

When we began our project for National History Day, the intersection between the feminist movement of the 1960s-70s and the topic of birth control immediately drew our attention. Inspired by the lasting impact of the Pill on women's then-transforming roles in society, we sought to understand the way in which the Pill shaped societal and familial norms in the mid-20th century. Our interest deepened as we began to research the key figures, objectives, and motivations behind the creation of the oral contraceptive. We aimed to focus on the attitudes, perspectives, and environment that shifted in the mid-1900s due to the development of the Pill and its linkage to the feminist movement.

We began our research by reading books about the women's health movement and the development of the Pill to gain background information about our topic. Then, we began to search through databases and archives for primary sources recorded throughout the 1900s. Part of our research centered on the work of Margaret Sanger, a leader and activist who pioneered the early development of the oral contraceptive. We found many of Sanger's interviews, papers, and speeches, which helped us understand the barriers that Sanger and other birth control advocates faced from their perspectives. We also read several newspapers which presented information about the social climate of the 20th century, allowing us to analyze changes and evolution in the social environment more closely. After reading about feminist efforts in support of the Pill, we were eager to learn more about the counterarguments and opposition to the birth control movement. For an anti-birth control perspective, we decided to interview Jim Sedlak, the vice-president of a pro-life organization called American Life League.

We chose to create a website since many of our sources were photos and videos. We believed it was the best way to organize our information in a clear and concise format. Creating a

website allowed us to use font, color, and other features to present a visually engaging project. We first planned the layout of our website and determined how the viewer would navigate the site. Then, we added our student-composed words, quotes, and selected media into the website. Our last step was to tweak the design of the site to improve its cohesion and appearance.

Our project is incredibly relevant to this year's topic, Breaking Barriers. Activists and supporters of the birth control movement faced many obstacles in their pursuit of a safe, accessible, hormonal contraceptive for all women. Critics argued that usage of the oral contraceptive would lead to more "promiscuity" in women, while many religious leaders proclaimed all forms of contraception to be against God's will. Despite the adversity that feminists and activists faced, they managed to overcome social, legal, scientific, and religious barriers in order to make the Pill accessible to women. The Pill enabled women to easily control the size of their family and provided them increased opportunity to join the workforce, thereby ushering in a new era of liberation and economic freedom for American women.