

GRISWOLD v. CONNECTICUT

Case Basics

Docket No.: 496

Appellee: Connecticut

Appellant: Griswold

Decided By: Warren Court (1962-1965)

Opinion: 381 U.S. 479 (1965)

Argued: March 29-30, 1965

Decided: Monday, June 7, 1965

Issues: Judicial Power, Standing to Sue, Personal Injury

Categories: ninth amendment, contraception, privacy, criminal

Facts of the Case:

Griswold was the Executive Director of the Planned Parenthood League of Connecticut. Both she and the Medical Director for the League gave information, instruction, and other medical advice to married couples concerning birth control. Griswold and her colleague were convicted under a Connecticut law which criminalized the provision of counselling, and other medical treatment, to married persons for purposes of preventing conception.

Question:

Does the Constitution protect the right of marital privacy against state restrictions on a couple's ability to be counseled in the use of contraceptives?

Conclusion:

Though the Constitution does not explicitly protect a general right to privacy, the various guarantees within the Bill of Rights create penumbras, or zones, that establish a right to privacy. Together, the First, Third, Fourth, and Ninth Amendments, create a new constitutional right, the right to privacy in marital relations. The Connecticut statute conflicts with the exercise of this right and is therefore null and void.

Decisions

Decision: 7 votes for Griswold, 2 vote(s) against

Legal provision: Due Process