



## Barbara Dale

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In 1979 Barbara Dale used five hundred dollars her grandfather had left her in his will to print Dale Cards, a very funny, edgy line of alternative greeting cards. They were wildly successful. She created a distribution network so quickly that in one year she went from hand delivering her cards locally in Huggies diaper boxes (all she had as a new mother) to shipping card orders all over the US and as far away as England, Australia and Japan.

Her success was noted by Recycled Paper Greetings, then the fourth largest greeting card company in the United States. They wooed Barbara and her ex-husband Jim (then an important contributing writer) and eventually bought Dale Cards and put the Dales under contract. Over the next more than twenty-five years, the Dales produced many gift industry products such as cards, notepads, post-it notes, aprons, stickers, buttons, mugs and balloons. Barbara was included in an article in Cosmopolitan Magazine in May of 1992 about successful women entrepreneurs. When asked in 1992 how many cards she had sold, Barbara guessed over seventy-five million. There was even a Dale Cards fan club started by the owners of a pharmacy in Michigan. The *Washington Post* said, "The new generation of card designers such as the Dales has changed the face of the nearly 7 billion cards Americans sent to each other last year."

In 1984, as women started entering the work force in larger numbers, Barbara and Jim Dale created, *The Working Woman Book or How to be Everything to Everyone*, published by Andrews and McMeel, which was a humorous, sympathetic look at the trials women face trying to balance work and family lives. It made the best seller list and evoked positive letters from accomplished women like Erma Bombeck, Dear Abby and Helen Gurley Brown. The New York Daily News said, "Is this woman familiar? She is the antithesis of the too-together, dressed-for-success woman. She is permanently frazzled, wallowing in the existential agony that lies between the laundry room and the board room. She's Working Woman, a creation of Barbara and Jim Dale, a caricature whose success is one of the most entertaining reminders around that working women with families are dying to have someone recognize the absurdity of their daily balancing acts."

Several years later, Barbara sat next to a woman at a dinner party who told her she was embarrassed when people asked her what she did. The woman felt she was no longer interesting to others because she was staying home to raise her kids. Barbara thought that was unfair. So, in 1987, Barbara and Jim responded by creating, *"The Joys of Motherhood,"* also published by Andrews and McMeel, which provided humorous support to stay at home Moms. *Women's Wear Daily* wrote, "The darts they throw hit the target every time."

Much of Barbara's work has feminist themes, both verbally and visually as she later evolved into a cartoonist, illustrator, painter and ceramic artist.

In 1985, after the song. *We Are the World*, raised money to aid the Ethiopian famine, Barbara heard Harry Belafonte on television ask all US industries to create similar projects. She contacted USA for Africa which had created the song. Working alongside them, she gathered 500 famous cartoonists, all with different syndicates, agents and lawyers and put their work on a greeting card which was sold to aid the cause. It was dubbed Cartoon Aid. Barbara was interviewed on Good Morning America, in People Magazine, Larry King Live and many other media outlets. She was an honoree at the World Media Awards held at the United Nations for the Cartoon Aid project.

In 1990, Barbara and Jim created, *The Stanley Family*, a comic panel syndicated by Universal Press Syndicate. The comic was syndicated to over 70 papers, including the Philadelphia Inquirer and the LA Times. It featured a mixed religion family (she was Jewish, he was Catholic) who had two jobs, three kids, a dog, and frantic lives. One cartoon showed the family Christmas tree decorated with Jewish stars.

Over the years Barbara has illustrated a variety of interesting projects, both cultural and political. From a poster for Social Work Week to an invitation to Orioles Park for a Barbara Mikulsky fund raiser.

In addition to commercial art, Barbara has created drawings, paintings and ceramic sculpture. She has been in numerous solo and group shows, most recently shown by the Sponder Gallery in the 2022 Palm Beach Modern and Contemporary Art Show. She is represented in museums, such as The Baltimore Museum of Art, the Newseum, and the Ohio State Billy Ireland Museum and Research Library. She is represented in many private collections, including the famous Gil Silverman Collection.

Most recently, Barbara created a project during the pandemic of over two hundred illustrated toilet paper tubes, each depicting a moment during the pandemic which range from personal (dreamt about Danny DeVito) to political (the storming of the US Capital) to cultural (the race to find vaccine shots.) A television piece about Barbara's project was aired by CBS news picked up by a wire service, and played as far away as Singapore.

Barbara has been in numerous professional publications, including *Celebrity Profile* in 1996 *Artist's & Graphic Designer's Market*, and *A Gallery of Rogues: Cartoonists Self Caricatures*, published by Ohio State University where she is described as "Specializing in off-the-wall humor of the taste-expanding variety." Barbara was also one of six illustrious panelists on "Women Legends in Cartooning," presented at the 2019 Reuben Award Weekend and Conference of the National Cartoonists Society moderated by Ann Telnaes, Pulitzer Prize winning political cartoonist for The Washington Post.

Barbara's worked with numerous card and gift industry manufacturers such as Recycled Paper Products, Andrews and McMeel, Carol Wilson, The Ink Group, Wild Card, American Greetings and Smart Alex, Inc. Currently, her cards are published in the United States by RSVP Cards/Sellers Publishing and on her website [barbaradale.com](http://barbaradale.com).

Barbara attended Oakland University and Cranbrook Academy of Art, an elite art school which at the time had 7 departments and selected only 10-13 students from the world in each department.

Major Awards include the Jack Davis Award for Lifetime Achievement in Cartooning from the National Cartoonists Society, Reuben Award Division Finalist in 2001 for Greeting Cards, and Grand Marshal Honoree at TuneFest 2017 in Marceline, Missouri, hometown of Walt Disney, where she was awarded bark from the Dreaming Tree, a plaque, a hard hat with Mickey Mouse ears and a tree was planted in Walt Disney's arboretum with her name on it.