

# Pamie

- [Home](#)
- [Blog »](#)
- [Books »](#)
- [Other](#)
- Elsewhere
- [About](#)
- [Archives](#)

In [Pamie](#)

## Barbie Fucks It Up Again

Posted by [Pamie](#) on Nov 17, 2014 · [192 Comments](#)

I recently paid a visit to my sweet friend [Helen Jane](#) and was excited to find this book at her house.



(The second book of the “2 Books in 1!” is “Barbie [i can be...] an Actress.” We’ll get to that later.)

Helen Jane has two little girls under the age of six. I have a daughter who is almost two. “This is great!” I said. “Barbie wants to be a computer engineer! And fifty stickers!”

“Yeah, I was really excited at first, too,” Helen Jane said. “Because, like you, I believe in the good of people. But then, like I’m sure you’ve experienced a million times, I was reminded you should never believe in the good of people.”

“Oh, no. Should I read it?”

“You must. Immediately.”

And now you all will, too. Because this is a real book. A book you could [buy right now](#) if you wanted to. A book that right now, somewhere, is teaching possibly hundreds of young girls and boys the following:



*At breakfast one morning, Barbie is already hard at work on her laptop.*

*“What are you doing, Barbie?” asks Skipper.*

*“I’m designing a game that shows kids how computers work,” explains Barbie. “You can make a robot puppy do cute tricks by matching up colored blocks!”*

Barbie! That’s awesome. I love how your game is both educational and fun. Bonus points for keeping it cute, because you are so stylish. Please be careful not to drop your breakfast fro-yo on your laptop. I’ve done it, and it’s not so funzies.

Anyway, Internet, get ready to find your thing to be super pissed off about today.



*“Your robot puppy is so sweet,” says Skipper. “Can I play your game?”*

*“I’m only creating the design ideas,” Barbie says, laughing. “I’ll need Steven and*

***Brian's help to turn it into a real game!"***

What the fucking shit, Barbie?

This is where you assume Skipper will be like, *"Oh, why do you need boys? We can do it ourselves! Let's learn and work hard and do things all on our own because a sense of accomplishment and knowledge are powerful weapons for adulthood."*

But no. Nope. Barbie's just fine ending her work with the "design ideas" and a laugh. She'll need the boys before she'll have a "REAL GAME."

Wait, wait. I need you to know something, and this is hard for me to tell you, because I'm guessing that like Helen Jane and me, you maybe believe in the good of people. You still hope that when we turn the page, there will be something empowering for Barbie and Skipper to experience. That maybe Steven and Brian are... I don't know, maybe they could still be girls? But, no. It's about to get even more misogynistic up in here.



***Barbie tries to email her design to Steven, but suddenly her screen starts blinking.***

***"That's weird!" says Barbie.***

***Barbie and Skipper try to reboot the computer, but nothing happens.***

***"Looks like you've got a virus, big sister," says Skipper.***

***"Luckily, I wear my flash drive on a necklace so that I'll always remember to back up my work," replies Barbie.***

So, after this page, we—

Hey, where did you go? Oh, I see you. You're on the floor, face down, having given up. Yeah, we did that, too. Is it because it took two girls to reboot a computer?

I feel bad for every time I made fun of my mother using technology, because right now some mom is having to read this book to her daughter, and after the “weird” blinking screen and reboot, she’s having to describe the computer’s state as: “nothing happens.”

Are you still on the floor because Barbie wears a flash drive around her neck? And that it’s a giant pink heart? At least Skipper’s doing her best to help the situation by pouring her sister some juice. Girls can be so helpful in the kitchen.



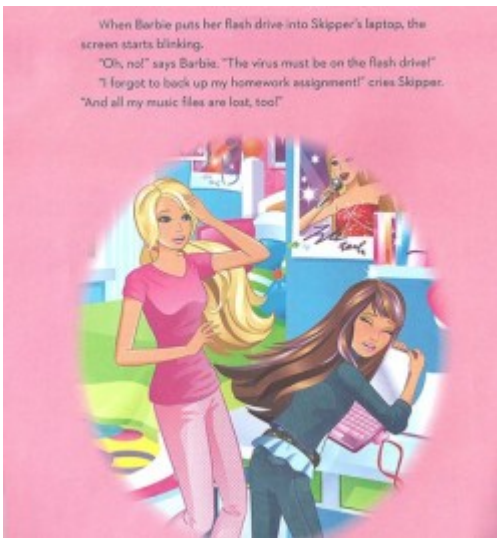
***“May I borrow your laptop, Skipper?” asks Barbie as she follows her little sister into her bedroom.***

***“I really should finish my homework assignment. I am writing about a person I admire,” says Skipper.***

***“I only need it for a minute,” adds Barbie.***

***“Okay,” says Skipper.***

Run, Skipper! Run from the haunted flash drive!



***When Barbie puts her flash drive into Skipper's laptop, the screen starts blinking.***

***"Oh, no!" says Barbie. "The virus must be on the flash drive!"***

***"I forgot to back up my homework assignment!" cries Skipper. "And all my music files are lost, too!"***



***"I'm so sorry, Skipper," says Barbie. "I have to run off to school now. But I promise to find a way to fix your laptop."***

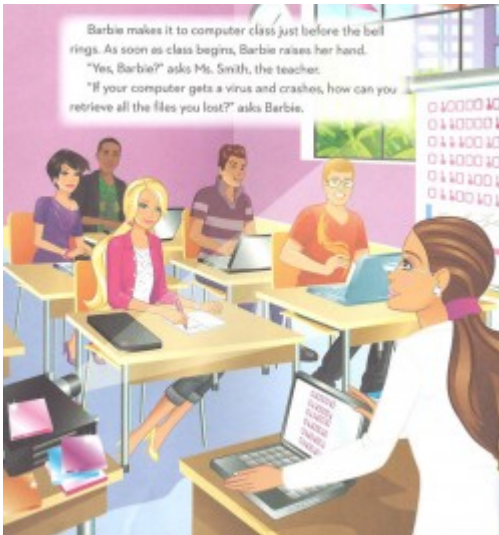
***"You better!" Skipper replies as she playfully hits Barbie with a pillow.***

A PILLOW. SKIPPER HITS HER SISTER WITH A PILLOW. PLAYFULLY.

Skipper has just lost her homework, all her music files and her laptop, but all she's moved to is



## STATUS: PILLOW FIGHT.



***Barbie makes it to computer class just before the bell rings. As soon as class begins, Barbie raises her hand.***

***"Yes, Barbie?" asks Ms. Smith, the teacher.***

***"If your computer gets a virus and crashes, how can you retrieve all the files you lost?" asks Barbie.***

The fact that Barbie's comp sci teacher is female almost lets you assume things are about to get less insulting. Don't fall for it.

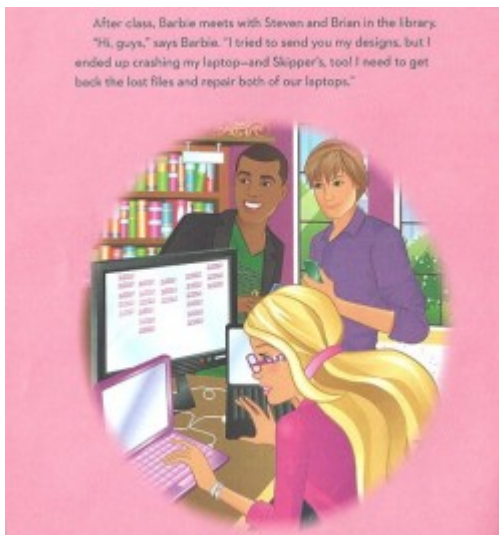


***"Well, first you remove the hard drive from the crashed computer," explains Ms. Smith. "And then you hook it up to another computer."***

***“But won’t the other computer get the same virus that made your computer crash?” asks Barbie.***

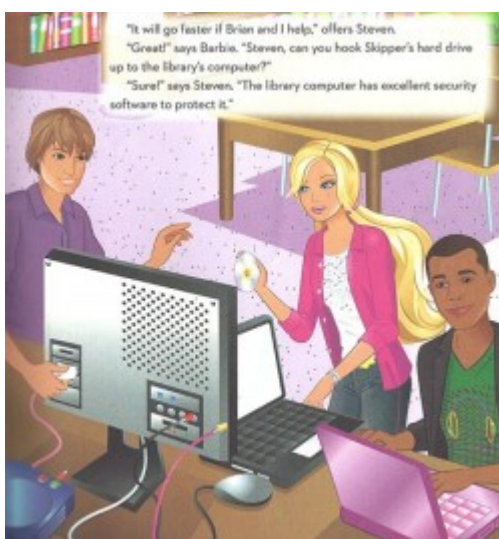
***“Not if the computer has good security software installed,” says Ms. Smith. “Good security software protects your computer from catching a virus.”***

Barbie gets told how to do something, so what do you think she does next? That’s right. Go find some boys to fix her computing!



***After class, Barbie meets with Steven and Brian in the library.***

***“Hi, guys,” says Barbie. “I tried to send you my designs, but I ended up crashing my laptop — and Skipper’s too! I need to get back the lost files and repair both of our laptops.”***



***“It will go faster if Brian and I help,” offers Steven.***

***“Great!” says Barbie. “Steven, can you hook Skipper’s hard drive up to the library’s computer?”***

***“Sure!” says Steven. “The library computer has excellent security software to protect it.”***

IT WILL GO FASTER IF BRIAN AND I HELP, offer the men voices. “Step aside, Barbie.” YOU’VE BROKEN ENOUGH, NOW.

From Helen Jane: Steven and Brian are nice guys, I’m sure. But Steven and Brian are also everything frustrating about the tech industry. Steven and Brian represent the tech industry assumption that only men make meaningful contributions. Men fix this, men drive this and men take control to finish this. Steven and Brian don’t value design as much as code. Steven and Brian represent every time I was talked over and interrupted — every time I didn’t post a code solution in a forum because I didn’t want to spend the next 72 years defending it. Steven and Brian make more money than I do for doing the same thing. And at the same time, Steven and Brian are nice guys.



***“I’ve got Skipper’s assignment from the hard drive!” exclaims Steven.***

***“Fantastic!” says Barbie. “And her other files, as well?”***

***“I’ve got everything,” says Steven. “Now let’s retrieve the files from your hard drive. Both laptops will be good as new in no time!”***

High-five, dude. High-fucking-five.





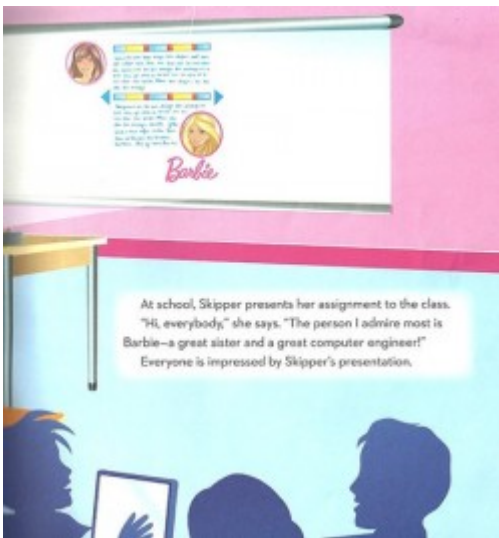
***The next morning, Barbie gives her sister a big surprise. Skipper turns on her laptop— and it works!***

***“My lost assignment!” cries Skipper. “You are just too cool, Barbie! You fixed my computer AND saved my homework!”***

***Skipper gives Barbie a huge hug.***

Barbie not only waits until *the next morning* to return her sister’s computer, she completely takes all the credit that it’s no longer broken! What an asshole!



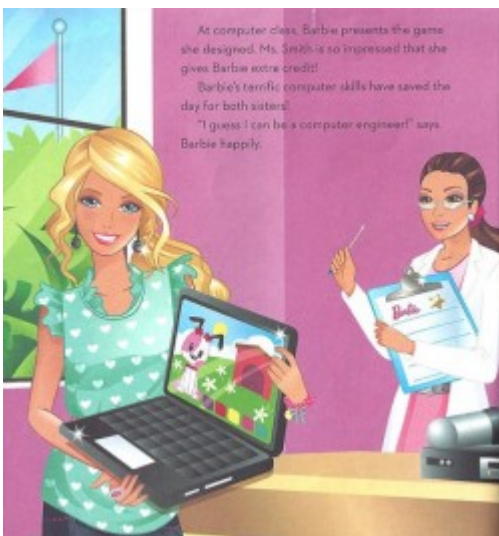


***At school, Skipper presents her assignment to the class.***

***“Hi, everybody,” she says. “The person I admire most is Barbie — a great sister and a great computer engineer!”***

***Everyone is impressed by Skipper’s presentation.***

What?! Oh, wait. Didn't she mostly write this assignment *before* the crash? Let's give Skipper a pass. She almost lost enough already this week. Besides, if we upset her we're likely to get trapped in the middle of one of her combination pillow fight/bikini car washes.



***At computer class, Barbie presents the game she designed. Ms. Smith is so impressed that she gives Barbie extra credit!***

***Barbie’s terrific computer skills have saved the day for both sisters!***

***“I guess I can be a computer engineer!” says Barbie happily.***

THE FUCKING END, PEOPLE.

Despite having ruined her own laptop, her sister’s laptop, and the library’s computers, not to mention Steven and Brian’s afternoon, she takes full credit for her game design— only to get extra credit and decide she’s an awesome computer engineer! “I did it all by myself!”

