

Volume 14 | Mercer University

A WORLD POST-ROE

*What you need to know and the implications
for people in the U.S. and beyond*

Global Health in Action | Special Edition



EDITORIAL

On June 24th of this year, *Roe v. Wade* was overturned.

As a global health publication, we feel that it is critical that we outline the public health implications of the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision, which are visible both on a national scale and here in the Macon community.

This case concerns drastic changes in access to certain health services. It concerns the lives of our next door neighbors in Georgia and across the country. *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* is a historical case that cannot be ignored.

We encourage you to continue to learn more about the ways the *Dobbs* decision will affect you and your community in the coming years. Please visit the [American Civil Liberties Union](#) or the [Constitutional Accountability Center](#) to learn more about this case.

It is our hope that this issue of Global Health in Action can play a small role in helping the Macon community feel informed and empowered during an uncertain time.

- **Makenzie Hicks and McKenna Kaufman**
Chief Editors



Roe v. Wade: What You Need to Know

Makenzie Hicks

Who is Jane Roe?

Jane Roe (Norma McCorvey) was 22 years old when she found herself unmarried, unemployed, and pregnant in 1969. She sought to have an abortion in Texas but could not access one. She then sued Henry Wade, the district attorney for Dallas County, Texas at the time.



What did Texas law state at the time?

Abortions were illegal unless they were being performed as a life-saving procedure



Why did Jane Roe sue?

Roe believed that the law in Texas was unconstitutional due to its vagueness and the infringement on her personal privacy, which is protected in the constitution.



What was the court's decision?

The Supreme court ruled in a 7-2 decision that it was unconstitutional to deny a woman's right to an abortion prior to viability. The Supreme Court used a 3-trimester system to decide what legislation could be passed.



What is the three-trimester system?

In the first trimester, the decision to have an abortion is solely the decision of the person carrying the fetus. In the second trimester, the state can regulate, but not outlaw abortion. In the third trimester, the state can regulate or outlaw abortions except when an abortion becomes necessary as a life-saving procedure.



June 24, 2022: Roe v. Wade Overturned

McKenna Kaufman



In “a rare breach of Supreme Court secrecy and tradition,” a draft of the Supreme Court majority decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* was leaked to the American public and published by POLITICO. The draft opinion, written by Justice Samuel Alito, explicitly overturned *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, two cases critical in upholding access to abortion care as a constitutional right.

While discussions surrounding controversial Supreme Court cases have been “fluid” in the past as justices change their votes or amend their drafts, this leaked opinion proved to be the court’s final decision. On June 24, 2022, the precedent established in *Roe v. Wade* was officially reversed when Justice Alito’s final opinion was released, calling the original decision and arguments “egregiously wrong” and “exceptionally weak.” Under the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* decision, the constitutional right to an abortion no longer exists.

The 78-page opinion argued that the American people’s reliance on abortion should not be used as a reason to maintain the precedent established in *Roe*, and that access to abortion is a decision that should be allocated to state legislatures. In a 6-3 vote divided along party lines, Justices Clarence Thomas, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett (all Republican appointees to the court) joined Alito on the opinion, while Justices Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan (all Democratic appointees) authored the dissent. Chief Justice John Roberts concurred in the judgement, although he argued for limiting the decision to only upholding the Mississippi law examined in the case, which banned abortion after 15 weeks.

“Young women today will come of age with fewer rights than their mothers and grandmothers,” Breyer, Sotomayor, and Kagan wrote. “With sorrow — for this Court, but more, for the many millions of American women who have today lost a fundamental constitutional protection — we dissent.”

In a concurring opinion written by Justice Thomas, he argued that the rationale used in Alito’s opinion could be used to overturn other precedents relating to the legalization of homosexual marriage, the criminalization of consensual homosexual relationships, and the protection of married people’s access to contraception, calling these court decisions “demonstrably erroneous.”

Despite the sweeping changes to abortion rights the United States experienced this summer, American public opinion remains largely in favor of abortion access. According to a report published by the Pew Research Center, nearly six in ten (57%) of adults disapprove of the court’s decision, while approximately four in ten (41%) approve of the court’s decision.

Protests and celebrations alike erupted across the country in response to the court’s decision, illustrating the case’s contentious nature. Crowds gathered in large cities like Atlanta, New York City, and on the steps of the Supreme Court in Washington D.C. following the announcement. Politicians and world leaders reflected protesters’ dismay at the decision.

