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## Old? Sez you: Baby boomers refuse to go away quietly

By [Lauren Beckham Falcone](#)

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They once sang "hope I die before I get old." Now they're pushing 60, and baby boomers - the generation that helped create youth culture 50 years ago - aren't ready to give up the stage.

"It's been about us for the longest time," said Cathy Hamilton, director of BoomerGirl.com. "Then we hit a certain age and well, that youth-obsessed market that we created no longer is into us, so to speak, so we're changing things again."

Even the Internet, once the exclusive playground of teenagers and young adults, is the latest to make way for boomers - Americans born between 1946 and 1963, the first of whom turned 60 last year.

BoomerGirl.com, launched Jan 1., is a Web site dedicated to midlife women with information about health, lifestyle, travel and fashion.

Local entrepreneur and Monster.com founder Jeff Taylor left the job-hunting Web site in 2005 to launch eons.com, which caters to the 50-plus set, and is planning to launch a magazine targeting the same audience.

Elayne Rapping, media critic, author, professor at the University of Buffalo and boomer, said the group still has a stronghold over popular thinking because they are a "huge, cohesive generation."

"Contrary to what younger generations think - and I teach them, so I know - we're not old fogies whose generation is dead," she said. "People in positions of power stay there for a long time. Fifty isn't old anymore. Hillary (Clinton) isn't old. Boomers are going to be around for a long time, running the country, running the media."

Not convinced? Well, here's how boomers are turning up the volume on the competition:

### ""The OC" vs. The Real Housewives of Orange County"

Fox canceled the former, a teen drama set in Ocean County, Calif., after four seasons. The latter? Bravo has a hit with its reality show about 40- and 50-somethings swapping secrets, scandals and stilettos.

### Tyra Banks vs. Rosie O'Donnell

Sure, the 33-year-old Banks has both a talk show ("Tyra") and a reality show ("America's Next Top Model," which kicks off its eighth season Feb. 28). "Top Model's" last season premier delivered its best ratings ever, but "Tyra" pulls in a modest amount of viewers. Meanwhile, 44-year-old O'Donnell's rants have sent the ratings of "The View" through the roof, with more viewers this season than in its 10-year history.

### "Sorority Life" vs. "Campus Ladies"

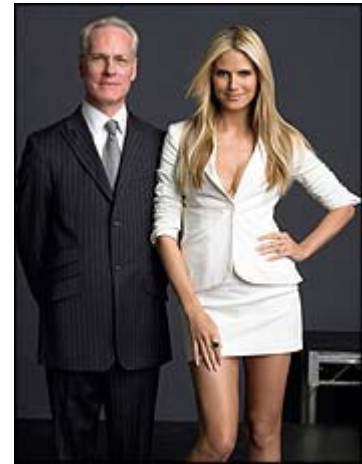
MTV canceled its reality show featuring beer-guzzling pledges in 2003. But Oxygen has a sleeper hit with "Campus Ladies," a farce about two 50-somethings who go back to college.



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The 33-year-old Heidi Klum might be the beauty on "Project Runway," but gray-haired gentleman Gunn, 53, is the breakout star.

### “Entertainment Tonight” vs. “Chronicle”

Step off Maria Menounos. WCVB's 25-year-old news magazine, co-anchored by Mary Richardson, skewers the youth-obsessed “ET” in Boston ratings during that 7:30 p.m. time slot.

### Lindsay Lohan vs. Meryl Streep

Hollywood's next big thing, all of 20, has been in and out of rehab. The 58-year-old Streep has proved style and seniority aren't mutually exclusive, especially with her Oscar-nominated turn in “The Devil Wears Prada.”

### Heidi Klum vs. Tim Gunn

The 33-year-old model might be the beauty on “Project Runway,” but gray-haired gentleman Gunn, 53, is the breakout star. Which do you hear more often, after all: Gunn's “make it work!” or Klum's “auf wiedersehen”?

### Barack Obama vs. Hillary Clinton

The two Democratic presidential contenders are speaking from opposite sides of the generation gap. The 45-year-old freshman senator from Illinois wrote in his book “The Audacity of Hope” that the boomer generation is “rooted in old grudges and revenge plots hatched on a handful of college campuses long ago.” Ouch! But Washington, where the average age of a senator is 61, doesn't like inexperience - which just might help the 59-year-old Clinton.

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