



## Barbie and Ruth: The Story of the World's Most Famous Doll and the Woman Who Created Her

By Robin Gerber

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“Barbie and her creator, the sharp-elbowed gal who built the biggest toy company, have a story to tell.”<?xml:namespace prefix = o ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" />

—*Time*

*Barbie and Ruth* by Ruth Gerber is the remarkable true story of the world’s most famous toy and the woman who created her. It is a fascinating account of how one visionary woman and her product changed an industry and sparked a lasting debate about women’s roles. At once a business book, a colorful portrait of an extraordinary female entrepreneur, and a breathtaking look at a cultural phenomenon, *Barbie and Ruth* is a must read for anyone who ever owned a Barbie doll—a book *Publishers Weekly* calls, “a stirring biography...a fine study of success and resilience.”

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### Editorial Review

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Cofounder of the Mattel Company, Ruth Handler and her husband, Elliot, turned the toy industry upside down, not only with the 1959 creation of Barbie and the subsequent introduction of boyfriend Ken but also with Hot Wheels and prescient advertising tie-ins to the Mickey Mouse Club. Yet the behind-the-scenes journey is just as fascinating as the public persona: born the tenth child of Polish-Jewish immigrants, Ruth was raised by her sister—and, early on, recognized the talent of her husband as a designer. Motherhood was not her natural state of being, though she named both dolls after her children. After being forced out of Mattel in the 1970s, Ruth then founded a second company, “Nearly Me,” producing prosthetics designed for women who had undergone mastectomies—just like her. Tragedy, unfortunately, continued to strike the family; son Ken died of AIDS in 1994, and Ruth herself lost her battle with cancer in 2002. Despite the research, Handler seems to have a two-dimensional luster, rather than the pioneering and dynamic businesswoman seen in other articles and books. Nonetheless, a fascinating account of entrepreneurial ups and downs. --Barbara Jacobs

Review

“This stirring biography is a fine study of success and resilience.” (Publishers Weekly)

“Gerber’s smoothly-written biography paints a fearless business woman as a devoted wife, a too-busy mother and a rock-‘em-sock-‘em executive.” (New York Post)

“Barbie and her creator, the sharp-elbowed gal who built the biggest toy company, have a story to tell.” (Time magazine)

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