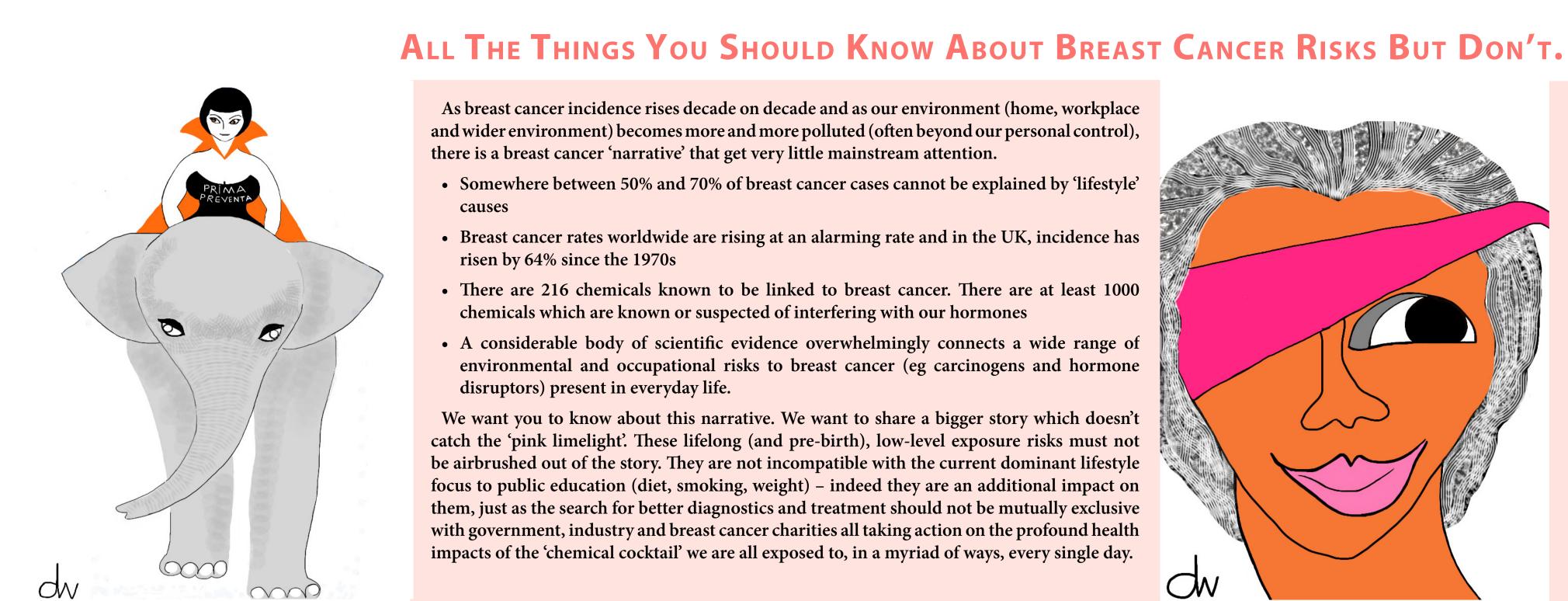
# ENVIRONMENTAL AND OCCUPATIONAL LINKS



As breast cancer incidence rises decade on decade and as our environment (home, workplace and wider environment) becomes more and more polluted (often beyond our personal control), there is a breast cancer 'narrative' that get very little mainstream attention.

• Somewhere between 50% and 70% of breast cancer cases cannot be explained by 'lifestyle' • Breast cancer rates worldwide are rising at an alarming rate and in the UK, incidence has

risen by 64% since the 1970s • There are 216 chemicals known to be linked to breast cancer. There are at least 1000 chemicals which are known or suspected of interfering with our hormones • A considerable body of scientific evidence overwhelmingly connects a wide range of

disruptors) present in everyday life. catch the 'pink limelight'. These lifelong (and pre-birth), low-level exposure risks must not be airbrushed out of the story. They are not incompatible with the current dominant lifestyle focus to public education (diet, smoking, weight) - indeed they are an additional impact on them, just as the search for better diagnostics and treatment should not be mutually exclusive

environmental and occupational risks to breast cancer (eg carcinogens and hormone We want you to know about this narrative. We want to share a bigger story which doesn't with government, industry and breast cancer charities all taking action on the profound health impacts of the 'chemical cocktail' we are all exposed to, in a myriad of ways, every single day.



