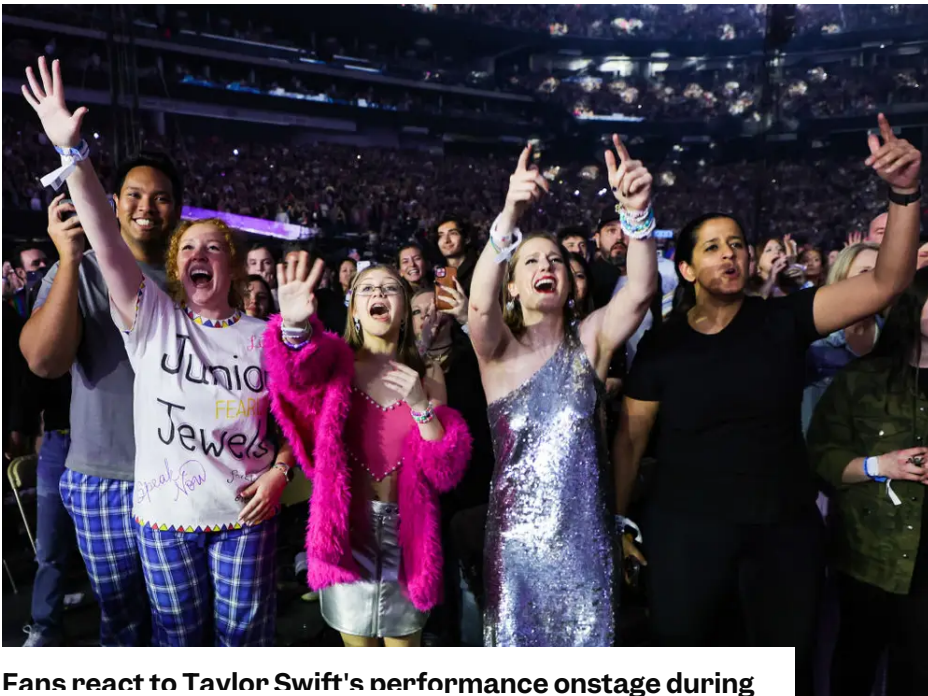


## ENTERTAINMENT

# Taylor Swift and 'Barbie' are helping women reclaim girlhood without rescinding power

Opinion by [Talía Lakritz](#)



Fans react to Taylor Swift's performance onstage during The Eras Tour in March 2023. Ethan

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- I was struck by the similar atmospheres at Taylor Swift's Eras Tour and the "Barbie" movie.
- It was more than just the pink outfits — it was the collective joy and celebration of femininity.
- Both successful events are inspiring a movement to reclaim girlhood without rescinding power.

"Are you ready to go back to high school with me?"

Taylor Swift asked the crowd at New Jersey's MetLife Stadium in May before singing the opening lines of "You Belong With Me."

Surrounded by tens of thousands of women and girls wearing pink "Lover" ensembles, sparkly "Fearless" dresses, and handmade friendship bracelets, we collectively shrieked our affirmative reply.

As I stood in line for the "Barbie" movie on opening weekend in July, once again surrounded by pink and sparkles, I was transported back to my night at Swift's Eras Tour.

The resemblance wasn't purely aesthetic. More than that, I was struck by the similar festive atmosphere at both events. The collective joy. The unironic celebration of femininity. The permission to be earnest and giddy and fully ourselves.

It was the equivalent of the impassioned support one receives in the women's bathroom at a bar from a complete stranger — "You look amazing!" "No, YOU look amazing!" — but on a massive scale.



**Taylor Swift performs onstage during The Eras Tour in July 2023.** Mat Hayward/TAS23/Getty Images for TAS Rights Management

The Eras Tour is on track to make history as the highest-grossing tour of all time and the first tour to gross over \$1 billion, The Wall Street Journal reported in June. Greta Gerwig's "Barbie" also broke records as the highest-grossing premiere weekend by a female director with a historic \$155 million, Variety reported. Their success proves the demand for media that centers women's lives and experiences, and is ushering in a movement of reclaiming girlhood without rescinding power.

"Barbiecore," the hot-pink, doll-inspired trend that Insider's Samantha Crozier describes as "a fashionable nod to our childhood selves," is everywhere, showing up in celebrity red-carpet looks, Target collections, and even home decor.

Lauren Rothman, a corporate and political fashion stylist, image expert, and author of "Style Bible: What to Wear to Work," told Insider that she's also seeing Barbiecore empower her clients outside of concerts and movie premieres.



**A moviegoer dressed up for the "Barbie" movie in July 2023. Stephanie Keith/Getty Images**

"Barbiecore is a fierceness to say, 'I am here, and I'm here for all of these important reasons,'" Rothman said. "I dress a lot of women who are in men's worlds, whether that's in finance or in law, and who are, many times, the only woman in the room, and the woman who holds a lot of power.

"Traditionally, there's this feeling that you don't always want to be standing out, and that is something that is changing. And I think with Taylor Swift and 'Barbie,' the concept is to say, 'Be you, don't be afraid to stand out. In fact, get creative with glitter, sparkle, have this vibrancy, and use style as an expression to get there.'

"In the more conservative career paths we may not see it to that extent, but I do see women saying, 'I don't have to just blend in. I am ready to be seen.'"





**Ryan Gosling, America Ferrera, Ariana Greenblatt, Issa Rae, Margot Robbie, Greta Gerwig, Simu Liu and Hari Nef at the premiere of "Barbie" in July 2023. Christopher Polk/WWD via Getty Images**

In an [interview with etalk](#), America Ferrera, who plays Gloria in the "Barbie" movie, praised the film for celebrating the unbridled joy of girlhood in a world where girls are often forced to grow up too soon.

"Growing up is about leaving behind childish things, particularly for women," Ferrera said. "Men get to have their man caves and play their video games forever. And women, it's like, 'Toys away, do the chores, grow up.'"

She continued: "That's what really touched me about Gloria as a character. This woman somehow made it to adulthood holding on to the value of play and the value of aspiration and imagination. It's, in a way, counterculture — that we can be a lot of things at once, that we can be joyful and playful and imaginative and childlike, and be a grown woman professional taken seriously."

Or as Swift herself put it in the song "Would've, Could've, Should've" on her latest album: "Give me back my girlhood / It was mine first."