



# *The Empire Strikes Back*

by Stephen H. Miller on March 15, 2012

David Boaz of the Cato Institute [remarks to Washington Post columnist Jennifer Rubin](#):

Every time Republicans have a big win — 1980, 1994, 2010 — it's because Democrats have overreached on their big-government agenda and Republicans campaign on lower taxes and limited government. Every Republican strategist knows that smaller government is the unifying theme for Republicans and independents in this election. I think even Santorum knows it. I think he doesn't really mean to get distracted into talking about homosexuality, contraception, and the outrage of separation of church and state. He just can't help it.

In 2010, the nascent Tea Party movement, focused on fighting back against Obama's trillions of dollars of debt expansion thrown willy-nilly at politically favored boondoggles, led to the GOP takeover of the House and strong gains in the Senate. But the empire strikes back, and social conservatives supporting Rick Santorum, [the anti-libertarian](#), (and [this](#)) are showing they're still potent.

This occurs just as the Koch brothers are [attempting to take over](#) the libertarian Cato Institute (a think tank that has played an important role in advancing gay legal equality, such as through its [Supreme Court brief](#) in *Lawrence v. Texas* that was cited approvingly in his decision [by Justice Kennedy](#), and in [supporting marriage equality](#)) and turn Cato into another arm of their Republican election machine by placing Koch employees, Republican campaign operatives and social conservatives on its board. More on the libertarian-conservative divide from [Outside the Beltway](#).