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



The Story of the World's Most Famous Doll
and the Woman Who Created Her

ROBIN GERBER



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.” •

Book Information

File Size: 663 KB

Print Length: 290 pages

Publisher: HarperCollins e-books; Reprint edition (March 11, 2009)

Publication Date: March 24, 2009

Sold by: HarperCollins Publishers

Language: English

ASIN: B001VA1PL6

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #375,692 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #8 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Antiques & Collectibles > Dolls #73 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Antiques & Collectibles > Dolls, Toys & Figurines > Dolls #293 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Business & Money > Biography & History > Company Histories

Customer Reviews

Barbie and Ruth is primarily the story of Ruth, and Barbie isn't in it as much as I'd like, but I will say that Ruth Handler makes a great subject. She was driven and that's the word for her. Married to a man she considered a genius, she moved heaven and earth to make his toys happen, and after awhile, she began enjoying the power of being one of the few female toy executives. Her own two children, Barbie and Ken, were brought up almost in absentia, even though their Los Angeles home

was designed and decorated within an inch of its life, including many factors ordinary children could only dream about having--such as a live tree growing up along the staircase, and a operating soda fountain in the basement! And still they were dissatisfied with their lives. So was Ruth, and the book goes to great pains to show how Ruth's dissatisfactions led her down the primrose path of crime, so that idiotically she risked her company's future by participating in an ill thought out plan to conceal losses and to protect its credit during some lean times, by inflating to its stockholders the amount of profit Mattel was making. After years in court, she saw defeat, yet by this time she had another enemy to surmount--breast cancer, which for a woman who had always prided herself on her figure, was especially devastating. She did not take cancer lying down and instead started a new company with a feminist consciousness--Nearly Me, which developed and manufactured breast prosthetics from a female point of view. This part of the story was inspiring. Forty-five "overt acts" of fraud were mentioned in the indictment, as her enemies rejoiced how the mighty had fallen. A lie detector test helped clear her beloved Elliott of any charges.

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