

Does the Color Pink Exist? Scientists Aren't Sure

By [Melissa Locker](#) | March 07, 2012 | [1 Comment](#)

In a [blog post](#), Robert Krulwich of the public radio show Radiolab noted that there is no pink in the colors of the rainbow. Pink is actually a combination of red and violet, two colors, which, if you look at a rainbow, are on the opposite sides of the arc. Remember the old colors of the rainbow mnemonic ROYGBIV? The R (red) is as far as it can get from V (violet). That's where the trouble lies. Pink can't exist in nature without a little rainbow-bending help, which would allow the shades of red and violet to commingle. This is leading scientists to believe, as Krulwich puts it, that "pink is a made-up color." Krulwich explains:

I know, of course, that all colors are just waves of light, so every color we "see," we see with our brains. But what [this video](#) says is that there is no such thing as a band of wavelengths that mix red and violet, and therefore, pink is not a real wavelength of light. That's why pink is an invention. It's not a name we give to something out there. Pink isn't out there.

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So there you have it. Pink, the color, is just the wishful thinking of our brain blending the red and violet wavelengths together to create the color of many little girls' birthday parties. But as compelling as Krulwich's argument is, there are plenty of scientists (and probably My Little Pony fanatics) who disagree with him. In a blog post aptly named [Stop This Absurd War on the Color Pink](#), Scientific American blogger Michael Moyer points to research that indicates that all color, whether in the rainbow or not, is a fabrication of our brains. He quotes biologist Timothy H. Goldsmith as noting that, "Color is not actually a property of light or of objects that reflect light. It is a sensation that arises within the brain." He concludes by stating that, "Pink is real—or it is not—but it is just as real or not-real as red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet."

We will leave the debate over the color pink to the experts, because we know [one Pink who definitely still exists](#). (Although she has been going by her given name of Alecia Moore a lot lately. Perhaps she knows something we don't.)

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