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AN ANALYSIS OF MATTEL'S ICONIC BARBIE: ROLE MODEL OR UNREALISTIC
IDEAL?

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to determine if Mattel's iconic Barbie was an inspiring role model or represented an unattainable ideal for its consumers in terms of career aspirations, cultural diversity, and body diversity in 2018. The messages that Mattel conveyed through its Fashionistas and Career doll lines were analyzed using the content analysis method. The findings showed that Mattel sent conflicting messages to girls in all three areas. These mixed messages may ultimately affect the socialization process of these young consumers. Future research could determine the types of messages that Mattel is sending through its other lines.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	iii
LIST OF TABLES	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
Chapter 2 Background/Literature Review	4
Barbie’s Origins	4
Design Limitations	5
Recent Doll Studies	6
Examples of Dolls’ Negative Effects on Consumers	8
Financial Impact and Mattel’s Reaction	10
Chapter 3 Methodology	12
Chapter 4 Results/Discussion	17
Style Focus with Little Mention of Professionalism in the Fashionistas Line	17
Barbie as Both Professional and Fashion Icon in the Career Line	19
Marketing Mixed Messages	22
Cultural and Body Diversity Both Favored in Fashionistas Line	24
Cultural Diversity More Prevalent than Body Diversity in Mattel’s Career Line	27
More Marketing Mixed Messages	30
Chapter 5 Conclusion	34
BIBLIOGRAPHY	38

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Crazy for Coral Doll.....25

Figure 2. Polka Dot Fun Doll.....26

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Comprehensive List of Dolls Studied in Career and Fashionistas Lines	13
Table 2. Variable Percentages and Counts for Fashionistas Dolls.....	17
Table 3. Variable Percentages and Counts for Career Dolls.....	20
Table 4. Variable Percentages and Counts for Terms in Product Features Descriptions.....	28
Table 5. Variable Percentages and Counts for Packaging	29
Table 6. Variable Percentages and Counts for Images of Dolls	31

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In recent years, there have been numerous female role models who have inspired young girls across America. Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton showed Americans that a woman could run for president. Motivational talk show host, author, and actress, Oprah Winfrey, worked relentlessly to spread positive messages of female empowerment all around the world. She showed through her own example what girls from diverse cultural backgrounds could achieve through hard work and perseverance. Popular plus-size model, Ashley Graham, worked to redefine new standards of beauty on the runway. There has been undeniable progress for women in the areas of career advancement, cultural diversity, and education about body acceptance.

Despite this progress, there seems to be room for improvement in all three areas. First, while women are advancing in their jobs, they still have a long way to go. There is an invisible glass ceiling that still restricts women's career advancement opportunities (Wright & Baxter, 2000). Some women are trying to break the glass ceiling and are obtaining higher levels of education (Engeln, 2017). However, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2011), men are more than fifty percent more likely to obtain jobs in the technical and mathematical fields, and greater than three times more likely to get into the architecture and engineering fields (as cited in Sherman & Zurbriggen, 2014). Therefore, in an era when women are encouraged to follow their dreams, it still seems they are having a hard time entering many of the occupations within STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math). Second, there have also been major strides in terms of cultural diversity in the United States. For example, Ursula Burns was

the first African-American woman to become a Fortune 500 company CEO (Adamczyk, 2017). Despite her accomplishment, there has not been as much progress as there could be in the workplace. For example, LeanIn.org's and McKinsey & Company's (2018) study of corporate women in the United States found that only 4% of Women of Color reached the C-Suite, which consists of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and those who directly report to them, and only 4% became Senior Vice-Presidents (SVPs). Third, women are also receiving mixed messages in the area of body acceptance. On the internet, many women are speaking out against fat shaming (Barnes, 2017). However, this has not discouraged girls from engaging in dangerous dieting behaviors. Author Renee Engeln (2017), states that "Thirty-four percent of five-year-old girls engage in deliberate dietary restraint at least 'sometimes'" (Engeln, 2017, p. 3). Therefore, despite recent encouragement from female role models, there is still limited progress in the areas of career goals, cultural diversity, and body image.

Young girls receive their first introduction to gender-laden, societal messages when they interact with dolls at an early age. Socialization occurs when children learn about and internalize the values of their culture, often through the activity of play (Sherman & Zurbriggen, 2014). A popular form of play for young girls is interacting with Barbie dolls. In fact, Rogers (1999) stated that 99% of American girls own one or more Barbie dolls (as cited in Sherman & Zurbriggen, 2014). Turkel (1998) stated that Barbie dolls send messages to girls about their roles in society (as cited in Sherman & Zurbriggen, 2014). Barbie dolls are significant in the socialization process of children.

The purpose of my study is to examine and determine whether Barbie represents a positive role model for girls or continues to perpetuate an unrealistic ideal in the areas of career modeling, cultural diversity, and body acceptance in 2018. In this study, I examine the messages

that Mattel sends to its consumers through its Fashionistas and Career doll lines by using the content analysis method. Drawing on a sample of 33 Fashionistas dolls and 34 Career dolls, my findings indicate that Mattel sends mixed messages to girls about career aspirations, cultural diversity, and body diversity. While the Career line showcases numerous opportunities for women, it is still very fashion-focused. My findings also show that the Fashionistas line highlights cultural and body diversity more than the Career line did. This research provides insights into the varied messages that Mattel conveys to girls through those lines. These inconsistent messages may influence the socialization process of Mattel's young consumers.

Chapter 2

Background/Literature Review

Barbie's Origins

Ruth Handler, one of the founders of Mattel, was the original creator of the very first Barbie doll. After witnessing her daughter, Barbara, playing with paper dolls, Mrs. Handler was inspired to create her own three-dimensional doll. She ultimately named the Barbie doll after Barbara (Weissman, 1999). Mrs. Handler wanted the doll to represent an adult woman, since she noticed that Barbara and her friends liked to play with the paper dolls that resembled grown women (Gerber, 2009). Her instinct to model the doll in this way was later confirmed by experts. According to Psychologist Susan Linn (2008), many children like to pretend that they are adults, because they wish to emulate them. Branding expert Martin Lindstrom (2004) refers to this as the “mirror effect.” He explained that this occurs when children imitate their parents’ responsibilities by playing with toys (Lindstrom, 2004). By playing with dolls, children can act out adult roles.

Barbie’s initial introduction, however, came with some backlash. Mrs. Handler debuted the original Barbie doll in 1959 at the New York Toy Fair (Ziobro, 2016). She came up with Barbie’s proportions, which were 39-21-33 (Gerber, 2009), by examining Lilli, a German sex doll (Dockterman, 2016). Since the beginning of Barbie’s history, women’s groups have argued that these proportions were unattainable (Ziobro, 2016). Therefore, the Barbie doll initially set an impossible body standard. Additionally, some of Mattel’s competitors did not believe that the

Barbie doll would be successful since they did not think that a doll with breasts would sell (Dockterman, 2016). This idea connects to objectification theory, in which others place an emphasis on women's bodies instead of on their other characteristics (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). The fact that the image of the doll was modeled after a German sex doll and that Barbie had large breasts, which were not in proportion to her tiny waist, implied that the focus of the doll's appearance was sexual in nature. Despite these critiques, Mrs. Handler decided to continue with her idea. She chose to name the doll, "Barbie Teenage Fashion Model" (Gerber, 2009, p. 17). She also used the song, "Barbie You're Beautiful" in order to promote her doll (Weissman, 1999, p. 10). Thus, in 1959, it seemed that Mattel's primary focus was on the doll's looks instead of her abilities.

