

LIVING IN BARBIE'S WORLD

THE FIRST BARBIE WAS CREATED IN 1959 BY RUTH HANDLER. HANDLER SAW THAT THE ONLY DOLLS FOR GIRLS WERE EITHER PAPER DOLLS OR BABY DOLLS, AND THAT THEIR MAIN PURPOSES WERE TO PROMOTE MOTHERHOOD.



"MY WHOLE PHILOSOPHY OF BARBIE WAS THAT THROUGH THE DOLL, THE LITTLE GIRL COULD BE ANYTHING SHE WANTED TO BE. BARBIE ALWAYS REPRESENTED THE FACT THAT A WOMAN HAS CHOICES" (HANDLER, 1994)

SHOW AND TELL



BUBBLECUT BARBIE (1961)

WITH EACH NEW DECADE OR SO, BARBIE CHANGES HER LOOK, IN ORDER TO BE A SNAPSHOT OF WHAT WOMEN WERE DOING / WHAT THEY LOOKED LIKE AT THE TIME.

“WHEN WE’RE TALKING ABOUT TOYS, SPECIFICALLY DOLLS, WE’RE BASICALLY TALKING ABOUT TINY HISTORICAL SNAPSOTS OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE... WHEN WE’RE LOOKING AT A TOY THAT’S SUPPOSED TO BE SOMETHING THAT A CHILD CAN ASPIRE TO AND RELATE TO, WE’RE TALKING ABOUT WHAT ADULT WOMEN ARE ACTUALLY DOING IN THE WORLD AT THAT TIME” (MATTEL, 2023)



BARBIE LEARNS TO COOK (1965)



MALIBU BARBIE (1971)

EVERY BARBIE, SUCH AS BARBIE LEARNS TO COOK, WAS CREATED LOOKING PASSIVELY TO THE SIDE UNTIL THE RISE OF WOMEN’S LIBERATION AND SUBSEQUENT CREATION OF MALIBU BARBIE IN 1971 (LORD 12).

BARBIES WERE ALSO MADE TO FIT EUROCENTRIC BEAUTY STANDARDS, AS IT WASN’T UNTIL 1980 THAT MATTEL CREATED DOLLS THAT WERE ACTUAL BLACK, ASIAN, AND LATINA BARBIES, RATHER THAN DOLLS THAT WERE JUST FRIENDS OF BARBIE. THIS RELUCTANCE TO CREATE DIVERSE DOLLS INADVERTENTLY CREATED A SINGLE STORY OF BEAUTY.



SHOW AND TELL



BARBIE BUBBLEGUM SHOP
COMMERCIAL (1994)

ACCORDING TO A STUDY EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PLAYING WITH BARBIES AND GIRLS' CAREER ASPIRATIONS, "GIRLS WHO PLAYED WITH BARBIE INDICATED THAT THEY HAD FEWER FUTURE CAREER OPTIONS THAN BOYS, WHEREAS GIRLS WHO PLAYED WITH MRS. POTATO HEAD REPORTED A SMALLER DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FUTURE POSSIBLE CAREERS FOR THEMSELVES AS COMPARED TO BOYS" (SHERMAN & ZURBRIGGEN, 2014).

MATTEL ALSO CONTRIBUTED TO DISSUADING GIRLS FROM PURSUING STEM AND MATHEMATICS FIELDS WITH TEEN TALK BARBIE AS SHE SAID THINGS LIKE "MATH CLASS IS TOUGH!" PHRASES LIKE THESE PERPETUATE THE STEREOTYPE THAT GIRLS ARE BAD AT MATH AND "...CAN HAVE FAR-REACHING CONSEQUENCES ON CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL CHOICES AND CAREER ASPIRATIONS" (CANKAYA, 2023).



TEEN TALK BARBIE (1992)

"I'LL NEED STEVEN'S AND BRIAN'S HELP TO TURN IT INTO A REAL GAME!"



ADDITIONALLY, MATTEL HAD TO ISSUE AN APOLOGY FOR A 2014 BOOK WHERE THEY MADE BARBIE LOOK LIKE AN INCOMPETENT COMPUTER ENGINEER, AS SHE NEEDED THE HELP OF HER MALE FRIENDS TO FIX HER COMPUTER AND TO DO THE ACTUAL VIDEO GAME PROGRAMMING FOR HER.

THE IMPACT OF HER FIGURE

ALTHOUGH BARBIE'S FIGURE WAS A RESULT OF THE LIMITATIONS OF MANUFACTURING DOLL CLOTHING, IT'S IMAGE HAS HAD AN IMPACT ON WOMEN AND YOUNG GIRLS FOR DECADES (LORD 12).



GREAT SHAPE BARBIE COMMERCIAL (1983)



SLUMBER BARBIE (1965)

FOR INSTANCE, MATTEL HAS BEEN ENCOURAGING GIRLS TO THINK ABOUT THEIR WEIGHT SINCE 1965, AS SLUMBER BARBIE CAME WITH A SCALE SET PERMANENTLY TO 110 LBS AS WELL AS A BOOK TITLED "HOW TO LOSE WEIGHT" WITH THE ONLY ADVICE BEING "DON'T EAT" (LORD 229).

