

## THE PINK RIBBON PHENOMENON

**Breast cancer – the disease – colonized, customized and corporatized.**

One outstanding example of 'Vested Interest' in breast cancer, by its being so ubiquitous, is the globally visible corporate cluster which continues to grow like a rampant cancer around the 'pink ribbon for breast cancer' cause.

We regard this whole situation as a phenomenon because breast cancer is the one and only human disease that has been taken up and taken over in this way by the corporate sector.

### IT BEGAN WITH ONE WOMAN IN CALIFORNIA, USA

[https://www.nfb.ca/film/pink\\_ribbons\\_inc/trailer/pink\\_ribbons\\_inc\\_trailer](https://www.nfb.ca/film/pink_ribbons_inc/trailer/pink_ribbons_inc_trailer)

*Clip from PINK RIBBON INC - background and interview*

In 1990 Charlotte Haley set out to promote among her friends the idea of wearing a pink ribbon in order to raise awareness about limited government spending on cancer prevention research. Once in the hands of skilled marketers following the unwelcome corporate take-over of her idea in 1991, the original message about prevention was replaced by a corporates-driven fundraising campaign for breast cancer research from a % of sales of 'pink' products. The success of this campaign can be measured today by the universal association of the colour pink with breast cancer.

**Why have we women of the world so easily and swiftly fallen in with the global corporate pink (not interested in prevention) marketing take-over of breast cancer in which we ourselves have become marketing icons?**

To industry's marketing gurus we represent the obvious and ideal target group being:

- the gender group most affected by a serious and dreaded disease
- the major purchasing group for household products
- viewed as responding with compassion to suffering in others
- in need of doing something/anything to alleviate personal fear of breast cancer
- guaranteed social approval for participating in the pink drive for breast cancer research
- affirmed through sharing positive and supportive group activities

The combination of corporate 'pink' marketing skills and our purchasing power guarantees corporate associates unlimited 'pink' profiteering from their established high profile 'pink' marketing positions.

The ugly truth is that we are complicit in aiding a highly visible cluster of corporates associated with the Pink Ribbon campaign, many of whom manufacture and market products containing chemicals linked to breast cancer, to profit from having and holding vested interests in the major cancer affecting women, while donating a minimal percentage of their pink profits to breast cancer research.

Why is it that, as major supporters of and contributors to the pink ribbon campaign, we women have failed to ask 3 key questions of those corporates which benefit in perpetuity from the disease which kills more of us year on year?

**From Pink to Prevention**

[www.frompinktoprevention.org](http://www.frompinktoprevention.org)



***Where does the money go?***

***Who decides how the money is spent?***

***What percentage of the 'pink' millions raised across the world has been dedicated to prevention research?***

Are we so caught up in the hype of pink events and promotions around breast cancer to have lost sight of the facts that:

1. **'vested Interests'** have successfully constructed a soft, pink, non- threatening image of a serious life-threatening disease, and by default, gained control of a breast cancer agenda which neither includes nor prioritises prevention.
2. the corporate bottom line will always put profit before prevention because there is no profit in prevention.

**For whose real benefit are we women of the world wearing pink and buying pink? DO WE KNOW?**