



Attitudes of women, media and society towards contraception : are we making progress ?

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despite the many biologic problems in the understanding of human reproduction

it seems reasonable to assert that

progress in the control of fertility could have been more rapid than it actually has been

social factors

rather than an absence of scientific knowledge

proved the greatest barrier

contraceptive use continues to increase

At the world level 63 per cent of women of reproductive age

who are married or in union are currently using

a contraceptive method for a total of 716 million worldwide

World Contraceptive Use 2007

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs , Population Division

In developed countries contraceptive prevalence has been high for many decades and its level has changed little since 1997

In the less developed regions contraceptive prevalence has increased substantially in the past decade





In the majority of the less developed regions

contraceptive prevalence has reached levels of **at least 60 per cent**

The major exceptions are Sub-Saharan Africa, Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia
where the levels of contraceptive prevalence are **still below 30 per cent**

As a region, sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest level of contraceptive prevalence,
with only 22 per cent of women of reproductive age who are married or in union
using contraception

WHO USES CONTRACEPTIVES ?

USA



- Overall, **62%** of the 62 million women aged 15–44 are currently using one
- **31%** of the 62 million women do not need a method because they are infertile; are pregnant, postpartum or trying to become pregnant; have never had intercourse; or are not sexually active

Thus only **7%** of women aged 15–44 at risk of unwanted pregnancy
are not using contraceptives

Between 1995 and 2002

condom

from **20% to 18%** among all women

from **30% to 23%** among never-married women

pill

the proportion of use increased slightly from 27% to 31%

female sterilization

27% in 2002 compared with 28% in 1988 and 1995

diaphragm

the proportion of all users declined from 6% in 1988 to 2% in 1995, and to **nearly zero by 2002**

New Analysis Confirms Abstinence-Only Programs Waste Tax Dollars

despite the fact that the bulk of the recent decline in U.S. teen pregnancy rates

is the result of improved contraceptive use

the Bush administration and some members of Congress

want to increase funding for **abstinence-only-until-marriage programs**

There is no evidence base to justify current policies

let alone the well over \$1 billion that the federal government has poured into

ineffective abstinence-only programs over the last decade

*Heather Boonstra, Guttmacher Institute
May 2007*

Birth regulation in Europe: Completing the contraceptive revolution

The transition to the dominant use of modern contraceptives by the majority of populations

took place in Northern and Western Europe during the 1960s and 1970s

In Southern Europe, this occurred mostly during the 1980s and 1990s and is still ongoing in the 2000s

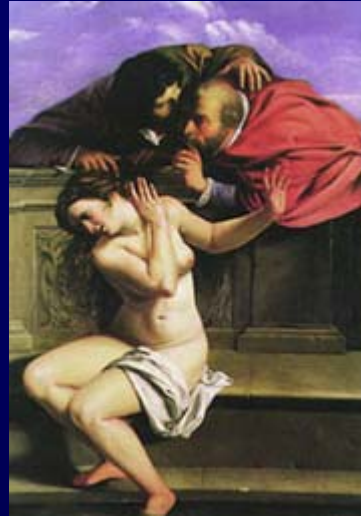


Contraceptive use and use of modern methods, by regions in Europe, as reported in 1998 and 2005, reflecting years prior to these dates

| Region | Year reported | Percentage of couples using any method | Percentage of couples using modern method | Percentage of users employing modern methods |
|-----------------------------|---------------|--|---|--|
| Eastern Europe ^a | 1998 | 69 | 31 | 44 |
| | 2005 | 62 | 36 | 58 |
| Northern Europe | 1998 | 78 | 77 | 98 |
| | 2005 | 79 | 75 | 95 |
| Southern Europe | 1998 | 69 | 31 | 46 |
| | 2005 | 69 | 49 | 71 |
| Western Europe | 1998 | 75 | 71 | 94 |
| | 2005 | 74 | 70 | 95 |

Sources: United Nations 2001, 2006.

Note: ^aThe formerly state-socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe.