IN A STUDY DONE IN MAY OF 2023, RESEARCHERS LOOKED AT HOW YOUNG GIRLS FELT AFTER PLAYING WITH BARBIE DOLLS, ASKING THEM WHAT THEY THOUGHT ABOUT THEIR OWN BODIES, THE WAY THEY DESIRED TO LOOK, AND HOW THEY ENVISIONED THEIR FUTURE SELVES. AFTER LOOKING AT THE DATA THEY FOUND THAT THE GIRLS, "EXPERIENCED LOWER SELF-ESTEEM AND HIGHER BODY DISSATISFACTION, WHICH REFLECTS THE INTERNALIZATION OF BARBIE'S PROPORTION AS THE BEAUTY STANDARD" (ZHANG ET AL.. 589-590).



GREAT SHAPE BARBIE (1983)

THE IMPACT OF HER FIGURE



BARBIE'S FIGURE HAS AN IMPACT ON TODAY'S WOMEN AS WELL, AS "BARBIE TRAPTOX" HAS BECOME A POPULAR COSMETIC PROCEDURE.

TRAPTOX IS THE INJECTION OF A NEUROTOXIN LIKE BOTOX INTO THE TRAPEZIUS MUSCLE IN ORDER TO CREATE THE ILLUSION OF AN ELONGATED NECK, MUCH LIKE BARBIE'S.

THE INJECTIONS ARE ONLY FDA APPROVED FOR USE IN THE FACE, AND CAN CAUSE PERMANENT DAMAGE TO THE MUSCLE IF INJECTED INCORRECTLY (ROY, 2023).



DO YOU KNOW



IF BARBIE WERE A REAL HUMAN SHE WOULD:

BE 5'9"

WEIGH 110 LBS (OR LESS)

HAVE AN 18" WAIST

HAVE A CONCAVE STOMACH

HAVE F-CUP BREASTS

HAVE LEGS THAT WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO SUPPORT HER AND WOULD BE SO THIN THAT SHE WOULDN'T MENSTRUATE

(VITAMIN STREE, 2018)



DO YOU KNOW



WHAT WAS I MADE FOR?



NUMBER ONE BARBIE RECREATION

DESPITE ALL OF THIS, "BARBIE DOESN'T INSTIGATE BUT MERELY REFLECTS SOCIETY'S NOTIONS OF BEAUTY" (LORD 227).



MODERN BARBIES (2024)

AS OF 2016, BARBIES ARE NOW CREATED WITH A MULTITUDE OF BODY SHAPES, HEIGHTS, HAIR STYLES AND TEXTURES, AS WELL AS DISABILITIES AND MOBILITY AIDS.



HOWEVER, MATTEL'S HESITATION TO CREATE ANYTHING OUTSIDE OF THE "BARBIE IMAGE" HAS CREATED SINGLE STORIES OF BOTH BEAUTY AND VALUE. ONES THAT ARE TRAPPED IN EXCLUSIONARY, EUROCENTRIC BEAUTY IDEALS AS WELL AS MISOGYNISTIC AND PATRIARCHAL IDEAS OF WHAT AN "IDEAL WOMAN" SHOULD BE.

the future is FEMALE

THESE SINGLE STORIES TAKE AWAY RUTH HANDLER'S ORIGINAL INTENTIONS FOR THESE DOLLS, AS VESSELS FOR GIRLS TO IMAGINE THEMSELVES WITHIN, AS WELL AS SOMETHING THAT CAN SHOW THAT GIRLS CAN DO ANYTHING.



ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- CANKAYA, OZLEM. "YES, THE ORIGINAL BARBIE IS A STEREOTYPE – BUT CHILDREN ALSO CREATE THEIR OWN 'BARBIE WORLDS.'" MACEWAN UNIVERSITY, [HTTPS://WWW.MACEWAN.CA/CAMPUS-LIFE/NEWS/2023/10/NEWS-CONVERSATION-CANKAYA-BARBIE-23/](https://www.macewan.ca/campus-life/news/2023/10/news-conversation-cankaya-barbie-23/). ACCESSED 8 MAY 2024.

THIS WEBPAGE GOES OVER BARBIE'S INFLUENCES, STEREOTYPES, AND LIMITATIONS WHILE INCLUDING LINKS TO OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES. IT ALSO CREATES THE ARGUMENT THAT ENCOURAGING PERSONALIZATION WHEN PLAYING WITH BARBIES CAN MITIGATE SOME OF THESE NEGATIVE ASPECTS. I PLAN TO USE THIS SOURCE TO HIGHLIGHT THE NEGATIVE INFLUENCES THAT BARBIE MIGHT HAVE ON CHILDREN.

- LORD, M. G. FOREVER BARBIE: THE UNAUTHORIZED BIOGRAPHY OF A REAL DOLL. MORROW AND CO., 1994.

