The Creation of the Birth Control Pill:

A Turning Point for American Women's Educational, Economic, and Cultural Experience

Zania Hierlmaier
Junior Division
Historical Paper
Paper Length: 2,481 words
Process Paper Length: 335 words

"Science must make woman the owner, the mistress of herself. Science, the only possible savior of mankind, must put it in the power of woman to decide for herself whether she will or will not become a mother." - Margaret Sanger[1]

The invention of the birth control pill in May, 1960 was a turning point that led to educational, economic, and cultural changes for American women. Before the development of the pill, most American women thought that being a housewife was their primary career goal.[2] That mindset changed once women had access to the pill, which allowed them to achieve higher education and thus obtain jobs that once seemed out of reach. The pill also played a role in decreasing poverty, as women could choose not to have children they couldn't afford. Most importantly, American women finally had a choice over their life direction. This new opportunity made women question authorities such as religious leaders, doctors, and the government.

Before the Pill

Women have been using forms of contraception for thousands of years, dating all the way back to the Ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, who used animal parts, natural ointments, and withdrawal to prevent pregnancies.[3] Women in Ancient China drank liquid lead and mercury as a form of contraception, and in the Middle Ages, women even drank potions and wore animal parts.[4] Between 1873 and 1965, when America was under the Comstock Law, which prohibited birth control from being sent through the mail, women continued to use contraception.[5] In the late 1800s, when birth control clinics were not available, women relied on people like Sarah Chase, a woman who illegally sold contraception to women.[6] Eventually, women became more informed about their birth control options, leading to the average American woman's birth rate decreasing from eight children in 1800 to four in 1900.[7]

In Minnesota, birth control was an issue as early as 1916. On December 11, 1916, the Minneapolis Morning Tribune said, "The Minnesota State Birth Control league has announced a public hearing on birth control."[8] This was part

---

[1] Elaine Tyler May. 2011. America and the Pill : A History of Promise, Peril, and Liberation. New York: Basic Books, 25.
[2] Mead, Margaret. 1969. "American Women Are Dreaming the Impossible Dream." Newspapers.com. October 26, 1969. https://www.newspapers.com/article/star-tribune-american-women-are-dreaming/135799313/.
[3] "Birth Control before the Pill | American Experience | PBS." n.d. Www.pbs.org. https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/pill-birth-control-pill/.
[4] Johnson, Traci. 2021. "The History of Birth Control." WebMD. August 16, 2021. https://www.webmd.com/sex/birth-control/ss/slideshow-birth-control-history.
[5] May, America and the Pill,16.
[6] Cataneo, Emily. 2022. "The 19th-Century Woman's Secret Guide to Birth Control." Atlas Obscura. April 22, 2022. https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/19th-century-birth-control-dittrick?scrlybrkr=a68a93a4.
[7] May, America and the Pill,15.
[8] Birth Control Topic of Minnesota League." 1916. Newspapers.com. December 11, 1916. https://www.newspapers.com/image/181430904/.

of a nation wide movement led by Margaret Sanger, a women's rights activist who developed the term "birth control" a year earlier in 1915, and advocated for birth control throughout her life.[9] Sanger created the Birth Control Federation of America in 1921, which later changed its name to the Planned Parenthood Federation of America. The number of birth control clinics in America rose from 55 in 1930 to more than 800 in 1942.[10] These clinics provided access to barrier methods such as the condom and diaphragm. Part of this was due to Margaret Sanger's work to educate women about their birth control options.

One of these birth control clinics was the Minneapolis clinic, which opened in 1931. In 1937, the clinic had served over 3,000 women. However, this clinic couldn't help all of the women looking to prevent pregnancies, and almost 500 Minneapolis women were hospitalized from trying to limit the size of their family every year. Dorothy Atkinson, president of the Minneapolis Birth Control League told the Minneapolis Star that "None of it is necessary had physicians given these mothers birth control information so that they could plan their families." [11] This showed that although birth control had made substantial progress in America, accessibility was still an issue that needed to be addressed.

