

Dollhood: The Doll as a Space of Duality in 20th-Century Literature and Art

Anna Maria Panszczyk

A dissertation submitted to the faculty of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of English and Comparative Literature.

Chapel Hill
2011

Approved by:

Dr. Eric Downing

Dr. Laurie Langbauer

Dr. Gregory Flaxman

Dr. William Harmon

Dr. Madeline G. Levine

© 2011
Anna Maria Pansczyk
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

ABSTRACT

Anna Panszczyk

Dollhood: The Doll as a Space of Duality in 20th-Century Literature and Art
(Under the direction of Eric Downing and Laurie Langbauer)

This project explores the figure of the doll as something that textually and imaginistically inhabits its own liminality and produces a particular uncanny experience. Dolls possess a liminality felt in the tension between contradictory opposing states that negate and collapse into one another. They are both living and dead, permanent and fleeting, feeling and unfeeling, loved and feared. I call this suspended state “dollhood” and argue that it points to both our desire for a permanent escape into “our things” and our inability ever to do so; we can never fully occupy the space of our dolls.

The works investigated present images of the doll that speak to how a material culture constructs and names the identity of an object. The primary sources are North American and European twentieth-century works, including children’s books by Dare Wright and Sylvia Cassedy, poems by Charles Simic and Bolesław Leśmian, and artworks by Joseph Cornell and Hans Bellmer. The study engages theoretical concepts such as Victor Turner’s use of the “liminal,” Freud’s articulation of “the uncanny,” and Bill Brown’s writings on “thing theory.” It also engages various essays by Baudelaire, Rilke, and Walter Benjamin.

Each of the three main chapters is anchored in a particular metaphor: the shadow, the box, and the shadow box. The first uses the image of the shadow to examine the relationship between the human and the doll as one based on the visual experience of recognizing the

possible existence of a doll soul as being both like and unlike that of the human. In the second, the tactile qualities of the box help articulate how the doll body is often explored and investigated to better understand the depth and breadth of its unique subjectivity. The third engages the image of a shadow box to examine how the doll can fluctuate and move between being read as an object or a subject. The conclusion examines how the doll can actually eclipse the human as a subject in a manner that gives fullest expression of the doll's power over its audience.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are too many individuals to thank in this small space for the encouragement, guidance, and support that has been offered to me in the completion of this dissertation. First and foremost, however, I must express my sincerest appreciation to the members of my committee.

Thank you to Eric Downing who not only modeled for me what it means to be a scholar of comparative literature, but who also encouraged me to turn a not quite twenty page paper on dolls into this dissertation. Thank you also to Laurie Langbauer who provided me with full access to her knowledge of and passion for children's literature and who made my writing stronger through her critical and enthusiastic feedback and our lovely talks. I am also very grateful to Gregory Flaxman for acting as an honest sounding board, poser of challenging questions, and sincere friend and to William Harmon who shared his great wisdom and love of poetry well beyond the scope of what appears in this dissertation. Finally, I wish to express my profound sense of gratitude to Madeline Levine and the brilliance, kindness, and patience that she has offered me since my first year as a graduate student. More than a mentor, Madeline has become a true friend and a model of what kind of scholar and person I strive to one day become.

In addition, without family and friends who read pieces of this project, offered me a shoulder to whine on, or just made me laugh when that was all that I needed – I would be lost. Therefore, I am forever thankful for Ewa Panszczyk, Ashley Hogan, Ericka Giroux,

Jocelyn Dawson, Amy Fader, Elena Oxman, Melissa Birkhofer, and Lauren Ruffrage as well as my fellow comparativists, Camille, Katy, and Rania, for what each shared with me in real friendship as well as offered to me in the writing of this doll paper.

I am also indebted to the Department of English and Comparative Literature at the University of North Carolina for providing me with a Richardson Dissertation Fellowship, Lee Kogan and the American Folk Art Museum, Leslie Eager, and the Dawsons' Mountain Writer's Retreat for their generous assistance in the completion of this project.

And, finally, I'd like to thank my mother, Anna T. Panszczyk, who taught me to love books and ask questions and showed me that trying my best was always good enough; and Emily Flight Curtin who was not only my personal children's book librarian and first reader, but who is also my dearest friend; and lastly my husband, Lee A. Williamson, who has never read a word of this dissertation, and yet it would never have been completed without his love, support, and ability to make the perfect cup of tea. To all these supporters and loved ones, this dissertation is dedicated.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES.....	ix
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background.....	2
Thesis.....	4
Brief Overview.....	7
Primary Texts.....	9
Theoretical Framework.....	21
The Liminal.....	21
The Uncanny.....	26
The Shadow.....	39
The Box.....	43
The Shadow Box.....	45
Outline of Chapters.....	46
CHAPTER	
I. THE DOLL IS A SHADOW.....	50
Introduction.....	50
Pliny's Origins of Art and the Doll's Two Sides of "Likeness".....	52
Athenagoras' Origins of Art and Doll Interaction.....	65
Me and My Shadow Doll.....	71

II. THE DOLL IS A BOX.....	89
Introduction.....	90
Doll Passivity and Violence.....	92
Curiosity and Investigation.....	95
The Power in Doll Parts.....	99
The Uncanny Corpse.....	104
The Deconstructed Doll: The Human Soul within Parts.....	117
The Deconstructed Doll: The Non-Human Soul within Parts.....	122
The Deconstructed Doll as a Soul in Action.....	123
III. THE DOLL IS A SHADOW BOX.....	134
Introduction.....	135
The “Shadow Box” in Cornell’s Shadow Box.....	137
The Doll as Object and Subject.....	141
<u>The Lonely Doll</u> Looking.....	146
How Leśmian’s “Lalka” Looks.....	152
CONCLUSION	
THE DOLL IN DOLLHOOD.....	159
Introduction.....	159
Why Dolls at All?.....	160
The Doll on the Human Stage.....	162
Being a Doll (or a Human?) in <u>Lucie Babbidge’s House</u>	165
APPENDIX.....	174
BIIBLIOGRAPHY.....	178

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure

Intro.1.	Photograph: “Animal Locomotion, plate 481” by Eadweard Muybridge.....	1
2.1	Photograph: “Broken Doll, Paris” by Frank Horvat.....	89
2.2	Chart: Graph of the “Uncanny Valley” by Masahiro Mori.....	102
2.3	Two Photos: “Untitled, from La Poupée (The Doll)” by Hans Bellmer.....	112
2.4	Illustration: from <u>The Meanest Doll in the World</u> by Brian Selznick.....	115
2.5	Illustration: “Bad Doll” from <u>The Daydreamer</u> by Anthony Browne.....	126
3.1	Photograph: “Untitled (Bébé Marie). Early 1940s” by Joseph Cornell.....	135
3.2	Photograph: The doll, Edith, with a book by Dare Wright.....	147
3.3	Painting: Portrait of Dare Wright at age six by Edith Stevenson Wright.....	147
3.4	Photograph: Self-portrait by Dare Wright.....	148
3.5	Photograph: The doll, Edith, looking at a mirror by Dare Wright.....	149
3.6	Photograph: The doll, Edith, covering her eyes by Dare Wright.....	149
3.7	Photograph: The doll, Edith, and Mr. Bear by Dare Wright.....	151

INTRODUCTION

“The overriding desire for most children is to get at and *see the soul* of their toys.... But *where is the soul*? This is the beginning of melancholy and gloom”

from Charles Baudelaire’s essay, “A Philosophy of Toys,” 203-04

““Only dolls,”” repeated the aunt, with icy significance. “Well, my child, you shall soon see what ‘only’ dolls can do.””

from William Sleator’s Among the Dolls (1975), 51

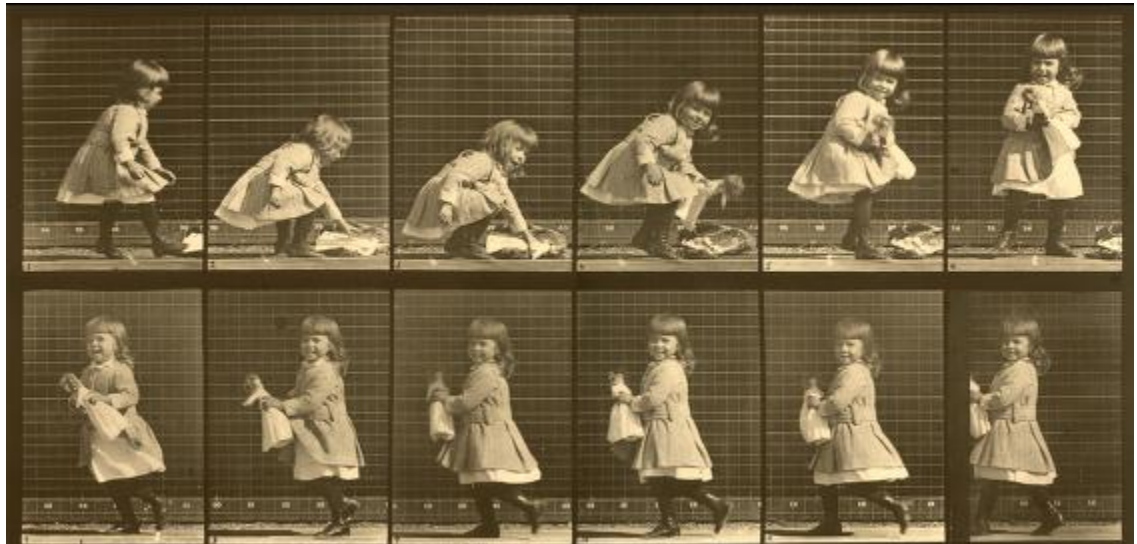


Fig 1: “Plate 481 Movements, Female, Child, lifting a doll, turning, and walking off”

Title: [Muybridge Animal Locomotion, plate 481]. ca. 1887

Photographed by Eadweard Muybridge

Archived at the University of Pennsylvania’s “University Archives Digital Image Collection:” <<http://hdl.library.upenn.edu/1017/d/archives/20041222002>>

Courtesy of the University of Pennsylvania Archives.

Background:

The doll is nothing if not well known. As an image and an icon found in all aspects of culture, its uses and likeness have been studied across the academic disciplines: archeologists study dolls' presence in excavated sites of ancient civilizations; religious scholars study the voodoo doll; sociologists relate dolls to gender roles; psychologists explore the doll through Freud's idea of the uncanny; folklorists examine the gendering of lawn ornaments and funeral statues; economic historians research the American doll industry; and robotics scientists invent and obsess over mechanical doll innovations. Visual or literary representations of dolls as well as material doll toys have been the point of departure in discussions about cultural images of the female body (the improbable Barbie), its place in the construction of gender and identity (the act of playing with dolls), class (the marketing of Bratz Dolls vs. the American Girl Dolls), fetishization (the popularity of collectable dolls), and fashion (dolls' historical association with femininity and fashionability).¹ Dolls are also

¹ For the importance of dolls in ancient civilizations, see:
Cerny, Jaroslav. "Organization of Ushabi-Figures." Journal of Egyptian Archaeology. 34. 1949. 121.
Marcus, Joyce. Women's Ritual in Formative Oaxaca. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2008.
Neils, Jennifer, John Howard Oakley, Katherine Hart, Lesley A. Beaumont. Coming of Age in Ancient Greece. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.
For their importance in voodoo, see:
Fanthorpe, Lionel and Patricia. Mysteries and Secrets of Voodoo, Santeria, and Obeah. Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2008.
For their relationship to gender roles in children, see:
Crawford, Susan Hoy. Beyond Dolls & Guns: 101 Ways to Help Children Avoid Gender Bias. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1996.
For their relationship to the uncanny experience, see:
Freud, Sigmund. The Uncanny. Trans. David McLintock. New York: Penguin Books, 2003.
For their visible representations of gender in folklore, see:
Thomas, Jeannie B. Naked Barbies, Warrior Joes and Other Forms of Visible Gender. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003.
For their relationship to American economic history, see:
Formanek-Brunell, Miram. Made to Play House: Dolls and the Commercialization of American Girlhood, 1830-1930. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993.
For their importance to animation and robotics, see:
Wood, Gaby. Living Dolls: A Magical History of the Quest for Mechanical Life. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002.

key figures or symbols in national literatures and works of art ranging from ancient Japanese texts to contemporary French graphic novels.² The image of the doll is well documented across the spectrum of visual culture in examples as diverse as the earliest children's book illustrations, classic horror films, gold framed daguerreotypes, home snapshots, nineteenth-century portraiture by world renowned artists, eighteenth-century folk portraits by unknown American painters, and ads in the earliest days of commercial advertisement.³ Overall, scholarship has paid much attention to the doll and has tended to treat it as an object which

For Barbie's influence, see:

Lord, M.G. Forever Barbie: The Unauthorized Biography of a Real Doll. New York: Walker & Company, 2004.

McDonough, Yona Zeldis, Ed. The Barbie Chronicles: A Living Doll Turns Forty. New York: Touchstone, 1999.

Rogers, Mary F. Barbie Culture. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 1999.

Weissman, Kristin Noelle. Barbie: The Icon, the Image, the Ideal. An Analytical Interpretation of the Barbie Doll in Popular Culture. Boca Raton, FL: Universal Publishers, 1999.

For dolls' importance to play and gender identity, see:

Chudacoff, Howard P. Children at Play: An American History. New York: NYU Press, 2007.

Forman-Brunell, Miriam. Girlhood in America: An Encyclopedia. Oxford, UK: ABC-CLIO, 2001.

For their relationship of class, see:

Talbot, Margaret. "Little Hotties: Barbie's New Rivals." The New Yorker. Dec. 5. 2006.

For their role as a fetishized object, see:

Robertson, A. F. Life Like Dolls: The Collector Doll Phenomenon and the Lives of the Women Who Love Them. New York: Routledge, 2004.

For their importance in fashion, see:

Peers, Juliette. The Fashion Doll: From B  b   Jumeau to Barbie. Oxford, UK: Berg Publishers, 2004.

² To name only a few: Murasaki Shikibu's Tale of Genji (Japan), Canepa's and Barbucci's Sky Doll, Vol. 1 (France), Prus's The Doll (Poland), Ibsen's A Doll's House (Norway), Ray Lawler's Summer of the Seventeenth Doll (Australia), Tchaikovsky's The Nutcracker (Russia), short stories by Carlos Fuentes' including "The Doll Queen," "Chac-Mool," and "La Desdichada" (Mexico).

³ As a type of visual addendum to this dissertation, I have created a catalog of images that is meant to be illustrative of the many different types of representations of dolls found in visual cultures: www.dollhood.tumblr.com. Such representations included at this address include the categories of images listed here as well as many others which I feel reflect an idea of "dollhood" in general. Please note also that this virtual collection is an ongoing and publicly open blog and therefore interactive as it is located on Tumblr, a mini-blog service that allows users to upload as well comment on each others' posted images. Finally, though I do attempt to identify the sources of every image on "dollhood," this is not always a possibility. However, as the front page of the blog states, I am *not* the original creator or source of any of the images and do, at the very least, post a link to every internet page on which I located a particular image. I have not scanned, uploaded, or put any images on this website that did not already exist virtually and, if notified that any image breached copyright law, it was immediately removed. Nevertheless, any image directly referred to on the pages of this project is not only fully cited to credible sources, but, if visually represented, appears by permission of the copyright holders.

historicizes culture, acts as another of its artifacts, or as a symbol which embodies the larger issues and concerns of a culture. The doll in the twentieth century in particular has been well scrutinized as a gateway to the past, a symbol, or a representation, but it has been neglected as an invention. The doll has been viewed as the conductive tissue to something else, an echo to some other time, as another example of some other definition. In a sense, the doll has been read as an empty thing and so the depth of its power has been abbreviated.

Thesis:

Mourning the consequences of a culture that values rush and oversimplification, Walter Benjamin quotes the French poet Paul Valéry in his essay “The Storyteller: Reflections on the Works of Nikolai Leskov” (first published in 1936) in order to explore the balance between nature and artifice in craftsmanship. He argues that the performance of a craft no longer resembles the forces of nature as it once did, and Benjamin recognizes this loss of slow process and production as the storyteller’s loss as well:

“This patient process of Nature,” Valéry continues, “was once imitated by men.

Miniatures, ivory carvings, elaborated to the point of greatest perfection, stones that are perfect in polish and engraving, lacquer work or paintings in which a series of thin, transparent layers are placed one on top of the other—all these products of sustained, sacrificing effort are vanishing, and the time is past in which time did not matter. Modern man no longer works at what cannot be abbreviated.” (“Storyteller” 92-3)

Just as the art of layering, whether in “lacquer work” or in storytelling seems to have been lost and replaced by its modern condensed version, the concept of the doll has also been

metaphorically cut short by modern man in a way that has nothing to do with its material production. The doll has been abbreviated and stripped of its unique power, its “thingness”⁴ or “aura,”⁵ by how quickly and definitively that power is read in only certain narrow examinations. Specifically, the most narrowing examination offered the doll is the concept of the “uncanny” which, quite conversely, is also a concept that claims to have knowledge of the profundity of the doll’s real power.⁶ Nevertheless, my project aspires to reach very different goals. First, this dissertation provides an exploration of the doll as a force outside of the milieu of material culture scholarship. Secondly, my project will set apart traditional readings about how the doll offers itself as a site of uncanny experience. Instead, I will argue that the doll defines a liminality of the narrative experience whereas it is able to be, both

⁴ “Thingness” in terms of Bill Brown’s definition of “thing theory” as investigated in a number of his works including the following essays: “How to Do Things with Things (A Toy Story)” published in Critical Inquiry (summer 1998), “Thing Theory” published in Critical Inquiry (autumn 2001), “The Secret Life of Things: Virginia Woolf and the Matter of Modernism” published in Modernism/Modernity (1999), “Reification, Reanimation, and the American Uncanny” published in Critical Inquiry (winter 2006), and the following two texts: The Material Unconscious: American Amusement, Stephen Crane, and the Economics of Play (1996) and A Sense of Things: The Object Matter of American Literature (2003). This term will be addressed later in this introduction.

⁵ “Aura” in terms of Benjamin’s articulation of it in his essay “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” (originally published in 1936) will also be discussed later in this chapter, but note that the version of the Benjamin essay referenced throughout this project is the Harry Zohn translation found in the Hannah Arendt edited collection, Illuminations (1969).

⁶ Though there is critical scholarship about the literary and aesthetic doll that has examined it in terms of such rich concepts as thing theory, the cyborg, childhood, animation, and possession, the child’s toy is still too often first and foremost discussed in popular culture in terms of sexuality (see footnote 11) or its given uncanniness. However, for works that discuss the doll in some of these other topics see, first, the following influential essays: Bill Brown’s “How to Do Things with Things (A Toy Story)” (1998) for a discussion of the doll through “thing theory” and Donna Haraway’s “A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century” (1991) to read the doll through the cyborg lens. In addition, major texts specifically on dolls include: Lois Kuznet’s When Toys Come Alive: Narratives of Animation, Metamorphosis, and Development (1994), A. F. Robertson’s Life Like Dolls: The Collector Doll Phenomenon and the Lives of the Women Who Love Them (2004), Kitti Carriker’s Created in Our Image: The Miniature Body of the Doll as Subject and Object (1998), and Miriam Formanek-Brunell’s Made to Play House: Dolls and the Commercialization of American Girlhood (1830-1930) (1993).

independently as well as simultaneously, the subject and object and therefore can express an entirely unique space of power as a material object in a literary or visual text.

This state of tension and amalgamation between subject and object, since it is so well articulated by the image of the doll, I will define and recapitulate with the term, “dollhood.” However, as I argue in the conclusion of this work, other characters, including human beings, can also occupy this liminal state of being, this “dollhood,” in literature and other works of art. The term “dollhood,” however, works beautifully in conveying this state because “[b]eing a living suffix, *-hood* can be affixed at will to almost any word denoting a person or concrete thing, and to many adjectives, to express condition or state, so that the number of these derivatives is indefinite” (online OED), and the specific word and concept of this “state,” as this chapter will express, is imperative to my argument. This term has been used once before in Miriam Formanek-Brunell’s “The Politics of Dollhood in Nineteenth-Century America,” which I first came across as reprinted in The Children’s Culture Reader (1998).⁷ Formanek-Brunell focuses on a historical study of how dolls were presented, used, played with, and manipulated by both children and adults throughout America in the nineteenth century. Aside from the title, the word “dollhood” only appears one other time in the essay and refers to a historical/sociological context: “Busy parents with fewer children provided their daughters with the companionship of dolls, thereby lengthening childhood and prolonging their ‘dollhood’” (“Politics” 368). In my own work, I am redefining this term and, for all intents and purposes, introducing it into a critical literary, rather than a social science, discourse. In my argument, dollhood is a liminal state of being which neither the exclusively living nor the exclusively nonliving can occupy. Instead, dollhood is a space of reconciliation

⁷ It is also a chapter in Formanek-Brunell’s Made to Play House: Dolls and the Commercialization of American Girlhood (1830-1930) (1993).

in which contradictory states, like the object and the subject, surrender into one another while also still firmly holding on with their own respective footing. I would argue that while dolls alone do not occupy this space, western culture has illustrated this liminal state through the ways in which twentieth-century works of literature, art, and film engage with, present, and imagine the doll. The doll is then the emblem of this interstructural state and, I would also argue, the doll is also its inventor as it fully defines, illustrates, and captures that very state of being. Though present in various genres, collectively these works not only feature the doll, but also play with the same boundaries of identity, imagination, and the threshold experience in terms of the doll.

