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Abortion Law in Transnational Perspective

Cases and Controversies

Rebecca J. Cook, Joanna N. Erdman, and Bernard M. Dickens, Editors

It is increasingly implausible to speak of a purely domestic abortion law, as the legal debates around the world draw on precedents and influences of different national and regional contexts. While the United States and Western Europe may have been the vanguard of abortion law reform in the latter half of the twentieth century, Central and South America are proving to be laboratories of thought and innovation in the twenty-first century, as are particular countries in Africa and Asia. *Abortion Law in Transnational Perspective* offers a fresh look at significant transnational legal developments in recent years, examining key judicial decisions, constitutional texts, and regulatory reforms of abortion law in order to envision ways ahead.

The chapters investigate issues of access, rights, and justice, as well as social constructions of women, sexuality, and pregnancy, through different legal procedures and regimes. They address the promises and risks of using legal procedure to achieve reproductive justice from different national, regional and international vantage points; how public and courtroom debates are framed within medical, religious and human rights arguments; the meaning of different narratives that recur in abortion litigation and language; and how respect for women and prenatal life are expressed in various legal regimes. By exploring how legal actors advocate, regulate, and adjudicate the issue of abortion, this timely volume seeks to build on existing developments to bring about change of a larger order.

Rebecca J. Cook is Professor of Law Emerita and codirector of the International Reproductive and Sexual Health Law Program at University of Toronto. She is editor of *Human Rights of Women: National and International Perspectives*, and co-author of *Gender Stereotyping: Transnational Legal Perspectives*, both available from University of Pennsylvania Press.

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