

TRANSCRIPT

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 1

Scene 1: Mattel convention: Orlando, Florida

Action: Barbie doll is auctioned

Auctioneer

...Forty-two and a half! Anybody bid forty-two fifty. Forty-two and a half to buy. Forty-two and a half, speak now!

Auctioneer's assistant

I'm back in!

Auctioneer

Four thousand. Forty-two fifty. Look what we're doing for forty-two fifty. -- \$4,000.

Auctioneer's assistant

Forty-two and a half!

Auctioneer

Four thousand. Forty-two and a half. And a half! Four thousand. Forty-two fifty.. Sold!

Crowd

[Yelling, screaming, applause]

Scene 2: Gay Freedom Day Parade, San Francisco, CA

Action: Drag queens in parade dressed as Barbie dolls

Drag queen on street

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 2

Every drag queen's dream, I'd say.

Drag queen in parade

Got Barbie?

Scene 3: Outside the Barbie Hall of Fame

Action: Demonstrators protest Barbie doll

Protester Ron Nicolino

We're making a statement, a public statement about the connection between Barbie and...

Owner of Barbie Hall of Fame Evelyn Burkhalter

There is no connection!

Ron Nicolino

...the decision to get implants, which has sometimes killed women, lots of women. There are 50,000 cases right now, today of people who have decided to get implants and they've turned into a horrible nightmare.

Evelyn Burkhalter

What's that got to do with Barbie?

TITLE UP: BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Music under title

Barbie, Barbie, Barbie you're my ideal. Barbie, Barbie, Are you a dream or are you real? Late at night when the sun goes down, there you are in your evening gown. Ohh, Barbie...

Scene 4: Barbie convention, Orlando, Fla.

Action: People at convention, buying Barbie

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 3

Off camera narrator

Sometimes it seems that much too much has to do with Barbie. You can't get her shoes to stay on for five minutes, yet ideologies adhere to her with great tenacity. These seekers journeyed from around the world to Mattel's Barbie festival. The star, and her entourage, are in rare form. .. Mattel's marketing is brilliant. Some of the most brilliant and lucrative in American history.

Off camera voice of MC at convention

It's ready. Come on. The price is right.

Narrator

But Mattel's efforts would have failed had there not been a million stories in American waiting to be acted out. Within each buyer, was a fantasy life, yearning to be made... plastic. Barbie was the perfect vehicle. At Barbie festivals, the person who created the ideal doll can be found at the end of the longest line.

Woman in line to Ruth Handler

She's my very first doll. Thank you very much. Nice to meet you.

Ruth Handler

There you are my dear. I hope you continue to...

Person in line to Ruth Handler

Hi.

Ruth Handler

I am really almost in a state of shock, observing these people at this festival and it's... it's like a cult activity. These people are really so into Barbie. And it's not phony, it's real.

Mattel employee on stage at festival introducing Ruth Handler

There can be no doubt that the world is a different and we believe, far more special place because of this woman, Barbie's mom. [Applause]

Narrator

This is the story of Ruth Handler, who brought us the Barbie doll. And the rest of us who bought her, or refused to buy her. Everybody has a Barbie story and the stories are about us.

Scene 5: Interview with Ruth Handler

Action: Early still pictures, interview at home, Barbie convention, early TV doll commercials

Ruth Handler interview

My daughter Barbara, when she was about seven I guess, started playing with paper dolls. But she always chose adult paper dolls. She and her little friends sat around the house by the hour, playing with adult paper dolls.

Ruth Handler (with daughter Barbara Segal)

This is what you... kind of stuff you were playing with. Debbie Reynolds. Oh boy, that's a neat one. That may be the idea where I got the bathing suit, for the first... [laughing]

Ruth Handler interview

I felt, little girls growing up have enough difficulty adjusting to their own breasts as they start to develop. I remembered how self-conscious I was and how, kind of hard it was. I... how stoop-shouldered I got, and everybody was telling me, stand up straight and I was kind of hidin' those breasts. I remember it was a very difficult time. And... I felt that if they got a grown-up doll, with breasts, that they would... it would ease their feelings

about themselves as they were growing up. It would help them. So I started bringing these paper dolls to our factory, trying to convince my husband and all our designers, that we should three-dimensionalize those adult paper dolls and the... and the clothing. And make... I found a hole in the market. Here I saw these little girls playing grown-up. And I knew that the only dolls available on the market were baby dolls, where the child is limited to playing mommy... or toddler or companion dolls, where the child is limited to playing with a girlfriend. There was no adult doll, where... with which a child could truly dream her dreams in the early fifties.

Scene 6: Early commercials

Action: Black and white commercials

Music

Did you ever see a dream, walking? Well, I did. Did you ever hear a dream, talking? Well, I did. Did you ever have a dream...asking, will you be mine? Oh it's so grand, and it's too, too divine.

Narrator

What a child dreams, what she plays, is one of life's earliest reference points. A child grows up and yet keeps coming back to what things looked like during those endless games on the living room floor.

Scene 7: Suburban house

Action: Sandi Holder interview

Sandi Holder, Barbie dealer

For me personally, I enjoy that period of my life I think, the most. And maybe deep down inside, I wish the world could be more like it was when I was growing up. Barbie was never liberated. Barbie was always a very wholesome type of individual, that would have never had a drug or alcohol problem.