Brief Overview:

The works I investigate in this dissertation present challenging and thought-provoking images of the doll that speak to how a material culture can construct and name the identity in an object. Drawing from poetry and children's literature as well as from film and visual art, my thesis engages dolls as an assemblage of experiences that negotiate difference across psychological states: dolls repeatedly demand to look and be looked at, they insist on the wholeness of their body and yet desire its fragmentation. The primary sources I discuss in this project offer a varied collection of American and European twentieth-century works including children's picture books such as Dare Wright's Lonely Doll, middle-grade novels like Sylvia Cassedy's Lucie Babbidge's House, poetry by Charles Simic, artworks by both Joseph Cornell and Hans Bellmer, and even a photo story from Life magazine. I also include lesser known though remarkable texts such as a poem by Polish poet Bolesław Leśmian and a children's short story by Ian McEwan. All of these works have a two-fold function: they

are capable of illustrating well-known ideas of the doll (as a thing of horror, a childhood reminiscence, a mirror, a cyborg), but they also demonstrate the space of dollhood to be, to borrow from Bill Brown's A Sense of Things: The Object Matter of American Literature (2003), "the story of a kind of possession that is irreducible to ownership" (13). As to the theoretical make-up of my project, I have drawn from a number of critical texts in order to illustrate the particular liminality of the doll state, but the tent poles of dollhood are two specific concepts: Victor Turner's use of the "liminal" and Sigmund Freud's articulation of "the uncanny."

Moreover, in order to express the various layers of this particular liminal space, each of the three following chapters is anchored in its use of a specific image as metaphor: the shadow, the box, and the shadow box. Individually, each image/metaphor offers its own singular complexity of understanding and nuance of meaning to the doll. The shadow offers its relationship to the body as being one which is wholly personal, but also a relationship which is based on the visual experience. The box provides the doll a means through which to discuss how the doll, like the box, is experienced through the active investigation accomplished by the sense of touch. The shadow box articulates for the doll the complexity of being its own singular art object as well as a combination of "shadow" and "box." Collectively, these images/metaphors provide a fuller and richer understanding of dollhood and so the concluding chapter explores how they are all at work in the liminal state of dollhood.

Primary texts:

The twentieth-century texts discussed in this project cover a range of media including poetry, photography, newspaper print, and works of art. However, in a sense, these texts are liminal themselves in that they belong to less authoritative genres of literature or are reflective of a minor area within a larger, more established genre of critical study.⁸ The genre which overshadows all the others and is at the very heart of this project is a doubly liminal genre due to its subject matter and intended audience: children's literature. Children's literature is central to this paper's argument because of its connection to the liminal space of imaginative narratives associated with childhood and childhood play and, of course, the doll and doll play. As Walter Benjamin observed in his "The Cultural History of Toys" (first published in 1928), it is an error to assume:

...that the imaginative content of a child's toys is what determines his playthings; whereas in reality the opposite is true. A child wants to pull something, and so he becomes a horse; he wants to play with sand, and so he turns into a baker; he wants to hide, and so he turns into a robber or a policeman. ("Cultural" 115)

Imitation, Benjamin writes, "is at home in the playing, not the plaything" ("Cultural" 116).⁹

Since the state of dollhood is articulated not in the doll alone, away from any subject, but in

⁸ There are no novels, short fiction intended for adult audiences, or canonical works of live-action film represented in this project and though poetry is discussed, they are works by poets who are considered more avant garde and so less mainstream like the Yugoslavian-born American imagist Charles Simic and the metaphysical Polish poet Bolesław Leśmian.

⁹ E.H. Gombrich's famous essay, "Meditations on a Hobby Horse or the Roots of Artistic Form" (1951), also speaks to the (what he called) "image-making" aspect of play. Gombrich also claimed that there is a biological need to perform this kind of "making:" He wrote: "The 'first' hobby horse...was probably no image at all. Just a stick which qualified as a horse because one could ride on it. The *tritium comparationis*, the common factor, was function rather than form. Or, more precisely, that formal aspect which fulfilled the minimum requirement for the performance of the function – for any "ridable" object could serve as a horse...in this sense, 'substitutes' reach deep into biological functions that are common to man and animal" (45).

an individual's engagement with the toy as an object, one is more likely to find examples of this type of "object engagement" as well as descriptions of such narratives of imitation in texts for children or about childhood. In addition, as Benjamin intimates, narratives of childhood often express what occurs when the toy object not only stops acting as a reflection, but when it expresses difference from what is expected of it – a difference only recognized and *experienced* by the human child whether that experience with the toy as an "other" occurs within the realm of a child's dream state, his or her imagination, or in the "real" world context of a children's story.

Finally, aside from the experience of differentiation from the doll that may be captured in the pages of a children's book, a child's reading of that narrative may also convey an experience of great beauty and power. Turning to Benjamin once again, consider the following passage from his "A Glimpse into the World of Children's Books" (1926):

Things do not come out to meet the picturing child from the pages of the book; instead, in looking, the child enters into them as a cloud that becomes suffused with the riotous colors and the world of pictures. Sitting before his painted book, he makes the Taoist vision of perfection come true: he overcomes the illusory barrier of the book's surface and passes through colored textures and brightly painted partitions to enter a stage on which the fairy tale lives. ... In such an open, color-bedecked world

There is also a range of interesting texts (from purely psychological studies to works on the visual arts) which engage with the idea that child's play is a type of narrative mimesis. For example, grounded in the nature of child play, Kendall L. Walton's fascinating book Mimesis as Make-Believe: On the Foundations of the Representational Arts (1990) develops a theory of make-believe in order to address the nature of representation in fiction as well as art because, as he writes, "What all representations have in common is a role in make-believe" (4). Other engaging (though somewhat more anthropological or psychological) works include: Laurence Goldman's Child's Play: Myth, Mimesis and Make-Believe (1998), Carol Fleisher Feldman's 2005 article for Cognitive Development titled "Mimesis: Where Play and Narrative Meet," and the anthropological work of renowned kindergarten and nursery school teacher Vivian Gussin Paley, especially her Bad Guys Don't Have Birthdays: Fantasy Play at Four (1988), Boys and Girls: Superheroes in the Doll Corner (1984), and The Boy Who Would be a Helicopter (1991).

where everything shifts at every step, the child is allowed to join in the game.

(“Glimpse” 226)

Certainly, not all children have such an overwhelming experience with reading, nor can it be claimed that such a sensation occurs for the most impressionable child with every book she encounters. Nevertheless one can argue it is the child, as Benjamin suggests, who is more impressionable and imaginatively available and is thus more likely to have such an overwhelming reading experience compared to most adults.

There are, of course, other genres of literature aside from children’s literature, such as science fiction, that also eagerly play with dimensions of identity and suspension of reality through the presence of the doll figure. Nonetheless, as adult texts, such doll narratives often also engage with sexual elements tied to the presence of that particular female form, and sexualizing dolls would inform this project in an entirely different way.¹⁰ Although there undoubtedly remains a great deal more that may be said about the relationship between inanimate female bodies and the men who create, desire, use or brutalize them especially through cyborg theory, it is also essential to examine doll narratives through the lens of aesthetics as well as the lens of gender, sexuality, or other identity politics. I argue that it is through the child and the literature of children that one can clearly establish how the doll may be critically approached in a new way. To a child, the doll is no cyborg; its technologies are different. In many science fiction works, the actual animation of the cyborg may presume a

¹⁰ Female-identified dolls are, of course, not the only kind of dolls. There are also male dolls such as those marketed to boys like action figures and army men, boy-gendered baby dolls like Cabbage Patch Dolls, the Ken doll, Woody and Buzz from *Toy Story*, and the infamous Chucky from the horror film series, *Child’s Play*. However, though I do refer to some of these boy dolls, the specificity of being a male doll or playing with a male doll, is not the focus of this study. Instead, my focus is on the doll in general and the doll, in general, is seen as female.

“pygmalionism”¹¹ that gestures to its man-made sexualized status, but the enlivened doll can also be registered as being more akin to an ensoulment, possessing an essence that may be represented in numerous ways aside from its materiality. For example, to discuss a story about a boy breaking a doll (as in the acts of ten-year-old Peter Fortune in Ian McEwan’s The Daydreamer (1994)¹²) by relying solely on generalizations about how males objectify the female form through the manipulation of female dolls would be careless scholarship. Indeed, in many such narratives, the human male claims the power in the exchange between a female-identified object and the human man as “maker” of said object, but there are also other avenues of studying such a relationship. For example, in my second chapter, I will argue, in the context of “The Dolls,” a story from The Daydreamer, that the literal fragmentation and splintering taking place with the boy is actually more of an exploration of a particular power the doll has over the human than the articulation of female or child objectification since this act actually occupies a liminal space that no human can easily and permanently ascertain. Therefore, though works like Salman Rushdie’s Fury (2001) and the infamous Alma doll belonging to Austrian artist Oskar Kokoschka (1886-1980) may be intriguing to pair with McEwan’s children’s story in order to discuss the power dynamics played out in the relationship of male creator to female doll, I am more interested in removing all previously discussed cultural relationships between the human and the doll in order to explore a new power dynamic. In this way, I ask: if we remove issues of gender

¹¹ Some thought-provoking works which address this type of gendered and usually sexualized relationship include: Victor I. Stoichita’s The Pygmalion Effect: From Ovid to Hitchcock (translated by Alison Anderson), (2008); Lynda Nead’s The Haunted Galley: Painting, Photography, Film around 1900 (2007); Giorgio Agamben’s Stanzas: Word and Phantasm in Western Culture (translated by Ronald L. Martinez), (1993); George L. Hersey’s Falling in Love with Statues: Artificial Humans from Pygmalion to the Present (2009); and Alan Bacher Williamson’s Almost a Girl: Male Writers and Identification (2001).

¹² Ian McEwan. The Daydreamer. Ill. Anthony Browne. New York: Joanna Cotler Books, HarperCollins Publishers, 1994.

(human male to female doll) as well as dichotomies in femininity (male child to female doll), race (African-American child to Caucasian doll), and class (poor child to expensive doll) then where is the power of the doll located once all those are stripped away? Or to borrow from Book One of Ovid's "Metamorphosis," a quote which, coincidentally, also acts as an epigraph to McEwan's The Daydreamer: "My purpose is to tell of bodies which have been transformed into shapes of a different kind."

In Plato's Symposium, Alcibiades tells Socrates that what he loves about him is his *agalma*, the mysterious treasure, hidden inside. In a similar sense, the true power of the doll, its *agalma*, is only seen once we look past the body of scholarship and the way that culture currently reads its objects. Without negating other ways of reading, in this project I discuss these texts through more of a phenomenological philosophy, paying greater attention to the subjective experience of the doll than the shared public experience in my attempt to articulate that essential power that the doll (no matter its making) has over the human (no matter his or her cultural identity). My interest is to study the doll that is animated through the mechanics of the imagination rather than the mechanics of physical articulation or technology. To illustrate the distinction, consider a doll story as simple as Liesel Moak Skorpen's Elizabeth (1970).¹³

This thirty-two page children's book begins with Christmas, the holiday most commonly linked to doll transformation in literature and art,¹⁴ when nothing necessarily

¹³ Liesel Moak Skorpen. Elizabeth. Ill. Martha Alexander. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1970.

¹⁴ Christmastime recurs as the setting for tales of dolls animation because like birthdays and Easter, this holiday provides a type of toy origins story due to the fact that these are occasions when a toy can be considered "born" as it enters the child's world first as unknown and unopened present that is then brought to being by the tearing of paper and the opening of packages. For example, at the conclusion of Elizabeth, as Kate,

overtly “magical” happens but when two dolls are, in a way, born. The protagonist, Kate, receives an unnamed “soft cloth doll with warm brown eyes and thick brown braids” that looks remarkably like her and yet does not seem to “do” anything; when the child asks her mother: “What does it do?,” her mother replies that it does “[e]verything a doll’s supposed to do” (6). Thinking it to be “an ugly doll,” Kate instead expresses jealousy over the seemingly livelier doll, in both programmed abilities and girlish appearance, which her cousin Agnes receives for Christmas:

Agnes had a new doll whose name was Charlotte Louise. Charlotte Louise could walk and talk. “Where is your Christmas doll?” asked Agnes.

Kate showed her the cloth doll lying in the box.

“What does it do?” asked Agnes.

the child protagonist, tugs her doll into bed on Christmas night she wishes it not only a “Merry Christmas,” but, as the doll was received a year ago that day, Kate also wishes it a “Happy Birthday too!” (Skorpen, 32).

However, aside from the fact that dolls are given as presents during Christmas, another reason for the plethora of Christmas doll stories is the magical quality associated with the holiday. The most well-known animation of dolls and toys during Christmastime is E. T. A. Hoffmann’s story, “The Nutcracker and the Mouse King” (1816), a story which is actually better known as the Tchaikovsky penned ballet, the perennial favorite, “The Nutcracker.” Many writers have written doll animation stories which are, not so coincidentally, also Christmas stories such as Louisa May Alcott’s short story, “A Christmas Dream, And How it Came True” (1890) (thanks to Dr. Anne Bruder for this reference) and the very brief and very peculiar “The Crooked Mirror (A Christmas Story)” by Anton Chekhov. Children’s doll stories include Big Susan (1947) written and illustrated by Elizabeth Orton Jones, The Story of Holly and Ivy (1959) by Rumer Godden, and The Dolls’ Christmas (1950) by Tasha Tudor. One also cannot forget the presence of the rag doll on the “Island of Misfit Toys” which made its indelible mark on Christmas in popular American culture when it appeared in the stop-motion classic, “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer” (1964). A passage from the short story, “The Brandenburg Gate” by Sarah West Lander (published in the “Berlin” volume of the series Spectacles for Young Eyes (1865)) hints to the magical as well as visual pleasure of this holiday that seems to make everything, including dolls, come alive:

"They do not look empty to-night," exclaimed Walter; "for, if Berlin was never gay before, it is so now."

"It is glorious," said Peter. "It is Christmas eve: every one is moving about, and the whole city is alive."

It was true. Shops were open; boxes of toys had been unloading all day, and for a week before; dolls were winking from the windows; dogs were barking; cats were mewing; jumping-jacks and jugglers were performing wonderful feats; Christmas-trees were glittering with golden apples, and lighted with wax-tapers.

"Well! what kind of a city do you call this?" inquired old nurse, suddenly roused by the confusion and the lights. "Is it a spectacle and a show, or a playhouse for children?"

"It is a spectacle for young eyes, nurse; and we cannot but enjoy it too." (23-24)

“It doesn’t do anything,” Kate replied.

“What is its name?” asked Agnes.

“It doesn’t have a name,” said Kate.

“It certainly is an ugly doll,” said Agnes. She set Charlotte Louise down on the floor, and Charlotte Louise turned a somersault.

“I hate you, Agnes,” Kate said, “and I hate your ugly doll!”

Kate was sent upstairs to bed without any pumpkin pie. (10)

Kate angrily discards the doll by giving it to the dog, but, eventually, retrieves it from where her pet has buried it in the snow (an act suggesting its rebirth). Kate realizes that her simple cloth doll, now named “Elizabeth,” “could do everything:”

When Kate was happy, Elizabeth was happy.

When Kate was sad, Elizabeth understood.

When Kate was mad and said something mean and had to go upstairs,

Elizabeth went with her. (16)

For Kate, Elizabeth turned out to be more alive than the pre-named and pre-programmed Charlotte Louise who, despite her somersaulting and blonde-haired and pink-dressed glamour, seems completely lifeless. In fact, in the story’s conclusion, the plot goes full circle and returns to the following year’s Christmas holiday. While Kate receives other gifts, including new dresses for her doll Elizabeth, her bratty cousin, Agnes, receives yet another new doll because last year’s Charlotte Louise, who could “do” mechanical tricks, was already broken and thrown “in the trash” by the summertime (22). This year, the difference between the two cousins is that now when Kate expresses her hatred toward Agnes and her new doll, it is not blurted out in jealousy, but whispered to her cousin with relish, suggesting

quite the opposite feeling from the one she once had toward Agnes and her then new doll exactly a year ago:

Agnes had a new doll whose name was Tina Marie.

“Tina Marie can sing songs,” said Agnes. “She can blow bubbles too, and crawl along the floor.”

Kate held Elizabeth tightly in her arms.

“Well,” said Kate in a whisper, “Tina Marie is the ugliest doll I ever saw. She is almost as ugly as you.”

Agnes kicked Kate sharply on the leg and said the most dreadful things to Elizabeth, who was looking particularly well in her velvet dress.

Agnes’s mother was very cross with Agnes.

Agnes spent the rest of the day in disgrace and wasn’t permitted any pumpkin pie. (30)

In a reversal from the Christmas before, Agnes is punished and goes to bed without pumpkin pie even though, as it was last year, it was Kate who escalated the name-calling between the two cousins. For the reader, this turnaround not only suggests that Kate, and through her the doll Elizabeth, are the ones meant to be cheered as heroes, but also that they are heroic because they illustrate a larger swath of what a doll “can do” when it is engaged with that force of active imaginative play that exists entirely outside of cyborg elements: the mechanics of a voice box or the workings of motored limbs. It is that ensoulment of the doll that exists in the intimate space of play between such a scrappy heroine and her simple rag

doll that I propose as more powerful, more valued, and a more lasting enlivening than the produced results of motorized clockworks.¹⁵

For the primary texts in this project, I also sought such depictions of doll animation in children's literature of the twentieth century because that genre and period share a connection to modern psychology. As the tail end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth was a time period in which the social, emotional, and imaginative world of children's minds began to receive serious attention from the fields of social science, psychology also began to play a role in shaping children's literature. These new interests in the child then turned and informed the constructs of the worlds given back to children in picture and story form. As Kenneth Kidd wrote in his 2004 article, "Psychoanalysis and Children's Literature: The Case for Complementarity":

From the start, psychoanalysis was part and parcel of a new interest in childhood that drew from evolutionary metaphor and the emergent social sciences. That interest in turn transformed the scene of children's literature. "When the late nineteenth century found that its researches into origin and development focused attention on the child," writes Juliet Dusinberre, "it simultaneously produced for those children a literature which revealed as clearly as possible adult hopes for the new generation"While

¹⁵ Worth noting that aside from this opposition between mechanical and immaterial animation, this story points to a number of other more archetypal patterns of tension. In the dolls alone, there are the opposing sides of handicraft (Elizabeth) vs. mass produced commodity (Charlotte Louise and then her doppelganger Tina Marie), working class (handmade rag doll) vs. upper class (store-bought dolls), and constructs of personal identity (Elizabeth looks like Kate and is named by Kate) vs. public persona (Agnes' dolls don't really belong to her as they are pre-named and pre-packaged to look only like each other). And then, in terms of the girls themselves, they are also, in both word and text, polar opposites of one another. Where Kate, with her brown braided pigtails and simple yet classic first name is as familiar and trusting to us as is the form of her rag doll, Agnes, with her upturned nose and bowed hair is as spoiled and prissy as is suggested by the pretentious names given to her dolls. And though both use the same "ugly" language, with Kate its use is meant to register as scrappy and is intended to elicit cheers from readers while from Agnes, such language is read as coming from a spoiled and cruel child. These differences between the girls (in looks, demeanor, as well as suggested class) are also reminiscent of another, much more familiar rivalry in children's literature: the one between the out-spoken Laura Ingalls and the spoiled Nellie Oleson as found in the works of Laura Ingalls Wilder.

there may be no direct or simple correspondence between psychoanalysis and children's literature, it's safe to say that the whole project of writing for children was profoundly altered by the insights of psychoanalysis, and child analysis especially. (Kidd 115)

As Kidd as well as other contemporary theorists have suggested, the relationship formed at the beginning of the twentieth century between the social sciences and children's literature is worthy of drawing from and addressing in a project such as this which is attempting to discuss the doll in a new way.¹⁶ Along with the general richness of readings that psychoanalysis has provided to children's literature written in the twentieth century, it was also during this time period that a major study on how children understand and play with dolls, in particular, was produced and widely remarked upon.

G. Stanley Hall, known as "the father of adolescence"¹⁷ and one of the first major child psychologists, conducted the study, titled "A Study of Dolls," along with A. Caswell

¹⁶ In addition to Kidd's essay, an excellent overview is Hamida Bosmajian's chapter, "Psychoanalytical Criticism," found in the International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature (1996) in which she begins by stating that: "the child and childhood hold a privileged position in most psychoanalytical theories, the elective affinity between children's literature and psychological criticism seems more natural than the affinity between psychology and literature" (86).

Also see Jacqueline Rose's canonical The Case of Peter Pan or The Impossibility of Children's Fiction (1984), Karín Lesnik-Oberstein's Children's Literature: Criticism and the Fictional Child (1994) and Juliet Dusinberre's Alice to the Lighthouse: Children's Books and Radical Experiments in Art (1987).

¹⁷ Hall's most famous work is the 1904 two volume edition of Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion, and Education. A pioneer in child psychology and credited with defining adolescence, the gist of Hall's theory, as defined in Adolescence, was that the "storm and stress" seen during these years was "an inevitable outcome of evolutionary processes" (Epstein 117). However, as Robert Epstein notes in his 2007 work, The Case Against Adolescence: Rediscovering the Adult in Every Teen, Hall's theory was discredited by the 1930s because it was based on a "faulty theory from biology" (Ibid). Indeed, although no longer recognized as accurate, Hall's famous work is still known and addressed in the psychological community in order to discuss current practices as well as historical understandings of adolescence. Furthermore, the psychological accuracy of "A Study of Dolls," which is the primary work by Hall that I consider does not appear ever to have been discredited. While undeniably dated, perhaps this particular work has been left unchallenged because its form is more of an empirical record of data rather than an interpretive analysis of it. Nevertheless, this project is not in a position to speak to the validity of such psychological research, but only to point to how such works may have not only reflected, but also contributed to twentieth-century ideas of the child and the doll as illustrated in literature and art. And

Ellis, in the late nineteenth century in order to observe, gather, and catalogue the responses American and British schoolchildren gave to their own relationships to this particular toy. Published in 1896, the study offers an abundance of information on how children play with and think about dolls, illustrating that very particular power the doll has over its child.¹⁸ As Hall and Ellis observed: “Nothing illustrates the strength of the doll instinct and the vigor of the animistic fancy” as do children who will find anything from pillows to flowers to “stuffed elephants (seemed like a real baby)” to act as doll substitutes for them (“Dolls” 159). Another psychologist, James Sully,¹⁹ also addressed the power the doll has over children as he wrote

although there is discussion of this work within the social sciences especially in the area of “doll play,” I am more invested in how contemporary literary scholars have engaged with this work especially Robertson’s Life Like Dolls, Carriker’s Created in Our Image, Bill Brown’s The Material Unconscious, and Formanek-Brunell’s Made to Play House.

