



Mattel Board of Directors
King'sMUN
February 24, 2024
Emily Ferguson

Letter from the Secretary General

Dear King'sMUN 2024 delegates,

We are truly honoured, as this year's Co-Secretary Generals of King'sMUN, to welcome you to our 10th annual conference. The Secretariat has been working hard throughout this school year to deliver you an incredible, in-person conference with a variety of creative committees, experienced chairs, and an overall successful day of debate.

Model United Nations, a reenactment of the function of the United Nations, is designed for students to come together to debate, discuss, and develop creative resolutions to some of the world's most pressing issues that plague our world today. In most committees, students take on the positions of various countries, characters, or political figures to create solutions for both real and fictional issues and crises. We also offer unique committees that explore historical, future, and fictional issues.

In our personal experience with MUN we have developed many valuable skills that we will take with us throughout our lives, such as confidence in public speaking, leadership, and creative problem-solving. Furthermore, MUN promotes lifelong connections, as we are constantly meeting delegates who share similar passions to us in committee sessions. We truly believe that your participation in MUN will guide you throughout your high school journey and beyond.

At King'sMUN, we provide a variety of committees to ensure that we have something of interest for everyone. From very current pressing issues (ie. UNSC and the African Union) and issues in sports (ie. International Cricket Council and WSF) to fictional, yet real, controversies (ie. Barbieland) and issues set in the past (ie. The Manhattan Project). We strive to ensure that there is appeal for a variety of delegates. Whether you have no experience or have been to a multitude of conferences, there is a place at King'sMUN for you!

Once again, we are thrilled to welcome all delegates, new or returning, back to King'sMUN. We hope that you engage in fruitful debate and have an amazing time at King'sMUN 2024.

Sincerely,

Serena Kalsi and Georgia Apostolopoulos

Co-Secretary Generals

King'sMUN 2024

Creation of Barbie

Ruth Handler created the first Barbie doll in 1959. Ruth, along with her husband Elliot, co-founded the toy company Mattel. Ruth was inspired by her daughter, Barbara, who played with paper dolls and envisioned the dolls having adult roles. From Ruth's observation of Barbara, she saw an opportunity to create a three-dimensional, adult-like doll that could be a role model to young girls and encourage imaginative play. Ruth wanted this doll to convey to young girls that they could be anything they wanted to be, by creating Barbie dolls with hundreds of different occupations. In 1956, Ruth convinced Mattel to invest in the creation of her new adult-like fashion doll. When creating the doll, Ruth's design was inspired by a German doll, Bild Lilli, who was a fashion doll that appeared to be an adult in a comic strip. Ruth named the doll "Barbie", after her daughter and introduced it to the world at the American International Toy Fair in New York, on March 9, 1959. Ruth's design process took several years, with the most intensive development occurring in the mid-to-late 1950s.



History of Barbie

The success of Barbie has allowed the doll to change in terms of careers, fashion, and ethnic diversity. The Barbie doll has been able to adapt to cultural norms and societal expectations which encourages different roles and aspirations for young girls. Due to Barbie's success, the brand was able to expand and create Ken, Barbie's boyfriend, along with a widespread range of accessories and playsets. The doll became a cultural icon and a symbol of fashion and aspiration. It is estimated that 92% of American girls ages 3 to 12 have owned a Barbie (news18.com, 2023). The Barbie doll has undergone continuous changes to represent a wider variety of inclusive and varied backgrounds and job options for young girls. In 1985, the workplace evolution showed girls that they could have it all. The advertising campaign "We Girls Can Do Anything" was launched in 1985. This advertisement inspired girls to have confidence in their abilities and aspirations.



Issue 1: Standards of Beauty - Barbie's Influence on the Youth

Though the Barbie doll is a popular children's toy, many individuals struggle with the standards of beauty that Barbie imposes and influences on young girls. It has been a matter of discussion for years, as its impact on the perceptions of body images among youth is a matter of concern. The original Barbie is a blonde, slim doll which can suggest that young girls need to have a slim figure to be anything that they want to be in life. As well, there were underlying issues with Barbie before the creation of different Barbies, as the dolls' looks did not cater to all young girls. With research conducted, the importance of young girls having a doll that looks like them was discovered. "We tend to minimize the importance of "seeing yourself" and downplay how this lack of representation plays out in a child's life - particularly in one of the most powerful industries in the world..." (alike.com, 2022). Thus, proving that there is a great need for young girls to play with dolls that look like them and if they don't, body issues can arise. This can promote unhealthy standards of beauty as young girls may develop body image issues. But since the first Barbie, many different and unique Barbies have been created. Though different Barbies with diverse body shapes, skin tones, and hairstyles have now been implemented within the brand, the lack of their appearance and absence from the line have caused various concerns about standards of beauty amongst the youth. With body concerns impacting the youth, unattainable beauty standards also have an impact on young girls. Due to the Barbie doll having a particular body type, it plays a role in young girls' self-esteem that can imply a sense of inadequacy among those who do not meet these standards. Barbie's attention to style, glamour, and physical appearance could encourage a more narrow definition of what makes a person valuable rather than a more holistic one. It has been argued that this close attention on appearance, could play a role in the objectification of women. Although Barbie is seen as an icon, there are various harsh beauty standards embedded within the appearance of the Barbie doll.

