

FLAWED ABORTION POLL PROVES MISLEADING

Pew Research Center recently released a survey titled, "*Roe v. Wade* at 40: Most Oppose Overturning Abortion Decision." Here are some examples of how the media reported the findings:

- "Majority Upholds Landmark U.S. Abortion Ruling: Poll," AFP (French News Agency)
- "As 'Roe v. Wade' Turns 40, Most Oppose Reversing Abortion Ruling," Reuters
- "Roe v. Wade at 40: Pew Poll Finds Abortion Not a Key Issue," *Los Angeles Times*
- "Poll: Most Americans Oppose Reversing Abortion Ruling," *Washington Post*
- "Survey: Few Religious Groups Want *Roe v. Wade* Overturned Despite Belief Abortion Morally Wrong," CNN

Only CNN indicated that most Americans are conflicted about abortion. In fairness to the other media outlets, they were not inaccurate; the survey was misleading.

Generally, Pew does excellent research. The problem with this survey is that it gave respondents only two choices: "Would you like to see the Supreme Court (a) Completely Overturn *Roe v. Wade* or (b) Not Overturn *Roe v. Wade*." Either/or questions on complex issues are inherently flawed. Pew should have known this when it learned, in the same poll, that 47% said abortion is "Morally Wrong"; only 13% said it is "Morally Acceptable." Among Protestants, the figures were 56% to 9%; among Catholics, it was 55% to 9%.

A more sophisticated poll by Gallup last May found that the majority of Americans (52%) want abortion legal *under certain*

circumstances; 25% want it legal in all cases and 20% want it illegal in all cases. In other words, only a quarter of Americans support *Roe v. Wade* as it was written. Most want restrictions.