¹⁸ According to A. F. Robertson’s Life Like Dolls: The Collector Doll Phenomenon and the Lives of the Women Who Love Them (2004), this empirically structured study by American psychologists Granville Stanley Hall (1844-1924) and Alexander Caswell Ellis (1871-1948), has no parallel in terms of its scope and depth - even after more than a century since its publication. Hall and Ellis provided detailed surveys to interested American and British school teachers who volunteered to administer this “test stimuli” to their students and so “hundreds, sometimes thousands of ‘cases’” informed the final work (Robertson 261).

“A Study of Dolls” was published in December 1896 in volume four of Pedagogical Seminary. This journal, later renamed the Journal of Genetic Psychology, was the first of its kind in the field of child psychology (it was also founded by Hall in 1893). Though not even 50 pages long, the study itself is incredibly detailed and well organized in the cataloging of the many aspects of doll play. It is divided into several sections that address topics as diverse as the materials of which dolls were made as well as their apparent “psychic qualities” (Hall, “Dolls” 159). It also inventories how children fed, dressed, put to sleep, disciplined, named, groomed, accessorized, and played with their dolls; and how children perceived illness and death in their dolls and how these toys were treated and considered when thought “dead.” In addition, this study incorporates historical and international examples of doll play and makes room to reference Victor Hugo, Goethe, and Queen Victoria. And along with the aforementioned wealth of information already crammed into the pages of this study, Hall and Ellis also included generous amounts of quotes taken directly from children themselves.

¹⁹ James Sully (1842-1923) was an English psychologist most renowned for introducing and studying children’s art into and through the science of psychology. His most famous work, Studies of Childhood (1896), is quite an engaging work of study on the complexity and inaccessibility of children’s imaginations and worlds of play. In addition to the direct study of the child, Sully also drew much from literature incorporating writers such as George Sand, John Ruskin, and Robert Louis Stevenson into his concepts. Though the interdisciplinary facet of his work is fascinating, Sully also relied heavily on the problematic analogy between children and “primitive” peoples especially in his discussion of child art. This type of equating is, however, reflective of how influential Darwin’s evolutionary theory was during this time period according to Carolyn Steedman’s Strange Dislocations: Childhood and the Idea of Human Interiority, 1780-1930 (1995). Quoting Frank Sulloway’s work on Freud, Steedman notes: “‘Darwin’s pervasive influence on child psychology’, and the way in which in the second half of the nineteenth century it became increasing common for psychologists [Sully, among others] to

in his essay responding to Hall's and Ellis's study titled "Dollatry" (1899): "dolls seem to reach a higher degree of reality than other playthings. As objects of passionate attachment, they appear to grow a part of the child's very self, and so become the least questionable of realities" (68).²⁰

Although my study is not a work of psychological analysis, the popularity and influence that such studies had by the turn of one century (no matter whether they were later challenged, overturned or dismissed) clearly casts a large shadow over the century that was to follow and thus cannot be ignored. In fact, those studies still appear to inform how the child and/or the doll are considered even in texts of the latter half of the twentieth century, including those addressed in this dissertation. In addition to the 1896 "Study of Dolls" and Sully's 1899 "Dollatry," other intriguing studies which influence how scholars talk about the power of twentieth-century dolls include another study by Hall (with Theodate L. Smith) titled "Curiosity and Interest" (1903), a doll study conducted in Poland by Madam Anna Grudzinska, titled "A Study of Dolls Among Polish Children" (1907), James Frazer's classic anthropological study, The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion (first 2 volumes published in 1890); a study on children and shadows, found in The Child's Conception of Physical Causality (1927) by renowned French child psychologist Jean Piaget; and the encyclopedic work by Max von Boehn, titled Dolls and Puppets (1932, in English) which attempted to catalog all of the doll's vast uses and understandings including dissimilar categories such as "prehistoric idols," "utensils in doll form," and "the shadow theatre of the

compare the emergence of instincts in childhood with those in the lower animals" (84). Also see Donna Darling Kelly's Uncovering the History of Children's Drawing and Art (2004) and Jonathan Fineberg's Discovering Child Art: Essays on Childhood, Primitivism, and Modernism (1998).

²⁰ Sully's essay goes on to acknowledge that children can also have intense attachments to animal toys, but it is not quite the same unique attachment that they have to dolls.

orient.”²¹ Finally, it is worth noting that one of the critical concepts that I use to illustrate the state of dollhood was also first published in the early part of the twentieth century: Freud’s “The Uncanny” was originally published in 1919.

Theoretical Framework:

The Liminal:

My concept of dollhood, first and foremost, necessarily incorporates definitions of the liminal. Victor Turner, the cultural anthropologist, writes in “Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in *Rites de Passage*,” in his The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual (1967), that “our basic model of society is that of a ‘structure of positions’” or “states” (93):

By “state” I mean here “a relatively fixed or stable condition” and would include in its meaning such social constancies as legal status, profession, office or calling, rank or degree. I hold it to designate also the condition of a person as determined by his culturally recognized degree of maturation as when one speaks of “the married or single state” or the “state of infancy.” The term “state” may also be applied to ecological conditions, or to the physical, mental or emotional condition in which a person or group may be found at a particular time. A man may thus be in a state of

²¹ As further evidence as to the importance of these studies, there are key literary texts which were also published during this same time period that, in their own right, seem to express many of the interests that the anthropological and psychological studies discuss, specifically the relationship between man (or child), nature, and the inanimate object. These works may be considered as having also influenced later generations of literature. I have in mind such works as: Shaw’s Pygmalion (1913) (it may also be worth noting that Shaw wrote the “note on puppets” which acts as an introduction to Boehn’s work of over 500 pages on dolls and puppets); Charles Kingsley’s The Water-Babies (serialized in 1862-1863, published as book in 1863, and remained popular through the 1920s); Robert Louis Stevenson’s A Child’s Garden of Verses (1885); and Hans Christian Andersen’s fairy tale, “The Shadow” (1847).

good or bad health; a society in a state of war or peace or a state of famine or of plenty. State, in short, is a more inclusive concept than status or office and refers to any type of stable or recurrent condition that is culturally recognized. (93-4)

Yet, between those states, those culturally recognized structures, there is also “a period of margin or ‘liminality’” which is “an interstructural situation” (93). Turner observes that in the rituals of some societies (as the title of the work indicates, he focused on the Ndembu tribe in central Africa) one can locate or name this “liminal period” during particular times in individuals’ lives (in this case during initiation rites). My concept of dollhood is similar to and informed by Turner’s articulation of cultural spaces of liminality because the space that a doll may occupy (as being both singly and collectively the object and subject) is also a state of “betwixt and between” identity that corresponds to Turner’s ideas of liminality and interstructurality (Turner 97).

Dolls are also neophytes. When describing the Ndembu tribe of Zambia, Turner uses the term “neophyte” to refer to “the subject of passage ritual” as “not-boy-not-man, which is what a novice in a male puberty rite is ...” and he writes that the basic feature of the neophytes is that:

...neophytes are neither living nor dead from one aspect, but both living and dead from another. Their condition is one of ambiguity and paradox, a confusion of all customary categories. (95-7)

This confusion is the result of the neophyte not being in a fixed and fully defined state or a “stable or recurrent condition that is culturally recognized” (94). Like Turner’s neophyte, the

doll also occupies a neither/either/both space where it can encapsulate opposing states: that of being object and subject and source of both subjective and intersubjective knowledge.²²

Another, and arguably more famous, example of the “betwixt and between” liminal space is in the character of Peter Pan who is also in a neither/either/both position. He occupies this position though his aging and non-aging, of having just had a birth day (“his age is one week”), but also of having no future birthdays though the children who once knew him collect so many birthdays that they soon forget about him (Barrie 12).²³ However, though Peter Pan exemplifies Turner’s neophyte writ permanent, he does not illustrate the concept of dollhood in its entirety. As defined by Turner as a liminal period, the character of

²² My idea of dollhood begins to veer away from Turner’s idea of the neophyte when it comes to the concept of permanence. In one way or another, Turner’s neophytes are eventually meant to move on to a fixed state. They do not permanently occupy the liminal period of being the novice while a literary doll or the representation of a doll can be or become permanently liminal.

²³ As described in J.M. Barrie’s Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens (originally published in 1906): Of course, it also shows that Peter is ever so old, but he is really always the same age, so that does not matter in the least. His age is one week, and though he was born so long ago he has never had a birthday, nor is there the slightest chance of his ever having one. (12) Nevertheless, it is not only through a collapsing of time in which Peter occupies this liminal space. He also occupies it in the form of his identity (or, perhaps, lack thereof) as being multiple combinations of a boy/a bird/not a boy/not a bird. He finds out from Solomon, an old caw, that even though he was born a bird (after all, all children have “been birds before they were human”) he is no longer one now though he is also not a boy (13):

‘Poor little half-and-half!’ said Solomon, who was not really hard-hearted, ‘you will never be able to fly again, not even on windy days. You must live here on the island always.’

‘And never even go to the Kensington Gardens?’ Peter asked tragically.

‘How could you get across?’ said Solomon. He promised very kindly, however, to teach Peter as many of the bird ways as could be learned by one of such an awkward shape.

‘Then I shan’t be exactly a human?’ Peter asked.

‘No.’

‘Nor exactly a bird?’

‘No.’

‘What shall I be?’

‘You will be a Betwixt-and-Between,’ Solomon said, and certainly he was a wise fellow, for that is exactly how it turned out. (16-17)

Solomon also tells Peter that he “*will be* a Betwixt-and-Between” (emphasis is mine) and not that he is *in* a betwixt-and-between space. That choice to make “Betwixt-and-Between” a thing, a noun, something that someone becomes, instead of a space of temporary occupancy, makes it a permanent state, a place from which Peter cannot move – not toward boy, not toward bird. Turner’s liminal period of being “betwixt and between” then, in the form of Peter Pan, becomes a *fixed* state like any other state.

Peter Pan is indeed in a space of neither/nor/both, but, as Solomon's wise words announce, that space can be and is an everlasting state for one like Peter Pan: a perfect and permanent "Betwixt-and-Between." What then further unites Barrie's Peter with Turner's neophyte is also what distances both of them from the doll: the fact that they are living. Despite being examples of identities which are neither/nor/both – for Turner, the neophyte is always a living person, Peter is always a living boy-bird.

Representations of dolls, as I will argue throughout this work, are not only presented in a liminal space as defined by Victor Turner or located in this liminal state as embodied by the character of Peter Pan. They also encompass a much more complicated neither/nor/both identity because they are not securely covered by the umbrella of being alive. They defy categorization. Nonetheless, Turner also addresses this issue of deadness in his work. He writes that "the structural 'invisibility' of liminal *personae* has a twofold character. They are at once no longer classified and not yet classified" (96). He goes on to note that if they are no longer classified then the symbols used to represent them are familiar because they are treated:

... as a corpse is customarily treated in his or her society. ... The neophyte may be buried, forced to lie motionless in the posture and direction of customary burial, maybe be stained black, or may be forced to live for a while in the company of masked and monstrous mummers representing, *inter alia*, the dead, or worse still, the un-dead. (Ibid)

Turner writes that the neophyte is seen as "structurally 'dead'" and is treated so as a corpse may be treated by being buried, colored black, or forced to live among the dead or "un-dead"

(Ibid) even though this “structural” death is still, in fact, dictated by life in many ways including the reality that it inevitably leads to a rebirth.²⁴

As I will argue in the following chapters, though not alive, dolls can also move with greater fluidity between the states of living and lifelessness than even neophytes because they are neither. Since dolls are neither living nor dead, they are able to perform as if in one state or the other as well as in both simultaneously and so can perform as both indifferent text (as pure commodity) and subjective teller (as partner in imaginative play). The non-classified neophyte, in his liminal period, needs symbols of death to identify him as dead; whereas the doll, in its liminal state, is often used or read as a symbol of death which can then also, to borrow from Freud’s “The Uncanny,” “take on the full function and significance of what it symbolizes” (151). The doll as a symbol can then represent and dwell in the states of living (as storyteller, as subject) or dead (as text, as object) though continuing to be neither as well as both.

The space that the doll occupies is not, however, only a type of permanent liminal state which can reflect these human states, but it is also a space which lacks an organizing or classifying principal because its very “thingness” resists such customary classification. In other words, the doll can also occupy nonhuman spaces. Because of this, the doll is truly

²⁴ There are three significant ways in which “life” is still present in this structural “death.” First, technically (and perhaps obviously), despite all symbolic gestures, the neophyte is still a living person. Performing as if dead or being considered dead is still not actually being dead. Secondly, the space in which the neophyte is unclassified and seen as dead is a culturally ordered and articulated space because his “deadness” is defined by the symbols by which his society recognizes and indicates death. To have such firm and fixed symbols or symbolic acts (being buried, forced to lie in the position and style of a traditional burial, painted to look deceased, forced *to live* with those dressed to appear dead or, actually, *to live* with the dead) highlights the relationship between this state of deadness and the state of living since it is the living who are dictating what death looks like and how it needs to be reflected back to the living in order to be recognized as such (Turner 96). Finally, with any presentation of human death there is also a presentation of human life. The “structural ‘invisibility’ of liminal personae,” which Turner discusses, is actually made visible not only through the means of naming (the importance and use of symbols), but also because to discuss anything dead is to also acknowledge that it was once alive, once visible (Ibid).

reflecting what Turner's idea of "not yet" or what "a not at all" classified thing should look like. Unlike Turner's neophyte, who was organized even within his liminality or his non-classification in terms of transitional states of living, the doll, being a material object, resists this predictable movement and cannot be classified using those same symbols or images of liminality. In other words, despite the neophyte's classification as "dead," he is still bound by societal assumptions and expectations about how he should perform "death." For dolls, however, there cannot be any customary way of treating it in death (because it can never die) or in life (because it can never be living). Nevertheless, the problem is that the doll and its power *are* discussed in terms of human states of being (those of being living or dead). Such readings then classify the doll as being liminal in the same sense as Turner's neophyte. Therefore, in order to avoid this customary way of reading the doll through the dichotomy of human living and death, I address the state of the doll, in the following chapters, through symbols which are also specifically not human though they are not entirely dead: the shadow, the box, and the shadow box. Nevertheless, the foundation to this general misreading of the doll's liminality is in a narrow understanding of the concept of the uncanny.

The Uncanny:

In his essay, "The Uncanny" (originally published in 1919), Sigmund Freud's starting point in defining the concept was with a paper written by Ernst Jentsch in which Jentsch defines the uncanny as when there is "doubt as to whether an apparently animate object really is alive and, conversely, whether a lifeless object might not perhaps be animate" (135). Freud quotes Jentsch as stating that:

‘One of the surest devices for producing slightly uncanny effects through story-telling ... is to leave the reader wondering whether a particular figure is a real person or an automaton, and to do so in such a way that his attention is not focused directly on the uncertainty, lest he should be prompted to examine and settle the matter at once, for in this way, as we have said, the special emotional effect can easily be dissipated....’
(Ibid)

To a greater extent, the power of the doll has been measured against this definition despite the fact that, in this same essay, Freud infamously discarded the doll, Olympia, from his discussion of the concept through Hoffmann’s figure of the “Sand-Man,” choosing instead to focus on the uncanny experience of being robbed of one’s eyes.²⁵ However, works such as Hélène Cixous’ 1976 essay, “Fiction and Its Phantoms: A Reading of Freud’s *Das Unheimliche* (“The Uncanny”),” have taken issue with Freud’s dismissal of Olympia as being “nothing else than a personification of Nathaniel’s feminine attitude toward his father in his infancy” and have reclaimed uncanniness as belonging to the doll (538). Nevertheless, these readings have also, to a degree, contributed to a now familiar cultural understanding of the uncanny doll. That understanding is that the doll’s power is, primarily, articulated through the fears of it having a real independence, existence, and difference away from the human body.²⁶

²⁵ “Uncertainty as to whether an object is animate or inanimate, which we were bound to acknowledge in the case of the doll Olympia, is quite irrelevant in the case of this more potent example of the uncanny” (“Uncanny” 138-39).

“...I hope that most readers of the story will agree with me – that the motif of the seemingly animate doll Olympia is by no means the only one responsible for the incomparably uncanny effect of the story, or even the one which it is principally due” (136).

²⁶ Also see Eva-Maria Simms’ essay, “Uncanny Dolls: Images of Death in Rilke and Freud,” in a 1996 volume of the journal, *New Literary History*; Françoise Meltzer’s “The Uncanny Rendered Canny: Freud’s Blind Spot in Reading Hoffmann’s ‘Sandman,’” in *Introducing Psychoanalytic Theory*, edited by Sander L.

In many ways, however, it may seem as if these two sides of the doll (familiar material object versus uncanny entity) parallel Bill Brown's articulation of "object" (that which continues to "work" as expected) versus "thing" (that which "asserts itself" and claims a new kind power over us when it "stops working" as expected) ("Thing Theory" 4). Nevertheless, such paralleling is actually misleading as to just how similar those two sides of the doll coin actually are in terms of cultural expectations and understandings of this child's toy. In his 2001 essay "Thing Theory," Brown wrote that there:

... are occasions of contingency – the chance interruption – that disclose a physicality of things. In Byatt's novel,²⁷ the interruption of the habit of looking *through* windows as transparencies enables the protagonist to look *at* a window itself in its opacity. As they circulate through our lives, we look *through* objects (to see what they disclose about history, society, nature, or culture – above all, what they disclose about *us*), but we only catch a glimpse of things. ... We look through objects because there are codes by which our interpretive attention makes them meaningful, because there is a discourse of objectivity that allows us to use them as facts. A *thing*, in contrast, can hardly function as a window. We begin to confront the thingness of objects when they stop working for us: when the drill breaks, when the car stalls, when the windows get filthy, when their flow within the circuits of production and distribution, consumption and exhibition, has been arrested, however momentarily. The story of objects asserting themselves as things, then, is the story of the changing relation to the human

Gilman (1982); and Carriker's discussion of both Cixous's and Meltzer's essays as found in her work on dolls, Created in Our Image: The Miniature Body of the Doll as Subject and Object (1998).

²⁷ Brown is referring to A.S. Byatt's The Biographer's Tale (New York, 2001).

subject and thus the story of how the thing really names less an object than a particular subject-object relation. (“Thing Theory” 4)

One may argue that, when understood in terms of Brown’s articulation of the difference between “object” and “thing,” the doll has, in fact, “asserted” its power when it stopped working as a material object and instead began working (by not “working”) as a means through which one may access the uncanny experience. After all, as in the uncanny, in Brown’s concept there is a correlation between the relationship of working and not working to being alive and dead, and the examples Brown uses of things “not working” are things in which there is an interruption to their purpose or intent, or even a breaking down. In other words, there are objects, such as the drill or the car, which fail or “die” because they are no longer functioning as they were intended to as products of consumption. The doll can also stop working in that same sense when a voice box breaks or hair becomes unglued, but, more provocatively, one can also claim that the doll also stops working when it stops acting as we expect the doll to act: its moves on its own free of its mechanical abilities or human manipulation, or it seems to have a will of its own by speaking though it has no voice box, or by independently participating with the world around it though it has no soul. Furthermore, these instances of the doll “not working” (whether depicted in literature, art, or film) are also instances in which the experience of the doll is then labeled as being uncanny. However, the difference between how Brown’s “thing” does not work and the experience of the uncanny doll is that the notion of an independently animated doll has actually become part of the cultural idea of how a doll “works.” The resulting effect is that those narratives that engage with the same question (whether an apparently inanimate doll is animate or not) have become so commonplace and predictable in our culture as to have helped push the doll out of the

uncanny experience entirely. Or, to quote Cixous: “The abbreviating effect which affirms life asserts death” (545). In other words: We have become so familiar with associating the uncanny with the doll that by naming the doll as uncanny we have destroyed its actual uncanniness. Therefore although the experience of seeing a doll “coming to life” in a film or a story may seem to frighten an audience, it surely no longer surprises them.

Consequently, whether read through Freud or Cixous, the uncanny has become an empirical tool with which the doll is now universally dissected and so, to borrow now from Freud: “There is no longer any question of ‘intellectual uncertainty,’” and, with that, it seems that the doll can no longer be experienced as uncanny (“Uncanny” 139). This lost experience is then similar to the “aura” that Walter Benjamin saw as lost in the age of reproduction. In his essay, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” (first published in 1936), Benjamin defines “aura” of natural products...:

...as the unique phenomenon of a distance, however close it may be. If, while resting on a summer afternoon, you follow with your eyes a mountain range on the horizon or a branch which casts its shadow over you, you experience the aura of those mountains, of that branch. (“Work” 222-23)

Benjamin then pins the loss of “aura” on two circumstances: culture’s desire to “bring things ‘closer’” and their equally passionate concern for overcoming each thing’s uniqueness by assimilating it as a reproduction” (“Work” 223). In twentieth-century culture it then also appears as if that power or “aura” which once seemed to have belonged to the doll may now also be lost because of that collective desire to name and identify its power as “uncanny” and to then cycle such pre-determined likenesses of the uncanny experience back out into culture

in the form of mass entertainment like popular horror films,²⁸ television shows,²⁹ and lasting works of literature.³⁰ In fact, the uncanny and the doll have become so inextricably bound up with one another that this concept is now part of the intersubjective knowledge in which the doll is discussed rather than as a subjective experience that was once contingent on one's own singular engagement with a doll's actual nature. This loss of meaning is just what is suggested by Goethe's remark as quoted in Benjamin's "Little History of Photography:" "There is a delicate empiricism which so intimately involves itself with the object that it becomes true theory" ("Little" 287). However, as outlined earlier in this introduction, the experience of the uncanny is still a key component of the experience of the doll in terms of the state of dollhood, but in order to reclaim for the doll its actual uncanniness – the relationship of one to the other needs to be reassembled from that failing construct of the doll's uncanniness being equated with the expectation of its aliveness in animation.

