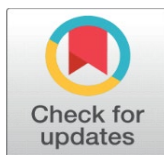
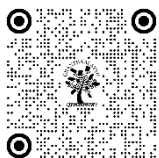


# UNBOXING NEW MASCULINITY: ANALYSING KEN'S EVOLUTION IN BARBIE'23

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## ABSTRACT

The representation of masculinity in media has long been dominated by traditional stereotypes, perpetuating rigid gender norms, and limiting the scope of diverse expressions of male identity. However, the film "Barbie" which recently released starring Margot Robbie as Barbie and Ryan Gosling as Ken presents a refreshing departure from this norm by offering an intriguing portrayal of Ken, a character with a rich history in popular culture. This research paper examines how the movie reimagines and challenges conventional notions of masculinity through Ken's character arc.

The paper shall establish the historical context of Ken's portrayal in previous Barbie movies and merchandise, where he often embodied the archetypal male figure, emphasizing physical appearance and material possessions. Through a comprehensive analysis of "Barbie'23," the study explores how the film deconstructs these stereotypes and reconstructs Ken as a multifaceted and relatable character, embracing a broader spectrum of masculinity. Key themes explored include Ken's journey of self-discovery, emotional intelligence, and vulnerability. **"Unboxing New Masculinity: Analysing Ken's Evolution in Barbie'23"** seeks to contribute to ongoing conversations about reimagining masculinity in media and highlights the importance of inclusive storytelling for young viewers. By breaking away from the traditional mold, "Barbie'23" exemplifies a forward-thinking narrative that paves the way for a more accepting and diverse portrayal of masculinity in children's entertainment.

**Keywords:** Barbie & Ken, Hegemonic Masculinity, Gender Role, Character Evolution, Popular Culture

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In today's society, there is a growing recognition that traditional notions of masculinity are overly narrow and can be detrimental. The concept of rethinking masculinities refers to a contemporary approach that challenges and redefines traditional stereotypes and norms associated with masculinity. To provide a contextual foundation for this paper, exploring the evolution of Barbie and Ken, iconic figures created in the early 1960s in the Western world is imperative. This historical context is crucial for justifying our critical exploration of masculinity in a toy icon that originates from the West. The analysis extends to Hollywood's global influence, considering its pervasive role in shaping mainstream cinema worldwide. Hollywood's representation of gender roles and masculinity plays a pivotal role in

the broader cultural discourse, and understanding its impact is essential for a comprehensive exploration of masculinity in media.

Literature and media play a crucial role in shaping perceptions of masculinity among younger readers due to their formative influence. Young minds are particularly impressionable, and the stories they encounter during childhood and adolescence can have a lasting impact on their understanding of gender roles and identity. For instance, traditional fairy tales often feature male protagonists who embody stereotypical traits such as strength and heroism, while female characters are relegated to passive roles. This perpetuates the idea that masculinity is synonymous with dominance and physical prowess, reinforcing traditional gender norms. Researchers such as Varney (2002) have delved into the images of masculinity portrayed in boys' toys, revealing the intricate relationship between cultural expectations and the construction of young boys' identities. Additionally, Weissman (1999) provides an analytical interpretation of the Barbie doll, shedding light on how popular culture, through iconic figures like Barbie, contributes to shaping societal ideals.

In contemporary society, there is a growing recognition that traditional notions of masculinity are excessively narrow and potentially harmful. This paper explores the evolution of masculinity, focusing on the iconic figures of Barbie and Ken. To provide a comprehensive understanding, it is imperative to delve into specific years of their creation, rooted in the Western world. The critical stance of probing into masculinity within the context of a toy icon originating from the West demands a justified explanation.

The research problem extends beyond the movie's portrayal of masculinity; it necessitates a scientific examination of toys' influence on gender roles and responsibilities. This exploration is grounded in studies around children's stories, fairy tales, and toys in Western societies, integral to socialization. Additionally, the influence of Hollywood in shaping mainstream cinema, especially in the West, adds a distinct layer to the inquiry. A seminal work in this field is the American Psychological Association's (APA) guidelines for psychological practice with boys and men, which was published in 2018. The APA highlights the importance of addressing issues such as emotional suppression, aggression, and the pressure to conform to traditional male stereotypes. These guidelines emphasize the need for a more inclusive and flexible understanding of masculinity to promote healthier development in boys and men. The relevance of rethinking masculinities is underscored by contemporary social and cultural shifts. Movements like #MeToo have exposed the damaging consequences of toxic masculinity, while LGBTQ+ rights advocacy has challenged conventional gender norms.

