence, this descriptive analysis does not establish whether political differences are causally related to the duration of the relationship. People in mismatched partnerships, and the partnerships themselves, might be different in unobserved characteristics. Individuals who, knowingly or unknowingly, select into a mismatched partnership are probably different in dimensions that could independently affect relationship duration. It is also possible that as couples grow apart, partners’ political preferences change, reversing the causal order between mismatching and separations. Thus, estimating the effect of being mismatched would require randomly varying the political correspondence of couples, a tall demand when studying the near universe of US voters. Instead, informed by the descriptive

¹We just focus on heterosexual couples, to be consistent with L2’s data construction.

analysis, we explore how exogenous variation in the political environment affects the survival of mismatched couples. In June 2022, the United States Supreme Court overturned the national constitutional protection of abortion. By the end of that year, abortion became effectively banned, or severely restricted, in 13 states (see Table 3)². Hence, we compare the evolution of mismatched couples in states that maintained abortion protections with the evolution of mismatched couples in states that banned abortion by 2022, controlling for key couple characteristics, as well as for county fixed effects. Focusing only on new couples to avoid survival bias, we find that relative to 2020, mismatched couples in states that banned abortion were 1.47 percentage points less likely to remain together in 2022, around 11% of the mean separation rate in 2022.

Our identification assumption is that the gap in the separation rates of mismatched couples in states with and without bans would not have changed had abortion laws remained the same. We provide several pieces of evidence in favor of this assumption. First, we show that the drop in the likelihood of being together affects only mismatched couples. Politically matched couples are not differentially likely to split up in 2022, relative to 2020. Second, there were no differences in the separation rates of mismatched couples in 2018, before abortion was banned. Third, we exploit variation in the timing of bans across states and compare bans in 2022 with those between 2022 and 2024. There are no visible differences in the separation rates of mismatched couples in 2022 between states with protections and states that banned protections in 2024 — there is an effect in 2024. Fourth, our results are robust when controlling for the evolution of key state-level regressors, like Republican support, unemployment rates, and the demographic composition of the state.

This paper contributes to different literatures. A growing body of research investigates how partisan polarization in the United States relates to patterns of geographic and residential sorting (Brown and Enos, 2021; Mummolo and Nall, 2017; Gimpel and Hui, 2015; Martin and Webster, 2020; Brown, 2025), occupational and consumer sorting (Chinoy and Koenen, 2024; McConnell et al., 2018; Gift and Gift, 2015; White et al., 2025; Kagan and Burbano, 2025), and social relationship sorting (Huber and Malhotra, 2017; Easton and Holbein, 2021; Nicholson et al., 2016; Alford et al., 2011; Iyengar et al., 2018). We document dynamic rates of partisan mismatch among American couples during an era of heightened political polarization. We are, to our knowledge, the first to exploit the longitudinal data of the voter file and identify the role of being mismatched in the likelihood of separation. Further, we provide causal estimates of the differential effects of politically salient events on matched and mismatched couples.

²We exclude two states that banned abortion in that period, Alabama and Missouri, because they do not record party registration.

The two prior studies most proximate to our own are [Hersh and Ghitza \(2018\)](#) and [Iyengar et al. \(2018\)](#). [Hersh and Ghitza \(2018\)](#) study married couples of registered voters in the 2012 and 2014 elections, finding that the 30% of them who were politically mismatched had lower turnout. Our study tracks voters over a longer period (2014-2024), includes unmarried cohabitating couples, and focuses on separation rates rather than turnout rates. [Iyengar et al. \(2018\)](#) compare rates of spousal political agreement in historical surveys from the 1960s and 1970s and in voter files from the mid-2010s, finding higher levels of spousal agreement in the contemporary, polarized era. They also find that the main mechanism is active selection into co-partisan relationships, rather than other contextual factors or convergence over time. We focus our study on the contemporary, polarized era and study the consequences rather than the origins of partisan (mis)alignment. Moreover, relative to both studies, we causally link a policy change to differential separation rates of exposed mismatched couples.

Voter file data has frequently been used to study turnout dynamics (e.g. [Gerber et al., 2008](#); [Fraga, 2018](#); [Barber and Holbein, 2022](#); [Thompson et al., 2020](#); [Cantoni and Pons, 2021](#)), yet researchers have only recently started to use these administrative records to link family members and track political behavior over time ([Brown et al., 2023](#); [Fouka et al., 2026](#)). We contribute to this literature by proposing an algorithmic approach to identify familial relationships. In particular, we reconstruct couples of registered voters within households and track them across space and time. Using historical voter file snapshots presents two key advantages. First, by leveraging the longitudinal dimension of the data, we are able to follow couples over time, as opposed to gathering information only at one point in time, and carry out estimations at the couple-level, rather than at an aggregated level. Second, as opposed to survey data, we are able to observe political behavior (party registration) and link it to inferred behavior (staying together), as opposed to studying opinions and attitudes.

Finally, emerging research shows that the landmark SCOTUS decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* affected not only health and safety outcomes ([Gemmill et al., 2025](#); [Saxena et al., 2025](#); [Dave et al., 2025](#)), but also personal decision-making across many domains, including choices about where to live ([Dench et al., 2025](#)), which college to attend ([Kane, 2025](#)), whether and when to enter the workforce ([Ando, 2025](#)), and which contraceptive method to adopt ([Gallen and Lu, 2025](#)). We add a different dimension to existing studies by also investigating the political implications of abortion bans.

2 Data

States, which organize elections in the US, maintain up-to-date records of registered voters. Although not all states record the same information, different companies or vendors

harmonize and streamline these registries at aperiodic intervals, adding inferred information about voters. These final voter files, therefore, contain a snapshot of voter-level recorded information, such as name and address, and modeled variables, such as income and marital status. For this paper, we used state voter file snapshots provided by L2 to construct a bi-yearly panel dataset.³

Our analysis relies mainly on two variables: party registration and marital status. Party registration is recorded in 35 states, and inferred by L2 from primary election participation in seven states. The raw variable in the voter takes up to 70 values. We collapse these into Democrat, Republican, and Independent/Other/Unknown. We exclude from our analysis the nine states for which party registration is completely modeled by L2 on an ecological basis.⁴

L2 models marital status using a proprietary algorithm based on household composition, gender differences, age similarity, stability of cohabitation, and additional commercial data input. L2 only models heterosexual relationships. Every year, except for 2024, the categories are “null,” “non-traditional” and “married”. The only difference between the last two categories is whether potential household partners share a last name. “Married” people are those with the same last name. Importantly, people who are married to a registered voter but do not co-reside, or who are married to a non-registered citizen or a non-citizen, do not appear as married prior to 2024.⁵

A key feature of the L2 data is that there is no couple-level identifier within a household. Voters have an assigned marital status, but are not linked to another person within the household. We use an algorithm based on gender and age differences, household size, and last names to identify couples. For a given state in a given year, the starting point is to divide households by the number of registered voters and the number of generations represented. Generations are constructed as 20-year age ranges. In two-person households, we link voters if they both have the same predicted marital status, are of the same generation, and do not have the same gender. In multiple-person households in which more than two people are marked as “non-traditional” or “married”, we divide these groups and rank by age and gender. We link couples within a generation that share the same predicted marital status and have different genders, prioritizing first those of the same age, then those closer in age.

³The panel was constructed by selecting the first voter file snapshot from each state directly following each even-year general election.

⁴States with partially modeled party identification are Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia. States with fully modeled party identification are Alabama, Hawaii, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, Vermont, and Washington.

⁵In 2024, L2 changed its modeling approach to include information from a national consumer file. In this year only, it would be possible for a registered voter’s marital status to reflect a relationship with an unregistered individual.

We then generate a stable couple identifier by concatenating the partners’ individual IDs. We repeat this process for all states, all years.

We follow ever-coupled people over time, from the first time they appear in the voter file, regardless of whether they are coupled, and observe whether they form a couple, remain together, split, or leave the data in each recorded time period. To avoid misclassifying couples as newly formed when one person leaves, we complete the panel of voters, filling gaps from the first to the last time they show up. Voters who leave the dataset temporarily and then reappear in the same relationship are not counted as new couples. We classify newly formed couples as pairs of voters who we observed to be coupled in year t but not in year $t - 2$, including voters who were coupled with someone else in year $t - 2$.

We consider that a couple remains together in year t if, relative to year $t - 2$, both partners still live together and share the same marital status. Conversely, we consider that a couple has split up if, relative to $t - 2$, in t they no longer share the same residence and marital status, yet both of them remain registered voters, because not being registered does not necessarily imply the end of the relationship.

A couple is politically mismatched in a given year if the voters comprising it are registered with different parties. The party registration values are Democrat, Republican, and Independent/Other/Unknown, so there are six possible mismatched combinations. Since voters can change party registration between elections (around 6% of voters in our sample do), politically mismatched is a time-varying variable.

