



Antiabortion Activists In Their Own Words: Contraception Is Abortion

On the question of when a woman is considered pregnant, the medical and scientific communities have long been clear: Pregnancy is established only when a fertilized egg has been implanted in the wall of a woman's uterus. The definition is critical to distinguishing between a contraceptive, which prevents pregnancy, and an abortion, which terminates it. And on this point, federal policy has long been both consistent and in accord with the scientists: Drugs and devices that act before implantation prevent, rather than terminate, pregnancy.

This medical consensus notwithstanding, some antiabortion activists and lawmakers have long argued that commonly used birth control methods like the pill in fact cause abortions because, although their primary mode of action is to prevent ovulation or fertilization, they may on occasion act after fertilization to prevent implantation. Such activists have long sought to embody this belief into public policy.

“Birth control very often causes abortion—period. The medical community has known for a long time and the government is just now admitting it. We hope this 11th-hour consideration puts a new consciousness in the American people—the pill kills.”

Judie Brown, American Life League

[Federal Proposal Recognizes Abortion to Include Birth Control Pill](#)

July 17, 2008

“One way the birth control pill works is it makes the wall of the uterus impermeable to implantation, in which case the very young preborn human is aborted.”

Jill Stanek

[June 7: The Pill Kills Day](#)

June 5, 2008

“Some experts therefore recommended redefining the word ‘conception’ to be synonymous with implantation instead of fertilization—so devices like the IUD could be called ‘contraceptive’ even if they work after fertilization, causing an early abortion. This campaign was so successful that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration now calls ‘contraceptive’ even drugs that it admits can act by interfering with implantation—and

state and federal proposals mandating 'contraceptive' coverage in health insurance plans generally cover all such drugs as well. However, from a Catholic moral perspective (and the perspective of biological reality), an intervention to prevent the survival of a new embryo is abortifacient in nature. . . . It is probably true that contraceptive pills act chiefly by preventing ovulation. But it is difficult to claim that we can reduce abortions by promoting drugs that may sometimes cause an early abortion."

Richard M. Doerflinger, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops
[The Prevention Deception: How Not to Reduce Abortions](#)
June 29, 2007

"Can the pill, Norplant, the IUD, Depo-Provera, and emergency contraception really decrease abortion? Not likely. One of the ways that these chemicals and devices work is to prevent the newly conceived human embryo from attaching to the lining of the uterus. You may hear the inaccurate term 'fertilized egg' used to describe the living human embryo. But once fertilization has taken place, there is no more 'egg.' A new tiny person has been formed and is traveling on his or her way down the fallopian tube to enter and attach to the womb. Once there, the baby receives nourishment, and the growth hormone progesterone needed for survival. But, if the contraceptive device prevents the newly conceived child from attaching to the uterus (womb), what happens? Without nourishment and room to grow, the child cannot survive and he dies in the first 1-7 days of life. This is what we call an early, chemical abortion."

Judie Brown, American Life League
[Birth Control: the Abortion Connection](#)
October 5, 2005

"We've known for a long time that birth control pills are abortifacients," she says. "Now it's finally catching on."

Karen Brauer, Pharmacists for Life International
[Access Denied: Find out why growing numbers of doctors and pharmacists across the US are refusing to prescribe or dispense birth control pills](#)
September 22, 2004

"Some of the contraceptives that were mandated under the Snowe/Reid provision act de facto as abortifacients upon failing to prevent fertilization."

Sen. Sam Brownback (R-KS)
[Brownback Colleagues Oppose Health Care Mandates Language in Treasury/Postal Bill](#)
June 22, 1999

July 24, 2008