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Long Essay #2 CIVIL RIGHTS OR CASE LAW

The Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, 597 U.S. ____ (2022), marked a pivotal turning point in U.S. constitutional law. By overturning the landmark precedents set in *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113 (1973) and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, 505 U.S. 883 (1992), the Court fundamentally altered the legal framework governing abortion rights in the United States. The case centered on whether the Constitution guarantees a right to abortion or if such authority should be left to individual states. This decision not only raised critical legal and ideological questions about federalism and personal autonomy but also intensified debates about the broader implications for reproductive healthcare and privacy-based rights. Examining the facts, legal analysis, and implications of this ruling underscores its transformative impact on American law and society (Hamm).

In 2018, Mississippi enacted the Gestational Age Act, which prohibited most abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy, allowing exceptions only for medical emergencies or severe fetal abnormalities. Jackson Women's Health Organization, the state's sole licensed abortion clinic, challenged the law, asserting that it violated constitutional protections established in *Roe v. Wade* and reaffirmed in *Casey* (Justia Law). These precedents guaranteed a woman's right to terminate a pregnancy prior to fetal viability, generally around 24 weeks (Justia Law). Lower courts struck down the Mississippi law, citing these precedents, but the state appealed to the

Supreme Court (Oyez). The Court agreed to review the case, framing the issue as whether the Act violated the Constitution or if the established precedents themselves warranted reevaluation. This set the stage for a broader examination of the constitutional basis for abortion rights.

The primary question in *Dobbs* was whether the Constitution explicitly protects a right to abortion under the Fourteenth Amendment. In a 6-3 decision, the Supreme Court upheld Mississippi's law, with a narrower 5-4 majority explicitly overturning *Roe* and *Casey*. Justice Samuel Alito, authoring the majority opinion, argued that abortion rights are not “deeply rooted in this Nation’s history and tradition” and should therefore be left to state legislatures (Wikipedia). This reasoning relied on the precedent set in *Washington v. Glucksberg* (1997), which required rights protected by the Due Process Clause to have a strong historical foundation. Chief Justice Roberts concurred with upholding the Mississippi law but disagreed with overturning *Roe* (National Constitution Center). The dissent, written by Justices Breyer, Sotomayor, and Kagan, warned of severe consequences for women’s autonomy and equality. They also cautioned that the ruling jeopardizes other privacy-based rights, such as access to contraception and same-sex marriage.

The ruling in *Dobbs* returned authority over abortion regulation to individual states, leading to a patchwork of laws that has reshaped access to reproductive healthcare across the country. States with restrictive laws have seen increased financial and logistical burdens for individuals seeking abortions, often compelling them to travel to states with more permissive laws (Escobar et al). These burdens disproportionately affect marginalized communities, including low-income individuals and people of color, exacerbating existing disparities in healthcare access. The decision has also created uncertainty for medical providers in restrictive states, where fear of legal repercussions can delay necessary care (Latoya Hill and Samantha

Artiga). Socially and politically, the ruling has deepened partisan divides, galvanizing both pro-life and pro-choice movements while sparking widespread protests (Karlis). This decision has not only transformed reproductive healthcare but also raised broader questions about the future of privacy-based rights and judicial stability.

The Supreme Court's ruling in *Dobbs* represents a seismic shift in U.S. constitutional law, redefining the balance of power between state sovereignty and individual rights. While proponents view the decision as a victory for federalism and moral values, critics argue it undermines decades of precedent and personal autonomy. The ruling's implications extend beyond abortion rights, potentially affecting other fundamental liberties grounded in privacy. As the nation continues to grapple with the legal and social consequences, *Dobbs* remains a defining case in shaping the future of civil liberties and the role of the judiciary in safeguarding individual freedoms.

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LONG ESSAY- #1 POWER

The presidency extends beyond the formal powers outlined in the Constitution. As noted in OpenStax, political scientist Richard Neustadt argued that “presidential power is the power to persuade,” emphasizing the importance of negotiate and influence in presidential leadership. This persuasive ability, coupled with the strategy of “going public” – where presidents appeal directly to the public to gain support for their policies – enables presidents to shape public opinion and build coalitions. Personal attributes such as character and style significantly impact a president’s effectiveness in these areas. Understanding these traits provides us with a more comprehensive view of presidential success, highlighting the dynamic nature of the office beyond its constitutional powers.

