

My earlier works were all inspired by the pink tax which is tax placed on products advertised “for women”. Typically, these products were colored pink; hence the name ‘pink’ tax. Feminine hygiene products are included in this tax and are considered *luxury* items. Women in several countries, including the US, are not only forced to pay a luxury tax on items that are necessities, they continue to pay more than men for the same products.

Countries, including France and the UK, have protested these taxes. Back in 2014, a French feminist group known as the Georgette Sand Collective began a campaign to bring attention to the price discrepancies amongst male and female products. The group found Monoprix supermarket—which translates to single price— charged €1.80 for a 5-pack of pink razors and €1.72 for a 10-pack of blue razors. Monoprix argued the price difference is because production costs are higher for ‘pink’ products. If that’s the case, then why are tampons and maxi pads included in the tax?

In 2015, UK women protested the tax placed on feminine hygiene products by free bleeding in front of the Houses of Parliament. Their intention was to make members of parliament feel uncomfortable and to understand that tampons and pads are not a luxury— they are a necessity. Their bloodied pants made it obvious that women cannot go without some sort of feminine hygiene product while menstruating.

I then began using actual tampons in my work. I hand-dyed them and carefully hung them to reference floral fauna. Because the objects were abstracted, people associated them with ideas of beauty and not their actual use. My work developed further with menstruation. I continued to work with tampons. For FEMALE POWER, I created a mask using about 280 tampons. Then, I recorded myself wearing the mask in the shower and allowed the tampons to expand and grow heavy with water. I wanted to show the physical weight women feel during menstruation. The pink tax plays a part in the stress women feel. Not only is physical weight felt during menstruation, but also an economical weight.

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