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 6

Scene 8: Barbie dealer, Sandi Holder

Action: Sandi Holder working in office, interview

Sandi Holder

Hi, Jackie. It's Sandi Holder from the Barbie Attic. I received your fax this morning. I will hold the pale blond, bubble cut at \$100. Number 75 is a 61 with a tighter bubble to it. She was the... and she has lots of real pretty smoky shadow. She's a really neat doll. I think I would prefer her over the 76. Yes. So we're going to go with the two pony tails and the bubble? OK. OK, your total with shipping is \$151. Thank you very much. Good afternoon, Barbie Attic. OK. Which one was it now?

Sandi Holder (voice-over)

I didn't start collecting Barbie for the monetary aspect. It was more to pass down a piece of my childhood to my children, so they would have something to compare to the type of image of dolls that I've played with, versus what they have now. I was going to compare, say this kind of party dress to a party dress that Barbie might have worn back in the sixties. This is more of a very nice sophisticated type of a Barbie dress. Where, this is modeled almost after a Cher outfit as you can see right here. But this would have not been an outfit that you would have purchased back in the sixties for your Barbie doll. You would have never seen your mother or seen your Barbie doll in an outfit that exposed her stomach, and barely covered her breasts. You would always have a pair of gloves to go out in. You... Barbie never left without her gloves. Also, in case you had to powder

your nose or wipe your face, you had a little hankie. Inside, you would tuck your hankie inside her little corduroy bag that was fully lined in white satin. I think a lot of us are

trying to... my feeling is, is trying to relive a very safe period of time, which was in the... late fifties, sixties when things were real passive and compliant and... and there wasn't as much violence and the suggestive clothing was not there. There was so many

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 7

neat things to look at and nice play toys to enjoy. Where, I think people like that period of time.

Scene 9: Sandi Holder at home

Action: Family in kitchen

Sandi Holder

...is it TGIF today? [Children yelling] ...did you save Daddy a piece of cake?

Scene 10 Sandi Holder interview

Action: Sandi Holder Interview

Sandi Holder

Many of the scenes that I set up for my Barbie's are scenes that I would like to find in a home. Very cohesive, very peaceful. Mom and Dad's there. The kids are doing the homework at the table and she's cooking dinner. Things are very nice. The door's open. You don't have security systems throughout the home. It's... it's a very gentle atmosphere. Where now, it's not.

Scene 11: Soundgarden music video clip excerpt

Music

Black hole sun, won't you come, and wash away the rain? Black hole sun, won't you come...

Scene 12: Mattel Festival Convention, Orlando, Fla.

Action: People dancing on stage, convention footage

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 8

Narrator

Sometimes it seems that at least half the country and three quarters of the politicians are longing for the 1950's.

Allen Moreli at convention

She's got red hair!

Narrator

And Mattel uses those memories to sell Barbie dolls.

Woman at table with Allen Moreli

Wow, I love this!

Narrator

But there are some Barbie memories that aren't suitable for a Mattel info-mercial.

Scene 13: Franklin Lim Liao, doll artist

Action: Interview with Franklin Lim Liao, early pictures

Franklin Lim Liao

I would be playing with it, quietly like away in the bathroom, you know? You're not playing out there in the open, no. I would be playing like, in my own... I don't have my own room, but in my own like... it was a double-deck bed, so I could be on the top deck of the bed and nobody would know that I was out there stitching outfits and making clothes for the doll. Yes, I had to kind of hide its... put it that way, yes. And yet I think my parents know that I have it but then they think that I'm not doing any harm, so they kind of, you know, just kind of let it be. It wasn't like I was flaunting it. Oh, Christmas used to be about my favorite time of the year because I live in

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 9

the neighborhood, my... in Manila, that's where the commercial district was and I would see these beautiful displays. So what I've done to the doll was, I make Christmas outfits for them and it was acceptable for my parents. I made a nativity scene on them. I had Virgin Mary, Barbie's the Virgin Mary. Joe... one time they had this mod-haired Ken, so he had this beard that you can tape on to his face, so I [put it in] so he was the Saint Joseph, and I looked for [this little] baby dolls and that was the baby, Jesus. And then we had the shepherds, the angels, and [so] it was a whole nativity scene, out of Barbie dolls.

Music

Av-e... Mari-a....

Scene 14: Barbie Players - Caroline and Barbara

Action: Caroline and Barbara playing/dressing Barbie characters

Caroline

Are you going to put that hood on him?

Barbara

No, I... I'm just going to put him into the restraints, on the wall.

Caroline

OK. We weren't real thrilled with the idea of being on camera in terms of showing our faces doing this.

Barbara

But we were willing to show these because, I am absolutely positive that there are a ton of people out there doing, possibly kinkier things with their Barbie's than we do.

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 10

Caroline

A lot of people don't want to acknowledge that Barbie is a sexual doll, a sexy doll. That's certainly part of my beginnings as a child. It very quickly became just this private game that I had with my dolls and... and they were very sexual. Took me years to get to a point where I had done what Barbie had done. I didn't come out as a lesbian until I was over 30. Maybe he could be lying on his back and she could step on him with her... her high-heel shoe.

Barbara

I think it's best that he just worship and adore her.

Caroline

all right. [Going to] adore her... Oh, let's throw a steak on the "Barbie".

