

A Life-Changing Technology Turns 50

(NAPSA)—This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Pill—an innovation that’s universally recognized by a name so simple, but which has created a cultural shift that’s anything but that. The introduction of the first birth control pill in the United States was a landmark for women’s independence and empowerment—allowing them to make real choices in their lives regarding the pursuit of education, career and family.

However, you needn’t be a woman or have ever taken the Pill to have been affected by the changes it created across America. During a 30-year span (from 1970 to 2000), the number of graduating college women has more than doubled, according to the CDC’s National Center for Health Statistics. According to The Shriver Report, women today also represent half of all U.S. workers and are primary or co-breadwinners in nearly two out of three American households.

“1960 marked a liberating milestone for women because they were at last able to separate sexuality from reproduction,” said Gloria Steinem, renowned American feminist and journalist. “For the first time, women had access to an effective and discreet form of contraception and control over their reproductive health.”

Steinem recently joined other women’s empowerment figures of the past five decades for a roundtable discussion on what this landmark means to them. Participants included two-time Academy Award-winning actress Hilary Swank; historian and author of the newly published book “America and the Pill,” Elaine Tyler May; founder and owner of Dermalogica, Jane Wurwand; and professor and leading ob-gyn, Dr. Diana Ramos.

Bayer HealthCare Pharmaceuticals supported the roundtable discussion as part of a multifaceted celebration of empowerment and



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innovation. The program enables women everywhere to take part in a national dialogue by visiting the 50th Anniversary Facebook page at www.fiftyyearsofthepill.com. This page also features information on the remarkable history of the Pill in America, as well as footage from the roundtable discussion.

Make Your Mark

A cornerstone of the campaign is the “Make Your Mark” contest, an online initiative that encourages women to achieve their goals and provides three lucky entrants with a chance to win a \$5,000 grant. These women and others will also have the opportunity to be photographed by legendary photographer Annie Leibovitz in an online photo collection to be unveiled later this year. Visit the 50th Anniversary Facebook page to learn more about the contest.

Step Up

Visitors to the site can also give other women the chance to make their mark through the 50th Anniversary Pledge of Empowerment. For each pledge received up to 50,000, Bayer will donate \$1 to Step Up Women’s Network, a national, nonprofit membership organization dedicated to connecting and advancing young women. For information on the Step Up Women’s Network, visit www.suwn.org.



Note to Editors: This story is good to run all year, but after June 28, please remove the Make Your Mark paragraph which mentions a dated contest.