This rethinking is driven by the understanding that rigid gender roles can lead to a range of issues, including toxic masculinity, mental health problems, and limited opportunities for self-expression. Examining the portrayal of masculinity in children's and young adult literature is essential because it can either reinforce or challenge these stereotypes. Positive and diverse representations of masculinity can promote empathy, emotional intelligence, and a broader spectrum of male identities among young readers. Conversely, reinforcing traditional stereotypes can limit boys' and girls' perceptions of what it means to be a man or a woman, potentially leading to harmful behaviours and attitudes.

The study at hand revolves around the impact of the portrayal of masculinity in media, with a specific focus on the movie "*Barbie*." While the movie itself presents an intriguing depiction of masculinity, the study aims to delve deeper and explore the broader implications of this portrayal. The central concern is understanding

how children's media, such as "*Barbie*," can be a powerful agent of change in shaping societal attitudes towards gender roles and identity. By analysing the movie's representation of masculinity and its effects on young viewers, this research seeks to contribute to the ongoing discourse surrounding the need to reimagine and diversify masculinity in media. To address this, we must critically examine our research object— "*Barbie*" (2023) — and move beyond a mere restatement of the movie's intentions. How does this paper strike a distance from the movie, and how does it contribute unique insights beyond what the movie explicit?

The research objective is twofold: firstly, to undertake a detailed analysis of the 2023 "*Barbie*" movie, with a specific focus on its depiction of masculinity, particularly examining the characters of Ken and Barbie and their roles in reshaping conventional gender norms. Secondly, the study aims to contextualize the evolution of Barbie and Ken within a larger socio-cultural framework, encompassing their origins in the 1960s and tracing the influence of Western societal changes on the portrayal of gender roles in children's media over the years. This research seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of how the film contributes to the redefinition of traditional gender norms and explores the broader historical and cultural forces that have shaped the iconic characters of Barbie and Ken.

## 2. EVOLUTION OF MASCULINITY IN MEDIA AND ITS IMPACT

The representation of masculinity in media and literature has been a focal point of academic inquiry for several decades, tracing its roots back to early children's literature where male characters were often depicted adhering to conventional masculinity stereotypes, emphasizing qualities such as physical strength, bravery, and independence. This thematic thread is exemplified by classic tales like "*Peter Pan*" and "*The Hardy Boys*" series, which underscored societal norms prevalent during their creation in the mid-20th century. However, as societal perspectives on gender roles have undergone profound transformations, so too has the landscape of children's literature. In response to evolving understandings of gender, authors have gradually begun challenging traditional stereotypes by introducing male characters characterized by emotional vulnerability, empathy, and a more diverse range of interests. This shift reflects a broader cultural movement away from rigid gender norms and towards more inclusive and nuanced representations of masculinity. Nevertheless, the trajectory of masculinity in literature is far from a linear progression. It is imperative to consider the intricate interplay of cultural shifts, evolving societal attitudes, and the distinct influences of Hollywood on mainstream cinema.

The evolution of masculinity in children's media has become a dynamic process, shaped not only by literary expressions but also by cinematic narratives. Scholars such as John Stephens have utilized socialization theory to argue that literature and media significantly mould young readers' perceptions of gender, reinforcing or challenging societal norms related to masculinity. Feminist perspectives, represented by scholars like Carolyn Daniel, scrutinize children's literature from a feminist lens, critically examining the representation of male characters and their potential impact on female readers. This perspective emphasizes the importance of balanced portrayals of masculinity that avoid perpetuating power imbalances. Moreover, researchers exploring the intersectionality of gender representation in children's literature have delved into how factors like race, ethnicity, and cultural backgrounds influence the portrayal of masculinity. The incorporation of LGBTQ+ characters and themes in literature, drawing from queer theory, has emerged as a critical exploration challenging heteronormative assumptions about masculinity.

Recent trends in children's literature signal a departure from traditional stereotypes, with a growing emphasis on male characters displaying emotional intelligence, empathy, and vulnerability. Works like *"Wonder"* by R.J. Palacio and *"The Fault in Our Stars"* by John Green exemplify this trend, featuring male protagonists who defy stoic stereotypes.