Table A1 presents descriptive statistics for our sample. The final dataset includes around 60 million unique couples across all election years. Figure 1 plots the evolution of couples’ partisanship and separation rates over time. Consistently, at around 34%, the modal political identity of couples is Republican. This share is relatively higher than the overall party identification in the US because Republican registrants tend to be older and more likely to be married (see Table A2). At 26%, the share of mismatched couples has remained relatively stable during our period of analysis. Further, as Table A1 illustrates, the type of mismatch has also remained stable. In about 5% of couples in our sample, the woman is a Democrat, and the man is a Republican; the opposite is true in about 2.5% of cases.

The average separation rate increased significantly in 2020 in the context of the global pandemic. Separation rates among couples of all partisan identities nearly doubled relative to 2016 levels. Break-ups have steadily declined since 2020 but have not yet reached pre-pandemic levels. Politically matched couples, in particular when both partners are registered Republicans, are the least likely to split up. The bi-year separation rates among Republican couples fluctuate between 1.8% and 2.9%. The numbers for Democratic couples range from 3.6% to 5.4%. Every year, from 2016 to 2024, Independent and mismatched couples have

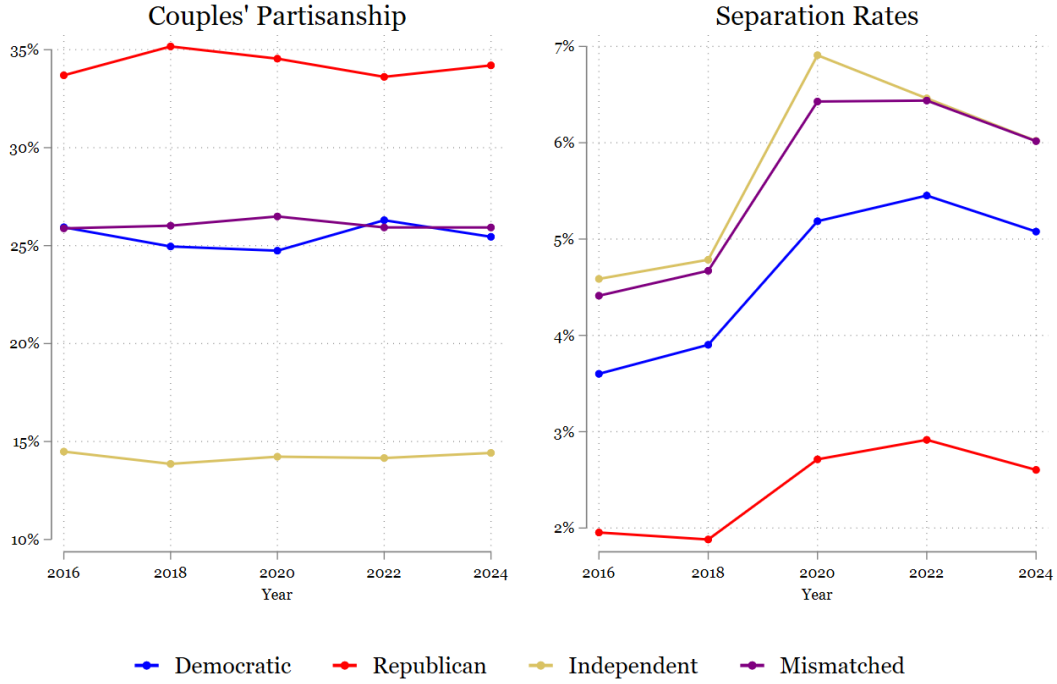


Figure 1: Descriptive Trends

had the highest separation rates of all, going from 4.5% to nearly 7%, around 5 times as high as rates for Republican couples.

These estimated numbers of marriages and separations obtained from the voter file are not directly comparable to other commonly used aggregated estimates. For example, the yearly divorce rate statistics generated by the CDC/NCHS National Vital Statistics System include both citizens and non-citizens who are not registered to vote. To validate our estimates, we construct counts of marriages and separations among citizens using the American Community Survey (ACS) microdata via IPUMS, which includes information on citizenship, marital status, and the year of marriage and divorce. As Appendix A.2 indicates, the marriage and separation estimates obtained from ACS are strongly correlated with the estimates obtained from the L2 voter file.

3 Descriptive Analysis

Why are mismatched couples more likely to split? Without random variation in who opts into a relationship with someone registered with a different political party, it is not possible to identify the effect of political mismatching on separation. However, it is possible to explore whether the observed differences in separation rates disappear when accounting for characteristics that are more common among mismatched couples, such as those outlined

in Table A3. We examine the stability of the correlation between being politically mismatched and separation rates when controlling for a battery of geographic and couple-level characteristics observed in the voter file by estimating the following regression:

$$Together_{pct} = \beta * Mismatched_{pt-2} + \delta_t + \mathbf{X}_{pc,t-2} + \alpha_c + \epsilon_{pct} \quad (1)$$

where *Together* is a binary outcome for couple p , in county c , and year t . As described above, *Together* indicates whether a couple observed in $t - 2$ stayed together or separated in t . *Mismatched* indicates if the couple had different party registrations in $t - 2$. $\mathbf{X}$ is a vector of couple-year and county year-level regressors at $t - 2$. α are county fixed effects and δ are year fixed effects. We cluster the standard errors at the county level.

Since the indicator of staying together excludes unregistered voters, selection into the dataset could affect the estimates. That is, our estimates could be biased if mismatched couples are differentially likely to become unregistered. Table A9 indicates that mismatched couples are indeed around 14.5% more likely to have at least one partner temporarily unregistered and around 7.5% more likely to have at least one partner becoming permanently unregistered. Therefore, we restrict our analyses to couples whose members never exited temporarily or permanently; namely, to those who, once observed in the data, remained until 2024.

Table 1 presents the results. The unconditional coefficient is in Column 1. In expectation, mismatched couples are 1.79 percentage points less likely to remain together, around 41% relative to the total mean separation rate in our period of analysis (4.33%). Comparing couples in the same county by including county-fixed effects (Column 2) raises the coefficient marginally, suggesting that the higher break-up rates among mismatched couples are not geographically balanced.

Columns 3-5 progressively control for different couple-level characteristics. Column 3 just includes an indicator for the type of couple – “married” or “non-traditional”. The coefficient for *mismatched* drops by around one quarter, consistent with the higher likelihood of marriage among matched couples. Controlling for the couple’s mean age, the age gap, and the years they had spent together, as in Column 4, reduces the *mismatched* coefficient in half. On average, older, married couples with a smaller age gap and who have been together longer are more likely to remain together. Mismatched couples, in turn, are, on average, younger, less likely to be married, and with higher age gaps. However, even accounting for these variables, mismatched couples remain 0.66 percentage points less likely to stay together, 15% of the mean separation rate.

Column 5 explores whether economic constraints and other sources of mismatching could explain away the effect of partisan differences. First, modeled household income, available for

a subset of voters, is positively correlated with staying together. Second, differences in ethnicity decrease the expectation of remaining together by 1.2 percentage points. Conditioning on these two variables reduces only marginally the size of the *mismatched* coefficient.

Table 1: Correlation between political mismatching and staying together

	(1)	(2)	(3)	Stayed together		(6)	(7)
				(4)	(5)		
Politically mismatched	-0.0179*** (0.0008)	-0.0186*** (0.0005)	-0.0136*** (0.0004)	-0.0066*** (0.0003)	-0.0061*** (0.0003)	-0.0061*** (0.0003)	-0.0061*** (0.0003)
Married			0.0996*** (0.0016)	0.0739*** (0.0013)	0.0719*** (0.0013)	0.0722*** (0.0013)	0.0722*** (0.0013)
Mean age				0.0018*** (3.2×10^{-5})	0.0018*** (3.13×10^{-5})	0.0018*** (3.1×10^{-5})	0.0018*** (3.13×10^{-5})
Age gap				-0.0021*** (5.08×10^{-5})	-0.0019*** (4.57×10^{-5})	-0.0019*** (4.64×10^{-5})	-0.0019*** (4.6×10^{-5})
Years together				0.0076*** (0.0001)	0.0072*** (0.0001)	0.0073*** (0.0001)	0.0073*** (0.0001)
Income (000's USD)					0.0002*** (5.23×10^{-6})	0.0002*** (5.18×10^{-6})	0.0002*** (5.25×10^{-6})
Ethnically mismatched					-0.0124*** (0.0005)	-0.0124*** (0.0005)	-0.0124*** (0.0005)
GOP share (House)						-0.0001 (0.0001)	
Turnout (% cvap)						-7.82×10^{-5} (0.0002)	
Unemployment rate							-0.0008 (0.0006)
<i>Fixed-effects</i>							
Year	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
County		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	143,479,168	143,479,168	143,037,232	143,037,232	119,862,652	118,694,975	119,138,177
R ²	0.00259	0.00816	0.03856	0.06485	0.06672	0.06694	0.06686

Displayed is the likelihood of staying together. All couple-level variables, as well as the county fixed effects, are lagged. Mismatched Party indicates that voters in the couple have different party registration. Standard errors are clustered at the county level. Stars indicate: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1. Source: L2 voter file and BLS' LAUS.