Barbara

I get a great kick out of the fact that I was raised in a extremely conservative, religious environment and this is about as far away from that as you can get. [Laughs] Yeah!

Caroline

We're always looking for little miniature thises (sic) or that's. I know that the people at the fabric store think I must make quilts or something, because I'm always buying little pieces of fabric and little things. There are a lot of devout Barbie fans who would be offended by this. There are Barbie collectors. I'd hate to be shopping at a doll show and have somebody that recognized me and...

Barbara

...well, I wouldn't just tell anybody about... the Barbies.

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 11

Caroline

Yeah. It's just... it's more private than that.

Narrator

It's fitting that people play secret things with Barbie, because Barbie too, has a past.

Scene 15: Lilli Doll, Germany, TV Commercials

Action: Various ads, cartoons

Narrator

In Germany, after the war, there was a doll named Lilli. Lilli was modeled on a floozy in a German tabloid. Men fondled her in bars and dangled her from their rearview mirrors.

Scene 16: Interview with Ruth Handler and Sid Kahn, former Mattel advertising executive

Action: Early still pictures, dolls, interview with Ruth Handler and Sid Kahn

Ruth Handler

In 1956, we took a trip to Lucerne, Switzerland and Zurich, where we saw a toy store with a window full of adult dolls, very much like I had been describing to my husband and all our designers. She had an adult body. Well, our guys at the factory turned me off when I got to the breasts, you know, that was it. They explained to me that there was no way we could make the doll with breasts.

Sid Kahn

They walked into the office, sat down at a table in our conference room, and they unwrapped this package from a briefcase and they took this doll out and stood it on the counter, on the table top. This very stiff-legged, BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 12

straight doll that was on a stand with two wire supports behind the arm to hold her up and a round base painted black. And she was in a black and white, striped bathing suit. And, fairly well-formed. Long legs, good looking figure and I turned to Ruth and I said, you must be joking. Well, that was my claim to fame, because I could not believe that this doll was going to be marketed to kids.

Scene 17: Old commercials (in black and white)

Action: Various commercials, interview with Sid Kahn

Woman in 1960s Barbie commercial
May I help you ladies?

Two young girls in commercial
We'd like to see the newest Barbie clothes!

Woman in commercial
Of course, Barbie, the famous teenage fashion model doll, by Mattel. May I arrange a showing of her wardrobe?

Young girls

Oh yes. We'd love it.

Narrator

Ruth had the answer to Mattel's dilemma. How do you sell a European sex doll to prudish America? Bypass the mothers. Sell directly to the daughters via the new medium of television.

Sid Kahn, former Mattel advertising executive
The parents hated Barbie. The kids adored her.

Young girl in commercial
Does Barbie have any new costumes to go along with Ken?

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 13

Woman in commercial
Naturally.

Sid Kahn
Well, you know. I mean television, kids just sat there and watched it and sopped it up. For the first time in the toy business though, people were coming into a store and not asking the owner, "What do you have for a bright, six year old or bright seven year old?" -- They were always bright. For the first time, they were coming in and they were telling the guy behind the counter, this is what I want!

Woman in commercial
Which ones would you like?

Young girls in commercial
I think I'd like all of them!

Voice over in commercial
You can tell they're Mattel! They're swell!

Scene 18: FAO Schwarz
Action: Kids, parents shopping for toys, Mattel employee interviewed

Girl in FAO Schwarz
I want these! I want these!
Second Girl in FAO Schwarz
...taller!
Father of second girl
They're taller?

Second girl
See?

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 14

Cashier at FAO Schwarz
Hi!

Woman buying Barbie stuff

This, this, this, this, this. This and this.

Lisa McKendall (Mattel spokeswoman)

Two Barbie dolls are sold every second, somewhere in the world. So those are pretty phenomenal numbers. We did over a billion dollars in sales last year, with Barbie alone. In the United States, the average American girl has eight Barbie dolls. In Germany, that number is seven, and in France and Italy, that number is five. And we have some new countries that we're beginning to sell our products in, that we see great, great opportunity.

Scene 19: News clips from Croatia, Russia, Japan

Action:Commercials, foreign commercials, kids buying and playing with Barbie

Music

Sugar, sugar, sugar baby, sugar, sugar, sugar baby. Come let me taste you, let me gobble you up! Sugar, sugar, sugar baby, sugar, sugar, sugar baby...

Russian news clip newswoman voice-over

Most of the little girls we polled were unanimous in their dream for a Barbie doll.

Russian Girl

...Ya Hachu Barbie! ["I want Barbie" in Russian]

Newswoman voice-over

[Katia] explains the attraction. [Translating girl: She's prettier than other dolls. She has nicer hair.] [Children scream]

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 15

Lisa McKendall

We have a challenge in Japan, that girls in Japan don't play with their dolls. They put their dolls on the shelf and they admire them and think they're beautiful and look at them but they don't play with them. So we have a challenge in Japan that we, through our advertising, are teaching little girls how to play with Barbie.

Scene 20: Japanese Barbie commercial

Action:Girls playing with Barbie

Narrator

American girls learn to play Barbie very young. Ruth Handler recognized it. Learning to play Barbie looks a lot like learning to be female.

Scene 21: Nora and Claire-best friends

Action:Nora Rodriguez and Claire Turner playing Barbie, interview with Ruth Handler

Nora

Oooh, you really...

Claire

Can I be her?

