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Ron Paul's social problem

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Ron Paul's opposition to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as his criticism of Washington's war on drugs, has made him appealing to some voters who would otherwise never vote Republican.

Californians who might be tempted to support him should take a closer look at his record.

David Boaz of the libertarian Cato Institute explained Paul's appeal to Chronicle reporter Carolyn Lochhead as a unique combination of "economic conservatism, social moderation and staying out of unnecessary wars."

Social moderation? Not so fast. Paul wants to peel back Roe vs. Wade. His campaign Web site includes a pledge to define "life as beginning at conception by passing a 'Sanctity of Life Act.'" Paul supports the Defense of Marriage Act, which denies federal marriage benefits to same-sex couples. Paul also wants to repeal birthright-citizenship, as granted in the 14th Amendment, to the children of illegal immigrants.

Then there are Paul's old newsletters. It doesn't matter whether Paul or someone else wrote some of the racist or homophobic rants. He had the bad judgment to publish them.

Paul's opposition to the Patriot Act and other excesses in the war on terrorism makes him an iconoclast in the Republican field, but it can't make him a social moderate. He's not.

Read more: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2012/01/09/EDD11MLS33.DTL#ixzz1j4FTJZt8>