In 1961, ‘the pill’ was approved for use by married women in Australia. Before then its development had been shrouded in secrecy because US laws prohibited the dissemination of information about contraceptives. Despite dire predictions from opponents, uptake was rapid and within a few years many women were taking advantage of this new opportunity to manage their fertility. During the 1960s, sex outside marriage became more acceptable, sexual issues were debated in public, and sexuality could be portrayed openly in print and on screens. We now take for granted many of the changes that took place at this time. To mark 50 years since the introduction of the pill we will reflect on the promise of the sexual revolution, the reality of what has been delivered for young women today, and our hopes for the future.

Nelly Thomas
Nelly Thomas is one of Australia’s most natural and intelligent feminist comedians and is a highly sought-after, engaging, funny and thought-provoking speaker and MC. In addition to her regular comedy work, she is well-known as the creator and director of the highly acclaimed ‘No Means No Show’ and the sexual health and ethics DVD The Talk. She is currently writing her first book with Random House.

“Really very funny. “ ★★★★
Helen Razer, The Age Newspaper

“Astringent, intelligent … very good.”
Metro Newspaper, Edinburgh Fringe Festival

Leslie Cannold
Dr Leslie Cannold is an award-winning author and columnist, as well as a qualified ethicist and researcher. She has been noted as one of Australia’s top 20 public intellectuals and in 2011 was honoured as Australian Humanist of the Year. She is the author of ‘The Abortion Myth: feminism, morality at the hard choices women make’ (UPNE, 2000) and ‘What, No Baby: why women are losing the freedom to mother and how they can get it back’ (FACP 2005). Her latest work is an historical novel, ‘The Book of Rachael’, published this year by Text.

Louise Keogh
Dr Louise Keogh is a Senior Lecturer at the Centre for Women’s Health, Gender & Society in the Melbourne School of Population Health at The University of Melbourne. Her research program focuses on issues in sexual health and the choices faced by people with a family history of cancer, through the use of qualitative research methods in public health. She promotes the role of sociology in improving health by developing and teaching postgraduate courses in research methods and social theory. She also has a book manuscript desperately in need of a publisher, ‘The Incomplete Revolution: having sex and managing fertility post-pill’.

Mary Crooks
Mary, Executive Director of the Victorian Women’s Trust, has had a varied career in tertiary teaching, research, advocacy and public policy. She has been the Executive Director of the Victorian Women’s Trust for the past ten years. In this role, she has helped guide the Trust’s annual grants program to make real and lasting differences for women. Mary is a passionate advocate on a range of issues from law reform to ethical environmental management, and in 2009 published ‘A Gender Lens for Inclusive Philanthropy’.