The Cultural, Economic, and Educational Environment For Women Preceding the Pill

Previous to the birth control pill, many cultural, economic, and educational factors influenced women's desire for a better contraceptive method. The cultural expectation for American women was to become an ideal housewife: cook and clean, raise children, support a loving husband, and live in a middle class home. Yet, this lifestyle was incredibly hard to reach, as 37% of American women were unmarried and forced to support themselves on their own, without access to high paying jobs.[12] In addition, some women disagreed with the cultural norms placed on women, wanting a less restricted life. In 1973, feminists such as Alice Rossi said, "If women cannot plan their pregnancies, they can plan little else in their lives."[13]

Before the 1960s, the majority of American women didn't consider college an option as work wasn't a life path they could choose, due to finances and cultural standards.[14] In 1929, 40% of American women had bachelor degrees. By 1950, that number had decreased to 24% as many women either had jobs during WWII when men were unable to work, or

[9] May, America and the Pill,17.
[10] May, America and the Pill,20.
[11] Birth Control League Will Begin Ninth Year of Activity in Minneapolis ." 1937. Newspapers.com. May 1, 1937. https://www.newspapers.com/image/187599037/.
[12] "American Women Are Dreaming the Impossible Dream."
[13] Maggio, Rosalie. 1998. The New Beacon Book of Quotations by Women. Beacon Press (MA).
[14] Nelson, Libby. 2015. "For the First Time Ever, More American Women than Men Are College Graduates." Vox. October 13, 2015. https://www.vox.com/2015/10/13/9514051/educational-attainment-census.

became housewives, a popular choice for women after WWII.[15] Still, many women wanted a new birth control option to experience some of the freedom they had during the war and to limit the size of their families.

Prior to the creation of the birth control pill, World War II had ended and America was experiencing a baby boom. On a global scale, the world population nearly doubled from 1.6 billion in 1900 to 3 billion in 1960. While America was experiencing an increase in birth rates, the majority of population growth was in poor, non white countries. A group of people referred to as Eugenicists "believed in curbing the fertility of the unfit", viewing the poor and non white as a drain on global and national resources.[16] This mindset along with cultural changes in America, provided the perfect time to research the pill.

After the Invention of the Pill

In 1950, Margaret Sanger paired up with Katherine McCormick, a wealthy women's rights activist, to locate a doctor who would be willing to research a female birth control pill, which she believed would be women's "key to liberty". Together they found Gregory Pincus, a biologist who had a background in reproductive health. The trio discovered a hormonal compound that prevented ovulation, and collaborated with the obstetrician and gynecologist, John Rock, to help test the new medicine. Pincus and Rock started broadening their trials of the birth control pill, first by forcing fifteen psychiatric patients at Worcester State Hospital to take a trial pill. In 1956, the duo conducted their first large-scale trial on women in Puerto Rico, which had no laws banning contraception and plenty of poor women willing to participate. In 1960, the tested pill, known as Enovid, was requested for approval by the FDA. On May 9, 1960, the pill was approved and put on the mainstream market.[17]

After two years, 1.2 million American women took the pill daily, and by 1964, 6.5 million married women were on the pill, making it the most popular contraceptive in America.[18] That was only possible because of the legal case of Griswold v. Connecticut in 1965, which allowed married couples the access to contraception. Yet, it wasn't until 1972 with the Supreme Court ruling of Eisenstaedt v. Baird that unmarried women had legal access to birth control.[19] This led to many unmarried American women relying on Early Legal Access, which were state laws that lowered the age restrictions on the birth control pill. These laws became a major turning point in women's reproductive health, as women who benefitted from Early Legal Access saw improvements in job opportunities and wages, reduction in poverty levels,

---

[15] Snyder, Thomas D. 1993. "120 Years of American Education: A Statistical Portrait." https://nces.ed.gov/pubs93/93442.pdf.
[16] May, America and the Pill, 36-37.
[17] May, America and the Pill, 21-34.
[18] May, America and the Pill, 2.
[19] Zorea, Aharon W. 2012. Birth Control. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Greenwood,81

and greater educational options.[20] Other factors such as family planning programs and Title X of the Public Health Service Act helped make the pill available to everyone. These options provide low cost contraception and educational materials to federally funded families.

