Beyond the Dolls House? Barbie entrepreneur dolls and the commodification, fetishisation and consumption of idealised, gendered entrepreneurial identity

Abstract

Purpose: This article examines the concepts of gendered, entrepreneurial identity and fetishism through an analysis of images of Barbie entrepreneur. It draws on the literatures of entrepreneurial identity and fetishism to examine how such identity is socially constructed from childhood and how exposure to such dolls can shape and influence perceptions of entrepreneurial identity.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Using semiotic analysis we conduct a visual analysis of the Barbie to make observations and inferences on gendered entrepreneurial identity and fetishism from the dolls and artefacts.

Findings: The gendered images of Barbie dolls were influenced by societal perceptions of what an entrepreneur should look like, reflecting the fetishisation of entrepreneurship, especially for women. Mirroring and exaggerating gendered perceptions, the dolls express hyper-femininity reflected in both the physical embodiment of the doll as well as their adornments / accessories. This includes handbags, high-heeled shoes, short skirts, haute-couture and designer clothes. Such items and the dolls themselves become fetishised objects, making context and culture of vital importance.

Research Implications/Limitations: There are positive and negative implications in relation to how we might, as a society, present unrealistic gendered images and role models of entrepreneurship to children. The obvious limitation is that the methodology limits what can be said or understood, albeit the imagery mirrors socially constructed reality for the context examined.

Originality/Value: This is original research in that no previous published studies have tackled gendered entrepreneurial identity in relation to fetishism. The value of the work lies in discussing the concepts and embeds them in the expanding conversation surrounding gendered entrepreneurial identities.

Introduction

In her seminal book, Angela Holdsworth (1998) made a call for women to come '*out of the doll's house'*. We read this as a call for women to escape from the trappings of patriarchal domestication and sexism. We consider that Holdsworth's call is still

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significant, because despite the passing of time it could be argued that little has changed since then in relation to how women, and particularly women entrepreneurs, are depicted in the media. In this provocative article, using Barbie as a visual metaphor (Koller, 2004) for gendered feminine entrepreneurial identity, we consider how the iconic 'Barbie' Doll has moved beyond the Doll's House as a commodified, but arguably fetishised and consumed gendered, entrepreneurial identity to become a creditable role model for young girls aspiring to entrepreneurial careers. Koller (2004) highlighted the abundance of masculinised metaphor which skew the business media discourse. Although, Barbie is seemingly 'just' a toy, there is potential to influence, and thus shape, societal perceptions of such identities and perpetuate potentially damaging stereotypical representations. To illustrate this, we examine (through a scholarly gaze) the contentious ideological and philosophical relationships between 'Barbie' as a plasticised example of feminism, and fetishism through the rubric of a consumed entrepreneurial identity, as marketed by Mattel. We explore the concept of 'emphasised femininity' (Connell, 2005) as a foil for the concept of 'hegemonic masculinity' (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) which shapes masculine notions and pervades entrepreneurial identity.[1] In an anthropological sense, the dolls visually represent ideal typical, secular reified formulaic images of revered entrepreneurial identities arguably imbued with mystical qualities (as man-made objects with power over others). In this article we apply the theory and literature of fetishism sparingly, because the article is not so much about fetishism per se, but about how entrepreneurial identity can be fetishised and consumed.

We also build on the broader utilisation of visual research in gender studies and on Barbie as a representation of complex female entrepreneurial identity (Pritchard et al,

2016) expressive of "*excessive entrepreneurial femininity*" (Lewis, 2014:1858). In the process, we examine fetishism, and sexual objectification (Saguy et al. 2010) facilitated via social constructionism and its links to gendered consumer stereotyping (Campenni, 1999). We adopt a gendered lens (Bem, 1993), focusing attention on gender differences and identity aspects by applying concepts from feminist studies and female entrepreneurship (Rouse *et al*, 2013) to study the social construction of fetishism associated with Barbie (Bignell, 1999) and the gendered consumer stereotyping this reflects and perpetuates. We also address issues of 'realness' (Holter, 2003) associated with hegemonic concepts, which draw their power from the direct experience of women rather than from the structural basis of their subordination. In the process, we make a clear contribution by synthesising the relevant literatures of gendered entrepreneurial identity, feminism and fetishism to build on the salient ideological arguments of both. Prior to this paper we are not aware of any other(s) which combine arguments from the fields of entrepreneurship, marketing and fetishism. In the separate literatures the arguments remain unconnected. We join theories concepts and arguments across the disparate literatures and conduct an analysis of images associated with Barbie entrepreneur dolls to provide empirical evidence.

The ontogenesis of this work began during a conference presentation in 2012, when the lead author was presenting a paper on female entrepreneurial identity (See Smith, 2012/2014), including slides of Barbie entrepreneur dolls and a fetishised image of a pair of red high-heeled shoes, from the cover of a textbook on women in business. Both images caused controversy and patently split the mainly female audience in terms of their reaction. Half of the female attendees approved but others disapproved volubly, and it

was apparent that this presentation had struck a nerve. This engendered debate on aspects of the fetishism of female entrepreneurial identity and 'emphasised femininity' (Connell, 2005), which was duly tweeted. After the lecture the lead author was approached by two female scholars who had not been at the presentation but were nevertheless disparaging in their comments. One remarked "*Did you really present an image of Barbie?*", before both shook their heads and walked away. It was immediately apparent that the topic was worthy of further research. Authors two and three were in the audience and this continuing conversation grew from there.

The research problematics relate to how female entrepreneurial identities are influenced by socially constructed and arguably fetishised images and artefacts of identity in the workplace; and how these images and artefacts are represented in the form of Barbie dolls. These are important and related social themes worthy of study because of contemporary arguments and debates over 1) the right of women to wear non-sexualised (sexist) clothing in the workplace (see Donaghue, 2017); and 2) societal debates around the social construction of female work place identities and mediated images thereof (see Gill et al, 2017). Indeed, Hanke (1992) has argued that hegemonic masculinity has been employed in studying media representations primarily because the concept helps us make sense of both the diversity and the selectiveness of images in mass media. Workplaces constitute an interesting site where individuals 'do gender', whilst constructing their professional identities, and where the concept of 'femininity' typically has negative connotations (Holmes & Schnurr, 2006).

