

dimensions of play and its impact on child development. Ticktin's adept use of accessible language and reliance on relatable anecdotes contribute to the book's effectiveness in reaching its intended audience. The emphasis on practical advice and sensory modalities offers significant value, yet its exclusive focus on sensory play represents a potential limitation. To optimize its impact, the book could benefit from a more comprehensive exploration, deeper research, and better sociodemographics. *Play to Progress* succeeds as an engaging guide that fosters a connection with parents while offering practical strategies, thus affirming its relevance within the evolving landscape of literature addressing sensory elements in child development.

—Christopher J. Alterio, *Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY*

An American Icon in Puerto Rico: Barbie, Girlhood, and Colonialism at Play

Emily R. Aguiló-Pérez

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An American Icon in Puerto Rico: Barbie, Girlhood, and Colonialism at Play is published as volume 4 in a series about Transnational Girlhoods, which includes monographs on topics of relevance for an international readership, with particular interest in interdisciplinary perspectives. The book is written by Emily Aguiló-Pérez, who is Assistant Professor

of English at West Chester University of Pennsylvania and who has previously published work about children's literature. For this volume, she draws on various approaches to research, including interviews with women and girls who played with Barbie dolls as children and a review of archival materials. The author adds an autoethnographic element by considering her own childhood play as a Puerto Rican who grew up with a connection to both the continental United States and the island.

Over the course of five chapters, plus an introduction and conclusion, the book presents a nuanced and well-informed discussion of Barbie as a transnational object, a toy that is designed according to specific guidelines and marketed to a global customer base of mostly girls. Each chapter of the book discusses a specific aspect pertaining to Barbie: chapter 1 centers on the connection between "Girlhood, Dolls, and Barbie;" chapter 2 considers "The Politics of Barbie in Puerto Rico;" chapter 3, titled "Fashioning a Self," traces the doll's connections to embodiment and feminine identities; chapter 4, titled "Accessing Barbie," engages with issues of class, wealth, and race; and finally, chapter 5 is titled "All in the Family" and inquires into Barbie's place in family dynamics.

The early sections of the book offer a conceptual foundation, presenting a review of current literature about children's play and the social and historical construction of girlhood. The book considers Black and Brown girlhoods in particular, discussing the way that they have been discursively juxtaposed to notions of idealized white femininity. This discussion draws on the work of foundational feminist writers such as Simone de Beau-

voir and on contemporary scholars such as Angela McRobbie and Radha Hedge. Feminist criticisms of the Barbie doll have often addressed hegemonic notions involving body type, hair, race, and color, all of which are implicitly embodied through the materiality of the toy. Yet, over time, Barbie has also enjoyed widespread popularity among girls around the world, so the criticisms do not seem to have undermined her reach. Situating Barbie within a historical framework, the author adds a discussion of the doll's connection to aspects important for the U.S. toy industry—such as commercialism—and explores the way Barbie's arrival in Puerto Rico in the 1960s was also a function of economic developments that linked the island to the continental United States.

One of the more interesting aspects of the book involves its presentation of original research about Puerto Rican women and their memories of childhood play, which centers on Barbie dolls and their accessories. An inquiry into the meaning making and the types of play facilitated by Barbie is enriched by a discussion of the Dolls of the World collection that includes the Puerto Rican Barbie released in 1997. This collection features a number of dolls representing various nationalities, which are meant to diversify a line of dolls traditionally considered representations of white U.S. American femininity. Through library and archival research, Aguiló-Perez reconstructs how and when Barbie arrived in Puerto Rico, as well as how it became an important toy for girls who moved to the continental United States with their families. Excerpts from a limited number of interviews with women and girls in dif-

ferent age groups help illustrate the many meanings attached to the toy, as well as the place that it occupies in the daily lives of young people. In this regard, the research would have been enhanced if the author had conducted a larger number of interviews to tease out more details regarding diversity of experiences. As is, this part of the book may provide a foundation from which new studies can be conducted, perhaps exploring the meaning that Barbie holds for Latinas who have linkages to other countries and territories or for people of color more broadly within and beyond the United States. Further research could also engage in more interviews with tween and teen girls and use secondary sources such as social media feeds to gather information on what young people say about the toy and the kinds of play it enables.

Barbie dolls have continued to be popular objects despite the passing of time, and the book offers poignant statistics regarding ownership. Still, criticisms of the doll continue on social media platforms and appear in public discourse, which suggests that Barbie remains an object that incites mixed feelings. After the box office success of Greta Gerwig's movie *Barbie*—which entered the list of top ten movies earning more than one billion dollars in the international market—conversations about Barbie are likely to carry on. Thus, this book offers ideas that may spark new academic discussions of Barbie in college classrooms and across various disciplines, such as communication, sociology, women's studies, anthropology, media studies, advertising, and popular culture.

—Claudia Bucciferro, *Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY*