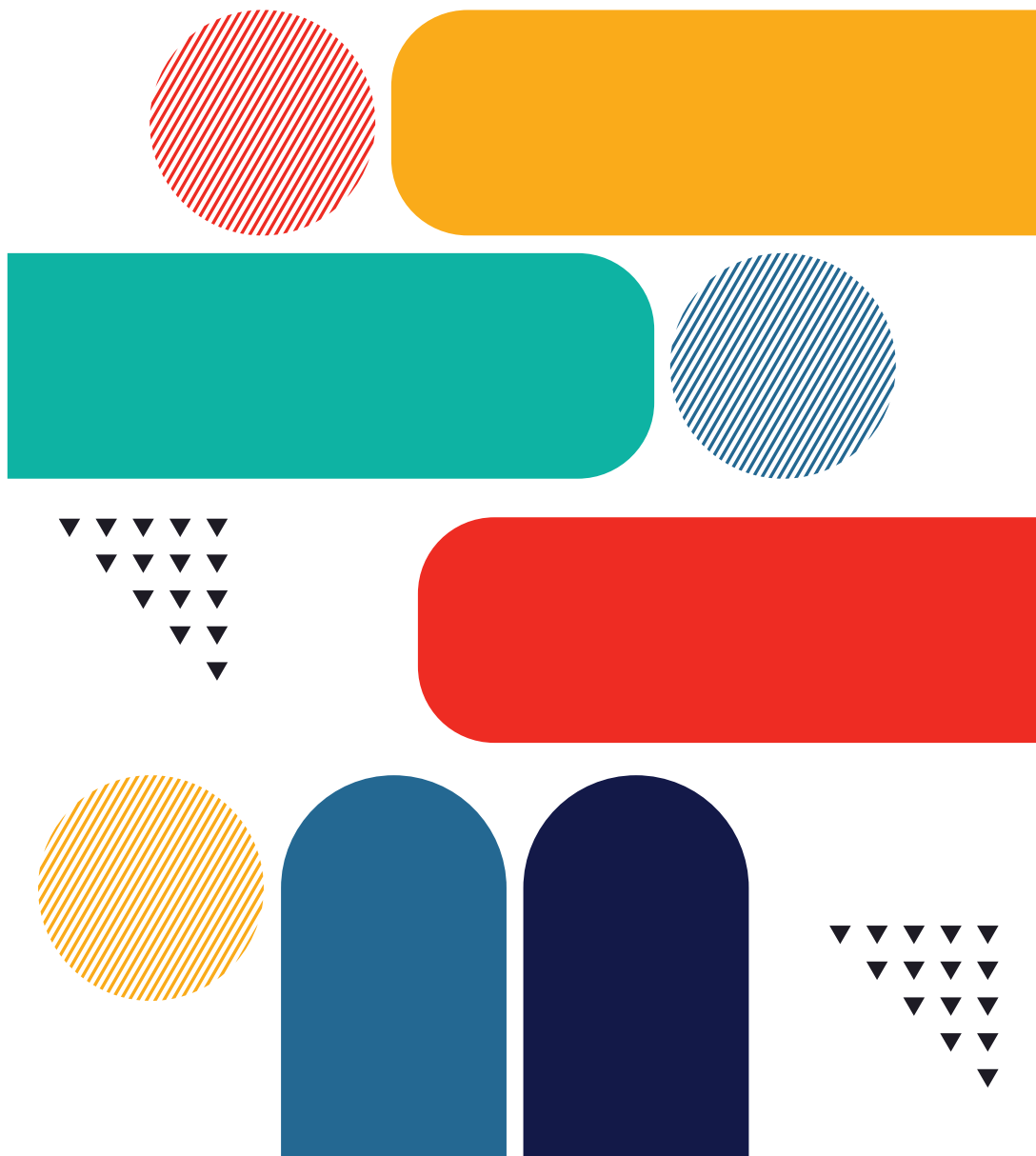


A WOMAN'S PLACE WITHIN DESIGN.