Many now argue that these risks are a missing key to understanding ever increasing rates of breast cancer (indeed other cancers too). We have brought together a wide range of experts and activists to give you a quick summary of what's going on, why we need to call it out and who we need to put the pressure on to get primary prevention on the agenda. Primary prevention means stopping the disease before it starts. (Prevention is sometimes wrongly confused with early detection).

The history of the original pink ribbon We use the original Charlotte Haley 'salmon / peach' colour to acknowledge Haley's original campaign intention - prevention. As it was when she began in 1991, so it is now- a fraction

of funds spent on breast cancer are dedicated

to primary prevention and addressing wider

environmental and occupational risks.

Gudrun Kemper, Breast Cancer Action Germany:

Breast Cancer Month: We Need A Name Change

"As many millions of women are already hyperaware of breast cancer, there is no more need for any pink breast cancer awareness. What is now needed is a fuller more complete picture. It's time to change the name of the month to Breast Cancer Prevention Month." **Some Statistics:** Breast cancer is the second most common cancer in the world. It is by far, the most frequent cancer among women with an estimated 1.67 million new cancer cases diagnosed in 2012 (25% of all cancers).

Breast cancer ranks as the fifth cause of death from cancer overall (522,000 deaths) and while it is the most frequent cause of cancer death in women in less developed regions (324,000 deaths, 14.3% of total), it is now the second cause of cancer death in more developed regions (198,000 deaths, 15.4%) after lung cancer.

Reference World Health Organisation 2012 http://globocan.iarc.fr/old/FactSheets/cancers/breast-new.asp

THE TENDENCY IS TO LOOK AT THE CANCER

Professor Andrew Watterson

Stirling University

Assessments have said that 50% of breast

RATHER THAN THE CANCER CAUSING SUBSTANCES



Gudrun Kemper

**Breast Cancer Action Germany** 



Health and Environment Alliance, Belgium

WHO IS TELLING YOU ABOUT IT?

You Have A RIGHT TO KNOW THAT BREAST CANCER IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL AND

OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE AND THEREFORE PREVENTABLE. THE EVIDENCE IS OUT THERE BUT

The Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) is a leading platform of health and environment public interest groups working to strengthen European environment policies to improve people's health. We work to create better representation of expertise and evidence from the health community in EU and international decision making processes and this includes the issue of environmental and occupational links to breast cancer. We have seen breast cancer gain more and more attention, as civil society groups and scientists alike, forge a way forward in sharing the scientific evidence that links the disease to these risk factors which are insufficiently addressed in the policy arena. There is a significant body of evidence now about which we should all have The Right to Know. Evidence from distinguished sources such as

The President' Cancer Panel (USA) The Collegium Ramazzini (EU) WHO Asturias Declaration In the Asturias declaration, the World Health Organisation put environmental and

occupational factors in first place in the primary prevention of cancer. "Decreasing, and eventually eliminating the exposure to environmental and occupational carcinogens is the most effective way to prevent a number of cancers," Lisette van Vliet, Senior Policy Advisor on Chemicals & Health, Health and Environment Alliance, who took part in the meeting, said: "The Pledge represents an important milestone in developing international consensus on the

primary prevention of cancer - that is, stopping cancer before it starts by eliminating exposures to harmful chemicals at work and from the environment. This recognition by medical and scientific experts and the WHO makes our call for specific EU and national targets - to reduce people's exposure to cancer-related chemicals by half by 2020 - even more urgent." http://www.frompinktoprevention.org/resources/scientific-evidence/ (Asturias 2011) Find out more: Health & Environment Alliance (HEAL) http://www.env-health.org/

When there is talk about breast cancer prevention, it's about lifestyle factors and what the individual can do. Known and suspected environmental and occupational risk factors are not addressed.

cancer we can't explain, there is recent research done which indicates that something like 85% of breast cancers are due to long term exposures to environmental cancer causing substances, that would include diet and other things. There are areas we know can take effective action on. There needs to be interventions now, along with treating cancer and preventing exposures to carcinogens is critical. There are 216 chemicals known to be linked to breast cancer. We can prevent certain things, we can remove carcinogens, which is what the WHO approach is, act upstream and stop people falling ill if you can and of course treat them when necessary. The WHO estimates that up to 19% of cancers are due to toxic environmental exposures but when you look at what the bigger charities do on prevention, many of those messages are lost. Speaking on BBC Radio 4 Woman's Hour (2012) 'Un-pinking Cancer'