Design Limitations

From her initial introduction, it became clear that Barbie had limitations in the area of body diversity. When Barbie first came out, Mattel's focus was on slimness. In 1963, Mattel came out with a doll called Barbie Baby-Sits, which included a book telling children that if they wanted to lose weight, they should not eat (Dockterman, 2016). This clearly relayed the message to girls that if they wanted to look like Barbie, they should limit their food intake. And, limited body diversity was not the only area of diversity lacking in Barbie's initial introduction.

Mattel made only small strides in showing cultural and racial diversity through the Barbie brand. In 1967, Mattel came out with an African-American Barbie (Ziobro, 2016), and in 1980, Mattel came out with more diverse dolls that represented people from different parts of the world, such as from Asia (Abrams, 2016). While Mattel's Barbie dolls started to reflect different

ethnicities, critics noticed one major problem. These dolls' features still reflected Caucasian features (Dockterman, 2016). These dolls did not fully represent the consumers that were included in Mattel's target market. This emphasis on highlighting Caucasian features connects to an earlier, landmark study called "...the Dolls Test" (Clark & Clark, 1947, p. 169). Researchers Clark and Clark (1947) surveyed two hundred fifty-three children between the ages of three and seven. When given a choice between playing with a Caucasian doll versus playing with a doll that represented a Woman of Color, they found that sixty-seven percent of the children ($n=169$) wished to play with the Caucasian doll (Clark & Clark, 1947). This showed that children at that time had been receiving specific messages about race from their society, and selected their dolls accordingly.

Mattel not only received backlash over its Barbie dolls in the areas of body image and cultural diversity, but in the area of career aspirations, as well. Barbie dolls represented women in mostly feminine careers. For example, Mattel created dancer Barbie dolls, nurse dolls, and model dolls (Rampell, 2014). In addition, in 1992, Mattel came out with a Barbie doll that told children that math was a hard subject for her (Dockterman, 2016). This connects to the stereotype that women had trouble in math-related fields. Therefore, until recently, Barbie only embodied a narrow range of feminine roles.

Recent Doll Studies

Contemporary researchers have confirmed that Barbie has modeled limited career opportunities for women. For example, Sherman and Zurbriggen (2014), studied how Barbie affected how four-year-old to seven-year-old girls from the United States envisioned their career

options for the future. Some of the thirty-seven girls in their sample interacted with a Barbie doll, while some interacted with a Mrs. Potato head doll. After they played with the dolls, the girls had to answer whether or not they would be able to work in ten different types of careers. The researchers also asked them whether or not boys could work in those careers. After the girls in their sample set interacted with the Barbie doll, they viewed their career opportunities as limited. This finding held true regardless of whether or not the job opportunities were in traditionally male-dominated or female-dominated fields (Sherman & Zurbriggen, 2014). Such findings connect to the glass ceiling hypothesis. The glass ceiling is a hypothetical barrier that limits the career paths for women (Wright & Baxter, 2000). When girls play with dolls that have limited career options, researchers believe they internalize the messages about the societal glass ceiling. Since girls are socialized through dolls, they receive and process cultural beliefs from them (Sherman & Zurbriggen, 2014), which can directly affect how they view their career opportunities.

Multiple studies have shown that seeing and interacting with dolls influences how girls perceive body image, as well. In one study, Dittmar and Halliwell (2006), examined five-year-old to eight-year-old girls' views regarding ideal body type. They showed 162 girls various images. Some were of Barbie dolls, some were of average-sized Emme dolls, and some did not depict dolls at all. The girls who viewed the Barbie doll images later relayed that they did not feel confident about their body sizes and believed that a slim body was better than a curvy body (Dittmar & Halliwell, 2006). Similarly, a study by Anschutz & Engels (2010) examined how interacting with slim dolls affected how much food 117 Dutch girls consumed. These six-year-old to ten-year-old children interacted with a slim doll, a doll with normal proportions, or a control toy. The researchers found that children who interacted with the doll with normal

proportions consumed more food afterward than the other girls did in the study (Anschutz & Engels, 2010). Likewise, researchers Worobey and Worobey (2013) studied how forty 3.5-year-old to 5.5-year-old girls viewed dolls with different body types. After interacting with a slim, average, or overweight doll, the girls had to tell which descriptors matched each doll. The researchers found that the children used positive descriptor words for the slim and average dolls and negative descriptor words for the overweight doll (Worobey & Worobey, 2013). Finally, a study conducted by Rice, Prichard, Tiggemann, and Slater (2016) also showed how Barbie influenced girls' perceptions of different body types. They studied the behavior of five-year-old to eight-year old South Australian girls. Their sample set of 160 girls were either told to play with a Barbie doll, look at a Barbie doll, look at pictures of Barbie dolls, or interact with a control toy. The researchers found that the girls who were involved with the Barbie scenarios started to view a slim body as the ideal body type (Rice et al., 2016). These studies clearly indicate that playing with Barbie dolls leads young girls to view thin bodies as the desirable option.

Examples of Dolls' Negative Effects on Consumers

The Barbie doll even seemed to negatively affect Ruth Handler's own granddaughter, Stacey Handler. Playing with her grandmother's Barbie doll influenced her view of the ideal body type. In her poem, "On and Off the Shelves" (Handler, 2000, p. 11) Stacey described the strong pull that Barbie's advertising had on children, like herself. Imagining herself as a Barbie doll, she said:

The children see me looking my best,
taking over almost every toy store,

and because of brilliant advertising
they always come back for more.

Stacey Handler was emphasizing the strong influence of Barbie's perfect image on young consumers like herself. Ever since the 1940s and 1950s, marketers have increasingly tried to sell products to children (Pecora, 1998). Schor (2014) confirms that children have become integral parts of the consumer marketplace since they display the strongest desire for particular products and brands within their households. Stacey indicated that she felt a strong pressure from advertisers to buy Barbie products, since she was a part of their target market. Stacey continued her poem, "On and Off the Shelves," by saying "I am plastic/ unrealistic..." (Handler, 2000, p. 13). It seemed that Stacey internalized the message that Barbie was sending that she should have a flawless and thin body. She warned girls, "Society gave me my body;/ don't let it give you yours" (Handler, 2000, p. 13). Therefore, from Stacey's perspective, Barbie was the medium that taught her the societal message that thin was beautiful. In her book, Stacey alludes to the fact that this led to her issues with body image, and ultimately her struggle with an eating disorder (Handler, 2000). Unfortunately, many other women would follow in Stacey's footsteps.

