

# ACMUN XIX

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Barbie

**Chair:** Selina Li

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## Background Guide

### Main Characters:

#### Generic Barbie:

Generic Barbie is a model, activist, astronaut, and more than 250 different professions.

Barbie is an inspiration to young and grown-up girls everywhere, inspiring them to be anything they want to be. Barbie has a great day every day.

#### Beach Ken:

Ken is Barbie's boyfriend. Ken is a surfer and works at the beach. Ken only has a good day if Barbie looks at him.

#### Tourist Ken:

Tourist Ken is another Ken. Tourist Ken is the arch-nemesis of Beach Ken, and their rivalry leads to a brief battle involving pool toys and stick ponies.

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## Allan:

Allan is the only other man in BarbieLand who is not a Ken. Allan is not a fan of the Kendom, as he tried to leave the Kendom in the back of Barbie's car. Allan is fun and uniquely charming.

## President Barbie:

President Barbie is the official president of BarbieLand. She is the embodiment of female empowerment and goes to work every day in a fluffy pink ballgown.

## Weird Barbie:

Weird Barbie is the only Barbie in BarbieLand that is not perfect. She became Weird Barbie because the child playing with her became sad, which caused Weird Barbie to experience change. She lives in a weird house atop a hill in BarbieLand.

## CEO of Mattel:

The CEO of Mattel is Ynon Kreiz. He is the top dog at Mattel and is the deadliest at making sure Barbies do not get into the Real World. If they do, he gets rid of them. Mr. Kreiz's only focus is on making more money for Mattel because that means more money for him.

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## CFO of Mattel:

The CFO of Mattel is Athony DiSilvestro. He is the right-hand man of Ynon Kreiz, and like Mr. Kreiz, he is also aimed at making money for Mattel, regardless of what happens to the Barbies and the Kens in the process.

## Low-level Mattel Employee:

The low-level Mattel employee just wants to get work done. However, Barbie getting into the Real World can cause some real problems for him. If Barbie ruins Mattel, they are out of a job, but how can they balance this dilemma with their moral obligations?

Young Mattel Executive: The young Mattel executive just wants to get his job done well and maybe get a promotion in the process. To do that, he has to do exactly what his bosses tell him, including capture Barbie who has escaped BarbieLand.

President of Mattel Films: The President of Mattel Films is Robbie Brenner. Robbie is focused on positively showcasing Mattel while keeping true to the Barbie vision. She does this by strategically designing films based on Mattel's brand and IP.

Taylor Swift Barbie: Taylor Swift Barbie is modelled after the Real World artist, Taylor Swift. She is fierce, bold, and undeniably, a star.

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Gloria: Gloria is a Real World mom who used to play with Barbie as a child. Gloria is struggling to maintain a work-life balance as she doesn't know how to be a perfect mom, a perfect employee, or a perfect woman.

Sasha:

Sasha is Gloria's daughter. She attends high school and also used to play with Barbie. However, recently, she has become sad and troubled and thinks of Barbie as just a stupid toy for kids.

Ruth Handler:

Ruth Handler is the inventor of Barbie and the former CEO of Mattel. She named Barbie and Ken after her children, Barbara and Ken, and designed Barbie as an inspiration for girls around the world.

Anxiety Mom:

Anxiety Mom is a mom in the Real World who is extremely stressed from being a mother and a woman.

Greta Gerwig:

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Greta Gerwig is a movie and TV show director who wants to direct a Barbie movie to tell the story of Barbie becoming imperfect and traveling to the Real World to fix her imperfections.

## Setting:

### BarbieLand:

BarbieLand is ruled by President Barbie. The majority of the population is made up of Barbies and Kens while a minority is made up of other dolls such as Allan, Midge, and Skipper. Prior to the overthrow of the Barbies and the insurgence of Kens, BarbieLand had a pink theme with pink houses, pink streets, etc.

### Real World:

The Real World is reality outside of BarbieLand. To get to the Real World, one must travel through six different types of transportation, including on a spaceship, in an RV, and in a speedboat. The Real World is filled with social stratification and constructs that do not exist in BarbieLand, such as patriarchy and racism. The Real World also includes people like Mattel and grown-ups who used to play with Barbies and Kens.