Column 6 investigates whether the higher separation rate among mismatched couples could mask differences in the political environment in which the couples live. The hypothesis is that the association between political incongruence and separation may be concentrated in contexts of more intense partisanship or political salience. As Table A3 indicates, the mean mismatched couple lives in a county that leans marginally more Democratic than matched couples. Therefore, politically mismatched couples driving the observed variation could be concentrated in election years or counties of intense political significance or strong

partisanship, and both factors may affect separations by themselves. We do not find evidence supporting this hypothesis.

Finally, Column 7 tests whether local economic conditions affect couple separations, by generating economic anxiety or alternatively raising the opportunity cost of exiting a relationship. The unemployment rate is negatively correlated with the probability of staying together, but the coefficient is small and not statistically significant.

In both Columns 6 and 7, the coefficient and significance of *mismatched* are unchanged relative to Column 5, suggesting that its association with separation is not explained by a simultaneous association with local political or economic conditions. In expectation, politically mismatched couples are 0.61 percentage points less likely to remain together one electoral cycle later.

3.1 Political Salience and Mismatch

Couples’ characteristics and local conditions may strengthen or weaken the link between political differences and the likelihood of separation. The results in Table 1 suggest that when couples are more demographically different (larger age gap and ethnic differences), income and barriers to exit are lower (non-married or fewer years spent together), and –potentially– economic conditions are bad, couples, regardless of whether they are politically aligned, are more likely to split up. However, it is unclear how changes in these correlates affect mismatched couples in particular. Is the survival of mismatched couples more responsive to shocks affecting the couples’ differences, their barriers to exit, disposable income, or local conditions?

We focus on local conditions, as exploiting changes to other couple-level characteristics is either infeasible (some features, like the age gap or mean age, are constant) or presents a challenge of reverse causality (a non-random group of mismatched couples may decide to get married). Leveraging variation unrelated to couples themselves, Table 2 examines if mismatched couples facing a politically or economically salient environment are less likely to remain together, relative to matched couples facing the same environment.

Column 1 studies the differential likelihood of separation for mismatched couples in politically salient years. We proxy political salience with turnout, assuming that when politics are more salient, political participation increases. In particular, from 2016 to 2024, we identify, for midterm and presidential elections separately, the election years in which the county had higher turnout than its median. This approach allows us to maintain the within-county structure of the analysis and identify specific instances of political significance for each county, while not pre-selecting specific years or counties. During above-median turnout years, matched couples are not more or less likely to remain together. However, in those

years, politically mismatched couples are less likely to remain together. Namely, when politics becomes more salient in a county, mismatched couples are especially affected. There are two potential explanations behind this. First, during politically salient times, couples tend to talk more about politics, learning what the other’s preferences are. In that sense, a change in political salience can be thought of as an information shock to members of the couple. Second, in politically salient times, differences (perhaps already known to the couple) may become more visible to outsiders, imposing social costs on one or both members of the couple.

Table 2: Differential likelihood of staying together for mismatched couples by local conditions

	Stayed together	
	(1)	(2)
Politically mismatched	-0.0054*** (0.0003)	-0.0058*** (0.0003)
Above median turnout (cvap)	0.0003 (0.0002)	
Politically mismatched $\times$ Above median turnout (cvap)	-0.0015*** (0.0003)	
Above median unemployment		0.0017** (0.0007)
Politically mismatched $\times$ Above median unemployment		-0.0008*** (0.0003)
Observations	119,137,709	119,138,177
R ²	0.06686	0.06686

Displayed is the likelihood of staying together by mismatched status and turnout as a share of registered voters (column 1) or unemployment rate (column 2). The indicator of *Above median turnout*, which varies at the county-year level, indicates an above-median value for that county that year, given the type of election -midterm or presidential. The indicator of *Above median unemployment*, which varies at the county-year level, indicates an above-median value for that county that year. Mismatched party indicates that voters in the couple have different party registration. All estimations control for election year and (lagged) county and married fixed effects, as well as all the (lagged) couple-level covariates from column 5 of Table 1 (mean age, age gap, years together, income, and mismatched ethnicity). Standard errors are clustered at the state level. Stars indicate: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1. Source: L2 voter file and BLS’ LAUS.

Column 2 studies the differential likelihood of separation for mismatched couples in economically salient years. We proxy economic salience with unemployment rates, taking the years in which unemployment was above the county’s median, without separating between midterm and presidential elections. Economic salience is positively correlated with staying together for matched couples, suggesting, for instance, a worsening of outside options. Conversely, during economically challenging years, mismatched couples are half as likely as matched couples compared to better economic years. One potential explanation is that, among mismatched couples, economic hardship reinforces their differences, countering the

general decline in outside options.

4 Abortion Bans and Separations

While it is not feasible to randomly vary, at scale, couple-level characteristics to test the effect of political incongruence on relationship duration, it is possible to leverage exogenous variation to study the effect of changes in political conditions on the separation of mismatched couples. We exploit the sudden criminalization of abortion in 13 US states between the 2020 and 2022 elections and explore if mismatched couples were more likely to separate as a result. In line with our previous analyses, our hypothesis is that the change in abortion law in treated states increased the salience of politics, making politically mismatched couples less likely to remain together, relative to states in which abortion remained protected.

In June 2022, the Supreme Court of the United States struck down federal protections for abortion, allowing states to enact their own laws. A set of states, which had pre-enacted laws in the event of a new judicial decision, triggered abortion bans, and another set of states adopted similar policies in the succeeding months. A third group of states protected and expanded abortion protections. Finally, a fourth group of states imposed abortion limits after 2022 or had their immediate modifications delayed, or even partially reversed, due to legislative and judicial challenges. Table 3 classifies the states according to the modifications to their abortion laws and whether they record party registration.

As Table A11 indicates, abortion bans are concentrated in conservative states. In most liberal states, abortion rights remained protected. Early adopters are marginally more conservative than later adopters. They also have higher poverty rates and lower median household income than abortion-protective states and late adopters.

Abortion bans created significant changes. Among others, compared to states that kept protections, states with bans saw increases in child mortality and reductions in fertility (Gemmill et al., 2025; Bell et al., 2025). In terms of politics, in the 2022 midterm election, Democratic candidates in states with bans were more likely to center their campaigns around abortion (Meisels, 2025), highlighting its political salience and its role in shaping voting behavior (Mutz and Mansfield, 2024).

Our expectation is that these policy and political changes in treated states disproportionately affected politically mismatched couples. The impact should be concentrated among couples made up of one Democrat and one Republican, since abortion preferences largely fall along party lines. Given the heterogeneous nature of the group, the hypothesized impact among mismatched couples containing an Independent/Other voter is ambiguous. The separation rates of politically aligned couples should not be different in states that banned abortion, as this issue is unlikely to divide unified Republican or unified Democratic part-

Table 3: States by treatment status

No restriction (Control)	Restriction in (2020-22] (Treated)	Restriction in [2023-24] (Not yet Treated)	Ambiguous abortion law (Robustness)	Modeled party regist. (Excluded)
Alaska California Colorado Connecticut Delaware DC Illinois Kansas Maine Maryland Massachusetts Nevada New Hampshire New Jersey New Mexico New York Oregon Pennsylvania Rhode Island Virginia	Arkansas Georgia Idaho Kentucky Louisiana Mississippi Ohio Oklahoma South Dakota Tennessee Texas West Virginia Wisconsin	Florida Indiana Iowa Nebraska North Carolina South Carolina Wyoming	Arizona Utah	Alabama Hawaii Michigan Minnesota Missouri Montana North Dakota Vermont Washington

Sources: (Nash and Guarnieri, 2022; Center for Reproductive Rights, 2022; The New York Times, 2024; Dench et al., 2024; Gemmill et al., 2025; Ranji et al., 2026)

nerships.

4.1 Identification Strategy

We compare the survival of politically mismatched couples in states that enacted abortion laws before the 2022 election relative to those in states that maintained or expanded abortion rights. We focus on early adopters because they are the larger group (13 vs 7) and because many late adopters (not-yet-treated) began implementing legal changes before 2022, complicating the exact timing of treatment. Comparisons with not-yet-treated are included as part of the robustness checks.