Some women have gone to great lengths to look like Barbie. For example, in 2012, one model, Valeria Lukyanova, resorted to plastic surgery in order to emulate a Barbie doll (Dockterman, 2016). In essence, she resorted to *plastic* surgery to look more like a *plastic* doll. Researchers refer to this obsession with physical perfection as *Barbie Syndrome*. This condition occurs when women alter their bodies in order to achieve the unrealistic proportions and features of the doll (Rössner, 2014). The fact that this is a named syndrome indicates its pervasiveness. Therefore, it seems that many women internalized the messages about body image from Barbie and took drastic measures in order to fit what they perceived to be the ultimate beauty ideal.

Financial Impact and Mattel's Reaction

After receiving all of this negative feedback, Mattel made some changes to its Barbie line. In the third quarter of 2015, Mattel's earnings dropped by thirty-three percent (Ziobro, 2015). Mattel's earnings had been decreasing for eight quarters (Ziobro, 2015). The company had started to revamp the Barbie brand before the sales decline, but really started to alter the brand image after it. During the 2000s, Mattel started to expand the career options that it presented to girls through its Barbie dolls. In 2011, a researcher who studied architectural history, Dr. Despina Stratigakos, realized that only seventeen percent of women actually became architects (Anonymous, 2011). She convinced Mattel to create Architect Barbie (Anonymous, 2011). As an architect, Barbie was able to step into a male-dominated field. In 2014, Mattel created a marketing campaign for Barbie entitled "... 'Anything is Possible' ... " (Bulik, 2014, p. 24). In that year, Mattel released Entrepreneur Barbie (Rampell, 2014). Mattel was sending the message to girls that they too could come up with innovative ideas. Later, Mattel reshaped its Barbie brand even more in order to reflect the diversity in its customer base.

In the past few years, Mattel released Barbie dolls with different body shapes, body sizes, and ethnicities. Right before the turn of the century, Mattel created a line of Barbie dolls called My Design. Children could select their dolls' hair, eye color, and skin color (Anonymous, 1999). Children could create their own Barbie dolls to represent them and their unique characteristics. In 2015, Mattel also added more dolls to its Fashionistas line that had differing hair, skin colors, and facial features (Ziobro, 2016). In total, Mattel came out with dolls that had "...24 different hair styles, 30 different hair colors, 22 eye colors, 14 face shapes, and seven additional skin tones" (Wilhelm, 2016). After this introduction, girls had a better chance of finding a doll that looked like them. In 2016, Mattel added curvy, short, and tall Barbie dolls to its growing

assortment of dolls (Abrams, 2016). The company explained that it made these changes in order to appeal to girls with varying body types and ethnicities (Wilhelm, 2016). Girls were able to see a less limited version of beauty. Mattel also created a new line that presented girls with more diverse female role models. For example, one doll in the "... 'Shero' ..." line is Ibtihaj Muhammad, an inspiring Muslim Olympic fencer (Hannan, 2017, p. 05). With this addition, Muslim girls could now find a Barbie doll that represented someone who shared their background.

These new lines positively affected Mattel's profitability. In Mattel's 2017 10-K, the company listed Barbie as a "...power brand..." (Mattel, 2017, p. 3). Between December 31, 2015 and December 31, 2016, Mattel's gross sales for Barbie products grew by thirteen percent. The Fashionistas and Career lines significantly contributed to this growth (Mattel, 2017). In 2018, Barbie's gross sales increased by fourteen percent (Mattel, 2019). It seems that Mattel's changes to the Barbie brand positively impacted sales from 2016 to the present. Based on the increase in sales, it was clear that Barbie was reaching more girls than ever before. Given this growth and extended reach, it is important to examine the current messages that the Barbie brand is sending to its consumers, specifically the messages from the Fashionistas and Career lines.

Chapter 3

Methodology

In this study, I conducted a content analysis which focused on the meanings conveyed by Mattel's online descriptions of Barbie dolls, the images of the dolls themselves, and the product packaging. To accomplish the content analysis, I employed a semiotic approach that focused on the language and imagery. When prospective customers are looking to purchase Barbie dolls online, they look at the online descriptions, the images of the dolls, and the packaging. These descriptions and images communicate powerful, influential messages about the Barbie brand to both parents and their children. This study did not focus on Mattel's advertising, since those advertisements were filtered through an advertising agency. I chose to conduct a content analysis instead of a survey, because I was examining the messages that Mattel was sending, not focusing on how the parents and children received those messages. Extensive research has already been conducted in the latter area (Dittmar & Halliwell, 2006; Sherman & Zurbriggen, 2014; Worobey & Worobey, 2013).

I drew a random sample of both online descriptions and images from the Barbie Fashionistas and Career doll lines. In total, there were 68 Fashionistas dolls and 65 Career dolls (Mattel, 2018). I selected every other doll from both lines to analyze approximately 50% of the total population of dolls, resulting in an examination of 34 Fashionistas dolls and 35 Career dolls (see Table 1). Studying 50% of the dolls in each category was representative of the larger population in that category. I analyzed dolls from these two categories, because I examined only

those Barbie dolls that portrayed realistic outcomes of adult development rather than Barbie dolls that depicted fantasy scenarios.

Table 1. Comprehensive List of Dolls Studied in Career and Fashionistas Lines

Career	Fashionistas
Laurie Hernandez Barbie Doll	Pretty in Python
Barbie Ballet Wishes Doll	Ice Cream Romper
Barbie Careers Chef	Crazy for Coral
Barbie Farm Vet Doll & Playset	Rock 'N' Roll Plaid
Barbie Made to Move Doll-Turquoise Top	Peace & Love Doll & Fashions
Barbie Cupcake Chef Doll	Everyday Chic Doll & Fashions
Barbie Ice Skater	Pretty in Paisley Doll & Fashions
Barbie Farmer Doll	Leather & Ruffles Doll & Fashions
Barbie Eye Doctor	Tutu Cool
Barbie Tennis Coach	Double Denim Look
Barbie Baby Doctor Playset	Lovely in Lilac
Barbie Zoo Doctor Playset	Polka Dot Fun
Barbie Scientist Career Doll with Microscope	Power Print
Barbie Animal Rescuer Doll & Woodland Center Playset	Platinum Pop
Barbie Builder Doll & Mega Bloks Playset	Cactus Cutie
Barbie Eye Doctor #2	Sweet & Sporty Doll & Fashions
Barbie Builder Doll & Mega Bloks Playset #2	Happy Hued Doll & Fashions
Barbie Astronaut Doll (in set with Space Scientist Doll)	Emoji Fun
Barbie Space Scientist Doll (in set with Astronaut Doll)	Floral Frills
Barbie Pizza Chef Doll and Playset	To Tie Die For
Barbie Gymnastics Coach Dolls & Playset	Purely Pinstriped
Barbie Pilot Doll	Seeing Stars
Barbie Ultimate Kitchen Playset with Barbie Chef Doll	Overall Awesome
Barbie Pizza Chef Doll and Playset #2	Pineapple Pop
Barbie TV Camerawoman Doll (Part of TV News Team Dolls Set)	Wear Your Heart
Barbie TV News Anchor Doll (Part of TV News Team Dolls Set)	Purple Lace Romper
Barbie Scientist Doll	102 Doll & Fashions
Barbie Bakery Chef Doll	Curvy with Pink Updo
Barbie Bakery Chef Doll and Playset	B-Fabulous Doll & Fashions
Barbie Robotics Engineer Doll #1	Pizza Pizzazz Doll & Fashions
Barbie Robotics Engineer Doll #2	Original with Purple Glittery Hair
Barbie Made to Move Doll with Brunette Updo	101 Doll & Fashions
Barbie Made to Move Baseball Player Doll	Petite with Brunette Waves
Barbie Made to Move Doll with Brunette Ponytail	Original with White Afro
Barbie Beekeeper Doll & Playset	