In the second half of the 20th century, several European countries had legal restrictions on the use of contraceptive methods reflecting the position and influence of religious institutions, notably Christian churches



In 1930 in the encyclical *Casti connubii* (Chaste Marriage) the Vatican began down the same road of theologic accommodation to the need for contraception

In a contrived and convoluted way the church began to approve
the rhythm method of family planning

CASTI CONNUBII

ENCYCLICAL OF POPE PIUS XI ON CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE, 1930



The Vatican Council in 1962 was a major milestone in Catholic theology

The majority of Catholics and practically all theologians of stature

began to develop an ethical system that embraced

so-called artificial contraception

In 1963 Pope Paul VI set up a Pontifical Commission to discuss the matter

Pope Paul was obsessed with the prestige of his office and in the end

he rejected the majority findings of his own commission

and endorsed a minority report by Cardinal Ottaviani, Fr. John Ford, and others

Ford was concerned that the Vatican could not change on birth control

because, in his words, of

"the millions we have sent to hell if these norms were not valid "

After *Humane vitae* the percentage of American Catholics attending mass on a weekly basis **dropped from 71% to 50%**

By the 1970s the marital fertility rate for Catholic women in the United States was

2.27 almost identical to the 2.17 for non-Catholics



Westoff CF, Jones EF: The secularization of US Catholic birth control practices. Fam Plann Perspect, 1977

Family planning became a common practice regardless of religion, and today the percentage of Catholic women having abortions in the United States is slightly higher than the percentage of non-Catholic women

in the path of the couple there can be grave circumstances which make it prudent to delay the birth of children or even suspend it



The methods of observation, which allow the couple to determine the periods of fertility allow them to administer all that the Creator has widely inscribed in human nature without disturbing the integral meaning of sexual donation

We can ask ourselves, how is it possible that today the world, and **also many of the faithful**, find so much difficulty in understanding the message of the Church, which illustrates and defends the beauty of conjugal love in its natural manifestation?

the appearance of the new contraceptives introduced a fundamental change in the behaviour of couples

The key feature of modern contraceptives is not that they are more effective

- traditional methods could be used quite effectively by motivated couples -

but that they are under the sole control of women

A woman using the pill or an IUD is in a permanently infertile state

- until she stops using the method -

and if she wishes to conceive she has to decide to end this situation

Ambivalence towards pregnancy is common and is associated with use of
less effective contraceptive methods

- ✓ almost one third of women expressed ambivalence about their intentions to become pregnant
- ✓ being **older than 30, being nonwhite and having a personal or religious objection to abortion** were significantly associated with ambivalence towards pregnancy
- ✓ compared with women who stated they were trying to avoid pregnancy, **women who expressed ambivalence** were significantly less likely to have used a barrier or hormonal form of contraception at last intercourse and **more likely to use the natural family planning or withdrawal**

*Prevalence and correlates of ambivalence towards pregnancy among nonpregnant women.
Contraception 2007*

Contraceptive attitudes and contraceptive failure among women requesting induced abortion in Denmark

Lack of contraceptive knowledge and experience of contraceptive problems were associated with the choice of abortion

Immigrant women

seem to have more difficulties in using contraception than Danish-born women



there is a need for culturally sensitive information campaigns targeting this heterogonous group of women

Does ambivalence about becoming pregnant explain social class differentials in use of contraception?

Manual social class background

has consistently been associated with markers of poorer sexual health

'Not having planned for sex' was the most commonly cited reason for non-use (47% of men and 40% of women)

'Not caring if pregnancy occurred' was cited by 11% of women and 12% of men

'took a chance' was cited by 8% of both men and women

semi and unskilled manual women more likely to report that sex was unplanned or that they 'took a chance'

Attitudes towards contraception in three different populations

Muslim women living in Germany, Muslim women living in Greece, Christian Orthodox women living in Greece

- the use of contraceptive pills was more frequent among Muslims from Germany and Christians from Greece
- the use of condoms was more frequent among Christians from Greece
- the use of IUDs was more frequent among Muslims from Germany and Greece

there are behavioral differences between race/ethnic groups and minorities

regarding contraceptive practices

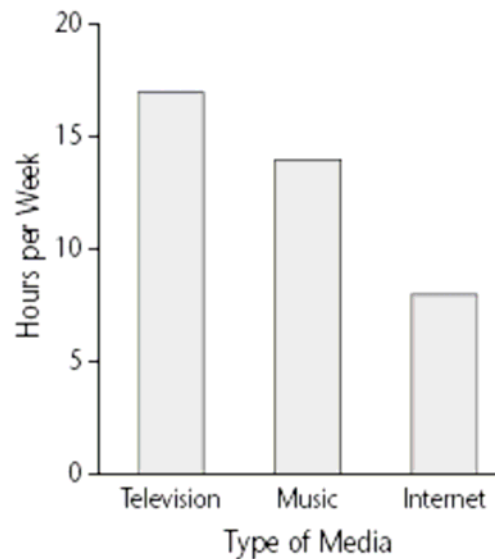
probably due to different cultural, socioeconomic and educational factors



Research has demonstrated that even when a young woman's intention to avoid pregnancy
is unequivocal
her attitude toward contraception **has to be absolutely positive** if she is not to conceive

*Do adolescents want babies? the relationship between attitudes and behavior,
Journal of Research on Adolescents, 1993*

Figure 1
Time US Adolescents Spend
Using Media, per Week,
by Type of Media



Source: American Academy of Pediatrics, 2001

According to the AAP adolescents spend more than 40 hours
each week using the three leading forms of media
among this age group

television music and the Internet

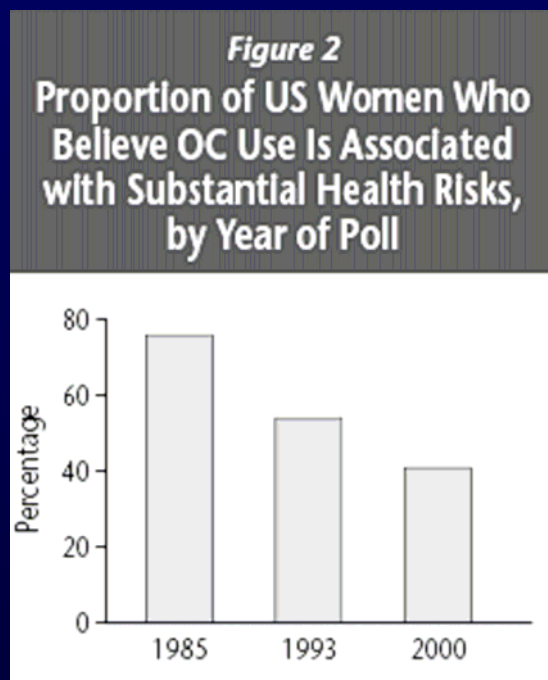
American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Public Education.
Sexuality, contraception, and the media .
Pediatrics 2001

Negative media reporting contributes to patient misperceptions and contraceptive discontinuation



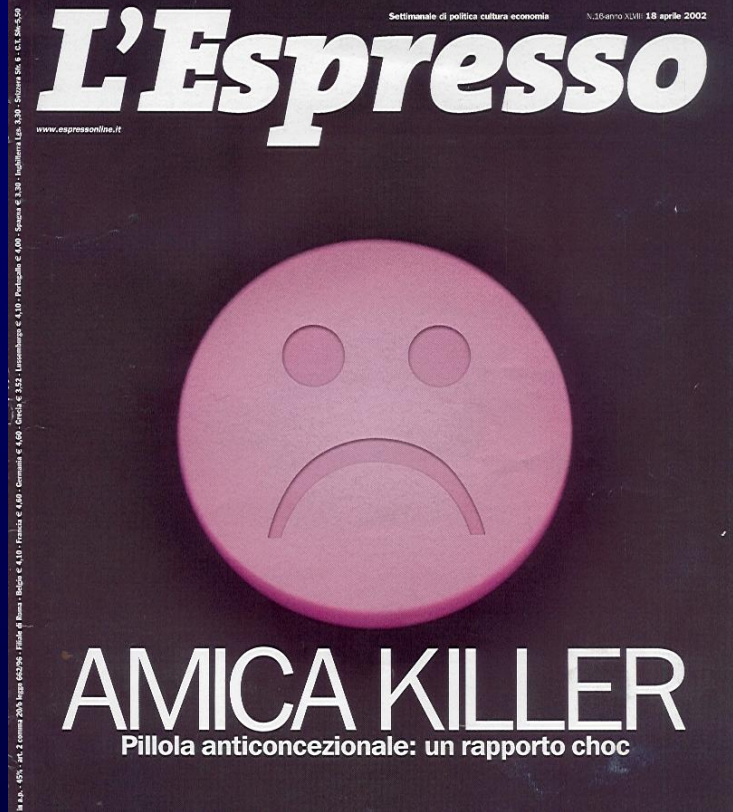
An analysis of use of OCs and the IUD between 1970 and 1975 documented increased rates of stopping OCs after unfavorable news stories about the methods appeared in print and on television

