



Childhood and Parenting in Children's Popular Culture and Childcare Magazines

Carmen Luke 9.2

By

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Think for a moment...



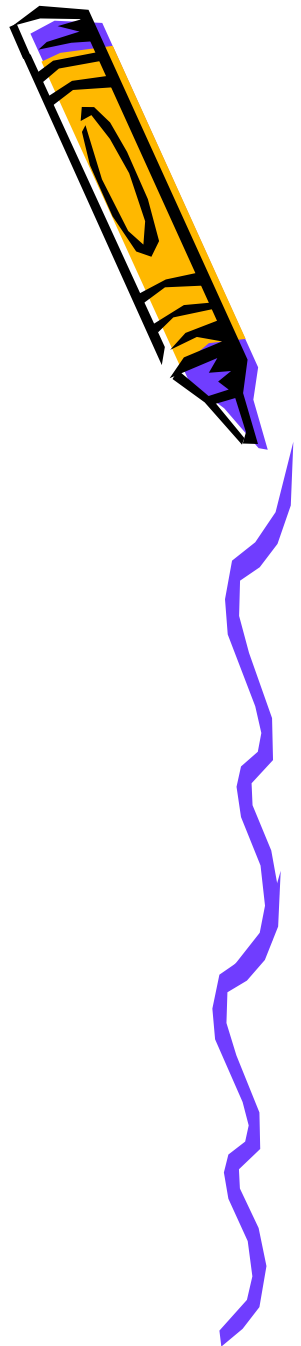
- Is it ok for little girls to play with hot wheels and action figures like Superman, Spiderman?

- Is it ok for little boys to play with Barbie dolls, baby dolls and kitchen sets?



Think for a moment

- What colors are associated with boys?
 - Blue, red, green (primary colors)
- What colors are associated with girls?
 - Pinks and purples



Carmen Luke

- The following selection is excerpted from an essay by Luke taken from *Feminisms and Pedagogies of Everyday Life*
- It is about the pedagogical influences of popular culture, parenting and the impact of media on children



Luke cont...

- Sees the importance of gender issues in a culture context
- Approaches pedagogical issues in the formation of human selves from a critical pedagogical perspective
- By doing this she attempts to demonstrate the influence of societal and cultural forces on the personal identity development of all people



Key concept: pedagogies of everyday life



- Understands that all social dialogue affects the power relations in society
- Looks at the impact of a wide verity of texts on children's lives
- Looks at how discourse on childhood and motherhood influences is affected by popular culture
- Explores the gendered organization of social space as one of the cultural vehicles for socialization of girls and women.



Children's Popular Culture as Public Pedagogy



- Texts and artifacts of popular culture frame children's understanding of the world and themselves.
- Popular culture teach powerful lessons about social world that are reinforced at home and school
- Together these discourses provide culture meaning systems of concepts such as childhood, family, femininity, masculinity, race



Discourse and it's power

- Self-other understandings are always contingent upon subjects' various positions within a range of discourses available at particular historical moments and in specific cultural locations
- "discourse transmits and produces power"
- the author-authorities of theories of childhood, motherhood, and femininity have been men



Childhood and toyworlds: Gendered Organization of Space



- The adult leisure market boom in the 1980s had a direct impact on the commercialization of children's leisure
- Gendered discourse underlying organization of space and color at Toys'R'Us
- The gendered discourse in the toy industry's construction of childhood is not a subtext but a very explicit pedagogy of gendered identity



Childhood and Parenting in Childcare Magazines



- In the liberal theory and modern or postmodern capitalism the child is situated in the social and economic unit of the idealized nuclear family and as the primary focus of the labor for women
- Most first time mothers buy or are given pregnancy, childbirth and baby-care books



Lack of male figure

- Magazines offer visions of childhood and motherhood which both model and reinforce normative ideas of feminine desire located in idealized motherhood and childhood
- The concept of parenting by which most magazines identify their readership has very little to do with male parenting or fatherhood



Conclusion: Contradictory Images of Parenthood and Childhood



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