How do we know that Batman & Barbie are secretly dysfunctional?

“The images of huge, steroid-monster Batman are not only inaccurate but nonfunctional for most of the things Batman would need to do.”
—Dr. E. Paul Zehr, author of Becoming Batman: The Possibility of a Superhero (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), professor of neuroscience and kinesiology, University of Victoria.

If Barbie were flesh and blood, with her unrealistic dimensions, she could not lift her head. She would have to walk on all fours. She would be severely underweight and would not menstruate. She would be missing vital organs.
—Rehabs.com, based on research by the Yale Center for Eating and Weight Disorders

In our mainstream media, attractiveness is associated with a specific look and body type—for men as well as for women. This message negatively affects men’s self-image and self-care, as it has long been known to harm women’s, research shows. In men, disordered self-image may manifest as obsessive muscle building, rigid eating, and other behaviors.

To learn how body image issues and disordered eating affect male students, see Student Health 101, February 2016.