

'Domestic Abuse Barbie' Is A Harrowing Project Aimed At Violence Against Women

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Warning: The following post contains material about domestic abuse that may be disturbing to some readers.

Countless young girls grow up playing with Barbie dolls, the Mattel toys' unrealistic plastic bodies and shiny, blonde manes becoming engrained in children's ideas of femininity and adulthood. In a disturbing series intended to raise awareness about domestic violence, artist Sam Humphreys transforms the picture-perfect Barbies into victims of abuse, exploring the space between appearance and reality. As the tagline of the series hauntingly states: "We shouldn't be taught that life is perfect."



For her project, entitled "It's A Matter Of Trust," Humphreys adds black eyes, bloody scars and bruises to the classic American dolls, using Barbie's instantly recognizable image to make a lasting statement about violence against women. The artist transformed 10 dolls in total, ranging from lightly bruised to severely injured. "[I was interested in how, when we're younger, we're led to believe that everything is perfect](#)," Humphreys explained to The Daily Mail, "and how as children we are quite rightly sheltered from the harsh realities of adulthood."



Humphreys explained the importance of Barbie's influence in the works to The Essex Chronicle. "[When I was a little girl I played with Sindy dolls and you did housey things with dolls then](#). Then along came Barbie dolls and they were very different and very materialistic. They had everything whereas Sindy was a housewife. My Sindy dolls used to go to the shops. Barbie could be the first instruction to young children [on] how adults live their life."



Humphreys' project is reminiscent of India's "[Abused Goddesses](#)" campaign last year, which also aimed to bring attention to the crucial issue of domestic abuse. Do you think these artworks are effective ways of teaching the dangers of abuse? Let us know in the comments.