Having set the scene, we move on to discuss the theoretical underpinning of the article synthesising relevant entrepreneurship literature with that of fetishism. We begin with a discussion on the socially constructed nature of a particular gendered female entrepreneurial identity before considering fetishism and commodification in relation to the creation of the entrepreneurial identity. We then consider the academic literature on Barbie dolls and how this relates to the commodification of the particular entrepreneurial identity. Following this, we articulate the research methodology of visual semiotics and semiotic analysis before presenting and analysing the research empirically. We then discuss the importance of this research, before ending with some important conclusions.

We appreciate that the results obtained are somewhat descriptive until one casts a critical eye over them and understands the relevant ties of the differing Barbie images to a wider socio-economic critique of women and business women over these differing time periods. When Barbie was introduced in the 1950s and 1960s there was little conception, from the makers Mattel, that Barbie was or could be an entrepreneur. She was primarily a role model and vehicle for showcasing different occupations and therefore by extension upwardly mobile neo-liberal identities (Walkerdine, 2003; Donaghue, 2017). Presumably, it was the societal preoccupation with the ideology of entrepreneurism from the 1980s that awoke the toymaker to the potential for income generation by marketing a Business Woman Barbie. At this stage the metamorphosis was achieved by virtue of clothing and artefacts associated with business alone. It was not until circa 2013 that the Barbie Entrepreneur doll concept came of age, with multiple ethnicities represented and a more nuanced range of artefacts. Despite these facts, the product is still primarily focused on the children's market, albeit the 'designer' Barbie's were no doubt targeted at wealthy

mothers and collectors. The changes in appearance, clothing and artefacts mirror the changing times and the wider political discourse surrounding women and their representation through Barbie.

Theoretical underpinning

Here we examine how female entrepreneurial identity is socially constructed from an early age and how social perceptions of such identity is influenced by gendered objects such as toys and in particular, dolls and vice versa. However, it is necessary first, to discuss the importance and significance of dolls to girls. This aspect of childhood socialisation has a long history. For example, Rheingold and Cook (1975) found that the contents of a child's room had a significant impact on their development and that this was influenced by parental perceptions of what was appropriate for boys and girls – girls were generally provided with dolls houses, dolls and other toys of domesticity (cookers, hoovers, irons, etc.). Francis (2010) argues, from an educational perspective, that several decades' later toy preferences are still highly gendered, with boys preferring action and technology and girls often choosing toys linked with stereotypically feminine interests. This is important in relation to this study, given that we use Barbie dolls as a measure / proxy for female entrepreneurial identity.

It is helpful at this stage to define the key terms discussed and particularly how we understand the terms entrepreneurship and fetishism in relation to each other. Entrepreneurship is narrowly defined as – *"The activity of setting up a business or businesses, taking on financial risks in the hope of profit"*. However, this generic definition is not very helpful and a better way of understanding this creative socio-economic phenomenon is to view it as *"the creation and extraction of value from an*

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environment" (Anderson, 1995). We are particularly concerned with issues of entrepreneurial identity and gender. Fetishism is variously defined in the Oxford Dictionary as: 1) A form of sexual behaviour in which gratification is linked to an abnormal degree to a particular object, activity, part of the body; 2) An excessive and irrational devotion, or commitment, to a particular thing e.g. *'the fetishism of consumer goods';* and 3) Worship of an inanimate object for its supposed magical powers or because it is considered to be inhabited by a spirit. We consider these in relation to entrepreneurial identity.

Considering the literature on gendered female entrepreneurial identity

There is a burgeoning literature on entrepreneurial identity, which focuses on the privileging of maleness and masculinity in such representations (Ogbor, 2000; Shaw, Marlow & Lam, 2009; Smith, 2010; Ahl & Marlow, 2012; Jones, 2014). Ogbor (2000) examined conventional entrepreneurial discourses and praxis, arguing that the concept of entrepreneurship is discriminatory, gender-biased, ethnocentrically determined and ideologically controlled, sustaining prevailing societal biases and also contradictory assumptions and knowledge about the reality of entrepreneurs. Shaw et al (2009) argued that gender shapes the possession of entrepreneurial capital and that there is an interplay between economic, human, social and symbolic capital all of which shapes female entrepreneurial identity. Smith (2010) further confirmed that entrepreneurship is ideologically skewed towards masculine ideology, with negative perceptions of female entrepreneurs being commonplace. Ahl and Marlow (2012) identified a persistent, but occluded, gender bias within the entrepreneurial discourse whereby

women were positioned as lacking and incomplete men. Jones (2014) argues that, rather than being gender neutral or meritocratic, discourses of entrepreneurship are saturated with gendered meanings which position entrepreneurs in potentially damaging ways. Collectively, the gist of these studies is that the concept of entrepreneurship *per se* is dominated by a patriarchal rhetoric that emphasises masculinity and its cultural norms. This serves to skew the narrative on entrepreneurship by privileging 'heroic' male entrepreneurs, whilst marginalising and silencing alternative non-hegemonic identities.

Studies relating to female entrepreneurial identity *per se* are quite rare, albeit there is a strong literature on female-entrepreneurship and gendered aspects of entrepreneurship. A major, recurring theme in the literature is how entrepreneurs, and in particular, female-entrepreneurs are 'silenced' and portrayed in the media (see the studies of Christensen & Askegaard, 2001; Nicholson & Anderson, 2005; Radu & Redien-Collot, 2008; Smith, 2009; Achtenhagen & Welter, 2011; Eikhoff, and Summers & Carter 2012). Christensen and Askegaard (2001) examined the masculinised discourses of corporate identity and image management. Nicholson and Anderson (2005) did likewise for entrepreneurship, arguing that entrepreneurship is socially constructed through masculine myth and metaphor whereby entrepreneurs are frequently presented using dynamic masculine metaphors. Radu and Redien-Collot (2008) examined social representations of entrepreneurs in the French press arguing that these were skewed towards the masculine[2]. Smith (2009) examined discourses of female entrepreneurs in the media and identified the – 'Diva complex' as a positive female metaphor and entrepreneurial identity. Achtenhagen and Welter (2011) examined the representation of women's entrepreneurship in German media/newspapers and found that these conformed to and

regulated the nature of women's entrepreneurship by highlighting 'typical' and 'socially desirable' behaviour of women entrepreneurs. Eikhoff, Summers, and Carter (2012) examined gendered representations of women entrepreneurs in a women's magazine.[3] They found that women were portrayed as engaging in traditional female activities and pursuits and as being domestically centred. The general 'consensus' of such studies are that female-entrepreneurs are presented as being 'lesser' than male-entrepreneurs and are subjected to a socially constructed, process of trivialisation and domestication. For example, female-entrepreneurs are regularly discussed in relation to their specific, 'roles'; such as motherhood, and their domestic and personal relationships; moreover, female-entrepreneurs are questioned about their image. Indeed, there is a fascination with artefacts and clothing. This is fitting because Sahlins (1976:185) argued that clothes reflect many things such as time and place of activity; social status; age; ethnicity; and subculture. Clothes act as boundary and differential mechanisms through which we fashion entrepreneurial identities (Smith, 2012). Similarly, Schiermer (2011) focused on the notion of the 'fashion object' and the linkages between fetishism and fashion theory.