Criticism of the Pill Post Release

People of color were one group that was skeptical of the birth control movement's motives due to the long history of reproductive injustice they faced. During the civil rights movement, some white birth control groups weren't sympathetic towards Black women's desire for birth control. One reason for this was because of a popular theory that whites were genetically superior to Blacks. This theory became so widespread that routine sterilization became common for poor Black women in the South and occasionally the North. In many cases, Black women were forced to undergo sterilization in order to keep federally funded assistance. This also impacted Black men's opinions on the birth control pill, as they just assumed it was another method by whites to control Black women and reduce the amount of Black people. However, not all Black people agreed with this opinion. Many Black women still utilized the birth control clinics available to them as they saw it as part of their reproductive freedom. A study in 1970 found that 80% of Black women in Chicago approved of birth control and 75% used contraception.[21] Public figures such as W.E.B. Dubois also agreed with birth control and saw the pill as a way to improve Black health.[22]

Another group that doubted the pill was the feminist movement. The pill was marketed with the promise of light side effects but many women started complaining about illnesses they experienced while on the pill. Because of this, women began demanding answers, inspired by Barbara Seaman, a women's health advocate who wrote the book *The Doctor's Case Against The Pill*. Right after the book was published, there was a U.S. senate hearing on the safety of the pill. Women's health advocates were glad for senate recognition of the issue, but were upset that no women testified, as shown in Appendix A.[23] This book included facts about bodily harm from the pill, and led to the FDA enforcing a rule that every packet of pills must have an information sheet showing side effects and health risks. The book *Our Bodies, Our Selves*, first published in 1973 by the Boston Women's Health Book Collective, also added to the growing backlash against the pill. As the women's liberation movement sparked in the 1960s, feminists also started questioning why they

---

[20] Bernstein, Anna , and Kelly M Jones. 2019. "ECONOMIC EFFECTS of CONTRACEPTIVE ACCESS: A Review of the Evidence CENTER on the ECONOMICS of REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH." https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/B381_Contraception-Access_Final.pdf,12-17

[21] Solinger, Rickie. 2007. Pregnancy and Power : A Short History of Reproductive Politics in America. New York ; London: New York University Press,172

[22] Roberts, Dorothy. 2005. "Forum: Black Women and the Pill." Guttmacher Institute. February 9, 2005. https://www.guttmacher.org/journals/psrh/2000/03/forum-black-women-and-pill.

[23] May, America and the pill, 132

still needed their physician's permission to take the pill, as the pill was supposed to allow women the ability to control their fertility on their own.[24] Finally the Catholic Church was opposed to the birth control pill. John Rock, one of the main inventors of the birth control pill and a practicing Catholic, assumed that the Catholic Church would share his view that the pill was important to women's reproductive health, and a solution to the world's growing population. Instead, the church published the encyclical letter Humanae Vitae, which stated that the use of birth control was a sin and a violation of natural law. The Catholic Church only allowed the use of the birth control pill among its followers for medical purposes, not to prevent pregnancies. Margaret Kearns remembered being allowed to use the pill for menstrual cramps as a teen living in a Catholic community in rural Minnesota. She remembered that her parents and doctor didn't disclose that she was taking the birth control pill because they were a strict Catholic family and feared that they would be judged by other church members.[25] However, many Catholics disagreed with the encyclical, and in 1965, 3 out of 4 Catholics thought that contraception should be available to anyone who wanted it. Catholics' interpretation of their religion's rules left them conflicted about which was more important, their Catholic faith or their reproductive freedom.[26]

The Lasting Impact of the Pill on Women Today

In conclusion, the pill was a turning point in American history that improved American women's lives educationally, economically, and culturally. Although the pill has been on the market for over 60 years, some of the greatest turning points for American womens' lives have occurred recently. For instance, as of 2022, women outnumbered men in the U.S college-educated labor force and college enrollment, which could only be possible because of the pill, as seen in Appendix B.[27] In the last 60 years, the age that American women had their first child has increased. For example, in 1960, the age that most women had their first child was 20-24, compared to the age of 25-29 in 2018, as shown in Appendix C.[28] In addition, American women now have an average of 1.6 kids, a stark contrast from 3 in 1950.[29]