²⁸ The most familiar is likely the "Child's Play" series where the infamous Chucky straddles that line of animate and inanimate depending on his own murderous agenda. Child's Play. Dir. Tom Holland. Perfs. Catherine Hicks, Chris Sarandon. United Artists, 1988. Child's Play 2: Chucky's Back. Dir. John Lafia. Perfs. Alex Vincent, Jenny Agutter. Universal Pictures, 1990. Child's Play 3: Look Who's Stalking. Dir. Jack Bender. Perfs. Justin Whalin, Perrey Reeves. Universal Pictures, 1991. Bride of Chucky. Dir. Ronny Yu. Perfs. Jennifer Tilly, Katherine Heigl. Midwinter Productions, Inc., 1998.

²⁹ Such haunted and haunting dolls have appeared on many television shows from the well-known episode of a classic program, The Twilight Zone ("Living Doll." The Twilight Zone. writ. Jerry Sohl, dir. Richard C. Sarafian. Season 5, episode 6. November 1, 1965) to an episode of a current program, The Ghost Whisperer ("Cursed." Ghost Whisperer. writ. Laurie McCarthy, dir. Kim Moses. CBS. Season 4, episode 21. May 2009).

³⁰ Writers such as Edgar Allan Poe (in "William Wilson"), Joyce Carol Oates (in "The Doll"), Henry James (in "The Jolly Corner") and Susan Sontag (in "The Dummy") have engaged with ideas of the uncanniness of the doll as these works are even found published in a collection of short stories titled: Doubles, Dummies and Dolls: 21 Terror Tales of Replication (edited by Leonard Wolf. New York: Newmarket Press, 1995). Another "haunting" collection of doll stories is The Haunted Dolls (an anthology selected by Seon Manley and Gogo Lewis. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1980) which includes stories by Agatha Christie ("The Dressmaker's Doll"), Nathaniel Hawthorne ("Feathertop") and Hans Christian Andersen ("The Steadfast Tin Soldier").

Specifically, the uncanny experience of the doll is recaptured by addressing one particular distinction: form versus symbol.

First and foremost, in the liminal state of dollhood, the experience of the uncanny is not linked to the doll as a physical form, but as a functioning symbol. This dissertation will carefully focus instead on the latter: the animation of the doll in terms of descriptions of its consciousness or “soul,” rather than the mechanics of its temporal body. The failure of the doll’s uncanny experience was that such an experience was anchored in the toy’s body whereas this project looks to discuss the experience of the uncanny with respect to abstract representations of being such as the soul, the spirit, or the “aura.” Such intangible qualities of otherness are *not* those suggested by the Jentsch description of the concept of the uncanny that opens Freud’s essay, where he states that the experience of the uncanny is felt when there is “doubt as to whether an apparently animate object really is alive and, conversely, whether a lifeless object might not perhaps be animate” (135). Although this description seems to address the doll almost directly, that fact also restricts readings of the doll only in terms of its physicality, an interpretation which has been reproduced so many times that associating dolls with the uncanny has become a critical commonplace. Like the two movements which erase “aura” for Benjamin, being both identifiable and reproducible examples of the uncanny voids the actual experience of the uncanny through the doll. In order to maintain and use its power, I will locate dollhood’s manifestation of the uncanny in Freud’s summary of it as a purely symbolic function and not in its material self:

An uncanny effect often arises when the boundary between fantasy and reality is blurred, when we are faced with the reality of something that we have until now

considered imaginary, when a symbol takes on the full function and significance of what it symbolizes, and so forth. (“Uncanny” 150-51)

The doll is the manifestation of this moment because it is the symbol which articulates itself while at the same time it represents something else. To only discuss the doll in terms of human states is problematic because, again, representations of the doll living and the doll dead do not look like the human living or the human dead, even when compared to those who occupy liminal human spaces (the neophyte in culture or Peter Pan in literature). The doll, after all, is a thing. And it is the doll’s very *thingness* which allows it to carve out and define a new concept of the liminal space. However, in this articulation of Freud’s concept of the uncanny, the effect of the uncanny is found in that blurred boundary or state between fantasy and reality where the uncanny doll also exists. By describing the uncanny in such terms, Freud not only proposes that in such liminality a relationship to human life does not have to exist but also points to a more complicated uncanniness present in the doll. The doll, as a conduit, can then be that symbol that takes on the full function and significance of what it symbolizes in a liminal state without mention of human states or qualities. Reading the doll as a symbol then also reinforces the idea that it does not need to have a relationship to human states of liminality in order to be considered as existing in a liminal state. As the rest of this work will convey, the doll is in fact the thing which captures a much more complex and multifaceted idea of liminal identity and, in that identity, a truer sense of the uncanny.

This distinction between the physical and the symbolic uncanny as recognized by Jentsch and Freud, respectively, is crucial to my own critical method for this project. As noted, physical dollhood invites psychological and sociological interpretations, but treating the imaginary and spiritual dimension of dollhood demands literary criticism. As the

difference between Jentsch's idea of the uncanny and the symbolic one invited by Freud is much like a distinction between the uncanny experience as grounded in the physical versus the immaterial, this project also grounds itself as a critical work by engaging with the doll as it exists in the realm of the imagination rather than in the realm of the real.

Consider the image which opens this introduction as a work existing in these two realms (see figure 1). Described as "Plate 481 Movements, Female, Child, lifting a doll, turning, and walking off" and titled "Muybridge Animal Locomotion, plate 481," this 1887 plate of images taken by Eadweard Muybridge can be interpreted as a work grounded in the real or as a work grounded in the imaginative. As a work reflective of the real, one can interpret these images as if there is a definitive answer that this series of still photographs offers about a child's relationship to the doll. Such an analysis would be akin to answering that \$25,000 question that Muybridge so famously answered in 1878 with the photo sequence of a certain animal in motion: while galloping, is there any point when all four of a horse's legs come off the ground?³¹ With that series of images of a horse in motion, an answer to a long sought after question could be provided: yes, a running horse, for an instant, was air bound. Does the series of photographs of a girl picking up her doll and walking away, taken almost ten years later, also ask an implicit question demanding the kind of certainty that only the real could provide? Over his lifetime, Muybridge captured many such photographic sequences of animals and humans in motion and, though most did not test a hypothesis as

³¹ In Mitchell Leslie's Stanford Magazine article, "The Man Who Stopped Time: Photographer Eadweard Muybridge stunned the world when he caught a horse in the act of flying" (2001), Leslie writes that "legend has it" that Leland Stanford, a former governor, railroad owner, and horseracing enthusiast, had a "\$25,000 wager on the outcome" of this famous question though, as Leslie also shares, "[v]irtually every serious historian to look into this ... has concluded there was no bet" (<http://www.stanfordalumni.org/news/magazine/2001/mayjun/features/muybridge.html>).

directly as the galloping sequence, his images clearly demonstrate the difference between approaching a work as being reflective of the real or of the imaginative.

For instance, each of the twelve images of the girl in motion contributes to the collection as a whole in the same way in which individual chapters work together to produce a single narrative, a narrative of a certain child's sole pursuit in having and holding a particular doll. A reading of these images as such a narrative is to consider the work as functioning in the realm of the real as if the individual images are facts that can be dissected in order to provide a firm answer as to how the child views the doll. In the first five images the little girl seems to be driven to the doll itself as the child seemingly walks with purpose from the viewer's left toward where the doll lies on the floor amongst some other unrecognizable things (fabric? a bed?), picks it up, and holds it in her hands. In the first two (or three) images she appears to only look forward and down toward her destination, the doll, and not at the camera which is recording her every move. These motions imply intent and desire. In the sixth image, she pivots and seems to momentarily face the camera, smile with an open mouth, before returning again from where she came, the off-screen space to the viewer's left. Here we see her pleasure in reaching the doll. Even though she holds the doll in virtually the same position in her hands (not against her body, not close to her face) when she is walking away with it, she appears to express joy in her possession. In all six of the last images, her smile appears natural and genuine, but specifically in the first two of the last six, the ones which follow her pivoting return, she appears particularly pleased with herself as she shares a wide open smile with the camera that also captures a motion in her step which suggests the exuberance of skipping away. After piecing together the fragments (the singular

images) of this whole picture, one can surmise that the child single-mindedly attained and returned with the doll that she so desired.

This reading of the narrative of these photographs is not wrong, but it is, in many ways, evidentiary. Such a reading of a text is invested in a cool and calculating dissection as if such a performance will and must result in some final cohesive answer. This type of analysis, though thoroughly successful in discussing the motions and movement of a visual narrative, removes the actual experience of the imaginative and thus the uncanny from the story. In other words, through such a reading of this visual essay any talk of the uncanny experience would be one only grounded in the physical: what is found, what can be touched, and what is cataloged through the investigative process. For example, as Jentsch suggested that:

‘One of the surest devices for producing slightly uncanny effects through story-telling ... is to leave the reader wondering whether a particular figure is a real person or an automaton...’ (“Uncanny” 135)

Then one can surmise that Muybridge, as a storyteller, provided the reader with the experience of the uncanny by causing him or her to wonder as to the authenticity of this engagement between the child and the doll in its entirety. The question of the “realness” of this situation comes through with the evidence of the staging of the action (the lines and numbers of the tracking chart behind the girl) and her almost constant awareness of the camera’s eye, as seen in almost all of the stills, once she finally reaches and returns with the doll in her hands. This type of uncanny experience, because it is identifiable and universally recognizable is not actually a representation of the uncanny as a *personal* experience. There is no intellectual uncertainty present because an evidentiary critic does not value it. By

dissecting the image-story in such a way the reader first grounds the uncanny moment in what is physically present rather than what is immaterial and also grounds the moment in the realm of the real (the evidence found in the text) instead of in the realm of the imaginative (the experience of reading the text).

When discussing the work as belonging to the realm of the imaginative, an important element is the value of maintaining distance. Distance which, as Benjamin discussed in his definition of “aura,” is vital if one wishes to actually gain knowledge through the experience of a moment rather than to merely comprehend a moment through a close and critical examination of it. Now looking at Muybridge’s visual narrative of a girl and a doll, it may seem as if there is no room for a reading of distance, never mind as a means to offer access to the experience of the uncanny. However, despite the qualities of the images which lend themselves to such a “close” reading, these images are also suffused with “aura” or distance and the true symbolic uncanny moment because of their content: the child and the doll.

For all the ways in which evidence is able to provide intellectual certainty about what is occurring within this narrative, what such a reading is unable to provide is the child’s actual experience. The aforementioned moments of the uncanny in this series link the experience of the uncanny to the doll as a physical form and not as a functioning symbol. Those moments of uncertainty as to the “realness” or genuineness of the story are laid out for us by the storyteller in the form of the simple empirical plot of his story, a construct which the evidentiary critic is then able to articulate. However, to identify the experience of the uncanny as a functioning symbol is rather the work of the critic who reveals and revels in the narrative’s qualities of distance.

To access this actual experience of the uncanny, such a critic produces the moments of liminality without taking them apart and thus making them no longer liminal. For instance, consider the third image of the series. In it, the girl does not look directly at the doll though, one would think, assuming that her assignment was to “Go pick up that doll,” her eyes would be entirely focused on either the doll or the camera which was recording her fetching of it. So where is she looking? What has caught her attention aside from the task at hand? In that same image, the girl appears to be mouthing something as if, possibly, unsure of what she is doing or is supposed to do. Or is she saying something else entirely? This is the moment she is reaching for the doll – could she be saying something to it? For it? Through a close reading of a photo spread in Life magazine, the following chapter of this dissertation will argue that for all the ways in which a child’s doll play may be constructed by culture at large or controlled by more immediate influences like parents or those seemingly ever-present photographers, there is no measuring the real intimacy that takes place between a child and her plaything. That engagement between an object and its subject is oftentimes reversed in play as to be unknowable and ungraspable by any observer. For a series of photographs which seem to follow in the tradition of serving the investigative reporter and providing an answer (while galloping, is there any point when all four of a horse’s legs come off the ground?), it is the presence of that well-known yet private and immaterial intimacy that exists between the child and the doll which resists reader knowledge – no matter how well constructed, plotted, or controlled the rest of the elements of the narrative may be. That relationship between the child and her doll maintains not only a sense of aura for her, in not knowing the possible internal life of her own plaything, but also for the outside observer in not knowing the child’s thoughts, feelings, or privately held experiences. For the reader, it is

in just this realm of the imaginative where the experience of the uncanny actually occurs in this narrative and where this dissertation focuses its attention.

The Shadow:

Although Turner's concept of liminality and Freud's idea of the uncanny are the major theoretical tent poles of this dissertation, the images of the shadow, the box, and the shadow box also play significant roles in establishing a critical, as well as metaphorical, lens through which to read the experience of the doll in the state of dollhood.

The shadow, for example, is an apt tool in the study of dollhood because at the same time that children are beginning to negotiate the difference between themselves and their shadows, they are also inquiring about the possible dissimilarities between themselves and their dolls.

In terms of a child's development in recognizing the "other" as having an essence, spirit, or consciousness of its own, Lacan's "mirror stage" is an immediate touchstone reference. However, an emphasis on Lacan's pre-mirror and mirror stages does not fully facilitate access to the dollhood quality of being both self and other. The mirror, though it does point to an existence outside of the self, is nevertheless functioning as a reflection and thus illustrating the "other" as an extension that is still tied to the self. On the other hand, while the shadow too can function as a type of reflection of the self, it can also be experienced as expressing independence away from the self. This idea that the shadow can act independently of the self also produces a profound feeling of the uncanny as illustrated in such different works as James Frazer's anthropological study, The Golden Bough: A Study in

Magic and Religion³² and Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale, "The Shadow" (1847).³³

Freud also acknowledged the link of the shadow to the image of the double in his nod to Otto Ranks' work as "exploring the connections that link the double with mirror-images, shadows, guardian spirits, the doctrine of the soul and the fear of death" ("Uncanny" 142). Finally, one could argue that the rise of the literary device of the double or the motif of the doppelganger during this time period, specifically in Gothic literature, is a manifestation of where the shadow and the doll meet in form.

In addition to how the shadow articulates the "other," the age range in which children begin to engage with the possibility of an "other" present in their dolls corresponds to the age range of the "shadow stage" and not that of the "mirror stage." For Lacan, the "mirror stage"

³² "The Soul as a Shadow and a Reflection.—But the spiritual dangers I have enumerated are not the only ones which beset the savage. Often he regards his shadow or reflection as his soul, or at all events as a vital part of himself, and as such it is necessarily a source of danger to him. For if it is trampled upon, struck, or stabbed, he will feel the injury as if it were done to his person; and if it is detached from him entirely (as he believes that it may be) he will die" (Frazer 189).

³³ In this dark fairy tale, a "learned" man, a writer, loses his shadow in Africa only to have it reappear, in human form, when the man returns home. The shadow in its human disguise visits the man and makes him promise not to reveal its real identity. The shadow then relates his successes and experiences beginning with what he has learned from "Poesy" who occupied the house opposite the man's in Africa. Years later, the shadow returns again. It has grown fat and successful while the man has grown ill and though he writes "about the true, and the good, and the beautiful, but no one cares to hear such things!" (Andersen 324) The shadow then offers to take the man with it on its journeys, but only if the man becomes his shadow. Upon its engagement to a princess, the shadow wishes to make the man into a shadow permanently. The man, refusing to deceive anyone as to the shadow's real identity, proclaims he will reveal all to the princess. The shadow then locks up the man and tells the princess of "his shadow's" madness:

"I have lived to see the most cruel thing that any one can live to see!" said the Shadow. 'Only imagine—yes, it is true, such a poor shadow-skull cannot bear much—only think, my shadow has become mad: he thinks that he is a man, and that I—now only think—that I am his shadow!'" (Andersen 328). The shadow and the deceived princess do, indeed, wed and he, the Learned Man, according to the last line of story, "heard nothing of all this—for they had deprived him of life" (Andersen 329).

Also, in terms of the uncanny elements in this fairy tale, see When Dreams Came True: Classical Fairy Tales and Their Tradition (2007) by Jack Zipes who notes that:

Andersen "turned known literary motifs into provocative and uncanny stories that challenged conventional expectations and explored modes of magic realism that he learned from the German romantics, especially E. T. A. Hoffmann. ... 'The Shadow,' which is clearly based on the German writer Adelbert von Chamisso's novella *Peter Schlemihl* (1813), in which a man sells his shadow to the devil, can also be traced to E. T. A. Hoffmann's tale "The New Year's Adventure" (1819), in which a man gives up his reflection for love. For Andersen, this loss of a shadow or reflection is transformed into a problematic psychological conflict in which unconscious forces debilitate and eventually destroy a strong ego" (122).

originates with the infant while the playing with dolls is actually *not* typically the play of the very young.³⁴ Rather, doll play is traditionally seen as (and thus marketed toward) the play of school-aged children, older children who are no longer in the “mirror stage” but are in what the French child psychologist Jean Piaget implied to be a “shadow stage.”

According to Hall and Ellis’s “A Study of Dolls,” the stage of “doll play” is typically between seven and ten: “Very rare are those who begin doll play in the cradle and keep it up through life. The doll passion seems to be strongest between seven and ten, and to reach its climax between eight and nine” (Hall, “Dolls” 184). Madam Anna Grudzinska in her 1907 study, “A Study of Dolls Among Polish Children” which acted as a response to Hall and Ellis’s work noted that “Polish children cease playing with dolls earlier than American, usually by nine or ten years, but there is a recrudescence of interest in dolls at about twelve, which is, perhaps, a cropping out of the maternal instinct “(389).³⁵ In terms of the stage of

³⁴ Without a doubt much younger children can also enjoy playing with dolls, but the complexity of the relationship of the self to the doll seems to occur for children who are older than infant or toddler age. As will be discussed, doll play is the play of children who are at the age in which they not only begin to notice that “others” may exist, but also seem to be constantly negotiating with their own knowledge (or lack thereof) of the essential qualities of the “other,” whether it be shadow or doll.

³⁵ In April of 2009, The Sydney Morning Herald published an article, “Goodbye dolly, hello Nintendo,” which reported on a social research study that revealed that today’s girls stop playing with their dolls at an average age of six or seven while their mothers had stopped playing with dolls between the ages of ten and eleven (Burke). Nevertheless, despite the fact that this study reveals that contemporary children are not playing with dolls as long as their counterparts once did over 100 years ago, Hall’s and Grudzinska’s observations are not necessarily entirely out of date. This study indicates that the earlier end of doll play is a phenomenon of this youngest generation, “generation Z.” More interesting, however, is the fact that the study notes that the mothers of this generation played with their dolls until around ages ten or eleven. Therefore, one may surmise that this drop in age is more of a twenty-first century phenomenon since the mothers of these children (mothers who were children of the late twentieth century) played with their dolls for approximately as long as the children at the turn of the previous century.

Also worth mentioning is that this recent study implies that this youngest generation’s early discarding of dolls is reflective of the growing influence of technology. Although one may argue that every new generation is perceived as corrupted by “technology,” one child psychologist calls this current incarnation: “the up-ageing syndrome.” This syndrome is thought to be “fuelled by the premature sexualisation of children” and “has resulted in a generation of young girls deeply dissatisfied with their age, no matter how old they are” (Burke).

In addition, though research such as the Australian study does indicate the erosion of childhood, others are pointing to an extension. Jennie Lindon in her 2001 book, Understanding Children’s Play, acknowledges that many school aged children now stop having imaginary companions at younger ages because they are often

“shadow play,” a 1927 study about children’s responses to shadows, conducted by renowned French child psychologist Jean Piaget and published in his The Child’s Conception of Physical Causality, revealed an age range in which children are negotiating their relationship to the shadow that is virtually identical to the age range in which children are playing with dolls. Victor I. Stoichita, in his A Short History of the Shadow (1997), summarizes Piaget’s concept of a child’s four stages in understanding the phenomenon of shadows in the following way:

[in terms of a child around the age of five] ...in this first stage, the shadow is said to be the result of the collaboration or participation of two roots, one internal (the shadow *emanates* from the object, it *is* a part of the object), the other external (the shadow comes from the night, from a dark corner of the bedroom etc.). It is only around the age of six or seven that the shadow is seen to be the product of one single object. From that point it is regarded as a substance, emanating haphazardly from the object. However, from the third stage (around the age of eight), the child can even predict where a shadow will fall, going as far as to state that the shadow is produced where light is absent. But behind this outwardly correct reasoning we discover the ‘substantialism’ of the final stages: to the child, the shadow is still nothing but an emanation from the object, but it is an emanation that drives out the light and is therefore obliged to position itself on the side opposite the source of light. It is only around the age of nine that the child, at last, realizes that the shadow is not a

shamed by fellow students out of such play, but she also questions whether such play ever really ends as she quotes from George Bernard Shaw (the famed playwright of Pygmalion): “‘We do not stop playing because we grow old, we grow old because we stop playing.’ It is an open question whether some grown-up children ever stop playing. Perhaps it depends on your definition of play” (90).

Finally, A.F. Robertson’s book, Life Like Dolls: The Collector Doll Phenomenon and the Lives of the Women Who Love Them also articulates and argues for the presence of a type of extended doll play into adulthood especially in terms of how avid doll collectors consider and engage with their own dolls.

substance behind the object, driven away by light. To the child the shadow simply becomes synonymous with the absence of light (Stoichita, “Shadow” 29).³⁶

In essence, the age range in which Piaget indicated children are negotiating their relationship to the shadow (five to nine) is profoundly similar to the age range in which G. Stanley Hall and others observed children to most often play with dolls (seven to ten).