Flip the book and you can read “Barbie: I can be an Actress,” where Barbie saves the day by filling in for the princess in Skipper’s school production of “Princess and the Pea.” She ad-libs and smiles her way through her lines, and charms the entire audience. Standing ovation, plenty of praise. At no point did she need anybody’s help. She didn’t even need lines! Just standing there being Barbie was enough for everyone in attendance. See, actors? It’s not that hard. Even Barbie can do it.

When you hold the book in your hands to read a story, the opposite book is upside down, facing out. So the final insult to this entire literary disaster is that when you read “Barbie: I Can Be a Computer Engineer,” it appears that you are so fucking dumb, you’re reading “Barbie: I Can Be an Actress” upside down.

Helen Jane and I were so livid after reading this book we spent the first fifteen minutes spitting out syllables and half-sounds. We’d go from outraged to defeated to livid in the span of ten seconds. *“I want this thing to start a meme of girls screaming, ‘I don’t need a Brian or a Steven!’”*

We knew we had to share this with you, because if we didn’t, we’d be saying it was okay. We couldn’t just roll our eyes at how insulting this book is, how dangerous it is for young minds, how it’s a perfect example of the way women and girls are perceived to “understand” the tech world, and how frustrating it can be when nobody believes this is how we’re treated.

Just about every [review](#) we could [find](#) on this book had readers equally offended and frustrated.

Oh, and the 50 stickers? I only saw one: “Nerdy is the new Fab!” The others had already been removed by Helen Jane’s small daughters. We can only hope that one of them doesn’t boast, *“My other laptop is a boy!”*

[Barbie Computers](#) [Feminist Girls](#) [Helen Jane](#) [Parenthood](#)

## Share It

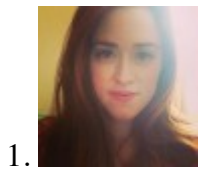


Tweet 2,344

Like 11k

[Previous post](#) [That Time Retta Called Me Out on Twitter \(Further Adventures in Fan Face\)](#) [Next post](#) [I Can Be... Exhausted](#)

## 192 Comments



[Kat](#)

November 17, 2014

Oh good Lord. I'm half thankful that you brought this to our attention and half wanting to go slam my head against the wall.

[Reply](#)



[Paul Tabachneck](#)

November 17, 2014

From experience, I'm just going to suggest that you pick your wall carefully (This is not an endorsement of wall-head engagement).

[Reply](#)



**Chris Snyder**

November 20, 2014

Definitely pick your wall carefully. You wouldn't want to put a hole in it and need to call a boy to come fix it.

[Reply](#)



**RickF**

November 22, 2014

This is a terrible book. But it does bring up the debate- why do these attitudes persist?

I have a few credentials here; my dad, an electrical engineer, taught my older sister math at the kitchen table in third grade. She excelled, and was allowed ( this is the sixties ) to skip a year in math only. So, she was eventually taking Calc I and II in 11th grade. She went to MIT and graduated with a degree in applied math. After a few years working for DoD, she went to law school and is now a lawyer. Why? She didn't like the work. So, we KNOW that learning the subject matter is not the issue. I am now a software engineer doing scientific and medical algorithm work. I spend sometimes 8 ( or more ) hour days with the only social interaction being small talk with a Starbucks employee. I enjoy the immersion and focus without interruption. Plenty of men don't like this, but I wonder if MORE men like this type of work the women. It may be one of preference rather than only stereotyping. That said, the book is stupid either way.

[Reply](#)



**Jen**

November 28, 2014

RickF: I suspect that your “8 hour solitary immersion” experience is an outlier. That may be possible if you're working for a company as their primary or even sole developer/engineer on a project, perhaps as a contractor that only needs to meet with someone to gather major requirements.

Most people, even in tech, have to work on teams of multiple people, which usually require meetings on a regular basis that break up the day (sometimes disruptively so). I actually dislike having to work in the office, because my [mostly-male] coworkers talk too much and it's distracting. When they're not talking in person, they're frequently gabbing it up on IRC. And they love going out for beer after work.

Don't get me wrong — socializing with my coworkers is great. I just don't think that the “socially isolated geek” stereotype is the norm any longer, even for engineers and programmers.

Most women start out capable and enjoying the work that they do in STEM...until they run up against the status quo BS.

Real life story that happened only 2 years ago: I work in tech, and I was on a project team (only woman on the team...and there might have been only one other woman at the party who wasn't there as a significant other) that was doing some pretty cool work. Our team was invited to a reception to meet other people involved, including the funders. Our team was being introduced to one of the funders, and the funder went around shaking everyone's hands. He shook the person's hand next to me, skipped me without missing a beat or acknowledging me, and went right on shaking hands down the line telling



everyone how much he liked our work. I think he had pretty much assumed I was just there at the reception as someone's girlfriend.

I've had people ask my boyfriend for technical advice (he was an artist, but looked "geeky") and even offer him a technical job where they would train him because he "looked smart", while I was sitting there remotely configuring a server from my laptop for fun.

I spent years under a boss where I would present an idea to him, and he would turn it down, and then another [male] coworker would present the same idea to him 15 minutes later and he would accept it and give credit to the other coworker. A different [male] coworker noticed the pattern and told me that he thought it was because I was a woman, and the boss had some kind of issue with it. At the time, I didn't believe my coworker, because this was one of my first jobs and I hadn't had as many other experiences. Then my boss left and we replaced him...and suddenly my ideas were actually listened to the first time they were presented.

It doesn't happen every day, but this kind of thing still happens often enough to not just be "a few bad apples" story. I'm sure most women in STEM have a similar laundry list of incidents. The point is, I stick with it because I love it and can't imagine doing anything else with my life.

But most people — women included — don't feel a "calling" to work in STEM. They're there because they're smart and they find it interesting and it makes decent money.

Most people aren't going to stick around at a job where they're constantly told, "You don't belong here." If you have multiple ways to put your intelligence to good use that you like equally and that pay you, you're going to refuse to put up with the BS and go somewhere else...which is what a lot of women do.

[Reply](#)



o

**John**

November 22, 2014

Chicks are terrible at computers. Everyone knows that!! GEESH!

[Reply](#)



o

**TrailDreaming**

November 22, 2014

That is just so weird that the story goes that she took credit for the contributions of her male friends.

I have been a female engineer for 25 years and it never goes like that.

The way it usually goes is the female makes a contribution and men take the credit. Men have taken my code, removed my name (not changing the variable names) and presented my work as their own.

It gets worse... (for real)

[Reply](#)



**Jennifer**

November 26, 2014

I am (or I guess I should say was, I'm a stay at home mom now) a software engineer. I did once work with a girl who was a truly terrible programmer. She was brought in to do a small contract job and I think we ended up rewriting the very little she managed to accomplish shortly after she left. Anyway, from talking to her it was clear that she'd been skating by at all of these other companies by getting the guys to do her work for her. So it does happen. I wouldn't call that the norm though.

I love programming and I miss it, but I left because my job was becoming less and less about programming and more about dealing with corporate political bullshit and staying home with a crying baby sounded like a lot more fun.

[Reply](#)



**[Mr. Miller](#)**

December 1, 2014

+10 points jen.

Regardless of sex, people will take advantage of you and stab you in the

back if you let them.

Protect copyrighted code.

If working on a team, on a large project, speak up for yourself and be proud of your work.

And yes... office bureaucracy and politics can drive anyone insane!

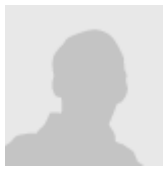
[Reply](#)



**NoNeedForAName**

December 7, 2014

git config --global user.email might help combat that foul practice... I hope. ;-)



o

**Hezaa**

November 24, 2014

Oh, sweetheart, no – not your pretty little head! Best not to worry about it all, anyway – those frowning brow lines are so unattractive and manly.

[Reply](#)



2.

[Paul Tabachneck](#)

November 17, 2014

Eeeegh. The book was written by Susan Marengo (<http://www.susanmarengo.com/>), whose website has the title “Your Site Title,” so maybe she’s calling in her own personal technological experiences as a stand-in for Computer Engineer Barbie’s, rather than talking to a computer engineer to find out what they actually do?

(I did the research because I was really hoping this book had been written by a man that we

could yell at.)

[Reply](#)



o

**Kelly Yeoh**

November 17, 2014

you mean someone actually gets paid to write that fuckupperty?!?!? Gah

[Reply](#)



■

**John**

November 22, 2014

Speak english?

[Reply](#)



o

**[Matthew Wunderlich](#)**

November 18, 2014

Now I see my problem as a writer. I portray intelligent, creative women in literature, with the male narrator along for the ride more than anything else. If I want finical success I need to depict women as helpless without the aid of a man.

By the Sword of Xena, that's depressing.

[Reply](#)



■ **Namita Bhopal**

November 20, 2014

Matthew, please send me some of your writings. They sound like just what I would love to read :)

[Reply](#)



■ **Steve**

November 21, 2014

Your book has a repetition error in the second sentence.  
By the Sword of Xena, that's embarrassing.

[Reply](#)



■ **Stacie**

November 30, 2014

Matthew, may I please use (steal) the line, "By the sword of Xena"? It's fabulous.

[Reply](#)





**Tanya**

November 18, 2014

Maybe Susan needed a man to write the story.

[Reply](#)



**maximum overtroll**

November 19, 2014

Barbie seems to be more on a computer science track than engineering. CE has a lot of electrical engineering and fabrication involved too. Clutter Barbie's room with tools and reclaimed parts and boards, board up the windows to keep out the wreched light and toss a few thousand bottles of mountain dew and hot pocket wrappers around and then i'll believe Barbie is a computer engineer.

[Reply](#)



**Alquanole**

November 20, 2014

From stereotype to stereotype... Great!

[Reply](#)



**Abigail**

November 22, 2014

After reading your comment, I looked around my room. My life has been a mess lately, so it kind of described the messiness. These hot pocket wrappers, computer parts, and cans look nice with my purple glittery walls and the rainbow butterfly bedspread.

[Reply](#)



■ **Sarah**

November 24, 2014

As a female computer programmer, I also take offense to your stereotype. My basement apartment is NOT cluttered with Hot Pockets wrappers. I prefer Croissant Pockets anyway.

[Reply](#)



○

[PC](#)

November 19, 2014

Eeeehh I was worried about that. The 'women can't do math' attitude doesn't come from men alone. It's horrible that it got all the way to publication, though. How did multiple people think this was okay?

[Reply](#)



○

**Sammy**

November 20, 2014

So yell at Susan!

[Reply](#)



■ **Ben in Seattle**

November 20, 2014

Please do not yell at Susan. The authors of these books have no say over how Barbie is portrayed. Susan probably was gnashing her teeth over this as much as anyone. It's Mattel, the corporation that sees sexism as a selling point, that needs to be yelled at.

[Reply](#)



■ **Gabs Bs As**

November 26, 2014

Point for Ben in seattle

Copied from the author's site:

“How Susan creates stories according to editors' needs

Meets editors' specific needs with original stories based on a character or theme provided by the editors and fitting the relevant format”

I wouldn't write that story if they payed me a trillion dollars...tough

[Reply](#)



■ **MiddleAgedBarbie**

December 11, 2014

Yeah...I'd do it for a trillion dollars. Heck, I'd do it for 2 million. I'm cheap!



o

**Hezaa**

November 24, 2014

Website titles are so HARD! Maybe she didn't have time to ask her husband to help her.

[Reply](#)



3.

**Leslie W. (@mamatiger)**

November 17, 2014

From the people who brought you "math is hard" comes...computer engineer Barbie! Who still doesn't know math, or much of anything else, apparently.

[Reply](#)



o

**Leslie W. (@mamatiger)**

November 17, 2014

Oh wait, I know! She knows how to find a nice man to fix her problems! What a useful skill!

[Reply](#)



o

**Pontifex**

November 18, 2014

She knows how to stay calm under pressure by:

using other people, their time and their materials, ignoring that her mistakes affect others, convincing others to ignore her mistakes, manipulating men, and gliding easily forward on their hard work.

Classic “princess bitch” sorority girl stereotype, straight out of a 50s movie. Only here she is the heroine.

[Reply](#)



**[Kakakak](#)**

November 20, 2014

“She knows how to stay calm under pressure by: using other people, their time and their materials, ignoring that her mistakes affect others, convincing others to ignore her mistakes, manipulating men, and gliding easily forward on their hard work.”

Sounds like she’s ready to skip the whole engineering thing and jump straight to management or project management, just like my boss (a guy by the way).

[Reply](#)

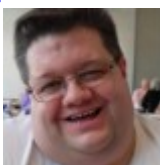


**RickF**

November 22, 2014

Exactly what I was thinking! She’s ready to be CEO of wahoo.com

[Reply](#)



**Alex Cockell**

December 9, 2014

Easier nowadays to ensure she doesn’t fry anything – bung her on a virtual desktop and give her a Chromebook, tabley or thin client



running Citrix Receiver, and LOCK OUT USB ACCESS.

That way – her work's in the bloody datacentre.



**Dsayko**

November 17, 2014

I have a long-standing hatred of Barbie books. When my now 26 year old cousin was 4, another cousin and I “accidentally” left her favorite Barbie book at a hotel on a family vacation. They are terrible, awful books.

[Reply](#)



**Andy**

November 17, 2014

Thanks for the heads up. I have an 18 month grand daughter living with me, and am now confirmed in my determination to eschew everything Barbie. I raised two daughters sans Barbie, and I'm sure I can manage one more young woman growing into self sufficiency.

[Reply](#)



**[Anna M.](#)**

November 17, 2014

NO... just NO. As a web programmer with a wee little girl (3 1/2) who has demonstrated a mind and interest geared toward mechanics and engineering books like this make me so angry I could just spit.