Research in Context ADAD5003

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1. INTRODUCTION

Within modern society, the importance placed on the separation of traditional male and female characteristics is becoming increasingly relaxed. It is now of the common understanding that there is an enormous overlap in attributes between the sexes, as for a biological male to display traditionally 'feminine' attributes such as having soft rounded facial features, to be kind natured, caring and compassionate it is not uncommon. "Gender is what differentiates places, times, tools, tasks, forms of speech, gestures, and perceptions that are associated with men from those it associates with women". (Illich, 1983)

In the eighteenth-century western society, theories on gender differences were derived from Christian ideology, classical philosophy and contemporary science and medicine. Emsley, Hitchcock and Shoemaker, (2018) notes that as men and women inhabit different bodies, they were thought to have fundamentally different characteristics as well, each with separate qualities and virtues. Men as the physically stronger sex were associated with intelligence, whereas it was believed that women were governed by their emotions and were expected to be modest and compassionate. The establishment of gender assigned a duality between the sexes, which historically has been entirely distinct. The believed differences between sexes in the context of gender are subject to individual, societal culture. Psychologist Gerda Siann explains that:

'the formation of terms such as gender-stereotype, gender-roles and gender-identities, imply that they are subject to social and cultural influences and are only minimally, if at all influenced by sexual characteristics such as chromosomes, hormones and sex organs' (Siann, G. 1994).

Gender is often used as a category system, though one that is not usually in favour of all individuals. Within most societies, the male opinion has been favoured, rather than that of the female. This inequality in opinions has reflected a viewpoint bias towards one single-genders interests rather than that of the whole population. The result of this has, in turn, created an unequally balanced representation of the sexes within positions of power and status. The drastic extent of gender inequality that has been evident in the past has significantly improved, however looking specifically at the UK; it is clear that the battle for female equality is not entirely over. Albeit women have won a significant number of spectacular victories including the Right to vote Act in 1918 (Bbc, 2018), and the right to become ordained priests in the church of England (1994) though women were not permitted to hold higher positions, such as that of a bishop in the Church of England until only five years ago. (Herd, 2017)

Though these improvements have ushered in fundamental progress for women's rights, at other more mundane but particularly vital levels progress has been slow, laborious and in some cases static. Still, women "continue to be under-represented at all levels of government; continue to earn less than men in similar positions, and for the most part men in general". (Gerda Siann, 1994, p.3)

The majority of medium and large companies pay a higher wage rate to men, "according to the latest government figures the disparity, known as the gender pay gap, reflects the different average hourly salaries earned by men and women". (BBC News, 2018)

Historically, women have not traditionally been a part of the paid workforce as the belief was that a woman's place was within the home as a housewife. Aesthetics have historically been ascribed to women, while design, ascribed to men. Women were in charge of home decoration, while men occupied paid positions designing and building them. In 2018 The Design Council

conducted a survey, and found that “the UK workforce is now 47% female”. Women are now a crucial part of the division of labour in almost all sectors. This survey also revealed that:

"The UK's design workforce is mostly male (78%)", which is far greater than that of the wider UK workforce as previously mentioned, and one which has "not improved since the last edition of The Design Economy in 2015...Overall, women form the minority in six of the eight design subsectors included in this study, with product and industrial design being the most male-dominated (95%) followed by digital design (85%) and architecture and built environment (80%)”

This under-representation of women in the design industry is crucial, as every product we interact within our environment has been designed, usually by men. Many women have the first-hand experience with products that are in some way ineffective or inappropriate for them due to poor design, this thesis shall further explore the reasoning and results of the sexist design industry that has historically been only accessible to men.

2.DESIGN HISTORY FROM A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

Gender dramatically influences the production and reception of designed goods, for a product to meet the needs of a varied target market, the designer must make certain assumptions about what they believe the 'average consumer' would be like in order to have a basis to work with. If the designer does not consider the differences in needs between men and women for whatever reason, then traditionally the assumed 'average consumer' is usually male in all gender-neutral products unless the product is specifically for the needs of women.

The impact of this means that "the output of design based on male assumption provides the imagery women use to form their identity through fashion, advertising and the media" (Sadowska, 2006).

The development of the feminist movement in the early 1970s gave way to a new era of design which was far more critical of the almost entirely male discourse of the time; it also questioned why the needs of women were being considered a secondary priority, and why the female designers that were active did not receive the credit in which they were entitled. Historically the under-representation of women designers has not meant that there have been none but that instead, the design industry has not valued them to the same standards as the male designer.