This convergence of age in doll play and shadow work is as remarkable as it is useful. As a critical tool in describing the liminal space of the doll, the shadow proves not only to be a stronger metaphorical “reflection” than the mirror, but also more of an appropriate one in a discussion that engages with the implications and influences of child psychology in literature and art for and about the child’s relationship with the doll as an “other.”

The Box:

Rich in a wide range of both obsolete and current definitions,³⁷ many of the meanings, uses, and images associated with the box do, indeed, position it as another space

³⁶ Note that there are works which challenge and delve much deeper into the psychological implications of Piaget’s ideas as well as its relevance and accuracy. I found some interesting observations about this study in the following works: Michael Siegal’s Knowing Children: Experiments in Conversation and Cognition (1997), Eric Margolis and Stephen Laurence’s Concepts: Core Readings (1999), and Felipe Fernández-Armesto’s Truth: A History and a Guide for the Perplexed (1997).

³⁷ As a brief overview, the online OED notes “box” to be a small evergreen tree, a case or receptacle with a lid that is “(unless otherwise specified) understood to be four-sided and of wood;” a mixing up of different flocks of sheep which also informs its definition as a “stage of confusion;” slang for a safe, TV, coffin, jail, confessional, vulgar euphemism for female genitalia, short for telephone (box), jury or witness (box), seated compartment in a theatre (as well as the occupants of such a box), a small shelter, free range area for a horse; a part of a watch, gun, pump; a space that acts as a container (ballot box, letter box), a space that is contained (an enclosed military area, defended in all directions), and a space that does the containing (the cavity inside a tree’s trunk where it collects its sap) ; to “box” is also to beat with the hand, with fists, but also to confine, to cup, and “to box clever” which is slang for: behaving cleverly or to “use one’s wits” (online OED).

In addition, from New Dictionary of American Slang, ed. Robert L. Chapman, Ph.D. (Harper & Row, 1986, 42) box or boxes may refer to male genitals, especially as displayed by tight pants; any stringed instrument, esp. a guitar; an accordion; a small camera; an icebox or refrigerator; police telephone operator; a

of liminal unfolding as do the many profound ways in which theorists from Gaston Bachelard to Laura Mulvey have engaged with the image of this familiar form.³⁸ Nevertheless, the box is a particularly valuable metaphor for the doll in dollhood because of how it articulates the idea of the doll as having an architecture that is both a thing of construction (or science) and an act of deconstruction (or art).

The concept of “construction” reflects the systematic and practical side of architecture (its science) which correlates to the general physical form and intended functional construction of the box (as container, as TV, as coffin) as a thing used by humans “to house” other things. The doll embodies this understanding of the box when the doll “looks” like a doll (child-like, miniature, unbreakable) and when it is being played with as a doll is “supposed to” be played with (as a baby, as a mother, as a children’s television show character). In this sense, the box represents what the doll *collector* values – the doll that is kept in its original packaging, in its original box:

With an eye to investment, the ‘serious’ collector keeps everything intact from bows and shoelaces to wrappings, labels, and receipts, and must resist the temptation to make little changes to clothes and hair. (Robertson 54).

The act of “deconstruction,” on the other hand, illustrates the creative and aesthetic side of architecture (its art) located in how a box is employed beyond its intended use and so

tight spot, a bind. Also, “boxed” meaning drunk, “boxed in” meaning trapped; “boxed out” meaning totally uninhibited because on drugs; “box man” meaning a safe-cracker, or a cashier or blackjack dealer at a gambling casino.

Finally, also worth noting is that fact that boxes are also closely linked to dolls in measuring the value of a doll when the question is asked: Is it in its original box? There are many visual representations that engage and play with the image of “doll in box,” some of which can be found here:
<http://dollhood.tumblr.com/tagged/box>

³⁸ See Bachelard’s The Poetics of Space: A Classic Look at How We Experience Intimate Places (first published in French in 1958, translated into English in 1958) for a poetic reading of the box as home and Mulvey’s “Pandora’s Box: Topographies of Curiosity,” as found in her work Fetishism and Curiosity (1996) for a thoroughly engaging feminist reading of the Greek myth.

becomes “home” to something else (the shoebox becomes a diorama, a bed for a stuffed toy, a bird’s coffin). The architecture of deconstruction is recognized in how the original box is manipulated and not merely touched, but also changed and challenging beyond its given form. The doll exemplifies this quality of the box when that which is called “doll” does not “look” like one (it resembles instead a corn husk, a pillow, a clothes pin) or when it is played with in an unintended manner (instead of being held like a baby – it is hung from a tree, instead of being dressed – it is dissected). The box here then signifies what the doll *owner* values – the doll that is played with, taken out of its box, and tactically experienced:

Nearly all the doll owners we met were critical of collectors who put material values above emotional values. Keeping a doll boxed, with her label and price tag still fixed to her wrist, is considered inhumane. (Robertson 54)

With these two sides of architecture in mind, what the box then offers a reading of the doll in dollhood is how the doll, like the box, is able to embrace the two opposing sides of what it means to have a tangible existence. Through the exploration of depths, the negotiation of spatial materiality, and the journey in the reading and recognizing of boundaries through the sense of touch, the doll, like the box, can be viewed as moving in and out of being both an object of steady and fixed construction as well as an experience of unstable and unknown deconstruction.

Shadow Box:

The significance of the shadow box in understanding the doll’s power is that it not only brings together both the qualities of the shadow and the box. The shadow box also expresses how there exists a Möbius strip-like movement between the relationship between

the shadow and box images, a fluidity that more fully grasps the liminal and uncanny nature of the doll in dollhood.

In her Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism (1994), Elizabeth Grosz articulates the Möbius strip to the relationship present in the construct of “shadow box”:

The Möbius strip has the advantage of showing the inflection of mind into body and body into mind, the ways in which, through a kind of twisting or inversion, one side becomes another. This model also provides a way of problematizing and rethinking the relations between the inside and the outside of the subject, its psychical interior and its corporeal exterior, by showing not their fundamental identity or reducibility but the torsion of the one into the other, the passage, vector, or uncontrollable drift of the inside into the outside and the outside into the inside. (xii)

Although the use of the “shadow box” as a metaphor could represent the sorting out of what elements of the doll are “shadow” and which are “box,” that ability does not convey the real impact of reading the doll as a “shadow box.” Instead, as Grosz suggests, what the image of the shadow box offers this reading of the doll identity is the suggestion of what it feels like to a subject to experience the distinct qualities of the box and the shadow as they move into and from one another like forms constantly intertwining and collapsing on a Möbius strip.

Outline of Chapters:

As I anchor the complexity and nuance of the liminal space of dollhood in an understanding of the three images of the shadow, the box and the shadow box, I devote a chapter to each metaphor.

In Chapter One, “The Doll is a Shadow,” the shadow’s pertinence to a discussion of dollhood is twofold. First, the doll, like the shadow, is experienced as a stable visual construct of something else. Each is considered to be a physical reflection, possession, as well as creation for and of a human form. On the other hand, both the shadow and the doll can also elicit a troubling or uncanny visual experience for their respective viewers when they perform differently, independently, or at a distance from the recognizable human body. After all, both the shadow and the doll have been depicted in literature as well as in visual arts as forms which are capable of animation independent from human control.

Tracing a number of ways in which the doll functions like a shadow as expressed through the ancient Roman myth of the origins of art, this chapter then moves on to discuss how “likeness” is measured in the idea of portrait dolls (“Shirley Temple” dolls versus the “Strawberry Shortcake” doll) and how the doll, like the shadow, values and understands intimacy as expressed in the creation of dolls in folk art by twentieth-century American artists (Nellie Mae Rowe, Morton Bartlett, and Calvin and Ruby Black). Finally, the culmination of this chapter is a close reading of how all of these elements of the shadow come together in the doll as expressed in a 1961 photo essay for Life magazine, titled “A Girl Named Sandra is a Doll Named Peter.”

In the second chapter, “The Doll is a Box,” the tactile qualities of the box as well as its ability to express depth are offered to a reading of the doll and to a fuller understanding of the liminal state of dollhood. Aside from being experienced through the field of vision, the doll, like the box, is also experienced through the sense of touch. Unlike the shadow, the doll can be encountered via the physical senses similar to the ways in that the box is concretely experienced and investigated. Therefore, as the first chapter argues that the shadow offers

dollhood an understanding of how the child begins to negotiate his or her relationship to the “other” through the doll, my second chapter explores how the box represents dollhood for the child beginning to experience the actual depth of that “other” by playing with the interiority and exteriority of the doll.

In order to discuss the nature of the toy’s power in box/doll “mis-play” in terms of their respective literal as well as semantic deconstruction, this chapter begins with deconstructive nature of curiosity (as examined through a passage from Toni Morrison’s The Bluest Eye (1970)) and then turns to the deconstruction associated with the corpse (as articulated in the artwork of German artist Hans Bellmer and the children’s book The Meanest Doll in the World (2003) written by Ann M. Martin and Laura Godwin, and illustrated by Brian Selznick). In the section that follows, I then discuss how even the deconstructed parts of the doll reveal their individual and unique powers to be human-like (as seen through a reading of a song found in Charles Kingsley’s children’s book, The Water Babies (1863), which begins with the line: “I once had a sweet little doll, dears” (193) as well as not human-like at all (as found in the characterization of Tottie from Rumer Godden’s children’s book, The Doll’s House (1962)). In order to combine the effects of these types of “mis-play” together along with the notions of a doll soul as a thing of action, this chapter concludes with a close reading of a contemporary children’s story (“The Dolls” by Ian McEwan as found in his The Daydreamer (1994)).

In Chapter Three, “The Doll is a Shadow Box,” the interests of the shadow intersect with the interests of the box to complicate the liminal space of dollhood and reveal it to function much like the constantly changing and returning path on a Möbius strip. Exploring how the incorporeal shadow merges with the physical box in two works named “Untitled

(Bébé Marie)” (a 1940s shadow box by Joseph Cornell and a 1990s poem by Charles Simic) leads to a larger discussion of how this newly amalgamated “shadow box” begins to present how the doll can be viewed as even having more than a human-like subjective experience. I will argue that for the state of dollhood, the “shadow box” illustrates how the doll can still be the object of the experience, but can now also be the subject that experiences. And primarily through a close reading of two very different texts (the early twentieth-century poem, “Lalka” (“The/A Doll” in English), by Polish poet Bolesław Leśmian, and the 1957 picture book, “The Lonely Doll,” by Dare Wright), this chapter examines how the doll can be experienced as the spectacle and the spectator, as that thing which is able to do more than mimic the human experience, it can also create its own space of experience because it can *exist* on the unique border between life and art.

Finally, in the concluding chapter, “The Doll in Dollhood,” I consider how the full existence and capacity of the doll in dollhood is able to trouble, challenge, and usurp human identity. In other words, the goal of this chapter is to address the consequences of the fullest expression of the doll’s power in the liminal state of dollhood for human existence. Drawing on Susan Stewart’s On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection (1984) and Jane Bennett’s “The Force of Things: Steps toward an Ecology of Matter” (2004), this dissertation ends with a reading of Sylvia Cassedy’s children’s book Lucie Babbidge’s House (1989) in order to address how the power of the liminal doll overwhelms that space of the human when both are placed on the same stage as equals. For in that space, the doll is able to maintain its objecthood at the same time in which it is able to eclipse the human as a subject.

CHAPTER 1

THE DOLL IS A SHADOW

Ancient Greek and Latin vocabulary also makes it clear that dolls were regarded as young girls, not babies. ... in Latin the doll is called *pupa*, a word that can also mean “little girl”; the same is true of the Greek word for doll, *korē*, which is also the standard word for “girl.” ... Another Greek word for the doll — *plangōn* — is found as a proper name in Greek New Comedy (something like the English “Dolly”). Thus, as defined in Greek and Latin, the doll is like a tiny mirror that reflects the world at large. This mirror is not simply a metaphor: the words *pupa* and *korē* were also both used to mean the “pupil” of the eye, and more specifically the miniaturized image captured in the mirror of someone else’s pupil when we look into the eye of the person who is looking at us.

**(on defining the image of “the girl in the eye”)
from Maurizio Bettini’s The Portrait of the Lover (1999), 217**

Introduction:

For the doll in dollhood, the shadow articulates three essential qualities. First, like the shadow, the doll can reflect the form of the human subject as a universally recognizable figure. This is the idea of “likeness” which the doll is most easily and unhesitatingly associated with. However, the doll, like the shadow, can also reflect the soul of the human subject as a privately experienced and intangible force. Although not as readily recognizable, this resemblance is what makes a doll a truly captivating force as it suggests some of the doll’s real power. Finally, as between the being and its shadow, it is interaction that plays a significant role in the negotiation between the human subject and its doll as an active performance that reveals the profound ability of the toy to reflect a likeness to human consciousness. This means that the doll, as a shadow, functions under the idea of a doubled

“likeness” that only one’s real engagement with the doll can articulate, explore, and experience.

The twofold idea of resemblance is captured in how the doll *looks like* a subject in terms of physical similarity, but also in how the doll *looks for* recognition in how well it registers the real consciousness of an absent subject that cannot be tangibly measured.

Although two seemingly indistinguishable ideas of “likeness,” an understanding of resemblance as physical similarity and resemblance as reminder of a soul can be made discernable in the intimacy of interaction or, more directly, in how an individual engages or plays with a doll.

This chapter will address the distinctions between these two sides of “likeness.” First through a reading of Pliny’s version of the myth of the origins of art (about the making of the first sculpture), this two-fold idea of “likeness” will be discussed in terms of the creation of modern “portrait dolls” like Shirley Temple dolls or Strawberry Shortcake dolls and in terms of the desire of the doll itself as expressed in Sylvia Waugh’s children’s book series about a doll family, The Mennymys (1993). The chapter then focuses on a later version of the origins myth, retold by Athenagoras, that employs a discussion of four twentieth-century American folk artists (Nellie Mae Rowe, Morton Bartlett, Calvin and Ruby Black) to illustrate how the act of interaction reveals the art object to be a greater expression of the doll as soul than the doll as body. Finally, the 1961 Life magazine photographic essay, titled “A Girl Named Sandra is a Doll Named Peter,”¹ is introduced to express the manifestation of these three

¹ Titled “A Girl Named Sandra is a Doll Named Peter,” this photo essay was published in the May 19, 1961 issue of Life magazine titled (9-10). Photographer: George Silk. Date taken: April 1961. One can view this photo essay on Google Books by searching the title of the essay or by going to the following link: <http://books.google.com/books?id=rE8EAAAAMBAJ&lpg=PA2&dq=titled%20%E2%80%9CA%20Girl%20Named%20Sandra%20is%20a%20Doll%20Named%20Peter%E2%80%9D&pg=PP1#v=onepage&q&f=false>

shadow qualities in the doll and how they contribute to a fuller understanding of the uncanny and liminal power of the doll in dollhood.

Pliny's Origins of Art and the Doll's Two Sides of "Likeness":

Although dolls are now mass produced, bought, and sold as objects and so seemingly separated that much further from the living body upon which they are modeled, the doll's first role was like that of the shadow's: as a form considered to be an actual extension of a human subject. In other words, the doll, like the shadow, was first and foremost considered to be a manifestation of the living soul. According to Max von Boehn, in his encyclopedic work, Dolls and Puppets (1932), it is the doll as vessel for the human spirit or the doll as "ancestor image" that "is rightly to be regarded as the oldest doll form" (76). Boehn describes this first doll as such:

The ancestor images represent the dead and form a substitute for the dead, since all the spiritual qualities of the deceased have passed into them. It is the dead man himself who, in sculptured form, continues to participate in the life of the community.
(Boehn 37)

Further, and more famously, Rainer Maria Rilke, in his essay "Some Reflections on Dolls: Occasioned by the Wax Dolls of Lotte Pritzel," addresses the consciousness he sees belonging so intrinsically to dolls. Kitti Carriker notes in her study, Created in Our Image (1998), that "Rilke's essay and the fictional narratives treated here illustrate, the body of the doll is often invested with a 'truth-bearing function,' perhaps even with a soul" and further adds that Rilke:

...places the doll at a border that conscribes existence ... He describes dolls who “lay there on the border of the children’s sleep, filled, at most, with the rudimentary idea of falling down, allowing themselves to *be dreamed*; as it was their habit, during the day to be lived unwearyingly with energies not their own.” This vision is the uncanny and “inhuman spectacle of a dream no longer in need of its dreamer,” a doll no longer in need of a dollmaker, an object no longer in need of a subject. Like the three-dimensional dolls of childhood, the doll-soul too eventually appears then vanishes at its own uncanny border, “the quiveringmost borders of our vision.... Reflecting thus and looking up, one is confronted and almost overwhelmed by their waxen nature.” (Carriker 172)

This vision is also of a doll with consciousness, with a soul, that is separate from the consciousness which may or may not be reflected onto it from the child or its viewer, a dynamic further suggested by the choice to frequently name dolls “Alma” (“soul” in Spanish).² Even the myth of the very origins of art, as recounted by Pliny the Elder (23-79 AD) in his Naturalis Historia (Natural History), insists that the doll is like the shadow in that it not only mirrors the physical shape of a subject but also captures the very essence of that subject’s consciousness.

Although the origins of art is a story rich with interpretations and retellings, the structure of the myth depends on the same cast (pun intended) of characters (a potter, his

² Aside from the “Alma” doll belonging to Austrian artist Oskar Kokoschka (1886-1980), there is also the 2009 “Alma” animated short film directed by Spanish filmmaker Rodrigo Blaas (<http://almashortfilm.com>). In this wordless Pixar-like short, a child named “Alma” stumbles upon a toy shop which features, in its window, a doll which looks exactly like her. After entering the doll-filled but human-empty shop, the girl, in touching the doll she admired as her mirror image becomes trapped within it. In essence, like all the other children hidden within the dolls of the toy shop, Alma’s “alma” is stolen and locked behind the glassy eyes of her miniature toy double.

heartbroken daughter, and her lover's shadow) and the same basic plot. On the eve of her beloved's departure, a potter's daughter captured her love's "likeness" by drawing "in outline on the wall the shadow of his face thrown by the lamp" (Stoichita, "Shadow" 11).³ Her father, the potter, then "pressed clay on this" in order to make a physical and tangible model of the young man's likeness (Ibid). This model, "hardened by exposure to fire with the rest of his pottery," thus became the first sculpture and was "preserved in the Shrine of the Nymphs" (Ibid). An interpretation of Pliny's version of this myth may, at first, seem to be as straightforward as the plotting of the story's events. The daughter created the first portrait by tracing her beloved's shadow and the potter created the first sculpture (or doll) by following that portrait. In such a reading of the story, all signs (articulated as the motives and actions made by individuals) seem to only point back to the beloved or, more precisely, the beloved's body. It is as if the very careful plotting of this myth articulates that the desire for art-making (or shadow-making) is found in the culmination of creating earnest referents that are only made, accumulated, and valued in how successfully they refer back to (however far) an undeniable and stable original form. In desiring her beloved, a potter's daughter catches his body's likeness by tracing his shadow. In wishing to please his daughter, a potter casts this silhouette into hardened clay. Wanting evidence of this act, the Shrine of the Nymphs preserved this model. Needing an origin to art, we have this story. This myth, in both structure and narration, suggests that even the supposedly elusive shadow functions to make lost *physical* things once again present. It appears as if the engine that drives this narrative,

³ As I am citing Pliny via Stoichita's text, please note that Stoichita indicates that all quotations from Pliny's *Natural History* are taken from the Loeb Classical Library version translated by H. Rackman (Cambridge, MA and London, 1952) (endnote 1, 243). In addition, see cited pages of Stoichita's text (particularly his endnotes) for exact page references to Pliny's work. Finally, in order to avoid errors in citation, please note that the format of this citation is Stoichita's as well.

and its eventual art-making, is that of creating a family tree, a type of map which, by its very nature, brings the past into the present as it always carries with itself a physical and tangible reminder of that which once seemed past, or lost along the way, into the ongoing present. However, the emotional motivation that initially triggers this stable of referents also reflects a “likeness” that is found outside of physical resemblance. In fact, what actually drives this story is an insistence on creating a communion with the psyche and *not* the body.

It is the spirit of the beloved rather than his body that each referent is attempting to reflect as this story’s entire art process was triggered by the private feelings of a heart-stricken girl who desired for the final form, for all intents and purposes, to return her to the intimacy of her lost love and not necessarily its bodily representation. That is to say that while both the story as a whole as well as each exchange of action in its plot illustrates a generational progressing away from the original (first to the shadow, then the silhouette, the clay relief, the fired sculpture), what is held wholly intact within each of those descending stages is an implication that although each generation of creators makes a new “likeness,” each has that same firm desire to return to the intimacy and emotion associated with that first soul and not necessarily to the body which contained it. In this myth, the “likeness” which is then valued is the resemblance that brings the viewer closer to the beloved’s spirit and not the beloved’s body.

Of course, the genre of portraiture, whether in works of art, photography, or literature also acknowledges that the desire to harken back to a “first” body, like the body of the beloved, is really about returning to that subject’s essence and not necessarily its physical and tangible form. In Portraiture (2004), Shearer West succinctly notes the genre’s complexity:

While a portrait can be concerned with likeness as contained in a person's physical features, it can also represent the subject's social position or 'inner life', such as their character or virtues. A portrait can be subject to social or artistic conventions that construct the sitter as a type of their time; it can also probe the uniqueness of an individual in a way that sets the sitter apart from his or her context. (21)

In listing just a few of the possibilities of what a portrait "can be," what West is actually illustrating is how portraiture is a complicated form of testament. In fact, aside from the ways in which desire is measured in the *material* doll as it offers itself as a means of accumulating knowledge about the social, religious, or economic practices or whims of a collective body (see the first footnote in my introduction), the doll as image can also be viewed as longing to satisfy a need to convey the existence of a single consciousness.