From the main panel of couples, we create three separate groups of couple-year observations: matched, mismatched with a member of the opposing major party, and mismatched with a voter unaffiliated with either major party. Then we run the following regression for each group:

$$Together_{psct} = \alpha_c + \sum_{t \neq 2020} \beta_t * AbortionBan_s + \delta_t + \mathbf{X}_{pt-2} + \epsilon_{psct} \quad (2)$$

where *Together* is a binary indicator for whether couple p , in treatment state s , and county c , stays together in year t , relative to year $t - 2$. α captures time-invariant county

characteristics. *AbortionBan* is a binary variable for states that enacted an abortion ban between the 2020 and 2022 elections. The different β s denote the difference between treated and control states for each year; the difference in 2020 is the omitted category. In particular, our coefficient of interest is β_{2022} . $\mathbf{X}$ is the vector of couple-level controls consistent with our correlational analysis: age gap, mean age, income, and ethnically mismatched, as well as an indicator for being married or non-traditional. δ captures specific year effects. All our couple-level variables, as well as the county fixed effects, are lagged two years to match the timing of the shock, not the outcome. There is no *mismatch* variable because all the couple-year observations have the same value. Standard errors are clustered at the state level.

Our baseline specification is limited to newly formed couples; namely, to those whom we observe together for the first time in $t-2$. We do this to have a consistent, comparable sample. Keeping all couples could introduce survival bias, with a mix of newly formed couples and those who endured the general shock of the 2020 pandemic, plus any other shock affecting survival. Further, the composition of this sample among treated (conservative) states would include a higher share of older, established couples. Focusing on newly formed couples does not invalidate our design if there are no systematic differences in couple formation, of any type, between treatment and control states in 2020. Table A10 shows that indeed, there is no differential couple formation among treated states before, and even after, 2022.

4.2 Identification Assumptions

The identification assumption behind our design is that the separation rate among mismatched couples had not been trending differently in treated states prior to treatment. If this assumption was not met, the collection of β s would display a trend/cycle, without a clear break in 2022. Likewise, our design assumes that the difference between treatment and control states captures the role of abortion bans, and not other simultaneous shocks. We test against these possibilities in different ways. First, we run the estimation for matched couples. If the treated states had experienced a generalized shock that affected couples, regardless of their mismatch status, this group would be affected. Second, we compare the control with the not-yet-treated states. If in 2022, couples in not-yet-treated states saw an analogous decline in the probability of staying together, before abortion bans were effectively adopted, our design would likely be capturing other changes, unrelated to the bans. Third, to rule out differential trends in regressors that could affect separation rates in treated vs control states, we control for changes in a set of pre-period state-level variables and interact each one with time indicators. Our results are robust to all these tests, supporting the identification assumptions.

4.3 Results

Graph 2 presents the coefficients and 95% confidence intervals of the different β from equation 2 for the subsamples of newly formed matched and mismatched couples (Table A15 in the Appendix has the same results). Politically matched couples in treated states were not differentially likely to stay together in 2022 compared to 2020. Overall, the differences are small (from 0.7 to -0.4 percentage points) and not statistically significant, despite the group being more than 10 times as large. This set of results assuages concerns about a generalized shock, correlated with abortion bans, affecting the separation rates of all types of couples in treated states.

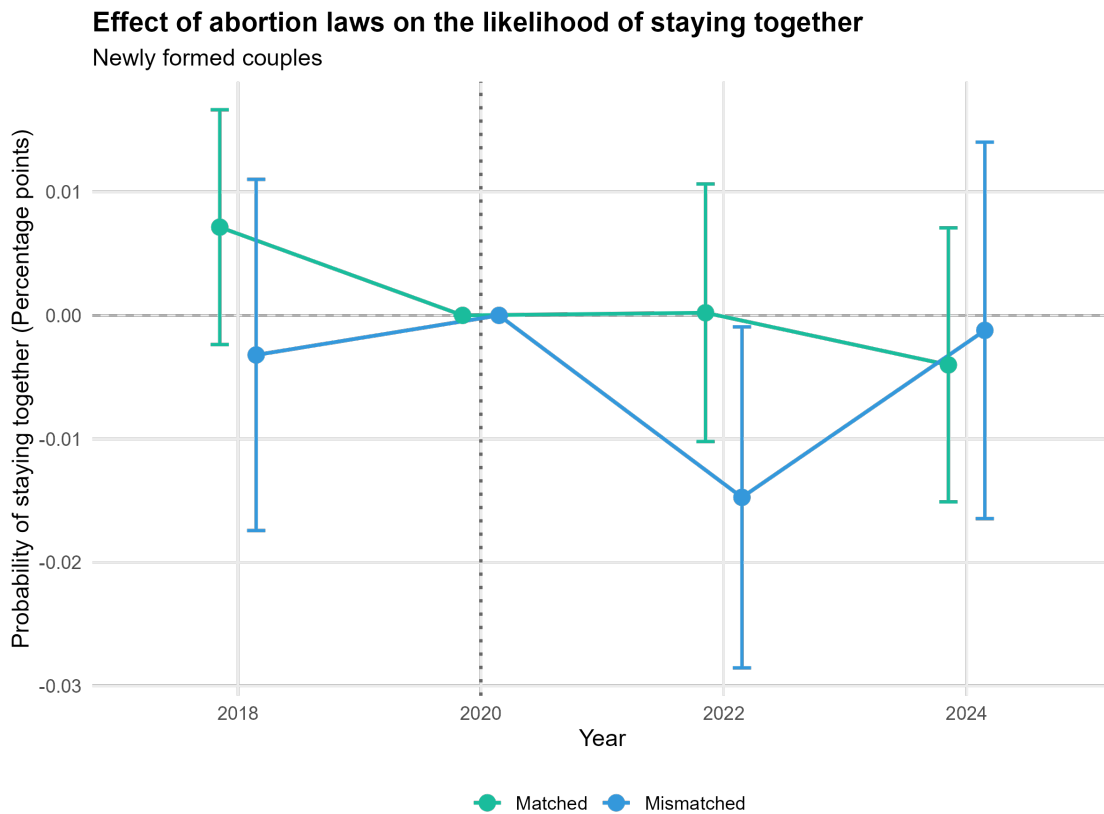


Figure 2: Effect of abortion restriction on staying together for newly formed couples by mismatched status

In contrast, there is a statistically significant change in the separation rate of mismatched couples in treated states. Compared to the difference in 2020, in 2022 mismatched couples in treated states were 1.47 percentage points less likely to remain together. In 2022, the average separation rate for mismatched couples in treated and control states together was 13%, so the effects indicate a 11% increase. There is no evidence of a change that precedes abortion bans. The 2018 difference in the likelihood of staying together of mismatched couples in

treated states was not statistically different from that in 2020, the baseline. Moreover, the point estimate is around a fifth of the one for 2022.

The effects of the abortion ban do not persist. This short-term effect is reassuring and consistent with expectations. The voters who entered a relationship between the 2022 and 2024 elections were exposed to the abortion bans separately, not as a couple. Therefore, the ban should not have made any political differences more salient.

4.4 Robustness Checks

Table A13 compares the separation rates of mismatched couples in control states and states that banned abortion after the 2022 election — not-yet-treated states. Mismatched couples in not-yet-treated states are not differentially likely to remain together in 2022. The coefficient is one-fourth that between the treated and control states and is not statistically significant. In contrast, in 2024, after not-yet-treated states adopted abortion bans, mismatched couples were less likely to remain together compared to those in control states. Hence, separation rates among mismatched couples responded to two different waves of abortion bans precisely in the election after the bans were enacted.

Although the increase in separation rates follows the adoption of abortion bans, treated states could have been experiencing different trends in variables that could themselves affect separation, confounding the effect of bans. In particular, it is possible that the increase in separation rates for mismatched couples could be caused by an underlying right-ward shift or a worsening in economic conditions, rather than by the bans. As Table A11 shows, treated states differed significantly from control states at baseline, but it is not clear whether they were on a distinct trajectory. Graph A2 presents the results of our main specification controlling for pre-period (2018 minus 2014) state-level changes in a battery of political, economic, and demographic variables interacted with time indicators. The decline observed in 2022 is robust to controlling for these differential trends. The stability of the effect for mismatched couples contrasts with the instability of the coefficient for matched couples. The expected change in the probability of staying together for politically matched couples in treated states fluctuates between positive and negative values, with large confidence intervals (Graph A3), further suggesting the specific role of bans for the survival of politically mismatched couples.

Another concern relates to inference. With only 33 states, 13 treated and 20 control, the number of clusters for the standard error is below the recommended levels for asymptotic validity. In Table A14, we recompute the results using a small-sample degrees-of-freedom correction. The effects remain statistically significant.

Finally, as Table A15 illustrates, there are no clear patterns for mismatched couples with a pairing other than Democrat-Republican either. Mismatched couples with one voter

registered as Independent/Other were consistently less likely to remain together in treated states, but the effect is not significant or larger than around half a percentage point in magnitude in any year, suggesting that on average, the probability of separation for these couples did not change in response to *Dobbs*.

5 Conclusion

We study the prevalence and relationship duration of politically mismatched couples in the United States. Relying on demographic data from the L2 voter file, we identify around 60 million unique couples from 2014 to 2024 in the 35 states that record party registration. In this period, couples formed by voters registered to different political parties represent around 25% of the total identified. Following couples over time, we document that mismatched ones are consistently among the least likely to remain together in the succeeding election. Observable characteristics, like marital status, income, mean age, and ethnic differences, partially explain this association. However, in expectation, mismatched couples are around 14% less likely to remain together compared with otherwise similar matched couples.