This fascination with fashion and appearance can be framed as a form of journalistic fetishism because male-entrepreneurs do not receive such a 'gender-biased-interrogation' and are constructed more seriously in relation to business topics (Ljunggren & Kolvereid, 1996). Nor are women seen as being good entrepreneurial role-models (Ahl & Marlow, 2012). The world of male-dominated journalism reproduces and perpetuates such inequalities via chauvinism, sexism and patronising attitudes albeit female journalists can be equally acerbic in their commentary on female-entrepreneurs (See Nadin, Jones &

Smith, 2017). These issues influence how female entrepreneurs are portrayed in the media and in turn how they are depicted as role-models.

Indeed, from an academic perspective, entrepreneurial identity is constructed as a performed male dominated paradigm (Down & Warren, 2008; Giazitzoglu & Down, 2015) via artefacts, objects and possessions which are associated with masculine imagery and enactments relating to success. This is mirrored in popular culture in novels of capitalist, corporate culture where masculine entrepreneurial identity is commodified and festishised and female identity and values are constructed in relation to masculine norms and desires (Ellis, 1991 – *American Psycho*; Anderson, 2008 – *City Boy*; James, 2011-*Fifty Shades of Grey*). In such novels, masculine entrepreneurial identity is portrayed via possession of designer clothing; bad-boy-values, behaviours and imagery, reminiscent of entrepreneurship as a form of hyper-masculinity, or hegemonic masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Conversely, female identity is constructed as an appendage to male identity, with sexism and overt heterosexuality presented as the norm. In the novel '*Confessions of a Citygirl*' (Stcherbatcheff, 2010), the entrepreneurial heroine performs, mirrors and parodies fetishised masculine values and admits to getting ahead by performing her corporate feminine role as expected, to capitalise on feminine guiles. This cultural dimension is important in identity creation because the female entrepreneurial identity crafted for Barbie comes from this socially constructed cultural stock.

In the academic literature, negative female-stereotypes abound including – *Divas* (Smith, 2009); *'Daddy's girl, little princess, bitch, dolly-bird secretary, gold-digger* (Smith, 2014); and the *Matriarch* (Smith, 2015). Within this tranche of work there is an emerging obsession with artefacts and clothing as a medium through which

entrepreneurial identity is constructed, portrayed, performed and fashioned (see Smith, 2010; Clarke, 2011). In corporate culture, there is a focus on conservative business attire in its feminised manifestation(s). This includes dark-coloured-suits, power blouses with high-heeled shoes often being the norm.[4] Experts on corporate dress warn 'would be corporate players' to avoid flamboyant displays of colourful 'diva' clothing. The fe*male* entrepreneur who emerges is dressed sensibly like a school 'mam' with a stern 'tied back' hairdo, elegant glasses and business artefacts such as matching handbag and laptop (see Smith, 2014). Artefacts thus become serious signifiers of entrepreneurial and corporate identity (Johnson & Lennon, 1999: Christensen & Askegaard, 2001) and even in academic books on women in business settings, the front covers depict and fetishise, for example red coloured, shiny, high-heeled shoes (See Reeves, 2010). Female-entrepreneurial identity thus appears to be constructed in an 'idealised' and, as will be argued, a fetishised manner. The literature on fetish and fetishism to which we turn helps us to frame this paper because to the best of our knowledge fetishism as a concept has seldom appeared in the entrepreneurship literature albeit Crawford, Dimov and McKelvie (2016) consider the obsession with the academic literature of entrepreneurship as a theoretical fetishism in itself. In the case of Barbie, fetishism is introduced via emphasising the desirability of 1) an objectified female entrepreneurial identity; 2) the gendered clothing and accessories associated with such an identity.

What is apparent from this perusal of the literature is that the differentiation of the idealised female entrepreneur from the male entrepreneur is achieved by a social process of belittling and criticizing female actions and endeavours via artefacts, clothing and issues such as domesticity. Little or no consideration has been given to important topics

such as commodification of entrepreneurial identity and the obvious links with the concepts of sexuality and fetishism. Issues of sexuality and fetishised entrepreneurial identity are therefore ignored in the literature albeit they are present in reality. This is a critical omission and are important gap in the literature.

Fetishisation and commodification

Our review covers both 'commodity' fetishism (Marx, 2000) and 'sexual' fetishism (Freud, 1928) because 1) a commodity is an object outside us, whose properties satisfy a human want or desire; which 2) because of their nature and context can become an object of sexual desire through the interpretation of others. As a concept, fetishism and its myriad practices have been the focus of research in marketing and consumer research (Jhally, 1990; Graeber, 2005) but less so in entrepreneurship research circles. Jhally (1990) linked commodification to fetishism and the relationship between people and objects through the process of 'objectification', which is instrumental in the mediation of human needs through the appropriation of objects. Such objects often have a symbolic as well as an economic, psychological and physical value and, according to Jhally, are simultaneously communicators (about society and power relations) and satisfiers (of human needs). Nevertheless, as a commodity, *per se*, Barbie has value for customers (Walsh, 2010) which goes beyond mere possession and consumption. This is because it is part of a brand(ed) community (Bohm & Batta, 2010; Graeber, 2005) that fetishises notions of feminine perfection and therefore exerts a curious fascination for many (Pietz, 1985, 1987). This has obvious negative connotations. Such 'commodity oriented' fetishism has a schizophrenic influence, being simultaneously deleterious and useful

(Billig, 1999). Bohm and Batta (2010) argue that commodity fetishism, within the wider ideological system of capitalism (and thus entrepreneurship), can be viewed and explained by understanding it as a sense of enjoyment or consumptive desire. The very process of marketing can promote both commodification and fetishism of a product albeit the relationship between child and doll is a romanticised, emotional (not sexualised) fetish because the child most-likely values the doll and its accessories as cherished possessions in an expanding collection. The child may be unaware of adult interpretations of the doll in the real world, seeing the doll as an object of idolisation, although they are ultimately consuming a product that is highly sexualised. The same may not be the case in relation to an adult's fetishisation of the same product, which may manifest more as 'commodity narcissism' (Cluley & Dunne, 2012).