THIS BOOK TALKS ABOUT HOW BARBIE WAS CREATED TO TEACH WOMEN WHAT WAS EXPECTED OF THEM AND HER EFFECTS ON PEOPLE. I PLAN TO USE THIS BOOK TO HELP MY ARGUMENT THAT BARBIES TELL GIRLS AND WOMEN HOW THEY SHOULD BE.

- ROY, JESSICA. "EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT 'BARBIE BOTOX.'" ELLE, [HTTPS://WWW.ELLE.COM/BEAUTY/HEALTH-FITNESS/A45340371/WHAT-IS-BARBIE-BOTOX-TRAPTOX/](https://www.elle.com/beauty/health-fitness/a45340371/what-is-barbie-botox-traptox/). ACCESSED 20 MAY 2024.

THIS WEBPAGE DESCRIBES WHAT BARBIE TRAPTOX IS, HOW IT WORKS, ITS RISKS, AND ITS NEWFOUND POPULARITY. I PLAN TO USE THIS TO EXPLAIN HOW BARBIE'S FIGURE HAS AN IMPACT ON WOMEN TODAY AND HOW WOMEN ARE WILLING TO RISK THEIR HEALTH FOR BEAUTY.

- SHERMAN, AURORA M. & ZURBRIGGEN, EILEEN L. "'BOYS CAN BE ANYTHING': EFFECT OF BARBIE PLAY ON GIRLS' CAREER COGNITIONS." SEX ROLES, VOL. 70, 2014, PP. 195-208. [HTTPS://LINK.SPRINGER.COM/ARTICLE/10.1007/S11199-014-0347-Y](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11199-014-0347-y).

THIS STUDY TALKS ABOUT HOW GIRLS WHO PLAY WITH BARBIE DOLLS, VERSUS CONTROL MRS. POTATO HEAD, REPORT FEWER FUTURE CAREER OPTIONS FOR THEMSELVES AS OPPOSED TO BOYS. I PLAN TO USE THIS TO, AGAIN, SHOW HOW BARBIES TELL GIRLS AND WOMEN HOW THEY SHOULD BE, HOW SHE CAN NEGATIVELY INFLUENCE SELF-PERCEPTION, AND HOW HER ORIGINAL MESSAGE IS LOST.

- "THE BARBIE EFFECT - DOLLS, BEAUTY STANDARDS AND BODY IMAGE ISSUES." YOUTUBE, UPLOADED BY VITAMIN STREE, 13 NOV. 2018, [HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/GI0LVPJST2W?SI=KMS9GIKXDCQ8DKUK](https://youtu.be/GI0LVPJST2W?si=KMS9GIKXDCQ8DKUK).

THIS VIDEO TALKS ABOUT BARBIE'S UNREALISTIC BODY AND HOW MATTEL IS ONLY JUST CREATING NEW BODY TYPES FOR THEIR DOLLS. I PLAN TO USE THIS TO HELP HIGHLIGHT HOW UNREALISTIC BARBIE'S PROPORTIONS ARE AND HOW THE DOLLS ARE, IRONICALLY, TRYING TO FIT INTO TODAY'S WORLD.

- "THE HISTORY OF BARBIE | A GUIDED TOUR BY TRIXIE MATTEL." YOUTUBE, UPLOADED BY TRIXIE MATTEL, 20 MAR. 2023, [HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/WZVE3D8UWQ8?SI=ENUEJ21VWW54IFZY](https://youtu.be/wzve3d8uwq8?si=enuej21vww54ifzy).

THIS VIDEO GOES OVER THE HISTORY OF BARBIE DOLLS FROM THEIR CONCEPTION TO PRESENT DAY. IT ALSO TALKS ABOUT HOW BARBIES HAVE CHANGED OVER THE YEARS ACCORDING TO POPULAR CULTURE. I PLAN TO USE THIS TO SHOW HOW EXPECTATIONS FOR WOMEN'S LOOKS, DURING THEIR RESPECTIVE DECADES, WERE EXPRESSED THROUGH THE DOLLS.

- ZHANG, DANYI & WANG, SIYU & XU, NUO & WANG, DAWEI. "HOW DOES BARBIE INFLUENCE THE AESTHETIC STANDARDS OF GROWING CHILDREN?." LECTURE NOTES IN EDUCATION PSYCHOLOGY AND PUBLIC MEDIA, VOL. 4, NO. 1, 2023, PP. 585-590, [HTTPS://WWW.RESEARCHGATE.NET/PUBLICATION/371384481_HOW_DOES_BARBIE_INFLUENCE_THE_AESTHETIC_STANDARDS_OF_GROWING_CHILDREN#](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/371384481_how_does_barbie_influence_the_aesthetic_standards_of_growing_children#). ACCESSED 2 MAY 2024.

THIS STUDY EXPLORES HOW BARBIE'S FIGURE INFLUENCES YOUNG GIRLS' SELF-PERCEPTION. I PLAN TO USE THIS TO FURTHER MY POINT THAT BARBIE'S DEFAULT BODY TYPE CAN HAVE NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON CHILDREN.