In the absence of random variation in selection into a mismatched partnership, we examine the effect of an exogenous change to the political environment on the probability of staying together. In particular, we exploit the sudden criminalization of abortion in 13 states between the 2020 and 2022 elections, and ask whether newly formed mismatched couples are less likely to remain together compared to newly formed mismatched couples in states that maintained abortion protections. We focus on newly formed couples to avoid survival bias. Relative to the difference in 2020, the immediate election before the abortion bans, mismatched couples in treated states were 1.47 percentage points less likely to remain together, around 11% of the mean separation rate for these couples in 2022. There were no observable differences in separations in 2018, before the bans. Further, we do not observe a 2022 change in the probability of remaining together for matched couples or mismatched couples in states that banned abortion in 2024. These results suggest that the observed decline in expected relationship duration is indeed caused by the political tensions generated by abortion bans.

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A Appendix

A.1 Descriptive statistics

Table A1: Summary Statistics by Year

	2016	2020	2024
Unique Couples	32,327,915	35,646,849	37,274,193
Mean Age	55.075	54.943	55.658
Mean Age Gap	3.265	3.243	3.446
Share Mismatched	0.263	0.260	0.264
W Dem - M Rep	0.054	0.050	0.047
W Ind - M Rep	0.047	0.049	0.054
W Rep - M Dem	0.030	0.025	0.022
W Ind - M Dem	0.035	0.035	0.035
W Dem - M Ind	0.056	0.060	0.063
W Rep - M Ind	0.040	0.040	0.043

Table A2: Summary statistics by party

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Democratic	Republican	Independent/Other
Age	57.89 (15.18)	59.22 (14.41)	52.85 (14.96)
Female	0.54 (0.50)	0.48 (0.50)	0.48 (0.50)
Married	0.80 (0.40)	0.91 (0.29)	0.79 (0.41)
Household income (000's)	98.05 (59.66)	102.17 (58.94)	103.34 (59.17)
Ethnically mismatched	0.08 (0.28)	0.04 (0.18)	0.07 (0.26)
Observations	97728268	122514242	66782614

Standard errors in parentheses. Estimates at the person-level.

Table A3: Summary statistics by mismatched status

	(1)	(2)
	Matched	Mismatched
Mean age	56.12 (14.89)	52.93 (14.48)
Age gap	3.18 (3.06)	3.28 (3.13)
Married	0.86 (0.35)	0.80 (0.40)
Household income (000's)	100.22 (59.18)	103.40 (59.54)
Ethnically mismatched	0.05 (0.23)	0.08 (0.27)
Republican vote share, midterms	51.24 (19.50)	48.51 (18.68)
Turnout (% registered cvap)	57.60 (11.86)	58.32 (11.75)
Observations	106104419	37374767

Standard errors in parentheses. Estimates at the couple-level.

Table A4: Status Breakdown by Treatment State: Matched couples

Year	Control states		Treated states		Not yet treated states	
	Not stayed together	Stayed together	Not stayed together	Stayed together	Not stayed together	Stayed together
2018	161408 (8.64%)	1707214 (91.36%)	91939 (6.69%)	1282954 (93.31%)	55894 (6.58%)	793753 (93.42%)
2020	168268 (14.23%)	1013872 (85.77%)	123176 (12.79%)	840105 (87.21%)	66863 (11.23%)	528687 (88.77%)
2022	226631 (11.58%)	1730480 (88.42%)	180509 (11.16%)	1436600 (88.84%)	104691 (10.59%)	883518 (89.41%)
2024	166974 (12.56%)	1162410 (87.44%)	130120 (11.88%)	965485 (88.12%)	70349 (11.08%)	564377 (88.92%)

Table A5: Status Breakdown by Treatment State: Mismatched couples

Year	Control states		Treated states		Not yet treated states	
	Not stayed together	Stayed together	Not stayed together	Stayed together	Not stayed together	Stayed together
2018	20998 (9.87%)	191720 (90.13%)	7163 (7.05%)	94401 (92.95%)	8247 (9.52%)	78395 (90.48%)
2020	20397 (16.27%)	104944 (83.73%)	9316 (12.45%)	65512 (87.55%)	10098 (16.96%)	49436 (83.04%)
2022	26931 (13.25%)	176321 (86.75%)	12824 (12.49%)	89872 (87.51%)	13507 (15.41%)	74159 (84.59%)
2024	20554 (15.38%)	113127 (84.62%)	10071 (12.60%)	69831 (87.40%)	10066 (18.43%)	44541 (81.57%)

Table A6: Status Breakdown by Treatment State: Mismatched Other

Year	Control states		Treated states		Not yet treated states	
	Not stayed together	Stayed together	Not stayed together	Stayed together	Not stayed together	Stayed together
2018	90140 (11.35%)	704131 (88.65%)	24509 (9.00%)	247760 (91.00%)	32761 (10.12%)	290941 (89.88%)
2020	103984 (17.73%)	482349 (82.27%)	32284 (14.57%)	189272 (85.43%)	42220 (16.66%)	211277 (83.34%)
2022	129185 (14.38%)	769133 (85.62%)	40058 (12.83%)	272114 (87.17%)	60129 (15.06%)	339028 (84.94%)
2024	100488 (16.08%)	524344 (83.92%)	28552 (14.28%)	171440 (85.72%)	46825 (16.56%)	235942 (83.44%)

Table A7: Correlation between political mismatching, by type and staying together

	(1)	(2)	(3)	Stayed together		(6)	(7)
				(4)	(5)		
Pol mism (Dem-Rep)	-0.0029*** (0.0007)	-0.0036*** (0.0006)	-0.0023*** (0.0005)	-0.0046*** (0.0004)	-0.0044*** (0.0004)	-0.0043*** (0.0004)	-0.0043*** (0.0004)
Pol mism (Ind/Other)	-0.0245*** (0.0009)	-0.0256*** (0.0006)	-0.0188*** (0.0005)	-0.0075*** (0.0003)	-0.0069*** (0.0003)	-0.0069*** (0.0003)	-0.0069*** (0.0003)
Married			0.0992*** (0.0016)	0.0739*** (0.0013)	0.0719*** (0.0013)	0.0722*** (0.0013)	0.0721*** (0.0013)
Mean age				0.0018*** (3.18×10^{-5})	0.0018*** (3.11×10^{-5})	0.0018*** (3.07×10^{-5})	0.0018*** (3.11×10^{-5})
Age gap				-0.0021*** (5.06×10^{-5})	-0.0019*** (4.55×10^{-5})	-0.0019*** (4.62×10^{-5})	-0.0019*** (4.58×10^{-5})
Years together				0.0076*** (0.0001)	0.0072*** (0.0001)	0.0073*** (0.0001)	0.0073*** (0.0001)
Income (000's USD)					0.0002*** (5.22×10^{-6})	0.0002*** (5.16×10^{-6})	0.0002*** (5.23×10^{-6})
Ethnically mismatched					-0.0124*** (0.0005)	-0.0124*** (0.0005)	-0.0124*** (0.0005)
GOP share (House)						-0.0001 (0.0001)	
Turnout (% cvap)						-7.83×10^{-5} (0.0002)	
Unemployment rate							-0.0008 (0.0006)
Year	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
County		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	143,479,168	143,479,168	143,037,232	143,037,232	119,862,652	118,694,975	119,138,177
R ²	0.00321	0.00879	0.03892	0.06486	0.06673	0.06695	0.06687

Displayed is the likelihood of staying together. All couple-level variables, as well as the county fixed effects, are lagged. Specific instances of mismatch (columns 2 and 4) occur when one person is registered as Republican and the other as Democrat, or when one of them is registered as Independent/Other. Standard errors are clustered at the county level. Stars indicate: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1. Source: L2 voter file and BLS' LAUS.

A.2 Data validation

Table A8: Correlation between the estimates of coupled and separated US citizens from the L2 voter file and the ACS (2016-2024)

	Together (ACS)	Separated (ACS)
<i>A. All couples</i>		
Together (L2)	0.83*** (0.04)	
Separated (L2)		0.68*** (0.04)
Observations	210	210
<i>B. New couples (2018-2024)</i>		
Together (L2)	0.83*** (0.05)	
Separated (L2)		0.70*** (0.08)
Observations	168	157

Displayed are the coefficients of regressing the log of the state-year household-weighted couples (separations) obtained from the ACS on the log of couples (separations) obtained from the L2 voter file. To make the yearly ACS estimates comparable to the bi-yearly L2 estimates, we grouped years in periods of two starting in 2015, except 2019-2020 because the 2020 ACS data is not consistent. For the total number of couples (stocks), we use the information for the second year of the period. A person is considered married if their marital status is married, spouse present, and they got married before the first year of the period. For the number of new couples and all separations (flows), we sum the information from both years of the period. To transform from couple (L2) to individual (ACS) level estimates, we multiply the number of marriages and separations from L2 by 2. The sample of people from ACS only includes adults who are US citizens, not living in quarters. States with modeled party identification are excluded. Standard errors are clustered at state level. Stars indicate *p<0.1, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01.