---

[24] May, America and the Pill, 130-136
[25] Kearns, Margaret. 23AD. Birth Control Pill Interview by Zania Hierlmaier.
[26] Raup, Christina. 2010. "The Time Has Come: A Catholic Doctor's Proposals to End the Battle over Birth Control (1963), by John Rock | the Embryo Project Encyclopedia." Embryo.asu.edu. June 10, 2010. https://embryo.asu.edu/pages/time-has-come-catholic-doctors-proposals-end-battle-over-birth-control-1963-john-rock.
[27] Schaeffer, Katherine. 2022. "10 Facts about Today's College Graduates." Pew Research Center. April 12, 2022. https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/04/12/10-facts-about-todays-college-graduates/.
[28] Schweizer, Valerie, and Karen Guzzo. 2020. "Distributions of Age at First Birth, 1960-2018." Bowling Green State University. 2020. https://www.bgsu.edu/ncfmr/resources/data/family-profiles/schweizer-guzzo-distribution-age-first-birth-fp-20-11.html.
[29] North, Anna. 2023. "You Can't Even Pay People to Have More Kids." Vox. November 27, 2023. https://www.vox.com/23971366/declining-birth-rate-fertility-babies-children.

Women's ability to access higher education has also improved. There is research that strongly suggests that the pill has allowed women to prevent births at an early age so that they can pursue their education.[30] Women who have children later earn 88 more college credits than women who had a child right after high school.[31] Birth control has also become much more affordable thanks to the Affordable Care Act of 2010, which has provided around 63 million American women an inexpensive way to access birth control, saving women and girls $1.4 billion on birth control pills.[32] Improvements to reduce side effects and adverse health outcomes have also been made to the pill during this time span. Finally, on July 13, 2023, the FDA approved Opill, the first birth control pill that does not require a prescription. This has made the pill even more accessible to American women.[33]

While there have been many advancements to birth control in America, some women still have trouble accessing it. Currently, more than 19 million women live in "contraceptive deserts" in the U.S., meaning access to birth control is limited.[34] This is due to a variety of reasons. The 2014 Supreme court ruling of Burrell v. Hobby Lobby, allowed certain employers the right to restrict access to the pill for their employees.[35] In addition, the 2020 court case Little Sisters of the Poor Saints Peter and Paul Home v. Pennsylvania allowed the US government to issue rules exempting any private employer from requiring insurance to cover the birth control pill. [36]The Trump Administration used this case to further limit access to the pill by weakening the Affordable Care Act, which resulted in some insurance companies refusing to cover contraception.[37]

"The politics surrounding reproductive rights, which appeared to be settled in 1973 with the Roe v. Wade decision, has continued to be volatile."[38] In the past 10 years, contraception access has been threatened, and with the overturn of Roe v. Wade in 2022,[39] marking abortion as illegal in some states, many other contraceptives including the pill could face restrictions in the future. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas indicated that the US Supreme Court should

---

[30] Goldin, Claudia, Lawrence F Katz, and Ilyana Kuziemko. 2006. "The Homecoming of American College Women: The Reversal of the College Gender Gap." Journal of Economic Perspectives 20 (4): 133–56. https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.20.4.133.
[31] "Economic Effects of Contraceptive Access,11
[32] "The Affordable Care Act's Birth Control Benefit: Too Important to Lose." 2018. National Women's Law Center. June 25, 2018. https://nwlc.org/resource/the-affordable-care-acts-birth-control-benefit-too-important-to-lose/.
[33] approves First Nonprescription Daily Oral Contraceptive." 2023. FDA. July 13, 2023. https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-approves-first-nonprescription-daily-oral-contraceptive.
[34] Sreenivas, Shishira. 2022. "Health Disparities and Bias in Contraception Access and Care." WebMD. June 13, 2022. https://www.webmd.com/sex/birth-control/contraception-access-care-disparities-bias?scrlybrkr=a68a93a4.
[35] Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores, Incorporated. 2014. United States Supreme Court.
[36] Little Sisters of the Poor Saints Peter and Paul Home v. Pennsylvania. 2020. United States Supreme Court
[37] Robinson, Jovanna. 2017. "TRUMP ADMINISTRATION TAKES DIRECT AIM at BIRTH CONTROL COVERAGE for 62 MILLION WOMEN." Plannedparenthood.org. National - PPFA. October 6, 2017. https://www.plannedparenthood.org/about-us/newsroom/press-releases/trump-administration-takes-direct-aim-at-birth-control-coverage-for-62-million-women-2.
[38] May, Elaine Tyler. 24AD. Interview About May's Book, *America and the Pill* by Zania Hierlmaier.
[39] Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization. 2022. United States Supreme Court.

reconsider other rulings, including Griswold v. Connecticut.[40] This could lead to a new turning point where American women could lose the reproductive rights they have benefited from since the invention of the birth control pill in 1960. Some current Supreme Court Justices disagree with Thomas, siding with the late Ruth Bader Ginsburg who believed that "contraceptive protection is something every woman must have access to, to control her own destiny".[41] All turning points in history stem from active citizen engagement in impacting policies that affect their lives. Elain Tyler May, author of *America and the Pill*, believes that what is necessary is "a strong call for citizens to step up and vote, and hold their representatives accountable for serving the interests of the American people."[42] In the near future, it can be expected that this will be an important topic of debate within the Supreme Court, which could have impacts for decades to come.