In a sense, in this understanding of their respective relationships to the body, the shadow and the doll both seem to function under the guise of a doubled idea of "likeness" as articulated in the most superficial notion of the "portrait" or of "portraiture" – as that which *looks like* something else in the details of its physicality and that which *looks for* recognition in how well it *feels like* the essence of that something else. Consider, for a moment, the shadow and the doll in terms of W. J. T. Mitchell's discussion of what images desire in his What do pictures want? The Lives and Loves of Images (2005):

...most pictures want something. Consider the average portrait, standing in a portrait gallery with hundreds of others, waiting for someone to pay attention to it. Average portraits—that is, the conventional, official images of forgotten personages by forgotten painters—are the most forlorn figures of longing for recognition. No one cares about them except historians and specialists. Yet captured there on the canvas is

the shadowy likeness of a once-living individual, one who probably regarded himself with considerable self-esteem, an attitude validated by his ability to command a portrait to be made. This picture is caught in the labyrinth of desire, its demands to be noticed, admired, and taken at its “face value” (pun intended) continually outstripped its bare need to exist (which is also somewhat doubtful, since no one would miss it if it disappeared). (73)

Although he does not directly address either the shadow or the doll, they do fall within the scope of Mitchell’s discussion of “pictures” as they too can be perceived as having the same two-fold desire as that of the portrait. Essentially, that doubled desire is not only to be held as a likeness to some first form but also for the quality of that likeness to be recognized, to be held as a universally valued truth.⁴

Again, despite not being directly addressed by Mitchell, there is a direct correlation as to how the shadow and doll act like the critic’s description of “average” portraits. First, in terms of that initial desire, a longing to be held up as a likeness, the shadow, as mentioned already, points to the exact shape of a figure. The doll, as a three-dimensional portrait, looks to produce a likeness of an individual who may have also “regarded himself with considerable self-esteem” though, more often than not, this form of portraiture is a means through which the likeness of a publicly cherished individual is captured (Mitchell 73). For instance, there are a great number of “individuals” such as twentieth-century American stars

⁴ Coincidentally, Mitchell, in an earlier section of this work, in chapter three’s “Drawing Desire,” does, in fact, engage directly with Stoichita and the Pliny myth as an example of a doubled desire, one which is “based respectively in lack and plenitude, in the longing for an object and the possession that surpasses any object” (66). However, as this quote suggests, it is a two pronged desire which belongs to the human participant and *not* any inanimate object or cast image. For Mitchell, the moment in which the girl traces the outlines of her beloved’s shadow “expresses both pictures of desire in a single scene; it has its cake and eats it too,” but it is a desire that seems to be all human (Ibid). Therefore, though Mitchell’s discussion in this earlier chapter is engaging, it is his following chapter, “Drawing Desire,” which relates more directly with this paper’s argument as it illustrates a multi-faceted desire which begins with and belongs to the image itself.

Raggedy Ann, Strawberry Shortcake, and Mrs. Beasley, who entered “dollhood” and the marketplace when they became so popular in their original roles as characters in the literary, television, or film stage that three-dimensional portraits were made in order to provide anyone (who could afford it) a chance to have such a “likeness” for their very own.⁵ In another example closer to the heart of portraiture, many dolls have also been designed and manufactured to capture the likeness of cherished warm-blooded individuals, especially culturally popular children no matter whether those children were also known as “characters,” like Shirley Temple, or were merely known for being born, like the Dionne Quintuplets.⁶ Therefore, as in Mitchell’s “most pictures” or “average portraits,” one can

⁵ Of course none of these famous characters have the same tale to tell as to how they came to be known in their three-dimensional forms. For example, though the popularity of Raggedy Ann dolls in the early twentieth century does have a direct correlation to the popularity of the Raggedy Ann stories as written and illustrated by Johnny Gruelle (1880–1938), the doll was not merely born because of the books but rather the rag doll as “doll” begot the rag doll as “image” who returned the favor. According to the “Dolls” entry of *The Guide to United States Popular Culture* (2001), written by Kathy Merlock Jackson, Gruelle took an old rag doll, drew on her expression, named her as we know her, and gave her to his daughter, Marcella. From that doll sprung the stories of Raggedy Ann which Gruelle made up for his daughter who contracted, and eventually died from, tuberculosis. Those stories were only published after her death, as a tribute and, according to Jackson, it was booksellers who “in order to generate interest in the books” placed them “alongside Raggedy Ann dolls” in their store windows (243). For images of Raggedy Ann, see: <http://dollhood.tumblr.com/tagged/raggedy%20ann%20and%20andy>.

The first incarnation of Mrs. Beasley was also as a doll as she was featured in the late 1960s, early 1970s television show *Family Affair* as being the confidante of a six-year-old girl named Buffy. However, though Mrs. Beasley, the doll, existed in the realm of a family sitcom where only its child could hear her speak, the “Mrs. Beasley doll” was created and mass-produced because of the character’s popularity on the show. But then with that first doll of Mrs. Beasley, she was also no longer silent to a public audience. Through a voice box, the “Mrs. Beasley doll” was given a voice typical of a grandmother and a bank of less than a dozen pre-programmed phrases to share with any listener who pulled her string. According to Juliette Peers’ overview of “Mattel” in *Girl Culture: Studying Girl Culture* (2008), the doll was made into her own doll when the toy company moved into “the portrait doll arena in the mid- to late 1960s” and began to create dolls that represented such well-known living personalities as the model Twiggy and the actress Dianne Carroll as well as the well-loved though not quite as “living” personality that was Mrs. Beasley (426). For images of “Mrs. Beasley” dolls, see: <http://dollhood.tumblr.com/tagged/mrs%20beasley>.

Strawberry Shortcake rose to dollhood in the 1980s when she “became America’s top-selling doll after she appeared on video, triggering sales of over \$1 billion in Strawberry Shortcake dolls and related products,” according to Kathy Merlock Jackson’s “Dolls” (244). However, the popularity of the sweet smelling character that led to the production of its doll-form was actually a foregone conclusion. Jackson reveals that such animated programs in the early 1980s like *Strawberry Shortcake* were part of “the birth of toy-based television shows” that were “designed expressly to promote doll lines” (244). For images of “Strawberry Shortcake” dolls, see: <http://dollhood.tumblr.com/tagged/television%20-%20strawberry%20shortcake>.

argue that the majority of Shirley Temple dolls, for example, also express that same initial desire for likeness, that which *looks like* something, to be met. A desire which can then be satisfied when it, the collective that is the Shirley Temple doll, expresses any universally or culturally understood signs of resemblance (presence of dimples, curly blond hair) to that larger constructed form of the Shirley Temple child.

⁶ Shirley Temple and the Dionne Quintuplets, as well as their likenesses, were hugely popular in the 1930s with 1934 being a shared year of significance. Shirley Temple was, in many ways, the world's biggest movie star during her reign in the 1930s. According to Tino Balio's Grand Design: Hollywood as a Modern Enterprise: 1930-1939 (1995), after appearing in nine films in 1934, Temple received a special "miniature Oscar for bringing 'more happiness to millions of children and millions of grown-ups than any other child of her years in the history of the world'" (147). And, in that same year, on May 28th, the Dionne Quintuplets were catapulted into fame, and doll form, the moment they were born in Canada. As the first set of quintuplets to survive their infancy, the five identical girls, according to Katherine Arnups' "Mothering the Dionne Quintuplets: Women's Stories" (2001): "provided hope and inspiration to millions of people across North America and, indeed, around the world" (134).

This history as well as the ongoing commoditization of all six of these girls as "dolls" whether in actual form or in cultural representation is a complicated and intertwining relationship which, regrettably, this project does not have the scope necessary for its discussion though I do suggest that any interested readers begin first with their autobiographies (the ones which were written by the adult women and not the many autobiographies "written by" them as children): Shirley Temple Black's Child Star was published in 1988 and Jean-Yves Soucy's and the Dionnes' Family Secrets: The Dionne Quintuplets' Autobiography in 1997. Also, I should like to draw the reader's attention to three tantalizing images of the girls and the girls as dolls to illustrate just how convoluted their relationship may have been with each other, with themselves, as well as with representations of both the former and the latter. The first image, as reproduced in a 2009 edition of an auction book by Heritage Auction Galleries titled Heritage Vintage Movie Photography & Stills, is a publicity shot of Shirley Temple taken in 1934 in which she is posed to be "playing" with own her set of "Quints" dolls (60). The second image is a 1935 publicity shot, reproduced in the letters section of the autumn 1975 edition of Liberty magazine (Dubas 5), in which Temple is depicted celebrating the birth of the famous quintuplets by preparing to present them with another set of quintuplets, five Shirley Temple dolls. In this image, Temple appears to be organizing her dolls for duty as, with eyes cast toward the camera, her finger is pointed up and towards the ready row of dolls whose faces are all turned in the direction of that original "doll." The Dionne girls themselves then add to this visual labyrinth of ownership and doll identification by contributing not only an innumerable number of images of themselves playing "naturally" in front of an eager camera with dolls of their own likeness but also a particularly fascinating un-credited photograph, published in the "Illustration Section," following page 64, of their 1963 work, We Were Five: The Dionne Quintuplets' Story from Birth Through Girlhood to Womanhood written by James Brough and the five sisters. In this third telling image, from 1944, sitting in a semi-circle on the floor of a neatly arranged room full of multiples, the identically dressed girls are now the ones posed with what appears to be those same Shirley Temple dolls. Under a portrait of the girls as infants, an image which anchors the center of the room as it hangs over a fireplace bookended by matched sets of chairs, curtains, lamps, and girls (one girl is, coincidentally, positioned right under the picture itself), the five sit politely, smile awkwardly, and hold for the camera those very same (but ten years older) Shirley Temple dolls. An image of all these children and dolls "playing" together would be the culmination of this surreal visual experience, but, sadly, I have not had the luck nor the time to locate such an image if one, in fact, exists. For examples of "Shirley Temple" dolls or Shirley Temple with dolls, see:

<http://dollhood.tumblr.com/tagged/shirley%20temple>.

For dolls of the "Dionne Quintuplets" or for images of the girls with dolls, see:

<http://dollhood.tumblr.com/tagged/dionne%20quintuplets>.

Even the doll in works of fiction can function as if it also longs to make present that “home” body that may otherwise appear entirely absent. Consider, for example, Sylvia Waugh’s 1990s series of children’s books about a family of dolls called the Mennymys.⁷ Though they are “man-sized, talking, rational rag dolls” that “do not exist anywhere else in the world,” neither age nor feel any sort of physical pain since they have no physical flesh, their basic behaviors and deep desires are all driven by a need to reflect a real human form (Waugh, “Mennymys” 15) Their longing to always be pointing back to this home of origin, the human, is emphasized by the fact that a key part of their daily existence is to routinely play “pretends” where they perform the everyday human acts that they are incapable of actually participating in as material dolls such as drinking tea, getting sick, or sleeping. And although these “pretends” do seem to share much with how children play at house, the mimicry that the Mennymys have been engaging in for the multiple decades of their existence more pointedly illustrates what Mitchell saw as the desire of “average portraits.” This doll family does, indeed, shadow human behavior for the obvious fact of their survival. They must/do/act/perform like the typical family in order to go unnoticed by the human world which surrounds their snug little home at Number 5 Brocklehurst Grove.

However, their mimicry of human behavior at home, in the privacy and security of that space as an “average” family also points to what Mitchell saw as the “labyrinth of desire” that is also present in an “average” portrait (73). While the portrait may appear to strive to be recognized as offering a resemblance to a particular individual and the Mennymys may claim to want to *look like* a typical human family, what both the portrait and the

⁷ The following are the five titles that make up Waugh’s series: The Mennymys (1993), Mennymys in the Wilderness (1994), Mennymys Under Siege (1995), Mennymys Alone (1996), and Mennymys Alive (1996).

Mennymys also desire is to be appreciated for how they model, mimic, and remind their respective audiences of the *spirit* that inhabits a human body and not necessarily just its form.

In terms of both her reader and her dolls, Waugh makes much of this desire for recognition as *being like* a human rather than simply *looking like* one. As the reader may look to understand the secret life of dolls, the dolls are illustrating how precisely they are (despite their button eyes) just like the reader in how much they desire to be measured as such in their daily acts of performance. Even in moments where it may appear as if the distance between “us” and “them” should be marked with difference, those moments are pointing to an actual difference present in us. Consider, for example, the description of Appleby’s yearly reoccurring fifteenth birthday celebration:

Appleby was proud of her birthday. Every fourth of July she reached the age of fifteen yet again. It was never clear at what stage of the year she reverted to being fourteen. Certainly at Christmas she was always fourteen. At other times she would be fifteen if being a little bit older gave her more prestige. Occasionally, in an argument, she might claim to be nearly sixteen. But the birthday always had to be her fifteenth. (Waugh, “Mennymys” 113)

There is no denying the fact that this teenager is celebrating the same fifteenth birthday she has been celebrating every year for the past 40 years. The text does not even attempt to avoid this truth as it states, quite definitely, that: “Every fourth of July she reached the age of fifteen yet again” (Ibid). And yet despite what this passage is claiming, it is anything but a foreign concept to its reader. In fact, in the ways in which Waugh describes how this forever turning fifteen-year-old does or does not act her “age” is actually quite similar to how *any* human fifteen-year-old may act and seem to be one age in one instant and yet a younger (or

older) age in the next. By noting that Appleby is certain ages at certain times of the year (on the fourth of July she is fifteen, at Christmas she is fourteen), the author also suggests that these ages are actually tied more to the “betwixt and between” behavior of a teenager than the chronological age of one. Therefore, echoing the age of any human teenage girl, Appleby is fifteen when it suits her, almost sixteen for the sake of argument, and always fourteen at Christmastime when being younger is always better.

In reading Appleby, the doll, as behaving as a typical teenage girl, Mitchell’s secondary form of likeness, as that which *looks for* recognition in how well it *feels* like something else, is expressed because it is a type of resemblance that cannot be measured in how closely the elements of the “portrait” or “doll” meet and match the original form. Rather, this likeness is recognized in how well the cast likeness (the portrait, the doll) closes a more intangible gap between itself (the image) and the original body. In other words, the desire *for* likeness, rather than *in* likeness, is measured in how closely the copy brings us, in a more intimate and visceral sense, to the spirit of the original.

In Portraiture, West also uses C. S. Pierce’s idea of index (from his semiotic theory of the icon, index, and the symbol) to address how a portrait may include the artist as well as the encounter between himself and the subject as being part of the larger idea of what a portrait artist may “portray” in this genre. Notwithstanding her own particular use of the term, what is useful about West’s observation is that it also exemplifies how forms of “likeness,” in general, are able to carry with or in their semblances (the silhouette, the doll) that which was also thought to have only existed off-stage or off-screen (the departed lover, the elusive shadow).

Most portraiture represents a particular occasion or moment, whether directly or by implication. Unlike a landscape painting or a history painting, which may seem to transcend a single moment in time, the presence of a specific individual in a portrait reminds us of the encounter between the artist and the sitter. This special aspect of portraiture has been explained using C.S. Peirce's semiotic theory of the icon, the index, and the symbol. According to Peirce, an icon looks like the thing it represents; an index draws attention to something outside the representation; and a symbol is a seemingly arbitrary sign that is, by cultural convention, connected to a particular object. A portrait has qualities of all three: it resembles that object of representation (icon), it refers to the act of sitting (index), and it contains gestures, expressions, and props that can be read with knowledge of social and cultural conventions (symbol). In this tripartite view, the indexical qualities of portraiture are particularly notable.

These signs relate to the process of producing the portrait, and the traces of that process that remain in the final product. When we look at portraits, we see individuals who are either dead or are now older and different than the way they were represented, but portraits seem to transport us into an actual moment that existed in the past when the artist and sitter encountered each other in a real time and place.

Whether or not a portrait was actually based on a sitting, the transaction between artist and sitter is evoked in the imagination of the viewer (West 41).

This difference between desire for likeness as an index and the desire for recognition in its indexicality can be seen in how, for example, the value of Shirley Temple dolls is measured. First, the dolls which look the most "like" the child are not necessarily the most valued in terms of monetary worth or collector demand. Those types of dolls simply satisfy that desire

for likeness as similarity, for the physical ways in which their material features may harken back to the original. But the dolls considered to be the most valuable and are the most sought after are, in a way, the generation of dolls closest to the actual child: the licensed Ideal Company dolls “born” in the same years as Temple’s greatest success and the one of her as a baby that was inspired by family photographs.⁸ Both of these dolls are “originals” in that both kinds of dolls are perceived as being only one generation removed from the original form. This lack of distance illustrates the fact that the kind of likeness measured and valued is located in how these dolls are able to mimic that intimacy between the actual shadow and the body of origin in a much more nuanced and complicated way than those dolls which superficially “look like” the actual human form.

Essentially, what West is suggesting and what is implied in the very etymology of the word “portrait” (specifically in how the noun “portrait” may be interpreted as the archaic past participle form of “portray”⁹) is that the portrait is, in a sense, a means to access more than the lost body, but also the lost spirit. The portrait and the portrait doll is readily and

⁸ Though there are countless websites devoted to the discussion of the buying and selling of Shirley Temple dolls and number of published pricing guides (including two volumes of the Shirley Temple: Identification and Price Guide to Shirley Temple Collectibles (2002, 2003) by Suzanne Kraus-Mancuso), these two sets of dolls seem to be, in general, the most sought after by collectors as well as the dolls with the highest price tag. Of course, it is important to note that Shirley Temple doll collectors, like all collectors, also measure the value of their collectibles in increments of intactness (original box, original bow) and nuance of markings (the number of teeth showing, how the company licensed to make the dolls marked their approved “Shirley Temples”) in addition to the “generation” of the doll.

⁹ The following is excerpted from the OED’s definition of the verb form of “portrait”:
“Apparently < the past participle of PORTRAY *v.* (see forms *portrait*, *purtrait*, *purtraite* at that entry). Attested earliest in the past participle *portraited*, which could alternatively be interpreted as simply a variant of the past participle of PORTRAY *v.* with secondary suffixation, from which a present stem *portrait* subsequently arose by analogy. Alternatively, perhaps a back-formation < either PORTRAITOUR *n.* or PORTRAITURE *n.* Probably also in later use partly < PORTRAIT *n.* Compare PORTURE *v.*” (online OED).

constantly echoing back to an original or, to borrow a phrase from critic Eloise Knowlton, it is also a form of narrative which is “bent toward its object” (44).¹⁰

Athenagoras’ Origins of Art and Doll Interaction:

Returning to the story of the origins of art, although Pliny’s account is possibly the best-known Western version of the myth of the origins of sculpture (in particular) or of art (in general), it is a later version of this story, told by Athenagoras, which draws a more profound connection between the soul and the doll itself: the role of interaction.¹¹

In Pliny’s telling, this myth emphasizes an intimate relationship between the soul and the doll only if one were to carelessly collapse the distinctions between the arts of sculpture and doll-making. Certainly, there are elements of this story which do resist the notion of calling the potter’s finished creation a “doll,” such as the fact that its shape (adult male rather than female child), form (hardened clay not pliable material), suggested dimension (life-size not lap ready), and eventual landing place (museum rather than nursery or trash heap) are the qualities more broadly linked to that of sculpture than of the doll. In addition, one cannot ignore the fact that this myth is more famously known, due to Pliny’s version, as the origins of sculpture than the making of dolls.

However, there is also room to interpret the potter’s finished object as being more a doll than a sculpture because of the role that interaction plays in not only defining such an

¹⁰ In her Joyce, Joyceans, and the Rhetoric of Citation (1998), Knowlton uses this phrase in her discussion of James Joyce’s use of quotes (specifically the epigraph by Ovid) in his A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.

¹¹ For additional references on this myth in general as well as fuller discussions of Pliny’s version, see: Victor I. Stoichita’s A Short History of the Shadow (1997) and Maurizio Bettini’s The Portrait of the Lover (1999).

object as a “doll,” but also in how that intimacy of interaction grants access to the experience of the being.

Although Pliny’s version of this myth is the most familiar, it is not the only one. A century after Pliny, another author, Athenagoras, recounted the same story, but with one notable difference – he directly stated this to be the origins of the doll:

The manufacture of dolls was inspired by a young woman: very much enamoured of a man, she drew his shadow on the wall as he slept; then her father, charmed by the extraordinary likeness – he worked with clay – sculpted the image by filling the contours with earth. (Stoichita, “Shadow” 15)¹²

Athenagoras’ word choice of “doll” in his retelling may appear insignificant as even Victor I. Stoichita does not dwell on its implications. The scholar seems to move past it by writing in his A Short History of the Shadow (1997) that, despite differences, what both accounts of the story seem to indicate is that “the primary purpose of basing a representation on the shadow was possibly that of turning it into a mnemonic aid; of making the absent present” (Ibid). And yet, though this observation glides past the word “doll,” it does not reject a reading of the potter’s work as a doll. In fact, by indicating that what these two versions of the tale share is how the shadow functions as an “aid,” Stoichita’s word choice suggests a doll reading of the potter’s creation as it implies the element and importance of interaction, a key defining characteristic of recognizing that which is doll spirit rather than sculpture body.

According to an interview with Geri Olson, chair of Sonoma State University’s psychology department, interaction is also that key distinction between doll and sculpture:

¹² Stoichita is quoting from the translator’s version of Athenagoras, *Legatio pro Christianis*, in *Patrologia Cursus completus*, 6, coll. 923-4. (As stated in the second footnote in this chapter, please note that the format of this citation is also Stoichita’s.)

...the main difference between a doll and a sculpture—stone sculpture especially—is that we play or interact or somehow use dolls in some way, whether we put them on an altar or dress or undress holy dolls in a church. (Giles)

Though the clay figure eventually does find itself to be something which is looked upon and admired when it is “preserved in the Shrine of the Nymphs,” the desire which drove the potter’s daughter to capture a sense of her beloved as well as, perhaps, the desire for the potter to please his daughter bears the implication that the intention of this creation was for the closeness and intimacy of private interaction (between lover and beloved and, although differently, also between father and daughter) and not the distance found in shared or public contemplation of it as a physical art object.