Table A9: Probability of exiting the data by mismatched status

	Temporary missing		Permanently missing	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Politically mismatched	0.0012*** (0.0002)		0.0034*** (0.0004)	
Politically mismatched (Dem-Rep)		0.0002 (0.0003)		0.0010 (0.0009)
Politically mismatched (one Independent/Other)		0.0017*** (0.0002)		0.0045*** (0.0005)
Age gap	0.0002*** (1.2×10^{-5})	0.0002*** (1.2×10^{-5})	0.0011*** (4×10^{-5})	0.0011*** (3.99×10^{-5})
Years together	0.0008*** (7.26×10^{-5})	0.0008*** (7.27×10^{-5})	0.0008** (0.0004)	0.0008** (0.0004)
Mean age	-0.0004*** (1.97×10^{-5})	-0.0004*** (1.96×10^{-5})	0.0018*** (6.75×10^{-5})	0.0018*** (6.78×10^{-5})
Observations	144,563,432	144,563,432	150,181,381	150,181,381
R ²	0.01412	0.01413	0.02680	0.02681
Dependent variable mean	0.00830	0.00830	0.04540	0.04540

Displayed is the likelihood of at least one member in the couple being temporarily unregistered (columns 1 and 2) or permanently unregistered (columns 3 and 4) by mismatched status. The generic *Politically mismatched* (columns 1 and 3) occurs when voters have different party registration. Specific instances of mismatch (columns 2 and 4) occur when one person is registered as Republican and the other as Democrat, or when one of them is registered as Independent/Other. All estimations control for election year and (lagged) county and married fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the state level. Stars indicate: * * *: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1. Source: L2 voter file.

Table A10: Differential change in the number and type of newly formed couples between states that maintained abortion protection and those that did not

	New couples (log) (1)	Ratio of matched/mismatched (2)
Abortion Ban $\times$ 2016	-0.0570 (0.1236)	-5.39×10^{-5} (0.0269)
Abortion Ban $\times$ 2018	0.0715 (0.1392)	0.0083 (0.0093)
Abortion Ban $\times$ 2022	0.0536 (0.0891)	-0.0057 (0.0183)
Abortion Ban $\times$ 2024	0.0636 (0.0920)	-0.0109 (0.0149)
Observations	10,296	10,296
R ²	0.97968	0.90238

Dependent variables are the number of newly formed couples (column 1) and the ratio of matched relative to mismatched couples among the newly formed (column 2). The estimates represent the differences between states that maintained abortion protections and those that banned abortion before the 2022 election. The yearly differences are relative to 2020, the immediate election before the bans. All estimations control for election year and county fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the state level. Stars indicate: * * *: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1. Source: L2 voter file.

Table A11: Summary statistics of states by their abortion regime

	Maintained Protections	Bans before 2022 election	Bans after 2022 election
Total population (000's)	7122.67 (8903.65)	6660.31 (7055.30)	6955.65 (6552.15)
Mean age	39.18 (1.56)	38.47 (1.30)	39.09 (1.19)
White population, share	62.91 (15.61)	70.89 (14.29)	72.55 (11.46)
Black population, share	11.32 (10.77)	14.30 (11.70)	11.81 (9.05)
Hispanic population, share	16.23 (11.25)	8.85 (9.39)	10.79 (6.46)
Unemployment, rate	5.11 (1.88)	4.79 (1.40)	4.31 (1.30)
Poverty, rate	11.62 (2.52)	14.97 (2.64)	12.35 (2.01)
Median household income, USD	69358.37 (12344.30)	53860.41 (6392.46)	58161.63 (5120.75)
Republican vote (House), share	40.67 (8.78)	60.10 (7.53)	56.65 (6.23)
Republican vote (President), share	40.11 (10.19)	58.41 (6.09)	55.87 (6.46)
Observations	120	78	42

Displayed are the mean and standard deviation of 2015-2020 yearly values.
Sources: US Census, BLS' LAUS, SAIPE program, L2 and Dave Leip's.
Displayed are the mean and standard deviation of 2015-2020 yearly values.
Standard errors in parentheses * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

A.3 Main results

Table A12: Effect of abortion bans on the likelihood of staying together

Year	Matched	Mismatched
2018	0.0071 (0.0049)	-0.0032 (0.0073)
2022	0.0002 (0.0053)	-0.0147** (0.0070)
2024	-0.0040 (0.0057)	-0.0012 (0.0078)
Mean of dep. var. (2022)	0.8861	0.8701
Observations	9,677,076	872,555

Displayed is the likelihood of staying together of newly formed couples living in states that banned abortion in 2022 compared to the likelihood of staying together of newly formed couples living in states that maintained abortion protections. The yearly differences are relative to 2020, the immediate election before the bans. Each column represents a different sample. The sample in column 1 is politically matched couples (registered to the same party), and the sample in column 2 is politically mismatched couples (one person is registered as Republican and one as Democrat). Newly formed couples are those observed together for the first time in the preceding election. Standard errors are clustered at the state level. Stars indicate: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1. Source: L2 voter file

A.4 Robustness checks

Table A13: Effect of abortion bans on the likelihood of staying together, not-yet-treated states vs control states

Year	Mismatched
2018	0.0078 (0.0063)
2022	-0.0035 (0.0075)
2024	-0.0147** (0.0063)
Mean of dep. var. (2022)	0.8610
Observations	807,603

Displayed is the likelihood of staying together of newly formed mismatched couples living in states that banned abortion in 2024 compared to the likelihood of staying together of newly formed mismatched couples living in states that maintained abortion protections. The yearly differences are relative to 2020, the immediate election before the bans. Each column represents a different sample. Newly formed couples are those observed together for the first time in the preceding election. Standard errors are clustered at the state level. Stars indicate: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1. Source: L2 voter file

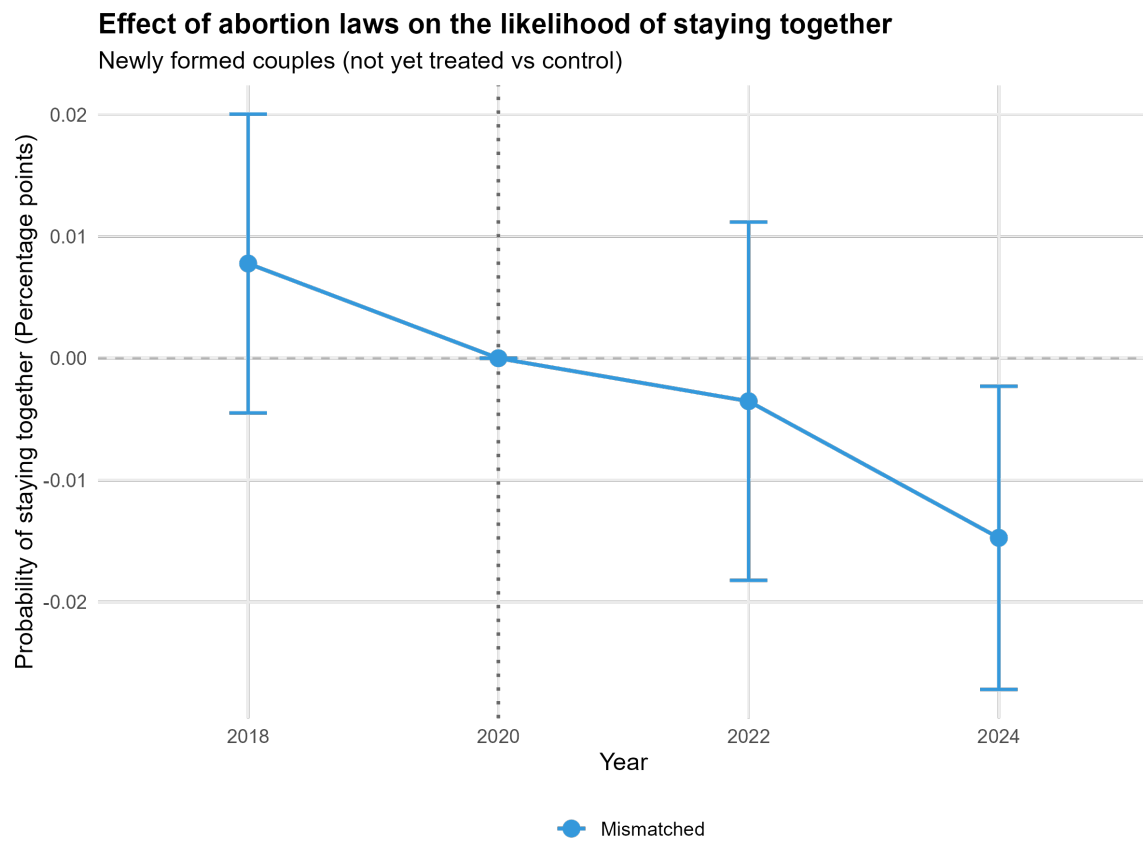


Figure A1: Effect of abortion restriction on the probability of staying together for newly formed mismatched couples, not-yet-treated vs control states