Belief in feminism is not restricted just to the lives of women as gender encompasses masculine as well as the feminine. The aims of the feminist movement is not to make women the special case for treatment, but instead challenge the normalisation of a culture which subordinates people based on attributes outside of their control. By applying a feminist approach to the history of the design, it immediately questions why the accepted norm has traditionally been male when that only accounts for 50% of the population. Designer Judy Attfield, explains that:

"the 'feminist perspective' is that which acknowledges that women form a group among many in a multicultural society, each with different tastes, needs, values and orders of priority because of the roles they play, the types of jobs they do and the position in society they occupy through the accident of their birth. In this context, Feminism is a political position which seeks changes in the interests of women. There is no ultimate agreement as to those changes should be nor what strategies should be used to peruse them since different cultural groups of women have different interests." (Attfield, 1989, p.349).

Consciousness to the diversity between women is a critical starting point for any individual trying to assess design from a feminist perspective. To acknowledge the fact that women experience the designed world drastically differently to men supports an authentic portrayal of the female lived experience rather than supporting the feminine stereotype that has become an established orthodoxy.

While discussing the feminist perspective of design history, it is particularly relevant to be precise about the historical construction of the term 'feminist' and the evolution it has undergone. Without the belief that change is possible, there is little point in taking a feminist perspective in the first place.

Design history has traditionally assumed that fields of the profession should be considered 'women's work'; thereby echoing the predominant division of labour in society. Furthermore, traditional design practice "segregates sexes through artefacts by endowing these with unnecessary gender definitions". (Attfield, 1989:203) However before the feminist movement, In the eighteenth and nineteenth-century women solely existed within the household, but "household production of baking, cloth, candle and soapmaking, traditionally 'women's work',

moved over into manufacturing industries. Often to become men's paid work" (Dieleman and Wegener, 2004). Giedion notes:

By the nineteenth-century domestic functions were taken up by philanthropic and entrepreneurial inventors and remodelled into mechanised forms, with machines beginning to replace manual housework by the early 1900s (Giedion, 1948).

The development of the 'machine' has become synonymous with masculinity. Industrialisation normalised the popular narrative that, men occupied the public world of work (production), and women confined to the private world of the home (consumption).

Traditional accounts of design history confirm the belief that form is the aftereffect of function and the two, a concept of 'good design'. 'Good design' is still commonly believed to be the resultant of professional designers, industrial production and the division of labour- which assumed that a woman's place within society is as a homemaker.

As 'good design' has historically been synonymous with men and the male interests, the outcomes of the practise have resulted in "a sexist portrayal of women and disregard for them as an end-user" (Sadowska, 2019).

To uptake a feminist critique upon the future of design would ensure that the production of future goods, would avoid the inclusion of any overtly sexist connotations that have been present in the past. Thus, allowing the primary concern of 'good design' to be the interest of all individuals equally. The feminist assessment of future design and design history should not be treated as another addition to it's range of methodologies for, as Lisa Tickner has remarked it is "a politics rather than a method" (Walker, 1989 p.199).

Made accessible in the 70's, 'white goods' such as washing machines and cookers reduce the heavy labour an individual has to undertake while performing household chores. Machines designed by a woman may potentially satisfy other women's needs better than those designed

by men. However, the past design of such goods were created with females in mind as its sole consumer- the inherent presumption is that it is women who would be doing the majority of the washing and cooking, rather than men - thus the division of labour was continually unaffected by product innovation and the patriarchy untouched.

Isabelle Anscombe's *a Woman's Touch* (1984) individually highlighted women designers who participated in the history of significant design movements since the 1960s. Her book helped to bring a more considerable significance to the contributions of women who did manage to break through into the professional design arena, but have become long overshadowed in the context of design history by male designers, with whom they associated through professional or personal ties. This approach to raising the profile of women designers is somewhat successful, but it does little to challenge the system which initially deemed them as inferior designers in the first place. If anything, it confirms the prejudice that women are destined to succeed only in the 'feminine' areas of design such as textiles, fashion, interior design and decorative arts. Solely considering women designers as the primary focus, creates a disillusioned view of design history. It does not highlight the sexism they faced at the time; furthermore, it enables a system which placed them in that station initially and only accredited it's male contributors with the term 'great'.

Feminism at its most radical, questions many of the most basic assumptions and practises of the design discipline. There is a great need for male design scholars to examine their own identities and social positions; Such a venture would serve a self-critical function in respect of the historically male-dominated design industry as well as the future of design. If men within the industry were to take the lessons of feminism seriously, then the predominantly male discourse of design would be transformed for the better.

