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Roe v. Wade (1973)

One of the landmark decisions of US Supreme Court was in the case Roe v. Wade in 1973. This decision led to ineffectivity of state laws criminalizing abortions due to their unconstitutionality.

In 1969 21-old single woman named Norma McCorvey (alias Jane Roe) got pregnant. She wanted an abortion so she travelled to Dallas, Texas and claimed that she was raped (as abortions were only legal for victims of rape) and wanted to get an abortion. This did not happen as there was no proof of that rape, no police report or anything. Child was born and eventually adopted but McCorvey decided to bring an action challenging constitutionality of the Texas abortion laws. Texas was represented by Dallas DA Henry Wade.

The District court held in the plaintiff's favor and said that the abortion laws are too vague and infringing plaintiff's right based on Ninth and Fourteenth Amendment.

The defendant appealed and in 1973 the case was decided by US Supreme Court, presided by Chief Justice Burger. The USSC ruled 7-2 that the right of privacy under Fourteenth amendment gives woman the right to end the pregnancy till certain point (end of the first trimester) for whatever reason she has. After this point, as the fetus is growing and getting closer to become a human being, the public interest on his surviving gets stronger and so there is a certain level of state's regulation permitted. But before the end of the first trimester no state law can ban abortion.