Diana Ward

From Pink to Prevention, Australia

#### public about this major cancer in women. It is therefore disturbing to discover that many leading breast cancer charities fail to inform women about ALL risk factors for the disease while maintaining their focus almost exclusively on lifestyle risk factors {alcohol, smoking,

exercise). Lifestyle factors are important but what about the impact of toxic chemicals on the

Breast cancer charities are highly regarded as organisations dedicated to providing advocacy,

support and information for women affected by the disease. Their work also informs the wider

What Major Breast Cancer Charities Are Not Telling Women

health of every single one of us? Given that we know (i) there is a vast amount of existing research linking breast cancer incidence to lifelong (womb to grave) exposures to environmental and occupational chemicals e.g. carcinogens and endocrine disruptors (ii) that breast cancer is a hormonally driven disease (iii) that genetic factors account for less than 10% of cases (iv) that only a small proportion of the remaining 90% can be attributed to lifestyle factors leaving the majority of cases without explanation why is it that so many breast cancer charities, industry and government chooses to ignore the scientific evidence for environmental and occupational risk factors? Why the deafening silence in breast cancer awareness campaigns about the role of chemical, environmental and occupational exposures for breast cancer? Their selective and narrow focus on lifestyle risk factors is a barrier to official and public recognition of environmental and occupational risk factors implicated in both promotion and onset of breast cancer as well to the advancement of scientifically informed strategies for saving lives through primary prevention - stopping the disease before it starts - rather than by post disease pharmaceutical intervention favoured by industry.

A POLLUTED ENVIRONMENT MEANS POLLUTED PEOPLE

Women could not be blamed for losing faith in the integrity of any breast cancer advocacy

cancer and the potential of such knowledge for saving women's lives.

organisation which deprives them of their Right To Know about ALL the risk factors for breast

The endocrine system is a collection of glands that produce hormones. These hormones regulate metabolism, growth and development, sexual function, reproduction, and much more, connecting a complex system that

includes ovaries, testes, thyroid, adrenal glands, pancreas and the brain.

complex system, whether by affecting amounts produced, of where they

are directed to go. These hormone disrupting chemicals are everywhere

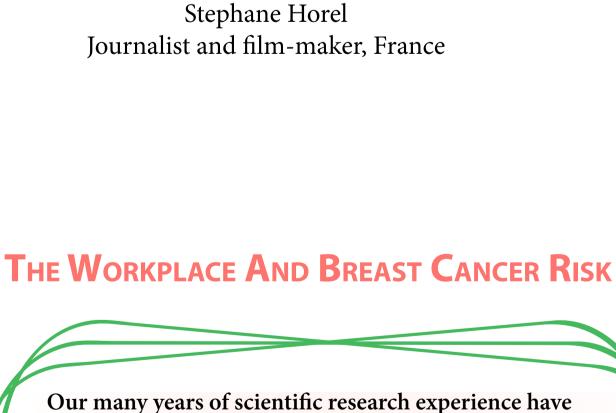
Endocrine – or hormone – disrupting chemicals (EDCs) interfere with this

WHAT ARE EDCS, WHERE ARE THEY, WHY DO YOU NEED TO KNOW

ABOUT THEM AND WHAT'S THE COST OF THE HARM THEY DO?

- from birth to death. We cannot escape them - at home, at work, in the wider environment. They are in plastics, cosmetics and pesticides; across household items from furniture and carpets to white goods in our kitchen; they are in food cans. The EU has demanded action on EDCs but the chemical lobby has other plans. It has very effectively blocked action on hormone disrupting chemicals. We know breast cancer is a hormonally driven disease. We also know that EDCs mimic the female sex hormone oestrogen. There are 1000 chemicals which are known or suspected of interfering with our hormones according to the WHO's State of the science of Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals in 2012 and we know there are 216 chemicals known to be linked to breast cancer. So why aren't governments acting on this? Why aren't those charged with the prevention of breast cancer not taking action on EDCS as well as 'lifestyle' causes? Find out more: French journalist and film-maker Stephane Horel has spent many years tracking and investigating the relationship between corporate lobbying across the EU and how conflict of interest negatively impacts on environmental and public health policies. Her films Le Grande Invasion and Endocrination together with her extensive research and writing dig deep

into these relationships.



