

TOY STORY

A Museum, A Lecture, A Story...



The only traveling museum of its kind.

G.I. Joe is the worlds first "action figure". Prior to 1963 there was no word or concept known as an "action figure" until toy designer Don Levine created the "G.I. Joe". Hasbro produced the "action figure" as a direct response to the popularity of rival toy manufacturer Mattel's Barbie doll for girls. Their belief was that there was a market for a boys doll that could be fully accessorized with different outfits, equipment, and vehicles. The original design called for the creation of a different figure for each branch of the military services. This plan to have each service represented by a different figurine was scrapped and G.I. Joe became a single generic figure representing all of the armed services. The name was taken from a popular film; "The Story of G.I. Joe". The action figures name referring to World war II shorthand that identified soldiers as "government issued Joe's".

The figure itself was designed to pay homage to the World War II soldier for several reasons. First, those soldiers were looked upon with high esteem by the American public and would be easily marketed to that group. Second, most men of that era would object to their sons playing with a doll, and it was erroneously believed that linking the doll to the World War II soldier would overcome that prejudice. The term "action figure" was coined in an attempt to help soothe the gender objections men would have to purchasing their sons a doll.



Breaking Barriers!

In 1965 two years after creating the first G.I. Joe Hasbro made another bold move by creating the first positive representation of a African-American male toy. They created the first African-American G.I. Joe and he came fully equipped with the same weapons, clothing and other gear that the White G.I. Joe's came with. This toy was placed into production at a time when the United States was battling racial unrest and civic disorder over the issue of civil rights and equality for African-Americans. In comparison the first White Barbie doll was created in 1959 and the first African- American Barbie was not created until 1983.

Since 1965 G.I. Joe has helped to fight an undeclared war against racial discrimination, prejudice and gender norming. The action figure has helped to document African- American, Latino, other ethnic minority groups and even female participation in every military conflict since World War II. This museum is dedicated to helping others discover the significance and sacrifice of those underrepresented groups towards the freedoms we all enjoy.

Bryant K. Smith is a man with a vision. He is an expert in identifying, cultivating, and maximizing human potential. His work often makes good people great and great people memorable. For the past two decades Bryant has been at the forefront of assisting business, athletic, and educational institutions train, inspire, and develop their employees, athletes, and students into world altering people. Driven, outspoken, and passionate Bryant's enthusiasm for helping others combined with his exceptional communication skills have taken him from the public schools of his hometown Chicago, into some of the nations leading business and educational institutions. If you would like additional information about the museum or it's curator, Bryant K. Smith please direct all inquiries to him at Bryant@Smithcan.com, via telephone (864)207-0267 or visit him online at www.Smithcan.com.

- ▶ Available as a traditional lecture
- ▶ Available as a passive display
- ▶ Available as a multimedia presentation
- ▶ Available as a museum exhibit