Nora

Yeah. I was just going to say, you should be her...

Music

La, la, la! La, la, la, la...

Claire

Barbie can wear all kinds of dresses, even going to school she can wear fancy dresses.

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 16

Nora

Sometimes me and Claire joke about a part of their body and we um, say, ooh, this Barbie has big boobies! [Laughs] Nora makes [Ken doll kiss Barbie] You are a very clumsy prince, you know? I'm not marrying you! If I was Barbie, I wouldn't care if I was fat or thin. It doesn't really matter if um, you're pretty. It's not that important. But there is one important thing about being pretty. If you're not pretty, the... at least a little bit pretty, people won't really like you, and then you won't have any friends. (Shot of Barbie and Ken in carriage) I think they're like regular people.

Ruth

I wanted little girls who are not pretty or who were too chubby or whatever, I didn't want them to be intimidated by the doll. I wanted them to be able to dream their dreams through Barbie. And I thought if she was too pretty, or if she had a certain personality, then they wouldn't feel that she was the one through whom they could... role-play.

Scene 22: Early Barbie commercials

Action: Barbie commercials, various fifties film clips

Ruth Handler (voice-over)

So, we tried... We kept her quite bland. We gave her the hair style of the period and we gave her the clothing of the period. But we never made her too unachievable.

Scene 23: Sixties Barbie commercials

Action: Sixties Barbie commercials, film clips

Music

I've moved into a new dimension. I'm leaving everyone so far behind. Don't waste any time girl, step inside my mind. I'm five years ahead of my time.

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 17

Scene 24: Current commercials, beauty pageant

Ruth Handler (voice-over and interview)

As the years went on, as she... with each passing year, we made her a little prettier, and she got a little nicer looking and she just kept going up and up in sales and satisfaction. The consumer wanting that doll is more important than the theories of some adults who have their own negative feelings.

Scene 25: Magazine covers, articles, Barbie commercials

Narrator

Adults had negative feelings about Barbie from the beginning. But they didn't worry about her being too pretty. They fancied Mattel as a den of demons, mass-producing a threat to men.

Male voice-over (reading from magazine articles):

The Nation Magazine, 1964: Barbie threatens to make a generation of vipers that will cause men to plead for the return of Mom-ism. *Ramparts Magazine*, 1965: Mattel wants little girls to realize the American, feminine ideal, growing up to be a big-spending, busy, powerful, frigid woman.

Narrator

Some girls who played Barbie also grew up to be critics. That's when the focus of the Barbie critique shifted.

Scene 26: Early Barbie commercials

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 18

Commercial voice-over

New fashion photo Barbie...

Narrator

Girls didn't fear becoming Barbie. They feared Barbie was an impossible ideal.

Girl in commercial

Barbie's groovy!

Commercial voice-over

Fashion photo Barbie has eight costume combinations. ..

Music in commercial

...new fashion photo Bar-bie!

Scene 27: Kerry Muller, art student

Action: Kerry, taking pictures of Barbie, interview.

Kerry Muller

I think it's sickening. It really sickens me now that you know, I could see a little girl playing with this and think like, oh wow, this is... this is.. this is right. This is perfect. I tried for five years to achieve this body type and it did not happen. When I was a freshman in high school, I wanted to... to maybe do some modeling and so I decided to join modeling school. And they told me that I needed to lose five to ten pounds. I wanted legs like this so badly, you know? Like, I wanted leg... I wanted long, long legs. And I wanted them to be this thin. I definitely wanted them to be this thin. And so I just started to eat less and less and less. I would eat, maybe at night, I'd have like a... a latte, like a large latte or something. Put a lot of Equal in it and then get whipped cream on it or something, lot of whipped cream and that'd be it for the day. And... and I was gaining weight. 'Cuz I weighed myself every day and I was gaining weight. And I didn't understand, you

know? I felt like my body had finally turned on me. My body had... had become my own enemy, you know? Like, my will was like, so in the right place, you know? My will was like, I don't need food. I'm there. And eventually one night, I came home and I was really, really frustrated and I was craving sugar, craving sweets. And so that was the first time that I... I binged. And then, it got to the point where I felt like bingeing, you know, all the time, so I was throwing up like three, four, five times a day. I was bulimic for... for two and a half years. And I still consider myself [work] heavily, right now. And I've been lucky because I do love art and I think I've been able to work out a lot of stuff for myself through it. A lot of my stuff through it. But um, I think, being not thin makes me feel like I have to better in other areas now. I have to make sure everything else is perfect, because if I can't control this, then I have to control what I can control.

Scene 28: Barbie aerobic/workout video scenes

Action: Barbie, others working out

Barbie aerobics video on-camera narrator

How do you feel? You should be able to talk easily and not be out of breath or dizzy. You're doing just fine if you can say, I'm OK! Let's hear it! Hey girls! You've got the look!

Scene 29: Barbie still pictures, commercials

Narrator

Mattel has always insisted, and many women agree, that Barbie doesn't just encourage girls to be pretty. From the get-go, Barbie has worked. In the sixties, she was a baby-sitter, student-teacher, airline stewardess. Since the feminist movement, Barbie has taken on male dominated careers. But she's also gotten steadily pinker.

Music from Barbie commercial

...Barbie's into making her patients feel good. She's into...
BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 20

Narrator

It's as if she expresses some kind of ambivalence. What does powerful and female look like? How about corporate chieftain? And Mom?