The *Barbie* movie released in 2023, serves as a compelling cultural artefact challenging conventional notions of femininity and masculinity. In this cinematic narrative, Barbie resides in Barbie land, a matriarchal society where diverse versions of Barbies hold prestigious jobs and enjoy independence. This setting subverts traditional gender roles, challenging stereotypes that often associate women with submissive or narrowly defined roles. The film introduces a group of discontinued models treated as outcasts, emphasizing the movie's critique of conventional beauty standards and societal expectations related to femininity. Barbie's journey becomes emblematic of a reimagined heroism and strength within the context of femininity. Her decision to prioritize female friendships over romantic relationships challenges the notion that a woman's fulfilment must solely derive from a romantic partner.

The narrative unfolds as Barbie undergoes an existential crisis, symbolized by physical changes disrupting her routine, leading her on a journey of self-discovery typically associated with heroism. A pivotal moment in the movie occurs when Barbie confronts harassment at Venice Beach, demonstrating her strength and courage while challenging the societal expectation for women to tolerate such behaviour. Gloria's inspirational speech further reinforces the theme of strength in resilience and the power of women supporting each other. Barbie's collective action with other characters within the narrative reflects the strength of unity and the ability to challenge oppressive systems, emphasizing themes of empowerment and self-discovery.

As scholars such as Katie Pickles and Jack Butler offer diverse perspectives on the *Barbie* movie, interpreting it as a portrayal of both the strengths and potential issues within a matriarchal society, the discourse surrounding the film expands beyond its immediate narrative. Some critics have positioned the movie as a post-feminist satire, challenging established notions of a utopian feminist world and satirizing perceived male dominance within that context. By examining the *Barbie* movie through a post-feminist lens, we can delve into how the film navigates and critiques contemporary feminist discourses, addressing the achievements and potential pitfalls of a matriarchal society.

The movie's resonance with Taylor Swift's Eras Tour, known for reclaiming femininity and empowering women, adds another layer to its cultural impact. Recognizing this connection suggests a parallel exploration of the broader influence of both the movie and the tour on popular culture. Examining the intertwined cultural influence of these two phenomena enriches the understanding of how popular media, ranging from movies to musical tours, collectively contributes to reshaping cultural narratives around femininity and women's empowerment. These parallels underscore the interconnectedness of cultural phenomena and their shared impact on societal perceptions and discussions regarding gender dynamics.

In addition to the scholarly perspectives of Katie Pickles and Jack Butler, the diverse reception of the *Barbie* movie prompts a nuanced exploration of its cultural implications. Beyond being analysed as a matriarchal narrative, the film has garnered attention as a post-feminist satire, challenging the conventional portrayal of an idealized feminist world. This interpretation opens up avenues for examining how the movie navigates the complexities of contemporary feminist discourse,

addressing questions of agency, representation, and power dynamics within a satirical framework. Also, drawing parallels between the *Barbie* movie and Taylor Swift's Eras Tour adds a fascinating layer to the analysis. Both cultural phenomena share a common theme of reclaiming femininity and empowering women, contributing to a broader narrative of a feminist resurgence in popular media, acknowledging this parallel narrative invites exploration of the interconnectedness of these cultural productions and their collective impact on shaping societal conversations around gender roles. It suggests a potential synergy in how different forms of entertainment can collaborate in reinforcing or challenging cultural norms, fostering a more inclusive and empowered vision of femininity.

The *Barbie* movie transcends a mere cinematic narrative, becoming a subject of multifaceted analysis that extends beyond its immediate storyline. The juxtaposition of perspectives from scholars, the exploration of the film as a post-feminist satire, and the parallel drawn with Taylor Swift's Eras Tour collectively form a rich tapestry of cultural commentary. This invites further examination into how these cultural productions interact with and impact societal understandings of femininity, empowerment, and gender dynamics, positioning them as influential contributors to the ongoing discourse on gender representation in contemporary media.

Drawing from feminist cinema theories can provide a robust theoretical framework for understanding how the movie engages with feminist ideals and critiques. Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" introduces the concept of the male gaze, highlighting how traditional cinema often positions the audience to view characters from a heterosexual male perspective. Applying Mulvey's theory to the *Barbie* movie, we can scrutinize how the film challenges or subverts the male gaze, particularly in its portrayal of Barbie's agency, self-discovery, and interactions within the matriarchal society of Barbie Land.

