



# Abortion, Conscience and Democracy

*Mark R. MacGuigan*

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Few issues have polarized Canadians and Americans as much as the abortion debate. In this thoughtful and thought-provoking reflection on the implications the law on abortion has on democracy, Mark MacGuigan brings a much-needed perspective to this controversial subject. Few people are as well qualified to do so: MacGuigan is a former law professor, minister of justice and attorney general of Canada, a Catholic, and a federal appellate-court judge.

Distinguishing carefully between morality and the law, MacGuigan includes a history of the criminal law, the Catholic Church's views, and the often-ignored roles of individual conscience, freedom and responsibility in democracy. He reviews the essential debate, important case histories, and the evolving social perspectives that have attached themselves to discussions of abortion. he also includes chapters on the related issues of contraception and euthanasia.

MacGuigan refers to a wide range of influential and international documents and judgements: papal encyclicals, the Wolfenden Report, *Roe vs. Wade*, a ruling in a case that involved Dr. Henry Morgentaler, and numerous other sources. With great candour, MacGuigan also explores how his own attitude and position have changed to the point where he now opposes any legislation limiting abortion before viability.

Those who are seeking clarity of the issues and those who want to uncloud the rhetoric and the arguments should not miss reading this important work.

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