[40] Kornfield, Meryl, Timothy Bella, and Amy Wang. 2022. "Biden, Other Critics Fear Thomas's 'Extreme' Position on Contraception." Washington Post, June 24, 2022. https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/06/24/contraception-supreme-court-clarence-thomas-griswold/.
[41] Carmon, Irin, and Shana Knizhnik. 2018. Notorious RBG : The Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsburg. London: Harpercollinspublishers, 147.

[42] May, Elaine Tyler. 24AD. Interview About May's Book, *America and the Pill* by Zania Hierlmaier

Appendix A:



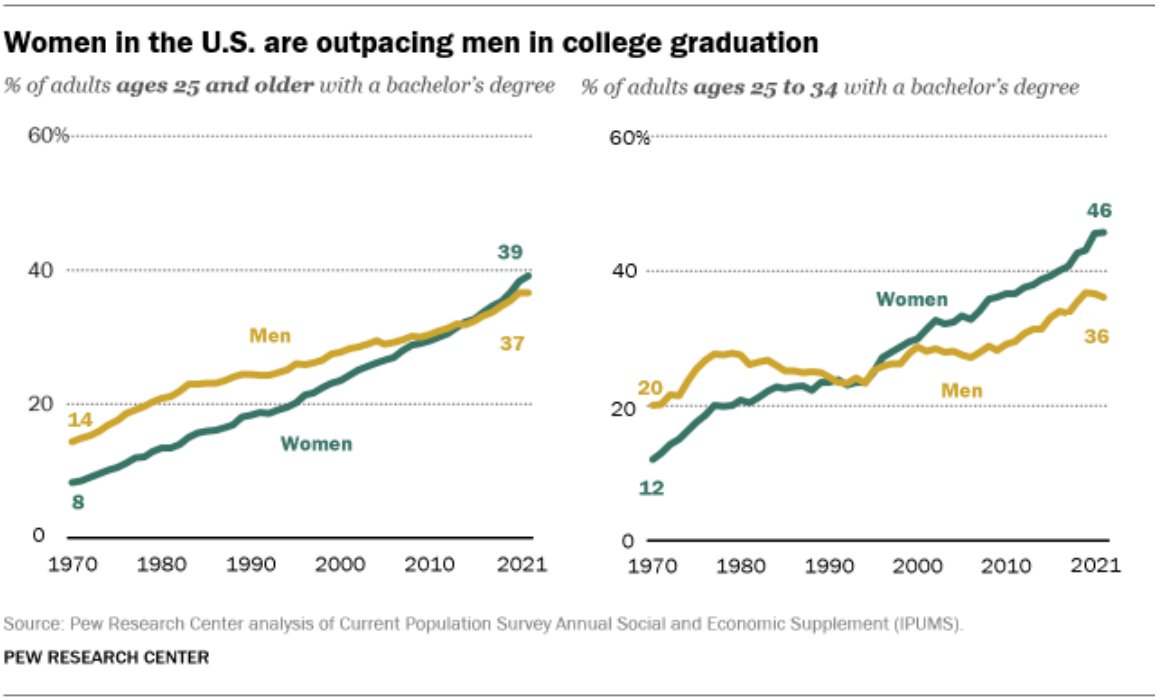
Associated Press

YOUNG WOMEN DISRUPTED SENATE MONOPOLY SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING ON BIRTH-CONTROL PILLS

They began asking questions; Sen. Gaylord Nelson, chairman, ordered police to clear the room

This newspaper clipping from January 24, 1970, in the Minneapolis Tribune, shows women protesting the U.S. Senate hearing on the safety of the birth control pill, where no women were asked to testify.