[Reply](#)



**GiggityPuff**

November 24, 2014

Well those boys did what a technician does, not exactly what a programmer/engineer does...so yeah. Not every engineer/programmer knows/bothers to know (since to some of them they probably have more money than time) how to plug a SATA drive to a computer and recover data. They however are designing circuits/programming stuff which is far more complicated.

[Reply](#)



**Alex Cockell**

December 9, 2014

.. into a library workstation on a production network (unless they've isolated it)?

With the risk it has a boot sector virus?

[Reply](#)



**GiggityPuff**

November 24, 2014

...other than the part that she says needing the boys help, sorry missed that part.

[Reply](#)



**Laura**

November 17, 2014

I appreciate and fervently agree with your outrage, but posting the entire book online isn't cool, especially when you acknowledge that it is for sale. As an author, you should be more sensitive to copyright than most!

[Reply](#)



**[Troy Gilbert](#)**

November 17, 2014

I'm pretty sure this would qualify as fair use considering the intent is criticism.

[Reply](#)



**Nick**

November 17, 2014

"Fair use" is not as powerful as you'd think. Even with covered intent, posting the entire book is probably not kosher.

[Reply](#)



**Neeneko**

November 19, 2014

It would be a bit of a hazy case, but in general doing a page by page

critique of a work with substantial commentary relative to the amount copied would count as fair use.

If the book's author decided to press the issue, their lawyer would likely recommend dropping the case unless the intent was to harass as opposed to win. The case would be just hazy enough SLAPP laws would probably not come into effect and the author might be able to scare an ISP or host into pulling the content, but if it went to court and both sides had adequate legal council, the chances of finding for the author would probably not be very good.

[Reply](#)



■ **UnBarbie**

November 19, 2014

If their lawyer was smart, they'd let this slide. Lest this turn into another Streisand Effect.



■ **Uncle Mike**

November 20, 2014

To be fair, it's only half the book that's posted. We still don't know the glories of Actress Barbie.

[Reply](#)



○ **vinz**

November 19, 2014

I think they could make a flimsy case about it 'damaging' them by railing against the book, showing the crap of content within, but literal copyright you're safe from, as the scans aren't good enough to reproduce the book and you are missing the covers. If it

isn't a reproducible content then it wouldn't fall under actual legal copyright laws. They can still hit you with a dmca for 'damages' as a result of the criticism though (which is what movie and game companies like to slap youtube reviewers with)

[Reply](#)



7.

[Karen Lopez](#)

November 17, 2014

No worries.

I refactored Barbie's story. <http://blog.infoadvisors.com/index.php/2014/01/30/refactoring-computer-engineer-barbie/>

[Reply](#)



o

[Shawn McBurnie](#)

November 17, 2014

Nice refactor!

I respect that you went in for as small a changeset as possible, and the sticker format is brilliant!

If it were practical, I think a full rework would be even better. Barbie as designer and full-fledged collaborator is good, especially when paired with competence in getting out of (as well as into) computer difficulties – but misses out on the promise of the front cover (“engineer”, Linux, binary on the screen).

[Reply](#)



o

**mortymortadella**

November 19, 2014

Brilliant :)

This refactoring should've been the official release.  
(also, the whole idea is way more constructive and insightful, then Pamie's article we're commenting on, which is basically just ranting.)

[Reply](#)



■ [Karen Lopez \(@datachick\)](#)

December 7, 2014

That was my point. Fix it. Rant on Twitter and Facebook, but fix the damn thing.

I really enjoyed the rant here, though.

[Reply](#)



○ **Robert Murphey**

November 20, 2014

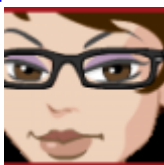
Wow, Karen – that is epic. Thanks for this.

The entire write up of the book was extremely disheartening for me.

My daughter is 12 now, and is keenly interested in many things, including computer programming and designing game assets like artwork and texturing. First, the entire GamerGate fiasco, and now this? I've already had to talk to her about how girls are not treated well in tech industry – due to the taunting of some spiteful boys who she totally beat down in some Pokemon battles online.

Your “refactor” of this book, plus an age-appropriate re-reading of the original post about how bad the book is will end up being a topic of discussion tonight. The uphill battle continues...

[Reply](#)



■ [Karen Lopez \(@datachick\)](#)

December 7, 2014

Excellent. I use my vintage (and new) Barbie collection to talk to parents about having discussions with their children. So I'm not entirely anti-Barbie. But I find it so discouraging to walk down the pink explosion aisle of any retailer and see what are basically hooker Barbies and cute, non-working Barbies.

[Reply](#)



**Arthur Swart**

November 22, 2014

Hi Karen,

If you need a hand getting the story uploaded properly, just give me a buzz...

Cheers,

Arthur

[Reply](#)



8.

**Angie Kritenbrink**

November 17, 2014

Do I spy a couple pink laptops in that story?

[Reply](#)



9.

**Eric J**

November 17, 2014

christ wept

[Reply](#)



**Macromika**

November 17, 2014

Does anyone remember the talking Barbie that said, "Math is Hard!?" I'm no longer surprised by anything Mattel does.

[Reply](#)



**Alessandra**

November 17, 2014

Yes! I even HAD this barbie!! I have a PhD in Physics now, thank goodness I didn't listen to that BS.

[Reply](#)



**[Karen Lopez \(@datachick\)](#)**

December 7, 2014

Actually, she said "Math class is hard".

I thought that was a great comment. Math \*class\* should be hard.

[Reply](#)



**[Katy](#)**

November 17, 2014



\*Head in hand\* Sigh.

[Reply](#)



12.

**GrumpyProfessor**

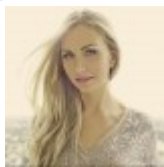
November 17, 2014

I taught a Gender and Computing class for a couple of years and had thus two Computer Engineer Barbies purchased with university money so we could look at the gender bias in the dolls. Here we go:

- \* Yes, pink laptops (Macs, with an App you can get for your iPhone)
- \* pink phones
- \* Barbie wears glasses (pink)
- \* Her blonde hair is in a ponytail (okay, sort of)
- \* She has a bluetooth receiver in her ear (pink). This is kind of a guy thing, but whatever.
- \* She is not wearing a T-Shirt with ALT+F4 or something on it, but a close-fitting blousey thing with computer keys printed on it. Apparently the designer didn't get the memo on the joke T-Shirts.
- \* [I hope you are sitting down] Barbie is wearing tight \*leggings\*. WTF? Where do I put my keys and my Swiss army knife and my dongle and my USB sticks if I don't have pockets??? The "briefcase" that comes with Barbie (silver) only fits the pink Mac.
- \* The killer: Since Barbies come in high-heeled only, and someone noticed that Computer Engineers don't usually walk around in 5 inch spike heels, she has flat loafers with insets to fill up the high heel, meaning that she can't stand straight.

I have the two on my shelf and explain it to people who ask. And I join the choir: #fail, Mattel, #fail.

[Reply](#)



o

**Carrie**

November 17, 2014

This book is embarrassing on several levels, but I have a slightly different perspective on the physical look of the dolls you mention.

I think it's defeating to women and girls to suggest that they \*must\* look a certain way to be happy/successful/etc. However, I find it just as defeating to say they \*cannot\* look a certain way and be successful at something.

The link between professions and clothing/hair/beauty choices seems to be more of a result of bias, exclusion, and peer pressure than of any organic connection. Is there any substantial reason Barbie can't wear leggings and 5" heels while she's coding? Or that the same brain that likes solving engineering problems can't enjoy aesthetic pleasures or pampering like cute hair and a stylish manicure? No one tells the boys they can't like "typical" male pursuits like sports or fast cars, do they?

Reinforcing stereotypes – of engineers who must look like they don't care about fashion or of fashionable girls who must not be smart or interested in intellectual pursuits – doesn't help anyone in my view.

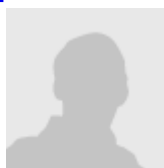
My whole career I've seen how much easier it is to be respected if I dress sloppily, don't apply make-up, etc. But I'm never happy playing that part because it just isn't me. I'm from the South, I grew up competing in pageants, I love fashion (including – and especially – very high heels), and by God I love having my hair blown out. I promise you none of those things effect my engineering skills in the slightest.

I'm seeing this problem play out with my niece – despite my very tom-boyish sister's best efforts, her 4 year old daughter is a princess. She wants to dress up, she wants things to be pretty, and you'd better believe she wants everything pink. I had to hand-dip an entire Erector Set in glitter to interest her (don't get me started...), but when I did she built circles around her 7 year old brother.

What do you think the chances are that she'll pursue anything engineering related, though, if none of the toys are aesthetically pleasing to her and she can't relate to anyone in the industry because they all tell her she needs to change the way she is to fit in?

I think the answer is more diversity, not less. Let Barbie have her leggings and 5" heels, just give her a casual friend to hang out with (and a black engineering friend, and a trans engineering friend...). /rant

[Reply](#)



**John Williams**

November 17, 2014

I tried wearing Leggings and 5" high heels while programming once and Grumpy Professor is right they are incompatible.

I don't know why something about the angle of the foot seems to keep the C++ compiler from properly interpreting preprocessor directives.

I know it is a nitpick but Barbie is doing software engineering not computer engineering and despite what the OP has said spec'ing and designing is a huge

part of the process. I spend at least as much time in the design phase as I do writing code. Additionally Program Managers aka the people who collect Business Requirements, design features and similar are essential to software development.

If I were to change this book to be less insulting I would

- Call her a software engineer.
- Talk about how her designs tell steve and whoever how to make the software
- Show how her understanding of coding and systems engineering helps her make good designs
- Remove all the crap about the computer virus because that is A+ cert stuff and has little to nothing to do with either software engineering or computer engineering. Someone who troubleshoots technical issues would be a computer technician at the low end and a support engineer at the high end or possible and support escalation engineer at the very high end. ( I would say though that at least removing the harddrive and using another system to scan and inspect is a viable solution. I could have been worse. The teacher could have given her a strategy that wouldn't work. Though they did forget to also clean the flash drive. Also after retrieving the files, I would have reinstalled the OS from scratch out of fear of a root kit or similar left over even after a virus scan. Also I would have used a computer that was not only had security software but was also a different OS.

I know I've gone a bit here, but I also find it funny that Barbie is allowed to plug a harddrive into the library's computer. First because that is one heck of a permissive policy the library has and second because plugging in a harddrives would most likely involve taking the library's computer at least partially apart. And laptop harddrives usually though not always use non standard connectors and form factors. On the other hand Barbie did get the harddrive out all on her own and didn't even make a deal of it so presumable she either has a laptop that makes change the harddrive very easy or performed some pretty technical work on the background )

- She could have talked about why she loves the creative process and sharing her games with people.

[Reply](#)



Misc

November 18, 2014

“software engineering not computer engineering” / “computer technician” / “support escalation engineer”

Other books in that collection are called “Barbie – I can be a baby doctor”, “Barbie – I can be a pet vet”. The simplification of the career title is within the editorial line, and completely irrelevant.

[Reply](#)



**John Williams**

November 18, 2014

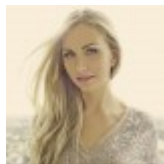
obstetrics gynecologist are probably too big as words for the target audience. So baby doctor is a reasonable.

I knew and continue to know a lot of veterinarians and the majority of them work with large animals. Pet Vet while cute also makes it clear what type of vet

Calling someone a computer engineer rather than a software engineer doesn't seem to be simplifying it rather it just seems wrong. But maybe I am wrong. I've been steeped in computer science and related fields for so long that I am perfectly willing to accept that I can no longer reasonable judge what someone who isn't would find easy or hard to understand about the field.

So point taken.

I still think though if the point of the books is to get young girls interested in STEM careers then spending some time talking about why she likes the work even if it is the design side would be helpful. Even a through away line like “By making games, I help people have fun” or “Working with computer if I can dream it I can make it” seem like they would be good. The way the book shows the work, I wouldn't want to get into it.



**Carrie**

November 18, 2014

LOL on the shoes and leggings John. I wouldn't have a problem with Barbie being a software engineer or a designer or anything else as long as A. she wasn't always put into stereotypical roles in any industry and B.

her role was not diminished by having to ask boys for help. Lots of ways to position this that would have been WAY better than this.

[Reply](#)



[Mr. Miller](#)

December 1, 2014

Lets approach what you said with equality.

A. She isn't always put into stereotypical roles.

Which, if approached by equality, means men would not be in stereotypical roles either.

Which means, men would be in the roles women are stereotyped into, and women would be in the roles men are stereotyped not to.

All these does is reverse stereotypes, and create a new stereotype. Your not ending stereotypes, your perpetuating them.

B. Her roles were not diminished by asking boys for help.

Well, would asking women not diminish her role? Because by how you stated it, that is how it sounds. And if your saying that, all your statement equates to is.

Men are inferior to women, and asking a man, as a woman, is diminishing, since men are inferior.

Which is more sexist than anything this book has written.

And if we assume, that the gender in that sentence you typed, meant less than describing whom she was asking for help from.

Then your saying its a bad thing to ask for help, from other people. Or that she should ignore the rest of her development team, and do it all herself.

For which there is a problem, as teamwork is a trait very HIGH in demand in the tech world. Because its very uncommon.

Forbes has somewhat recent articles talking about this, as does small business, and several other business related articles. Teamwork is lacking and important!

Though, I do agree with your other sentiment. Barbie can design GUI's for game design, wearing any type of high heel she owns. She can look however she wants.



**Alex**

November 18, 2014

Please point out where anyone anywhere in this comment section said “women should NEVER wear pink, have long hair, wear makeup, or in any way be stereotypically girly.” Go ahead. Quote ONE SINGLE COMMENT that says this.

