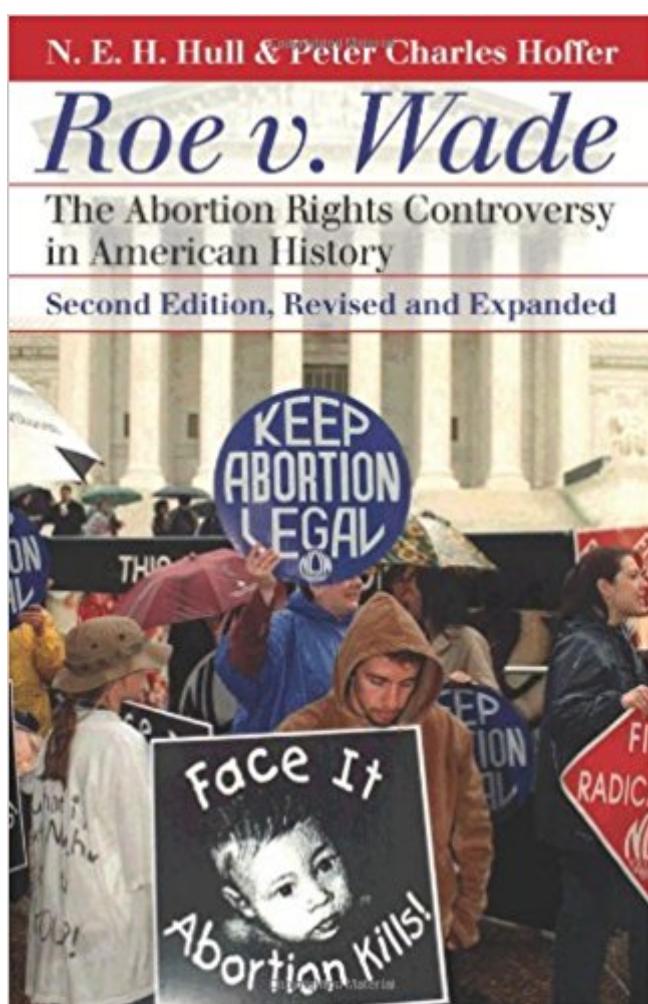


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# **Roe V. Wade: The Abortion Rights Controversy In American History, 2nd Edition (Landmark Law Cases And American Society)**



## Synopsis

Few Supreme Court decisions have stirred up as much controversy, vitriolic debate, and even violence as the one delivered in *Roe v. Wade* in 1973. Four decades later, it remains a touchstone for the culture wars in the United States and a pivot upon which much of our politics turns. With that in mind Peter Charles Hoffer and N. E. H. Hull have now taken stock of the abortion debates, controversies, and cases that have emerged during the past decade in order to update their best-selling book on this landmark case. Like the original edition, the new one highlights the abortion issue's historical background; highlights *Roe v. Wade*'s core issues, essential personalities, and key precedents; tracks the case's path through the courts; clarifies the jurisprudence behind the court's ruling in *Roe*; and gauges its impact on American society and subsequent challenges to it in *Webster v. Reproductive Services* (1989) and *Casey v. Planned Parenthood* (1992). The new edition, however, adds two completely new chapters covering abortion politics and legal battles in the post-9/11 era, along with a new preface and a much-revised epilogue and conclusion. The new material covers, among other things, the surprising results from recent public opinion polls; the impact of the presidential elections of George W. Bush and Barack Obama; Supreme Court confirmation hearings for Chief Justice John Roberts, Justice Samuel Alito, and Sonia Sotomayor; two major 5-4 Supreme Court decisions—*Gonzales v. Planned Parenthood* and *Gonzales v. Carhart*—that confirmed the constitutionality of the "Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act"; the murder of abortion provider George Tiller by Scott Roeder and the latter's trial and conviction; and the appearance of the abortion issue in the debate over health care reform legislation.

## Book Information

Paperback: 384 pages

Publisher: Univ Pr of Kansas; 2 Rev Exp edition (September 15, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 070061754X

ISBN-13: 978-0700617548

Product Dimensions: 8.4 x 5.5 x 1.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 5 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #531,476 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #112 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Women's Studies > Abortion & Birth Control #516 in Books > Textbooks > Law > Constitutional Law #682 in Books > Law > Legal History