Appendix B :

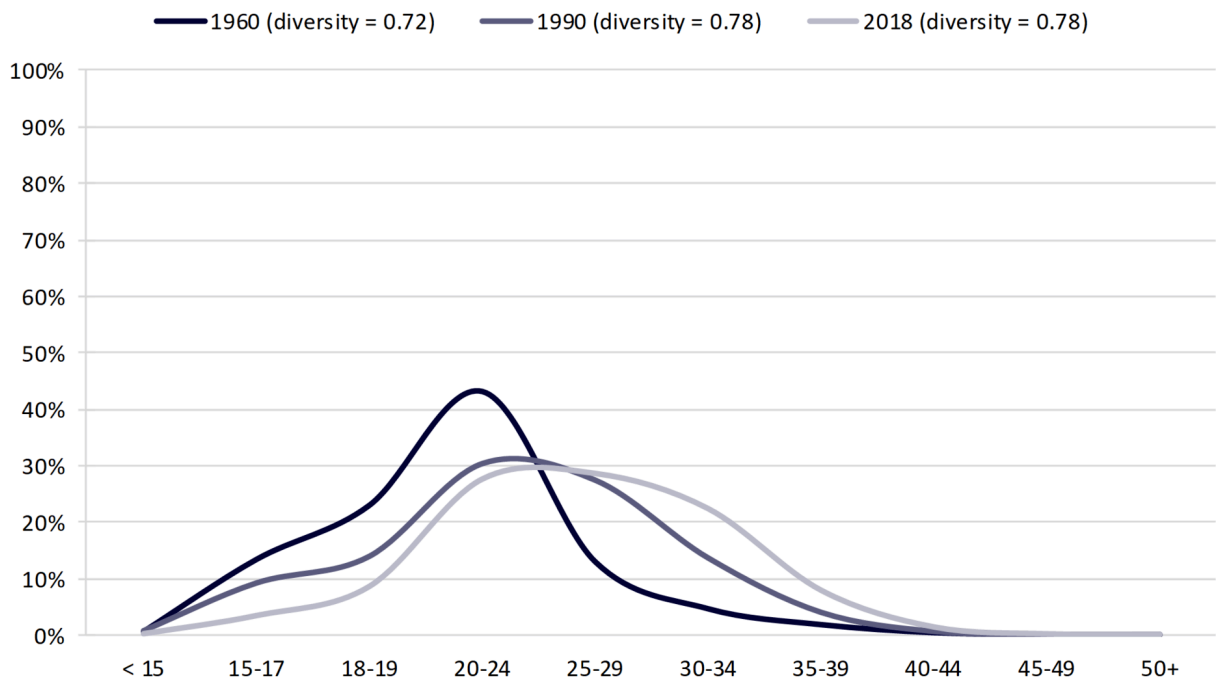


These two graphs show the difference in the percentage of American women with a bachelor's degree since 1970, which was a decade after the pill became available.

Source: Schaeffer, Katherine. 2022. “10 Facts about Today’s College Graduates.” Pew Research Center. April 12, 2022. https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/04/12/10-facts-about-todays-college-graduates/.

Appendix C:

Figure 1. Distributions of Women's Age at First Birth, 1960, 1990, & 201



This graph shows how American women's birth rates have changed over time. Notice the drop between 1960 and later decades.

Source: Schweizer, Valerie, and Karen Guzzo. 2020. "Distributions of Age at First Birth, 1960-2018." Bowling Green State University. 2020. https://www.bgsu.edu/ncfmr/resources/data/family-profiles/schweizer-guzzo-distribution-age-first-birth-fp-20-11.html.

Process Paper

How did I choose my topic?

For my history day project, I wanted a topic that involved women's rights and social justice. My dad encouraged me to look into the birth control pill, and I realized it was a groundbreaking turning point for women's reproductive freedom.

How did I conduct my research?

I first found several books at my public library about the pill, which helped me learn about the creation of the pill and its long term effects. I wanted to go deeper into first hand accounts about the pill, so with the help of my dad, I found old newspaper articles from Minnesota about the pill. I was also able to correspond with the author of the book *America and the Pill*. She graciously reviewed my paper and provided feedback. Her insights helped me better understand the topic I chose. In addition, I used the internet to find more information about how the pill impacted American women and society.

How did I create my project?

Since I decided to write a paper for my project, I created an outline with all of my information, and then wrote my first draft. I broke my topic down into groups: before the pill, the invention of the pill, and after the pill, to help organize my information and write my paper efficiently. After I finished writing my final draft, I made a title, added footnotes and an appendix, and made headings for each paragraph.

