

Weeks Population

Dr. John Weeks' official demographic blog - just the latest post!

This blog is intended to go along with [Population: An Introduction to Concepts and Issues](#), by **John R. Weeks**, published by Cengage Learning. The latest edition is the 12th (it came out in 2015), but this blog is meant to complement any edition of the book by showing the way in which demographic issues are regularly in the news.

If you are a user of my textbook and would like to suggest a blog post idea, please email me at: john.weeks@sdsu.edu

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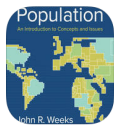


John Weeks

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Weeks Population Companion App



The app provides learning objectives and main points for each chapter, along with a quick POPquiz to test knowledge about key population information, and there is also a link to the WeeksPopulation blog.

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Saturday, April 2, 2016

Reproductive Rights and Choices in America

Abortion has been legal in the US since the 1973 Supreme Court decision supporting that right. The Republican Party has long been opposed, however, and has worked diligently with a variety of state legislatures to restrict access. These issues came to the fore this week with Donald Trump's assertion (subsequently "walked back") that women who sought an abortion should be punished. His walk-back targeted doctors instead of women, and of course doctors performing abortions have been under attack for a long time, [as I noted a few months ago](#). The attacks on Planned Parenthood and other reproductive health organizations have the potential to make it even more likely that a woman might be put in a position of thinking about abortion if she is unable to readily access other methods of birth control. On that score, there was some good news this week in that the US Food and Drug Administration approved some changes in the use of abortion-inducing drugs, as [CBS News reported](#):

A federal agency approved a new label for a common abortion-inducing drug that will undermine restrictions on medication [abortions](#) passed by several states, allowing women to take the drug later in a pregnancy and with fewer required office visits.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) notified the manufacturer of the drug Mifeprex in a letter on Tuesday that the [drug](#) is safe and effective for terminating a pregnancy in accordance with the new label. Also known as mifepristone, the drug is used in combination with another drug, misoprostol, to end a pregnancy.

While [abortion providers](#) in most states already are using the protocol outlined in the new label, laws in effect in Ohio, North Dakota and Texas prohibited "off-label" uses of the drug and mandated abortion providers adhere to the older protocol approved in 2000. Similar laws in Arizona, Arkansas and Oklahoma have been on hold pending legal challenges.

Under the new label, a smaller dose of mifepristone can be used up to 70 days after the beginning of the last menstrual period instead of the 49-day limit in effect under the old label. Also, the second drug can be taken by a woman at home and not be required to be administered at a clinic.

Of course, those who oppose a woman's right to an abortion were ready for this. [Today's NYTimes](#) reports that the governor of Arizona yesterday signed a law requiring abortion providers to use the old FDA guidelines rather than the new ones. It seems unlikely that this will withstand a court test, but the goal is obstruction of what is already legal, and this is just part of the war on women's reproductive rights--waged disproportionately by white males, so there is yet another demographic angle to this.

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Posted by [John Weeks](#) at 8:40 AM

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