You can't, because NOBODY IS SAYING THAT.

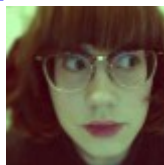
I don't know where you live where women are respected MORE for not giving straight men something pretty and weak-looking to stare at (and let's be honest here, that is the SOLE PURPOSE of the standard of “femininity” that you are so desperate to cling to—please stop pretending it exists for our benefit), but I'd sure love to move there.

So your daughter won't play with anything that isn't pink. Where, pray tell, do you think she picked that up? She doesn't exist in a vacuum.

How about instead of painting her Erector Set pink, you try teaching her that it is okay if girls play with things that AREN'T pink? Better yet, how about teaching her that the whole idea of colors and inanimate objects having genders is stupid, and that women are not ornamental objects whose primary function in life is to be pretty?

Yes, the answer IS more diversity, not less. How you figure that continuing to force girls into the stereotypically girly pink sparkly molds straight men want them forced into is going to encourage “diversity” is beyond me, though.

[Reply](#)



**Emma**

November 18, 2014

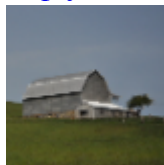
I don't think anybody is saying that anybody is saying (er...) ‘engineers

can never look like this'. Expressing surprise, though, at an engineer looking a certain way is nonetheless disheartening for anyone reading who's an engineer and doesn't fit the commenter's preferred mould because it does imply there is an ideal way for an engineer to look.

I agree the beauty and fashion industries have their roots in heteropatriarchal societal structures which are ultimately damaging to everyone (especially women). However aware you are of that, though, it's hard to force your own tastes to change. And it's really disheartening to see someone going 'if she's an engineer why is she wearing leggings', because yes, arguably the valourisation of revealing clothing on women (and also the simultaneous devaluing of revealing clothing on women, because we can't freaking win) is an instrument of patriarchy, but it has \*nothing to do\* with her being an engineer.

Setting up new false standards doesn't help anything. I don't want my clothing to be seen as a signifier of \*anything\* to do with my work. I want female engineers to be able to go to work in jeans and male engineers to be able to go to work in dresses and vice versa and for nobody to bat an eyelid because, in the context of their work, it \*doesn't freaking matter\*.

[Reply](#)



**Beti**

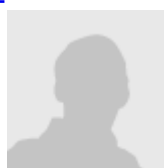
November 18, 2014

Please take a breath, Alex. No one is saying "no woman should ever wear pink" but GrumpyProfessor is pretty damned dismissive of the idea of a computer engineer wearing heels and leggings and pink clothes.

I'm with you – more diversity is better. And I think that's the point of the objections to GrumpyProfessor's comment. It just comes across to me like more rules women have to follow to be a "real" scientist/engineer /whatever.

I'd like to hear back from GrumpyProfessor because maybe I'm misinterpreting the comment but it sure sounds like that's what s/he said.

[Reply](#)



**GrumpyProfessor**

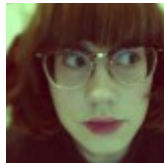
November 20, 2014

I didn't realize that my words could be interpreted as insisting that "real" engineers who are women only slouch around in jeans, T-Shirts with sayings on them, and healthy shoes, just because I do. My worry was that this idea of showing young children this highly stereotypical picture of a woman who is an engineer was highly annoying. It would have been better to have her in high heels and a T-Shirt, for example, and a bit less on the pink side.

**Dana**

November 22, 2014

I wonder if you have daughters, yourself? Speaking as a feminist mother with three daughters, I can tell you that raising them to be strong individuals is not the same as telling them how they should dress. Nor can a mother control their tastes. Nor should she.

[Reply](#)**Emma**

November 18, 2014

This, this, all of this.

Little girls being attracted to pink and frills and femininity is cultural and the result of how gender roles end up warping and limiting everyone's brains and tastes. The way to change that is not to make fun of people who have already been enculturated into liking those things. Ultimately what we are talking about is stereotypes which are being perpetuated by marketing, which exist within a deeply embedded capitalist social structure, so I'm not actually sure we \*can\* take simple steps to change it without restructuring our entire culture from the ground up first. But mocking people's choices (which are not made in a vacuum, but then no choices are) doesn't fix anything.

Also, the fact that so many people are still so freaking focused on \*how she looks\* (would the same things be said about a male software engineer in skinny



jeans or a tie? Really?) is part of the problem.

(PS: I am coding and I am wearing leggings. WHERE IS YOUR GOD NOW, GRUMPYPROFESSOR?)

[Reply](#)



**John Williams**

November 18, 2014

“(PS: I am coding and I am wearing leggings. WHERE IS YOUR GOD NOW, GRUMPYPROFESSOR?)”

You must be programming in Java the JVE helps protect against memory leaks and leggings induced bugs.

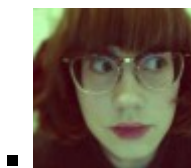
[Reply](#)



**Ben in Seattle**

November 20, 2014

I actually find that Microsoft's .NET is optimized for programming while wearing five inch heels. Try it some time and I think you'll like the results.



**Emma**

November 18, 2014

This, this, all of this.

First: I think we are in agreement that the book is trash. It's trash mainly because of the stuff Barbie \*does\* in it.

But. Little girls being attracted to pink and frills and femininity is cultural and

the result of how gender roles end up warping and limiting everyone's brains and tastes. The way to change that is not to make fun of people who have already been enculturated into liking those things. Ultimately what we are talking about is stereotypes which are being perpetuated by marketing, which exist within a deeply embedded capitalist social structure, so I'm not actually sure we \*can\* take simple steps to change it without restructuring our entire culture from the ground up first. But mocking people's choices (which are not made in a vacuum, but then no choices are) doesn't fix anything.

Also, the fact that so many people are still so freaking focused on \*how she looks\* (would the same things be said about a male software engineer in skinny jeans or a tie? Really?) is part of the problem, not a solution to it.

(PS: I am coding and I am wearing leggings. WHERE IS YOUR GOD NOW, GRUMPYPROFESSOR?)

[Reply](#)



**Mike**

November 22, 2014

I think I love you. My daughter also loves princess stuff and clothes, but she's got a keen and sharp mind. It would be a terrible shame if she was to end up being excluded from some professions because she's not wearing a nerdy enough t-shirt.

[Reply](#)



**Guti**

November 17, 2014

I strongly suggest you thoroughly check your Gender and Computing class material. Maybe you've been doing more harm than good.

- Pink. So what?
- Glasses? Any gender bias with glasses I hadn't realized? (Yes, they are... pink! They even match the rest of the outfit! Oh my god!)
- Ponytail. Actually, I've known quite a few software engineers who wear it. Some of them are male.
- Bluetooth receiver... guy thing... Sorry, I don't get it.

- Leggings and high heels... I haven't tried myself this one, but I suspect they don't interfere with designing or coding. And many people do wear those, and I suspect as well they have car keys and USB sticks; they figured out how to overcome that...

To summarize, if you are talking seriously, your Gender and Computing classes are really full of stereotypes and you spend an awful lot of time teaching how an engineer should... look! I just can't believe it.

[Reply](#)



o

[Deirdre Saoirse Moen](#)

November 21, 2014

FWIW, I wore jeggings nearly every day of the 5-1/2 years I worked at Apple as a software engineer.

As my husband says, "pockets are a feminist issue."

That said, I usually wore the politically expedient Nike trainers (because Tim Cook's on the board of Nike, many of the fitness events we had at Apple had Nike tie-ins).

[Reply](#)



o

**Monica**

December 10, 2014

Is there a word for sexism masquerading as anti-sexism?

Color is an important part of branding. Look at UPS, Target, and Home Depot.

Everything that comes with Barbie is pink because pink is the brand's color.

How is the hair relevant? Are you saying that blonde women can't wear theirs in a ponytail? I suspect I'm missing exactly how this fits in.

How are Bluetooth receivers a "guy thing?" I have five nieces and I know for a fact that four of them, plus one of my sister-in-laws, use them on a regular basis. I would except for the fact that the only reason I even own a cell phone (which is pink, by the way. My decision) is for roadside emergencies. Are you also going to tell us that we can't put on coveralls when we have to go in the crawlspace to do some repair work? Coveralls and home repairs are "guy things."

Kids like themes. I don't know any 8 year olds who know what ALT+F4 is, and to them a plain text reference they may not understand on a shirt would break the theme.

Having Barbie's name spelled out on her blouse using computer keys (judging by the pictures I've seen), in addition to reinforcing the Barbie branding, fits the computer theme with the use of key graphics.

Where do you carry those things without pockets? In your purse. Men need pockets because they generally can't get away with carrying purses. I'm not a computer engineer, but I work extensively with computers and when I have to present an STL file or a mobile app or a program to a client I, preferring immediate feedback face to face over delayed emails, deliver it on a USB stick. Unless I'm working around the house I wear skirts and dresses exclusively (personal preference), none of which have pockets, and I never have any issues carrying my USB stick, Swiss army knife (not mocking your example, I'd be lost without mine), voltage tester, USB cables, soldering iron, and solder.

I'll give you the high heels thing. I'm not much for government regulation, but those things should be banned by law due to the foot, leg, and back damage they cause.

Here's the vibe I'm getting from your comment: Nothing should be pink because pink is so "stereotypically girly" (fun fact: The colors use to be opposite. Pink use to be the masculine color and blue was the feminine color), a woman has to choose between being feminine and being taken seriously, technology should be restricted by gender, and, for some odd reason, blonde women shouldn't wear ponytails.

That's just as sexist as you claim Computer Engineer Barbie is.

Other than my USB sticks, one of which is grey and black and the other of which looks like a large caliber rifle cartridge, everything I have is pink. If I can't find it in pink and I can do so without compromising the electrical components I paint it pink because I like pink. No one is going to shame me into burning my pink clothes, painting my pink objects, and changing my favorite color just because it's "a stereotype forced on us by 'the patriarchy.'"

Unless I show up topless, with my skirt pulled up around my head, or in a bathing suit my clients couldn't care less how I dress. They don't hire me because I dress like the 40s never ended. Repeat clients wouldn't fire me if I showed up in jeans and a t shirt. They hire me because they hear good things about me. They continue to give me their business because they like my work.

We've won that battle. Women can walk down the street dressed like men (sometimes literally. My mother and ex-girlfriend both buy their casual clothes in the men's department because they fit better) and no one will bat an eye. We can walk down the street wearing skirts and dresses and no one will bat an eye. Men, put on a dress, go out for a while, and see how that works out for you.

I honestly fail to see how demanding that Barbie dress less androgynous for a computer engineer job is any less sexist than the days when men forbade us from wearing slacks and short sleeves.

[Reply](#)



■ **Monica**

December 10, 2014

Forgive the formatting of my previous post. I saw unordered lists were possible but didn't know if it was HTML () or a variant of BBCode ([]). I took a gamble with HTML, lost, and I don't see an edit option to fix it.

[Reply](#)



13.

**Jane**

November 17, 2014

Wow. This book was a real groaner. Not only did they confuse data recovery with computer engineering (there IS some overlap between the two when it comes to recovering failed storage), but they also confused software engineering with computer engineering (she's attempting to program a game). And even worse: She admits that she isn't even programming it, she's just designing it and she's going to call in her boy toy to program it for her...she does absolutely no engineering whatsoever.

Only nontechnical design work. Typical Barbie.

[Reply](#)



○

**John Williams**

November 17, 2014

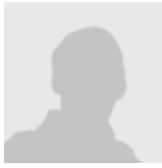
Just designing?

Designing software that is usable and useful takes quite a bit of skill and understanding both of how programming works and of how people work.

I don't think there is anything wrong with her being a Software Program Manager other than the fact that the author clearly doesn't know the difference between a PM, a

SE and a computer engineer (as you pointed out)

[Reply](#)



■ **Jane**

November 18, 2014

You MIGHT be able to make an argument that she's doing software engineering, but I got the impression her role is more akin to high-level development of the requirements, rather than anything at the software level.

[Reply](#)



■ **Jane**

November 18, 2014

In fact, the closest she gets to engineering anything is stating that she's writing a game, then corrects herself and says that she's just writing up what she wants it to be, and that she's going to let her boyfriends do the heavy lifting.

Menz to the rescue, I guess. So much for empowerment.

[Reply](#)



■ **John Williams**

November 18, 2014

This is true.

I have to say that I did as someone who works in software engineering like the idea that she wasn't making the game by herself. The idea of people collaborating on a project is more realistic. However, I can fully get with the vibe that for a story that is specifically aimed at young girls for the purpose of getting them interested in STEM work that the fact

that she was doing the non technical “design” work and then handed it to the two boys to program is the wrong story to tell.

I think it would have worked better if she even talked about how her designs told them how to program it, but even so removing the boys altogether or even having it be a boy and a girl who did the programing would have helped keep the story on message.

[Reply](#)



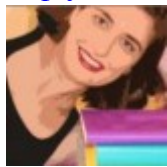
14.

**Sean Tomlinson**

November 17, 2014

You know, I am a guy that self-identifies as a geek and math IS hard!

[Reply](#)



15.

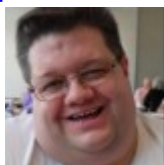
**[Lauren](#)**

November 17, 2014

It was disheartening to see how little thought the author of this children’s book put into the roles of men and women. I’m sorry to see that Barbie’s role as a computer engineer wasn’t taken seriously.

As a librarian, I have an issue with the book suggesting that they take the corrupted drive to the library and plug it into the library computers there. This is exactly what public libraries are trying to prevent with new procedures and policies. While I understand the virus probably wouldn’t end up on the library computer, it’s a bad idea! No, Ken (or Steven or whatever your name is) library computers don’t always have great security. Total fail from everyone’s perspective. Let’s send this to the publisher.