What is my thesis statement?

My thesis statement is: The invention of the birth control pill in May, 1960 was a turning point that led to educational, economic, and social changes for American women.

How is my topic significant to history?

The birth control pill is a turning point that changed American women's lives by allowing them access to higher education, good jobs, and most importantly, the freedom over their own bodies. Without the pill, American women would have similar rights and lifestyles as they had over 100 years ago.

Bibliography

Primary Sources:

"Birth Control League Will Begin Ninth Year of Activity in Minneapolis ." 1937. Minneapolis Star May 1, 1937. https://www.newspapers.com/image/187599037/.

This newspaper article helped me describe what birth control options were available before the pill and the health consequences of not having access to effective birth control. This article also described the beginnings of Planned Parenthood in Minnesota,

"Birth Control Topic of Minnesota League." 1916. Minneapolis Star December 11, 1916. https://www.newspapers.com/image/181430904/.

I used this newspaper article to demonstrate that the topic of birth control took place as early as 1916 in Minnesota.

"FDA Approves First Nonprescription Daily Oral Contraceptive." 2023. FDA. July 13, 2023. https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-approves-first-nonprescription-daily-oral-contraceptive.

This press release stated that a new form of birth control that did not need a prescription was available for the first time. This helped me write about what type of birth control was available long after the pill was invented.

May, Elaine Tyler. 24AD. Interview about May's book, *America and the Pill.*

I interviewed Elaine May to better understand her book and the points she makes about its impacts on American women's lives. We also discussed the current politics surrounding women's reproductive rights after the reversal of Roe v. Wade.

Mead, Margaret. 1969. "American Women Are Dreaming the Impossible Dream." Minneapolis Star October 26, 1969. https://www.newspapers.com/article/star-tribune-american-women-are-dreaming/135799313/.

This newspaper article was helpful because it outlined social changes for American women following the invention of the birth control pill.

Kearns, Margaret . 23AD. Birth Control Pill Interview by Zania Hierlmaier.

I personally interviewed Margaret Kearns about her experiences taking the birth control pill in the early 1960s. This conversation helped me understand Catholic views on birth control.

Kornfield, Meryl, Timothy Bella, and Amy Wang. 2022. "Biden, Other Critics Fear Thomas's 'Extreme' Position on Contraception." *Washington Post*, June 24, 2022. https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/06/24/contraception-supreme-court-clarence-thomas-griswold/.

I used this newspaper article to highlight why birth control is still a controversial topic today.

Secondary Sources:

Bernstein, Anna , and Kelly M Jones. 2019. “ECONOMIC EFFECTS of CONTRACEPTIVE ACCESS: A Review of the Evidence CENTER on the ECONOMICS of REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH.” https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/B381_Contraception-Access_Final.pdf.

I used this report as research evidence for educational and economic impacts of the pill.

“Birth Control before the Pill | American Experience | PBS.” n.d. Www.pbs.org. https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/pill-birth-control-pill/.

This website helped me write about birth control methods long before the pill.

Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores, Incorporated. 2014. United States Supreme Court.

The information in this court case helped me discuss legal changes long after the pill’s invention that impacted women’s ability to access birth control.

Carmon, Irin, and Shana Knizhnik. 2018. *Notorious RBG : The Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsburg*. London: Harpercollinspublishers.

I used this book to quote Ruth Bader Ginsburg opinion on birth control.

Cataneo, Emily. 2022. “The 19th-Century Woman’s Secret Guide to Birth Control.” Atlas Obscura. April 22, 2022. https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/19th-century-birth-control-dittrick?scrlybrkr=a68a93a4.

This website recounted the story of Sarah Chase, a birth control trailblazer before the pill was invented.

Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization. 2022. United States Supreme Court.

This court case helped me discuss legal changes long after the pill’s invention that impacted women’s ability to access abortion.

Elaine Tyler May. 2011. *America and the Pill : A History of Promise, Peril, and Liberation*. New York: Basic Books.

This book was a wealth of information about the birth control pill’s history. It had information about educational, economic, and cultural impacts of the pill over time.

Goldin, Claudia, Lawrence F Katz, and Ilyana Kuziemko. 2006. “The Homecoming of American College Women: The Reversal of the College Gender Gap.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 20 (4): 133–56. https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.20.4.133.