Scene 30: Ruth's daughter

Action: With Ruth at table being interviewed, early still pictures

Barbara Segal

None of my other friend's mothers worked, and it was very unusual in that day, for a mother to go out and to work. And so in the afternoons, when I would come home, I usually ran to my girlfriend's house after school to play with these paper dolls, because there was no one at home at my house, except housekeepers. And I felt like a mother should be at home with her children and staying at home pretty much, taking care of the house and children.

Ruth Handler

She wanted to be like everybody else.

Barbara Segal

I think most kids do.

Ruth Handler

And... and I, was different!

Scene 31: Ruth's history

Action: Early still pictures

Ruth Handler

I was the youngest of 10 children. And my mother was ill and my sister BARBIE
NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 21

and brother-in-law took me. My sister always worked, so I grew up not knowing that you don't do those things, necessarily. That helped, she was my role model.

Scene 32: Ruth Handler and daughter, Barbara Segal

Action: Ruth Handler and daughter, Barbara Segal, at table

Ruth Handler

I loved the business world. And I had this wonderful relationship with my husband, where he had this great creative... creativity. And he and I had... had very early on, had some marvelous, uh, together, experiences in the business world.

Scene 33: Ruth Handler and husband, Elliot Handler interview
Action: Historical still pictures of Mattel, Ruth and Elliot Handler interview on couch,
early still pictures

Elliot Handler

We like each other, that's what it is, isn't it? Isn't that what...

Ruth Handler

We like each other and we respect each other and we love each other.

Elliot Handler

...and that started when we were 16 years old.

Ruth Handler

It was love at first sight, instant love.

Elliot Handler

It was on a Sunday, Ruth's brother [Muzzy], had a crap going on his house on the other side of town. So, a group of us went over there and as I went through the living room into the den or whatever it was over there, I saw her picture on the mantle, this cute face. In fact, I think I still have the BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 22

picture here somewhere. And... boy, is she cute.

Ruth Handler

He was poor, and he wanted to be an artist. I didn't want to live poor. And that I might have to. And so we would separate and come together and separ-... Eventually, five years later, we got married. We came to California with a nice, new car that everybody gave us. But no money. We were in a new apartment with no... no furniture and he started designing things for our apartment and I said hey, if you can make stuff that beautiful, we can sell it. And he found a little factory and he started making giftware. And I went out and made his sales. He wouldn't go out. He was shy.

Elliot Handler

And then this is the... clock that we made for Douglas Aircraft that was our first big job and really started us in business. When we... they had the model of the DC-3 and I came up with the idea, that's coming in on time, that was the idea behind it. So we used the DC-3 and some airplane rivets. We made the clock. And we got the order. And it's the order that really put us in business.

Narrator

Elliot was one of the first designers to use Plexiglas for giftwares. A new partner, Harold Matsen, helped Elliot make lamps, and trays, and then from the scraps, Elliot made doll house furniture.

Ruth Handler

And we sold \$100,000 worth, the first year, and we made \$30,000 profit that first year. And we named that business, Mattel, from Mat- and Elliot. Never occurred to me the name should have been Mat-, Ruth.

Narrator

Mattel's sales skyrocketed. In 1957, the company sold \$9 million worth of toys. By 1968, Mattel's sales had climbed to over \$200 million.

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 23

Elliot Handler

The growth was so, you know... so fast and so big, it was like being on a joyride, you know? Where you... very exciting...

Ruth Handler

...exciting, stimulating, heady.

Elliot Handler

...you'd be happy to get up in the morning and run down to the office and get things moving...

Ruth Handler

...couldn't wait to get to work.

Narrator

Ruth Handler was on top of the world. She made Wall Street take the toy industry seriously. She ran the world's largest toy company when other women of her generation planned dinner parties.

Sid Kahn

Women in business were... weren't all that much around. That was... that was, that... she... well, she really broke the glass ceiling, didn't she? [Laughing] You know, she was... she was there before I think they ever put... maybe, maybe she's the reason they put it down, I don't know! I would say, among the clients that we had, and we had a lot, Ruth was, by far, our toughest client, by far. Would say OK, now we're going to face the moment of Ruth! And that became kind of a laugh around the agency. Time to face the moment of Ruth. And that's what it was!

Scene 34: Ruth Handler interview alone

Ruth Handler

I frightened a lot of people. And as the corporation grew, the need to be a strong, confident executive and... and have the courage of my convictions and be forceful in decisions and all that. You know, those are all sort of BARBIE NATION: AN

UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 24

masculine kind of, thought of as masculine kind of characteristics. And I had some experiences that kind of shook me up. I had a man walk in my office one day, during these heavy growth years, and look at me and say gee, you're totally different than I expected. And so I looked at him and I said, well... well, what did you expect? He said, well I expected someone leaning back in the chair with the feet up on the desk smoking a cigar. And I... I... it kind of shocked me when he said that. And he must have heard from somebody about me, to have expected that. And I... it shocked me into... fortifying my thoughts, that I must retain my femininity. I must stay feminine, in this role.

Scene 35: Barbie commercials

Music from Barbie commercial

...girls, make working lots of fun! Right Barbie? Day and night Barbie! Neat briefcase and stuff. ...we can work from nine to five, and then change in a sec for an evening with Ken! Secret turn around skirt, fabulous hair, sparkles everywhere! We girls can do anything, right Barbie? We girls can glow from head to toe...