Fetishism assists in the process of identity building via the provision of psychological, sociological, emotional, devotional and sexual affirmation. Fetish and fetishism come into play via the notion of consumer desires (see Belk, Ger & Askegaard, 2000, 2003; Belk, Ger & Lascu, 1993; Schroeder, 2002, 2008; Schouten & McAlexander, 1995; and Belk & Wallendorf, 1990). The process of fetishisation imbues a product with value, either overtly or via subtle polysemic communication (Schroeder & Borgerson, 2003) through a triadic discourse encapsulating individual, community and object. Marketing trades on fetishism (Walsh, 2010) because it aims to sell more of the same branded products to customers and, in the case of toys such as Barbie, it encourages parent and child alike to own the entire portfolio or collection. As a process, it generates systems of meanings around the product which helps us achieve a sublime state of 'want satisfaction', taking us beyond reality, liminally (Schroeder, 2008).[5] Marketers invoke

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tropes and imagery associated with fetishistic behaviour to sell both product and socially

constructed imagery. Advertising is the engine of consumption (Schroeder & Zwick,

2004) enabling the dissemination of carefully packaged, eroticised reproductions of real-

world identities (Johansson, 1999). It merits the scholarly gaze of disciplines as diverse

as marketing, consumer research, anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, postcolonial

studies, literature and art (Johansson, 1999; Miklitsch, 1996; Schroeder, 2008; Walsh,

2010). An obvious gap in the literature is that of any notable contribution from the

discipline of entrepreneurship.

Perusing the academic literature on Barbie dolls

The now ubiquitous 'Barbie doll' was created by American businesswoman Ruth

Handler and launched in March, 1959 by American toy manufacturers Mattel Inc. She

was inspired to create the doll by watching her daughter Barbara (hence Barbie) playing

with paper dolls and noticed that she would give them adult roles and work-related

scenarios. Ruth had the idea of creating a doll which represented a realistic role model for

children. She was further inspired by encountering a German manufactured doll 'Lilli' (a

stereotypical blond bombshell) whilst on holiday. She purchased the doll and gave it to

her husband Elliot, a founding member of Mattel (Cox, 1977). Controversially, Bignell

(1999) tells us that 'Lilli' was based on a risqué newspaper cartoon and sold as a sex toy

in tobacconist shops. This is (ironically) relevant given the subsequent iconic and

fetishistic status of Barbie dolls. Mattel has sold over a billion Barbie dolls since its

launch, making it a globally recognised iconic brand and, also, a collectable commodity.

It was an ideal vehicle for the sale of related merchandise (accessories, clothes, friends of

Barbie, etc.) and became popular, impacting on social values by conveying characteristics

of accessorised female independence, representing an idealised 'upscale' life-style which resonated with affluent children and their mothers (Cox, 1977). From the 1970s onwards, Mattel marketed Barbie as a 'career woman' (Messner, 2000:776).[6] In this article, we examine the fetishisation of female-entrepreneurship, with Barbie arguably being representative of a semiotic expression of this phenomenon, but equally the focus is on dolls themselves as being expressive of fetishistic memes.[7] We make links between the literatures to further understandings in both spheres. However, it is important to remember that Barbie is the result of an entrepreneurial venture by Ruth and Elliot Handler and ultimately Mattel. This is important because Barbie is first and foremost a product and a commodity and thus capable of being fetishised.

There is a constantly growing, academic literature on Barbie (see DuCille, 1994; Attfield, 1996; Bignell, 1999; Rogers, 1999; Messner, 2000; Spigel, 2001; and Lord, 2004) based around actively constructing a flawed image of gender. Indeed, Messner (2000:765) stresses that "*Children's gendered immersion in popular culture provides symbolic resources on which children and parents actively create (or disrupt) categorical difference*". Messner (2000:775) further notes that "*Barbie is likely one of the most immediately identifiable symbols of femininity in the world*". Moreover, DuCille (1994:50) claimed that Barbie was an "…*icon of true white womanhood and femininity*". There are obvious links here to emphasised femininity (Connell, 2005) and excessive entrepreneurial femininity (Lewis, 2014). These are serious claims and position her as an iconic totem of femininity and therefore open to fetishistic endeavors. Yet, Rogers, (1999) in defining, and discussing, '*Barbie Culture'* argued that Barbie is plastic in terms of what meanings children and adults create around her, in that owners bring their own

understandings and meanings to the play. Rogers argues that Barbie, despite being denigrated as sexist and racist is more complex because her sexuality is not clear-cut, and her class situation is ambiguous – she exists to be consumed (whether innocently by children or otherwise by adults). Here, we concentrate on the issues of gendered identity and fashion and not primarily on sex and sexuality. Bignell (1999) suggests that in real life, if 'scaled-up' Barbie's vital statistics would be an unrealistic 36-18-33, but points out that despite the erotic heritage of Lilli, significant markers of sexual and procreative capacity are absent.[8] Nevertheless, DuCille (1994:50) suggests that Barbie allows little girls to dream. Indeed, Messner (2000) argues that 'the Barbie narrative' is symbolically a serious competitor to the '*warrior narrative'* (Jordan & Cowan, 1995) espoused by boys. The warrior narrative also pervades entrepreneurial identity (Gomez & Korine, 2008).

There is an alternative literature, whereby academics comment on the sexualised (and thus fetishised) nature of Barbie; the idealised femininity and unrealistic aspect of Barbie's physical dimensions; and possible links to eating disorders and self-esteem issues (Dittmar, Halliwell & Ive, 2006; van der Hoort, Guterstam & Ehrsson, 2011). It is a ferocious and frenetic debate but not necessarily, directly related to this study other than potentially making Barbie a negative role model in terms of identity formation. In terms of both ideologies, feminism and fetishism, much is simply open to interpretation.

This theoretical discussion sets up a tri-partite framework whereby we have: Barbie, as fetishised commodities; Barbie as a sexualised entity; and their accessories and clothing as representations of fetishised entrepreneurial identity.