I analyzed the data using both quantitative and qualitative analyses. The purpose of quantitative coding was to count the number of times certain words and images occurred. This allowed me to determine the frequency of certain messages that Mattel was sending to young

girls. The purpose of the qualitative analysis was to determine the meanings behind those messages. Using both types of analyses provided me with the information necessary to determine if a widespread phenomenon was occurring, and also gave me the opportunity to gain more knowledge about that phenomenon by examining specific examples of it in greater detail.

I developed 11 codes for the product features descriptions to use during the quantitative coding process. I selected the codes, *aspirations*, *professional*, and *possibilities*, because they all showed that the descriptions had a professional focus. I chose the codes, *style* and *hair*, because they indicated that the descriptions had a fashion/beauty focus. The codes, *diversity*, *skin tone*, *original*, *petite*, *tall*, and *curvy*, showed that the descriptions emphasized the diverse looks and body types of the dolls. If a particular code was included in a doll's product description, I coded it as 1. If the particular code was not included in a doll's product description, I coded it as 0. I then calculated the number of product descriptions in each line that contained each of the codes by adding up the 1s.

I also created 15 quantitative codes for the images of the dolls. The codes, *Caucasian* and *Women of Color* were meant to capture the cultural diversity of the lines. The codes, *long hair or updo*, *short hair/cropped*, *high heels*, *flat shoes or barefoot*, *pink/pastels*, *dresses/skirts*, and *pants or shorts*, were meant to illustrate the dolls' appearances. The codes, *thin/original*, *average/curvy*, *petite*, and *tall* all demonstrated whether or not diversity was present in terms of body shape/size. If a particular code was evident by looking at the picture of the doll, I coded it as 1. If a particular code was not evident by looking at the picture of the doll, I coded it as 0. I calculated the number of dolls in each line that matched each code by adding up the 1s.

I developed two quantitative codes for the product packaging. The code, *pink/pastels*, would indicate that the packaging reinforced the notion of femininity. I selected the code, *body*

type, because it would show whether or not Mattel was advertising diversity in the line on the packaging itself. If a particular code was evident by looking at the packaging, I coded it as 1. If a particular code was not evident by looking at the packaging, I coded it as 0. I calculated the number of packages in each line that matched each code by adding up the 1s.

I created several tables with the information that I received from the quantitative coding process. I generated one table that listed all of the percentages and counts for the codes for the product features descriptions, images of the dolls, and the packaging for the Fashionistas line. I created another table that listed all of the percentages and counts for the codes for the product features descriptions, images of the dolls, and the packaging for the Career line. These tables allowed me to examine both lines individually. I then generated three comparison tables for both the Fashionistas and Career dolls that enabled me to determine the similarities and differences between the two lines in terms of the product features descriptions, images of the dolls, and the packaging.

Next, I created 14 qualitative codes. The codes, *female inspirational role model*, *professional focus*, *dual fashion and career focus*, *limitless possibilities*, *traditional feminine realm*, *dual beauty and career focus*, and *masculine reference*, all enabled me to determine whether or not Mattel had made strides in showing Barbie as an empowered female role model with many career opportunities. I used the codes, *fashion focus*, *true-to-life body type*, *diversified features*, *beauty focus*, *body flexibility*, *feminine hairstyle*, and *pink details*, to gain more insight into Mattel's possible emphasis on appearance and/or diversity. I developed those qualitative codes using the open coding process. I determined the initial codes by using both thematic and line-by-line methods. I then used the process of focused coding to apply the codes to the text. I

recorded all of the codes and their meanings in my code book. With all of this information, I drafted an analytic memo (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995).

My analytic memo focused on the ways in which the lines showcased career opportunities and the ways in which they illustrated feminine stereotypes. Two of the sections of my memo were dedicated to examining the Fashionistas and Career lines individually, and the final section compared both lines. I used the *professional focus* and the *fashion focus* codes for the first two sections of the memo, and the *dual fashion and career focus* code for the last section of my memo. This memo allowed me to develop themes that emerged from the codes, and provided the basis for the eventual analysis.

Chapter 4

Results/Discussion

Style Focus with Little Mention of Professionalism in the Fashionistas Line

In the Fashionistas line, one would expect to find extensive mention of style, since the entire line is dedicated to one career: modeling. Indeed, the word, *style*, was present in 100% of the product features descriptions for the dolls in this line ($n=34$) (see Table 2) (Mattel, 2018).

Table 2. Variable Percentages and Counts for Fashionistas Dolls

	%	n
<i>Words Used in Product Features Description</i>		
Aspirations	0%	0
Professional	0%	0
Possibilities	6%	2
Style	100%	34
Diversity	100%	34
Hair	76%	26
Skin Tone	47%	16
Original (In terms of body shape)	35%	12
Petite	24%	8
Tall	9%	3
Curvy	32%	11
<i>Images of Dolls</i>		
Caucasian	47%	16
Women of Color ¹	53%	18
Long Hair or Updo	79%	27
Short Hair/Cropped	21%	7
High Heels	68%	23
Flat Shoes or Barefoot	38%	13
Pink/Pastels	85%	29
Thin/Original (In terms of body shape)	35%	12
Average/Curvy	32%	11
Petite	24%	8
Tall	9%	3
Feminine Career	100%	34
Masculine Career	0%	0
Dresses/Skirts	91%	31
Pants or Shorts	18%	6
<i>Packaging</i>		
Pink/Pastels	100%	24
Body Type	25%	6
¹ Coded as anything not explicitly "Caucasian"		

These descriptions focused excessively on the fashion choices of the dolls. For example, the Crazy for Coral doll's product features description explains, "Barbie® Fashionistas™ doll includes a stylish dress with a black halter top and tapered coral hi-low skirt with a shimmery gold print" (Mattel, 2018). In this product description, Mattel is focusing on the doll's outfit, which includes a *shoulder-baring* halter top and a *leg-baring* skirt. The emphasis on *showing skin* creates a sexual focus for the doll. Likewise, the Pretty in Python doll is also wearing a skin-baring outfit. This doll's product description says, "Barbie® Fashionistas™ doll looks 'pretty in python' with a pink off-the-shoulder dress with python print and ruffle hem" (Mattel, 2018). An *off-the-shoulder* dress is yet another example of a skin-revealing outfit. This continued emphasis on Barbie's sexuality recalls Barbie's origin as a sex symbol (Dockterman, 2016) and solidifies that image for current, young consumers. This idea links to objectification theory, which explains the phenomenon whereby others view women as bodies instead of as actual human beings (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). By showcasing Fashionistas dolls in skin-revealing outfits, Mattel is sending a message to young girls that the focal point of the dolls is on their bodies.