Narrator

If girls, playing in a man's world, accentuate the feminine, then what about boys? What goes on in a boy's mind, if he ventures into the girl's world of dolls?

Scene 36: Interviews on street

Action: Various interviews in the street

Man on motorcycle

We took Barbie and Ken and put them in little army trucks and stuff, with... with G.I. Joe watching, we would, you know, put cherry bombs into the... the truck and blow Barbie up. Body parts flying. Yeah, we blew... you know, I mean, the head would come off.

Yeah, it just disintegrated. Cherry BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR
Page 25

bomb's pretty big stuff for Barbie, you know? She's not that tough.

Man on street

And Dale said, you know, give me the Barbie doll, and he [took it over] and threw it up in the air, [so I was just going]... it got stuck in the willow tree and then we couldn't... and we couldn't get it down. And so, we had to get our BB guns and shoot Barbie out of the tree.

RuPaul

I've had one since I was a kid. Actually, I sawed my breast off of my Barbie. But it has very... it had more to do with um, [just] being a boy than anything to any misogynistic, evil, spitefulness, you know? But, she's a wonderful thing and I love her. I think I'll take her. Good-bye. [Laughter]

Scene 37: Franklin Lim Liao interview

Action: Franklin changing Barbie, sewing new hair, etc.

Franklin Lim Liao

This project takes about 20 hours of your life, so you know, it's a good... thing to do when you want to relax and you're all stressed out at the end of the day. And that's what I do. I turn on the TV and just start cutting, unplugging and un-stitching. And here's some examples that I've done. I've done pink hair, blue hair. Another pink hair. Red hair. And another blue hair. You know, every time I see a crisis of some sort, I, it seems like, you just kind of go back into the doll and... and those certain hours, are... you know, like I'll be working on here, or be... you're so busy, you got preoccupied with it, that you're not thinking about the other world, because you're either, yeah... You know, you're thinking, oh OK, what I'm... You're so concentrated on, what do you have to do to make her look good? And there's nothing wrong with just... to dream about what is we thought is ideal. For a man, we can never be a Barbie, you know? It's a totally, a fantasy, but a woman, yes, you can. I mean, I could do your make-over, if you want to be like a Barbie. We can do a make-over and dressed you up. But then that's a fantasy, you know? That is...the whole Barbie key is BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 26

fantasy.

Scene 37: Allen Moreli, Barbie player interview

Action: Allen, showing his Barbie dolls.

Allen Moreli

Here at the bar is Midge and... and Scott. Midge has been looking for a man for awhile, but she's... she just hasn't really been able to find... find anybody. And then, old Scott, he's an artist as you can tell by the way he looks. And, then over here, we have Rebecca and [Mazee] and well, they're kind of a... my... my fem-lesbian couple. I have dolls that are gay. I have dolls that are straight. I have dolls that have never had relationships. They're still working on it. And I have some that are um... are falling in love. Nobody's divorced yet. But see, in Heavenly Valley, they can... they all switch around, all the time. It's very open. You know, there aren't a lot of rules. It's just... it's just love. They love each other. This is taking place in the back yard of a... of a really big mansion and everybody's come together for this wonderful day out in the country and they've decided to fire walk. And... so my friend, Pammy, this is where... see some of the dolls are people actually that I know, so this is my best friend Pam, she's decided to fire walk and of course they're all pumped up and what happens is, that when you go for it, everybody raises their hands up, you know what I mean? It's like this thing that... that everybody does. And I'm standing right here, kind of like you know, urging her on as she's taking her big... her big step. Some people come in and they can't believe it. They can't believe that somebody would live like this. It's just like, wow, this is just like so great, you know? Like they would never allow that for themselves, you know? And then they see somebody doing it, then the next thing you know, they've got... they've got one. Maybe just one, and maybe it's just in the corner of the room, but it's there and that's their heart. If you like something, there's nothing wrong with it. Nothing, no matter what the world

says or... you know, if it's something that truly gives you pleasure and adds to you, then do it. You know, do it, 'cuz that's what you're here to do. To enjoy everything.

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 27

Scene 39: National Barbie convention

Action: Convention, fashion show, dancers

Narrator

When the little boys and girls who play Barbie came out as collectors, they began to liberate Barbie from Mattel's dictates. It wasn't evident at first that they were subversive. They just stripped Barbie of the ensembles Mattel gave her. And dressed her in their own fantasies.

Allen Moreli(voice-over)

Mattel doesn't get what she is, at all. Like, 400 people were in a ballroom because it was Barbie, you know a Barbie convention. This is something that touches some people's hearts. And so I think that's why it's become such a phenomenon.

Announcer on stage

Yes, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the magic of Barbie! Welcome to Magic City...
[Applause, cheers] Put your hands together now! Barbie in a black dress!

Music

...Barbie with a black dress, black dress, black dress. Barbie with a black dress on, whoa!
Barbie with a black dress, black dress, black dress, Barbie with a black dress on!

Offstage announcer

I would like to welcome you to a magical fashion show. [Applause, cheers]

Action: Fashion show

Scene 40: Allen Moreli interview

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 28

Allen Moreli

There's a lot of creativity in the Barbie world, way outside of Mattel. People that make over dolls and create, you know, things for the dolls. It's total creativity.

