

PINK

- for all -



WE MAKE PEOPLE BETTER
THE VARSITY PROJECT
A COMMUNICATION CONSULTANCY

PINK
2DAY


The Varsity Project made the decision to brand our website PINK. It goes against the norm, and that's the point--to challenge what has been normalized, ask questions, and begin conversations that help us progress. The firm develops simple solutions to solve big problems. We specialize in working with high-stakes, high-risk industries, including aviation, healthcare, education, construction, banking, tech firms, and startups. Our goal is to improve performance, mitigate risk, and empower leaders.

A RECENT HISTORY
OF PINK from the
1700s to TODAY

HOW WE CAME TO LOVE AND HATE PINK

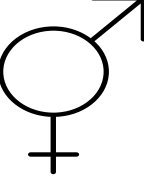
"Pink is the most divisive color in American society."

-Valerie Steele-

18th Century —  **LOVE FOR PINK**

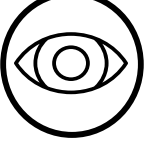
- ✓ Considered exclusive because of the expense, South American dye is used to color fabrics worn by French aristocracy.

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1840s —  **PINK BECOMES GENDERD**


- ✓ French society decides to gender-type color.
- ✓ Pink is designated for girls, blue is for boys.

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1868 —  **AMERICANS SEE PINK**


- ✓ Post-Civil War America (1865) first comes to learn of color's gender designations with the publication of Luisa May Alcott's book, *Little Women*. Alcott writes, "Amy put a blue ribbon on the boy and a pink on the girl. French fashion, so you can always tell."

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1927 —  **PINK TURNS \$\$\$CONFUSED\$\$\$**


- ✓ American department stores begin to monetize the gender-typing of clothing by color coding pink and blue.
- ✓ There is confusion. A 1927 TIME magazine reports on the color code confusion. Marshall Fields and Filene's sell pink for boys and blue for girls. Macy's, Wanamaker's, and Bullock's sell pink for girls and blue for boys.

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1928 —  **BUBBLE GUM IS PINK**

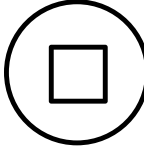
- ✓ Walter Diemer invented, what came to be known as, Dubble Bubble. A red dye, diluted to pink is what Diemer had on hand, and the color pink stayed! Pink bubble gum and the soon to be crafted toys, dresses, and dolls in pink all contribute to the notion of societal notions of pink as a not-so-serious, playful color.

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1950s —  **IT'S FEM, but then there's MISCHIEF**


- ✓ Pink becomes the color of sugar, and spice, and everything nice. It is representative of the Leave it to Beaver, "golly gee" culture where women are expected to care for the home, remain subservient to men, and act in the stereotype of femininity.
- ✓ Kay Thompson publishes *ELOISE* (1950) and gives pink a pop of punk, and a sprinkling of sass! Illustrator, Hilary Knight says about the pinking of *ELOISE*, "the concept was never planned."

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1960s —  **REVOLT AGAINST PINK**

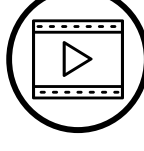
- ✓ Feminists challenge pink's oppressive stereotype, and America's fanciful fascination with pink wanes.

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1982 —  **A PINK RIBBON IS BORN**

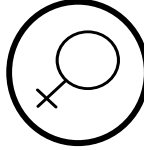
- ✓ The Susan G. Komen for the Cure first issues the pink ribbon as an awareness campaign, and to fund raise for breast cancer research. The silliness of pink suddenly becomes more serious.

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Early 2000s —  **FILM RECLAIMS PINK AS BADASS**

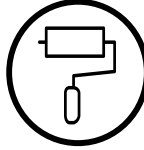
- ✓ *Legally Blond* (2001), and *Mean Girls* (2004) turn pink on its heels. The punch comedy satires embolden pink in a display of power.

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2016 —  **WEAR MY PINK PUSSYHAT**


- ✓ The Pussyhat Project is a protest of the rhetoric used against women and minorities in the 2016 US state and Federal election cycle. Millions show up in their hand knitted Pussyhats to more than 600 rallies organized worldwide. This is the power of pink!

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2017 —  **PAINT THE TOWN PINK**

- ✓ Millennial pink becomes color of the year. The Millennial Generation rejects pink's feminine stereotype and celebrates its versatility--the color is considered cool and androgynous.

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???? —  **WHAT'S PINK NOW?**

- ✓ Our socially constructed worlds can be deconstructed. It's up to all of us. We shape the color of our lives. Go out there, and PINK!

HOW DO YOU PINK?



Let's start a conversation, and get to work!

www.TheVarsityProject.com

Looking for more?

Check out FIT's online exhibit, *Pink: The History of a Punk, Pretty, Powerful Color*
An associated book authored by Valerie Steele can be found under the exhibit's name.