

December-18



Dear Club Members,

Rather than looking at a specific period in history this month we're taking an long-term over view of one of the most divisive of colours. . .

The link between femininity and pink seems to be so hard wired in our brain, but the link is comparatively modern. Even as recently as 1893 an article in The New York Times stated that "you should always give pink to a boy and blue to a girl". Even in 1918 a trade publication reconfirmed this "rule" because pink was "the more decided and stronger colour". Blue was considered "delicate and dainty" Quite why the colours swapped is unclear, but it took until the 1940's before pink really started to become a colour that was strongly associated with girls. Historically many men would have ended up wearing pink. Red dyes tend to fade over time, and the highly masculine red coated soldier would have often ended up wearing a pink jacket by the end of a long military campaign. Blue meanwhile was the colour associated with the Virgin Mary, that shining example of femininity. However that didn't mean that women never wore pink. Madame due Pompadour, the mistress of King Louis XV of France loved pink. We featured the colours of the Sèvres Pottery in the club in February 2017.

Pink wasn't used as a colour description until the late seventeenth century, until then it refers to a type of pigment, in the same way as some pigments are described as being a lake, the most commonly known being crimson lake. Pink pigments (which weren't necessarily pink) were made by binding an organic substance to an inorganic substance like chalk to make the colour easier to use. The plant matter was usually from the broom shrub, or buckthorn berries, and like most plants, the colour they yield is yellow, so the most common colour was in fact a Yellow Pinke called Still de Grain. Pinkes could also be green or brown as well as rose. Pink as a colour name is also somewhat unique. After all pink is just a pale version of red. English doesn't have a specific word for pale yellow, or pale green. Quite why pink stuck around as a colour to describe the pale red is probably due to the flower *Dianthus plumarius*, commonly known as Pinks.

In modern times the colour has been linked to many feminine causes, a pink ribbon has been the symbol of breast cancer awareness since 1991 (though it is worth pointing out that men can also get breast cancer). The Pussy Hat Project used bright pink hats knitted to look like cats ears as a symbol for protestors to wear in the Women's Marches of 2017. Time Magazine featured a Pussy Hat on the front cover with the caption "The resistance rises- How a march became a movement." Over time pink has gone from being a yellow pigment, to a colour that was worn by young boys, to a colour representing a women right movement. Love it, or hate it, that's a pretty impressive story!

Happy Spinning

Katie

Further Reading-

I'm starting to think the Fashion Museum in New York has some sort of secret link to my inner thoughts. . . the fibre was ordered long before the tweet that led me to the information about this exhibition-

<https://twitter.com/museumatFIT/status/1072122561255874560>

<http://www.fitnyc.edu/museum/exhibitions/pink.php>

An overview of the history of pink-

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pink>

What is a "Lake"-

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_pigment

Still de grain yellow, this is the historic colour called Pinke-

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stil_de_grain_yellow

<https://colourlex.com/project/stil-de-grain/>

About the Pussy Hat Project-

<https://www.pussyhatproject.com/our-story/>

Time Magazine print cover- https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/times-powerful-new-cover-reminds-the-world-the-resistance-to-trump-has-arrived_us_588a531be4b0737fd5cc54e4?ec_carp=194204393246022854&guccounter=1&guce_referrer_us=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLmNvbS8&guce_referrer_cs=fzc2Li3Q6bLpq-1bIBTOdA

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