Connections to SDGs

With Standards of Beauty, there are many SDGs that suggest that this is an issue. SDG stands for Sustainable Development Goals. These goals are universal and help not only developing countries but also developed countries. There are 17 goals in which members of the UN States have agreed to reach by the year 2023.



Issue 1 Standards of Beauty and Issue 2 Movie Bands have a direct connection with SDG 5, Gender Equality. SDG 5 states, “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” (sdgs.un). This issue connects to SDG 5 Target 5.b which states, “Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women” (sdgs.un). This target hints at the importance of making sure technology is used to advance the empowerment of women. As well, to end gender gaps and help women have equal opportunities in life. Though this goal aims to get rid of gender inequalities and empower females, how Barbie is portrayed in the media regarding beauty standards, can be a factor of individuals’ low self-esteem and reinforce gender stereotypes. As well, addressing why the Barbie movie has been banned in several countries could open the door for reinforcing gender stereotypes and people against LGBTQ+ themes. For example, Barbie can reinforce

stereotypes and has even been criticized for promoting a certain body image to young girls. Since the target puts an emphasis on women empowerment, Barbie can actually do the opposite and can place harsh social norms that demand women have a particular physical appearance. These issues also connect to SDG 5 Target 5.1. This target states, "End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere" (sdgs.un). The aim is for women and girls to have the same rights and access to resources as men and end discrimination. The target's goal is to help society become more equitable. Barbie has a slogan that says, "You Can Be Anything" and there have been issues with this because the doll is linked closely with appearance and therefore may be harmful to youth. Due to the doll connecting closely with style and glamour, it can make women feel that they need to focus on their appearance, thus prompting discrimination. This issue is also in direct correlation with SDG 3, Good Health and Well-Being. Stating, "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages" (sdgs.un). The aim of this goal is to ensure and promote healthy well-being and healthy lives for all ages. Due to the unrealistic beauty standards that this doll creates, it can leave many people with negatively impacted mental health. This directly goes against what this goal has aimed for and can harshly impact the well-being of people's body image and self-esteem. Lastly, this issue connects with SDG 10, Reduced Inequalities. This goal says, "Reduce inequality within and among countries" (sdgs.un). By marginalizing people who do not meet conventional beauty standards, the lack of diversity and representation in these standards, as represented by some dolls or the media, can actually enforce social inequalities. Specifically connecting to Target 10.2, "Empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status" (sdgs.un). The lack of diversity with close regard to ethnicity, can promote an non-inclusive representation. Barbies have lacked diversity in skin tones and cultural representation which can link to a reinforcement of stereotypes and the exclusion of people with particular racial or cultural roots. With the SDG's mentioned it can be clear that Barbie impacting standards of beauty is a current issue.



Questions to Consider

- What might be some other ways Barbie can be used to reflect women empowerment?
- Does society reflect the beauty standards that Barbie can impose on the youth?
- What should be done in order to combat the deeply embedded beauty standards in society? Is there anything at all that can be done? If not, why?
- With the creation of the Ken doll, do you think that this helped normalize young boys playing with dolls?
- Does Barbie affect standards of beauty?

Helpful Sources

- <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>
- <https://www.news18.com/viral/in-pumps-or-flats-theres-no-escaping-barbies-carbon-foot-print-8503429.html>
- <http://www.barbiemedia.com/timeline.html>
- <https://time.com/barbie-new-body-cover-story/#:~:text=Barbie%20is%20more%20than%20just.her%20affordable%20%2410%20price%20tag>.
- <https://www.insider.com/how-barbie-dolls-changed-evolution-2018-3>

Standards of Beauty - Barbie's Influence on the Youth: Conclusion

The Mattel board of directors needs to look toward what issues the Barbie doll can impose on young girls. This may include, lack of self-confidence, body image issues, and or objectification of women. The directors need to reflect on how the Barbie doll can continue to cater to all young girls and express diversity. With that being said, maybe the directors do not see an issue with the Barbie doll and an extensive argument must be stated. The Mattel board of directors must come together to discuss and figure out what issues that the Barbie doll can impose on the youth, through seeking relevant information.

