

between consenting adults.”⁶⁴⁹ Instead, the Court found *Stanley* “firmly grounded in the First Amendment,”⁶⁵⁰ and noted that extending the reasoning of that case to homosexual conduct would result in protecting all voluntary sexual conduct between consenting adults, including adultery, incest, and other sexual crimes. Although *Bowers* has since been overruled by *Lawrence v. Texas*⁶⁵¹ based on precepts of personal autonomy, the latter case did not appear to signal the resurrection of the doctrine of protecting activities occurring in private places.

So, what of the expansion of the right to privacy under the rubric of personal autonomy? The Court speaking in *Roe* in 1973 made it clear that, despite the importance of its decision, the protection of personal autonomy was limited to a relatively narrow range of behavior. “The Constitution does not explicitly mention any right of privacy. In a line of decisions, however, . . . the Court has recognized that a right of personal privacy, or a guarantee of certain areas or zones of privacy, does exist under the Constitution. . . . These decisions make it clear that only personal rights that can be deemed ‘fundamental’ or ‘implicit in the concept of ordered liberty,’ *Palko v. Connecticut*, 302 U.S. 319, 325 (1937), are included in this guarantee of personal privacy. They also make it clear that the right has some extension to activities relating to marriage, *Loving v. Virginia*, 388 U.S. 1, 12 (1967); procreation, *Skinner v. Oklahoma*, 316 U.S. 535, 541–42 (1942); contraception, *Eisenstadt v. Baird*, 405 U.S. at 453–54; *id.* at 460, 463–65 (White, J., concurring in result); family relationships, *Prince v. Massachusetts*, 321 U.S. 158, 166 (1944); and child rearing and education, *Pierce v. Society of Sisters*, 268 U.S. 510, 535 (1925), *Meyer v. Nebraska*, *supra*.”⁶⁵²

Despite the limiting language of *Roe*, the concept of privacy still retained sufficient strength to occasion major constitutional decisions. For instance, in the 1977 case of *Carey v. Population Services Int’l*,⁶⁵³ recognition of the “constitutional protection of individual autonomy in matters of childbearing” led the Court to invalidate a state statute that banned the distribution of contraceptives to adults except by licensed pharmacists and that forbade any person to sell

⁶⁴⁹ 478 U.S. at 195–96. Dissenting, Justice Blackmun challenged the Court’s characterization of *Stanley*, suggesting that it had rested as much on the Fourth as on the First Amendment, and that “the right of an individual to conduct intimate relationships in . . . his or her own home [is] at the heart of the Constitution’s protection of privacy.” *Id.* at 207–08.

⁶⁵⁰ 478 U.S. 186, 195 (1986).

⁶⁵¹ 539 U.S. 558 (2003).

⁶⁵² *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113, 152 (1973).

⁶⁵³ 431 U.S. 678 (1977).