

Inquiry Focus: Roe v Wade**Focus Questions:**

1. Explain, compare and contrast the most influential perspectives/ideologies regarding the overturning of Roe V. Wade.
2. Describe actions that have been taken in response to the perspectives/ideologies on the overturning of Roe V. Wade?
3. What are the implications of these findings for different places, issues or groups?

Source 1:

Directors:	Sundberg Annie, Stern Ricki.	Year of Publication	(2018)	Date Accessed	08/07/2022
Title	"Reversing Roe."				
Description of key ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinic Security: "They keep trying to push their religion on others in a nation with supposed religious freedom." • Sherri's Story: Sherri, pregnant with a much-wanted baby, took thalidomide, which causes severe birth defects. Her doctor recommended an abortion, but the hospital denied it. "I just want to do what's right for myself and my family." • Gloria Steinem & Dr. Curtis Boyd: Gloria, a feminist activist, had an illegal abortion in England. Dr. Boyd, a gynecologist, began providing abortions in 1967, risking his job. "I can make a difference and I'm going to take the risk." • Texas Law: Doctors must show patients a sonogram before an abortion to sway their decision, which is seen as unethical and invalidating the patient's choice. 				
Critique	<p>Is this a primary or secondary source? While this documentary was filmed and released recently, and is technically classified a secondary source, there is still evidence within this source that can be considered primary.</p> <p>Is there any possible bias in what is being stated in the source e.g. an opinion? There is some bias, that point to the negative effects of abortion being banned. However, this bias isn't a key factor of the documentary, as both perspectives, pro life and pro choice, are thoroughly discussed. Abortion, and the viewpoints surrounding its controversy is regularly discussed. The directors' use of addressing both perspectives is important, as both groups, pro life and pro choice are represented, ultimately lessening the prospect of any bias, and reducing any possible favouritism.</p> <p>Can you locate any information that could possibly be an inaccuracy? There is little to no inaccuracy, both points of view, pro choice, and the ones that are religiously motivated, are discussed and accurately depicted in this source. This documentary also addresses that political history of abortion, that has been controversial for the past 70+ years. The directors use of including historical evidence, and applying that to the current state of the abortion laws in the United</p>				

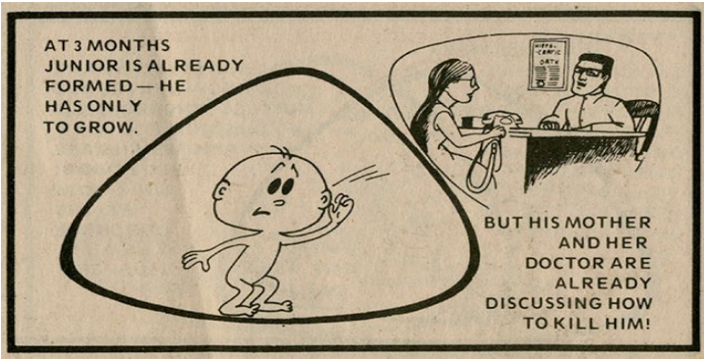
	States is important and proves to be beneficial, as it allows the audience insight into this overall issue.
--	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Source 2:

Author	New York Times, Tavernise, Sabrina.	Year of Publication	(2018)	Date Accessed	29/07/2022
Title	'Roe V. Wade, Part 1: Who was Jane Roe? (From the Archive).'				
Description of key ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norma McCarthy (Jane Roe) tried to get an abortion and wasn't able to do so, as abortion has been criminalised across the United States. She then went to an illegal abortion clinic but was unsuccessful in receiving an abortion, as no one was at the clinic to carry out the procedure. • Curtis Boyd, a gynaecologist, risks his job given the criminalisation of abortion. Boyd stated "My head and my heart and my hands said to do this. I can make a difference and I'm going to take the risk." • Pro Life people storm a planned parenthood centre, stating: "There won't be any murder here today. There will be no abortions in here today," as they do so. They also employed their motto "We're here to rescue the innocent child sentenced to die today." 				
Critique	<p>Is this a primary or secondary source? Secondary source.</p> <p>Is there any possible bias in what is being stated in the source e.g. an opinion? This source is biased, as the author, Sabrina Tavernise, shows her pro-choice viewpoints through this perspective. The author discusses cases in which abortion was needed, but couldn't be accessed, and enforces the negative effects of this medical procedure being criminalised.</p> <p>Can you locate any information that could possibly be an inaccuracy? No, particularly because this podcast has been made available on The New York Times' website, it is unlikely such a popular and well known company to promote a podcast that has inaccuracies.</p>				

Source 3:

Author	Right-to-Life-Committee	Year of Publication	(1973)	Date Accessed	29/07/2022
Title	'Who Killed Junior?' https://www.comicsgrid.com/article/id/3584/				

<p>Description of Key Ideas</p>	 <p>Page 9 of the article 'Information Labour and Shame in Farmer and Chevill's <i>Abortion Eve</i>,' discusses the concept that the unborn foetus has no rights or say in what happens to him is addressed in this newspaper cartoon. This source takes away the idea that the woman in the illustration could be getting an abortion for whatever reason, however, the life and wellbeing of her unborn child is more important than that of the mother. Stating that the baby's mother and doctor are 'discussing how to kill him,' is harmful, as it makes abortion as a procedure seem violent and inhumane. The overall purpose of this cartoon is to prioritise and show the importance of this unborn baby, and how it is of more significance than its own mother.</p>
<p>Critique</p>	<p>Is this a primary or secondary source? This is a primary source, as it was illustrated and published in the newspaper in 1973.</p> <p>Is there any possible bias in what is being stated in the source e.g. an opinion? There is a very clear bias, for people who are anti-abortion. The illustrator clearly shows their viewpoint through this cartoon, and ultimately where their priorities lie. Their favouritism of the unborn foetus, rather than the pregnant, fully grown woman, speaks volumes about the illustrator. Although this particular viewpoint isn't just shown through this illustrator, many people, particularly those who are pro-life or anti-abortion for whatever reason, put the unborn baby first, rather than the fully grown woman who is merely just making a choice that she believes is best for her. Ultimately, the illustrator is projecting their opinions onto those who may see this cartoon.</p> <p>Can you locate any information that could possibly be an inaccuracy? Inaccurate information can be seen through the idea that the baby is being killed by his mother and the doctor. This proves to be false, as the foetus is unborn, and abortions in the early stages, when provided the necessary access, abortion isn't usually harmful. However, this fact only applies if pregnant people are granted the critical access that they need, in order to be able to carry out a safe abortion. The portrayal of the baby in this cartoon can also be depicted as false, as although the baby has already developed and just needs time to grow, it has no clue about the outside world and what is occurring outside the womb. The illustrator's choice to portray the baby as thoughtful and curious about what could happen to it, is harmful, as it humanises an unborn foetus that is still unable to form its own thoughts. Aside from this villainization of the pregnant woman and her doctor, there is little to no other accuracy in the cartoon.</p>

Report Findings:

Viewpoint/ Perspective/ Ideology 1

There are many varying perspectives on the topic of abortion. These perspectives can be religiously or traditionally motivated, or built on the idea that women should have the right to make a choice for themselves, as they are in charge of themselves and their unborn foetus. One religious perspective can be seen through the Christian Reform Church, as they strongly oppose abortion and deem the medical treatment as being immoral. The article by 'Christian Reformed Church,' states: "Because the CRC believes that all human beings are image bearers of God, it affirms the unique value of all human life. Mindful of the sixth commandment—"You shall not murder" (Ex. 20:13)—the church condemns the wanton or arbitrary destruction of any human being at any stage of its development from the point of conception to the point of death. The church affirms that an induced abortion is an allowable option only when the life of the mother-to-be is genuinely threatened by the continuation of the pregnancy."¹ This particular viewpoint is widely common among the Christian community, as they tend to prioritise the life of an unborn foetus, rather than the person carrying it. To Christian people that obtain this viewpoint, there is nothing wrong with this belief, as they believe they are merely protecting the unborn child, and its future. However, people who are pro-choice argue that this belief is flawed, as the concept of abortion being induced, unless the pregnant person is genuinely in danger or at risk due to the pregnancy are in desperate need of determining their pregnancy, is harmful, as it encourages the idea that in order for a woman to have a say in what happens to her body, she needs to be violated/harmed beforehand. One particular viewpoint that stems from/is inspired by Christianity and opposes abortion, is shown through Amy Coney Barrett, a member of the United States' Supreme Court. She was nominated by former president, Donald Trump, and has been serving in her role since October 27th, 2020. Her political views and how she expresses them leads many to believe that her and her views are conservative and opposes abortion, as she is one of the many members of the United States' Supreme Court that voted to have Roe V. Wade overturned.