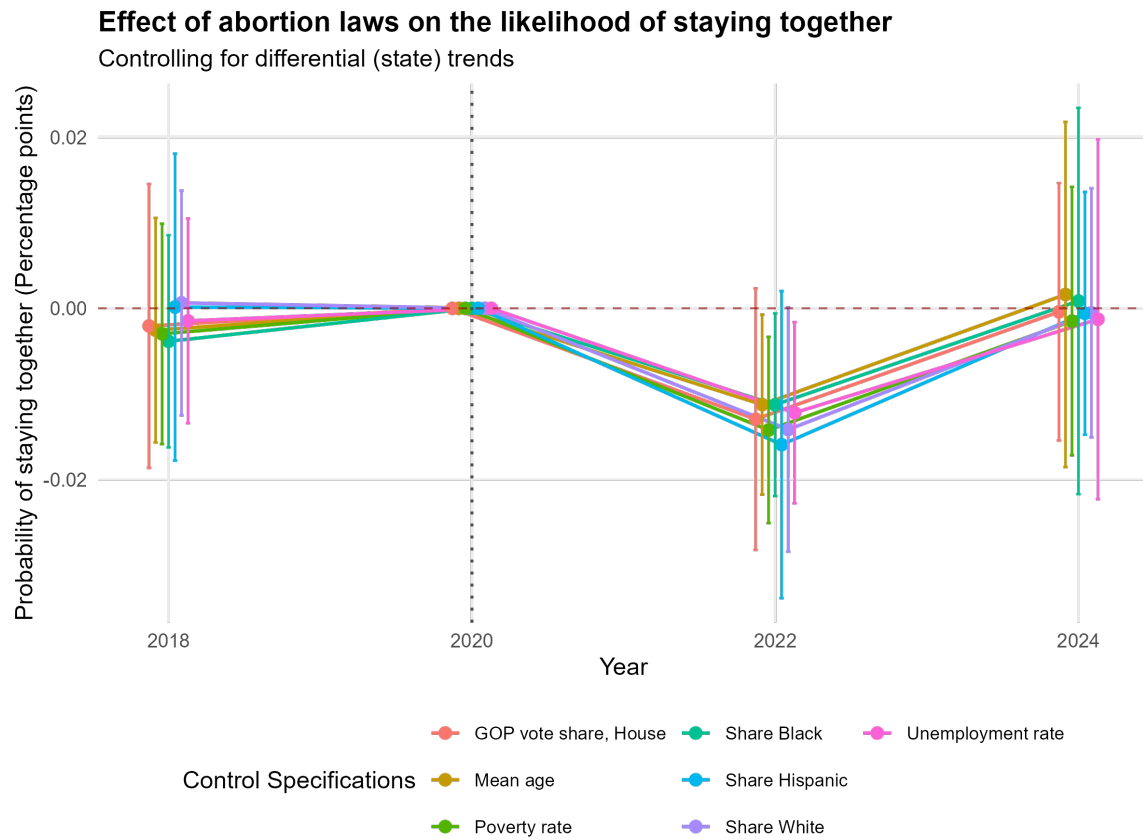


Figure A2: Effect of abortion restriction on the probability of staying together for newly formed mismatched couples, controlling for differential trends in state-level changes

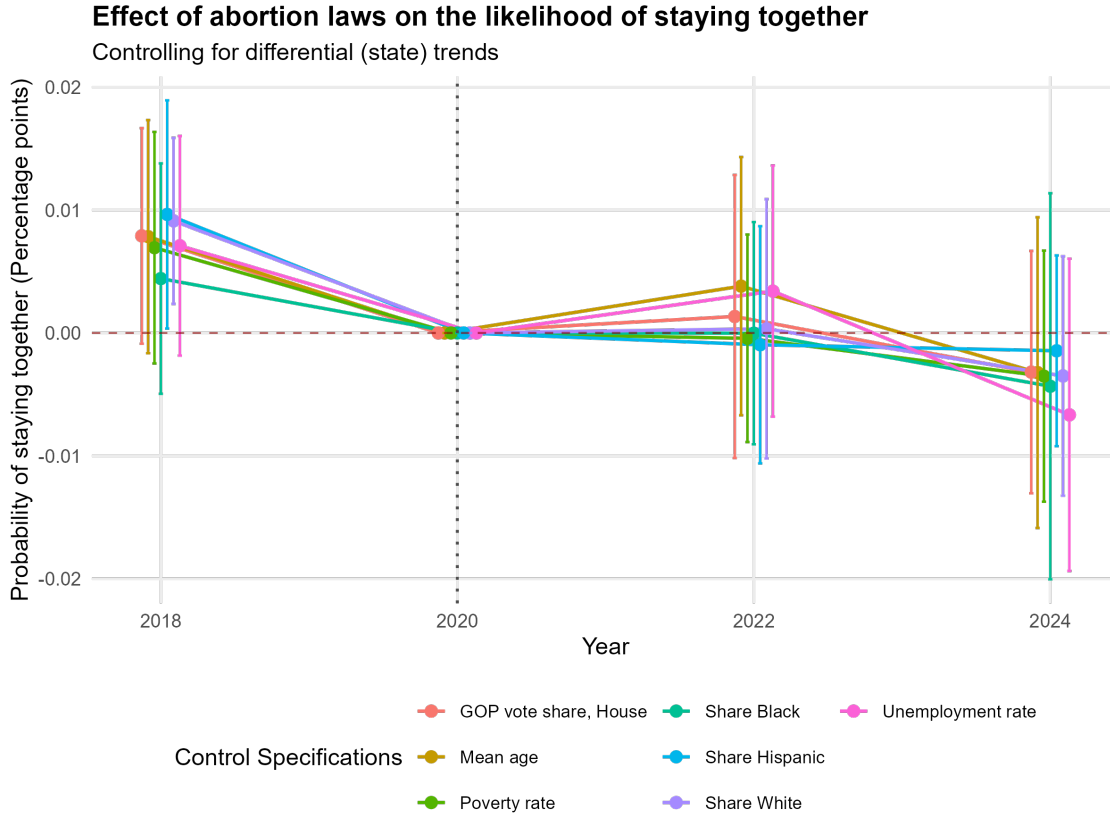


Figure A3: Effect of abortion restriction on the probability of staying together for newly formed matched couples, controlling for differential trends in state-level changes

Table A14: Effect of abortion bans on the likelihood of staying together, alternative standard errors

	Stayed together (1)
Abortion ban $\times$ 2018	-0.0032 (0.0073)
Abortion ban $\times$ 2022	-0.0147** (0.0070)
Abortion ban $\times$ 2024	-0.0012 (0.0078)
Observations	872,555
R ²	0.08605
Within R ²	0.02394

Displayed is the likelihood of staying together of newly formed mismatched couples living in states that banned abortion in 2022 compared to the likelihood of staying together of newly formed mismatched couples living in states that maintained abortion protections. The yearly differences are relative to 2020, the immediate election before the bans. Newly formed couples are those observed together for the first time in the preceding election. Standard errors are clustered at the state level with a small-sample degrees-of-freedom correction. Stars indicate: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1. Source: L2 voter file