Methodological underpinning,

Our methodological orientation was based on the premise that images should be studied as indicators of underlying cultural forces (Hall, 1973) and was complicated because we were analysing photographs that represented such underlying forces and exacerbated because the staged images contained semiotic elements of adorned fashion and embodied identities, all of which are require separate forms of consideration in terms of visual research (Emmison & Smith, 2000). To obtain empirical data we conducted a qualitative visually directed, semiotic analysis (viz a viz Chandler, 2007) of pertinent images located on the web using Google. We were mindful of the advice of Emmison and Smith (2000) that determining bias in visual images is no easy task. From the thousands of images located we selected and downloaded images we considered appropriate because in our experience they were representative of the 'majority' of images we encountered and because they illustrated the theoretical points we discuss. We used the key words –
Barbie Businesswomen Dolls, *Barbie Entrepreneur Dolls, Barbie Executive Dolls* and combinations therefore. These searches brought up similar images. In total we conducted ten separate searches using cognate search and looked at appropriate websites – those which appear in table 1. The criteria set was that it had to be a website capable of 1) being cited and 2) one which obviously used the images with permission and held copyright to the images. Most of the websites did not have such permissions and were avoided for obvious ethical reasons. We quickly reached saturation with hundreds of websites displaying the same images.

We worked hard to overcome selectivity bias (Keeble et al, 2015) by ensuring that,

as each category emerged, there were other exemplars of the image visible across

websites and by applying the eligibility criteria discussed above. With qualitative research and in particular visual images this has to be done intuitively using common sense judgement (Emmison & Smith, 2000) because the researchers are an integral part of the process and separating the two is neither possible nor desirable. Instead, it is necessary to be transparent and reflexive (Polit & Beck, 2014) about the processes by which data have been collected, analyzed, and presented. In carrying out the analysis we were aware of our own preconceptions, relationship dynamics, and analytic focus. We thus avoided obviously satirical and doctored images and contentious websites which were difficult to verify.

We pasted the images onto a wall mounted board and using qualitative analytic techniques (Banks, 2008; Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2013) we created galleries (visual storyboards) of relevant images. We adopted the strategy 'Photographic Montage Critique' (Berger & Mohr, 2016; Berger & Mohr, 1989; Dillon, 2004) to make sense of the selected images. Photo-montage as a visual narrative methodology relies on critique by placing visual fragments (photographs or images) in juxtaposition to each other to create a montage of images which present a visual story for interpretation and permits visualisation of new themes using sensory data (Smith, 2014). We juxtaposed relevant images in 'close-proximity' to each other to allow us to develop themes for discussion, whilst paying particular attention to the symbolic and socially constructed elements in the images. In keeping with the above criteria, we rejected images which were satirical and obviously doctored or where the authors were obviously biased or un-named. We were careful to avoid sites where there was an obvious agenda (Emmison & Smith, 2000). We also focused on aesthetic elements such as impressions and feelings. To assist in the

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analysis, each author conducted their analysis separately and shared their observations and findings with each other to develop a collective and more nuanced understanding. This was very helpful. For example, due to our different previous readings of the literature and the gender differences the lead author often did not fully understand the subtleties of the arguments surrounding feminism and the feminist literature. This was resolved by patient discussion and additional readings. This ensured a consensus of opinion emerged and thus allowed a form of triangulation and validation. The methods used were justified by virtue of mirroring those used and published in Smith (2014). Triangulation with the literature was achieved by matching the themes found to the theories and literature discussed above.

From the analysis of the galleries we developed tables to present the findings, primarily because of the difficulties and cost of obtaining copyright and printing colour photographs and other practical challenges. This enabled us to use the images as a springboard for subsequent theoretical abstraction. The images are available from author one on request.

It is difficult to recreate the aesthetic experience, and the power of the imagery in helping us reach a more nuanced understanding, by using text. We have attempted to overcome this by embedding the basic analysis/observation in the tables of findings, which provide a description of the images. Readers are encouraged to do their own 'Google images' search after reading this article to complement their understanding from the reading so that they can confirm or refute the findings below.

Analysis and discussion

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Analysis.

The analysis below is developed from our intuitive, visual observations, based on our collective understanding of gender and entrepreneurial identity as they emerged from the photo-montages.[9] It is of note that this entails an unintentional element of fashion critique which introduces a judgmental element to the analysis.[10] See Table 1 below: -

Image, description and location	Observational Analysis
Image 1: is of the original Barbie Business Woman doll (circa 1990s). She is dressed in sensible matching business attire of black and white checked blouse with a blue tightfitting pencil skirt finished off with a mismatched pink handbag and pale blue high heels. Tied-back hair, glasses and mobile phone complete the image. The link to this image is no longer available demonstrating the perils of internet research.	This model denotes an appropriately gendered business persona (for the time-period). Of interest is the mobile phone with the aerial, the only particularly relevant iconic artefact related to business. The other clothing and artefacts relate to women's fashion.
Image 2: Provides an updated but still sensible model for the twenty-first century. The new Barbie Executive is dressed in a matching grey business suit with pleated skirt, softened by matching red blouse and choker style costume jewelry. Black high heeled shoes complete the image. Big blonde hair is the order of the day. The flip style mobile telephone and large black handbag with clip boards, etc. presents a business persona. Located: https://uk.pinterest.com/ariellakeepsake/barbies/	This image provides a professional corporate image denoting a more personable entrepreneurial persona. The new Barbie Business woman is now more feminised and fashion conscious. The overall appearance is of corporate stylishness – the message is Executive Barbie means business.
Image 3: Presents Game Developer Barbie in a Khaki coloured jacket and grey 'T' shirt with blue denim jeans and trainers complete the picture. This model sports 'big', vivid auburn / died red hair and matching glasses. Located: http://www.idealo.co.uk/blog/4682-game-developer-barbie-mattel-introduces-new-career-doll/	This model presents a more casual business image with 'dress as you please' Barbie. This offering, mirrors and parodies the stay at home entrepreneur. The return of the glasses may be an attempt to make Barbie appear more serious. The message conveyed is that fashion is paramount and business attire optional but as a prototype for Entrepreneur Barbie it was a step in a different direction.
Image 4: Presents Computer Engineer Barbie in fashionable matching pink and pale blue pastel coloured casual attire with dark jeans. The long blonde hair continues the casual imagery. A pink (gender coded) coloured tablet completes the contemporary business image. Located: https://biancajchadda.wordpress.com/2014/02/21/entrepreneurship-never-looked-so-pink/	Fashion is the key idiom and again, glasses, possibly to denote a higher IQ. The use of pink and pastels suggests that Barbie may have entered a male dominated profession, but her femininity is still preserved. She certainly is not 'one of the guys'.