3.THE ONE-SIZE-FITS-MEN APPROACH

The marketing of gender-neutral products that happen to be biased towards men is a regular occurrence within the contemporary design industry and the shortcomings of these products can create damaging results to the end-user. From the most public to the most private of settings, subtle design distinctions perpetuate human inequalities.

Seemingly minor design choices, aesthetic or otherwise, can make a significant difference in how the product is received by its audience, and even whom it is marketed to initially. (Anthony, 2017)

Pianist Christopher Donison, wrote “one can divide the world into roughly two constituencies: those with larger hands, and those with smaller hands” (Donison, 1998a). Donison who as a male pianist, with smaller than average hands had struggled with traditional scaled pianos. Arguably he could have equally been writing as a woman with the same issue. There is a substantial quantity of scientific research to support the statement that women on average have a smaller handspan compared to men, and yet there is still a continual production of equipment built around the male hand scale as if the one-size-fits-men approach is believed to be the same as one-size-fits-all.

Unfortunately, the one-size-fits-men approach to consumer product design is putting a large proportion of women at a disadvantage, whether they realise it or not. The average female handspan is between 7-8 inches, octaves on a standard 48” keyboard are 7.4” wide as standard, making this somewhat of a challenge for 87% of adult female pianists (Boyle, Boyle and Booker, 2015). Of course this is not implying that all women feel that they are at a disadvantage. A study conducted in 2015 compared the handspan of 473 adult pianists to their level of acclaim. The study found that found that all twelve of the pianists considered to be of international

renown had hand spans of 8.8" or above. The two women who made it into this group, one had a handspan of 9", and the other had a handspan of 9.5" (Criado-Perez, 2019a).

For some women to reach the same level of acclaim as their male colleagues, is simply impossible as the full-scale piano was not designed with them in mind, meaning that they cannot perform certain chord formations which are intended to be played with one hand. Christopher Donison once again had the thought to design a new keyboard which was specifically intended for people with smaller hands, although though what if the issue is not individuals with small hands but is instead the men who first designed a piano that was always too large? Donison's 7/8th scale piano received critical acclamation for being far easier to play by a range of professionals, yet there has still been an incredible reluctance of uptake by the piano-playing world (Donison, 1998b). This poses the question that is it just accepted orthodoxy or is underlying sexism at play?

The-one-size-fits-men approach is not limited to the realm of music. In the early 2000's, the smallest phones were the pinnacle of technology. With the introduction of the pioneering iPhone and it's iPhone Plus counterpart, most smartphones are now an average of 5.5 inches (DeviceAtlas, 2019). Even though the device itself is impressive, with a height that's larger than the average woman's hand, it does not seem practical for half of the population, nevertheless fit in their pockets. This miscalculation in design seems somewhat misguided as research has shown that women are far more likely to own an iPhone than men (Williams, 2015). While Apple has never released an official statement regarding why they have chosen to embark down this route of putting women at a disadvantage, a common suggestion eludes to the fact that many women often carry a handbag. If women are encouraged to put their phones in their handbags, rather than keeping them on their person, then many of the passive tracking apps on most modern phones become obsolete.

Within the technology market when it comes to consumer electronics, developments aimed explicitly towards a female market have been sorely lacking. There has not been a recent lull in the production of consumer electronics altogether, as according to research "the global consumer electronics market was valued at around USD 1,172 billion in 2017" (Zion Market Research, 2018).

Though when concerning the development of female-orientated technology, the past consensus has been to alter the male version on a very superficial aesthetic basis, and either make it pink or turn it into a piece of jewellery. The lack of specifically female-orientated technology in the past, shows there has not been a great emphasis placed on developing technology that can solve genuine problems women encounter daily. Very few large corporate companies have developed products that intend on providing women with better information about their bodies.

The resounding belief that the male is the default gender remains absolute. In 2014, Apple launched its 'health' app which promised to be a 'comprehensive health tracker'. Tech Times reported that:

Apple's highly-anticipated new HealthKit software is supposed to give you a holistic picture of your health, from tracking your heart rate to cholesterol to your blood alcohol content. However, it seems like HealthKit can only give you the full run-down of your health if you're a man. As for the ladies, if you want to use HealthKit to track your menstruation cycle, you'll just have to go to another app for that. (Rosenfeld, 2014).

Mensuration is considered to be one of the vital indicators of bodily health, along with blood pressure and heart rate. The absence of a mensuration tracker in Apple's health app was a clear example of an instance where they had forgotten about at least 50% of their users. As

previously highlighted, women could even be their primary consumer. If the team working on the health trackers development included more women, this fundamental error could have been avoided altogether.

