

## **Opinion:** What's at stake in the Supreme Court's abortion rulings

**The dissent** by Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. is a poignant manifestation of his distress at not being able to prevent his presiding over, and thus being forever associated with, a court that cloaks a retrograde and (currently) unlawful sociopolitical agenda in legal mumbo jumbo. Perhaps this serves him right as an enabler, over 16 years, of the slow erosion of constitutionally protected rights. Justice Sonia Sotomayor emerges again as a preeminent champion of adherence to the rule of law as well as common decency. This case exceeds *Bush v. Gore* in exemplifying the court as a political institution. This is not news, but myths are important to society, and the myth of a politically disinterested judiciary, which on frequent occasions is exemplified in fact, is a useful one. Decades ago, I represented a Fairfax women's health clinic providing first-trimester abortions against anti-abortion protesters who damaged the clinic. We secured an effective injunction from a judge, who emphasized that he was pro-life but said that it was his duty to uphold the law. The Supreme Court's decision is as serious a blow to the integrity and reputation of the court as it is to women seeking abortions.

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