Supporting this idea that one may recognize a life-like art form to be a doll rather than a sculpture based on the level of intimate if not physical engagement taking place between it and its audience, is the work of four twentieth-century American artists: Nellie Mae Rowe (1900-1982), Morton Bartlett (1903-1992), and Calvin and Ruby Black (1903-1972, 1915-1982). Aside from being near in age and sharing the troubled and troubling label of artists of “folk art,”¹³ all four also produced the same form – the three-dimensional doll.

Georgia’s Nellie Mae Rowe worked in various mediums producing works both playful and spiritual. In addition to the handmade dolls she began making out of bedclothes

¹³ It is important to acknowledge that “folk art,” even within the narrower parameter of “American folk art,” is a somewhat unstable umbrella term as it is used to refer to such differing categories of art as “primitive,” “outsider,” and even children’s artwork. Although it is defined with inconsistent and changing understandings of concepts such as “naïve,” “non-academic,” and “visionary,” I chose to use this term as it is exemplified through a particular reading of these four specific artists. Aside being canonized as “folk artists” by their inclusion in the American Folk Art Museum and the Gerard C. Wertkin edited Encyclopedia of American Folk Art (2004) all are self-taught as well as self-propelled to create not for public recognition, but for the complex idea of personal pleasure (however each defined that pleasure). Special thanks to Lee Kogan, curator emerita, of The American Folk Art Museum for a personal discussion of the term “folk art” as well as introducing these artists to me.

in childhood, Rowe formed chewing gum sculptures, created works made brilliant in color through her use of only colored pencil and crayon, and embellished both the interior and exterior of her house (turning it into a living and *lived in* artwork) to the point of drawing the curiosity of strangers. On the other hand, Morton Bartlett, in Boston, privately worked to make only about 15 intricately and startlingly life-like dolls in order to photograph them in various settings “realistic” to childhood like reading, fishing, or playing with a dog. While husband and wife Calvin and Ruby Black first began to create what would become a family of about 80 wooden “Possum Trot” dolls as an attraction to their rock store in California’s Mojave Desert, they also identified each doll as having her own particular personality as well as carefully selected name. Although their dolls, like their styles, are quite different,¹⁴ what these artists share is the fact that their three-dimensional figures are seemingly uniformly categorized as “dolls” due to their physical likeness to such objects. Indeed, as in the typically prescribed gender of the toy, the form of the female child does dominate throughout the oeuvre of these artists. However, while Rowe’s dolls are fabric-based neither the Blacks’ rough and wooden dolls nor Bartlett’s plaster ones “look” like typical dolls nor is either collection particularly cuddle-friendly.¹⁵

¹⁴ For more on Rowe, see The Art of Nellie Mae Rowe: Ninety-Nine and a Half Won’t Do (1998) by Lee Kogan and Judith Alexander’s Nellie Mae Rowe: Visionary Artist, 1900–1982. (1983). For images of her dolls, see: <http://dollhood.tumblr.com/tagged/artist%20-%20nellie%20mae%20rowe>.

For more on Bartlett, see Marion Harris and Graham Ovenden’s Family Found: The Lifetime Obsession of Morton Bartlett (1994) and Roberta Smith New York Times art review of Bartlett’s work, titled: “Doll, You Oughta Be in Pictures” (August 8, 2007). For images of his dolls, see: <http://dollhood.tumblr.com/tagged/artist%20-%20morton%20bartlett>.

For more on Calvin and Ruby Black, in addition to Wertkin’s Encyclopedia of American Folk Art (2004), see Folk Art in American Life (1995) by Robert Bishop and Jacqueline M. Atkins, and the documentary Possum Trot: The Life and Work of Calvin Black, 1903-1972 produced by Light-Saraf Film. For images of their dolls, see: <http://dollhood.tumblr.com/tagged/artist%20-%20calvin%20and%20ruby%20black>.

¹⁵ Indeed, neither the Blacks nor Bartlett created easily embraceable dolls, their dolls were sturdy enough to be played with by anyone as many of the Blacks’ “Possum Trot” dolls were outside dolls, braving the elements of a desert sun while, despite the delicacy of Bartlett’s dolls, the main reason he made them, according

As the dolls of Rowe, Bartlett, and the Blacks also sit in different seats on the scale of “life-like” in much the same measure that “life-like” sculptures might, what then identifies them as dolls and not as sculpture? Is it the desire for a certain kind of personal physical engagement which Geri Olson gestured toward in her observation about the main difference between a doll and a sculpture that is also present in Stoichita’s observation that shadow functions as an “aid”? In a word: yes.

As the desires that drove both the potter’s daughter and the potter to create suggests that the intention of the ultimate creation was meant to be experienced through the closeness and intimacy of interaction rather than one of cool observation, this same desire appears to be echoed threefold in the readings of these four American “folk art” artists. Though their dolls are wildly different in style, what these artworks share, and what seems to then reveal why they are so clearly identified as “dolls,” is that all of these artists are emphasizing the same type of desire for interaction present in the art-origin story. In other words, each is said to have made dolls with a desire to reproduce the intimacy found in personal interaction, to make the presence of an unknown soul known to them and only them. With that said, this interaction was also of the upmost importance because it acted as an “aid” to fill a space of absence in their lives.

In that way, the main difference between the doll as a material object and the doll as an image is that as an image it often acts as a testament to an absence. For example, in nineteenth-century American folk portraits of children, the presence of a doll in the hands of a painting’s subject often acts as the marker for gender in what would otherwise remain a

to Roberta Smith’s “Doll, You Oughta Be in Pictures” (2007), was to photograph them, implying one’s experience of them was to be found in the sturdiness of reproducible images rather than the fragility of the actual models.

genderless child.¹⁶ Or, on the other side of the spectrum, the appearance of a doll as it sits in its owner's lap in a work of eighteenth-century English portraiture points to nuances of class or education that might otherwise go unrecognized.¹⁷

In terms of our four artists, they each created and interacted with their dolls in order to find a means through which to negotiate and then fill a space with the experience of consciousness that they felt as being absent from their existence. In other words, the artists' personal interactions with their dolls allowed them to access an intimacy that was lacking in their own lives, specifically the emotional rather than physical closeness of having their own children.

After her second husband, Henry Rowe, died Nellie Mae Rowe devoted all of her free time to making art including dolls which, according to Lee Kogan's "Nellie Mae Rowe: Multiple Contexts, Multiple Meanings:"

...fulfilled several functions for the childless woman. She said, "I wanted to be a mother....Every one of my sisters had children but me....God did not give me children, but He gave me artistic talent...and I have to use it." (114).

For Bartlett, orphaned at the age of eight, his dolls also seemed to serve as a surrogate family and not just as a subject for his camera's lens:

Bartlett made intimate, photographic portraits of "his children," reading, sleeping, laughing, and weeping, and they were private components of the alternate world he created for himself. (Kogan, "Bartlett" 42)

¹⁶ For dolls as gender indicators, see the Heritage Plantation of Sandwich's Is She or Isn't He? Identifying Gender in Folk Portraits of Children (1995), a work which corresponds to a loan exhibition held at the museum from May 14 through October 29, 1995.

¹⁷ For dolls as indicators of class and education, see Leslie Reinhard's 2006 article "Serious Daughters: Dolls, Dress, and Female Virtue in the Eighteenth Century."

Finally, readings of Calvin and Ruby Black also suggest that their desire to produce this particular form of art was driven by the possibility of an intimacy that can be achieved in the interactions of naming, discussing, personifying, and entertaining a family of dolls as if they were real children: “The childless couple lavished attention on their dolls, buying them perfume and jewelry from tips that visitors were encouraged to leave for their favorites” (folkartmuseum.org).

At the same time that Rowe, Bartlett, and the Blacks may have all similarly restructured the myth of the origins of art through the art-making map made out between the daughter as lover and her (absent) beloved in order to satisfy the longing for the closeness and intimacy of interaction between parent and child, they have also given the doll her due in the origins of art.

Me and My ~~Shadow~~ Doll:

Published in the May 19, 1961 issue of Life magazine, the photographic essay “A Girl Named Sandra is a Doll Named Peter,”¹⁸ is a text that illustrates the same three qualities that the shadow offers as an understanding to the doll in dollhood as well as complicates those qualities to the point where the photographic essay on a doll becomes, for the viewer, both a threshold and uncanny experience.

First consider the essay as a composite of a number of different photographs. One image featuring the child and doll in identical poses and hiding half of their respective bodies and faces behind a shared floor-length curtain is now sliced down the middle and used to

¹⁸ To view this photo essay search the title, “A Girl Named Sandra is a Doll Named Peter,” on Google Books or go to the following link:
<http://books.google.com/books?id=rE8EAAAAMBAJ&lpg=PA2&dq=titled%20E2%80%9CA%20Girl%20Named%20Sandra%20is%20a%20Doll%20Named%20Peter%20E2%80%9D&pg=PP1#v=onepage&q&f=false>

bookend the essay itself. The first half of this picture, with the image of the doll, “Peter,” is now acting as the left hand margin of the left page and it leads into the first half of the title’s text: “A Girl Named Sandra.” While the other half of the picture, the image of the girl, Sandra, acts as the opposite margin of the opposite page and it follows the text: “Is a Doll Named Peter.” Without addressing the serendipitous naming of either the magazine (Life) nor the particular department in which this story is published (“Speaking of Pictures”), this photo essay, in both word and text, outlines many of the ways in which the doll is tied to an understanding of the shadow as a visual representation of the twofold idea of “likeness” as being both the material illustration of the body as well as the intangible manifestation of the soul. Furthermore, the construction of this photo essay demonstrates how the private exchange of play taking place between child and doll is precisely that form of intimate interaction that not only emphasizes the doll as a representation of consciousness but also illustrates the larger scope of the doll’s liminal and fantastical power in dollhood upon its larger audience.

But first, does taking an inventory of the contents of these two pages truly reveal the doll’s full power or even delve into how a child’s personal interactions with her doll reveal the likeness of a consciousness? Constructed and controlled by a desire to illustrate an unsettling experience and explain away how a child plays with her toy, this photo essay seems to have erased the very possibility of seeing the doll soul and also as experiencing it as fantastic. As addressed in the introductory chapter of this work, one can argue that this photo essay is evidence of how Jentsch’s idea of the uncanny – as “doubt as to whether an apparently animate object really is alive and, conversely, whether a lifeless object might not perhaps be animate” – has become so culturally understood, or *told* to us, with respect to how

the doll “works” that the uncanny effect is, *in effect*, no longer felt by us (“Uncanny” 135).

At stake in this photo spread is then the experience of the strange. In order to offer an unsettling experience, a text must keep something hidden, something unknown, that can only be accessed through the individual’s intimate and private engagement with that text.

However, this photo essay with its abundance of staged images and explanatory content appears to resist offering the reader space for an intimate interaction that would lead to a private and visceral gain or a surprising experience. The question that then needs to be answered is what that first divided image suggests: Is this photo essay, like that sliced image, to be read as a stage curtain being drawn open for a spectacular performance that offers one access to the experience of the doll soul? Or is it a rather clumsy exposé that reveals every mystery taking place behind the scenes and tells the reader about the doll spirit without the soulful experience?¹⁹

As presented in the introduction of this dissertation, the recurring image of this particular toy as animated in popular culture, as product of consumerism, and as critical text to be read in any number of fields may imply that nothing can be left silent in the doll because nothing *has* been left silent on the topic. It may already be too near to us, too much has been told. Furthermore, one may also find fault with the form of this magazine article/narrative for not providing or permitting anything to be left unknown. Its design as well as its intent seems too noisy with informing the reader of any and all information pertinent to how this child plays with her doll. Published in a famously popular magazine, the

¹⁹ There are indeed other questions to be asked about this rich assemblage of word and image that I will address such as: Could this photo essay be a type of uncovering of a strange family and its peculiar encouragement of a child’s fantasy life? Or is this magazine article simply capturing the representation of a real child in actual play?

nature of its format as a mass produced, mainstream, and lowbrow report of popular culture back to consumers of popular culture may also suggest it has little interest, or holds no value, in producing an unsettling moment for its readers. In addition, the fact that this photo essay is so inundated with photographic images also suggests that it refuses to be a true representation of an in-between or uncanny experience. After all, many have argued that photography functions as a medium that either creates false knowledge²⁰ or distances one entirely from gaining access to the experience of original knowledge.²¹ Yet even with all those images, the article is just a two-page spread, an apparent centerfold, an overt display that defiantly denies the reader the discovery that comes with the investigative work or pace setting found in turning pages at one's own will or of then flipping back through them. Nevertheless, with all of this in mind, this tale of Sandra and Peter still warrants a closer examination of how exactly it may or may not work as an unsettling expression of the doll psyche.

To begin with a close reading of this work, in addition to the picture split in two that bookends the essay, there are three large black and white photographs and a small strip of text vertically centered (though horizontally lowered) across the two-page spread. Even though these images are clearly emphasized due to their content, size, and positioning in the layout, the text is also quite thought-provoking and so is quoted here in its entirety:

Most little girls like to pretend their dolls are real live people, but 3-year-old Sandra Kunhardt is different. She would much rather pretend that she is a doll. Deserted each morning by her brothers and sister who go off to school, Sandra hauls out the

²⁰ See Susan Sontag's On Photography (1973): "Humankind lingers unregenerately in Plato's cave, still reveling, its age-old habit, in mere images of truth" (3).

²¹ See Benjamin's The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction (1935-36): "that which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art" (221).

household collection of life-size dolls. She dresses up in their clothes, she walks stiff-legged as if her legs were hinged, she talks in a squeaky mechanical voice. Whether it's hide and seek behind a curtain or sleeping head to head on the rug, Sandra never changes her expression. She even refuses to answer to her own name, for when she is doll, her name is Peter. Here LIFE Photographer George Silk, a good friend of Sandra's, has captured Peter and her pals during a morning's play. In the afternoon when the older children come home, Peter becomes Sandra again. But sometimes the transformation back is a reluctant one. "Being a doll is fun," explains Sandra, "because I get to be the boss." (Life)

First and foremost, one must acknowledge that a number of the suggestive elements in this text may be unintentional and therefore may not be ripe for a discussion that looks to measure the choices an unnamed Life author made in these two pages. For instance, there is the naming of the doll "Peter" which would be a tantalizing element to explore, but only if there was evidence that it was chosen for the sake of adding an additional layer of meaning to this piece and not purely coincidental.²² If this were a fictional narrative or a psychological study, knowing that the child would one day become a writer would also be an interesting topic to address,²³ but because this essay is neither — that fact, as well as the inviting details

²² Briefly, the child's choice to name a doll Peter might seem to reflect the influence of reading about Peter Pan and his shadow or, perhaps, the reading about any "Peter" — no matter whether it is Barrie's literary boy, the anthropomorphic rabbit in Mr. McGregor's garden found in Beatrix Potter's The Tale of Peter Rabbit (first commercially published in 1902), the Catholic saint, or, perhaps, even a human "Peter" of Sandra's acquaintance.

²³ Sandra is a future writer if I am to assume Sandra Kunhardt, the child, and Sandra Kunhardt Basile, the co-author of A Mother's Circle: An Intimate Dialogue on Becoming a Mother (1996), are one and the same.

of her parentage, will have to be, unhappily, ignored (for the moment).²⁴ In addition, when discussing the aesthetics of this essay, although the choice of the uniform black and white palette offers itself up to a reading as well, one must acknowledge that the limited colors of this photo composition may be more reflective of publication styles of the time (not publishing entirely in color) than of an editorial decision to heighten the eerie effect that such an intentional act may produce on its reader.²⁵ Worth noting, nonetheless, is the fact that this decision, whether artistic or executive, does undeniably (and, yes, perhaps unintentionally) support the other choices made in the shaping of this piece to be a “shadowy” display of the shadow qualities found in doll play.

There are, of course, still elements of this essay that are rich, if not *too* rich, in meaning. For one, the symmetry of the layout acts as a type of doubling that suggests the first of many examples of the literal and tangible workings of “likeness.” Not only in the splitting of the aforementioned image, such symmetry is also found in the bifurcation of the top

²⁴ Although the text must ignore it, this footnote is quite willing to quickly mention a few brief details about Sandra’s family. Her father was Philip B. Kunhardt Jr., who was not only a managing editor at Life magazine, but, according to his 2006 New York Times obituary, later became a writer and producer of historical documentaries for television including a 1995 three hour biography of P.T. Barnum. In addition, he and his family have been known for generations for their “penchant for collaboration, documentation and accumulation,” a fact that is most notably proven in what is known as the “Meserve-Kunhardt Collection” which includes rare glass negatives by the photographer Mathew Brady of Abraham Lincoln as well as a vast collection of circus images (Fox).

Finally, Sandra’s grandmother was children’s book writer Dorothy Kunhardt, who is none other than the author of the children’s book classic, Pat the Bunny (1940). According to the website for the “Meserve-Kunhardt Foundation,” “Sandra K. Basile” is listed as the Director of “The Dorothy Kunhardt Collection” (<http://www.mkfound.org/projects.htm>).

²⁵ Within this particular issue of Life magazine, in addition to the cover (which is of astronaut Alan Shepard as he “relaxes with his fan mail”), the images that were published in full color were almost all advertisements for everything from alcohol to paper towels. The eight-page piece on the work of a French painter, René Bouché, was, naturally, also printed in color as were the two images accompanying an article on the funeral of a king of Laos. On the other hand, the article on Shepard and his historic flight included just two small illustrations done in muted blues and only one full color photograph — a full page picture of the “cloud-strewn Atlantic,” a color image of “What Shepard Saw, as recorded by the camera in capsule and timed by stop-clock in corner of picture” taken minutes after launch (Shepard 28, 29).

Aside from adding to the appeal of products in print ads, the magazine’s choice to print images in color seems to have been reflective of the importance of color in a particular subject (Bouché piece), its ability to emphasize the exotic (the Laos images), or wow its audience (the image from space).

middle image which places a paired boy and girl on each side of the margin (though all, but one, are dolls). This image also creates the same sense of mirroring as the initially addressed divided image, as it has Sandra appear on the left hand page and the doll on the right – as if to further reinforce the idea that they are two sides to the same coin. The bottom two images are also reflective of one another. At first glance, they do appear to have the same number of figures though, in actuality, the image on the left has five while the one on the right has four. In addition to the suggestion of mirroring in number, the composition of the images is similar whereas the child is lined up in a row of dolls as if she is one of them, but her behavior deviates from their actions. In the left image, their eyes are closed while her eyes are open and in the right image she is seated with them, but facing the opposite direction. The amount of space the title takes up on each page also appears symmetrical as does the shape of the text in the repeating neatness of four columns of five lines. Despite the cleverness in the composition of creating so many of these mirroring and repeating choices, when combined with the almost endless repetition within the images themselves (the matched outfits, identical positioning of bodies, pattern of raised hands in the top middle picture, mirroring cupped hands and rounded eyes in the divided image), the experience of the text becomes such a heavy-handed lesson on literally illustrating the fantastic through the work of the shadow as a double, that the actual force of the uncanny on the level of spiritual experience is negated. On the other hand, the text itself is much more nuanced. Rather than erasing the experience of the strange by the intentional and (over)construction of signposts pointing to it, it actually begins to produce the experience.

What is essential to note in this inventory-taking of the written content, is that more than half of the narrative seems to be playing with ideas of liminality (and thus the hidden)

and so begins to produce the uncanny effect which is actually present at the heart of this story. In fact, the first half of the first sentence carefully sets the stage in order to later unsettle it in just such a surreal fashion. First off, these words (“Most little girls like to pretend their dolls are real live people...”) are reflective of an assurance found in fact. Written in third person, the first line in the magazine article functions to bring security to its reader as the reader is reminded of knowledge that he already possesses and thus can find comfort in. Such a first line offers the work a surefootedness, an entrance into the text as if it is already in control of the experience – even in the confidence of its first word: “Most.”

Alone, the banality of the images seems to frustrate access to the more complex experience of the doll for both the girl and the reader, and, at first glance, the content of the text also appears to reinforce what the images have already told us. After all, the images seem to present the very interactions that “most little girls” have with their dolls as the text goes on to articulate what we have already seen: the child playing hide-and-seek, napping on the rug, not changing her expression, and entirely alone but for her dolls. Although play in general as well as these specific types of play suggest threshold states (hiding, sleeping, keeping thoughts to oneself), the overtly controlled perfection depicted in these photographs of Sandra playing hide-and-seek or playing dress-up does not offer a true expression of private or, for Victor Turner, “interstructural” experience. Even the idea of the child performing in a number of indeterminate spaces (deserted, alone, at home during the day) is diminished by the very presence (and naming) of the photographer. The privacy of her play is further dismissed by the primping and arranging done to costume and pose her by unnamed and unacknowledged hands. Looking at the reminder of the text, despite the photographer’s claim to be “a good friend of Sandra’s” and “her pals,” his role in the erasing of the uncanny

experience is accomplished not only in his taking of the pictures, but also in his disregard for the child's relationship with the doll. For example, according to the text, right after Sandra refuses to answer to her own name and will only answer to "Peter," the text reveals: "Here LIFE Photographer George Silk, a good friend of Sandra's, has captured Peter and her pals during a morning's play." The "here" seems to announce the conclusion of participating in the child's play and the reader's access to the fantastical. In that one sentence, the child is not only immediately named despite her refusal to answer to "Sandra," but when she is then humored and referred to as "Peter" that choice reads as dismissive of her intimate experience with the doll since the use of the doll's male name is quickly accompanied with the use of the child's female pronoun: "she."

