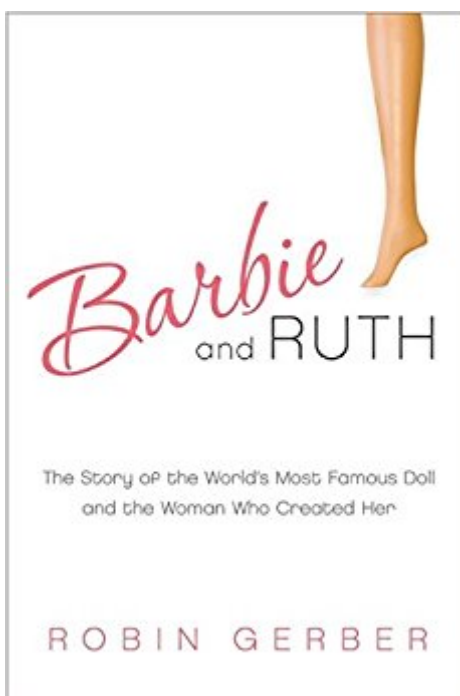


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Barbie And Ruth: The Story Of The World's Most Famous Doll And The Woman Who Created Her



Synopsis

“Barbie and her creator, the sharp-elbowed gal who built the biggest toy company, have a story to tell. *Time* *Barbie and Ruth* by Ruth Gerber is the remarkable true story of the world’s most famous toy and the woman who created her. It is a fascinating account of how one visionary woman and her product changed an industry and sparked a lasting debate about women’s roles. At once a business book, a colorful portrait of an extraordinary female entrepreneur, and a breathtaking look at a cultural phenomenon, *Barbie and Ruth* is a must read for anyone who ever owned a Barbie doll—a book *Publishers Weekly* calls, “a stirring biography—a fine study of success and resilience.”

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Customer Reviews

Cofounder of the Mattel Company, Ruth Handler and her husband, Elliot, turned the toy industry upside down, not only with the 1959 creation of Barbie and the subsequent introduction of boyfriend Ken but also with Hot Wheels and prescient advertising tie-ins to the Mickey Mouse Club. Yet the behind-the-scenes journey is just as fascinating as the public persona: born the tenth child of Polish-Jewish immigrants, Ruth was raised by her sister—and, early on, recognized the talent of her husband as a designer. Motherhood was not her natural state of being, though she named both dolls after her children. After being forced out of Mattel in the 1970s, Ruth then founded a second company, “Nearly Me,” producing prosthetics designed for women who had undergone mastectomies—just like her. Tragedy, unfortunately, continued to strike the

family; son Ken died of AIDS in 1994, and Ruth herself lost her battle with cancer in 2002. Despite the research, Handler seems to have a two-dimensional luster, rather than the pioneering and dynamic businesswoman seen in other articles and books. Nonetheless, a fascinating account of entrepreneurial ups and downs. --Barbara Jacobs

“This stirring biography is a fine study of success and resilience.” (Publishers Weekly)
“Gerber’s smoothly-written biography paints a fearless business woman as a devoted wife, a too-busy mother and a rock-sock-executive.” (New York Post)
“Barbie and her creator, the sharp-elbowed gal who built the biggest toy company, have a story to tell.” (Time magazine)

I was intrigued to find out about the creative genius behind Barbie and was pleased to read this book. It was about the vision of one woman whose husband had the insight to follow and help to create Barbie when she first appeared on the scene. Against all odds: parents' concern over a doll which was mature looking, a male dominated industry and the sacrifice of her family, Ruth was able to bring little girls, everywhere this doll called Barbie. The trials faced to bring this doll to the center of the toy world was intriguing, nail biting and, at times, infuriating. The hardest part of this book, was the ousting of a woman whose whole life was not as charming as her dolls. Ruth was a woman driven to provide a doll that could be played with, dressed and engaged little girls to use their creative imagination to be anything they could imagine. She was a pioneer ahead of her time and her husband was a true believer in her dreams. Nice read.

Don't let the title turn you away just because you are male or dislike the Barbie doll. This is a fascinating read for both men and women, especially those interested in business development, communication and structure. Ruth Handler has always been my hero for creating my favorite toy but having now learned her background and the obstacles in her path as a toy industry businessperson and woman in the mid 20th century, she has now catapulted even higher. 5 stars isn't even high enough.

An interesting and informative read about a dynamic woman who was definitely ahead of her time. It was especially interesting how she had to be snuck into a meeting with prospective stock brokers because women weren't allowed on that particular floor of the building. Growing up with Barbies, I enjoyed hearing about her conception. Also, I had no idea how much else she was involved with,

including helping women with breast cancer. I highly recommend this book.

I loved the book great inspirational book I grew up with Barbie and played with her until I was a teenager and through her dreamed of wonderful dreams. It was nice to learn the history of Barbie the rise and fall and rise again of her mother. Thank you Ruth for your vision and determination to bring dreams to all the little girls and remind us all a girl can be anything they put their mind too with hard work and determination

I really enjoyed the book! I was amazed at all the things that happened in Ruth's life. Bad and good! I hadn't known anything about the Barbie backstory so the book was quite enlightening. What she did for breast cancer survivors was incredible. My sister faced the problem of the breast prosthetic that never fit. It's ironic that the person who brought Barbie and her breasts to the world would also improve the life for breast amputees. In my opinion what she did for them is as big a story as her bringing Barbie to the world. Ruth is a hero! This was also a love story - Ruth and her husband never faltered in their love for each other. I'd definitely recommend this book to anyone!

I loved this book for the historical information and the insight to the invention of certain toys at various time periods. The book doesn't hold back in revealing Ruth's true nature, but it is honest and shows how a very powerful woman beat all the odds of being in a man's world and accomplished many things that others wouldn't have had the tenacity to do. If you are looking for a book to give you some courage, Ruth will do it for you. The lady behind the popular beautiful doll had her ugly flaws and scars but she never gave up when tough times stared her down. She faced them head on, and made my problems look very small.

After finishing the book, I couldn't stop thinking about Ruth's journey as an early woman pioneer of a large corporation. As a baby boomer I grew up with Barbie so her story was so fascinating and how she changed the way girls played with dolls. Lot of great facts about Mattel. The only down side was the lack of photos of Ruth and her family. I had to google to see what Ruth looked like over the years.

Barbie and I were born the same year so I grew up with her and her friends. Years later, I entered the toy business as a toy designer and I worked with the Barbie license and knew some of the people mentioned in Barbie and Ruth. I was even at the TMA event when Ruth and Elliot Handler

were inducted into the TMA hall of fame. So, I REALLY enjoyed the book and I learned some things that even I didn't know about Mattel and the Handlers early beginnings.

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