“It’s a slap in the face to women about using their own judgment to make their own decisions about their reproductive freedom,” U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said.

What does *Dobbs* mean for the future of abortion care?

McKenna Kaufman

The judgment in the Dobbs case is anticipated to cause “chaos” on a legal and individual level in communities across the country. Now that legislative decision-making power concerning abortion is allocated to lawmakers on the state level, abortion regulations will widely vary from state to state. Many states in the South have instituted near-complete abortion bans while others in the West and Northeast are preparing to become safe havens for people seeking abortions due to their more lenient laws. Abortion trigger bans, laws designed to be “triggered” to take effect by the overturn of Roe, were established in 13 states.

These new laws restricting abortion care across the country have created “abortion clinic churn,” a term that refers to the now unreliable nature of America’s abortion clinics.

“Clinical care providers are open one day, closed the next, and then offering limited services on yet another day,” Dr. Tracy Weitz, founder of Advancing New Standards in Reproductive Health (ANSIRH), said. “Churn leads people to have to make dozens of phone calls as well as scramble for time off, money, and help with transportation.”



The global gag rule, a regulation that prohibits foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs) receiving U.S. global health funding to finance abortion care or provide information to those in need, further expands the reach of the Supreme Court’s decision.

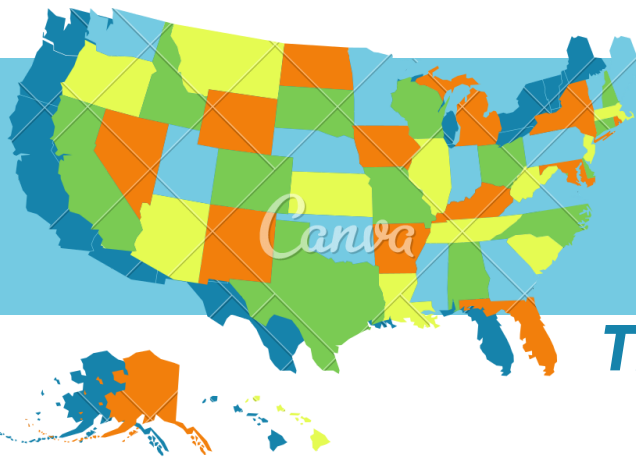
Abortion clinic churn disproportionately affects already-marginalized communities that lack security in healthcare, employment, housing, and transportation, or face the implications of institutionalized racism.

“These groups’ more limited resources, heightened risk of persecution, and experiences of discrimination tend to decrease their access to sexual and reproductive health care far further than the letter of the law,” Rachel Robinson, professor in the School of International Service at American University, said.

The overturning of Roe v. Wade may affect more than just abortion. Dobbs confirmed anti-abortion groups’ argument that life begins at fertilization, thus calling the legality of certain reproductive health services into question. Legal and medical experts speculate that access to birth control, emergency contraception (Plan B), gender-affirming healthcare for transgender people, and fertility treatments like in vitro fertilization (IVF) could be threatened by new legislation. Anti-abortion advocates argue that these treatments can be “life-ending,” as they prevent the implantation of an embryo. For this reason, these health services could be seen as violations of state abortion bans.

But what can be done to combat the negative impacts of the Supreme Court’s decision in Dobbs vs. Jackson Women’s Health Organization? According to Dr. Weitz, U.S. President Joe Biden has numerous tools at his disposal to lessen the impact of the decision, including making the U.S. Post Offices safe places for pregnant people to attend telehealth visits and to take abortion pills, and deploying public health services to clinics experiencing staffing and resource difficulties.

“There is no end to possibilities for executive branch action. Inaction should be considered unacceptable,” she said.



Abortion Laws By State

Makenzie Hicks

The Southeastern United States

State	Current Abortion Law
Alabama	Total Ban
Arkansas	Restricted After Viability
Florida	Restricted After 15 Weeks
Georgia	Restricted After 6 Weeks
Kentucky	Total Ban
Louisiana	Total Ban
Mississippi	Total Ban
North Carolina	Restricted After Viability
South Carolina	Restricted After 6 Weeks
Tennessee	Restricted After 6 Weeks
Texas	Total Ban
Virginia	Restricted after 21 weeks, 6 days
West Virginia	Restricted after 21 weeks, 6 days

Don't see your home state? Explore more state laws [here](#).

Editorial Board



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Special Thanks

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We would like to thank the International and Global Studies (IGS) faculty for their continual support of and commitment to the furthering of educational opportunities at Mercer.

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