Pianos and Phones lack of design consideration for women can be seen as an 'inconvenience', though they are a contemporary insight into the ignorance of the design industry as it is now.

Naya Health started by designer Janica Alvarez in 2013, was a female fronted technology company that struggled to raise funding due to the “male-dominated venture capital industry”(Joffe, 2017). Alvarez found that when she approached male investors, they were "too disgusted to touch her product and pleaded ignorance". The product she had developed was a breast pump.

The male ignorance towards female-orientated product development has left a significantly underdeveloped marketplace, which lacks innovation in products that are essential to a woman's life.

Currently 93% of venture capitalists are men (Cook, 2018). Which is how a substantial number of products are first developed and taken to market, and research has shown that men tend to be more inclined to support other men (Voitkane, Johansson and Wincent, 2018). This continual cycle supports the void of female-forward innovation. To combat this matter, a greater emphasis needs to be placed on the investment in women and support for the normalisation of women's issues.

Data on women's specific needs are required to produce suitably catered products, though there still seems to be a considerable gender data gap. Many questions about how a woman's body differs from a man's body remain unanswered. Research has shown that women's postural sway differs compared to men, though the extent of which is not fully understood (Goutier et al., 2010). The difference in postural sway means that women are more commonly

prone to motion sickness. Postural sway, refers to horizontal movement around the centre of gravity (Lackner, 2014). Motion sickness usually occurs when there is disruption to the sway oscillations by external movement, thus causing disturbance of the inner ear (Laboissière et al., 2015). The Cleveland Clinic (2016) states that:

The inner ear is the area of the body that affects your sense of balance and equilibrium. Motion sickness happens when your brain receives conflicting messages about motion and your body's position in space. The conflicting messages are delivered from your inner ear, your eyes (what you see), your skin receptors (what you feel), and muscle and joint sensors.

To prevent motion sickness, the body must be adequately supported by the vehicle's seating, in turn stopping the oscillations. Within the automotive design industry, car interiors are usually designed around the average male body measurements. As the average male body is larger than women's, it caters for the larger end of the spectrum in regards to size requirements. Due to this oversight, cars are not being designed to support women's bodies properly. Headrests that are designed with men in mind are often placed too high or made too large for women's heads. the support they are supposed to provide is simply in the wrong place. Therefore, exacerbating the motion sickness issue within women. This lack of design consideration for women in the automotive industry does not stop at motion sickness. Research has shown that:

Men are more likely than women to be involved in a car crash, which means they dominate the numbers of those seriously injured in them. However, when a woman is involved in a car crash, she is 47% more likely to be seriously injured, and 71% more likely to be moderately injured, even when researchers control for factors such as height, weight, seatbelt usage, and crash intensity. She is also 17% more likely to die. And it's all to do with how the car is designed – and for whom (Criado-Perez, 2019b).

Due to women's differences in muscle proportions, in the upper torso and neck compared to men, they are far more likely to be affected by whiplash. In fact, three times as likely. The car seat design does nothing to assist this vulnerability, but research has shown that it in fact amplifies it. Swedish researcher, Unni Eikeseth found that:

Crash tests by Swedish traffic researchers show today's car seats are too firm to protect women against whiplash injuries caused by rear-end collisions. And there's a good reason for this: the crash test dummies used by car manufacturers to develop safety features are all male. (Eikeseth, 2013).

If car manufacturers are only testing their vehicles using male crash test dummies, then it is to be expected that there is a significant disparity in injuries between men and women when they are involved in a collision. Contrary to the testers apparent beliefs, men and women do have considerable differences in anatomical build and muscle distribution, and these differences should most definitely be better considered. Eikeseth, the Swedish researcher, has now “created the world's first female crash test dummy to help manufacturers make vehicles that protect both sexes from whiplash injuries, not just men.” (Eikeseth, 2013). His research is the direct result of the backlash on how modern cars are designed and with whom in mind. In this instance, by disregarding women's needs and differences in body proportions during the designing process is not only inconveniencing them but is, in fact, killing them.

4.THE GENDERED OBJECT

Everyday tasks can often hold significant cultural meaning, which is usually invisible to those performing them. Our humanistic preferences for specific items, styles and aesthetics are a result of our cultural context and the display of which is perhaps the most salient material expressions of gender.

