

The Fulsome Game

1. offensive to good taste, especially as being excessive; overdone: *fulsome décor.*
2. disgusting; sickening; repulsive: *fulsome mounds of advertising.*
3. excessively or insincerely, lavish.
4. encompassing all aspects; comprehensive: *a fulsome survey of teenage magazines in America.*
5. abundant or copious.

The Fulsome Game was inspired by three vintage game boards that I own in my feminist study of our material culture. The oldest is a game titled, “**What shall I be?**”

The Exciting Game of Career Girls © 1966. The game offered six possible careers to young girls playing the game: ballerina, actress, flight attendant, school teacher, model, and nurse. Game cards in the box make a range of comments like:

“YOU ARE A QUICK THINKER, Good for: Airline Hostess and Nurse”, to harsh, “YOU ARE OVERWEIGHT, Bad for: Airline Hostess, Ballet Dancer and Model.”



Another game board is on the back of a “**Campus Queen**” © 1967 steel, metal lunch box. The lunch box came complete with a thermos, two magnetic game pieces and a spinner. The game board had spaces that said statements like, “YOU NEED A HAIRDO FOR THE PROM GO BACK TO THE BEAUTY PARLOR” and “YOUR HEM IS DOWN! WAIT 1 TURN TO FIX IT!”



Roll the dice, advance thirty years, I think, or should I say, I hope. In 1997 my eight-year-old daughter was given a Barbie game called, “**We Girls Can Do Anything’ Game Travel the Path that Leads to the Career of Your Dreams**” © 1996. After all of these years the career options have improved only slightly (didn’t the feminist movement have any impact?). Now the career options are: fashion designer, pilot, musician, ballerina, doctor, and actress, but every

character is dressed in Barbie pink, including the pilot and doctor.

When my daughter was fourteen I started “**The Fulsome Game**”, inspired by the comparison, or rather the shocking similarity between these three game boards. Adding to the culture shock for this women’s lib mother/artist are the magazines marketed to young girls, which are filled with underwear, makeup, and articles about “how to look good” or “what do boys want in girls”.

Our culture sells this fulsome game of excessive advertising, consciously and subconsciously selling an incessant message that limits females to stereotypical roles which insincerely focus on appearance instead of substance. When will women be unshackled from the limitations of these formulaic and limited roles? Roll the dice...