



Written by [Lisa Shaw](#) on February 19, 2017

Norma “Jane Roe” McCorvey Dies at 69

Norma McCorvey died Saturday in Katy, Texas, at the age of 69, following a period of failing health. McCorvey (shown) was more commonly known as “Jane Roe” in the historic 1973 Supreme Court case *Roe v. Wade*, the case that overturned all state laws banning abortion. However, she spent much of her life working to undo the damage of *Roe v. Wade*.



At 21 years of age and pregnant with her third child — the first two having been given up for adoption — McCorvey sought an abortion only to find it illegal in her home state of Texas. Through a series of circumstances she was introduced to attorneys Linda Coffee and Sarah Weddington who used a desperate and ill-informed young McCorvey to further an agenda to legalize abortion at the federal level. Although she agreed to be the plaintiff in the case, McCorvey, who had only a ninth grade education, admitted her lack of understanding of the situation. In an affidavit she gave to the District Court of New Jersey in 2000, she stated,

Virtually the entire basis for *Roe v. Wade* was built upon false assumptions. No meaningful trial to determine the real facts was ever held.

“They were looking for somebody, anybody, to use to further their own agenda. I was their most willing dupe,” she said. Her understanding of abortion was just as naïve, as she admits, “Abortion, to me, meant ‘going back’ to the condition of not being pregnant.”

Although *Roe v. Wade* opened wide the doors for women in every part of the country to receive abortions legally, McCorvey herself never had an abortion. Her third child was also put up for adoption. For years she fought conflicting emotions concerning abortion, but continued to be involved in the abortion movement in various ways, including working at abortion clinics and making public appearances at events.

However, though McCorvey is notorious for her connection to the legalization of abortion, there is another part of her life that may not be as noted. Her views began to change through an array of horrific experiences within the abortion industry, as well as acquaintances within the pro-life movement, such as Father Frank Pavone, national director of Priests for Life. McCorvey began to see and understand the fullness of her actions. Renouncing her past and trying to rectify what she could of her erroneous influence, McCorvey began to spend her life speaking out against abortion and started



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her own ministry, *Roe No More*, in 1997. In the above mentioned affidavit, she asserts,

I have a compelling interest in this litigation. My case was wrongfully decided and has caused great harm to the women and children of our nation.

In 2003 she went to court in an attempt to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, to no avail.

McCorvey seemed steadfast in her determination to stand for life and truth, and her desire to alter her reputation. She stated, "You read about me in history books, but now I am dedicated to spreading the truth about preserving the dignity of all human life from natural conception to natural death."

McCorvey desperately wanted to bring to light the truth about the landmark case that brought her shameful fame and changed the course of history. In her affidavit she claims,

While the experience of being Jane Roe over the past twenty-seven years has been very difficult, my life has been filled with hardship from the beginning. Although I was an emotionally abused child, and a sexually abused teenager, I believe the worst abuse was inflicted by the judicial system. In retrospect, I was exploited by two self-interested attorneys. Worse, the courts, without looking into my true circumstances and taking the time to decide the real impact abortion would have upon women, I feel used me to justify legalization of terminating the lives over thirty-five million babies. Although on an intellectual level I know I was exploited, the responsibility I feel for this tragedy is overwhelming. Because the courts allowed my case to proceed without my testimony, without ever explaining to me the reality of abortion, without being cross-examined on my erroneous perception of what of abortion really is, a tragic mistake was made by the courts, a mistake that this Court has the opportunity to remedy.

On her journey in the fight for life, McCorvey has seen many victories and defeats. Her optimism was evident according to [priestsforlife.org](#) as McCorvey's good friend, Janet Morana, claimed, "Just prior to the March for Life this January, Norma told me to greet all the pro-life activists in her name and tell them to keep strong in the battle for life, which we are winning."

One of McCorvey's wishes, along with the protection of life, was to separate herself from America's history and taint of abortion, to amend and heal what she could, as she lamented, "I long for the day that justice will be done and the burden from all of these deaths will be removed from my shoulders." In reconciliation of her past and her present, she once declared,

I was the Jane Roe of *Roe vs. Wade*, but Jane Roe has been laid to rest.

Today brings a close to Norma McCorvey's struggle in this life. May her soul rest in peace, her fight for justice not be in vain, and her quest for freedom be met.

Photo of Norma McCorvey: AP Images



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