

Cinderella ate my daughter **Peggy Orenstein**

Peggy Orenstein is an American journalist and speaker who writes about issues affecting girls and women. *Cinderella ate my daughter* is an exploration of the deluge of 'pink princess' marketing that bombards girls in western countries from the moment they are born. Orenstein takes a personal approach in her writing, using her own daughter Daisy as the impetus to explore 'princess mania' (p. 4).

Orenstein treads a well-worn path, picking easy targets to investigate and critique: the multi-billion dollar "girls' toys" marketing industry; American beauty pageants; princess fairytale myths; online social networking habits of female adolescents; and media stars such as Miley Cyrus and Brittany Spears. Unfortunately there is nothing new or novel in this book.

The soft-psychology content is written in a conversational tone, and includes many anecdotes from the Orenstein household. It is fairly tedious to read conversation after conversation about women who have given-in to the marketing push and showered their daughters in pink 'because little girls need to feel beautiful' (p. 22). Orenstein does question these motives and seeks advice from academics and researchers, but no interesting conclusions are drawn.

The only quote worth noting falls at the end of *Cinderella ate my daughter*. Writing about Disney Princess nappies, Shakira videos and Facebook accounts, Orenstein says each thing is 'a cog in the round-the-clock, all-pervasive media machine aimed at our daughters – and at us – from womb to tomb; one that, again and again, presents femininity as performance, sexuality as performance, identity as performance, and each of those traits is available for a price. It tells girls that how you look is more important than how you feel. More than that, it tells them that how you look *is* how you feel, as well as who you are' (p. 183).

Cinderella ate my daughter may have gained popularity among some readers who have not explored the writing of authors such as Lise Eliot, Melinda Tankard Reist and Maggie Hamilton. However, there is very little that is challenging or fresh in this book for those who educate, parent or counsel girls.

Orenstein, P. (2011). *Cinderella ate my daughter*. New York: Harper Collins.

