

PUBLIC OPPOSES ABORTION-ON-DEMAND

Two recently released Gallup surveys on abortion show how mixed Americans are on this subject. One of them is titled, "Americans Still Oppose Overturning Roe v. Wade." This a gross simplification. Indeed, by analyzing Gallup's own data, the opposite case could also be made.

It is true that when asked whether Roe v. Wade should be overturned, only 32% agree; 58% disagree. But when the survey digs deeper, it finds something altogether different. For example, only 32% believe that abortion should be legal in all circumstances; 67% disagree. Of that last number, 48% say it should be legal in certain circumstances while 19% say it should be illegal in all circumstances.

With regard to the meaning of Roe v. Wade, Gallup says the ruling "specifies that states may *regulate* abortion before fetal viability in the interests of maternal health, but not ban the procedure before that developmental stage (its *italic*)." That is technically true. It is also intellectually dishonest.

In practice, Gallup knows very well that the way this ruling has been interpreted and applied in most parts of the country, Roe means abortion-on-demand. And that, according to its own data, is precisely what Americans reject.

So why would only a third of Americans want Roe overturned given their overwhelming opposition to what Roe, in practice, allows? That's because many, if not most, falsely believe that Roe does not permit abortion-on-demand.

Gallup admits that support for abortion falls off dramatically after the first trimester. In other words, the average American does not want an outright ban because that would mean

abortions in the early stages of pregnancy would also be illegal, hence the reluctance to overturn Roe. But the average American is also unhappy with totally unrestricted abortions, which is what Roe basically permits.

No one can make an informed decision on any subject unless the facts are made clear. When it comes to abortion, they rarely are.