Mulvey's lens allows us to analyse whether the movie disrupts conventional gender dynamics and redefines the visual pleasure associated with female characters on screen. Additionally, Rosalind Gill's work on "Postfeminist Media Culture" becomes pertinent in examining how the *Barbie* movie navigates the landscape of post-feminism, which emphasizes individual empowerment and choice while sometimes perpetuating gendered expectations. Gill's framework helps assess whether the film reinforces or subverts postfeminist ideals, particularly in its depiction of Barbie's journey of self-discovery, her responses to harassment, and her relationships with other characters. Analyzing the movie through the lens of postfeminist media culture enables a nuanced exploration of how the narrative aligns with or challenges contemporary feminist discourses. Moreover, these feminist cinema theories provide tools to investigate how the movie navigates the complexities of femininity and its intersections with power, agency, and societal expectations. By applying Mulvey's and Gill's frameworks, the analysis can uncover subtleties in the film's narrative, shedding light on whether it reinforces or challenges established cinematic and cultural norms related to gender, ultimately contributing to a more nuanced understanding of the *Barbie* movie's engagement with feminist ideals.

The exploration of masculinity in literature and media has evolved, reflecting changing societal attitudes towards gender roles and identities. While contemporary depictions in children's literature are more likely to offer diverse and nuanced representations of male characters, the field remains dynamic and subject to ongoing research. The *Barbie* movie released in 2023 stands as a remarkable contribution to this discourse, challenging conventional norms and portraying a

matriarchal society that prompts critical reflections on femininity and masculinity. As we unravel the intricate connections between literature, media, and societal attitudes, the portrayal of masculinity in children's entertainment remains a rich and evolving area of study, influencing perceptions and fostering a more inclusive understanding of gender.

### **3. PROGRESSIVE PORTRAYAL: GENDER REPRESENTATION AND CRITICAL RECEPTION**

The 2023 *Barbie* movie, a groundbreaking exploration of gender representation, particularly masculinity, delves into the nuances of contemporary societal shifts. Extending beyond traditional narratives, the film invites a critical examination of how it navigates the complex terrain of 'woke' sensibilities. Drawing parallels with feminist cinema theories, such as Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," offers a lens to dissect visual dynamics and the portrayal of Barbie's agency within the matriarchal society. Additionally, Rosalind Gill's "Postfeminist Media Culture" helps unravel the film's alignment with postfeminist ideals, shedding light on whether it reinforces or challenges postfeminist discourses.

These theoretical frameworks contribute depth to the analysis, enriching our understanding of the film's engagement with contemporary feminist conversations. Ken's character undergoes a profound emotional journey, challenging stereotypical representations of masculinity. To illustrate the evolution of masculinity, we can situate Ken's narrative within the broader societal changes since his inception in the 1960s. For instance, in early Barbie commercials, Ken was often depicted as the confident, assertive companion to Barbie. The 2023 movie takes a radical departure from this, presenting Ken as a character with emotional depth and vulnerability. This shift aligns with evolving cultural expectations of men, moving away from rigid stereotypes towards more emotionally expressive and introspective portrayals.

The movie's alignment with cultural conversations around gender equality, particularly in the wake of movements like #MeToo, positions it as a significant cultural artefact. It becomes a powerful medium not only challenging traditional gender norms but also contributing to ongoing discussions about what it means to be masculine in contemporary society. Also drawing parallels between the movie and the Eras Tour added an intriguing layer, showcasing how both cultural phenomena reclaim femininity and empower women. For example, Swift's tour is known for its inclusive ethos, celebrating diverse expressions of femininity and championing women's voices. This parallel narrative reinforces the impact of both the movie and the tour in reshaping societal perceptions of gender roles.

In terms of gender stereotypes, Ken's character challenges traditional notions by being portrayed as a beach enthusiast, subverting the expectation of engaging in conventionally "masculine" activities. This aligns with broader conversations about breaking down gendered interests and encouraging individuals to pursue activities based on personal preferences rather than societal expectations. The movie also prompts discussions on masculinity by addressing men's struggles and identity crises. For instance, Ken's response to societal expectations and his search for self-esteem can be analysed in the context of broader discussions around toxic masculinity. Comparing Ken's journey to real-world movements, such as the men's rights movement, offers a dynamic perspective on how the film engages with contemporary social issues.

If we examine the use of the musical genre in the film, it offers a unique perspective on how artistic choices contribute to the narrative. For instance, the

incorporation of specific musical motifs during moments of character development or emotional revelation can be analysed to understand how the film uses music as a tool for conveying messages about femininity, masculinity, and societal expectations. Additionally, exploring the movie's negotiation of its capitalist identity and societal critiques adds complexity to the analysis. By questioning how the film operates within the capitalist system while critiquing it, we gain insights into the movie's dual role as both a commercial product and a social commentary. The critical reception and audience reactions to the Barbie movie highlight its resonance with contemporary viewers. For instance, positive reviews praise the film for its progressive approach to gender representation, emphasizing how it challenges traditional stereotypes and promotes more diverse and positive portrayals of masculinity. By incorporating these aspects, the analysis gains depth, showcasing the cultural impact of the film and its significance in shaping evolving attitudes towards gender roles in children's entertainment. *Barbie's* movie transcends conventional cinematic analysis, unfolding as a multifaceted discourse on gender representation and societal expectations.