Viewpoint/ Perspective/ Ideology 2

The overturning of Roe V. Wade in the United States has once again struck up the argument of pro-choice v pro-life, as women have been forced to advocate for their right to basic healthcare. Many people are outraged that the United States' Supreme Court is predominantly male, and the vast majority of have voted against abortion, although they are not the ones being directly affected by this change in law.

A different perspective to the Christian conservative perspective of Amy Coney Barret is the feminist perspective on abortion rights. Feminists are pro-life for a number of reasons. Mainly, they believe in bodily autonomy and that women should have the rights to make decisions about their own bodies and not have men, who are often the ones in power and making legislation dictate when they should be forced to have children. They also see access to fair and safe abortion as very important for achieving gender equality. Without control over their reproductive lives, women may face significant barriers to education and employment. Gloria Steinem is an example of someone who holds this perspective and viewpoint. During the initial Roe v. Wade decision in 1973, Gloria Steinem was actively involved in advocating for women's reproductive rights. As a co-founder of Ms. Magazine, Steinem played a very important role in publishing content that supported the pro-choice movement. The magazine featured stories and articles that highlighted the struggles women faced due to abortion laws and the need for safe, legal access to abortion service. Steinem emphasizes that access to abortion is crucial for women's equality. She stated, "First anger, because that means that female human beings are not going to be equal citizens who have power over our own physical selves". Steinem highlights the importance of safe and legal abortion, noting, "Nothing but nothing can stop women from taking control of their bodies, which sometimes means having an abortion. The question is in safety". This highlights how both aspects of the feminist perspective -gender

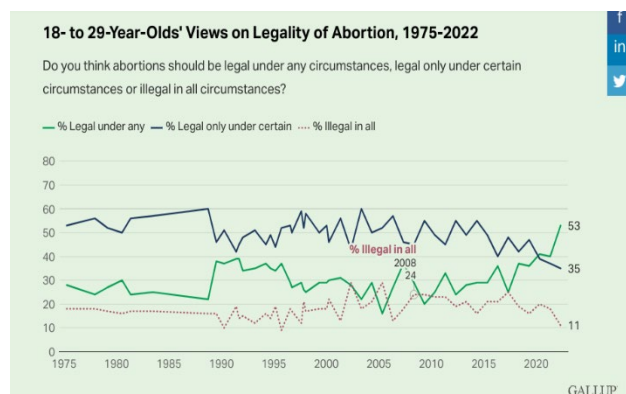
equality and bodily autonomy are part of the pro-choice viewpoint. When Roe v Wade was overturned, she once again had to be an important advocate for pro-choice.

Explanation of differences by comparing and contrasting perspectives

Both these perspectives are considered with human rights and the debate often comes back to who is able to 'have a voice' and advocate for themselves in society. The pro-life movement are concerned for the rights of the child and that they are unable to protect themselves from harm, whereas the pro-choice feminist perspective argue that abortion both harms women physically, but also 'harms' their broader rights within society and puts them further behind gender equality.

Within the United States both perspectives have been influential at different times. Dating back to the early Roman Catholic Church, abortion has been consistently frowned upon and people have aimed to prevent the occurrence of this particular medical procedure where possible. In the United States, abortion was criminalised during the late 1800's. This infringement upon granting people basic healthcare, and allowing them access to their human rights, is largely influenced by Christianity and the idea that all life is a gift from God.

However, progression, diversity and increasingly less religious society meant that these views began to slowly shift and this assisted in the legalization of abortion. The overall influence of the pro-choice perspective proves to be of significance, as people who support and advocate for the legalisation of abortion, were able to have certain laws overturned. This change in law has had long-lasting and significant effects on society and certain aspects of people's wellbeing as a whole.