#### In 2012 we were a part of an international, multidisciplinary team of investigators that collected the lifetime histories of over 2100 women living in southwestern Ontario, Canada. Our study found that women employed in agriculture, metal-

working, restaurant/casino, automotive plastics and food

they pose a threat to people of all ages.

brought us to one clear, stark conclusion: women who are

at work have a greater risk for developing breast cancer.

exposed to carcinogens and endocrine disrupting chemicals

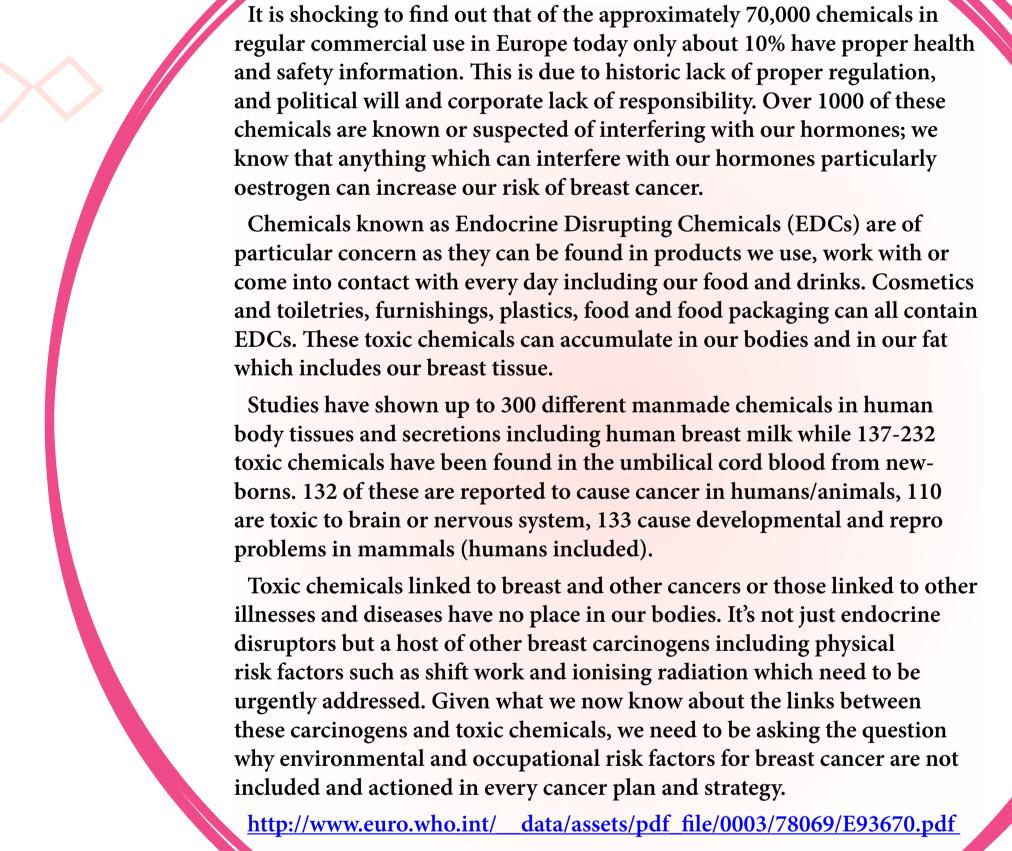
Workplace exposures can take many forms but we know that

workers' health acts as a barometer for the wellbeing of the

whole of society. Toxic chemicals used and produced in the

workplace find their way into our general environment where

canning bore an elevated breast cancer risk. It was especially noteworthy that premenopausal women in both automotive plastics and food canning had an almost five-fold risk. In partnership with The National Network on Environments and Women's Health (NNEWH) we collaborated with trade unions and other women's health advocates demanding that these workplaces be investigated and changed. This is not just a problem for Canada; it affects people worldwide. We join with all those calling for prevention with the belief that no woman should be forced to accept that her occupation should put her at risk of developing cancer. Find out more about breast cancer and occupation http://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-healthpolicy-statements/policy-database/2015/01/07/14/55/breastcancer-and-occupation





Tens of thousands of cases of breast cancer could

be prevented in the EU if the cancer establishment

recognised environmental and occupational risk factors

- 50% with no known cause. Mounting evidence points

to exposure to environmental contaminants as a major

contributor in the rising cases of breast cancer.