[Reply](#)



o

**Alex Cockell**

December 9, 2014

I did deskside support for 2 years and email administration/apps support for 8.. and I winced as well.

Those 3 are a menace to their school's network's integrity. Do that in the real world – their accounts would be revoked, and they'd have been slung out of the college and charges brought within minutes...

[Reply](#)



16.

**Jen G.**

November 17, 2014

This really makes me want to set my current projects aside and go write that game my damn self just to show an imaginary character what's what.

[Reply](#)



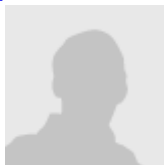
17.

**Sandy**

November 17, 2014

In my opinion, the FIRST mistake was when they combined the BARBIE the Computer Engineer with BARBIE the Actress.....that just fries me! Couldn't be DOCTOR and ENGINEER, or ENGINEER and TEACHER, etc....NO, Engineer and Actress!

[Reply](#)



o

**Cloud**

November 17, 2014

They typically pair one “not traditionally a girl thing” with one “traditionally a girl thing” in these books.

Oh God, I can't believe I know that.



But here's the thing. Some girls are into Barbies. I happen to be the mother to two of them. That doesn't mean they won't also grow up to be scientists or software engineers. I was a Barbie-loving little girl and I grew up to be a scientist, and then a database designer, and now... eh, it's complicated.

The problem (in my view) with this book isn't that it is Barbie or that it is pairing software engineering with some other less stereotype-busting career choice, but that it gets the story so wrong that it ends up reinforcing the stereotypes it was trying to bust.

[Reply](#)



18.

**Michelle**

November 17, 2014

This is Barbie we're talking about. I wouldn't have expected the content of a Barbie book to be anything other than lots of pink, ditziness, and Barbie being considered fabulous... otherwise, it would be like buying a Playboy magazine and being upset that the naked women aren't the photographer.

[Reply](#)

19.

**TechieMan**

November 18, 2014

While I agree that this book is just terrible, I do take offense at one of your statements:

“Steven and Brian represent the tech industry assumption that only men make meaningful contributions.”

Maybe it’s just your experience, or assumption, that the industry feels this way but that it no way makes it a fact.

In 15 years in the industry I have NEVER seen such an assumption, and I’ve always had females as parts of the teams I work on. The only times I even hear such statements is in the media, not in the industry. My current position has 2 females out of 5, and both of them are great at what they do.

NO ONE CARES what sex you are, only what you bring to the table. That’s the only thing that matters, not sex, not race, not religion, and most of the time not even formal education. What can you bring to the team, nothing else matters.

[Reply](#)

o

**Misc**

November 18, 2014

“In 15 years in the industry I have NEVER seen such an assumption”

We have no doubt you don’t see it. Your statement is definitely true. So is hers, though.

“NO ONE CARES what sex you are, only what you bring to the table.”

Some do. Who are you to say otherwise?

“Maybe it’s just your experience, or assumption, that the industry feels this way”

That’s the answer we get EVERY TIME we point out such occurrence. “It’s a single occurrence! An exception! Your personal experience, not a general issue!” These experiences add up. The sheer number of them demonstrates it is indeed a general

issue.

[Reply](#)



o

**Megan**

November 18, 2014

I have been in the computer industry since the late 90s and just last week I sat in a meeting while a man talked over me to a (tech) visitor.

Perhaps rather than telling women what we experience, you should ask the women on your team.

[Reply](#)



■

**Ben in Seattle**

November 20, 2014

I suspect “TechieMan” doesn’t ask the women on his team what their experiences with sexism are because he doesn’t want to have to take the time to explain to them why they’re wrong.

[Reply](#)



20.

**[Ray Charbonneau](#)**

November 18, 2014

My favorite bit is the Tux on the front cover!

[Reply](#)



21.

**chess**

November 18, 2014

There are obviously some very ignorant gender stereotypes at play here, but there are also plausible readings of Barbie's empowerment that can be posed. For example, Barbie downplays her creative/design role in the first instance but is praised and valorised for it at the end, when indeed she does take credit for her work and concludes with an affirmation that yes she "CAN" be a computer engineer. Further, Barbie's project management and people skills are exemplary, realising a "just-in-time" solution. Her ability to identify talent and problem solve shows Barbie is definitely leadership material.

[Reply](#)



**Anna**

November 20, 2014

But takes credit for what work? Asking her teacher how to do something and then having her male friends help her do it? And the last line actually made me shudder. "I guess I can be a computer engineer!" That means she doubted it, or she still doubts it, or she's really not that interested, or all of the above. Ugggghhhh. Way to take all the empowerment out of it. "I guess."

[Reply](#)



22.

**chess**

November 18, 2014

There are obviously some very ignorant gender stereotypes at play here, but there are also plausible readings of Barbie's empowerment that can be posed. For example, Barbie downplays her creative/design role in the first instance but is praised for it at the end, when indeed she does take credit for her work and concludes with an affirmation that yes she "CAN" be a computer engineer. Further, Barbie's project management and people skills are exemplary, realising a "just-in-time" solution. Her ability to identify talent and problem solve shows Barbie is definitely leadership material.

[Reply](#)

23.

**Saturn**

November 18, 2014

Ignoring the obvious technical issues with the book, which some like to dwell on, let us look at what you viewed as a problem: Barbie worked with men on her project instead of doing it all by herself. Software development is complicated and large projects are done easier by groups. Being a school project it probably had a very short deadline. Barbie specialized in the design portion of the project. That is just as important as writing code or doing the testing. I applaud she didn't go "lone wolf" as that mentality is the worst to have as it always leads to problems. Everyone in the biz knows of the stinky guy in the dark corner who chugs out code. Team work. It is important even if those in your team have a different sexual organ in their pants.

[Reply](#)

o

**M. Lives**

November 19, 2014

#1. Gender  $\neq$  genitalia, or "sexual organ in their pants"

#2. Gender stereotypes are real and pernicious and just pretending they don't exist (along with gender, apparently), doesn't make them evaporate. Women are constantly stereotyped as incompetent, particularly in tech fields. A book for children which reinforces the stereotype (the incompetent female main character having to get help from men to do ANYTHING) is dangerous and has "real world" consequences, as the experiences of the other women commented on this post alone show.

You might work in "the biz" but if you think "team work" is other people doing all the work (the men folk in Barbie's life) and someone else getting all the credit (Barbie) is what this nonsense book is about, I'm hoping I never work with you and/or that you learn to listen to female team members and their experiences with sexism and stereotypes.

[Reply](#)

24.



**J**

November 18, 2014

Can I get this book and tape a better story over it? XP

[Reply](#)



25.

**[Jenny Bloggess](#)**

November 18, 2014

I don't even have the words for this level of bullshit.  
HELP ME, STEVEN AND BRIAN!

[Reply](#)



26.

**Dan the Man**

November 18, 2014

Kudos to Skipper here for diagnosing the virus problem correctly.

Stay tuned for next week's episode called 'I can be a lawyer' where Barbie sues the \*\*\*\*\* out of Pamie for violating the copyright on her book.

[Reply](#)



27.

**Ron**

November 18, 2014

Pamie appears to have missed one of the subtleties of this book: it doesn't show that it takes two girls to reboot a computer—it shows that two girls (even when one is a "computer engineer") are incapable of rebooting a computer. "Barbie and Skipper try to reboot the computer but nothing happens."

I guess Computer Engineer Barbie hasn't had the class in pulling out the plug and the

battery.

[Reply](#)



28.

**Scott**

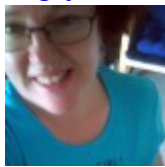
November 18, 2014

Great post!

Here's the author's site: <http://www.susanmarengo.com/contact/>

Maybe we should write her to explain how harmful this book is. She writes lots of kids books it seems so bringing this to her attention could help change things for the better.

[Reply](#)



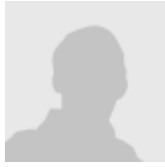
29.

**Liz**

November 18, 2014

It's a shame, because the "I Can Be" Computer Software Engineer Barbie doll, which was released in 2010, is actually pretty cool, even with a pink laptop and phone, and looks a lot more capable than the Bimbo Barbie portrayed in the book. It's typical of the schizophrenia Mattel have had with Barbie over the years, eg. in 1959 she's a 17 year old that babysits but also wears a sheer nightie and negligee and high heel mules (even if she also has a stuffed toy dog with it!)

[Reply](#)



30.

[scribblegurl](#)

November 19, 2014

\*facepalm\*

If by palm, you mean brick wall, and by face, you mean, bash your head against it repeatedly.

[Reply](#)

31.

**Dinoblob**

November 19, 2014

It's wrong to wear a jump drive around your neck?

[Reply](#)

32.

**Prettier than Barbie**

November 19, 2014

I do not see the big fuss about this! Get over it! We , women, can't do everything! Barbie designed the game the guys built it. It is like a graphic designer and a software engineer. What did u expect??? She is Barbie! Known for the beauty not the brains! And like her there are 50000 girls in my college who look pretty dress to the nines know everything about Kim Kardashian AND are dumb as a box of rocks. I think women need to stop competing with men. Get over it! Instead of writing articles like this work on YOUR CODE to be a better programmer than anybody else, INCLUDING men AND women. I am sick of this sexism thing!

[Reply](#)





o **SRSLY?**

November 19, 2014

PtB...Are you are real person? WTF?

[Reply](#)



■ **Ben in Seattle**

November 20, 2014

Sadly, PtB probably isn't just a troll. (I mean, he's a troll, but he's likely for real, too.) I've met guys like him that truly believe we live in a post-sexism age.

They'll say, "I'm not sexist, but girls can't code. I'm not sexist, but girls, especially pretty girls, are dumb as rocks. If they don't do well in the tech industry, it is because they aren't working hard enough. I'm not sexist, but I'm sick of all the whining about sexism. By the way, did I mention that I most definitely am not sexist?"

Confidential to PtB: Let me tell you something man-to-man. As a computer professional, the women I've seen in this field have worked twice as hard to get the same respect. Telling them to "get over it" and "work on your code" is not just insulting, it's showing your ignorance. We males have privilege in this society that we never asked for. We can act like jerks about it or we can, and I use the phrase intentionally, we can be men about it. Let's recognize that yes, while we worked hard to get where we are, there are other people who's hard work is being ignored because of their gender. I believe that part of being a "man" means being strong enough to admit that sexism is real and we've likely benefited from it. That's not our fault. But we will be to blame if we don't open our eyes to it and try to make things right.

[Reply](#)



■ **Prettier than Barbie**

November 23, 2014

Dear Ben FYI I am a woman. And because of that I am sick of women complaining about sexism but wanting the rules to change just because and NOT WORKING for it! I don't care if you are a man, woman or a dog, if you put effort in doing your work. And yes, there are girls dumb as a box of rocks, or worse: smart girls that do not put work into being good at anything other than having "the looks"

[Reply](#)



33.

[Melanie](#)

November 19, 2014

Love this. Oh, Barbie—you're a real mess.

For more fun, I've been having a Facebook discussion about your use of the word "misogynistic" in this piece. The main question is: is it really misogynistic; or is that just a buzz word? I'd love to hear your thoughts on this if you have the time.

[Reply](#)



○ **Tim H.**

November 19, 2014

Merriam-Webster has a terse four-word definition of misogyny- "A hatred of women."

Hate's a strong word, but some kind of institutionalized and critically bad underestimation of women is perhaps the nicest way you could realistically describe this mess.

[Reply](#)

34.

[Tiffany](#)

November 19, 2014

I rewrote this entire book with the help of the images on the Feminist Hacker Barbie website. It is now something I will read to my kids, and I wish THIS was the book they wrote instead of the “Damsel in Distress” crap that is now on shelves! When I held my 4-year-old in my lap and read my edits to her, I got a little emotional at the end since I know not many kids will see it. My kid did though, and she’s going to know that she can be successful with hard work and dedication. [https://www.facebook.com/tiffpitt/media\\_set?set=a.10152812079326223.1073741839.549656222&type=1](https://www.facebook.com/tiffpitt/media_set?set=a.10152812079326223.1073741839.549656222&type=1)

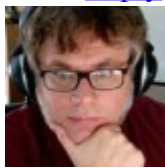
[Reply](#)

o

h

November 20, 2014

Your story is so cool. I like it. But I also think you could have some legal issues because you are not the owner of the Pictures =(

[Reply](#)

35.

**Jan Van Uytven**

November 19, 2014

\*bangs head on desk repeatedly\*

This is such an awful, vomit-inducing book, even by Barbie standards. Does Susan Marengo actually believe in the steaming pile she regurgitated onto tastefully colored paper, or was she browbeaten into writing this drivel?

[Reply](#)



36.

**Tim H.**

November 19, 2014

How fucking hard would it have been to have Barbie learn some universal principle of computer programming- one that enriches the child reading the book- and then have her apply it later in the story? Do they come up with covers for these books and then figure the real work is done and have an intern shit out a draft for the actual content?

And while it may be true that it will go faster if Brian and Steven help, how about saying “Three heads are better than one,” and making sure Barbie makes a meaningful contribution to the effort, and either Brian or Steven or both should be changed to a girl while we’re talking about fixing this.

[Reply](#)

37.

**Argo**

November 19, 2014

OK, so bashing Barbie books is all good clean fun and so on, but methinks there may be a bit of projecting here: Brian and Steven are every guy in tech who’s ever dissed you. So any male character in these stories is carrying way too much baggage for you.

[Reply](#)

38.