Scene 40: Various shots of people sued or threatened by Mattel

Action: Barbie scenes, Barbie magazines, collectors, various graphics

Narrator

Mattel profited richly from the collectors. And then broke their hearts. In the late 1990's, Mattel determined that the unauthorized iconization of Barbie threatened its trademark. The toy giant sued or threatened to sue Barbie dealers...

Sandi Holder
...Friday night date, that's been sold.

Narrator
...fan magazines, satirists...

Paul Hansen
...gays in the military...

Narrator
...Web pages. Barbie collectors were outraged. Could the company control every use of Barbie's name and image? It would be tough. Barbie had penetrated America's gut.

Scene 42: Various TV news stories regarding Barbie

Action:TV news stories

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 29

TV Anchor
Is deep frying a Barbie doll part of a Satanic ritual?

TV reporter voice-over
Just outside of Pittsburgh, two waitresses are accusing fellow workers of mutilating and burning Barbie dolls, as a kind of voodoo ritual aimed at cursing them.

TV anchor

The women claim that co-workers skewered the dolls, and then dropped it into a deep fryer, then cooked food in the same grease for a week.

Scene 43: X-rays of person who ingested Barbie

Action:Pictures of X-rays with voice-over explaining what happened

Voice-over doctor

This ingestion was not accidental. You can clearly see the profiles of two Barbie heads to the right of the spinal column. They are causing partial obstruction of the descending colon. The patient reportedly ingested the doll heads in order to achieve sexual gratification during passage of the Barbie heads.

Scene 44: Tabloid TV news, Real Copy

Action:K-Mart, various Barbie scenes

Tabloid newsman voice-over

It's happening in the most unlikely place, Sandusky Ohio. Two dozen Barbie dolls slashed in the breast and crotch. Detectives say each case is similar. They're worried that whoever is doing it, could move on to real life Barbie's.

Scene 45: TV news story

TV anchor

An update now on this disturbing crime tonight, from Channel 3's, Dan BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 30

Rosas.

TV reporter voice-over

It happened at this north Modesto apartment complex on Monday. As a little girl was stabbed in the back with a steak knife by a playmate, a six year old, after a name-calling and hair-pulling fight over Barbie's and beads. The incident is raising questions about violence in children. How innocent play with Barbie's could lead to such a violent behavior.

Scene 46: Barbie art show

Action: Barbie art show opening

Artist of skeleton Barbie

I just pop the head of my old Barbie and place it on top of this and it seemed to fit.

Artist of Barbie on cross

I was raised a good Catholic girl, and there was a Barbie from when I was little and... you know, this was a real icon imagery that you're raised with when you're a kid. There's a crucifix in every room and it just sort of, kind of went with the whole idea that, you know Barbie's sort of an icon herself.

Woman opposed to Barbie on cross

I think it's sacrilegious, and it's not good for our children to see we have a bad image as it is now. I think it's wrong, very wrong.

Artist of naked Ken and Barbie

That's the thing that they forgot at Mattel.

Narrator

It had to happen. First, Barbie personified the American dream. Then she came to symbolize the underbelly of the dream. Asian sweatshop worker Barbie. The Barbie that makes all the other Barbie's, for \$2.50 a day. Homeless Barbie, complete with syringe. Hooker Barbie. Homicide Barbie. And most ironic for Ruth Handler, change of life Barbie. Ruth had thrust BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 31

the doll with breasts into every girl's fantasy of growing up. But the flip side of growing up is growing old. Ruth couldn't foresee how fraught a symbol Barbie's breasts would become.

Scene 47: Protesters on street in front of Barbie Hall of Fame

Action: Protesters on sidewalk, in front of store

Anti-breast implant protesters chanting

...this disease that doesn't have a name, thousands of women, their stories all the same!
Chemically poisoned, our lives just a mess, they'll hand us a few dollars but they couldn't
care less!

Protester Ron Nicolino

We're going to have a public awareness, breast cancer month, awareness event down at
the Barbie Hall of Fame. We're going to try to figure out what the connection is between
Barbie doll and breast cancer.

Woman on street

...and... oh, I see.

Protester Ron Nicolino

...about breast obsession and what Barbie doll has to do with that.

Scene 48: Ruth Handler interview

Ruth Handler

You know all these people who are negative about this business of a doll having breasts,
they... the children don't see it that way. They see those breasts as normal. They observe
them all around them in adults. Breasts absolutely represent femininity to me.

Scene 49: Protester in front of Barbie Hall of Fame

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 32

Action: Protesters talking with Evelyn Burkhalter, owner of the Barbie Hall of Fame

Ron Nicolino

My name's Ron Nicolino.

Evelyn Burkhalter

I don't think I want to shake your hand.

Ron Nicolino

I wanted to simply pass out information on breast implant... issues.

Evelyn Burkhalter

What's that got to do with Barbie?

Ron Nicolino

It's a... it's a... body aesthetic is represented by Barbie which impels many people to make
the decision to go ahead and get breast implants which sometimes takes their lives...

Evelyn Burkhalter

...Oh, that's baloney! That's baloney! Barbie's got nothing to do with a woman making a
judgment of whether or not she's going to have an implant, I assure you.

Ron Nicolino
She knows all about this.

Evelyn Burkhalter
Well, I do too. I have it first-hand. Have you had breast cancer too?

