

## Abortion rulings set precedent for women's rights, not religious values

Will overturning Roe v. Wade (1973) stop abortion? The obvious answer is no. What is not so obvious is what will happen if the federal mandate against banning abortion is overturned.

South Dakota's State Representative, Roger Hunt is trying to force the issue by sponsoring a bill banning abortions in his state. He believes that the Supreme Court- now that two supposedly conservative justices have been appointed- will be forced to re-evaluate Roe and subsequently overturn it.

Several states already have pre-Roe laws still on the books. If Roe is overturned those laws will instantly be challenged and states without pre-Roe mandates will find themselves overrun with legal battles.

Cynthia Gorney, author of "Articles of Faith: A Frontline History of the Abortion Wars," stated in a NY Times article that "the ensuing legal and political tangle would be of epic proportions."

On the one hand, moving the battle to the state level would take it out of the main political arena. The next group of presidential or congressional candidates might cover topics that they could actually do something about, instead of dangling hot-button issues in voter's faces to arouse emotional

responses on Election Day.

But many women fear the precedent that would be set concerning women's rights on the federal level if Roe is overturned.

The pro-choice view covers more than just a woman's right to choose whether or not to terminate a pregnancy. It is about keeping the government from legally making that choice for them and many other choices just like it. If the federal government decides that abortion is no longer a woman's choice, how far behind would the regulation of contraception be?

Believe it or not, it was only one year prior to Roe v. Wade that a state ban on the sale of contraceptives sold to single women was finally struck down in a Massachusetts state court under Eisenstadt v. Baird (1972).

Like civil rights, women's rights are a relatively new concept in this country. Many people who are too young to remember the struggle don't understand the fear women have of losing the right to make choices about their own bodies. Add to that the perceived belief that social and religious conservatism is gaining ground in mainstream America, twenty-somethings are being asked to believe that pro-choice is equivalent to atheism.

What is needed is a better understanding of pro-choice, and possibly a realignment of "Christian values."

Pro-choice doesn't mean pro-abortion, and fighting to overturn legislation isn't going to stop the 1.4 million abortions that took place in the U.S. in 2000.

Several states will uphold a federal ban on abortions, but many other states will inevitably vote to keep the right to choose legal, and crossing state lines will become normal practice for those seeking legal abortions.

Christians should focus their collective energies on prevention and education where unwanted pregnancies are concerned, instead of going for the easy pat-on-the-back for carrying a placard or handing out pamphlets at pro-life rallies.

Abstinence, the Christian mantra for teens, is morally appropriate but not at all realistic.

Reality calls for reinstating sex-education in high schools, creating better, more appropriate access to contraceptives for minors, and those who need financial help, and reinstating daycares in high schools so that young girls don't have to pay for their mistakes through a loss of education. (Boys "in trouble" don't

have to quit school when they make a mistake).

Even though minors are only part of the demographic of those seeking abortions, education and a higher expectation from society of moral fortitude in the young, will no doubt allow many more young people to take the information they acquire with them into adulthood, and abortions will no longer be an issue in the courts or in the clinics.

-Joni Tyler

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### UNIVERSITY REPS VISIT VOL STATE CAMPUS

The following universities will be on the Vol State campus to meet with students about transferring to their university after graduating from Vol State. The university reps will be located in the Advising Center, Suite 174, in the Ramer Administration Building, on the following dates:

#### Austin Peay State University

Tuesday, April 18 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

#### Middle Tennessee State University

Thursday, March 23 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
Thursday, April 6 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
Thursday, April 20 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

#### Tennessee State University

Wednesday, March 22 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
Wednesday, April 5 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
Wednesday, April 19 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

#### Tennessee Tech University

Tuesday, March 28 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
Tuesday, April 11 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
Tuesday, April 25 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

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