



Barbie Culture (Cultural Icons series)

Mary F. Rogers

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This book uses one of the most popular accessories of childhood, the Barbie doll, to explain key aspects of cultural meaning.

Some readings would see Barbie as reproducing ethnicity and gender in a particularly coarse and damaging way - a cultural icon of racism and sexism. Rogers develops a broader, more challenging picture. She shows how the cultural meaning of Barbie is more ambiguous than the narrow, appearance-dominated model that is attributed to the doll. For a start, Barbie's sexual identity is not clear-cut. Similarly her class situation is ambiguous. But all interpretations agree that, with her enormous range of lifestyle `accessories', Barbie exists to consume. Her body is the perfect metaphor of modern times: plastic, standardized and oozing fake sincerity.

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