Woman protester
Yes, I have.

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 33

Evelyn Burkhalter
...so have I.

Ron Nicolino
But the public doesn't know about that, and that's what we're here for. We're simply down here trying to pass out some information... to let the public know about it.

Evelyn Burkhalter
Well... I think you should do it... I think you should do it in front of Merit's, maybe they're... maybe the beauty parlor! Why the little, dead, plastic Barbie dolls? Barbie's the only thing that's gone through 35 years of people, and is still making it!

Ron Nicolino
Do you know who Ruth Handler is?

Evelyn Burkhalter
I know who Ruth Handler is! She had breast cancer!

Ron Nicolino
...do you know she's written a book... she's written a book now, called..

Evelyn Burkhalter
...but she didn't have anything...

Scene 50: Ruth Handler interview
Action: Ruth by herself

Ruth Handler
When I lost my breast, I thought I lost my femininity. To me, they took that which represented my femininity and it was massive, uh, shock to me. And I took it very hard. People did not talk about breast cancer in

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 34

those days. It was a secret. I had a very, very, very hard time, emotionally, with having lost my breast. And my self-esteem went awfully low. I had my mastectomy in June and by the time I got back functioning, teary-eyed and functioning, troubles were setting in. I don't think it was entirely because of my mastectomy. I think that it was only partially that. I think it made me, a less-good manager. I was not effective as a manager during this time of troubles, or I might have acted differently than I did. For that, I blame the mastectomy.

Scene 51: Mattel commercials
Action: Early still pictures, TV commercials

Ruth Handler

In the meantime, we made some very bad product decisions. They were several bad ones and some were of very great magnitude of cost.

Narrator

In 1970, Mattel's earnings began falling. The company covered up its problems, keeping stock prices high. Two years later, Mattel admitted its true financial situation. It was too late.

Scene 52: Ruth Handler interview
Action: Ruth by herself, newspaper, magazine articles

Ruth Handler

And the banks started closing in on us and the lawsuits started. Because we started losing money. And it was pretty horrible.

Narrator

The Securities and Exchange Commission started investigating. Ruth and four other executives were indicted. Ruth claimed she was innocent but she was ultimately responsible. She was the boss.

Ruth

I got pushed out in 1975. I walked out, ah, but I was already pushed out. BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 35

And Elliot left six months later. And that was the end of that life, at Mattel.

Scene 53: Early pictures

Narrator

Ruth Handler was convicted of falsifying financial records, and Mattel struggled for years after the Handler's left. Barbie saved Mattel. By 1997, more than 1 billion Barbie dolls had been sold. A billion testaments to how people can create from the most mass-produced of things, a life that is unique.

Scene 54: Allen Moreli interview

Allen Moreli

Everywhere that I play Barbie is in a place called Heavenly Valley. That was Michael's name for it. My mate, Michael, who died about... about a year and a half ago... It was a really great concept 'cuz it's like really what the world will some day be. You know, people all living together and just being whatever they are. Michael had cancer back in 1986, he was diagnosed, and needed to find his inner child, needed to get back in touch with that... that part of him, to want to live again. And so the Barbie's was a way that he did that. And... as kind of a healing thing for him. So, at first I was kind of... well, I was, you know, I'm, it, ah.... my inner child wasn't out very much when I first met Michael. It was a little bit out, but not... not a lot out. So I didn't like, really let myself play very much. And... but, after living with him for a while and having all of this in my life, like all the time, I began to slowly begin to play with it. We had about two and a half really, really wonderful years together and then... and then he died of AIDS. After he died, I found a lot of solace in having it around me and... and in playing with it. As a matter of fact, when he died, his ashes are in Golden Gate Park, [whispering], don't tell anybody. But they're in Golden Gate Park and we took all the dolls out and had this big ceremony out there.

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 36

Scene 55: Dolls in Golden Gate Park

Scene 56: Barbie convention

Action: Announcer giving a prayer, convention

Announcer on stage

...world needs more of, people, and people like Barbie. They go hand in hand. Thank you Father, as we set out to have this wonderful luncheon. We hope that all of us, as we depart this week, will drive home carefully with Your blessing. In Jesus' name, we pray that Father. Amen.

Song sung by announcer

We got a dream that brings us here... She's coming to Birmingham! We got a dream, we all can share, she's coming to Birmingham! Yeah! She's coming to Birmingham! Everybody! She's coming to Birmingham! She's coming to Birmingham! Louder! She's coming to Birmingham, today! There she is! [Cheers, applause] Today! Today! Today! Today! My country 'tis of thee... Today! Barbie, we love thee... Today! Today! To you we sing... Today! To you we sing... Today! Today! Today! Today! [Cheers, applause]

Scene 57: CG: Epilogue

Scene 58: Ruth interview/ graphics

Action: Ruth Handler interview intercut with on-screen type.

CG

After leaving Mattel, Ruth Handler started a new company, Nearly Me.

Ruth Handler

And I totally revolutionized the breast prosthesis business.

BARBIE NATION: AN UNAUTHORIZED TOUR

Page 37

CG

Nearly Me brought customized breast prostheses to the masses

Ruth Handler

That woman who sometimes came in with her shoulders bent over and kind of self-conscious or low-down, she'd walk out, stick her chest up, look in the mirror...

CG

The company has sold more than 1 million artificial beasts

Scene 56: Credits