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## **Background Information:**

BarbieLand is a city where imagination and reality blend seamlessly to create a fuchsia fantasy for Barbies everywhere. Residents of Barbie Land enjoy endless sleepovers, unparalleled dance parties, and constant contentment. BarbieLand and its residents were created by the Real World company, Mattel, and its founder, Ruth Handler. Barbie was designed to spark joy in the hearts of children; however, after Ruth's retirement, Mattel was taken over by a male-dominated group of directors. Recently, in the Real World, the children playing with Barbies are sad and less cheered on by the happiness Barbies used to bring them. Children are drifting away from their Barbies and from their families. This

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causes disruptions in BarbieLand, putting a dampener on non-stop leisure. Several residents of BarbieLand have reported experiencing hate and 'having to be in the presence of non-perfect people', causing them to feel depressed and unmotivated. Barbie has also experienced physical changes to her appearance, such as flat feet, as opposed to her normal perfectly arched feet, and cellulite. Along with this, Barbie is feeling surrounded by thoughts of death—something far more sinister than her normal happy thoughts. Additionally, the buildings are looking dingy, and trash is accumulating in the streets—things that should never happen in the utopia that is Barbie Land. Barbies are growing worried as their life in plastic becomes less fantastic. To escape the growing imperfections of BarbieLand and find a solution to this problem, Barbie and Ken travel to the Real World to find the family playing with her and help solve their problems to restore BarbieLand to its former glory.

## Creation of the Kendom

### **Introduction:**

An individual generic Ken leaves BarbieLand in Barbie's pink convertible, travels to America, and upon witnessing a drastic shift in gender roles and conventions, he returns to BarbieLand with the intention of "freeing" his fellow Kens. In a world where women's empowerment was once fundamental, it is now dominated by patriarchy. Will you be



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able to free BarbieLand from patriarchy? Why was BarbieLand, an area that seemed to have its roots in feminism, so open to these types of political changes?



## **Current Situation:**

After Ken returns from the Real World, he attempts to get over Barbie by establishing a patriarchy, a concept he gathered from experiencing life as a man in the Real World.

BarbieLand has now become home to the Kens patriarchal mojo-dojocasa houses, and the Barbies, formerly leaders and career women in BarbieLand, are now the servants of Kens. BarbieLand has become ruled by the Kens, surrounded by mindless Barbies, fur coats, and horse paraphernalia. Barbie and Weird Barbie are the only Barbies who are not complicit in the rewiring of BarbieLand into a patriarchy because they have been to the



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Real World. Even non-Barbies, like Midge, have become trapped in the new patriarchy. Only Allan has remained unperturbed by the Kendom and wishes to escape from the new BarbieLand. Meanwhile, the Kens are having the time of their lives, enjoying the contentment of having the Barbies' attention solely focused on them and catering to their every whim. Kens now rule BarbieLand and are the focus of the previously women-run society. In a couple of days, the Supreme Court of Kens will vote on the new President of Kendom, solidifying the patriarchy in BarbieLand and dashing all hopes of restoring BarbieLand for Barbies forever. Barbie wishes to prevent this from happening, as this will result in a permanent alteration of BarbieLand, the lives of all Barbies, and a possible impact on the Real World by promoting patriarchy for children. However, despite her best efforts, Barbies are still determined to stick with their Kens. How can Barbie rescue the Barbies from the Kens, repair relationships with the Kens, and restore BarbieLand to its former glory?

## Post-Kens Exploration

### **Introduction:**

After Ken ventured into the real world, he blew up a storm of crazed fans in his wake. As parents began hearing their children begin to converse about Barbie, they were brought back to their childhoods watching Barbie and playing with dolls—how sweet, right? No.