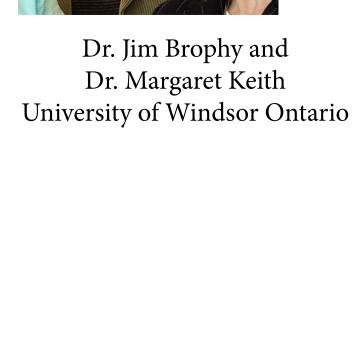
Helen Lynn

Alliance for Cancer Prevention, UK

#### as a contributory factor in the rising breast cancer epidemic according to a briefing to be published in January 2008. Conventionally accepted risk factors only account for 50-70% of breast cancer cases leaving 30%

WECF asks why primary prevention (stopping the disease before it starts) is being ignored in favour of an unsustainable and costly epidemic. Survival rates continue to fall despite increased spending. Every 6 minutes a woman dies from breast cancer in the EU. WECF, as the women's organisation on health and the environment, calls on the EU for a strategy on the primary prevention of breast cancer. In our publication, we focus on the current epidemic of breast cancer which cripples health budgets all over the EU and links it with exposures in the home, workplace and wider environment. What if this epidemic was preventable? Find out more at WECF.





How BC Affects The Developing World

THE VIEW FROM SOUTH EAST ASIA:

factors in the sharp rise of breast cancer incidence. For this reason, the PBCN has adopted the bold mission to eliminate the environmental causes of the disease, including toxic chemicals and radiation. Through public education, training, policy initiatives and other innovative campaigns, the PBCN mobilizes the public to secure the changes needed to stop this devastating epidemic. "The time trends and spatial features of cancer's occurrence around the globe clearly belie the notion that cancer is a random misfortune. Cancer associates with westernization. Whereas forty years ago, cancer was mostly a disease of wealthy nations, half of all cancers now occur in developing nations, particularly those rapidly industrializing." Sandra Steingraber Philippine Breast Cancer Network <a href="http://www.pbcn.org/">http://www.pbcn.org/</a> Danny de Meneses Philippine Breast Cancer Network

The Philippines has the highest incidence rate of breast

cancer in Asia and registered the highest increase of 589%

among 187 countries over a 30 year period from 1980 to

2010. It now has the 11th highest incidence rate of breast

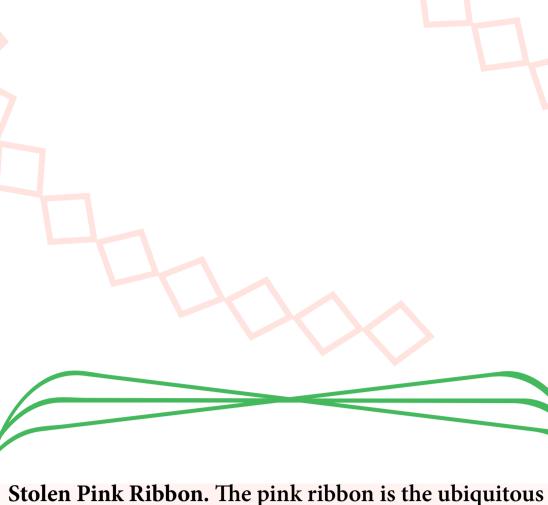
economic consequences for a developing country. Since

less than 10 percent of breast cancers are genetic, we at

the Philippine Breast Cancer Network (PBCN) argue

that the science increasingly points to environmental

cancer in the world. This has devastating human and



symbol of breast cancer. Almost everywhere in the world

people genuinely wear it or buy pink ribbon products in

support of those living with the disease or because they

the history of the pink ribbon is rather controversial.

It was created in the early 1990s by Charlotte Hayley,

a Californian woman whose family members had had

room and asked people to wear them to urge legislators

to act. She also made it clear that she was not looking for

donations. When, in 1992, the journalist Alexandra Penny

and Evelyn Lauder, Estée Lauder vice president diagnosed

herself with breast cancer, contacted Haley asking her for

permission to distribute the ribbon at cosmetics counters

initiative would commercialize the ribbon. Since Haley was

unwilling to renounce, Penney and Lauder were advised by

across the United States, Haley refused saying that the

have been directly affected by it. In spite of its popularity,

The first breast cancer ribbon was not pink, but peach.

breast cancer. She manufactured the ribbons in her dining

#### carcinogenic, endocrine disrupting chemicals and mutagens, plus shift/nightwork. Unions should explain that the eight to 16 per cent of cancer caused by work can be prevented by stopping those exposures at work and support workers and Safety Representatives in achieving this. Safety Representatives need support in using the Control

WHAT ARE UK TRADE UNIONS DOING?