Image 5: Depicts a special edition Barbie linked to haute-couture designer clothing manufacturers. Note the fawn coloured overcoat, blazer and matching handbag portraying a rich, casual business persona. Located: http://www.emirates247.com/news/emirates/barbie-dazzles-in-iconic-haute-couture-exhibition-in-dubai-2015-09-04-1.602314.	The exhibition in Dubai for collectors presented 24 limited edition Barbie dolls associated with fashion houses such as Hervé Léger, Christian Dior, Oscar de la Renta, Monique Lhuillier, Versace, Christian Louboutin and Armani. Throughout the decades, no fashion trend has been overlooked as Mattel / Barbie has collaborated with more than 75 fashion designers worldwide including Givenchy, Christian Louboutin and Burberry, remaining a true fashion icon.[11] The relevance of this collection being included is that it takes the fetishisation of the Barbie into a new arena for rich collectors and also introduces the world of designer clothing into the world of Barbie. Given that children now access the internet more frequently and freely there is a potential for these specialist images to influence the children's perceptions of entrepreneurial identity.
Image 6: Unveils the new Barbie Entrepreneur Doll range introduced in 2014. All of the dolls in this range wear themed pink dresses but Barbie is now multi-racial and multi-cultural. Located: https://theblackconversation.wordpress.com/2014/05/30/mattel-creates-new-black-barbie-entrepreneur-doll-now-barbie-is-intelligent-business-minded-and-well-black/	Collectively, the coordinated image sends a message of equality to the children and also sends messages of diversity and possibility to children of all ethnicities. However, there is still an undertone of white, Anglo-Saxon gendered sensibilities here, with the dresses and accessories being mainly pink.
Image 7: No Barbie Entrepreneur should be without accessories and these include a pink purse, a black patent leather handbag, an Apple iPad and a flip chart. Located: http://westcoastmama.net/entrepreneur-barbie/	This accessory set allows owners to add to the business image of Barbie Entrepreneur doll or to accessorise other Barbie models with a business persona. The accessories have the power to do this.
Image 8: Depicts a feminised CEO Barbie with 'bobbed' hairstyle. Note the traditional 'cradle' telephone juxtaposed with the contemporary laptop and flowers depicting a more 'homely' persona. Sensibility and conservative values is a recurring theme. Located: http://www.theonion.com/article/ceo-barbie-criticized-for-promoting-unrealistic-ca-1787	This image and imagery introduces a sense of datedness and even nostalgia and may perhaps blur the boundaries between work and home because the furniture is atypical for office furniture. However, sexism is still present because of the denim effect suit, the tightfitting white coloured polo necked top and mini skirt.
Image 9: Returns Barbie to a commodity in her packaging but this special edition depicts a pin striped Barbie with feminine power blouse, earphones, large utilitarian handbag and a latte coffee. Located:https://www.amazon.com/Barbie-Millicent-Roberts-Pinstripe-Fashion/dp/B000AMVXG8	Sexism and fetishism are brought into play because the power blouse, under garment is a tightfitting bodice type waist coat with matching leggings.

Table 1 Commodification and evolution of Barbie Entrepreneur dolls.

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The main themes to emerge are those of objectified 'entrepreneurial artefacts' – namely telephones, computers, iPads and work clothing such as power blouses. In this respect, these are used in 'fashioning' an entrepreneurial identity (Smith, 2012). Therefore, entrepreneurial identities are facilitated via adornment, the wearing of accessories, and the process of accessorising. The images individually and collectively and particularly when taken in sequence demonstrate a fabricated neo-liberal identity via the conspicuous display of consumerist fashions (see Walkerdine, 2003). As the Barbie concept is based on 'play' and 'role playing' there is very little backstory, and therefore, little philosophical, or epistemological underpinning behind it, albeit there are Barbie storybooks which now provide a sanitised backstory and ideology. The relationship between owner and doll and their maturity/immaturity dictates the potential storylines that come into play.

In the case of Barbie, the *commercialisation* of the product (Barbie) creates a desire for it, which is increased via the processes of *commodification* (of the gendered entrepreneurial identity) which establishes the desire for possessing the dolls. The success of the product in turns *objectifies* and *reifies* the idea of Barbie being representative of a legitimised entrepreneurial (and feminine) identity; and of Barbie as a role model. In time, the notion of collectability comes into play and recreates the desire for ownership of the entire collection and the need to possess the desirable objects. This leads to veneration of Barbie and thus fetishisation. Fetishisation plays out via the links to designer labels and cultural artefacts associated with enterprise, or socially constructed gendered aspects of such identities. Fetishisation and commodification creep in because of the issue of collectability and a desire to own, or possess, all the accessories. Barbie

dolls in their packaging become a collectable commodity 'in their own right'. Special edition dolls can fetch a considerable price at auction thereby increasing their collectability and viability as an investment to those who can afford to pay for such connoisseurship. Such items will inevitably become 'must have' items for collectors. However, fetishisation is also implicit because the accessories are displayed on a (to some) flawed, controversial and sexualised object, namely Barbie doll herself. We are struck by the fact that the 'style' is also very glamourous and depicts the female entrepreneurial body as something heavily invested in.

Table 1 also tells us 'Barbie the entrepreneur' has changed over time and we believe that this is in keeping with a more empowered Barbie. We do however acknowledge that there is a counter argument that Barbie is increasingly being subjected to and thus enthralled to male power. In other words, which argument you accept is a subjective, qualitative one dependent upon your ideological leanings viz a viz Barbie. There is therefore no unified emerging image of Barbie per se. What is being presented and for whom is clearly open to interpretation.

In Table 2, we encounter the Barbie 2014 interactive promotional material (as ppt slides) that accompanies the product.[12]

Slide	Description
Image 1: What's An Entrepreneur (opening slide).	This links the Barbie doll with the concept of entrepreneurship.
Image 2: What's An Entrepreneur (explanatory slide).	This slide provides detailed age and gender specific definitions and explanations of what an entrepreneur is. An entrepreneur is defined as being "*an adventurous person who takes risks to start a business*". This simplified version is linked to gender specific roles by questions such as "Do you like cooking, crafts and animals?"
Image 3: Be An Entrepreneur Now!	This slide exhorts the child to be an entrepreneur now. After listing other possibilities, the child is exhorted to follow what they love to start a lemonade stand, a gardening service or a mobile veggie stand.
Image 4: Believes in You	This slide exhorts the child to believe in themselves and be

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	creative. The message is to work hard to SUCCEED, DREAM and MAKE A DIFFERENCE. This is a bespoke enterprise culture where anything is possible via play. The handout ends with a creative exercise and an instruction to ask mum and dad for help.

Table 2: Barbie Entrepreneur 2014 promotional material.