Interestingly, along with this body focus, Mattel also seems to be sending simultaneous messages about the limitless possibilities for women in the product features descriptions for the Fashionistas dolls. In a line dedicated to fashion, one would expect to find little or no mention of professional opportunities. Indeed, the words, *aspirations* and *professional*, did not show up in any of the descriptions for this line. The word, *possibilities*, is present, but only in 6% of the descriptions ($n=2$) (see Table 2) (Mattel, 2018). However, while the mention of the actual term, *possibilities*, is only in a few of the product descriptions, the notion that girls have limitless opportunities is indeed present in many of the dolls' descriptions. For example, the Ice Cream Romper Doll's product description states that the Fashionistas dolls "...let you explore who you

want to be because with Barbie, you can be anything!” (Mattel, 2018). Mattel is suggesting that girls can be anything they want to be, while still linking those possibilities to fashion and beauty. Similarly, the Happy Hued Doll & Fashions description says, “Try on different looks and tell all kinds of stories because you can be anything with Barbie®!” (Mattel, 2018). Interestingly, Mattel continues to use its tagline, “...you can be anything...” in a line that only shows women as models (Mattel, 2018). In 2017, 78.4% of models were women (Bureau of Labor Statistics). It is interesting to note that Mattel is still highlighting the notion of endless possibilities within a line that showcases women in predominately feminine careers.

Barbie as Both Professional and Fashion Icon in the Career Line

It should come as no surprise that in a line dedicated to showcasing Barbie in various careers, one would find evidence of numerous professional terms and phrases in the descriptions and images of the dolls. That evidence is indeed present in the Barbie Career line. The word, *aspirations*, appears in 17% of the product features descriptions ($n=6$), while the word, *professional*, appears in 43% of the descriptions ($n=15$). Also, the word, *possibilities*, appears in 54% of the descriptions ($n=19$) (Mattel, 2018). In addition, data analysis reveals that 51% of the dolls in this line have masculine careers ($n=18$), while 49% of the dolls have feminine careers ($n=17$) (see Table 3). Masculine and feminine careers were determined by the total number of men or women in those careers, based on multiple sources of gender populations (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017; Data USA, 2016; Holcomb, 2007; Mattel, 2018; Olgin, 2018; United States Department of Labor, 2011; WCMH, 2018).

Table 3. Variable Percentages and Counts for Career Dolls

	%	n
<i>Words Used in Product Features Description</i>		
Aspirations	17%	6
Professional	43%	15
Possibilities	54%	19
Style	34%	12
Diversity	0%	0
Hair	26%	9
Skin Tone	0%	0
<i>Images of Dolls</i>		
Caucasian	51%	18
Women of Color ¹	49%	17
Long Hair or Updo	89%	31
Short Hair/Cropped	11%	4
High Heels	9%	3
Flat Shoes or Barefoot	91%	32
Pink/Pastels	86%	30
Thin/Original (In terms of body shape)	80%	28
Average/Curvy	20%	7
Feminine Career	49%	17
Masculine Career	51%	18
Dresses/Skirts	31%	11
Pants or Shorts	66%	23
<i>Packaging</i>		
Pink/Pastels	100%	26
Body Type	0%	0
¹ Coded as anything not explicitly "Caucasian"		

These statistics demonstrate evidence of career *terms* in its product features descriptions and Mattel's inclusion of a wide variety of career options. The *notion* of professionalism and opportunities for women is also present throughout the product features descriptions and is also reflected in the images of the dolls themselves. For example, the Barbie Careers Chef doll's product features description explains, "Barbie® knows anything is possible... Chefs need to know about food science, measurement and ingredients. An artistic eye and an expert palate help them to create delicious meals we all want to eat!" (Mattel, 2018). This description explains what the chef doll must do in her job in order to be successful. Mattel has also included a frying pan

with the doll to provide children with access to the proper tool for the craft (Mattel, 2018). Both the description and the accessory that is included with the job are focused on the professional responsibilities of chefs. In addition, the product features description for the Barbie Farmer Doll states, “Dream big with Barbie® career dolls! Barbie® doll can take on any goal, and this farmer doll wants to feed the world. Farmers plant crops and take care of their animals, whatever the weather” (Mattel, 2018). This description focuses on Barbie’s responsibilities as a farmer, such as tending to the crops and taking care of the livestock. Mattel is highlighting the Farmer Doll’s professional capabilities. Through their entire Career line, Mattel is relaying the message to its young consumers that they have the opportunity to enter into many careers. This challenges the glass ceiling hypothesis, which explains that there are barriers that limit a woman’s opportunity to reach higher levels in her career (Wright & Baxter, 2000). With its Career line, Mattel is sending the message to girls that they can flourish in numerous careers, regardless of obstacles that might deter their progress along the way.

However, alongside these empowering messages, there is also evidence showing that Mattel is still placing a strong focus on the dolls’ fashion choices, as well. The word, *style*, appears in 34% of the product features descriptions for the career dolls ($n=12$) (see Table 3) (Mattel, 2018). Therefore, Mattel is emphasizing the appearance of many of its dolls. For example, Mattel explains in the description for the Barbie Builder Doll & Mega Bloks Playset that “Barbie® doll is ready to bring her dream structures to life wearing blue jeans, a t-shirt with yellow vest and boots. A pink hardhat and orange tool belt make sure she's safe and stylish” (2018). Based on this description, it seems that the doll’s outfit is as important to her success as a builder as her skills are. In addition, Mattel states in the Barbie Farm Vet Doll & Playset that “Barbie farm vet doll is ready to see her patients in a cute outfit of pants, top, hooded vest and

tall brown boots” (Mattel, 2018). Mattel is sending the message to girls that what a professional’s outfit looks like is as important to note as what they do for a living. The message is that women should care as much about their outfits as they do about their jobs. Thus, along with the evolution of Barbie as a professional role model, it seems that Mattel is still holding on to its original branding of Barbie as a fashion icon in its Career line.