Scholars such as Katie Pickles and Jack Butler introduce diverse perspectives, interpreting the film as a nuanced portrayal of both the strengths and potential issues within a matriarchal society. This discourse expands beyond the movie's immediate narrative, encompassing discussions on post-feminism and its satire, notably challenging perceptions of an idealized feminist world. The juxtaposition with Taylor Swift's Eras Tour adds complexity to the cultural impact, intertwining narratives of femininity reclamation and female empowerment. Acknowledging this parallel narrative prompts a broader exploration of the interconnected influence of these cultural phenomena on reshaping societal perceptions of gender roles.

The film's engagement with feminist cinema theories, particularly Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" and Rosalind Gill's "Postfeminist Media Culture," provides a theoretical lens to understand the movie's negotiation of feminist ideals and critiques. Mulvey's concept of the male gaze invites scrutiny into how the film challenges or subverts traditional visual dynamics, especially in Barbie's agency and self-discovery within the matriarchal society. Gill's framework aids in assessing the movie's alignment with postfeminist ideals, unravelling whether it reinforces or subverts postfeminist discourse, particularly in Barbie's journey of self-discovery and responses to societal challenges. These feminist theories contribute to a more nuanced exploration of the film's engagement with contemporary feminist discourses.

Beyond feminist perspectives, the movie delves into the portrayal of masculinity, challenging traditional norms and fostering a reimagining of male identity. Nicholas Balaises' insights into Ken's character provide a lens to examine the emotional complexities, identity crises, and economic challenges faced by men. Ken's emotional journey and vulnerability disrupt traditional depictions of masculinity in media, showcasing a male character who undergoes emotional growth and self-awareness. Megan Garber and Eliana Dockterman offer diverse interpretations of Ken's journey, with one seeing parallels with adolescence and the other drawing connections to aspects of the men's rights movement. These perspectives enrich discussions on the movie's themes, including power dynamics and societal critique, sparking complex conversations about gender roles and expectations.

The portrayal of male characters, particularly Ken, in the Barbie movie stands in stark contrast to traditional depictions of masculinity in media. Ken's emotional journey challenges stereotypes of emotional stoicism, highlighting emotional

development as a positive attribute for male characters. The film underscores the importance of empathy, showcasing Ken's desire for emotional connection and support. This challenges the prevailing notion of associating strength with dominance and a lack of empathy in traditional masculinity portrayals. The movie's emphasis on collective action and cooperation further challenges individualistic notions associated with traditional masculinity, promoting a more collaborative approach to problem-solving. Moreover, the Barbie movie actively challenges and subverts gender stereotypes, contributing to a more inclusive understanding of gender roles for its young audience.

Ken's character, portrayed as a beach enthusiast challenging traditional "masculine" activities, dismantles the notion that interests and hobbies are inherently gendered. The diverse career choices for Barbie and other female characters break free from the stereotype that women should be limited to certain professions, encouraging aspirations regardless of gender. The movie challenges harmful stereotypes, depicting Ken's emotional journey as a rejection of emotional stoicism and encouraging the expression of emotions in boys and men.

The film's positive models of relationships, emphasizing emotional expression and vulnerability, dismantle toxic masculinity norms. The diverse cast, reflecting various racial, ethnic, and body backgrounds, promotes inclusivity and challenges traditional beauty standards. The movie extends its impact beyond individual representation, emphasizing collective action and unity among characters, transcending gender-based rivalry. These nuanced portrayals foster empathy, understanding, and inclusivity among young audiences, challenging and rejecting harmful stereotypes and norms associated with gender.

In examining the broader cultural impact of Taylor Swift's Eras Tour alongside the Barbie movie, the interconnected narratives of femininity reclamation and empowerment gain prominence. Acknowledging this parallel narrative invites scholars to explore the collective influence of both cultural productions on reshaping societal conversations around gender roles. The critical reception and audience reactions underscore the growing demand for media that challenges conventional gender norms and fosters inclusive and progressive notions of masculinity. The film's release in a cultural context marked by discussions on gender equality and movements like #MeToo positions it as a timely contribution to evolving societal expectations regarding gender behaviours and interactions.