However, according to NPR, "The percentage of Americans who consider themselves "pro-choice" has risen in the past year to 55%, its highest level in decades" This evidence shows that despite the large and clearly impactful influence of Christianity and the increase of conservatism generally, many people still identify as being Pro-Choice. Other comparisons between these two perspectives can be supported by the

concept that a lot of young people are prominently pro-choice. Meaning that when future generations are granted more political freedom and progress as a society, it is likely that the amount of pro-choice views are likely to increase and have more of a long-lasting impact. This perhaps also fits with the general increase in feminist views and that women should have more rights within society.

This is particularly interesting to look at when considering the overturning of Roe v Wade. Despite most young people holding a pro-choice viewpoint, this is not what was reflected in the Supreme Court decision. Additionally, when Roe v. Wade was overturned in June 2022, public opinion in the United States was notably in favour of the pro-choice viewpoint. According to a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center nearly a year after the decision, 62% of U.S. adults believed that abortion should be legal in all or most cases, while 36% thought it should be illegal in all or most cases.

This shows us that it is not so much the viewpoints of most people that have an influence in this debate, but more so the viewpoints of the politicians at the time, and the justices who have been appointed to the courts that shape the issue.

Q2. Actions / Responses

Action / Response 1

An action that Amy Coney Barrett took can be seen in an article by 'The Guardian.' The article states: "Amy Coney Barrett, the supreme court nominee, was a member of a "right to life" organization in 2016 that promoted a local South Bend, Indiana, crisis pregnancy center, a clinic that has been criticised for misleading vulnerable women who were seeking abortions and pressuring them to keep their pregnancies."² It can be argued that the motivation of this action was motivated by her Christian beliefs and distaste to abortion, something that many consider a very much necessary form of healthcare. The same article continues to reveal "The revelation adds to a growing body of evidence that Barrett, who has served as an appellate court judge since 2017, has advocated against abortion, abortion rights, and publicly supported the reversal of Roe v Wade in the years before she joined the federal bench. The Guardian has reported that she signed a letter in a newspaper in 2006 that called for the landmark abortion law to be reversed and called the legacy of Roe "barbaric".³ Amy Coney Barret being a part of this anti-abortion groups, and advocating for the criminalisation of abortion, proves to be a harmful action, as it deprives people across the United States' of an abortion, should they choose to have an abortion. Similarly, information regarding Coney Baret's political views are discussed in NPR's article 'A Look At Amy Coney Barrett's Record On Abortion Rights.' The text states: "During her Senate confirmation hearings for her seat on the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in 2017, Barrett — who has spoken openly about her Catholic faith — was asked about her personal views on Roe v. Wade. She gave a version of what's become a standard answer to that question for people in her position, saying, "All nominees are united in their belief that what they think about a precedent should not bear on how they decide cases."⁴ Ultimately, Amy Coney Barrett obtains a Pro-Life ideology and is a perfect example of religiously motivated views, and the overall impact that they can have. While the pro-life community tend to support Amy Coney Barrett and her actions, the goodness and genuinity of her actions are largely up for interpretation. There are many people that disagree with and oppose her harsh views, as they can be seen as harmful and unfair. To some, it has become apparent that her partake in the recent strict ban on abortion across the United States, is not only selfish, as she is infringing upon the rights of others, she is also abusing her power and taking advantage of her role in the supreme court.

Action / Response 2

In response to the overturning of Roe v Wade, Gloria Steinem took several actions which aligned to her feminist, pro-choice viewpoint.

One of the main things she did was to use her platform and her public profile as a feminist advocate to raise awareness to the issue and the implications of the decision. As a well-known feminist voice, she was quickly able to get interviews with the main news outlets to communicate the dangers of overturning Roe v Wade to women's rights. She went out publicly and called it a 'sucker punch' for Women's rights, highlighting the danger his decisions put women in and emphasising that this further reinforces patriarchal structures, by saying "If men could get pregnant, abortion would be a sacrament." Examples of her media engagements included going on Katie Couric to discuss the history of Roe v. Wade and the ongoing fight for reproductive rights. She also had interviews with the likes of NPR and PBS where she discussed the implications of the Supreme Court's decision. Although not as involved in the actual protests as she was during earlier feminist movements, likely due to her age, she still was an important voice in the initial months after the overturning to stand up for the pro-choice movement.

In a symbolic gesture, Steinem also started wearing a Prisoner of War-style bracelet, popularized during the Vietnam War, following the leaked draft of the decision. This was to honor and remember Rosie Jimenez. Rosie Jimenez was one of the first women to die from an illegal abortion due to the Hyde Amendment, which restricted the use of federal funds for abortions. This was a way to visibly express her opposition and solidarity with those affected.

Evaluation - Process

I feel as though I gathered more secondary sources than I did primary. Because the overturning of *Roe V. Wade* is very recent, many recent articles have been published, discussing what this change in law means for the United States, and how the progression of the country will decline, and will take steps backwards. This meant that more recent sources became easily accessible, and amongst the wide variety of different texts, it quickly became difficult to find primary sources that would help me in writing this report. However, I didn't struggle as much, when finding primary sources for my source analysis, at the beginning of this assessment. In terms of gathering secondary sources, I think I did a good job, and felt confident with the information that I had found.

One source that I found particularly important is the *Reversing Roe* documentary. This source gives the audience into the historical and recent aspect of this issue (and is technically a secondary source with primary evidence) and also discusses the two perspectives surrounding this controversial debate. This source has proven to be effective, as I was able to gain more insight and knowledge into this topic as a whole, putting me at an advantage when researching and writing about this issue.

It was definitely easier to find sources that clearly belonged to a Pro-Choice perspective, as opposed to a Pro-Life perspective. The reasoning for this may be that many people who are outraged by this harsh change in law, are Pro-Choice and are outraged with the large setback. Because of the recent overturning of *Roe V. Wade*, it became difficult to find a wide range of primary sources, as secondary sources were becoming more commonly read and obtained information that was regularly researched. This seemed to be the only challenge that I faced, and I had little to no trouble when finding secondary sources.

While I did encounter some bias in the sources I found, I didn't find any inaccuracies in any potential sources, or sources that I did use in my assessment. However, sources that were biased, specifically those that favoured the Pro-Life perspective, were effective, as I was able to gain more insight into those who are Pro-Life, and why.

I feel as though I could have made improvements to the areas in which I discussed the perspectives. I think I should have addressed where these ideologies originate from and why.

Evaluation – Findings

Sufficiency

Question 1: I was able to find a wide range of information in the *Reversing Roe* documentary. This source gave me lots of insight into abortion from a historical, traditional and medical perspective, all of which were interesting. This documentary proved to be stronger in terms of providing me with information about the more recent state of abortion and the perspectives surrounding it (before *Roe V. Wade* was overturned).

Question 2: The podcast '*Roe V. Wade, Part 1: Who was Jane Roe? (From the Archive)*.' was a great help in conducting my research. Through the use of this source, I was able to effectively gain insight into the origin of *Roe V. Wade*, and its significance in a historical context. This source was greatly beneficial, as I felt I had been brought up to speed with how *Roe V. Wade* came to be, and how this controversy began. This particular source was weaker in terms of

secondary information, as it was more focused on the origin of this issue and how it began. However, it was very strong through a historical lens.

Question 3: The newspaper cartoon 'Who Killed Junior?' was a helpful source, as it not only gave me insight into the time in which the cartoon was made and based, but the pro-life perspective that was so clearly demonstrated through this source. After having analysed this source, I was able to get a better understanding of the harsh views that people tend to have surrounding abortion, and how the medical procedure is inhumane. While this cartoon was effective from a historical and traditional perspective, there is little to no forms of information about the recent state of the abortion laws in the United States, the reason for this due to the fact that the cartoon was illustrated in 1973.

Significance of findings

When researching this issue, I also came across articles discussing the implications of Roe V. Wade being overturned in the United States. One such implication is that Gay marriage may also be banned in the country, and they are continuing to take steps that set them further back as a country.

Outside implications:

Because the United States' is a very well-known and influential country, there is the possibility that other countries may be inspired to ban abortion as well or advocate for reproductive rights, to ensure that laws aren't changed, and abortion remains accessible to all women across all countries.

The student provided basic footnoting throughout and a reference list at the end. These have been removed for brevity.