Women drive 70-80% of all consumer purchasing, through a combination of their buying power and influence. Influence means that even when a woman isn't paying for something herself, she is often the influence or veto vote behind someone else's purchase (Brennan, 2015).

For manufactures to ignore women's needs, they risk doing so at their own disadvantage. Though it is often difficult to comprehend how design influences our behaviours, the undetectability of it's prominence in everyday consumer goods is what makes it so profound. Professor Penny Sparke (1995) discovered that there were gender differences in the usage of electronic equipment and home appliances. For women technology is usually used in aid of completion of a task, and while doing so they make minimal use of multiple functions. Whereas men, view technology as a source of entertainment as a greater enjoyment is taken from the usage of machines. Of course, this does not apply to all individuals. However, the trend is identifiable when assessing the sexes as a whole (Anthony, 2017).

Manufacturers have often "resorted to the traditional strategy of 'shrink it and pink it' when trying to target female consumers" (Tischler, 2009). Though many women now find this approach outdated and offensive, as it intentionally disregards the fact that women have a far broader taste range than just pink.

To support design improvements in products mainly targeted at female consumers, should not be misunderstood for the acceptance that said improvements can potentially reinforce the outdated subordinate place of women in society. Several feminist critiques of design have highlighted how the "pinkification" (Valenti, 2014) and over feminisation of products traditionally used by women, strengthens the normalisation of the social patriarchy through design.

Today products within every consumer market feature an interesting combination of diversity issues. These cause gender stereotypes covered by design history to be continuously reaffirmed by the products that people are bringing into their home environment, and especially buying for their children.

Many consumers do not realise how the design of the products they buy their children affects their child's development, especially when it comes to understanding gender-roles. Grassroots campaign "let toys be toys" (2012) aims to:

stop the labelling and advertising of gendered toys in the attempt to reduce their effect on consumer buying habits, whilst normalising 'buying a boy a pink toy or a girl a toy labelled as 'for boys'.

The campaign also highlights that the normalised practice of intentionally gendering of toys, has caused many consumers not to notice that:

science kits and construction toys are missing from the "girls" section, or art & crafts and kitchen toys from the "boys" If children they are never offered the chance, a child may never find out if they enjoy a particular toy or style of play. Children are taking in these messages about what girls and boys are 'supposed to like'. They are looking for patterns and social rules – they understand the gender rule 'This is for boys and that is for girls,' in the same way as other sorts of social rules, like 'Don't hit'. These rigid

boundaries turn children away from their true preferences and provides a fertile ground for bullying." (Let Toys Be Toys, 2012)

In 2018, the Toy Retailers Association panel featured 'The Barbie Ultimate Kitchen Playset' in the 'Top 12 Dream Christmas Toys', based on predictions by a panel of retailers and industry experts (Duff, 2018). According to the toy's description, it's designed for "young chefs to cook up playtime fun" (Walmart, 2019).



Figure 1: 'The Barbie Ultimate Kitchen Playset' (2018)

However, the Barbie Ultimate Kitchen has received a great deal of backlash. Gaining criticism from Newcastle Labour MP Chi Onwurah, she stated that the Ultimate Kitchen could "limit aspirations". She further stated that "Toys should help children discover what they love to do – not keep them in the kitchen." (Odling, 2018).

Onwurah does share a valid point. Why are young girls still being taught that femininity and household duties are synonymous with each other? The issue is not with a kitchen being the subject of a toy; it's the fact that it was targeted at young girls and only them. Industry analyst

Frederique Tutt defended the Ultimate Kitchen, saying "It's all about lifestyle now with Barbie dolls. She's not just a housewife cooking for Ken. She's watched the Great British Bake Off, and she's being innovative with her cooking." (Odling, 2018). However, this defence does not seem plausible as Mattel, Barbies original creators, have been producing 'Ultimate kitchens' almost every year since 1962 (Piro, 2014).



Figure 2: 'The Barbie Ultimate Kitchen' (1962)

Creating re-invigorated, even pinker, versions of the original ultimate kitchen is not promoting 'lifestyle', it is indoctrinating young girls with the same constrained beliefs that a woman's place in the kitchen.

