

1501 N Redondo Ave.
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

March 14, 2017

American Girl
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53552

Dear Ms. Katy Dickson,

My name is Catherine ****. I'm a seventh grader from Manhattan Beach Middle School. I chose to write to American Girl because I have been a fan of your dolls. Your dolls and toys are educational and delightful for girls of all ages—I've played with them since I was five years old and really enjoy your quintessential products. The various dolls you offer are superb and all teach crucial life lessons to girls. However, I feel like the selection in your historical BeForever line could have even more options. It will be essential to your company if American Girl adds an Asian doll to the BeForever line.

Asians are often underrepresented in American books, movies, and games, and an Asian-American doll will help stop that trend. Many of the novels and screen-plays targeted toward children my age present Caucasian people as the important main characters, which excludes various other races. American Girl has already gone beyond the classic blond-haired, blue-eyed girl—African-Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans have all been incorporated into your product lines in the dolls Gabriela, Melody, Josefina, and Kaya. However, you have not included an Asian-American doll, which is excluding my race. Every girl should see herself in your products and should be able to relate to them on a personal level. I remember that, when I was seven, I felt disappointed of how there were no Asian dolls to represent my culture after Ivy Ling was archived in 2014. I do know that you offer black-haired, brown-eyed dolls in your personalized Truly Me section, but we need full-on Asian dolls who can represent what it's like to be Asian.

American Girl is one of the major companies that parents look upon to educate their children in a fun perspective, so creating an Asian doll would be profoundly appreciated in your customers. I feel like you're projecting a false image of entirely Caucasian girls to kids like me. America is made up of a variety of races and should not be represented by only white dolls. Through your product line, girls everywhere can learn and enjoy Asian history. American Girl has the power to influence many people's lives. You should use it to further the diversity of your products. Some ideas of an Asian doll to release are a Vietnamese girl from an immigrant family, a girl struggling to be American and Asian, or to simply take Ivy Ling out of the archives. Ivy was only in stores for seven years, which was not enough time for girls to fully enjoy her.

Last but not least, American Girl can make money off an Asian-American doll. I am certain that Asian families everywhere would thoroughly appreciate their race being represented. By releasing an Asian doll, American Girl can compete with other companies who have already created them. The Double Dutch Doll company has an exceptionally diverse product line, as do

the Vanange and Mixi companies. You may be thinking about how you are already releasing an Asian doll: Z Yang, one of your soon-to-be-released products in spring 2017. You have announced that Z's story will be centered on film. I am glad you will be putting an Asian doll into your stores, but I feel like Z's Asian background will be irrelevant to her story. Her allegory would remain the same if she were to be replaced with a girl of another ethnicity. I believe that many Asian families (including mine) would prefer a historical doll to teach kids about the unique lives of Asian-Americans. I don't think Z would properly express Asian heritage and culture through a story of film because Asians do not have a long history in filmmaking. There's not a strong link between the two. However, many Vietnamese citizens in America have gone into beauty salons doing nails, which is a very common and realistic Vietnamese occupation. Another realistic Asian life is one of a child under pressure from her parents to get good grades in school. As a Vietnamese girl in seventh grade, I know many people expect Asians to be extremely intelligent. Many Asians have been forced into this mold. You could make a significant and memorable story out of a girl struggling to stop that stereotype.

In conclusion, American Girl should place an Asian-American doll into your historical line so you can make money, educate girls, and celebrate racial diversity. You are already doing a phenomenal job in your brand of toys, and the effort you put into perfecting your products is outstanding, but an Asian-American doll would widen your spectrum of racial ethnicities. Thank you for taking the time out of your busy day to read this letter. I look forward to hearing back from you and hope you will consider my suggestions.

Sincerely,

Catherine M*****