**Ian**

November 19, 2014

OMG. THAT WAS SO STEROTIPED U DERP. THIS IS SO OFFENSIVE

[Reply](#)



39.

**cm1**

November 19, 2014

I'm a white southern man working as a programmer. Even I'm flabbergasted. The only use for that book is fuel or toiletry.

[Reply](#)



40.

**Kent**

November 19, 2014

I originally read this on Gizmodo. It kinda came in two parts, your essay and the comments.

The essay was excellent.

The comments were...ahh...numerous.

While reading through the comments I watched the whole group go off the rails and never once did any of them say what I thought should be said. So I'll say that here.

If they give Pulitzer Prizes for individual blog entries, this one should win for 2014.

[Reply](#)



o

**[Pamie](#)**

November 19, 2014

Kent. That's a bold statement. I appreciate it, though.

[Reply](#)



41.

**hennifer**

November 19, 2014

This is mostly disturbing due to the multiple accuracies in the story.

[Reply](#)



42.

**[Rob Dunn](#)**

November 19, 2014

Pamela –

Hi there – loved this article. As a father to a 7 year old daughter, I feel very much the same as you. Without a doubt, this is a waste of paper and resources that I would want no girl to ever partake in – they deserve more.

As it is, my wife and I do not buy into (figuratively or literally) the whole Barbie/princess thing. We want our daughter to be an independent, strong, smart woman who doesn't need a "knight in shining armor" to come to her rescue.

In addition, I am also an IT professional. I strive to treat my co-workers equally, whatever gender they might be. As such, I couldn't help but find it insulting on a different level; our profession is difficult, frustrating, and requires a lot of diligent focus to succeed... Barbie's actions in the book casts a not only insensitive shadow over all women who have struggled for equality, but there's that tone that makes it seem like any idiot can be a computer "engineer" (yay!), even if it means mindlessly using people and being ignorantly dishonest by taking credit for other people's work – which drives me INSANE.

Now, the role of Brian and Steven. There are people in this industry who really do just want to help. It would have been great if one of those two were girls, or hell, a transgender. But, good, honest guys do exist that want to help, because being human is more important than being a self-righteous male. Unfortunately, there is no shortage of the latter – especially on the Internet.

I want my daughter to feel like she can achieve anything that a man can, but even more, I want her to do it without taking advantage of others to get what she wants, but just to be an honest human being that cares about others.

So, with that – a question for you:

I run a site called Faildesk, where we post about humorous (or sometimes not) IT related topics – I'd like to use the Barbie pictures you posted and add my own commentary.

I will link to this page, of course. Due to the timeliness of the topic, I'd like to post this maybe late tomorrow or early Friday. Do I have your permission to repost your Barbie book

scans?

Thanks again for the great article,  
Rob Dunn  
Editor, Faildesk.net

[Reply](#)

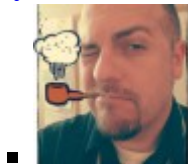


[Pamie](#)

November 19, 2014

I suppose you could. You could also try the Feminist Hacker Barbie site to do such a thing. <https://computer-engineer-barbie.herokuapp.com>

[Reply](#)



[Rob Dunn](#)

November 20, 2014

Thanks Pamela. I'll look to your link as well :)

Best to you,  
Rob

[Reply](#)

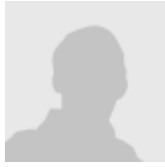


[brandy mars](#)

November 20, 2014

Feminist hacker Barbie site is so amazing.  
-Brandy  
brandymars.blogspot.ca

[Reply](#)



43.

**Susan McCarther**

November 19, 2014

It looks to me Barbie is living the upper-class American dream. She engages in very little actual labor and is able to take all the credit for the final outcome of a project.

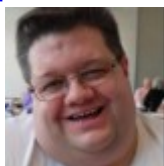
She is the “brains” of the operation who can’t be bothered with doing things that aren’t interesting or require creativity. Peasants are meant to actually do something that requires training and take orders from others.

She came up with the idea for the whole project, she tells everyone what the results need to be, and she takes credit for everyone else’s labor. The fact that she constantly doesn’t know actually how to code or program is a representation of her place in the leisure class.

To me it looks like she is living the American Dream. Her powerful social network allows her to take credit for other people’s work.

Really, she reminds me of all my (male and female) bosses. Often it seems they have networked their way into a good job, they don’t know what in the hell they are doing, but when something goes right they get the credit and when something goes wrong no dares blame them.

Way to go Barbie you aren’t a coder (that is for the worker bees, which you are not), you are mangament. Hooray, your pay check will be 10x everyone elses, you will get more vacation time, you will get stock options, and you don’t need any tangible skills because you are “creative” and “forward thinking.”

[Reply](#)

o

**Alex Cockell**

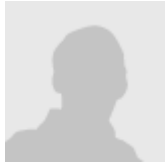
November 22, 2014

... or they then push to get their pet change in during a bloody change freeze – and we worker bees have to itigate for YET ANOTHER FUBAR.

I lost count of the number of princesses I had to support – hated all those problem tickets..

[Reply](#)





44.

**Stein**

November 20, 2014

I'd just like to point out that whoever drew this knew enough about computers to spell "Barbie" in binary.

[Reply](#)

45.

**Tualha**

November 20, 2014

Is it just me, or does Barbie on the cover, with those glasses and that hairstyle, look a LOT like Sarah Palin? Stealth protest by the artist, maybe :)

[Reply](#)

46.

**Valoth**

November 20, 2014

Firstly I hate Barbie. I don't buy them for my daughter because of the brands tendency towards promoting materialism. That said, I have to say the following: Sorry, Pamela, but this article is a load of femi-nazi poo. As someone involved in the computer industry, I can say beyond the shadow of a doubt, regardless of who you are, what gender you are, or even how good you are at your job, you will have to work as a member of a team, and thanks to the modern wonders of equal opportunity, most professional teams have BOTH genders working side by side. Some of the most highly skilled computer-related professionals I know are women and at least half of the reason they are the best is because they are invaluable as team members. Expressing that women have to work only with other women or by themselves to be considered doing something "empowering" is hypocritically sexist and fundamentally segregationist to say the least. As for this story's use of a computer virus, gender is not a concern of a computer virus, and can be confusing to the user of the computer regardless of the user gender. Next, stating that she claimed all the credit for these things is an exaggeration. When you take the car to the mechanic and you bring it home

saying “I got the car fixed.” would you expect to be hounded for taking credit the mechanic was due? And, lastly, if she actually designed a fun, playable computer game with the help of only two other people (even if they are guys, ) then as a fictional character goes, she probably could be an excellent game designer and her ending statement is not in vain. All this said, I wouldn’t expect a columnist from NPR to know just how much hard work goes into good game design.

[Reply](#)



47.

**Ken**

November 20, 2014

Are you kidding me!!!! In no way shape or form does this book portraying any type of sexist views. Women who have taken offense to this need to take a step back and look at the big picture. If Ken or Skipper barbie came to help her out, then this wouldn’t be an issue. I think everybody needs to relax and take a step back and take the book for what it is worth and stop looking for hidden messages.

[Reply](#)



o

**Prettier than Barbie**

November 20, 2014

I agree 100%!!!! Too much fuss for nothing!

[Reply](#)



48.

**Robert Murphey**

November 20, 2014

Pamela, thanks for taking the time to write this up. I thought the Barbie “math is hard” fiasco was bad enough... but it seems they’ve outdone themselves and shown they haven’t learned their lesson at all. My daughter is 12 and has already encountered some of this techno Chauvanism for just being better at Pokemon battles... an appropriately selected

excerpt of your blog entry and the “refactor” in the comments will be an interesting discussion with her tonight. The uphill battle against stupidity continues...

[Reply](#)



49.

**Joe**

November 20, 2014

It seems to me that demanding that women can never be incompetent characters in media is much more sexist than anything Mattel is doing

Men are portrayed as incompetent all the time.

Women are very diverse. There are in fact ditsy blonde women out there. You believing that they should be kicked out of society is wrong

[Reply](#)



50.

**Judy**

November 20, 2014

Here is a much better alternative: “Yes I Can! I’m Clover Anne!,” available on Amazon is a children’s book that tells a story about a little girl who encounters a problem, solves it, and then excitedly discovers she used engineering skills. Clover Anne empowers the girliest of girls to want to be engineers!

[Reply](#)



51.

**[brandy mars](#)**

November 20, 2014

Great article! Thank you for writing this.

-Brandy

[brandymars.blogspot.ca](http://brandymars.blogspot.ca)

[Reply](#)

52.

**Bernie Margolis**

November 20, 2014

As a software engineer I have to say that Barbie is on a path to a much more lucrative career than those saps, Steven and Brian. With her delegation and project management skills Barbie will be heading up teams in no time. She'll get to take credit for all her teams' accomplishments despite working 7 hour days with 2 hour business lunches thrown in.

Steven and Brian, in the meantime, will be working 12 hour days to bring Barbie's visions to fruition. Since Barbie's a generous sort she'll make them feel good with nice performance reviews and performance bonuses that will bring their income up to a level that still falls short of her's by about 25%.

This blog post implies that Barbie is falling short of her potential, but I contend that she's a freaking genius!

Consider that the typical engineer's day goes something like the expert's in this sketch:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKorP55Aqvg>

In the meantime Barbie is on track to be more like the project manager.

[Reply](#)

53.

**Jon**

November 20, 2014

Any chance you could write a version with less fuck in it?  
I'd love to be able to discuss this with my 12 yo daughter.

Thanks

[Reply](#)



o

[Pamie](#)

November 20, 2014

I'll let you do the filtering. I'm thrilled you believe your daughter is mature enough for this discussion, but I'd hate to be the one to decide what she can and cannot handle. Thanks.

[Reply](#)



o

**Sally**

November 20, 2014

How could you possibly have an intelligent conversation about an important issue without using the word "fuck"? Without this word, there would be no possible way for the author to get her message across.

[Reply](#)



54.

[Sandra](#)

November 20, 2014

Barbie: Isn't it time for you to die? Read below.

<http://www.sandrashpilberg.com/2014/11/barbie-isnt-it-time-for-you-to-die.html>

[Reply](#)



55.

**Salazar**

November 20, 2014

This is such a silly thing to get up in arms over, there are two things in this world you people will never get rid of. They are racism and sexism, and do you know why? Because you people refuse to let go of your egos and arrogance. In the end racism and sexism are products of arrogance and arrogance comes from an inflated ego the minute you people start humbling yourselves that's when you'll start to notice change.

[Reply](#)



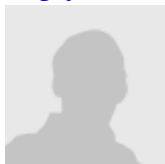
56.

**ronjon**

November 20, 2014

Time for Ken to grow some Yarbles.

[Reply](#)



57.

**Andrea**

November 20, 2014

Gee Pamie. You need to take a chill pill.

[Reply](#)



58.

**Andrea**

November 20, 2014

Gee Pamie. You need to take a chill pill.

[Reply](#)



59.

**MissAndry**

November 21, 2014

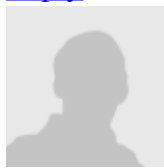
OMG, hold on to your pitchforks, we're having angry lynchmob here!

Sweet feminist-Jesus, why don't you relax. So what if Barbie's job is designing game ideas? She's obviously a game designer in that story.

FYI, game designers need the help of programmers, graphic designers, and whatnot to make their design an actual game. Not because they are female, but because that is not their job!

People are so fucking hypersensitive these days. Don't blame all your own insecurities on another people.

[Reply](#)



60.

[mcnesium](#)

November 21, 2014

Obviously the guy in class right next to Barbie is the real nerd here, since he's wearing a Firefox OS Shirt ;)

[Reply](#)



61.

**Simon Doolittle**

November 21, 2014

Sorry Pam, although it was fun to read the blog post, I think it really misses the point big time. Barbie is as much about pretense as for example any Rambo-type book, doll, movie or game. Or as playing Cowboys and Indians. Barbie was supposed to be about fun, trying out all the roles and costumes, with all the accessories and always majority confusing the actual work, job or accomplishment with just the way it looks. That's what ALL Barbie stories are about.

And then to select THIS booklet and analyze its reasoning while not attacking the complete Barbie brand and how all she ever did was joyfully debasing all jobs and activities as merely appearances! And as you outlined even \*acting\* in her other book is just "pretend acting", with no actual work or skill in exactly the same way the story lets her pretending to be a computer engineer. But you're not as upset about that story because it's about a less male

dominated area?

And are toys like this and their books supposed to be “role models”? I don’t think so. The message is just as void and “dangerous” as playing a soldier or armed renegade is. But how many boys or girls into that ever seriously aspire to be one beyond the brief thought?

That said, feel free to attack the Barbie confusion as a whole but do allow room for the make believe and pretending that comes with it. The Game does not have to make Sense or Teach us something. The Game essentially never Works that way.

Simon

[Reply](#)



62.

**A\_Coder**

November 21, 2014

Liking this article, provided a satisfactory diversion to devising a workaround to some program feature that Microsoft messed up. I suppose it all comes down to experience, if you experience these things yourself you can read between the lines and see them. Personally I thought the book was bollocks and wouldn’t wipe my arse with it! But the blog comments were nearly as good as the guy who used ‘veet hair removal cream’ Amazon review, a must read.

[Reply](#)



63.

**Dan**

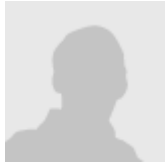
November 21, 2014

It’s a bit weird that Barbie ends up being a designer rather than a computer engineer. The story could have been more aspirational and there is definitely something a bit funny about how she needs help to write the code.

There are plenty of young people on Yahoo who just don’t even know they need antivirus software though. Things should also be realistic, if you had her building a new laptop and compiling Linux binaries that might be a tad OTT.

