

# BARBIE VS. GODZILLA: *What's Behind Gender Free Toys*

By Chuck Colson, © 2017 by the Colson Center for Christian Worldview, reprinted from Breakpoint.org with permission.

London's most venerable toy store, Hamleys, underwent a make-over. The self-described "finest toy shop in the world" did away with separate girls and boys sections and, instead, organized the store by types of toys. Pink and blue signs were replaced by red and white ones.

Hamleys' decision gave writer Peggy Orenstein the chance to ask the question "Should gender be systematically expunged from playthings?"

When you put it that way, the obvious answer is "no." In fact, the question is kind of ridiculous. After all, as Orenstein writes in the *New York Times*, by pre-school age, the differences between boys and girls is apparent when it comes to playing with toys: "girls prefer playthings that are pretty, exude 'harmony' and allow them to tell a story," while boys prefer to build things.

The differences between the sexes go beyond their preferred activities to the way they play: "girls typically [cluster] in pairs or trios, [chat] together more than boys and [play] more cooperatively." Thus, companies like Lego are on solid scientific ground when they say that "In order to be gender-fair . . . they have to be gender-specific."

Issue resolved, right? No,

unfortunately not. That's because the issue of "expunging gender from playthings" is part of a larger political project. This project sees the blurring, if not eradication, of gender differences as the key to female equality.

Earlier generations of feminists sought to eradicate formal, legal barriers to female equality. Their goal was a world where if a woman wanted to be, for example, a United States senator or a Fortune 500 CEO, she was free to pursue her dreams.

While some obstacles still remain, that world has largely come to pass. Yet, in some areas like politics and business, the feminists are still not happy.

Why? They believe that women aren't pursuing these opportunities because they still buy into traditional ideas about gender differences. The venom directed at stay-at-home mothers is but one example of this thinking.

More recently, this thinking has manifested itself in a backlash against prominent women who are considered too feminine. Actress Zoey Deschanel is a favorite target of feminists who consider her too "girly" and, as such, a bad example for young women.

Feminist courses in college teach that there is no difference between the sexes. Gender is simply a choice.

It's against the backdrop that talk about "expunging gender from playthings" must be seen. The discussion isn't really driven by science and it certainly isn't driven by the needs and well-being of young boys, who hardly figure in the discussion.

It's driven by a vision of what feminists believe young women should be aspiring to and what is necessary to achieve it: that is downplaying the differences between the sexes.

This ideological agenda is creating great confusion among young people, and that is not helped by the political re-education lesson they get by walking into a toy store. Our daughters are already our sons' equals in every way that matters, no matter what color they're wearing.

*Editor's Note:* Whether it is the new film "Equal Means Equal," or bills filed in state legislatures attempting to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment 35 years after a deadline set by Congress expired, or the new Senate Joint Resolution 6 introduced on January 20, 2017, by U.S. Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ), your Eagle Forum will continue to defend Phyllis Schlafly's legacy by defeating each and every attempt to resurrect the misnamed Equal Rights Amendment.