This journal article helped to show that the birth control pill allowed American women to get higher education.

Johnson, Traci. 2021. “The History of Birth Control.” WebMD. August 16, 2021. https://www.webmd.com/sex/birth-control/ss/slideshow-birth-control-history.

I used this website to write about birth control methods before the pill.

Little Sisters of the Poor Saints Peter and Paul Home v. Pennsylvania. 2020. United States Supreme Court.

This court case helped me discuss legal changes long after the pill’s invention that impacted women’s ability to access the pill.

Maggio, Rosalie. 1998. *The New Beacon Book of Quotations by Women*. Beacon Press (MA).

I used this book to quote Alice Rossi, an American feminist, on her opinion on the birth control pill.

Nelson, Libby. 2015. "For the First Time Ever, More American Women than Men Are College Graduates." Vox. October 13, 2015. https://www.vox.com/2015/10/13/9514051/educational-attainment-census.

This website helped me write about women's education rates long after the pill's creation.

North, Anna. 2023. "You Can't Even Pay People to Have More Kids." Vox. November 27, 2023. https://www.vox.com/23971366/declining-birth-rate-fertility-babies-children.

I used this website to show the change in birth rates in America over time, and to show that women are waiting longer to start families then they ever have in the past.

Raup, Christina. 2010. "The Time Has Come: A Catholic Doctor's Proposals to End the Battle over Birth Control (1963), by John Rock | the Embryo Project Encyclopedia." Embryo.asu.edu. June 10, 2010. https://embryo.asu.edu/pages/time-has-come-catholic-doctors-proposals-end-battle-over-birth-control-1963-john-rock.

This website helped me write about the creation of the pill and the Catholic church's view on the topic.

Roberts, Dorothy. 2005. "Forum: Black Women and the Pill." Guttmacher Institute. February 9, 2005. https://www.guttmacher.org/journals/psrh/2000/03/forum-black-women-and-pill.

This website gave me information on Black people's opinion on the birth control pill and the reasons why they were skeptical of it.

Robinson, Jovanna. 2017. "TRUMP ADMINISTRATION TAKES DIRECT AIM at BIRTH CONTROL COVERAGE for 62 MILLION WOMEN." Plannedparenthood.org. National - PPFA. October 6, 2017. https://www.plannedparenthood.org/about-us/newsroom/press-releases/trump-administration-takes-direct-aim-at-birth-control-coverage-for-62-million-women-2.

This website helped me describe a more recent controversy on the pill.

Schaeffer, Katherine. 2022. "10 Facts about Today's College Graduates." Pew Research Center. April 12, 2022. https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/04/12/10-facts-about-todays-college-graduates/.

This website included information that I used to show how American women have been getting more educated over the years.

Schweizer, Valerie, and Karen Guzzo. 2020. "Distributions of Age at First Birth, 1960-2018." Bowling Green State University. 2020. https://www.bgsu.edu/ncfmr/resources/data/family-profiles/schweizer-guzzo-distribution-age-first-birth-fp-20-11.html.

I used this website to show how the age in which women have their first child has been increasing.

Snyder, Thomas D. 1993. "120 Years of American Education: A Statistical Portrait." https://nces.ed.gov/pubs93/93442.pdf.

This website helped me describe the increase in American women's education rates over time.

Solinger, Rickie. 2007. *Pregnancy and Power : A Short History of Reproductive Politics in America*. New York ; London: New York University Press.

I used this book to show the use of the birth control pill in Black communities and their opinions on it.

Sreenivas, Shishira. 2022. “Health Disparities and Bias in Contraception Access and Care.” WebMD. June 13, 2022. https://www.webmd.com/sex/birth-control/contraception-access-care-disparities-bias?scrlybrkr=a68a93a4.

I used this website to write about the reasons why birth control is still not available to all American women.

“The Affordable Care Act’s Birth Control Benefit: Too Important to Lose.” 2018. National Women’s Law Center. June 25, 2018. https://nwlc.org/resource/the-affordable-care-acts-birth-control-benefit-too-important-to-lose/.

This website gave me information about how the Affordable Care Act was changed due to the recent lawsuits that affected the birth control pill’s coverage.

Zorea, Aharon W. 2012. *Birth Control*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Greenwood.

This book helped me describe the impacts on American education, economics, and culture from the birth control pill.