## Customer Reviews

Studies of abortion issues are common, but mostly partisan. With a deliberately (and rather successfully) even hand, law professor Hull and history professor Hoffer (coauthors of *Impeachment in America*) set out to answer one central question: how did abortion become illegal in America? Before Anthony Comstock's 1870s "anti-vice" campaigns, government was relatively uninvolved with women's pregnancies, which were seen as private. Our modern Congress, on the other hand, tries to legislate what doctors can tell pregnant women and even attempts to micromanage the actual abortion procedure by trying to outlaw certain techniques. By examining the roles of as many players as possible religious authorities, politicians, judges, doctors, activists, lawyers, etc. Hull and Hoffer piece together the story and explain the relevant legal workings. In another context, constitutional language might seem too dull, but with the abortion issue at center stage for so many Americans, this very scholarly work is also a page-turner. Legal terms (undue burden, class action suits, injunctions) are cleanly explained in a few concise sentences when they first appear. To orient the uninitiated, the authors interweave brief biographies of key figures (e.g., Thurgood Marshall and Antonin Scalia). No footnotes interrupt the flow: anything readers need to know is worked into the narrative. Important sources are reviewed in an excellent bibliographic essay at the end of the book. The most recent addition to the lively *Landmark Law Cases and American Society* series, this remarkable volume should be popular with law scholars and lay readers alike. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Hull (law and history, Rutgers Univ.) and Hoffer (history, Univ. of Georgia) here explain how abortion in the United States came to be criminalized in the 19th century, decriminalized in the 20th century's *Roe v. Wade* case (1973), and the subject of court and legislative battles ever since. They also offer clear and detailed discussions of the court decisions and legislative efforts that promoted or impeded abortion rights, including the strategies of lawyers and backgrounds of parties and judges. Also discussed are how many social forces feminist, paternalist, misogynist, racist, and others have affected abortion law. This study considers many fascinating aspects of abortion in the United States, including the connection between eugenics and banning abortion and the relationship between the contraceptive-rights and abortion-rights movements. The authors conclude with a bibliographic essay and a chronology of events. While there are hundreds of books on various aspects of abortion in society, this one does an unusually good job of covering the full legal history from Colonial times to 2001. It is crammed with information but remains very readable and a good

source for student papers. Highly recommended for high school, academic, and public libraries. Mary Jane Brustman, SUNY at Albany Libs. Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Very informative and in a good chronological order to grasp where this hotly debated topic has been, and what lies ahead. The sentences were somewhat poorly constructed, running on in legal-speak that could have been easily modified for the average reader to comprehend. In the face of Judge Scalia's passing this past week, the vacancy creates an opportunity to seat a moderate judge as President Obama prepares to leave office early next year. Many qualified candidates that will work towards keeping a women's right to choose as her own.

This is a highly readable and engaging book on the topic, covering the history of abortion laws from early 1800s to the Clinton years. To explain the legal shifts throughout those 200 years, the authors describe the social, political, religious and scientific forces that have lead up to each turning point, and how those shifts in turn have influenced further shifts in a seemingly never ending chain. They do so by presenting the various sides of the debate in an even-handed and concise manner, without losing depth on the one hand and without getting bogged down with technicalities on the other. What I found of particular interest was the behind-the-scenes debates of the Justices both in *Griswold v. Connecticut* and in *Roe v. Wade* that shed light on their final decision.

An interesting account of the rule of law, changing attitudes and the expansion of individual constitutional rights. Here, womens' health concerns, womens' freedom to decide her own future, and the rights of the unborn go to court. Well written.

Good overview with a pro choice viewpoint of the ongoing contentious debate centered on *Roe* and its offspring. Behind the scenes discussion of the legal strategies and the personnel involved. Very readable account.

One of many controversial Supreme court cases in the United States is the case of *Roe v Wade*. Norma McCourvey was a 23 year old pregnant divorced women. Norma took on the name of Jane Roe to secure her identity in front of the public. Roe lived in the state of Texas. She wanted to terminate her pregnancy the only obstacle was that within the state of Texas a women was not allowed to have an abortion unless her life depended on it. Roe was pregnant from an affair she had

which caused her marriage to fail. Roe took the case to the Supreme court alleging that her rights were being violated and that under the amendments 1,4 9 and 14 she had a choice. The attorneys who would carry on this case were two young women named Sarah Weddington and Linda Coffee. Both had recently graduated from the University of Texas. Sarah at the time was also pregnant, but would go on and have the child. Attorney Henry Wade was force with the decision to allow Norma and other women to have an abortion. Two years after the case was presented the court decided that in fact a women's right to choose on what to do with her body was hers and nobody else. I would recommend this book to everyone who is interested in politics. Due to the fact that no matter how someone feels towards a certain topic you may never know what your decision might be. I might one day become a lawyer and reading this book opened my eyes ;to realize that I can not allow my morals and beliefs to get in the way of my profession. I would also recommend this book to anyone who has strong feelings on whether abortion should be legal or not. Finally I just enjoyed this book because although abortion is a very controversial topic it is also one a very easy book to read and comprehend.

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