The success of any major endeavor, whether in sports or politics, often depends on the strength of the team behind the leader. Red Auerbach, the legendary coach and general manager of the Boston Celtics, emphasized teamwork, strategy, and leveraging individual strengths for the greater good. Auerbach famously said, “The best team beats the best individual every time,” a philosophy that underscores the value of collaboration in achieving any goal. In politics where deals are made, and victories are rarely the result of one person’s efforts alone, should be taken into consideration in the resulting 2024 Presidential race.

Donald Trump’s 2024 presidential victory exemplified the critical importance of having a team that amplifies your personal influence, strategic alliances, and innovative campaigning in modern politics. In this essay, I will identify the success that was driven by the contributions of three key figures: Elon Musk, Barron Trump, and Robert F. Kennedy Jr. Each played a distinct role in amplifying Trump’s power to persuade and go public, two essential tools in the modern presidency. Musk provided financial backing to Trumps Super Pac and a powerful platform through X; Barron connected the campaign with younger voters, vouching for his father to make multiple appearances in internet podcasts; and Kennedy consolidated voter support by endorsing Trump and campaigning on his behalf, leveraging the “silent majority” to his favor. These contributions highlight how personal features such as presidential character, style, and the ability to engage directly with the public are essential to understanding how Trump won presidency.

Elon Musk’s financial and social media influence was one of the most significant factors in Trump’s victory. Musk’s super PAC, America PAC, reportedly spent around \$260 million to support Trump’s campaign, focusing on mobilizing low propensity and first-time voters (Bellan). This financial investment funded extensive ground operations, including door-to-door canvassing and targeted advertising in key swing states like Pennsylvania. In Pennsylvania alone, the

campaign coordinated by America PAC mobilized thousands of volunteers to engage voters directly, addressing local concerns such as economic recovery and manufacturing jobs, especially abortion views which resonated deeply with the state's electorate (Doornbos). Beyond financial support, Musk used his platform X (formerly Twitter) to amplify Trump's messaging and bypass traditional media outlets. With over 500 million active users, X became the central hub for disseminating campaign updates, rally schedules, and policy announcements, reaching audiences who receive direct communication with the party and their affiliates. Reaching audiences who might otherwise avoid traditional news sources.

This direct communication strategy allowed Trump to maintain visibility and engage with voters unfiltered, a hallmark of going public in modern presidential campaigns. For example, Musk's strategic promotion of key campaign messages on X ensured that Trump's policies were trending topics, fostering real-time discussions and increasing voter engagement (Merica). Additionally, Musk's influence helped counteract bias. This not only bolstered Trump's visibility but also reinforced his image as an outsider challenging establishment narrative. Musk's involvement underscores the importance of "partnerships with integrating cutting-edge data analytics into voter outreach efforts and controlling a major social media platform demonstrates how persuasion (leverage), visibility (propaganda), and innovative methods (money) play a central role in electoral success in the 2024 presidential election.

Barron Trump, the son of Donald Trump, provided a fresh perspective that was instrumental in connecting the campaign with younger voters, a demographic historically difficult to mobilize in large numbers. Recognizing the shifting media habits of Gen Z and millennials, Barron advised his father to leverage platforms where these audiences were most active, such as Youtube, Twitch, and other social media platforms. His suggestion to appear on

popular podcasts and streaming platforms like Adin Ross's live streams and the Nelk Boys' "Full Send Podcast" brought Donald Trump into direct conversation with millions of young viewers, many of whom were previously disengaged from traditional political coverage (Isenstadt). For instance, Trump's interview on the "Full Send Podcast" amassed over 5 million views within 24 hours, illustrating the effectiveness of targeting platforms that resonate with younger audiences.