Marketing Mixed Messages

While the Fashionistas line puts more of an emphasis on style and fashion and the Career line focuses more on professional opportunities, it is interesting that both lines juxtapose the notion of limitless opportunities with the message that trendy fashions are essential to success. And, this juxtaposition takes place in both product lines within individual sentences in the product descriptions. For example, in the product descriptions for many of the Fashionistas dolls, such as the Power Print doll, the Platinum Pop doll, and the Cactus Cutie doll, Mattel includes the sentence, “Switch outfits, swap accessories and learn to create the perfect look to suit your style because with Barbie®, you can be anything!” (Mattel, 2018). The fact that Mattel chose to include this sentence in multiple dolls’ descriptions means that girls who view the Fashionistas dolls on Mattel’s website will be receiving the same message. Additionally, multiple descriptions for the Fashionistas dolls, such as the Rock ‘N’ Roll Plaid doll, the Lovely in Lilac doll, and the Polka Dot Fun doll, state, “With added diversity and more variety in styles, fashions, shoes, and accessories, kids everywhere will have infinitely more ways to spark their imaginations and play out their stories” (Mattel, 2018). This statement is telling girls that fashion should be an

important consideration when role-playing, including this dual emphasis in the descriptions for the Career dolls, as well.

In the Career line, Mattel often places the dolls' job descriptions in the same sentence as the descriptions of what the dolls are wearing. For example, Mattel states that the Barbie Scientist Career Doll with Microscope is "prepared for scientific research wearing blue pants, a shirt with molecule-inspired print, blue shoes and a white lab coat" (2018). By placing the job description adjacent to the fashion description, Mattel is implying that both are equally important and that women should be focused on their outfits in order to be successful, as *being pretty* still matters in terms of getting ahead in life. The Barbie Eye Doctor's product features description also illustrates this same phenomenon. The description says, "Barbie® eye doctor doll is ready to care for her patients' eyes wearing a career-themed outfit complete with accessories that enhance storytelling. Barbie® eye doctor doll is wearing a black top, colorful print skirt, black shoes and white doctor's coat" (Mattel, 2018). This is another example from the Career line of a description that links Barbie's career responsibility (checking patients' vision) with her style choices, indicating that the doll's outfit is just as important as her role as an eye doctor. Therefore, it is clear that Mattel places a dual focus on professionalism and fashion in the product descriptions for the Career dolls. According to researchers Sherman & Zurbriggen, when girls interact with dolls, they are socialized into their cultures and therefore internalize the beliefs of those cultures (2014), and these lessons undoubtedly influence their belief systems. By receiving the message that women have many professional opportunities alongside the notion that women must look good to succeed, girls receive conflicting messages about what their society values from both of the product lines.

Cultural and Body Diversity Both Favored in Fashionistas Line

Mattel includes a great deal of cultural diversity in its Fashionistas line. There is extensive mention of cultural diversity in the dolls' product descriptions. The word, *diversity*, is included in all of the product descriptions ($n=34$), and the word, *skin tone*, is present in 47% of the product descriptions ($n=16$). The images of the dolls themselves also show a great deal of cultural diversity, since 47% of the dolls represent Caucasian women ($n=16$), while 53% of the dolls represent Women of Color ($n=18$) (see Table 2) (Mattel, 2018). For example, the Ice Cream Romper doll represents a woman with a medium skin tone. Her product description makes a general statement about the diversity of the Fashionistas dolls. It says, "Just like your friends, these cool dolls – each with a unique style – have a wide variety of hair colors and styles, eye colors, skin tones and face shapes" (Mattel, 2018). This statement is sending the message to girls that the dolls represent women with many different looks and cultural backgrounds. The Cactus Cutie doll was another doll with a medium skin tone. Her product description also shows the degree of diversity within the Fashionistas line. It states, "Each doll is ultra cool with a unique mix of hair color and style, eye color, skin tone and face shape" (Mattel, 2018). Mattel officially introduced Barbie dolls that represented Women of Color in 1967 (Ziobro, 2016). This line continues the trend to make Barbie representative of all women.

Mattel also stresses body diversity in its advertising for the Fashionistas dolls. According to the product features descriptions, 35% of the dolls in the sample set have original body shapes ($n=12$), 32% are curvy ($n=11$), 24% are petite ($n=8$), and 9% are tall ($n=3$) (Mattel, 2018). This diversity in body shape and size is also advertised on some of the packages for the dolls, as well. 25% of the dolls have references to their body shapes and sizes on their packaging ($n=6$) (see Table 2) (Mattel, 2018). For example, the Crazy for Coral doll has a petite body type, while the

Polka Dot Fun doll has a curvy body type. Mattel chose to include the labels, *petite* and *curvy*, in the dolls' individual product descriptions and to also stamp those labels directly onto their packaging (see Figures 1 and 2).

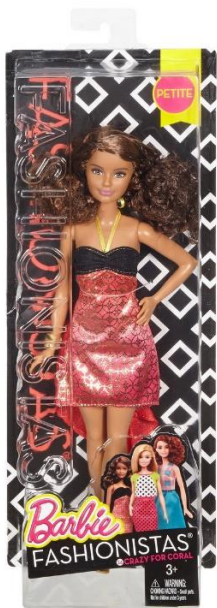


Figure 1. Crazy for Coral Doll

(Mattel, 2018)



Figure 2. Polka Dot Fun Doll

(Mattel, 2018)

Girls can easily see that the Fashionistas dolls are representative of women with many different body types, whether they are viewing the dolls' product descriptions, images, or packaging. These Barbie dolls' new shapes and sizes are very different from Barbie's original, extreme debut proportions of 39-21-33 (Gerber, 2009). This change reflects the current body diversity trend in the modeling industry today. For example, recently, thirty plus-size models participated in the fall 2017 fashion shows, which was an increase of fourteen from the previous season (Safronova, 2017). By including Barbie dolls with many different body types, Mattel is sending girls the message that beauty comes in all shapes and sizes. It also demonstrates that at least one line of the Barbie brand has evolved from the company's original model.

Cultural Diversity More Prevalent than Body Diversity in Mattel's Career Line

While Mattel does not specifically advertise cultural diversity in the product descriptions for the dolls in its Career line, it does show expanded diversity through the images of the dolls themselves. Words that indicate cultural diversity that are included in the product descriptions for the Fashionistas line, such as *skin tone*, are not present in the product descriptions for the dolls in the Career line (see Table 4) (Mattel, 2018).

Table 4. Variable Percentages and Counts for Terms in Product Features Descriptions

	%	n
<i>Aspirations</i>		
Career	17%	6
Fashionistas	0%	0
<i>Professional</i>		
Career	43%	15
Fashionistas	0%	0
<i>Possibilities</i>		
Career	54%	19
Fashionistas	6%	2
<i>Style</i>		
Career	34%	12
Fashionistas	100%	34
<i>Diversity</i>		
Career	0%	0
Fashionistas	100%	34
<i>Hair</i>		
Career	26%	9
Fashionistas	76%	26
<i>Skin Tone</i>		
Career	0%	0
Fashionistas	47%	16
<i>Original (In terms of body shape)</i>		
Career	N/A	N/A
Fashionistas	35%	12
<i>Petite</i>		
Career	N/A	N/A
Fashionistas	24%	8
<i>Tall</i>		
Career	N/A	N/A
Fashionistas	9%	3
<i>Curvy</i>		
Career	N/A	N/A
Fashionistas	32%	11

However, there are an equal number of *Caucasian* and *Women of Color* dolls. 51% of the Career dolls in the sample set are Caucasian ($n=18$), while 49% represent Women of Color ($n=17$) (see Table 3) (Mattel, 2018). For example, the Barbie Animal Rescuer doll has a light skin tone and the Barbie Cupcake Chef doll has a dark skin tone, even though there is no mention of cultural diversity in either of their product descriptions (Mattel, 2018). The fact that Mattel chose to

include an equal amount of Barbie dolls to represent Women of Color (despite the fact that cultural diversity is not echoed in their product descriptions) still sends the message to girls that careers are open and accessible to women of all ethnicities.