[Reply](#)





64.

**Matt**

November 21, 2014

Calm down people.

Anyone who relies on some crappy Mattel doll spin off book to inspire their children's future career is fucked in the head.

[Reply](#)

65.

**sc0p**

November 21, 2014

Tell us the truth, Pamie: Steven and Brian helped you to write this post, it is too sarcastic for a girl! Just kidding, very funny post, but I agree we are not looking at "just one story", what you say is true, in the IT, women are expected to behave like this Barbie, sooner or later.

The sad thing, being a man in the IT, is that I have been a Steven or a Brian many times, but I honestly don't know how to avoid this from happening. I think others want to see in me the Brian who finally solved and in my female colleague the Barbie who almost fucked it up. Even when there is no evidence at all anything like that happened!

[Reply](#)

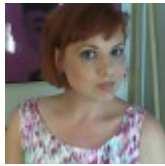
66.

**AJ**

November 21, 2014

So, am I the only one wondering how Kim Kardashian became a teacher? Can't fool me with that 'Ms. Smith' alias. No wonder Barbie got extra credit...

[Reply](#)



67.

[Dawn Masuoka](#)

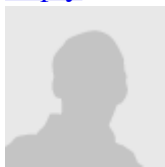
November 21, 2014

Good golly, I don't know why everyone's upset. The story inspired me to be an auto-mechanic. I was drawing a picture of my car, [I added flowers and butterflies to make it look prettier!] and wrote, "Vroom" under it because my real car was acting funny and it wasn't making that "vroom" sound any more :( I told my sister that I could fix it and make it go again [because who wants to walk to the gym to exercise?]. Remembering this book, I dolled myself up and called my friend, Toby, to come over and check out what's under my hood. Shockingly, he zipped over in record time!!!

He opened the box where the engine lives and nicely lectured me about some things that... I've no idea what they were about... something like, "oil", "fluids", who knows. I showed him my freshly polished nails and skipped to my computer to see what gossip I was missing out on from doing all that hard work. While I was on the computer, I changed my portal pages theme by clicking on the 'options' link [yes, I'm a web designer too!].

My friend had me go outside and turn the key, and guess what?? It went "vroom" again!! After I patted him on the head, told him what a great friend he was and made him go away, I called my sister and told her all about how I fixed it and she was so impressed that she bragged to all her friends at what a capable, independent, and smart woman her big sister was. She wants to be just like me when she grows up :D I'm so flattered!!!

If it wasn't for books like this, I'd wind up just pouting until someone asked me what's wrong and then fixes it for me. Pouting causes deep lines :( This book taught me to ASK for help from a boy rather than just waiting for one to come help me after hours of sulking. I \*can\* do and be anything I want!!! Haters... :(

[Reply](#)

68.

**Deborah**

November 21, 2014

First time at your site. My husband sent your post to me, so I don't know your writing. But, all I can think after reading this, is ,"what did you expect from a Barbie book?" I am not surprised at all. It's still a sorry story, but not surprising.

[Reply](#)



69.

**Hawk**

November 21, 2014

The story is completely unbelievable.  
Every girl who reads this will see it as a joke.

Barbie never offered to sleep with the boys, ...and Pamie clearly is lying when she proclaims that 'I don't need a Brian or a Steven!'

Methinks she protests too much.

[Reply](#)



70.

**Scott**

November 21, 2014

You gotta be intentional to write something this bad. Me thinks Susan Marengo wrote this with a purpose, perhaps she was pissed off at Mattel or just the whole concept of Barbie. I think she wanted to turn people and girls off or she just is one seriously deranged children's author.

[Reply](#)



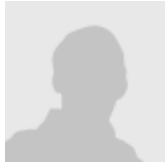
71.

**TR**

November 22, 2014

Grow up  
Grow up  
growup  
Grow up  
Grow up

[Reply](#)



72.

[Timbo](#)

November 22, 2014

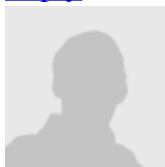
What make me MORE stunned by the contents of this book is what you find on the authors website:

1) The author, Susan Marengo was born, raised and educated in San Francisco, California. She lived in Copenhagen, Denmark for more than 20 years where she worked for Microsoft Development Center Copenhagen as a editor and usability designer specializing in linguistic usability.

2) She also wrote:

{quote}For Mattel's Barbie I CAN BE website, Susan has written dialog for Barbie and her friends. She has also written 45-page Barbie books for Mattel through Egmont Creative Center Copenhagen including, Barbie ICB Computer Engineer, Barbie ICB Painter, Barbie ICB Martial Artist, Barbie ICB Tennis Player, Barbie ICB Lifeguard, Barbie ICB Artist and Barbie ICB Actress. These books are available on Amazon.de.

So, there must be other classic faux pas in the ICB series – I'm not even going to guess what she might have done for MS – maybe Windows ME or Windows Vista was something she was working on ??

[Reply](#)

73.

**MikeM**

November 23, 2014

Pamela, I'd never heard of you or this blog before All Things Considered tonight, so let me just tell you that you're now one of my personal heroes. Thank you for this post, and consider yourself bookmarked (don't worry, I'm sure you kind find a couple boys to explain bookmarks to you).

[Reply](#)

74.

**Amber Rainey**

November 23, 2014

OMG! That is so horribly wrong...I can't even...WTF?!?

As a computer systems analyst I can only say that this book should be banned and burned!!!! And yes it represents every single thing wrong with the tech industry and the stereotypes that women face every day.

UGH!!!!!!

[Reply](#)



75.

**Cepo**

November 23, 2014

...and then Steven and Brian lament on their Facebook walls about the girl they helped out who won't go on a date with them.

[Reply](#)



o

**Datdamwuf**

November 23, 2014

no doubt Barbie will friend zone them...

[Reply](#)



o

**Alex Cockell**

December 9, 2014

More likely rant about the user from hell on Daily WTF...

[Reply](#)



76.

**Datdamwuf**

November 23, 2014

As I read this I couldn't help recalling a conversation with an 8 year girl I had last Christmas. She proudly told me that she had solved a problem and created a machine that would allow people to drive it both on the roads and in space. She brought me a bunch of drawings she'd made of the machine. I asked her how it worked. She told me she wasn't worried about that part, she had designed it and someone else would build it. Her words were "I thought of it, I'll get someone else to make it and I'll be rich!". I won't go into my fruitless attempts to get her excited about actually building it. Engineering was something other people would do to make her dream come true. Barbie is a piece of the problem, unfortunately there is so much else children (and we) consume in all forms of media that it's like chipping away at a huge wall. Maybe it's a Frozen ice wall.

[Reply](#)

o

**Prettier than Barbie**

November 23, 2014

The girl is smart! Nowadays it is how it works! You have an idea and hire people to work for u! U don't have to know everything for Gods sake!

[Reply](#)

77.

**shan**

November 23, 2014

did not read the whole thing as the smoke was coming out of my ears. please give me the publishing info. this is OUTRAGEOUS. thanks for making us aware of this SHIT.

[Reply](#)



78.

**Apple**

November 24, 2014

Designing a game is not “computer engineering”, it’s GAME DESIGNING. FOR FUCKS SAKE, AT LEAST NAME YOUR CAREER CHOICE RIGHT. THERE’S A DIFFERENCE.

Heck, her “boys” are even BOTH Engineers AND Programmers. They seemed more useful than barbie herself.

Having your computer reformatted is NOT FUN either. If someone crashed my pc to oblivion then I’d freaking cry my eyes out and proceed to stab theirs out too. There’s more than homework and music files in my computer.

Barbie doesn’t even have security softwares. To even catch a virus like that requires you to go to really stupid sites. (Fact: it was discovered that most viruses came from religious sites or PORN) She probably torrents shitty scam files too.

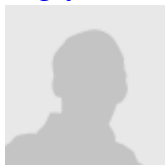
[Reply](#)

79.

**Jessie**

November 24, 2014

Not only did she just take the credit for everything, but it is also a ridiculously boring story to tell. I don’t even see how this is educational for young girls and boys.

[Reply](#)

80.

**MBB**

November 24, 2014

How can you claim that ‘But Steven and Brian are also everything frustrating about the tech industry’ , after the many ways you sum up that Barbie wronged them? Isn’t that all the more prove of Baribie’s misandry, the ‘ help’ is so easily cast aside?

But more serious, while it is representative of stereotypical behaviour in the software world techies do seem to 'do' everything when helping guys too (because it goes faster), so I don't think Barbie is treated differently – but that IS where the story is lacking compared to about EVERY OTHER CHILDRENS BOOK.

Most include a lesson about learning from each other – and there all the pink candy could have been a lure to teach that story with a few simple modifications.

I don't think that it's a problem that Barbie starts of as somewhat computer-illiterate – that's what computer class is for right? She's on the right way.

But like you already mentioned, it would be nice if she showed some initiative. For instance when they did the first laptop, she should have made notes and asked to have things explained.

And then the second laptop, the guys (or preferably boy and girl or two girls), should have said that they would watch, but Barbie would have to do that one herself.

And then her sister could have reasonably re-written her presentation (in the assumption that it was lost) explaining how Barbie stepped up and learned, and how more girls/people should take the opportunity to learn when it presents itself, rather than depend on others to fix it.

[Reply](#)



81.

[Laura](#)

November 24, 2014

“Barbie can use Photoshop” would have at least been a BIT more accurate... or “Barbie can use MS Paint”

good for you Barbie... good for you.

also this: <http://www.avclub.com/article/tvs-geek-girls-need-rise-above-being-tech-support-211679>

[Reply](#)



82.

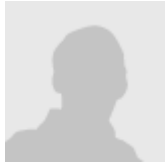
**GiggityPuff**

November 24, 2014

Just look like a damsel in distress story that coincidentally matched a common stereotype.

[Reply](#)





83.

**Srebrna**

November 25, 2014

A friend send us a link with a “fixed” version ;)

<https://computer-engineer-barbie.herokuapp.com/>

(user submissions based)

[Reply](#)



84.

**John Ireland**

November 26, 2014

You know, if your title weren't so vulgar, I could use your page in my university class on public relations.

[Reply](#)



85.

**Meg**

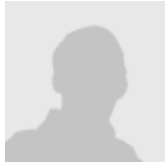
November 26, 2014

To everyone who just discovered Pamie : she's awesome, we love her, and her equally awesome friend Sars wrote the definitive post about feminism (in my opinion) in 2003 :

<http://tomatonation.com/culture-and-criticism/yes-you-are/>

Pamie, I said it on Twitter, but I want it recorded here : Qwerty's going to be so proud of you when she's grown.

[Reply](#)



86.

**Cran**

November 27, 2014

I don't get how asking her male friends for help is misogynistic? I ask mine for help when I know they have the answers. Is this article suggesting that we should only ask other females for help with complicated things, otherwise it's insulting? Isn't that misandric?

And barbie is obviously still in school so the book implies she's still learning. Being ignorant of something and asking for help isn't insulting, it's encouraging.

It may have come out like a misogynistic book, but I really doubt that was in their minds when they made it. But I never let my kid play with barbie things anyway, so I suppose it doesn't matter on my end.

[Reply](#)

87.

**David**

November 27, 2014

Pamie,

I totally get why you're exasperated, at the least, with this book. The upside down part though... Not really as much of an issue. I have some older Sci-fi books that were printed that way. Two novels in one paperback, printed upside down to each other. The rest though, I don't get how some people don't see that the author made Barbie totally incompetent at what she was supposed to be studying. It would've been fine to ask for help because something, like the programming, wasn't working. Not even being capable of it as a CE student, though? Not realistic at all.

[Reply](#)

88.

**Ian Sinclair**

November 28, 2014

There is a plethora of editorial sound and fury about “including” women in STEM fields, and equal column-inches about making STEM firms more “diverse”... yet in the final, reductive, HONEST analysis, it all distills down to... CODDLING. i.e. if those “evil patriachs” who (for some “strange” reason) dominate STEM fields, would only treat adult females and adult minorities as sensitive traumatized 8-year-old foster children, THEN these “excluded” folks will excel in intellectually rigorous math-intensive endeavors. At least that’s the gospel.

Oh snap, the irony of feminists lobbying for widespread PATRONization... is this perhaps the biggest outrage of all?

Three words to use as your STEM Reality Check: Apollo Moon Program! No coddling, no excuses, no sensitivity training, no “outreach” programs, just STELLAR RESULTS!

[Reply](#)



89.

[Mr. Miller](#)

December 1, 2014

Both the concept of the book and the content are wrong.

Firstly, several of the events and facts mentioned, are wrong. Security software only protects against well established virii, as anti-virus only protects against virii that it has previous definition of. If just plugging the flash drive in, causes the virii to spread to her sisters computer, then it is transferring by using windows Autoplay, autorun.inf or autoexec.bat. Which means, plugging in the hard drive to a computer with “security software” won’t really prevent anything bad from happening, unless Autoplay is disbled. Which most security software does not do (because turning off autoplay prevents install cds from properly loading up).

In this situation, you use another operating system to access the files. And it can be done on the same computer. (minwin, puppy linux, etc) This is due to how executable files, windows, and virii, work.

The subject matter is actually, way too complex to summarize, and get the whole concept across, let alone to a child.

As far as her “needing” help from Steven and Brian. Who really gives a shit that the two other people on her team, are men. That is sexist right there, the thinking that her team CANNOT have men involved. Any Development team, will consist of various members, and hey, guess what. Most Devs are men. Get over it, she is most likely working with men to complete a program.