Trade Unions in the UK need to take a more proactive and

preventative approach to the cancer caused by work. Some

unions do raise the issue but all could do more and better

prevention at source, at work. We need unions to be saying

and redirect the focus from screening and treatment to

there should be no occupational cancers, work must not

Firstly unions need to make preventing cancers caused

by work a major priority. This means publicising the fact

that work is a major cause of cancer by exposing workers to

cause cancer.

WHAT SHOULD THEY BE DoING?

of Substances Hazardous to Health regulations to identify all known or suspected carcinogens and then to ensure employers comply with the hierarchy of control. This starts with elimination of carcinogens, then substitution, followed by collective engineering controls, with personal protective equipment only as last resort. Safety Representatives need information and support on how to hold employers to their legal duty to prevent exposure to chemical carcinogens, how to challenge and negotiate on shift patterns for all workers and night work for women which increases the risk of breast cancer. Finally, Safety Representatives need their own union and TUC resources such as TUC Hazards at Work Chapter on Occupational Cancer plus Hazards Magazine and **Alliance for Cancer Prevention.** http://www.hazardscampaign.org.uk

Acting Chair HAZARDS Campaign, UK

So Why Are Some Of Us Sceptical About 'Pink'?

We don't in any way want to undermine those who

ask critical questions about the industry and the pink

ribbon brand. There has been a growing criticism of

washing" means, on the one hand selling products to

raise money for the disease while on the other, using

as women make 80% of the buying decisions.

the trend for business to 'cash in' on the disease. "Pink-

ingredients in that product which linked to causing the

disease. Breast cancer is a good cause for big corporations

And at Breast Cancer Action Quebec, we can't help but

be more than a little skeptical. Check out our FAQs and

find out the real story of the pink ribbon. Read more to

get information on some of the little pink lies that seem

critical questions about where the money goes. After

to abound during this time of the year. Be informed! Ask

gain hope, strength and a sense of community from pink

ribbon fundraising, but our film Pink Ribbons, Inc. does

Hilda Palmer



Breast cancer incidence is rising decade on

decade, whilst our homes, workplaces and

wider environment are becoming more and

more polluted. As an MP and previously as an

MEP I have seen how the connections between

these trends are gaining traction and, whilst we have a long way to go before 'the precautionary principle' is applied to risks around breast cancer, we are moving in the right direction. We owe much of this to visionaries like Rachel Carson, author of ground-breaking 1962 book The Silent Spring, and activists such as US scientist Sandra Steingraber, who says "From the right to know and the duty to inquire flows the obligation to act." I couldn't agree more.



As October approaches we are awash with all things pink –

only women would adopt a sensible lifestyle, then the incidence

It cannot be stressed enough how important a healthy lifestyle

is. But how many clean living, vegetarian, abstemious, keep fit

So whilst we support the 'pink' army in its quest to produce

lifestyle message being continually, predominantly and almost

Of all the conferences/ workshops/lectures we have attended

over the years, there is seldom any mention of environmental

a healthier population, we do get so very, very tired of the

continuous lecture on how women are to blame for their

own breast cancer. And we object strongly to the healthy

exclusively linked to breast cancer. Can it not stand alone,

fanatics still get breast cancer? Here at Challenge Breast Cancer

of breast cancer would decrease dramatically and all would be

lots of organisations, singing from the same hymn sheet. If

well in the pink, fluffy world.

Scotland HQ we know quite a few!

proud and strong, for what it is?

Caroline Lucas

Green Party MP for Brighton Pavilion

## their lawyers to simply change the colour. Pink was chosen as a feminine, joyful and relaxing colour. The pink ribbon has become the most prominent global icon of a deadly disease Breast cancer is anything BUT feminine, joyful and relaxing. The Pink Ribbon, used to sell products, many of which themselves contain chemicals linked to breast cancer, range from cosmetics to food, jewellery, clothing and even cars and drill bits. As a result, it has 'normalised' the fact that thousands of women are diagnosed with and die from breast cancer every year, all around the world. The original aim - to spur public opinion to demand political change - was deflected, some would say stolen – by a capitalist system where the combination of marketing skills and our own purchasing power can guarantee corporates unlimited 'pink' profiteering. Grazia De Michele, Ph.D., UK/Italy

### so many years there still seems to be very little money devoted to finding the root causes of this disease (less than 5% goes to prevention). Click here to learn more about some of the myths and misconceptions that are out there.