In Table 2, the child is subliminally sold an ideological standpoint with age and gender specific messages. The cartoon style images depict flowers and puppies using pastel pinks and blues. It sells a subliminal image of entrepreneurial success and also, an achievable identity via reciprocal self-belief. However, from an adult perspective the message is simplistic and patronising.

Discussion.

It is apparent from our readings and analysis that the aesthetics and resultant feelings evoked by the Barbie products analysed will differ according to whether the product is consumed by a child or an adult. The polysemic images and semiotic messages (Schroeder & Borgerson, 2003) broadcast by the dolls' adult origins may become confusing to the children. Barbie introduces fetishism 'by the back door' and is more insidious because of it. It also raises questions as to the role of the consumer in defining whether or not something is a fetish – just because Barbie is made for children, it does not mean it cannot be festishised. This is worthy of further academic study. Our work extends this knowledge to the study of entrepreneurship, with the Barbie entrepreneur phenomenon being one manifestation of the fetishisation of (female) entrepreneurship and the entrepreneur as an 'object of desire' (Jones & Spicer 2009).

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It is also incumbent upon us to consider the marketing implications of Barbie. We consider 'Barbie the entrepreneur' as both a reflection of neo-liberalist society (Donoghue, 2007) and its changing norms as discussed above but also a game changing event because it allows children to express perhaps previously unarticulated ambitions to become an entrepreneur, or consider other entrepreneurial career options. This makes Barbie entrepreneur dolls very marketable as a commodity. We believe this is a totally separate argument to the one discussed that Barbie must remain Barbie because men like it, however, although some women may still believe they need to look like her others will engage with the entrepreneurial role modelling aspects of the changing identity and play at being an entrepreneur.

Another area of interest worth discussing is the wider social context, and, the triggers for the emergence of the Barbie entrepreneur in 1990s. We believe that the triggers resulted from two contributory scenarios. The first relates to the movement to encourage female entrepreneurs which obviously helped considerably because Mattel appear to heed to changing attitudes and ideas and the new hype about female entrepreneurs is an obvious marketing point. The second relates to the competition from the American Girl doll and others which offer a non-sexualised doll identity played a significant role in the development of the Barbie entrepreneur doll. The resultant product therefore mirrors an emphasised femininity (Connell, 2005) which can be read as being an excessive entrepreneurial femininity (Lewis, 2014) which creates a sexualised objectification (Saguy et al, 2010) of an idealised and arguably fetishised entrepreneurial identity which stands in opposition to traditional hegemonic masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). The exaggerated imagery of Barbie the doll as the carrier of these

ideological and theoretical representations inexorably links it to fetishism by virtue of its

inherent plasticised sexuality.

Bignell (1999) stresses that sex and gender representation in toys has been the

subject of debate from several points of view, reflecting the diverse and contradictory

ways in which childhood is constructed in discourse. Bignell further suggests that the

promotion of 'representational' educational toys, inhibit a child's creative and

imaginative play, and their fantasy worlds distort the child's perceptions of 'real life',

leading to maladjusted behaviour. Moreover, feminists argue that sex differentiations in

toys valorize and perpetuate harmful gender stereotypes and skew identifications with

masculine or feminine role-models (Dittmar et al, 2006; van der Hoort, Guterstam &

Ehrsson, 2011). It could be argued that Barbie, as 'entrepreneur' or 'career woman',

challenges traditional gendered stereotypes and thus reflects a 'feminist' agenda in terms

of representing women in the work place (rather than just the domestic realm, or to be

provocative, the 'dolls house'). However, we agree it is a highly gendered and

commodified form of emancipation and one, which from our reading of the literature,

reflects the patriarchal gaze concerning the 'ideal woman'. Contemporary

'Entrepreneurial Barbie' represents a post-feminist ideal, providing an aspirational figure

for girls, showing that women can 'have it all', (i.e. the perfect body / wardrobe / career).

This is made quite explicit in the 2014 'Barbie Entrepreneur' release, which comes

equipped with an instruction guide for girls about how to become an entrepreneur (see

Table 2). This underlines the potential influence of Barbie as a role model and

educational toy, especially in the current context of the promotion of entrepreneurship

and the provision of entrepreneurial education, even at primary school level. This

highlights the need to intellectually interrogate 'entrepreneurial Barbie', to identify the ways in which she is fetishised and the values this expresses in respect of idealised and plasticised embodiments of contemporary femininity.

Nevertheless, this research has identified that, despite being flawed, 'Barbie' entrepreneur dolls in their many forms counter hegemonic masculinity as understood by Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) and even transcend its gendered equivalent of 'emphasised femininity' (Connell, 2005). As such they enact a form of hegemonic femininity, whereby women (as depicted by Barbie) exert an alternative power play. We are entitled to dispute the 'realness' (Holter, 2003) of Barbie and the hegemonic concepts associated with her fetishised entrepreneurial wardrobe but nevertheless she draws her power from the direct experience of women (as lived through a patriarchal lens) rather than from an idealised vision of a perfect politically and socially correct version of what female entrepreneurial identity should look like. In many respects, Barbie as an art form imitates but does not reflect reality, otherwise, stripped of fantasy and fetish, she would not sell so well as a product. The dolls act as 'totemic' commodities and their accessories as fetishised objects and therein lies the problem. In becoming totemic there is a danger that hidden nuances such as fetishisation, commodification and sexualisation become lost to view, justifying our adoption of a critical perspective and argument that Barbie represents a form of hegemonic femininity.

Conclusions

At the heart of this discussion, leaving aside academic arguments and theories, we must remember are little girls (and not-so-little-girls who once played with Barbie) and their

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relationship with their dolls. First and foremost, we argue that Barbie is simultaneously an object of 'play' and an object of 'socialisation', as well as being a commercial product with multiple markets and reasons for consumption. In this respect we see gendered 'role modelling' (Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2008) as a key concept. According to Eriksson-Zetterquist 'role modelling' is based upon a comparison between an 'image' of oneself with that of a person (or in this case an object) which serves as an idealistic proto-model that personifies desirable role traits, which leads to directive action. The girls thus model themselves on the idealised and reified mental constructs associated with female entrepreneurs and their idealised totemic appearance. In this respect, Barbie entrepreneur doll is breaking away from traditional stereotypical representations of female pursuits. That Barbie is not representative of the average woman (if there is such a thing) cannot be ignored, but neither too are her competitors.[13] Barbie is also part of the 'little-princess syndrome' (Himes, 2015) and the distortion of feminine values. This cannot be avoided because Barbie dolls are deliberately inflated representations but are after all a child's toy. They are intended for children, not adults who can become sensitive to the potential harm that such dolls can do and serious in their approach to collecting rather than playing. We argue that there is a role for such animations of entrepreneurial ideals and identities. To their credit, Mattel took earlier criticisms on board in designing entrepreneurial Barbie and her culturally diverse versions. This led to acclaim from the media and industry commentators, but occurred at a time when sales of Barbie were in decline. This tells us something about the market and consumers, because it is no longer a mono children's market but a nuanced market for adults too, whereby they can possess a product imbued with nostalgia that evades 'political correctness' and where the clothing

and artefacts remind them of their youth and/or of fetishised values from a bygone era. In the process, Barbie (by default), has crossed over from a children's to an adult market. There are wider implications too, in that the commodification of Barbie in the form of 'designer' dolls, aimed at wealthy collectors, allows the individuation of a fetishised entrepreneurial identity and different versions for the rich and poor.