The Designer is in charge of the GUI (graphical user interface), and overall how the users interaction should feel. They do not program, in most cases. That not sexist, its how the

industry works, it compartmentalizes these things because they are complex and time consuming.

There is no “I”, in team. Even if your a feminist.

Most programs ARE NOT written by one person. I would say 99.999% of the programs a person ever uses are that way, video games especially. Most are written by hundreds, or thousands, and occasionally tens of thousands of people will be involved. (yes, that many)

And, yes, there will be men involved. Like it or not, we are a part of this species too.

The fact the author would be shamed for having men involved, is as sexist as shaming her for having women involved.

Double standards are sickening, and anyone applying sexism and double standards, should be the ones being ashamed.

So... The author knows very little about IT, that is one issue. Misinformation should NEVER be how we teach our children, it just leads to confusing them.

Just like using “baby-talk” with babies. Your children will speak much more quickly if you just talk to them like normal. Don’t confuse the things before they even get a start in life.

The second issue I find, is with the fact that there is an assumption that females SHOULD be in the tech field. No, there is nothing wrong with a woman in the IT field. And God knows, as someone with over a decade in the tech field, doing everything from programming, to Network engineering, I would have loved less monotony and more effeminate roles in the workplace. To undo some tedium and monotony, and give difference of perspective, and interesting conversation.

The IT world is ridden with both, tedium, and monotony...

Truth be told, most women, naturally do not like technical fields. In science we call this:

Sexual Dimorphism, a phenotypic difference between males and females of the same species.

phenotype: the observable properties of an organism that are produced by the interaction of the genotype and the environment.

That is just copy-paste definitions, any arguments can be pointed at Merriam Webster.

That is why a womans brain chemistry is more relaxed while talking, and a mans is more relaxed during silence.

Along with thousands upon thousands, of other interesting facts that make us different, that we were not sat down and taught, but are rather there because of they are how we are born. Inherent differences found in our genes themselves.

Yes that is right, its not sexist. Its genetic. And its proven, accepted, scientific fact. Women and men naturally do what they want to do, its in their genes. Men generally are more logos, women are generally more ethos.

It doesn't make one sex better, but it gives us both roles. Yes, some people break the mold, and always will. But they will do it naturally.

You're more likely to convince someone to break that mold, by restricting them from it, than endorsing it. Anyone that argues this, never had to deal with a child, and never used reverse psychology. (which works unless the kid figures out you're using reverse psychology, smart little buggers.)

This is why Amelia Earhart was a big deal. No one gave her a book saying, hey, big sister is study'n to be a pilot! (with a bunch of technobabble thrown in) She broke the mold, because it was what she wanted. It was what came natural to her.

So how about this. How about instead of trying to force anyone into any specific role. We allow them to flourish at what they want to do, and we don't throw misinformation at them in the process.

We could start by halting the lies scattered through the learning process. Like Christopher Columbus discovered America (he never stepped a foot on North American soil, look it up. He was a slaver and a horribly evil man, stop celebrating him please. He owned a book from the 14th century that discussed how the world was round. Him discovering the earth wasn't flat is also a lie...).

Anyways...

How about we question why our children are lied to so much? And then teach our children to question everything, and learn with a sincerity and passion for what they want to do.

The entire education system is absolutely garbage! Anyone arguing such only happens with those living in a cave. It's a high stress, non-productive habitat.

It bores our intelligent children, and puts harsh roadblocks and restrictions on children without such a positive predisposition on learning.

We should be teaching these kids about having passion for learning, and then watching them take off in their own direction.

I myself, grew up without a computer. Yet here I am, working on them every day. Enjoying doing so.

Why are we telling these kids "You can be whatever you want to be when you grow up!" And then shoving them in McDonalds for their first job, and watching them struggle with 50 different majors until they get a degree in arts, and are still confused about what to do with themselves as their loans default and their options disappear.

The real question adults should be asking, isn't "Why are our schools failing?" The real question is, "Why are we failing our children?"

There are several TED talks about this, as well as several good books. The education system needs to be torn down, and changed into something this newer generation needs.

Which is simply a place for our children to develop themselves. Not just how to do math

well. Or read well. But how to understand human interaction well. We need these kids to understand the importance of tolerance. The importance of curiosity.

Esp. The american culture needs to be developed to something more important than cowboys and indians, or gangsters and cops.

This book doesn't teach little girls that working with tech is cool, it teaches them to alienate barbie as a woman that is different from themselves in a way that alienates her.

And then it enforces it with misinformation...

This is the difference between feeding someone fish, and teaching someone to fish.

And to this, the author is thankfully, headed in the right direction! For which I am thankful for. She is trying to get young girls to be curious about technology.

This is what our schools should be doing!

But seriously though, why the big push for a stronger education of women in a society that has 2 women in college to every 1 man. That is sexist and wrong.

There was a grant programmed opened for white men last year, that was SHUT DOWN by lawsuits from the NAACP. White men are quickly becoming the LEAST educated grouping because of such.

And no, its not good when ANY group is treated this way. White men are not any more responsible for the sins of their fathers than anyone else. (or mothers for that matter.)

If we want equality, make it equal, don't just keep tipping the scales.

There is something thoroughly messed up with this picture.

And to anyone, still spouting about feminism. Please, for the good of both genders, stop.

Feminism is feeding an IN-equality movement. If you want equality, be a egalitarian. Any time you push for more power for one gender/sex/religion, you are doing nothing but power-mongering for yourself, your views, and your side of the spectrum.

Doing so puts you in ranks with every other group that has done so. KKK, Black Panthers, Nazi's, Crusaders, etc, etc. It is never an awesome thing to power-monger for one side. Ever. It always starts off good, but once the scales tip, the goal remains the same, the scales tip the other direction, and all hell breaks loose.

All people should be equal, regardless of our disposition to naturally do one thing or another.

How about we get ALL kids excited about IT, programming, and computer related fields. And see where children go with it. Why does it have to be a gender thing? Isn't doing that, in and of itself, sexist as hell?

If feminists are so concerned with equality, why are they so concerned that she happens to work with two guys on her program, for which is in charge of design?

Sorry, but by being upset by that, your sexist as hell. Looking to hard at something for an inequality that IS NOT THERE.

Perhaps if the feminist movement was more fixated on equality than gender, it would equate to more than my bowel movement, and be at least as productive as one.

Looking forward to the book where barbie teaches stacey how being an egalitarian isn't sexist, but being a feminist very much so is.

[Reply](#)



90.

**Sterling W.**

December 8, 2014

Nice website, Pamela! Did you hand code it yourself?

[Reply](#)



91.

**Damara Neumeier**

December 9, 2014

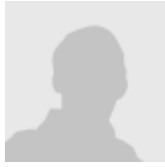
I had Barbie's growing up in the late 70's, 80's. She was pretty and had lots of lovely clothes.

Initially I was as horrified as any woman that Barbie wasn't the game coder but the 'designer'. And then something else ticked me off.

The boys dropped what they were doing to help the gorgeous woman in trouble. Maybe it's just jealousy on my part, I'm an unattractive woman and aware of it.

But it still pisses me off when some guy scrambles to assist the pretty co-worker and ignores 'team play' when it's the 'fat chick' who needs help.

[Reply](#)



92.

**Monica**

December 10, 2014

I think you're reading a little too much into this book (pun intended).

Where to begin... First of all, in terms of the Barbie universe she has a good idea (note the "in terms of the Barbie universe, as apparently people there like it though I fail to see how her idea teaches children how computers work on any level).

While ideas are a dime a dozen, if you know what you want but don't know how to make it you generally ask people who know how to do what you don't to help you out, and if you know the people and it's an idea you're passionate about you don't generally hold out for someone else just because your first choice has a Y chromosome.

Those parts about Skipper make it seem like you're just looking for things to get irritated at. She pours her big sister a glass of juice so suddenly she's Donna Stone?

And her hitting Barbie with a pillow is sexist how? It's what kids do. In reality she probably would have hit her out of anger and the pillow would have just been the closest object, but I'm sure they had to add that "playfully" in to avoid sending the message that it's acceptable to lash out like that when you're angry.

I use to hit my brothers and cousin with pillows, my cousin use to hit me with pillows, and with my cousin it never degenerated into the stereotypical slumber party scenario where we sat around in our nighties doing each other's hair and talking about boys.

Her teacher told her what to do to recover the files, but she didn't tell her how to do it. It's not quite as simple as just plugging a hard drive into another computer. It didn't go faster with the guys helping because they're guys, it went faster because they probably had experience, either in more advanced classes (she met them after class so they may have classes in common but they've already been through that course) or through personal experience.

Yes, she could have done it herself, just like I did it myself, but it would have gone a lot faster if my brother, who happens to be a guy and more knowledgeable about it than I (he majored in comp sci while I teach myself on the internet) did it for me because he wouldn't have spent all that time messing around with jumpers and running to our parents' house to look something up online.

You seem to be concerned about what kind of message this book would send to your daughter. The question is, what kind of message to YOU want to send to your daughter?

When she's an adult do you want her to stand there helpless because her phone (along with the GPS) is down and the only one who seems to know how to get where she's going



doesn't have the requisite number of X chromosomes?

Do you want her living without water because her pipes burst, she doesn't know anything about plumbing, and the only people in her circle of friends who knows how to fix the pipes are men? Or because she can't find a female plumber in the Yellow Pages?

I'm not at all ashamed to ask men for help if they know what they're doing. It's not admitting that my boobs make me incompetent in that area. It's admitting that I lack the knowledge (and since no one has time to learn everything we all have areas we're ignorant in) and one of the guys I know might know something about it.

While I fix the water lines around here (often I can optimize the areas I'm replacing so I quite enjoy it) because my girlfriend can't tell a pipe saw from a hack saw, I have no issue calling our boyfriend to rescue me from a leaking sewer pipe (her lack of knowledge and my lack of desire to work with sewage). She has no issue calling our boyfriend to fix her water lines before calling me.

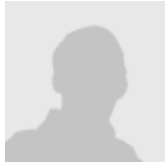
I don't ask our boyfriend to fix the sewer line because he's a man. I ask him to fix it because I know he knows how to do it and I don't want to do it. My girlfriend doesn't show preference to our boyfriend when it comes to her water lines because he's a man. She calls him first because she wants the leak stopped and the water back on in half an hour, not the leak stopped, the whole system optimized (removing unnecessary joints (the more joints you have, the more potential leaks), etc), and the water back on in three hours.

Simply put, if your daughter doesn't know how to do something when she's older and it outrages you that she asks men for help then you, frankly, will be an idiot.

I'm surprised you didn't also make a race issue out of it, because it's entirely possible for one person to do the programming but she required two, one who happens to be African-American. Isn't that sending the message that a black man can be helpful, but only if he's working with two white people?

My grandmother, who was a feminist to the extent of making you look like a 1950s suburban housewife (and also participated and helped organize civil rights marches in the 50s), probably would have been livid over that while shrugging off the alleged "sexism" in this book.

[Reply](#)



93.

[Latonya](#)

December 21, 2014

Excellent way of describing, and good post to get facts regarding my presentation topic, which i am going to present in college.

[Reply](#)

94.

**randomvisitor**

December 25, 2014

This was made on the feet based on usb drives being the most common source of infection. It fails fouriaringly when explaining that plugging a admin-installed poisoned file should be plugged in a endpoint in behind a hardened gate, even more if its not the own network to be f-ed up.

Wonder why the guys met her the afternoon and she only returned to her flatshare with the sister the next morning – after meeting in hookup central, the bibliotheque where every prudent programmer would go and which installed software he`d trust to handle a unkown file – in a system that must be safe since the guys as students have admin rights to install forensic and recovery tools?

There is more than one “wrong” message being send with this, but likely the author understood only firewall as sole virus protection available so downloading on the infected machine would have worked if the removal tools where good enough to remove a combined virus/worm/blining-screen-message convolute the system ingeneer had agreed to install on her backup drive neclace....

The black guy sitting in class appears to be an afterthought, the desk position s off and the guy at 2 o`clock could not even reach his desk if he had sat there at the beginning of this being drafted.

[Reply](#)

95.

**Bailey**

November 24, 2014

oh man, I thought that was going to work. Made a meme perfect for this!

[Reply](#)

## Leave a Reply

or

Name (required)

Email (required)

Website

## Search

## Recent Posts

- December 3, 2014 in [Pamie](#)

**[In Celebration of Roxane Gay's BAD FEMINIST](#)**

- November 21, 2014 in [Pamie](#)

**[I Can Be... Exhausted](#)**

- November 17, 2014 in [Pamie](#)

**[Barbie Fucks It Up Again](#)**

- October 14, 2014 in [Pamie](#)

## [That Time Retta Called Me Out on Twitter \(Further Adventures in Fan Face\)](#)

- June 6, 2014 in [Pamie](#)

## [hellozzz](#)

### Latest Comments

- [Grainne](#) on [In Celebration of Roxane Gay's BAD FEMINIST](#)
- dale freeman on [Why I can't keep a girlfriend.](#)
- randomvisitor on [Barbie Fucks It Up Again](#)
- [Latonya](#) on [Barbie Fucks It Up Again](#)
- MiddleAgedBarbie on [Barbie Fucks It Up Again](#)

### RSS Feed

Subscribe to the RSS feed for [the blog](#).

### Fun Fact

Did you know Pamela Ribon is in the dictionary? [Go look up "muffin top."](#) No, I'm not being an asshole. [It's true!](#) She's there! Because that's how things work in life for Pam. All great news is immediately tempered with a harsh, dork-tastic flipside. (But you probably already know that if you've been reading the archives.)

### Me Elsewhere



### Latest on Flickr





© 2014 [Pamela Ribon](#). All rights reserved.

Built by [Glark](#).