Teaching Pink Ribbon Culture – An Assignment
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This assignment is used in an Introductory to Women and Gender Studies course and a second year Sex and Gender course. The assignment is based on Gayle Sulik’s book Pink Ribbon Blues: How Breast Cancer Culture Undermines Women’s Health (Oxford, 2012), Barbara Ehrenreich’s essay “Welcome to Cancerland” (Harper’s Magazine 2001), and the film “Pink Ribbons, Inc.” (2011).

Instructions:
Please collect and submit 15 examples of images that portray pink ribbon culture, as Sulik describes. Physically find the images and take pictures of them; do not take them from the Internet. If you cannot retrieve an original image, please describe it in an addendum.

Write a brief caption to describe each image. If an image is of a product, find out how much of the cost of the product goes “toward breast cancer.”

After you collect and review your images, please answer the following questions:

1) How does gender play a role in pink ribbon culture? In other words, using Sulik and other relevant course material explain the function of marking breast cancer with the color pink. Use at least 2 of your images to explain this concept.

2) What are some of the unintended consequences of pink ribbon culture, as described by Sulik? Use 2 images to explain your response. (Use different images than you used in question 1).

3) After looking at and studying all 15 images, what are some of the emotional, physical, psychological and/or economic costs of being a woman in U.S. society who is subjected to pink ribbon culture? Cite at least 2 class sources to help you answer this question (Sulik, Ehrenreich, “Pink Ribbons, Inc.”).

Grading Rubric:
• 15 images—15 points (1 point per image plus description)
• Question #1—25 points (appropriate use of course material, plus 2 images as examples)
• Question #2—25 points (appropriate use of course material, plus 2 different images as examples)
• Question #3—25 points (appropriate supporting material from at least 2 different readings)
• Conclusion—10 points (conclusion logically draws from prior questions)