

Essay on rhetorical analysis essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Barbie vs. the World I'll admit it; I absolutely loved playing with Barbie's as a child! I must have had like twenty of them. She had everything: a dream house, Ken, plenty of friends, and a slender body with all the right curves, everything I dreamed of having when I grew up. "En Garde, Princess!" by Mary Grace Lord, challenges why every girl loves Barbie. Her article appeared in the online magazine Salon under the "Mothers Who Think" department on October 27, 2000, before the launch of a new doll line called the Get Real Girls, which were created by Julz Chavez.

In this article Lord uses repetition, ethos, comparison and name calling to convince the reader that Barbie will soon encounter a fierce competitor, a better role model, which may finally dethrone her as the best selling doll of all time, or at least "punch a few holes in her sales" (423). In the first paragraph, Lord repeatedly uses military references to show the reader that Barbie has a fight ahead of her. I think Lord uses these references to draw in the audience that she is appealing to, which are smart, aggressive, opinionated woman.

She declares that Barbie has been the leader in the doll industry since 1959, and that she needs to watch out for the "newly formed SWAT team of action figures known as the Get Real Girls" (419). SWAT means Special Weapons And Tactics, so this leads the reader to believe that the Get Real Girls are well equipped to battle Barbie for her throne. Also, Lord references Barbie need not "raise the pink drawbridge" (419) or "dump radio-controlled alligators into the moat" (419), both of which are found in military fortifications.

This signifies that Barbie has not lost the battle yet, but that she is dealing with a fierce competitor, one she should be cautious of. Lord establishes ethos by telling the reader that she wrote the book *Forever Barbie: The Unauthorized Biography of a Real Doll*. This suggests that Lord has a vast knowledge about Barbie's life, from her creation in 1959 to current day, which show us that she is a credible judge of Barbie's challengers. Lord has examined the demise of several of Barbie's rivals. In 1963, Miss Seventeen was one of them; she didn't survive.

Jem was another doll who perished in 1985, Happy to Be Me in 1991. As a journalist, she was assigned the task of evaluating the Get Real Girls, and upon seeing them, she thought "the time seems right for a toy-world upset" (419). This sets up the rest of the article in which Lord uses comparison and name calling to illustrate that the Get Real Girls have a real chance at dethroning Barbie. Lord compares Jill Barad, the recently resigned CEO of Mattel, and Julz Chavez to establish how the makers of these two very different doll lines bears a resemblance to the dolls they represent.

Rather than appealing to children through television advertising, like Mattel did in 1955, the Get Real Girls are trying to influence children with the internet. Mattel's first commercials depicted Barbie as brazenly sexy, which upset parents, but charmed children. GetRealGirl.com, on the other hand, portrays their doll line as "jocky, and up-to-date on music" (421), which are more important to the girl of today than being sexy. Also, Chavez does not put an emphasis on brands, as Barbie does.

Barad “coaxed high-end manufacturers like Ferrari to license Barbie-size versions of their products” (422). As a parent, I really appreciate the fact that Chavez does not promote brand specific items. Most children grow to love the toys that they play with, wanting those same things later in life. There are not many people in this world who can afford to purchase a Ferrari. By comparing Barad and Chavez, Lord makes her point that Chavez is more concerned about a girl being just a girl.

Lord uses the technique known as name calling to describe bad characteristics about Barbie, that make the Get Real Girls seem like they would be a better role model for our daughters to play with. After all, the article was under the “Mothers Who Think” department, which suggests that mothers who read this article will probably think twice about buying another Barbie for their daughter. Lord points out that the Get Real Girls are strong, muscular, and very physically active, each representing some sort of sport, such as surfing, soccer and basketball.

Barbie, on the other hand, has a “’60s-era pinup girl figure, she looks ridiculous in a basketball uniform-as if she borrowed it for a photoshoot and cannot wait to give it back” (421). Lord presumes that mothers would rather have their daughters play with a toy that reinforces being healthy and active, because in the real world, you cannot rely on just beauty alone. Another aspect is the difference in the dolls proportions. The Get Real Girls have a more accurate body figure to the women of today, 33-24-33, while Barbie is big busted and anorexic.

As a mother, I want my daughters to be a healthy weight for their height, physically active and not concerned about the size of their breasts, or looking like an anorexic supermodel. Barbie's body image is just not realistic, or healthy for that matter. Lord makes a great appeal to mothers by using ethos, repetition, comparison and name calling in her article to make the reader despise Barbie, and look forward to the new comers, the Get Real Girls, to beat her up. Barbie is depicted as a slut, with no morals, while the Get Real Girls seem to be a wholesome bunch.

As a mother, Lord has convinced me that I should carefully consider toy choices for my children, as they do influence our children's lives to a degree; however she has not convinced me to stop buying Barbie's all together. Dolls are great to get your kids imaginations flowing, which was the main reason behind the creation of Barbie. In the end, the Get Real Girls did not dethrone Barbie, as they are no longer being sold. Work Cited Lord, M. G. " En Garde, Princess! " Reading Rhetorically: A Reader For Writers. 2nd ed. Ed. John C. Bean, Virginia A. Chappell, Alice M. Gillam. New York: Pearson, 2005. 418-23.