

# Roe v. Wade: A Historical Journey to the Present

Roe v. Wade, decided by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1973, is a landmark case that legalized abortion nationwide. The decision has been a source of intense controversy and debate ever since it was handed down. In this article, we will provide a comprehensive overview of the case, including its historical context, legal arguments, and the impact it has had on American society.

## Historical Context

In the early 1970s, abortion was illegal in most states in the United States. However, the legal landscape was beginning to shift in favor of abortion rights. In 1970, the Supreme Court ruled in *Griswold v. Connecticut* that the right to privacy under the Fourteenth Amendment extended to a woman's right to use contraception. This decision signaled a willingness by the Court to recognize a woman's right to make decisions about her own body.



## Abortion and the Law in America: Roe v. Wade to the Present

by Mary Ziegler

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In 1971, a young woman named Norma McCorvey, using the pseudonym Jane Roe, filed a lawsuit in federal court in Texas, challenging the state's abortion law. McCorvey argued that the law violated her right to privacy and her right to make decisions about her own body. The case made its way to the Supreme Court, and in a 7-2 decision, the Court ruled in Roe's favor.

## **Legal Arguments**

The Supreme Court's decision in Roe v. Wade was based on the right to privacy under the Fourteenth Amendment. The Court held that this right extended to a woman's right to terminate her pregnancy. The Court also held that the state's interest in protecting the life of the fetus did not begin until the fetus was viable.

The Court's decision was controversial from the start. Opponents of abortion argued that the decision was based on a flawed interpretation of the Constitution and that it violated the rights of the unborn. Supporters of abortion rights argued that the decision was a necessary step to protect women's rights and that it had a positive impact on society.

## **Impact of Roe v. Wade**

Roe v. Wade has had a profound impact on American society. The decision has been credited with reducing the number of illegal abortions and with improving the health and safety of women. However, the decision has also been a source of intense controversy and debate.

Opponents of abortion have continued to challenge Roe v. Wade in court, and they have succeeded in passing a number of laws that restrict access to abortion. In recent years, there has been a growing movement to

overturn Roe v. Wade. In 2022, the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade in a case called Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization.

The Dobbs decision has had a significant impact on abortion access in the United States. Many states have passed laws that restrict or ban abortion, and more are expected to follow. The decision has also reignited the debate over abortion rights, and it is likely to continue to be a source of controversy for years to come.

Roe v. Wade is a landmark case that has had a profound impact on American society. The decision has been credited with reducing the number of illegal abortions and with improving the health and safety of women. However, the decision has also been a source of intense controversy and debate. In recent years, there has been a growing movement to overturn Roe v. Wade, and in 2022, the Supreme Court did just that. The Dobbs decision has had a significant impact on abortion access in the United States, and it is likely to continue to be a source of controversy for years to come.



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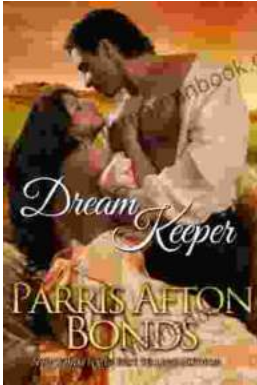
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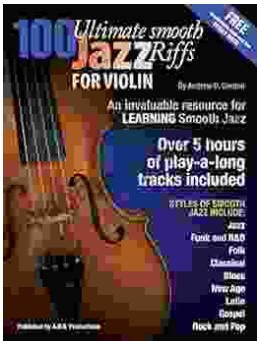
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