Patricia Kearns Pink Ribbons, Inc. Scriptwriter; Research And Network Advisor, Breast Cancer Action Quebec

or occupational links to breast cancer. When challenged we are told "there's not enough evidence" or "we can't separate out all of the environmental influences". So to the powers that be and the pink community in general, we say, take heed of this, our 'pink October' message. Stop passing the buck to women and start taking responsibility for our polluted environment and the chemical cocktails we are subjected to on a daily basis. We'll do our bit by taking regular exercise, eating our fruit and vegetables and encouraging the next generation to breast feed but you have to meet us half way. Please? Find out more **Challenge Breast Cancer Scotland** Moira Adams Challenge Breast Cancer Scotland

CURRENT TRENDS ARE NOT LOOKING GOOD

Look up any national or world cancer statistics and we

I remember many years ago, as a youngish person at a

crowded lecture, being asked to look at the persons on my

left and my right and being asked to consider which one of us

in Linlithgow didn't sign our glyphosate petition because he

would get cancer. That was a 1:3 risk then. Now it is 1:2. A man

people are living with the disease.

said we'll all get cancer anyway. Is he right?

find future projections all say 'on current trends' there is an

expected continuing increase in cancer incidence. Yes, there is

better management and declining deaths, but more and more

18th and early 19th century medical missionaries reported an and policies continue to be so influenced by the cancer absence, or a rarity, of cancer amongst the non "developed". The establishment, environmental and occupational risk factors Industrial Revolution had not yet reached them. Any doubt will be excluded from government agendas. about the role of industrialisation is immediately dismissed Equally, responsibilities for human, environmental and with a look at the current colourful maps on the WHO's IARC occupational health are also borne by science and industry. Yet site showing the global incidence of cancer at despite the length and breadth of scientific evidence linking www.globocan.iarc.fr. environmental and occupational risks to breast cancer, there The collection of health statistics is intended to guide is no indication of either active or consistent concern from government policy. IARC lists over 100 known carcinogens as those parts of the scientific community with influence over government policy or industry itself, leading it to take action. Official disregard for evidence supporting primary prevention

efforts.

and implemented as policy, lies with every one of us in our workplaces, homes and communities to keep the pressure up until such time as they do act upon the evidence. Deborah Burton Co-Founder Tipping Point North South/From Pink to Prevention, UK

Where does ultimate responsibility lie for action on this issue?

The ultimate responsibility for primary prevention should

lie with government -but this is patently not the case. There

are myriad ways in which the <u>cancer establishment</u> has proven

its capacity in blocking any debate, recognition and action on

makes it clear that the only hope of seeing 'primary prevention'

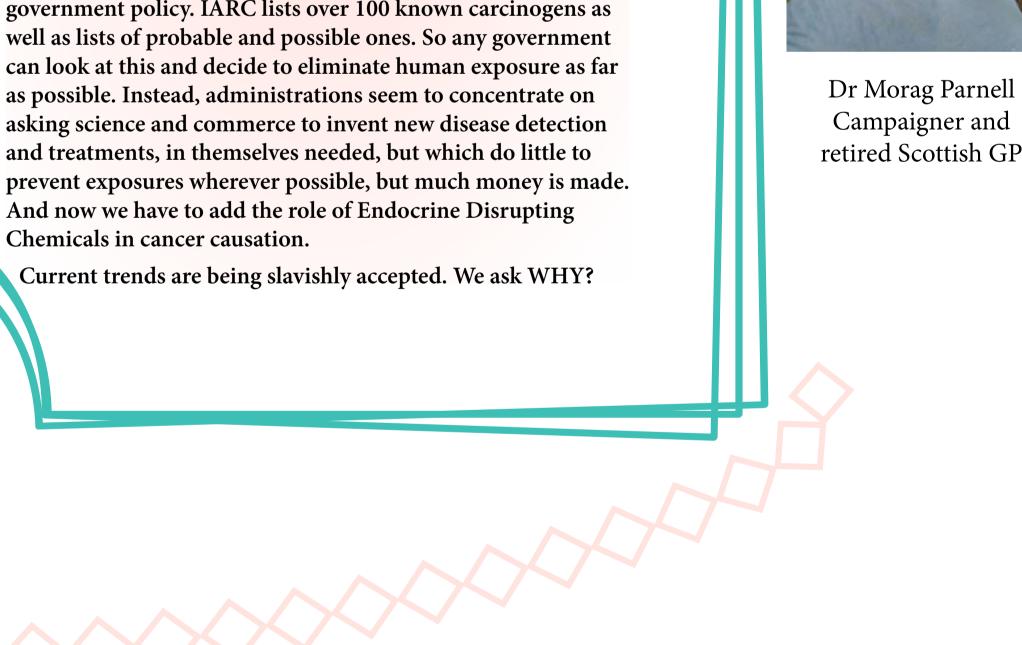
- stopping the disease before it starts - enacted into law

the role of environmental and occupational factors in breast

cancer. This means that as long as national cancer practices

Chemicals in cancer causation. Current trends are being slavishly accepted. We ask WHY?