In 2000 the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) conducted the third in a series of polls regarding US women's attitudes toward oral contraception



In the 2000 survey, 41% of women associated substantial risk with OC use

In ACOG's 1985 poll, more than three-quarters of women believed pill use carried "substantial health risks"



April 2002

Pill made me blind

Doctors failed to spot rare condition that wrecked young woman's sight



BY JANE WILSON

It was a routine check-up at the local GP's surgery. I was 28, healthy and happy. The doctor was friendly and we chatted for a few minutes. He asked me how I was getting on with my job and my family. I told him everything was fine. He gave me a prescription for some painkillers and a box of tissues. I thanked him and went home. I didn't think anything of it. I was just a young woman with a headache.

I was wrong.

It was a few days later that I noticed my vision was starting to blur. I thought it was just tired eyes. I rubbed them and the blurring went away. But it came back a few days later. This time it was worse. I couldn't see the faces of my friends and family. I was told I had a rare condition called acute angle-closure glaucoma. It was a medical emergency. I had to have surgery immediately. My vision was almost completely lost. I was blind for several days. It was a terrifying experience. I was told that if I had not gone to the doctor, I could have lost my sight permanently. I was lucky. I was told that I had a rare condition called acute angle-closure glaucoma. It was a medical emergency. I had to have surgery immediately. My vision was almost completely lost. I was blind for several days. It was a terrifying experience. I was told that if I had not gone to the doctor, I could have lost my sight permanently.

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Feel good about your legs

in 1995 the UK's drug regulatory agency warned
patients about venous thromboembolism risks with OCs containing desogestrel or gestodene

the warning scared women

and caused an increase in unintended pregnancy and abortion

*Update: The Media and Contraception.
The Contraception Report AUGUST 2001*

The percentage of women using a contraceptive method
especially a medical contraception (pill or IUD) has increased in France since 1994

Despite this high prevalence of medical contraceptive use

unplanned pregnancies remain frequent

Beyond the lack of information

which may explain part of the so-called 'misuse' of contraception

methods which are better suited to women's sexual and social lifestyle could help
reduce some of these contraceptive failures due to misuse and relational issues

The job of family planning will never be finished

MOTHERS!

Can you afford to have a large family?
Do you want any more children?
If not, why do you have them?
DO NOT KILL, DO NOT TAKE LIFE, BUT PREVENT
Safe, Harmless Information can be obtained of trained
Nurses at

46 AMBOY STREET
NEAR PITKIN AVE. — BROOKLYN.

Tell Your Friends and Neighbors. All Mothers Welcome
A registration fee of 10 cents entitles any mother to this information.

מומערס!

זײַם אײער פערמעגליך צו האבען א גרויסע פאמיליע?
וױלם אײער האבען נאך קינדער?
אײב ניש. ווארום האט אײער זײ?
סעדרערם ניש. נעהמט ניש קײן לעפען. נור פעררום זיך.
דערס. אנטשוליס אנטשוליס קענט אײער בעקומען פון טראגנע נױסעס און

46 אמבאױ סטריט נייער פיסקאן עוועניו **ברוקלין**

מאמע דאס בעקאנט צו אײערע פריינד און שטעטל. זענעט מיטן און ווילקאמען
פיר 10 סענט אײנשױבענדיק זײנס אײער בעקומענס צו דײקע אנטשוליסאן.