#### **4. UNBOXING NEW MASCULINITY**

In conclusion, the 2023 Barbie movie stands as a transformative milestone in children's entertainment, notably challenging and reshaping traditional gender norms, particularly in its portrayal of masculinity. This cinematic endeavour transcends the confines of earlier Barbie movies and animated features, offering a nuanced exploration of male characters that defies conventional stereotypes. By introducing male figures with emotional depth, vulnerability, and a willingness to challenge societal expectations, the film reflects and contributes to broader cultural shifts towards inclusivity and a reevaluation of traditional gender roles. Unlike its predecessors, the 2023 Barbie movie delves into the complexities of masculinity, providing a refreshing departure from the one-dimensional hero archetypes that often dominated earlier animated films. Male characters in this movie are portrayed as multi-faceted individuals with relatable struggles, fostering a more authentic and diverse representation of masculinity. Ken's emotional journey becomes a central narrative arc, demonstrating a departure from the simplistic portrayals of male



characters in previous Barbie movies and signalling a commitment to presenting a more accurate reflection of the varied experiences of boys and men.

The film's progressive approach to gender representation aligns with broader cultural trends that emphasize the limitations and harm associated with traditional stereotypes of masculinity. In the 2023 Barbie movie, the evolving portrayal of male characters reflects a growing recognition of the importance of emotional intelligence, empathy, and vulnerability in shaping positive role models for young viewers. This departure from the norm contributes to a richer narrative that encourages audiences to embrace a wider range of emotions and behaviours, fostering a more inclusive understanding of masculinity. Moreover, the positive critical reception and subsequent discussions surrounding the 2023 Barbie movie highlight its cultural impact and significance in shaping the discourse on gender representation in children's media.

The film's success lies not only in its entertainment value but also in its ability to prompt meaningful conversations about the importance of diverse and progressive portrayals of masculinity in shaping the attitudes and beliefs of young audiences. Beyond its thematic exploration of masculinity, the Barbie movie serves as a thought-provoking subject for academic inquiry, navigating complex intersections such as its alignment with 'woke' sensibilities, negotiation of capitalist influences, the functionality of the musical genre, and the differentiation between 'Barbie' as a product and 'Barbie' as a cinematic endeavour. The film's conscious efforts to challenge traditional stereotypes and contribute to a more accepting and progressive portrayal of masculinity position it as a cultural artefact worthy of in-depth analysis and scholarly consideration.

In the ever-evolving landscape of children's entertainment, the 2023 Barbie movie emerges not only as a cinematic achievement but as a trailblazer in challenging established norms. It provides a lens through which to examine societal attitudes, cultural shifts, and the influential role of Hollywood in shaping mainstream cinema. As animated movies and children's media continue to evolve, this Barbie movie catalyses change, evaluating gender norms and encouraging the industry to embrace more inclusive and progressive representations of masculinity. Ultimately, the film stands as a pivotal work that not only entertains but also contributes to the ongoing dialogue about the power of media in shaping perceptions, fostering inclusivity, and shaping a more equitable future.

## **CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**

None.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

None.

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**Author Note**

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**Dear Editor,**

I hope this letter finds you well.

I am writing to provide a statement regarding the sources and references used in my research paper titled *Unboxing New Masculinity: Analyzing Ken's Evolution in Barbie '23*, which I am submitting for consideration in your upcoming issue.

In the course of conducting my research, I have reviewed relevant literature and sources. However, I would like to clarify that I have not directly quoted any lines or sentences from these references. Instead, I have drawn upon the insights and knowledge gained from these sources to inform and shape my analysis. Therefore, none of the reference materials in my article have been used verbatim, word for word, or as direct quotations. I acknowledge the valuable contribution of these authors in shaping the perspective presented in my article.

Furthermore, I would like to confirm that this research has been conducted without the use of any book, article, or other publicly available sources as it is based on the recent movie *Barbie*. It is entirely an original work, and I have not referred to any external materials in the development of this research paper.

I am prepared to provide a signed confirmation letter affirming the authenticity and originality of my research upon request. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you require any additional information or clarification.

Thank you for considering my submission for publication in *ShodhKosh: Journal of Visual and Performing Arts*. I look forward to the opportunity to contribute to your esteemed journal.

**Sincerely,**



Javairia Nousheen  
Research Scholar, REVA University