Dolls present an idealised gender perspective. It could be argued that the early years of the Barbie phenomenon are epitomised as being representative of the reality of 1950s and 1960s corporate America with its WASPish values, in which the business norms were patriarchal and masculine.[14] One could argue that Barbie dolls merely parody and mimic now flawed values and represent a spirit of nostalgia, imbuing them with an anachronistic quality. However, we believe it is representative of contemporary reality because, during our research, we also came across an article in '*Management Today*', where Victoria Beckham is presented on the front cover having been nominated female entrepreneur of the year in 2014.[15] We were struck by the similarities between her image and that of the Barbie entrepreneur doll.[16] Indeed, Barbie is now taken seriously by the media. For example, in the wake of the 2014 Barbie Entrepreneur doll's release, the editors of the US based *Entrepreneur Magazine* polled readers to ask if Barbie was a serious role model and if entrepreneurs would buy them for their children. We do not have access to the poll but this surely legitimises the phenomenon.

What is also important is that it is adults who fetishise consumer products such as Barbie dolls. Adults vicariously collect the dolls and can afford to accessorise them and buy expensive special editions. It is parents who buy the accessories and outfits for their daughters, which begs the question - who is Barbie really for? Barbie exists in a super or

hyper-feminised environment. It is all about Barbie - her companion Ken seldom shares the limelight. In comparison, he is treated like a lump of plastic and has been given no equalised entrepreneurial status or persona. Ironically, it is he who is silent and silenced thus *reversing* gender roles and discrimination.

Why is this discussion important? It is because discussing gendered identity via the medium of Barbie allows us as scholars to consider issues such as commodification, sexuality, fetishisation etc. in a relatively 'safe' environment.[17] We argue that discussing a plastic object/subject is preferable to exploring such sensitive issues with real life subjects. Moreover, it is important because consideration of Barbie Entrepreneur merely as a child's doll disguises the sexualisation of the adopted entrepreneurial identity and obscures the symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 2004) done to its reality.

The value of Barbie Entrepreneur dolls goes far beyond its economic importance as a commodified fetish that reaches into households internationally (Walsh, 2010) attaching itself to object, people, place and played experience. This piece responds to Mick's (2003) call for research on fetishes and the cross-fertilisation of disciplines (entrepreneurship and management studies) thereby developing theoretical, conceptual and empirical synergies that deepen our understanding. We illuminate and contribute to extant research on fetishism and consumption and on gendered entrepreneurial identity. This study is important because, according to Holmes and Schnurr (2006), negative perceptions of female identity can be reclaimed and reinterpreted positively by framing 'doing femininity' at work as normal, unmarked, and effective workplace behaviour, instead of enacting contested parodic instantiations of workplace femininity.

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End Notes

[1] The theory of Hegemonic masculinity recognises multiple masculinities that vary across time, culture and the individual. Hegemonic masculinity is defined as the current configuration of practice that legitimises men's dominant position in society and justifies the subordination of women. Conceptually, it explains how and why men maintain dominant social roles over women, and other gender identities. The concept of emphasised femininity revolves around the idea that women have to display an emphasised version of their femininity to counter male displays of masculine hegemony. Both exaggerated concepts cause males and females to act a certain way, or look a certain way.

[2] Social representations result from perceptive and cognitive constructions of reality and transform social objects (people, contexts, situations) into symbolic categories (values, beliefs, ideologies).

[3] Media representations 1) influence, whether women perceive entrepreneurship as desirable and attainable and the impact entrepreneurial aspirations; and 2) shape how key stakeholders such as bankers or clients view and interact with female business owners, thereby impacting women entrepreneurs' business relations and opportunities.

[4] For a discussion of the concept of power blouses see https://www.standard.co.uk/fashion/how-to-work-the-gillian-anderson-power-blouse-8651814.html but a power blouse is a silk, super-soft, perfectly pressed blouse. Power blouses are associated with designer labels such as 'French label Equipment' or Calvin Klein.

[5] We are minded of the work of Spicer and Jones (2005) and their notion of the sublime object of entrepreneurship and the entrepreneur as an (phantasmic) object of desire.

[6] For an overview of the Barbie phenomenon see Lord (2004) and Gomez and Korine (2008).

[7] A meme is an element of culture or system of behaviour passed from one individual to another by imitation or other non-genetic means.

[8] Nevertheless, it must be stressed that Bignall (1999) discusses adult porn sites associated with the Barbie phenomenon. It would be easier to concentrate on this aspect for an SI such as this, but it is the fetishisation of an idealised gendered identity that we are interested in. Of interest is what Bignell refers to as the indeterminacy of Barbie's sexual identity i.e. the lack of nipples and female genitalia.

[9] The lead author is a middle-aged male academic and the second and third authors are mature and experienced female academics. All are white and from working class backgrounds and collectively are well published in entrepreneurship research circles. All are senior academics – Professor, Reader and Senior Lecturer.

[10] Please note that the analysis presented is that of the authors and that other academics from various disciplines may read the images differently.

[11] See http://www.barbiemedia.com/designers.html and the newspaper article - https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2015/aug/25/toy-trend-barbie-style-reboot-sophia-webster for a fuller discussion of the phenomenon.

[12] http://www.slideshare.net/Startupi/barbie-entrepreneur

[13] Bratz and Sindy dolls. They too have exaggerated features and stereotypical aspects.

[14] White Anglo-Saxon Protestant.

[15] Note that the Spice girls have their dolls too.

[16] We had a 'spot-the-difference' moment.

[17] Albeit. Mattel have in the past, acted paternally and protectively and have sued academics for disparaging its product by attempting to link it to eating disorders and potentially negative publicity.