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Advertisement

Since 1960, hormone levels

Pumping iron has replaced flower power. Pinstripes have replaced paisley. And Wall Street has replaced Woodstock.

But of all the major changes that have taken place since the 60's, one is hardly visible at all: the change that has taken place in the Pill.

In 1960, the Pill contained as much as 150 mcgs. of the hormone estrogen. Today, it's down to 35 mcgs. or less. That's a fraction of the original dosage.

Yet, today's Pill is as effective as yesterday's. In fact, it's still the most effective birth control available other than sterilization.

But is the Pill right for you? You should see your doctor to help you answer that. If the answer is yes, then the ultimate decision is yours. And it's important that you learn all you can about oral contraceptives.

First and foremost, what are the risks? Does the Pill cause cancer? Will it make you less fertile? Do you need to take a rest from it? These are just a few questions that have surrounded the Pill since 1960. Questions which must be addressed by you and your physician.

What about the Pill and breast cancer? Although there are conflicting reports concerning this issue, the Centers for Disease Control reported that women who took the Pill, even for 15 years, ran no higher risk of breast cancer than women who didn't. The CDC also reported that ovarian and uterine cancer are substantially less common among women who use oral contraceptives.

The Pill has been shown to have other health benefits as well. Pill users are less likely to develop pelvic inflammatory disease (tubal infections), benign breast disease and iron deficiency anemia, not to mention menstrual cramps.

But if the Pill is so effective at preventing pregnancy, can it later prevent you from having a baby when you're ready to have one? Studies

in the Pill have

indicate that if you were fertile before you took the Pill, taking it will not affect your ability to have children later. Some women may experience a short period of readjustment after discontinuing the Pill. Even so, most women usually become pregnant soon.

One piece of advice you may have heard if you're on the Pill is that you should take an occasional rest from it. Yet there's no medical basis for this advice. Furthermore, a rest could turn out to be anything but restful, since switching to a less effective form of birth control increases your chances for unplanned pregnancy.

Now that you know what the risks aren't, you should know what the risks are. For example, if you are taking the Pill, you should not smoke. Especially if you are over 35. Cigarette smoking is known to increase the risk of serious and possibly life-threatening adverse effects on the heart and blood vessels from Pill use. What's more, women with certain conditions or medical histories should not use the Pill.

Even if you're already on the Pill, you should see your doctor at least once a year. And read the patient information regularly.

Taking the Pill is easy. Deciding whether or not to take it isn't. That's why it's so important for you to make an informed decision. Continue reading everything you can about birth control methods. Seek out reliable sources. Talk to your doctor.

You've already taken a step in the

dropped considerably.

right direction. Just think, since you began reading this, there's a good chance your knowledge level about the Pill has increased. Considerably.



Andy Manhart/Daily Nebraskan

Program allows students to major in film studies

By Mark Lage
Staff Reporter

Despite having no department and no specific major, film studies and film production classes are popular at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, June Levine said, a film studies professor in the English department.

"It's the art of our time, and most students enjoy film classes very much," Levine said.

Specific film study goes no higher than a minor, but students can, through the Integrated Studies Program, create their own 50-hour film major. This involves just about everything on the minor list, Levine said.

For there to be a specific film major, there would have to be a separate film department, and in this "money has always been the curtailment factor," Levine said. "There is a genuine student interest."

The film courses at UNL are housed in the art and English departments. In the art department are the film production courses, taught by Wheeler Dixon, associate professor of English and art and head of the film department, while the English department has film studies and screenwriting courses, taught by Professors Dixon, Levine, and Oyekan Owomoyela.

However, Levine said, the Integrated Studies film major programs are not just film courses, but are in large part made up of sufficiently related courses, from a variety of other departments. These include theatre technical courses, video production classes from the journalism department, aesthetics courses from philosophy, still photography courses from history, history of media courses from English and journalism, and recording studio courses from music.

Someone interested in becoming a film student ought to first of all "love movies," Levine said. But, she added, they must be open to a wider diversity than just Hollywood film of the Eighties, as they will be taught a broad, multi-genre program, including silent, foreign and documentary film, as well as contemporary fictional

film. A student must also be able to make a serious time commitment to film study.

"It's more time-consuming than most students realize," she said.

After graduation from UNL, most film students follow one of two routes. Some go on to graduate school at places like University of California at Los Angeles, University of Southern California, New York University, Columbia University, University of Iowa and University of Texas at Austin, where they specify in either film production or film studies. Other students attempt to go straight to the industry, into either television production or independent film production.

The variety of film courses obviously leads to a variety of different focuses, but Levine said that she has her own general focus.

"I stress how film affects us and our responses, emotions, and ideas," she said. She asks her students "what it is in films, in their structure and their language, that manipulates us into our particular responses."

Levine said that she doesn't know enough about other nearby universities' film programs to make comparisons, but she did classify UNL's program as "very small."

"The bulk of the teaching is done by two people — Levine and Dixon," she said.

But, given the small financial commitment to the program, she said that the students have done well. The program has attracted some excellent students, as well as sending a number of students to first-rate graduate schools, or straight into the industry.

A big plus for UNL film students is what Levine called the "wonderful facility" at Sheldon.

"Sheldon is simply one of the best art-movie houses in the country," Levine said. "People from all over the country know about it."

She also praised its diversity, as well as its location on the cutting edge of film.

"Sheldon is a great facility not only for the film students, but for the entire student body."