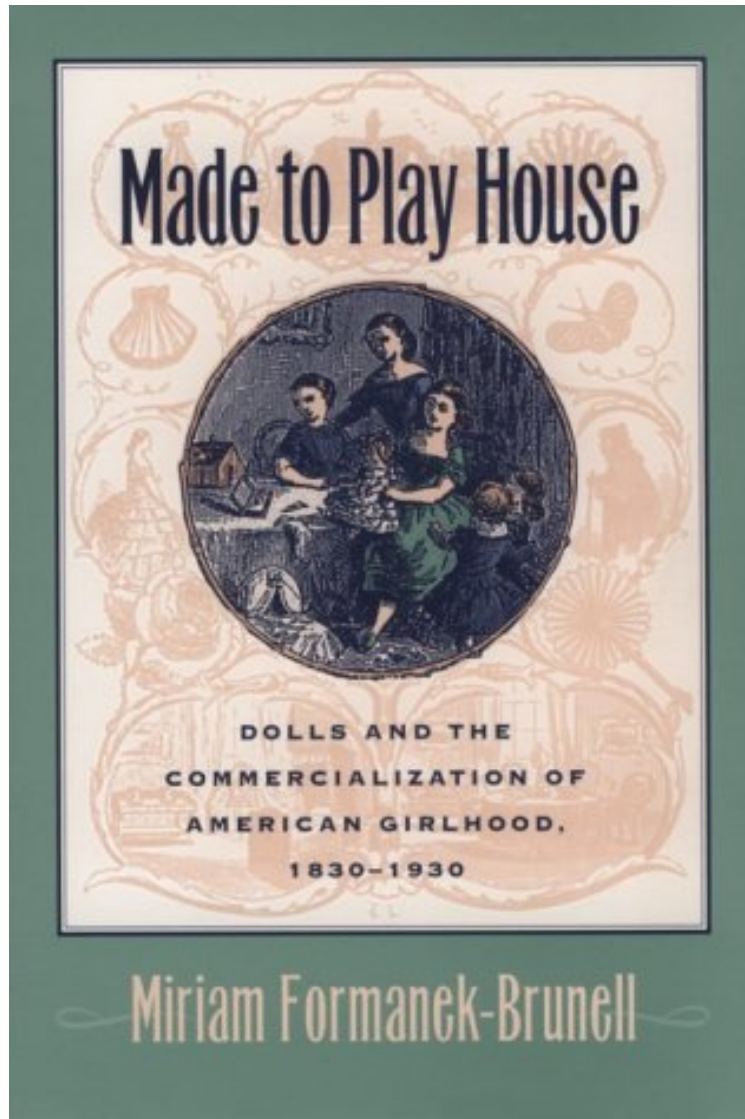


(Download) Made to Play House: Dolls and the Commercialization of American Girlhood, 1830-1930

Made to Play House: Dolls and the Commercialization of American Girlhood, 1830-1930

Miriam Formanek-Brunell

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Miriam Formanek-Brunell : Made to Play House: Dolls and the Commercialization of American Girlhood, 1830-1930 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Made to Play House: Dolls and the Commercialization of American Girlhood, 1830-1930:

"Formanek-Brunell's study of the United States doll industry provides a fresh perspective on the construction of gender in America... Made to Play House is a pioneering book of interest to collectors, historians of women and of consumer culture, and anyone who has a child who plays with dolls." -- Molly Ladd-Taylor, *Journal of American History*

In *MADE TO PLAY HOUSE*, Miriam Formanek-Brunell traces the history of nineteenth- and twentieth-century dolls and explores the origins of the American toy industry's remarkably successful efforts to promote self fulfillment through maternity and materialism. She tells the fascinating story of how inventors, producers, entrepreneurs -- many of whom were women -- and little girls themselves created dolls which expressed various notions of female identity. "Much of the value of *Made to Play House* is its deft weaving of business history, cultural history, and material culture studies into a coherent, largely convincing, narrative... The vivid portraits of the female entrepreneurs with an agenda for childhood are the book's most significant contribution to the literature of history and business." -- Mary Lynn Stevens Heininger, *Business History Review*

"This superb interdisciplinary history deploys mechanical patents and material culture to chart the development of a gendered American doll industry." -- Eileen Boris, *Nation*

"The book makes a solid contribution to the literature on childhood as well as business history and... illustrates the use that can be made of material culture in historical research." -- Sylvia Hoffert, *American Historical Review*

Provides a fresh perspective on the construction of gender in America..a pioneering book of interest to collectors, historians of women and of consumer culture, and anyone who has a child who plays with dolls. (Molly Ladd-Taylor *Journal of American History*)Formanek-Brunell effectively challenges the popular assumption that dolls are representation of patriarchal culture and that girls are passive consumers of that culture. (Lisa A. Marovich *Technology and Culture*) "Provides a fresh perspective on the construction of gender in America..a pioneering book of interest to collectors, historians of women and of consumer culture, and anyone who has a child who plays with dolls." -- Molly Ladd-Taylor, *Journal of American History*"Formanek-Brunell effectively challenges the popular assumption that dolls are representation of patriarchal culture and that girls are passive consumers of that culture." -- Lisa A. Marovich, *Technology and Culture*

From the Back CoverDolls have long been perceived as symbols of domesticity, maternity, and materialism, designed by men and loved by girls who wanted to "play house". In this engagingly written and illustrated social history of the American doll industry, Miriam Formanek-Brunell shows that this has not always been the case. Drawing on a wide variety of contemporary sources - including popular magazines advertising, autobiographies, juvenile literature, patents, photographs, and the dolls themselves - Formanek-Brunell traces the history of the doll industry back to its beginnings, a time when American men, women, and girls each claimed the right to construct dolls and gender. Formanek-Brunell describes how dolls and doll play changed over time: antebellum rag dolls taught sewing skills; Gilded Age fashion dolls inculcated formal social rituals; Progressive Era dolls promoted health and active play; and the realistic baby dolls of the 1920s fostered girls' maternal impulses. She discusses how the aesthetic values and business methods of women dollmakers differed from those of their male counterpart, and she describes, for example, Martha Chase, who made America's first soft, sanitary cloth dolls, and Rose O'Neill, inventor of the kewpie doll. According to Formanek-Brunell, although American businessmen ultimately dominated the industry with dolls they marketed as symbols of an idealized feminine domesticity, business-women presented an alternative vision of gender for both girls and boys through a variety of dolls they manufactured themselves.