The unnecessary gendering of consumer goods is not always as distinct. Daisy Rock Guitars, started in 2000 by Tish Ciravolo,, website boast that all of their guitars have "a slim neck profile which makes for easier playing for people with smaller hands. The guitars are also lightweight, so they will not be overpowering if you have a small build." (Daisy Rock Guitars, 2019). Though their website does not explicitly say that their guitars are meant solely for women, their Instagram handle @daisyrockgirlguitars certainly indicates otherwise (Instagram.com, 2018). Ciravolo has previously stated that Daisy Rock Guitars was created to encourage young girls

and women to learn to play the guitar, by offering them equipment that not only would appeal to them but would also fit them.



Figure 3: 'Daisy Rock Debutante Daisy Short Scale Pepper Mint Electric Guitar' (2019)

Tish Ciravolo has been the centre of criticism throughout the existence of Daisy Rock Guitars. Her various selection of garish glittery pink guitars does not encourage the balancing of the heavily male-dominated music industry as the “guitars inadvertently give those already predisposed to casual misogyny another reason to dismiss women playing the guitar” (De Gallier, 2018).

Female musician St Vincent released her first signature model guitar with Music Man in 2016. Guitar magazine reported that St Vincent had been offended by the 'floral' guitars that had been produced by the likes of Daisy Rock as she found them patronising. St Vincent's signature 'Proviso' guitar was designed naturally with women in mind giving it a lightweight, streamlined body, but the Proviso never actually intended to have a women-only target market (De Gallier, 2018). The 'Proviso' guitar took the needs of women into account, but did not rely on perpetuated stereotypes. Additionally, though designed by a woman, the Proviso guitar has shown great appeal amongst men with a slightly smaller build as the lack of overly gendered aesthetics did not alienate them.

The use of the colour pink has almost become a feminist issue, it is used within the product design industry as a signatory indicator of what products are meant for women without strictly having to label them as 'women's products'. This lazy approach women's design conditions us into believing that pink is only identifiable as feminine, and that products are strictly for women must be pink.

CONCLUSION

The design industry will always be one of the most significant influences on our lives, as it interprets the changes and developments of social attitudes through the means of physical objects. To achieve gender parity in the currently, male-dominated, design industry, ignorant attitudes towards women must be abolished. Modern women are no longer subordinate creatures whose only role within society is as a housewife, as they have now become a vital part of the division of labour within most industries.

However, the contemporary shift in mindset towards gender is not always adequately represented within product design. Many consumer products labelled as gender-neutral still happen to be biased towards men. Within the design industry, men are still the assumed user in most gender-neutral products, meaning that whether women realise it or not, they are being put at a disadvantage through design. New interpretations of what is considered to be 'good design' should now solely be concerned with enhancing the human experience rather than that of a specific gender leaving the other at a disadvantage.

The increase in women becoming offended by the advertisement of everyday products that in some way, perpetuate traditional stereotypes is a step entirely in the right direction towards gender equality. By challenging traditional design practices, and refusing to accept sexist products the needs of women will no longer be considered an afterthought of the design industry.

The aim of this thesis was not to condemn the production of pink products for women and girls. However, to instead educate others on why 'pinkification', promotes outdated gender

stereotypes. Aside from this, women deserve to have their preferences considered rather than receiving male-centric products reproduced in pink.

Female designers of the past have struggled to get their work validated, due to greater emphasis being placed on the traditionally male fields of design in which very few women were not allowed to excel. A greater influence of women in the design industry now, has reduced the production of products that are blindly sexist, though a further increase in female influence would help encourage products to have a greater bias towards women.

“63% of all students studying creative arts and design courses at university are now women” (The Design Council, 2018). Though the actual design industry is still heavily male-dominated, a female majority in creative courses, makes it seem highly likely that there shall be a higher proportion of female representation within the design industry in the future. However, this scenario shall only be possible if current design professionals invest in the interests of women and encourage current practising professionals to question whom they are subliminally designing for when tasked with gender-neutral products.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1: Mattel.com. (2018). Barbie Ultimate Kitchen Playset with Barbie Chef Doll | FRH73 | Barbie. [online] Available at: <https://barbie.mattel.com/shop/en-us/ba/new-playsets/barbie-ultimate-kitchen-frh73> [Accessed 11 Dec. 2019].

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Figure 3: Amazon.com. (2019). Amazon.com: Daisy Rock Debutante Daisy Short Scale Pepper Mint Electric Guitar: Musical Instruments. [online] Available at: <https://www.amazon.com/Daisy-Rock-Debutante-Pepper-Electric/dp/B0002D067C> [Accessed 10 Dec. 2019].

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