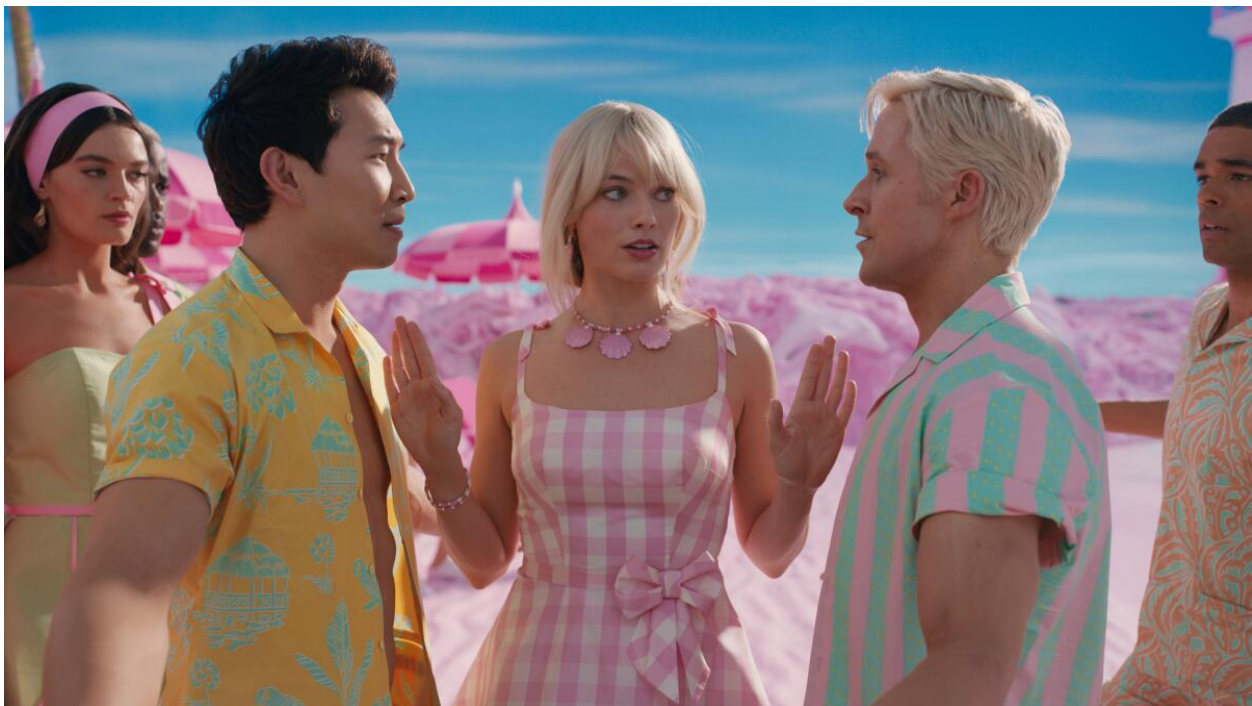
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As parents begin to reminisce, there is controversy surrounding public opinion on Barbie as a brand and an ideal. You and fellow residents of Barbie Land must fight negativity and work towards a formal plan to put a stop to bad comments such as "brainwashing" and "anti-male" to make sure all of BarbieLand is positive, happy, and safe!



## **Current Situation:**

Grownups who had forgotten about their childhood memories of playing with Barbies in the Real World have begun to remember. While there are moments of joy for these adults, the public begins to realize the focus of Barbie is on female empowerment and not on the

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historical viewpoint of male dominance. People are blaming Barbie for being “anti-male” and “brainwashing” young children. In BarbieLand, the Kens have also realized this and have established a patriarchy, forcing Barbies to be their servants and brainwashing the Barbies to think that a life of servitude is what gives them contentment. Barbies need to convince the public that Barbie is not about being “anti-men” but about being "pro-women," where women are not put down or sexually harassed like Barbie was in the Real World. BarbieLand and Barbie are there to make sure girls in the world have dreams that they believe are possible, no matter the men who may say otherwise. However, comments about Barbie being “anti-male” are still a cause of concern for Mattel, for parents, and for Barbies. If Kendom and patriarchy are abolished, the public may believe that Barbie is truly aimed at the ruination of all male autonomy. Additionally, the image of stereotypical Barbie also “brainwashes” children into believing that being blonde and shapely is the ideal image of a woman who can succeed in a world of men. The original design of Barbie in a swimsuit may also seem provocative and inappropriate for children to be playing with. This can give children who play with Barbies turbulent thoughts regarding self-image and body-image, as well as offend and anger parents.

## Questions to Consider

- Why was it so easy for the Kens to turn Barbie into a patriarchy?



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- Where does the view of Barbie being “anti-male” come from?
- What is the difference between Barbies being in charge of BarbieLand and Kens being in charge of Kendom?
- How do these differences impact and are impacted by the Real-World circumstances?
- Why is Ken so drawn to patriarchy?
- In the Real World, what are some still prevalent issues regarding patriarchy and feminism?
- Does the abolishment of the Kendom negatively reinforce the idea of Barbie being “anti-male”?
- Why is the public likely or unlikely to believe in the negative reflections of Barbie, BarbieLand, and the Kendom?

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