MADRI!

Potete permettervi il lusso d'aver altri bambini?
Ne volete ancora?
Se non ne volete piu', perche' continuate a metterli
al mondo?

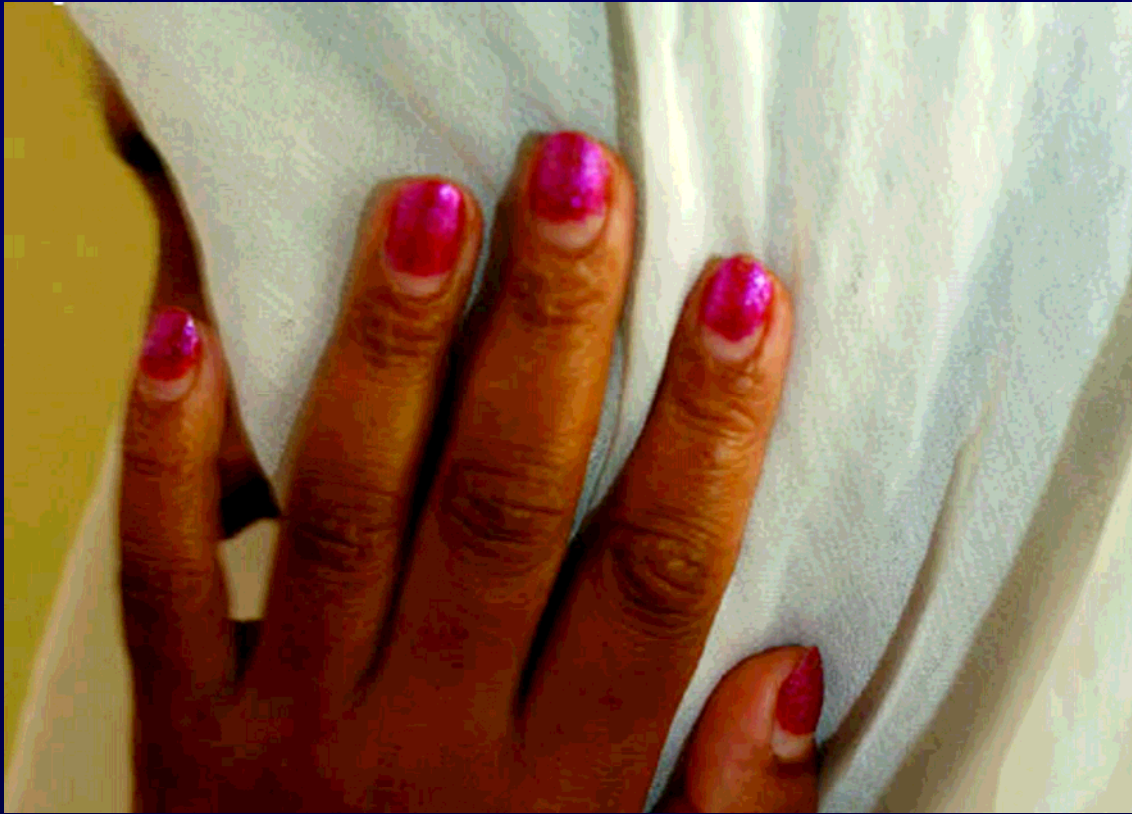
NON UCCIDETE MA PREVENITE!

Informazioni sicure ed innocue saranno fornite da infermiere autorizzate a
46 AMBOY STREET Near Pitkin Ave. Brooklyn
a cominciare dal 12 Ottobre. Avvertite le vostre amiche e vicine.
Tutte le madri sono ben accette. La tassa d'iscrizione di 10 cents da diritto
a qualunque madre di ricevere consigli ed informazioni gratis.

Margaret H. Sanger

SOPHIA SMITH COLLECTION, SMITH COLLEGE

America's first birth control clinic run by Margaret Sanger
in Brownsville, Brooklyn, New York, in 1916



Thank you