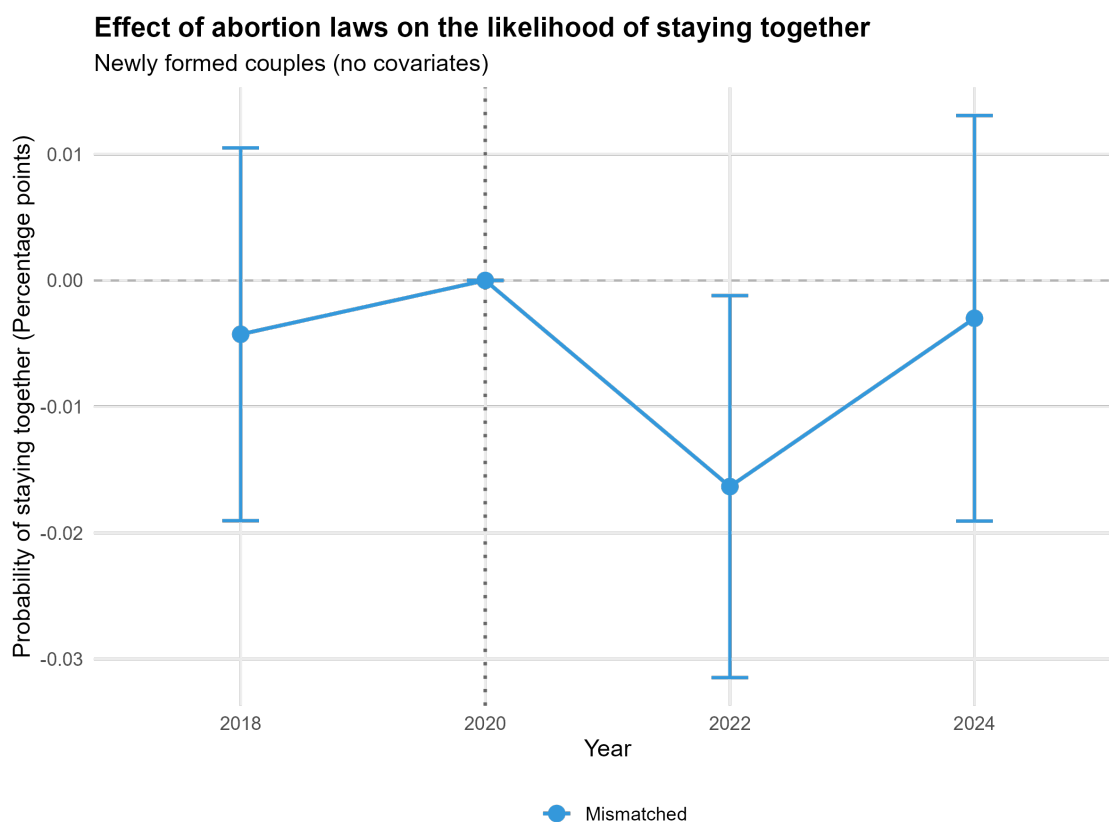
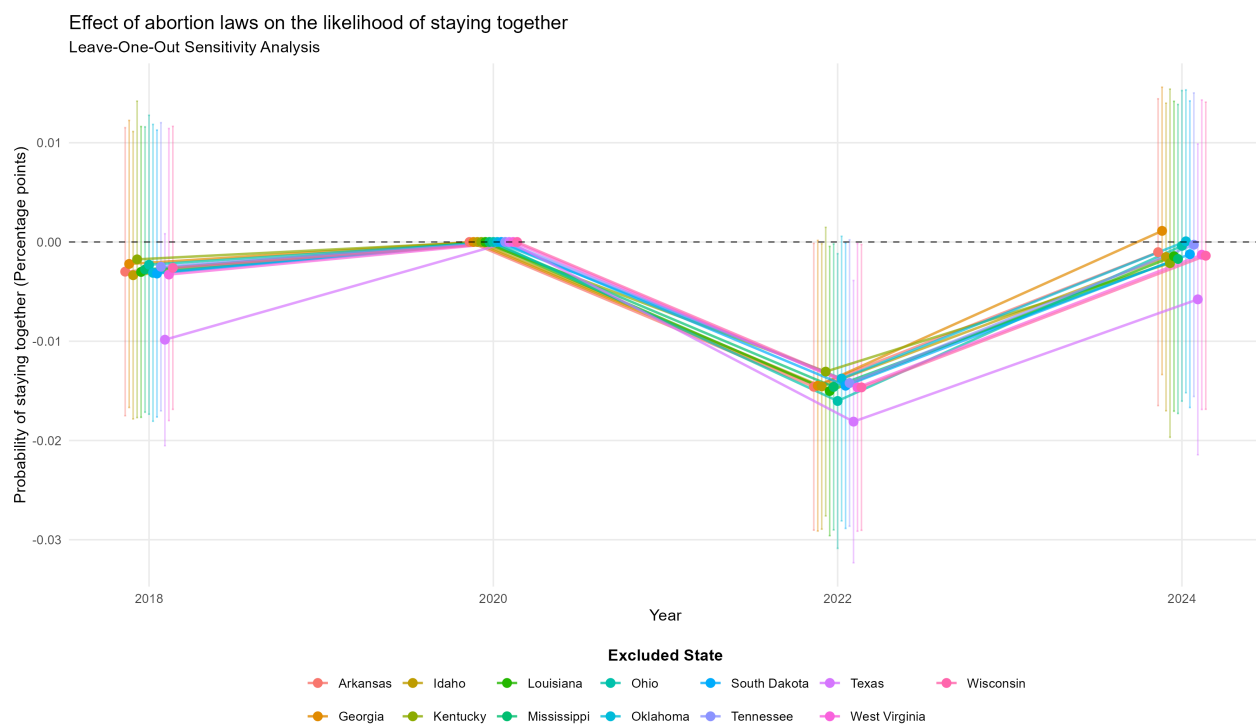


Figure A4: Effect of abortion restriction on staying together for newly formed couples by mismatch status



A.5 Additional analysis

Table A15: Effect of abortion bans on the likelihood of staying together

Year	Matched	Mismatched	Other
2018	0.0071 (0.0049)	-0.0032 (0.0073)	-0.0050 (0.0058)
2022	0.0002 (0.0053)	-0.0147** (0.0070)	-0.0055 (0.0071)
2024	-0.0040 (0.0057)	-0.0012 (0.0078)	-0.0056 (0.0072)
Mean of dep. var. (2022)	0.8861	0.8701	0.8602
Observations	9,677,076	872,555	3,277,309

Displayed is the likelihood of staying together of newly formed couples living in states that banned abortion in 2022 compared to the likelihood of staying together of newly formed couples living in states that maintained abortion protections. The yearly differences are relative to 2020, the immediate election before the bans. Each column represents a different sample. The sample in column 1 is politically matched couples (registered to the same party), the sample in column 2 is politically mismatched couples (one person is registered as Republican and one as Democrat), and the sample in column 3 is politically mismatched couples with one person registered as an Independent/Other. Newly formed couples are those observed together for the first time in the preceding election. Standard errors are clustered at the state level. Stars indicate: * * *: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1. Source: L2 voter file

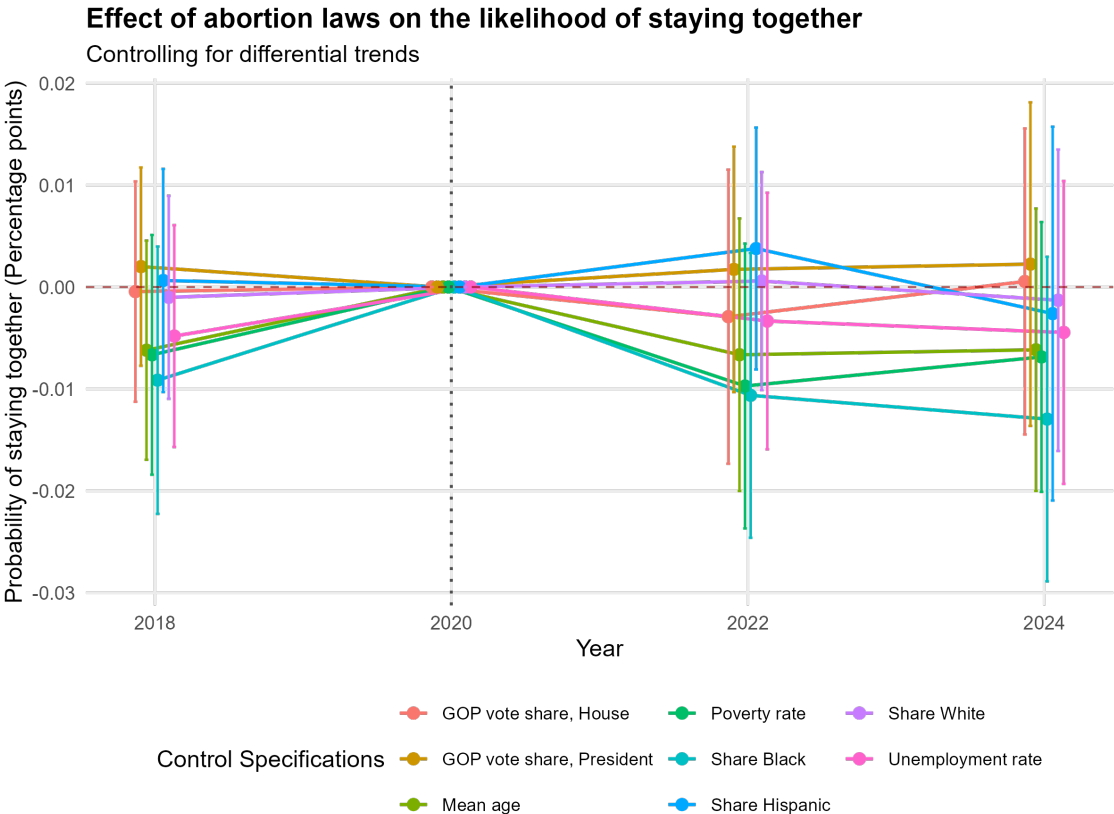


Figure A5: Effect of abortion restriction on the probability of staying together for newly formed mismatched (other) couples, controlling for differential trends in state-level changes