

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, Stem Ricki.	Year of Publication	(2018)	Date Accessed	08/07/2022
Title	"Reversing Roe."				
Description of key ideas	• 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.				

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	• 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."				

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/				
Description of Key Ideas	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.				

Source 4:

Author	Stephanie Kirchgaessener (Guardian)	Year of Publication	2020	Date Accessed	29/07/2022
Title	"Barrett was member of anti-abortion group that promoted clinic criticized for misleading women" https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/oct/11/amy-coney-barrett-member-right-to-life-organization				
Description of Key Ideas	- Amy Coney Barrett signed a 2006 newspaper ad saying Roe v. Wade was "barbaric" and should be overturned, showing she strongly opposes abortion. - She was linked to a group that believes life begins at fertilization, which means she supports very strict anti-abortion views. - Barrett has said most abortions happen for social reasons, which fits her belief that abortion shouldn't be used as birth control. - She has spoken about judges not making law but applying it, which matches her conservative view that courts shouldn't expand rights like abortion. - Barrett's past actions and statements suggest she will support limiting abortion rights if given the chance, because of her strong pro-life stance.				

Other sources had been included, but these have been removed for brevity.

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

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

The nature of the topic meant that in order to use primary source evidence I was often having to use sources that were biased to the views of the person who was presenting them. For example, the 2018 New York Times article is very biased, as the author, Sabrina Tavernise, shows her pro-choice viewpoints through this perspective. But using these types of primary sources is helpful because I want to be able to see how people express their viewpoints on the issue in their own words. So if both sides are being looked at with primary sources equally this should mean that my report overall has balance. But on reflection, I realise that I only looked at Amy Coney Barrett's viewpoint through secondary sources, like the Guardian and NPR and although these are reliable, they probably have a slight left bias which may mean that this isn't as accurate as it could be.

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, putting me at an advantage when researching and writing about this issue. It was helpful to watch this at the beginning of the process as it helped put the other sources I looked at, such as primary sources, in context and this probably helped pick up if they were not reliable.

It was 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 and became more publicly outspoken and dominated the media coverage of the event. So, it is possible that because my range of pro-life sources were more limited, that this part isn't done as well.

I feel as though I could have made improvements to the areas in which I discussed the perspectives. It may have been helpful to look more at the background of both ideologies. I found a source "A concise history of the US abortion debate" on The Conversation website which looks like it had lots of interesting facts which might have improved my report but I didn't look into it at the time as I didn't think it was relevant. This would be something I would improve for next time as it would perhaps help explain the reasons for each group feeling so strongly about the issue.

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.

Grade: Merit

For Merit, the student needs to conduct a critical social inquiry in depth.

In addition to the Achieved criteria, this involves analysing by comparing and contrasting points of view, values, and perspectives that relate to the focus of the inquiry.

The student has met the Achieved criteria for developing a research question, gathering information and background ideas, reporting on their findings, and evaluating the social inquiry process in relation to the findings.

The student has effectively analysed the contrasting viewpoints of Steinem and Coney Barrett by discussing, at a depth expected at curriculum level 8, their perspectives, values, and viewpoints—clearly articulating their relationship. The student has explained how the perspectives, values, and viewpoints have underpinned the actions taken by both women, and this has been done using appropriate supporting evidence (such as direct quotes) and citing specific actions taken with detail.

When comparing the two viewpoints and perspectives, the student examines the different viewpoints by considering their underlying values, influence, and the popularity of each view in society at different times. Towards the end of the section, the discussion is connected back to the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, which is the focus of the inquiry. Detailed supporting evidence is used throughout, ensuring this section meets the threshold for 'in-depth' as required for Merit.

For Excellence, there must be a critical evaluation of the findings and consideration of their implications in contexts outside the inquiry. The student begins to examine this when they identify same-sex marriage as having the potential to be banned within the United States. Further developing this idea to consider how similar perspectives/ideologies are at play, the position of same-sex marriage within the United States judicial system, and why it could or could not be subject to similar treatment in the courts in the coming years would be the type of discussion expected at Excellence.