Issue 2: Dealing with Movie Bans in Several Nations

The Barbie movie was created in 2023 and was directed by Greta Gerwig. The Barbie movie was created as an “attempt to make amends” with the goal of showing that being perfect is impossible and to affirm a woman's worth. As well, the movie’s goal was to diminish the beauty standards created by Barbie. Though many people have enjoyed this movie and saw it as helping to empower young girls, some countries have banned the Barbie movie. These countries include Kuwait, Lebanon, Vietnam, and Algeria. As well, this movie was temporarily banned in the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Philippines, and Pakistan. Several countries believe that this movie portrays society to be anti-men and are not okay with this, thus banning it. Below is a table of why each country has decided to ban the Barbie movie:

Country	Reason
Kuwait	Concepts and viewpoints outside the scope of Kuwaiti public order and society.
Lebanon	The minister feels that it "promotes homosexuality and sexual transformation" and goes against "moral and religious values as well as the principles of Lebanon."
Vietnam	A scene in the movie shows a controversial South China Sea map.
Algeria	The movie portrays "damaging morals" and advocates for western deviations and homosexuality.
United Arab Emirates	Seen as violating Islamic values but has since been released.
Saudi Arabia	Inappropriate for its audiences as it includes LGBTQ+ scenes. But has since been released with LGBTQ+ scenes taken out.
Philippines	Almost banned but after a 2 week process it was released.
Pakistan	Temporary ban on the film, while it assessed the level of LGBTQ+ themes.

It has been said that people who believe this movie is anti-men are not getting the point of the film. “The film does not espouse a simplistic binary view of feminism or promote hatred towards men. Rather, it strives to challenge traditional gender norms and encourages empathy and understanding between genders” (wionews.com, 2023). Thus, proving that this movie was made to combat harsh gender stereotypes and promote an understanding and empathy between genders.

Connections to SDGs

To see connections to the Sustainable Development Goals, refer back to Issue 1: Standards of Beauty - Barbie's Influence on the Youth. The main SDG that issue 2 connects with is SDG 5, Gender Equality. SDG 5 says, “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” (sdgs.un). Since the main goal of the film is to make people aware of women empowerment and to show that being perfect is impossible, what does this show about countries that have banned this movie? Could it point towards societies that value men more than women and seek to only empower men and let men lead countries?



Questions to Consider

- Does the Barbie movie portray an anti men society?
- What gender stereotypes have you seen in today's world?
- Did this movie make an attempt to make amends with the goal of showing that being perfect is impossible?

- Should the creator of the Barbie movie address why countries have banned this movie? Why or why not?
- Does this movie challenge traditional gender norms?

Helpful Sources

- https://uk.movies.yahoo.com/barbie-movie-ban-list-100541130.html?guccounter=1&guc_e_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAKQAZJLHIGpwZBkoiA1H2dDeZpkP4Cf483NYGBEq80LgbTy0MrIfIA3PzJCoxDggDP-AszE9g3x6dxM8YpJiB8VgxdOQRnnLtfWWil8aoxAjQgWvkOgJgj-VtQcZrDS-JBGSXbgtETL-AhKYVdbSCUe7OY7DrjimP7JsonViNxRl
- <https://www.wionews.com/entertainment/hollywood/news-opinion--is-barbie-really-an-anti-male-movie-622580>
- <https://www.technoserve.org/blog/barbie-and-gender-equality/>

Dealing with Movie Bans in Several Nations: Conclusion

The Mattel board of directors needs to reflect on why several countries have banned the Barbie movie. The banning of this film may include viewpoints outside the scope of societies, promoting homosexuality, sexual transformation, LGBTQ+ scenes, anti men, and violating Islamic values. Overall, the idea of the movie bans can help show us what different societies find inappropriate and what content continues to be hidden in the media world, revolving around gender. Possibly addressing why the film is banned in various nations, could help address why certain topics are hidden.

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Sharma, Tia. "Opinion | Is Barbie really an anti-male movie?" *WION*, 5 August 2023, <https://www.wionews.com/entertainment/hollywood/news-opinion--is-barbie-really-an-anti-male-movie-622580>. Accessed 18 December 2023.