There was less evidence of body diversity in Mattel's Career line. The dolls' product features descriptions do not mention the words, *diversity*, *original*, *petite*, *tall*, or *curvy* (see Table 3). Unlike the packaging for the Fashionistas line, the packaging for the Career line does not list the body types of the dolls (see Table 5).

Table 5. Variable Percentages and Counts for Packaging

	%	n
<i>Pink/Pastels</i>		
Career	100%	26
Fashionistas	100%	24
<i>Body Type</i>		
Career	0%	0
Fashionistas	25%	6

Additionally, based on the *images* of the dolls, only 20% of the dolls are average/curvy ($n=7$), while 80% are thin/original ($n=28$) (see Table 3) (Mattel, 2018). For example, even though the Barbie Scientist Doll has an average figure, there is no mention of body diversity in her product description or on her packaging. In addition, the Barbie Ice Skater doll, a thin doll, also does not have any reference to body diversity in her product description or on her packaging (Mattel, 2018). The fact that the overwhelming majority of the Career dolls are thin, along with being successful, sends a message to young consumers that a thin body type is associated with occupational success. This connects to the research finding of Roehling, Roehling, and Pichler (2007), who studied weight issues in the workplace. The researchers found that overweight women experienced weight-related discrimination in the workplace 12 times more often than women who were not overweight (Roehling et al., 2007). By not showing much body diversity in

the Career line, Mattel is sending the message that there is a connection between being thin and being professionally successful.

More Marketing Mixed Messages

While the Fashionistas line mentions cultural diversity in the product descriptions of the dolls while the Career line does not, both the Fashionistas and the Career lines include a substantial amount of cultural diversity in the images of the dolls themselves. In each line, about half of the dolls represent Women of Color. In the Fashionistas line, 53% of the dolls represent Women of Color ($n=18$), and in the Career line, 49% of the dolls in the sample set represent Women of Color ($n=17$) (see Table 6) (Mattel, 2018).

Table 6. Variable Percentages and Counts for Images of Dolls

	%	n
<i>Caucasian</i>		
Career	51%	18
Fashionistas	47%	16
<i>Women of Color¹</i>		
Career	49%	17
Fashionistas	53%	18
<i>Long Hair or Updo</i>		
Career	89%	31
Fashionistas	79%	27
<i>Short Hair/Cropped</i>		
Career	11%	4
Fashionistas	21%	7
<i>High Heels</i>		
Career	9%	3
Fashionistas	68%	23
<i>Flat Shoes or Barefoot</i>		
Career	91%	32
Fashionistas	38%	13
<i>Pink/Pastels</i>		
Career	86%	30
Fashionistas	85%	29
<i>Thin/Original (In terms of body shape)</i>		
Career	80%	28
Fashionistas	35%	12
<i>Average/Curvy</i>		
Career	20%	7
Fashionistas	32%	11
<i>Petite</i>		
Career	N/A	N/A
Fashionistas	24%	8
<i>Tall</i>		
Career	N/A	N/A
Fashionistas	9%	3
<i>Feminine Career</i>		
Career	49%	17
Fashionistas	100%	34
<i>Masculine Career</i>		
Career	51%	18
Fashionistas	0%	0
<i>Dresses/Skirts</i>		
Career	31%	11
Fashionistas	91%	31
<i>Pants or Shorts</i>		
Career	66%	23
Fashionistas	18%	6
¹ Coded as anything not explicitly "Caucasian"		

All of the dolls' product descriptions for the Fashionistas line mention diversity. For example, the product description for the Pretty in Python doll (a doll with a dark skin tone) includes the

sentence, “With added diversity and more variety in styles, fashions, shoes, and accessories, kids everywhere will have infinitely more ways to spark their imaginations and play out their stories” (Mattel, 2018). This is a generalized statement about the diversity within the line. The product description for the Double Denim Look doll (a doll with a light skin tone) makes a similar claim about the diversity in the Fashionistas line. It says, “Explore a wide range of stories and express a variety of styles with the expanded diversity” (Mattel, 2018). By choosing to repeat the term, *diversity*, in its product descriptions in the Fashionistas line, Mattel is sending a message that diversity matters. In contrast, the Career line only illustrates cultural diversity in the images of the dolls. For example, Mattel released two versions of its Barbie Builder Doll, one with a light skin tone and one with a dark skin tone. Mattel also introduced two Barbie Eye Doctor dolls, one with a light skin tone and one with a medium skin tone (Mattel, 2018). This shows girls that women from all ethnicities have equal opportunities to advance in their professions. However, it is interesting to note that there is no mention of diversity in the product descriptions for these dolls (Mattel, 2018). Nonetheless, both lines include cultural diversity to a significant degree.

However, mixed messages emerge as Mattel stresses body diversity in the images and product descriptions of the dolls in the Fashionistas line, while this type of diversity remains extremely limited in its Career line. The Fashionistas line includes both petite and tall dolls, while the Career line does not. In addition, 32% of the dolls are curvy in the Fashionistas line ($n=11$), while only 20% of the dolls in the Career line are average/curvy ($n=7$) (see Table 6) (Mattel, 2018). Mattel also specifically highlights a variety of body types in the product descriptions for its Fashionistas line. For example, Mattel includes the fact that the Everyday Chic and the Platinum Pop dolls were curvy in their written product descriptions (2018). In contrast, the dolls from the Career line do not show as much cultural diversity. For example, the

Barbie Ballet Wishes Doll and the Barbie Animal Rescuer doll both conform to the extremely thin dimensions of the original Barbie doll. For both of these dolls, there is also no mention of body diversity within the dolls' product descriptions (Mattel, 2018). This connects to the findings of Rice, Prichard, Tiggermann, and Slater (2016) who discovered that when playing with Barbie dolls, girls received the message that society values women with thin body types. Since there is little representation of curvy dolls in the Career line, Mattel is sending a message that makes a connection between a thin body type and professionalism.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

My study examined the messages that Mattel sent to consumers through its Barbie line to determine if Barbie was a role model for girls or represented an unrealistic ideal in terms of career aspirations, cultural diversity, and body diversity in 2018. Playing with dolls is part of the socialization process for children (Sherman & Zurbriggen, 2014). Turkel (1998) explained that Barbie dolls in particular teach girls about their society (as cited in Sherman & Zurbriggen, 2014). Therefore, it was important to explore the messages that Barbie dolls conveyed to girls, since these dolls show girls what values are lauded in their society. I used a content analysis method to uncover the messages that Mattel was sending to girls through its Barbie Career and Fashionistas line.