This strategy not only amplified Trump's visibility but also framed him as a candidate willing to engage with a new generation on their terms, fostering relatability and accessibility. IT contrasted sharply with traditional campaign methods, making Trump appear more attuned to contemporary culture. Barron's focus on influencer-driven outreach allowed the campaign to bypass media filters and address issues that resonated with the younger voters who inhabited the digital space. The contributions also reinforced the campaigns overarching narrative of "outsider leadership," appealing to younger voters whose desire is for the disruption of politics. This generational gap solidified a broader voter base that extended beyond Trumps core supporters (Reilly and Nava).

Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s endorsement of Donald Trump in August 2024 marked a pivotal moment in the presidential race, especially in swing states. Initially running as an independent candidate, Kennedy suspended his campaign and urged his voters to back trump. Aiming to consolidate votes that might have been divided. This move was also reflected areas of alignment between his platform and the values of Trump supporters. Kennedys skepticism of government overreach, particularly regarding public health policies, resonated strongly with conservative voters who had criticized federal mandates during the COVID-19 pandemic (O'Neil). Kennedy also voiced support for reducing bureaucratic inefficiencies, a stance that aligned with Trump's advocacy for deregulation and smaller government.

Kennedys polling numbers indicated he could draw significant support (Gibson). Polls showed him polling as high as 16% among young adults, suggesting his candidacy had some potential to influence, not in an astronomical amount, but voiced those silent majority individuals to vote for Trump. Particularly in battleground states. He actively sought to remove his name from ballots in key swing states like Georgia, North Carolina, Arizona, and Nevada to prevent siphoning votes from Trump. (not in an astronomical amount). His environmental advocacy, while traditionally associated with progressive policies, also found common ground with rural voters concerned about sustainable land use and preserving agricultural industries. This nuanced alignment allowed Kennedy to bridge gaps between traditional Democratic leaning constituencies and Trump supporters (Trudo).

Kennedy's potential role in Trump's administration, specifically in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), further highlighted this alignment. Reports suggest that Kennedy was considered for a position overseeing public health reforms, where his criticism of centralized health authorities and advocacy for transparent, decentralized decision-making would fit well with conservative ideals (Collins et al.). In summary, Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s endorsement and subsequent actions played a role in unifying the favor of elect Donald Trump, this broadening of Trump's appeal led him to the possible securing of HHS.

Donald Trump's 2024 presidential victory demonstrates that winning in modern politics is not achieved through individual effort alone but through a dynamic team leveraging influence, innovation, and strategic alliances. Elon Musk's financial backing and social media platformed transformed Trump's campaign into a digital powerhouse, connecting with disengaged audiences and countering traditional media motives. Barron Trump's understanding of Gen Z and millennial media habits modernized the campaign's outreach, capturing the attention of younger

voters and expanding the campaign's reach. Finally, Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s endorsement unified fragmented voters, resonating with rural and conservative Americans while appealing to the silent majority, further solidifying Trump's standing in key swing states.

In contrast, Kamala Harris's campaign struggled to resonate with voter across party lines. While her reliance on endorsement from Hollywood celebrities like Taylor Swift and Beyonce brought attention, but these figures often alienated working-class and independent voters who saw them as symbols of an out-of-touch elite (Modano). Conversely, Trump's team capitalized on voices like Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and cultural influences such as Joe Rogan, who were critical of establishment politics resonating with voters' frustrations (Dorman and Griffiths). This gave the Trump, campaign an anti-establishment appeal once again over Harris's polished and elite-driven messaged despite her crucial democratic-needed policies.

Moreover, Harris's team lacked the cohesion and adaptability that defined Trump's strategy. While her campaign appeals to progressive ideals, it struggled to unify the Democratic Party or connect with moderates and independents. Trumps team, by contrast, leveraged digital platforms like X, grassroots outreach in key swing states, and direct communication through popularized podcasts to energize and mobilize broad coalition. Ultimately, Trump's shocking victory reflects a shift in political campaigning toward a model that prioritizes outsider messaging, direct voter engagement, and the ability to address diverse constituencies. This strategy not only define by the 2024 election but also set a new standard for how candidates might approach future presidential races in ana increasingly divided and media-driven political environment.

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