YES WE CAN! WE CAN GET FROM 'PINK' TO 'PREVENTION'



Women have been at the forefront of information sharing, activism,

I'm heartened that so many tenacious activists and growing numbers of journalists, health care practitioners, and the public are raising their voices to demand transparency and accountability of all stakeholders in the breast cancer industry. Though divergent in the problems they tackle and the methods they use, a critical stance is necessary if we are to turn this thing around. We need new thinking about breast cancer. We need to move beyond the pink ribbon version of awareness. We need truth. Evidence. Action. Breast Cancer Consortium USA www.breastcancerconsortium.net WHAT CAN I DO? READ ON ...! **Get Informed and Take Action** Here are some actions you can take – as a citizen, as a consumer and as a worker and

Over the last 30 years the breast cancer movement has worked to

make breast cancer a national priority, raise awareness and funds,

and patient empowerment. And a lot of good has come from these

galvanize social support, and impact the direction of research.

Yet I would argue, and have argued, that there is an urgent

need to change the conversation on breast cancer, to get real

misinformation, trivialization, and commercialization that is

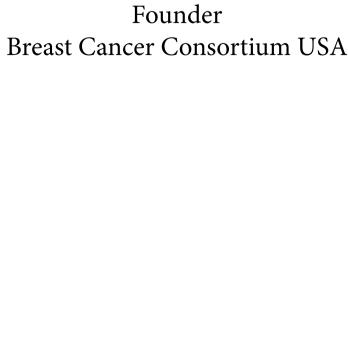
diagnosed, those at risk, and the epidemic at large.

about this disease, and to acknowledge that there is an ocean of

undermining the movement, and the cause itself. What's more, pink

ribbon hype diverts money and attention away from endeavors and

ideas that have a greater chance of making a real difference to the



Gayle Sulik, Ph.D.

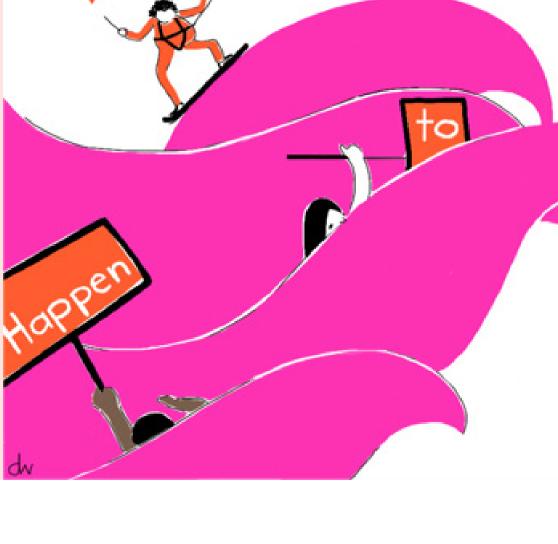


Designed by HC Lin, **Tipping Point North South** 

For background information as to why you need to take action check out our **Questions** and Answers page, the scientific evidence and the latest facts. This is all about stopping breast cancer before it starts, it's time to make it happen. • Citizen Consumer Worker • <u>Pinkwashing</u> • Recommended Reading http://www.frompinktoprevention.org/

most likely all three!

what-vou-can-do/





cancer? WHY do breast cancer charities continue to focus solely on 'lifestyle' risk factors such as diet and exercise, while ignoring the potential 60% of breast cancer cases for which they have no explanation. What about the role of chemical, environmental and occupational exposures in https://www.change.org/p/breast-cancer-charities-remove-thepink-ribbon-blindfold-and-ask-the-big-question-3

And finally – sign our PETITION & spread the word

We at From Pink to Prevention know that evidence links breast cancer

to environmental and occupational exposures. If this also concerns you,

join us in removing the Pink Ribbon 'Blindfold' and asking this BIG

QUESTION of the breast cancer charities, government and industry:

WHY do they persist in refusing to acknowledge the role of

environmental and occupational toxicants by ignoring decades of

evidence up to the present day on the link between our lifelong (womb

to grave) exposures to toxics and the escalating incidence of breast