I found that there were mixed messages in terms of Mattel's value signaling. As to be expected, the Fashionistas line was more focused on Barbie as a fashion icon while the Career line portrayed Barbie as a professional icon, although there was some mention of style in the product descriptions for the dolls in the Career line. In addition, while both lines stressed the importance of cultural diversity, Mattel advertised it more in the product descriptions for the dolls in the Fashionistas line than in the product descriptions for the dolls in the Career line. Finally, Mattel highlighted the importance of body diversity more in the Fashionistas line than in the Career line. My findings indicate that Mattel is sending conflicting messages to young consumers about what they should value through the Fashionistas and Career lines.

There were several marketing implications that arose from the research. By still making the Career dolls fashionable with an emphasis on the original thin-body prototype in 2018, Mattel was sticking to the initial branding of Barbie. This provides consumers with a consistent view of Barbie dolls as fashion icons. However, Barbie's thin body and expansive, trendy wardrobe may still be emitting an unattainable ideal for the average, young consumer. In addition, the Barbie brand has now evolved to include lines that show more cultural diversity. This is a positive development, because there has been a surge in immigration in the United States. For example, the US Census Bureau predicted that Hispanics will comprise 23 percent of Americans by 2050 (Palumbo & Teich, 2004). By representing more ethnicities in its Fashionistas and Career lines, Mattel is expanding the target market for Barbie.

There were also several social implications from the research. Since Mattel showcased dolls with many job opportunities in the Career line, girls playing with this line may view their career possibilities as limitless. Before Mattel rapidly expanded their Career line, researchers Sherman and Zurbriggen (2014) found that girls who interacted with Barbie felt that they had fewer career options. Now that Barbie represents women in many different fields, young girls may use Barbie as a role model and dream of many different possibilities for their futures. The fact that Mattel is currently including dolls of various ethnic backgrounds could also allow young girls to view Barbie as a role model. In a study of 669 high schoolers from the United States, researchers Phinney, Cantu, and Kurtz (1997), found that a strong sense of ethnic identity was related to a growth in self-esteem. Therefore, Mattel choosing to expand the cultural diversity in some of its lines is beneficial to improving girls' self-esteem, since girls may feel a greater sense of ethnic identity if they can find dolls that look like themselves. Cultural diversity is also important in the professional world, because there is a positive correlation between companies

that embrace diversity "...and book-to-market equity..." (Roberson & Park, 2007, p. 548). It is important that girls see cultural diversity in the dolls that they play with at a young age, because this diversity will become important when they enter the corporate world. Finally, while Mattel has made some progress by showcasing Fashionistas dolls with many different body types, the lack of body diversity in the Career line could send mixed messages about which body type society values. If girls play with the Fashionistas dolls, they may see Barbie as more of a role model, because the dolls in this line represent multiple body types. However, if girls play with the mostly thin Career dolls, they may believe that thin bodies are ideal. This connects to the findings of researchers Dittmar and Halliwell (2006), who found that girls viewed slim bodies as the ideal body type when viewing images of Barbie dolls. If girls interact with the Career dolls, they may view Barbie's thin body type as the standard that they should emulate. Therefore, Mattel is sending conflicting messages through its Fashionistas and Career lines regarding whether young girls should view Barbie more as a role model or an unattainable ideal.

There were several limitations to this study which could have impacted the findings. First, the Fashionistas and Career lines were the only lines that were examined, rather than the entire Barbie line of dolls. Second, only 50 percent of the dolls in the Fashionistas and Career lines were analyzed. Examining 100 percent of the dolls from both lines would have given me more information about the entire population of dolls in these lines, although 50 percent of most populations provide a high degree of representativeness. Third, studying the Ken dolls may have given me more knowledge about the messages that Mattel conveyed to its consumers regarding masculinity. Finally, I did not examine Mattel's commercial advertising for the Barbie brand. These advertisements may have conveyed more about the messages that Mattel was sending in its marketing. Therefore, there is still more to examine in the realm of Barbie.

Future researchers could explore current and future developments related to the Barbie brand. First, they could examine all of the current lines in this brand to uncover the messages that Mattel is sending to its consumers. Second, they could study new additions to the Fashionistas and Career lines to determine if Mattel eventually changes the messages that it is currently conveying to consumers through these lines. Finally, these researchers could analyze the commercial advertising for Barbie to see the messages that Mattel sends through this medium. This research may determine if Mattel continues to send mixed messages to its consumers in the future.

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ACADEMIC VITA

RACHEL L. KATZ

OBJECTIVE

To obtain an entry-level management or human resources position

QUALIFICATIONS

*Effective team leader and collaborator *Strong critical thinking, communication, and analytical skills
*Proven ability to work under pressure and meet stringent deadlines *Proficient with Microsoft Office

EDUCATION

Pennsylvania State University, Schreyer Honors College Spring 2019
Major: Business - *Concentration in Marketing and Management*
Honors: Samuel J. DiRoberto Business Award and Scholarship, Academic Excellence Scholarship, Sparks Award, President's Freshman Award, Provost Scholarship, Abington Fellows Grant, Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, Civitas Victus Dictio Honor Society, Abington Honors Program, Dean's List every semester

WORK EXPERIENCE

Pennsylvania State University, Abington, PA February 2019 - Present
Student Development Specialist - Spearhead the 2019 Senior Class Gift Campaign for the Office of Development and Alumni Relations to raise funds for the Student Emergency Assistance Fund

Freedom Mortgage, Fort Washington, PA May 2018 - July 2018
Data Analytics Intern - Analyzed past, current, and future economic performance utilizing TrueStandings, SQL Server, and financial reports

Jewish Relief Agency, Philadelphia, PA June 2015 - April 2018
Staff - Managed approximately 850 volunteers monthly, assisted with delivery routes to over 3,000 low-income families, and served as photographer to promote Facebook campaign reaching 2,439 followers

Mitzvah Circle Foundation, Lansdale, PA May 2015 - August 2016
Facilities Management Intern - Supervised local corporate volunteer groups in assisting approximately 40,000 families in crisis with essential care packages

ORGANIZATIONS/RESEARCH/PROJECTS

Pennsylvania State University, Abington, PA January 2017 - Present
Hillel, President
• Lead and implement Jewish educational programming to a diverse campus of over 4,000 students

Student Philanthropy Council February 2019 - Present
• Organize fundraising activities for students and alumni to support and enrich education, facilities, and programming on campus

7th Annual International Business Case Competition, Project Manager September 2017 - December 2017

- Led team members to develop winning entrepreneurial, customized children's picture book concept

Abington College Undergraduate Research Activities, Research Assistant August 2016 - May 2017

- Collaborated with university professors to create a presentation on corporate sustainability practices in the United States and India to reach 4,000 students

Lares Entertainment and Programming August 2015 – January 2016

- Planned and ran events for largest entertainment and event planning organization on campus