



Powerplay: Toys As Popular Culture

Dan Fleming

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From My Little Pony to Batman, from Lego to Nintendo, the toys that children play with make sense of their worlds. Should boys play with guns? Should girls play with Barbie dolls? This book investigates the marketing of toys, and their effects upon children. In an increasingly global media culture, toys are both consumer products and playthings, revealing a complex relationship between capitalist economics on the one hand and child psychology on the other. This study challenges accepted orthodoxies on the gendered and cultural meaning of toys. The author of this text argues that today's toys have the suppressed capacity to escape the very stereotypes of gender and power which they apparently reproduce. He also argues that toys are essential in the development of children into adults, and thus to civilization and culture. He states that violence and aggression on television and in the playground point to a deep and complex correlation between what children see and their behaviour and thought processes.

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