

Seeing red over the 'pink tax' problem

 By Leigh Andrews

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'Pink tax' has been doing the rounds for decades, though more in 'am I imagining this costs more because it's pink' whispers than the loud social proclamations of today. Sadly, it's exactly what it sounds like - selling items for a higher price if they're sold in pink...



The amount of social media posts highlighting the injustice of charging more for a product simply for creating it in pink rather than the standard black/blue/default colour is on the rise.

Are you really paying more, just because it's pink?

Colour and price have been at play since Henry Ford was quoted for having said, "You can have it in any colour, as long as it's black." The verdict's still out on whether that meant you'd need to pay more if you opted for a different colour, but retailers in the 21st Century have taken the notion and run with it, especially if it means they can punt a product as the 'just for women' version, as it comes in pink.

Enter the pink tax debate...

“ It's kind of shocking that in the 14 years that Game Boys were in production, there was never an overly gendered pink Game Girl released. Though I guess the pink tax is more a symptom of now than the 90s.— Jessi Witt (@jessiwitt) [July 4, 2018](#) ”

“ Welcome to the most recent episode of 'they are exactly the same thing except the girl color is more expensive because the Patriarchy' 💎💎💎💎💎 #Patriarchy #pinktax #imjustsotired [pic.twitter.com/dEGSnvqG7H](#)— Molly Boyd (@mollykat3) [July 5, 2018](#) ”

“ talk about pink tax dang this one is literally pink [pic.twitter.com/pareB13Uk1](#)— Lena (@Jenamroberson) [July 4,](#)

[2018](#) ”

“ the pink tax on self defense items is particularly upsetting tbh pic.twitter.com/TSSkrXWMkC— sexy unique kaitlin (@aqueerius69) [July 4, 2018](#) ”

“ Shoutout to my sister [@FugalFaith](#) for fighting the good fight against the [#pinktax](#) pic.twitter.com/5NaU2CHCyU— Erika Nesvold (@erikanesvold) [July 3, 2018](#) ”

In case you've missed the outrage, *Nas Daily* vlogger Dear Alyne is putting the issue into perspective for her social media followers in this explanation video. Set aside four minutes to catch up on the topic:

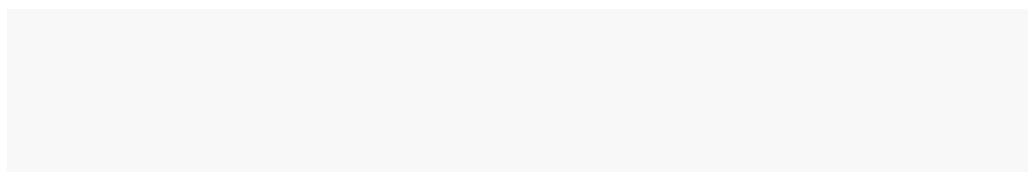
So while it may have been intended as a tactic to bring in more money for making products seem more exclusive or feminine, 'pink tax' is actually damaging sales. But the tongue-in-cheek way media are reporting on just this is also raising ire:

“ South Korean women protest against “pink tax”.[@STcom](#) thinks the best caption to accompany this story is one that perpetuates sexist stereotypes. pic.twitter.com/HpA80z38g9— Kirsten Han 韩俐颖 (@kixes) [July 3, 2018](#) ”

Answer: #AxThePinkTax!

Then there's the [#Axthepinktax](#) movement. Media and charity partners like European Wax Center and the global women empowerment non-profit Girls in Tech are asking corporates and consumers alike to 'raise your pink brow' at pink tax by literally painting your eyebrows pink to help raise awareness of pink tax, even if just on a [Bitmoji](#) or [Snapchat](#) rather than IRL:

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••Ladies only a few more days to get your pink brows, compliments of @EuropeanWax! Go in to your local center until the end of April and take a selfie, share it and add #AxThePinkTax to help raise awareness, because we shouldn't have to pay more for just being a woman! PS: #EuropeanWaxCenter is also giving you 13.51% off any one service or product during this month || <http://liketk.it/2vxOS>•• ----- ••¡Chicas solo unos días más para obtener tus cejas rosadas, gracias a @EuropeanWax! Visiten su centro local hasta finales de abril y tomen una selfie, compártanla y agreguen #AxThePinkTax para ayudar a crear conciencia, ¡porque no deberíamos tener que pagar más por simplemente ser mujeres! PD: #EuropeanWaxCenter también les ofrece 13.51% de descuento en cualquier servicio o producto por el mes de abril || <http://liketk.it/2vxOS>•• #miamifashionblogger #cubanblogger #cubanfashionblogger

A post shared by Mei | Miami Fashion Blogger (@blameitonmei) on Apr 27, 2018 at 2:45pm PDT

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The true cost of being female

On the added price of being a female consumer, [Listen Money Matters](#) reports that pink tax also refers to:

“ The extra amount women are charged for certain products or services. Things like dry cleaning, personal care products, and vehicle maintenance. ”

Numerous studies show that women pay more than men for the same service or product 42% of the time.

[Listen Money Matters](#) also mentions that in December 2015, the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs released a [study](#) comparing the prices of over 800 products. The goal of the study was to estimate the price differences male and female shoppers face when buying the same types of items.

The results were as follows:

- Products for women or girls cost 7% more than comparable products for men and boys.
- 7% more for toys and accessories.
- 4% more for children's clothing.
- 8% more for adult clothing.
- 13% more for personal care products.
- 8% more for senior/home health care products.

Pay attention to the 'personal care' products in particular, because linked to pink tax is tampon tax. *Listen Money Matters* sums it up as follows:

“ Did you know, tampons and pads are charged sales tax because they are considered “luxury” items? Periods are certainly not a luxury and I'm sure every woman on the planet would agree! ”

SA can be proud of our local version of *Cosmopolitan magazine* in this regard.

Not only did they publish a report in the June 2018 issue of the magazine in which they argue that sanitary products should be categorised as zero-rated basic items rather than luxury non-essentials, they also launched a petition that's being lodged with Parliament and the Department of Women.

From there, *Cosmo SA* hopes to see government seriously debate how period poverty can be ended before the close of 2018.



#NewCampaign: *Cosmopolitan SA* petitions to end tampon tax

Jessica Tennant 12 Jun 2018



You can get involved by signing the [Cosmo SA petition on Change.org](#), joining the all-women [Girls Gone Global](#) Facebook group by Dear Alyne to have your say, supporting [#AxthePinkTax](#), and boycotting those pricier pink products.

After all, if the government can provides free condoms, why not also free sanitary consumables – no matter the colour?

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ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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