Nevertheless, despite the ways in which this essay, in word and image, initially appears to focus on the physicality of "likeness" as it also over-articulates the experience of the strange to the point of not producing that effect, upon closer inspection this text also hints to an appreciation of the actual uncanny experience in the way it presents a moment of true anxiety. Although written in the confident style and certainty of tone that is often attributed to the third person narrative, this text also pauses to mark unease. As noted earlier, in size, content, and design, the images dominate this two-page article and, as already argued, this visual domination feeds into an authoritative and unsubtle display of the strange as an explainable and explicable concept. However, when paired with the text, these images and their almost collective brashness in "telling" rather than "showing" actually offers something else to the reader. In fact, it is that confidence and the unavoidability of going *through* the image-laden text rather than around it, which then becomes the gateway to the uncanny experience of the doll's essence for the reader.

There is very little chance that a reader would read the text without at least taking a passing glance at the photographs that take up most of the two pages. To then go through the images and catch that aforementioned emphasis on mirroring and copying is to then reach the text with an assumption that the article will depict the physical mirroring present in the idea of “likeness” with the child as a self and the doll as her possession (as an object) or as a thing which possesses her reflection. (Though it may not perfectly reflect Sandra’s likeness, it does reflect the likeness of children in general). Even the title, despite its directness in stating the fact of the child’s perception, “A Girl Named Sandra is a Doll Named Peter,” is constructed, both in formatting and language, to suggest not merely a mirror-like equivalence of exchangeability, but even the mirror stage’s idea of equivalency where reflection begins with the human image: “A Girl Named Sandra....” and ends with the object: “is a Doll Named Peter.” Therefore, for the reader, the declaration of difference made in the second half of that first sentence (“...but 3-year-old Sandra Kunhardt is different.”) is disorienting, a reason to pause, that is only heightened as it arrives after the reader has already passed through a terrain littered with signposts that emphasizes not only the physicality of “likeness,” but a “likeness” that begins with the human subject (the object looks “like” the human rather than the human looks “like” the object). Nevertheless, although the reader may have been promised this one side of resemblance, upon arrival to the text the reader is thrown into the unsettling space of experiencing the side of resemblance that registers the soul of an object *first*, as primary. In other words, the text suggests that what is “different” about Sandra is that, for her, the doll is the original and the child is the reflection.

Contributing to the reader’s loss of footing, may also be the announcement of Sandra’s age. As discussed in the introduction, at age three Sandra is technically only on the

culmination of falling into the age range for Piaget's shadow phase or Hall's doll play even though her play does seem to reflect a deep investment in the shared interests of both. One cannot claim, however, that the intended effect of including her age and announcing it so early in the text was for the reader to recognize this dovetailing of Sandra, her age, and her play with the meeting of the aforementioned stages. Nevertheless, these choices do nudge the reader in the direction of that convergence by emphasizing Sandra's own liminality — beginning with its expression in her age.

Sandra is indeed "different" because, as the text states: "she would rather pretend that she is a doll." However, she is also different in that she is three, which is a fact that subtly hints of her status as a threshold figure or, to borrow phrasing from a Peter Schwenger essay, it is a "difference" that "has taken on the characteristics of *différance*" (78). No longer an infant but not yet school age, "three" seems to evade being anchored to a single fixed understanding.²⁶

²⁶ This fact is further reinforced not merely by any children's book, but by the classic children's book, *Pat the Bunny* (1940), written by Sandra's own grandmother, Dorothy Kunhardt, and the circumstances in which she wrote it for her three-year-old daughter, Edith.

One of the very first interactive books written for small children, according to its publisher's website, *Pat the Bunny* was the result of the author "experimenting" to see if added "elements could increase a child's love for reading and learning" (Random House). As evidenced in its perpetual success, these elements have surely added to the book's pleasure, but it is also worth noting that the book, which was written with the needs and abilities of a three-year-old at that time, is also a text which expresses a liminal moment or transition between codes of understanding. As Ellen Handler Spitz observes in her essay, "Primary Art Objects: Psychoanalytic Reflections on Picture Books for Children," even the books' format was thought to be, in many respects, transitional (1999):

Even prior to the primer, children still in the crawling stage may encounter picture books like *Pat the Bunny*, which conjoin the perceptual and verbal with kinesthetic, olfactory, and tactile experience, strongly prioritizing the latter. Such objects emphasize the physicality, the materiality of art — qualities which, as adults acculturated into a universe of abstract codes, we learn early to deconstruct. Yet, touching, holding, loving, all intimately related for the small child, are transferable, displaceable, by means of those transitional forms, to physically more remote encounters later on with sophisticated cultural objects. (248)

Clearly, Spitz is discussing this text in terms of much younger children (those "still in the crawling stage" which, in terms of contemporary research on child development, are a much more appropriate target audience for this book than the older one which Kunhardt was aiming for - a fact that is supported by how the book is now marketed as "baby's first gift"). However, in its origins as a transitional text that was actually created with

Further, and more simply, three is, after all, an age that is both claimed and relinquished in terms of the broad categorizing of child development for which a toddler is one to three years in age while a preschool child is three to six (Davies 230, 307). Therefore, this particular age, on a number of levels, reflects a “betwixt and between” of the reader’s expectations of Sandra’s actions which her characterization only further emphasizes. Is she a preschooler because she is bright and creative? Or is she a toddler because she does not attend school? In that same sense, it may then seem that “three” is also caught between states (mirror, shadow, and doll play) as none of them seem to lay direct claim to the actual age.²⁷ In addition, although the number “three” may, in some ways, seem quite fixed due to its constant reoccurrence as a pattern in our culture (three wishes, three strikes, the trilogy, three meals a day) and in how it is understood symbolically (most obviously in the image of the trinity), it is still very much a “betwixt and between” number.²⁸

an older child, a three-year-old, in mind as well as the fact that *that* three-year-old turns out to be related to *this* three-year-old further points to the liminality of this age (Random House).

²⁷ As addressed in this dissertation’s introduction, ages three and four seem to be in need of a stage as Lacan’s “mirror stage” emphasizes ages six to eighteen months old while Piaget’s “shadow stage” leaps ahead with a range of five to nine years (and which is, for good measure, buttressed by the Hall, Ellis, and Grudzinska “doll play” age range of seven to ten years).

²⁸ For example, after taking an extensive inventory of the frequency of the number “three” as examples of trichotomy in American culture, folklorist Alan Dundes noted in his “The Number Three in American Culture” (1980) that, in a sense, three is an unnatural state: “Trichotomy exists but it is not part of the nature of nature. It is part of the nature of culture” (159). Although discussing Dundes’ claims through a study of narratives of recovery in his work, Sobering Tales: Narratives of Alcoholism and Recovery (1997), Edmund B. O’Reilly makes a salient point in support of the liminality of the number three: “To put it succinctly (and in only three words): trichotomy subverts symmetry” (114). O’Reilly goes on to write:

In a list of generalizations about the uses of the number three as a native category, Dundes observes that “a third term may be the result of splitting a polarity,” or that a third term may be formed by the “merging or combining of two terms so that one has A, B, and AB.” It is then only a short step to the production of a third term that depends upon the two members of a polarity but is not contained by them, or even necessarily and specifically implied by them. The third term may be qualitatively distinct, a synthesis that is something other than a mean or a sum, but is perhaps a transcendence. Analogies from genetics or chemistry might be suggested, but they would fail, as always, to convey the intricacies of symbolic process, especially in its characteristic ability to elude or defy categorical rigidity. Transcendence, in the imagination, is not answerable to falsifiability strictures, or even to brute facts. (114-15)

Returning to the primary text again, despite both the overt and subtle nods of “in-between-ness” in Sandra’s “three-ness” contribute to how the rest of that first sentence (“...but 3-year-old Sandra Kunhardt is different”) looks to produce anxiety in the reader, more than half of the remaining text also goes on to catalogue the other in-between spaces the child occupies because of the almost barebones manner in which it is written. By simply providing an account of Sandra’s day, the narrative suggests her liminality rather than drawing arrows directly to it. She is seen as occupying a threshold space in how she is both excluded (she is not yet school age) and “deserted” (she is abandoned daily by her older siblings when they head off to school). And yet, within that marginal space of being seemingly left at home, Sandra then turns to create more complicated “betwixt and between” spaces as she turns to the imaginative play of presence and absence in “hide and seek behind a curtain or sleeping head to head on a rug” and also hides her own presence by actually becoming her doll’s other, its shadow. Sandra performs this in-between-ness by not only dressing like the doll but also by mimicking its movements and mechanical speech. Through disguise and performance, she also masks her gender in bearing a likeness to not just any doll, but a boy doll. Her “self” seems to then be further suppressed by her refusal to answer to her own name or change her expression. The text, up to this moment, has only stated the observational facts of Sandra’s play and not qualified or explained the intimacy of that interaction. It is that very quality, however, which begins to offer the reader space to enter the text and therefore both imagine the shape of the child’s personal and private experience

These threshold qualities of the number three as an unnatural cultural construct that also encompasses ideas of transcendence and the asymmetrical places the idea of “three” squarely in cahoots with the liminal nature of the shadow.

with the doll's soul and to also experience the actual nature of the uncanny as a reality because they cannot fully know the intimate relationship between Sandra and her doll.

In terms of how the images are aligned with the text, the fact that these physical and tangible actions and interactions are also the ones depicted does not necessarily diminish the power found in this child's private and intimate play with her doll. In other words, although the interaction between child and doll seems to be made public, the intimacy of how the child experiences the doll soul is not necessarily lost. Consider the point in the text when "Peter becomes Sandra again." This transformation suggests the idea that the only hidden nature present is an internal or subconscious act of the child's and not one for the reader to experience. There is clear evidence, however, in those first two and a half paragraphs, that Sandra is enacting Walter Benjamin's idea of "living in images" as expressed by Beatrice Hanssen in her "Introduction: Physiognomy of a Flâneur: Walter Benjamin's Peregrinations Through Paris in Search of a New Imaginary" as found in the text Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project (2006):

[in discussing Benjamin's fondness for collecting children's picture books]

To Benjamin the collector, these images in children's picture books offered up a mysterious topography in which the child-spectator could become absorbed to the point of self-extinction (in the 1929 essay about children's literature), blissfully merging with the object or representation — a flash-like moment — *blitzhaft* — in which the border between representation and the represented object *was obliterated*. It was precisely this mimetic impulse, through which the imitator merged with the object imitated, that announced itself in the child's obsession with the sock, just as it

surfaced in surrealist dream-work, in which the subject crossed the expanse of 'aesthetic distance' to gain close proximity or nearness to the magical thing. (7)

Quite literally, looking more closely at the photo essay as a whole, Sandra has passionately "become absorbed [in her doll and doll play] to the point of self-extinction" because she engages with both sides of "likeness." Sandra not only bears the literal likeness of her doll but also reflects its consciousness as she experienced it as the intangible and powerful force she discovered in her play with its form. In more than half of the article, this merge of child with object occurs in the reality of the child and also in the articulation of it in the text.

Digging deeper into the photo essay, there are more strange and liminal moments that gesture to the real relationship of the child to the doll than were initially perceived. For one, the idea of a "household collection of life-size dolls" draws in an image of household gods, spirits or souls within objects. The final sentence in the text and the only time Sandra is directly quoted is also quite jarring: "'Being a doll is fun,' explains Sandra, 'because I get to be the boss.'" Where is the evidence of this statement anywhere else in the text or in the composition as a whole to "show" the reader this fact? There is none. There is only, in every corner of this essay, a declaration of the child being anything other than in charge as she is set and dressed to mirror the doll, positioned and propped by stage hands, framed and shot by a photographer, and copied and claimed by its magazine's readers. And yet she, herself, claims ownership of the doll in being aware of its soul; she points to an intimacy that we have not been informed of at all.

This is when the uncanny experience for the reader begins to slip in. This is when the fantastical begins to be felt again. Further, it is interesting to find (through one's right to

inspect) which photographs were *not* chosen as part of this photo essay.²⁹ There is another image of the child and doll behind the curtain, but their expressions do not match because the child's natural expression is too impish. There is also an image of the child in actual play, carrying the doll on her back, and, in the third image, the child and doll face one another in order to give each other a kiss (although this kiss may have been staged as well, the intimacy that is present in this picture is the fact these two are the only participants in this act). In these unpublished images, the child and doll are not perfect doubles of one another in expression and action. In the latter two, they appear to be in actual play, in movement, in the experience of their intimacy, and it is these images which cause a reader to reflect more profoundly and wonder what is hidden in this doll, this Peter, this shadow that only Sandra is able to reach and reflect. And yet these qualities of the uncanny do not "prove" this work, in the end, to *be* uncanny. An awareness of unsettling qualities does not immediately access that experience. It is not that easy. In order to feel the effect of the fantastical, a reader cannot be a mere observer, but an actual participant, an active reader, that is invested enough to inspect and sort through a web of images and text that are both tangible and ephemeral, publicly shared and privately held, to order to experience them at the end of that experience. Even Sandra's statement, on which this case of the uncanny hung ("“Being a doll is fun,’ explains Sandra, ‘because I get to be the boss.’”) begins to become unsettled if one considers whether the child actually did say what she is purported to have said or if even her quote is just another example of all the artifice involved in the construction of the photographs and this photographic composition.

²⁹ On www.life.com, one can view additional images from this particular photo shoot which were not published in the magazine, including a photo of Sandra kissing Peter and of Sandra carrying him on her back (<http://www.life.com/search/?type=images&q0=sandra+kunhardt>).

These limits of representation are also challenged in this Life magazine photo essay without the participation of any sense other than vision. The reader has to read through a complicated movement of assemblage that creates and confuses, distances and nears, claims as public and makes private, mirrors and shadows in order to arrive at its own experience of this liminal expression of the doll as soul. According to Simon During's Modern Enchantments: The Cultural Power of Secular Magic (2002):

Visual magic is a fictional domain where what is seen is not what is there, and not just in the banal sense that images presented in peepshows, stereoscopes, or thaumatropes are not “really” there. Stage magic, in particular, offers a complex interplay between depths and surfaces, two and three dimensions, stasis and transformation, light and shade, transparency and opacity, and reflection and refraction. It does so in a highly mechanized visual setting, where there is always occasion for illusion and surprise: it is organized and constructed in such a way as to induce experiences or sensations of amazement, wonder, and bewilderment. It is also a dynamically visual field, in the sense that sight is rarely wholly independent of sound and touch. (286)

Much does depend on the reading of the stage, on the seeing of the magic act, and the journeying done through the work of vision in order to then still arrive at a liminal space. As quoted in the beginning of this chapter, Maurizio Bettini's puzzling out of the origins of the word “doll” into the idea of “girl in the eye”³⁰ reveals how the doll itself is not only able to

³⁰ In the section titled, “The Girl in the Eye and *Neurospaston*,” found within his chapter, “The Doll,” Bettini also discusses how “doll” is linguistically tied to other meanings including “precious object” and “virgin” (216-18). See his footnote 12 on page 297 for specific references discussing the image of the “girl in the eye.”

reflect back to the world its physical resemblance but also its intangible force that can only be truly revealed in one's real engagement with the doll itself.

CHAPTER 2

THE DOLL IS A BOX



Figure 1: Broken Doll, Paris (1958) photograph by Frank Horvat.¹
Permission to reproduce this image in this dissertation was granted by the photographer.

Perhaps a definition of a box could be as a kind of “forgotten game,” a philosophical toy of the Victorian era, with poetic or magical “moving parts,” achieving even slight measure of this poetry or magic ... that golden age of the toy alone should justify the “box's” existence.

Joseph Cornell, in a 1960 diary entry as quoted in Dawn Ades’s “The Transcendental Surrealism of Joseph Cornell,” Joseph Cornell (1980), 29

¹ This image is found on Horvat’s website: <http://www.horvatland.com>.
The exact page for this image is: http://www.horvatland.com/pages/01doc/02paris/22_en.htm

She helped me unpack my trunk when it came, and was delighted when she found the doll the little girls sent her. I thought it a good opportunity to teach her her first word. I spelled “d-o-l-l” slowly in her hand and pointed to the doll and nodded my head, which seems to be her sign for possession. Whenever anybody gives her anything, she points to it, then to herself, and nods her head. She looked puzzled and felt my hand, and I repeated the letters. She imitated them very well and pointed to the doll. Then I took the doll, meaning to give it back to her when she made the letters; but she thought I meant to take it from her, and in an instant she was in a temper, and tried to seize the doll.

**(an excerpt from an 1887 letter by Anne Sullivan in which she describes the first time she spelled out a word (“doll”) for her new student)
from Helen Keller’s 1903 autobiography, The Story of My Life (1921), 305**

Introduction:

The box, as a metaphor, offers two essential attributes to the doll in the liminal state of dollhood: tangibility and manipulability. First, the box, like the doll, is a tactile and physical object typically associated with childhood play. As toys very much experienced with the sense of touch, both are known to inform any number of aspects of a child’s development including the child’s forming of the self, the private, and an understanding of consciousness.² In addition, both the box (specifically the cardboard box) and the doll are also played or “mis-played” with in a similar manner. Often misused or abused in being collapsed, broken, or changed, these two objects are, with great frequency, repurposed and recreated by the child away from the object’s intended use. This act of manipulation performed on such a tangible childhood object is the second quality that the box offers to the reading of the doll in dollhood.

² As evidence consider the article, “Selecting Appropriate Materials for Very Young Children” (summer, 1981) by Joan M. Zeller and Suzanne L. McFarland, and published by the Day Care Council of America which creates detailed tables of the suggested materials of play for children from 0-3 months old to three years old that help in a number of areas of development, including: “physical, cognitive, language, social-emotional, and play” (7). According to this research, variations of the doll and the box appear to be significant tools in helping a child’s development in almost all of these areas and across the entire range of ages.

Through the physical nature of the box and its ability to be manipulated, one can better understand how the child enters into play with her doll in order to attempt to actually grasp its essence, its soul, which the shadow merely points to. Whereas, through a reading of the shadow, knowledge about the doll consciousness is accessed through the sensation and experience of witnessing that consciousness as an event, an understanding of the box illustrates how knowledge about the doll soul may also be accessed through the sensation and experience of infringing on that event.

In order to articulate the nuances of these two qualities of the box as they are found in the doll, this chapter begins by addressing why the “mis-play” that takes place in doll play is too often interpreted as being equivalent to human acts of violence. Drawing much from Lacan and the studies published by child psychologists Hall and Ellis, this chapter begins with a discussion of Toni Morrison’s The Bluest Eye (1970) where a child’s act of “mis-play” can also be considered an act of curiosity, a curiosity prompted by the desire to more fully understand the power and depth of a doll’s soul and not necessarily by a desire to destroy it. With Melanie Klein’s concept of “part-object” in mind, the section which follows explores how the “mis-played” broken doll character in the Pixar film Toy Story (1995) meets the theory of “The Uncanny Valley” in order to discuss how the power of the doll in fragmentation is not only located in how unexpected that fragmentation may be to discover, but also in how that fragmentation relates to a child’s own fear of being so splintered and broken. Then, through Rilke’s “Some Reflections on Dolls,” Kristeva’s Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection, the art dolls of Hans Bellmer, and the children’s book The Meanest Doll in the World (2003), the fragmented doll is discussed in terms of the human corpse and the power of the uncanny associated with that “mis-play” state known as bodily decay.

After close readings of texts that discuss the fragmented doll in terms of human bodily fragmentation, the remaining three sections of this chapter address the nature of the soul that remains present in doll parts. Through a reading of a song from Charles Kingsley's children's book classic, The Water Babies (1863), this chapter analyzes the ways in which the wholeness of a doll's soul appears to stay intact no matter the state of the doll itself. In a discussion of Rumer Godden's The Doll's House (1962), this chapter then turns to discuss the doll soul as being something other than human-like, especially when connected to how, where, and why the doll was made. Finally, through a reading of a story, "The Dolls," found in Ian McEwan's The Daydreamer (1994), the doll soul is put into action as a character. Within this text, the doll soul, alive and living in a broken doll, provides the reader with a profound uncanny experience as it subverts the relationship between human and object. In this story, the power of the doll soul is located in how it can eclipse the human to the point where the identity of who is doll and who is human becomes, for the reader, a destabilizing experience.

Doll Passivity and Violence:

First and foremost, what a discussion of the box can offer our understanding of the doll is a much more nuanced and complicated reading of what is occurring when a child tacitly engages with a doll in search of what he or she perceives as the doll's knowledge. One can see the gain of a type of physical knowledge literally played out in the passage which opens this chapter in that it portrays how the doll is offered to Helen Keller as means to access knowledge, an entrance to communication. It is, after all, through the tactile

experience of the doll that she learned to first “read” that word, her first word, “doll,” as expressed in her hand by her teacher, Anne Sullivan.

However, more often than not, it seems as if how a child physically engages with her doll is equated to how play reflects a child’s potentially violent nature or aggressive feelings toward what that doll may represent. That is, of course, not to disregard the use and abuse of the doll in the hands of a child as discussed and studied in psychological as well as other social sciences, but it is also important to *not* always read the experience of the doll on the receiving end of violent action as if it were reacting or processing that violence as a human being. For example, although Allyson Booth makes interesting points in her essay “Battered Dolls” (1994) as to the hierarchy of dolls to one another other as well as to human beings, she discusses the aggressive acts performed on dolls by children in works like Johnny Gruelle’s Raggedy Ann Stories (1918) and Rachel Field’s Hitty: Her First Hundred Years (1929) in the language of human passivity.

Booth writes that such stories create “a convention of female characters who are supposedly subjects but are actually objects and who inhabit, furthermore, a context that teaches the best of them to accept battering as the price not only of love but of life” (148). She also writes that “battered dolls in picture books seem—by their eloquent silences, their refusals to reassure—to express some of our very real concerns about mute passivity” (151). And yet can their “mute passivity” be an expression of something that is *not* human? After all, these dolls are not, nor do they claim to be, humans in disguise as even their narratives stress their origins as being from man-made forms and often (putting Pinocchio aside for a

moment) what they dream to be is a real live doll – not a real life person.³ Doll passivity cannot be equated with human passivity in that the doll sees violence toward itself as part of its role as a plaything, as a soul that is as much object. Never mind the fact that dolls as bodies made from objects *may* express the emotional loss of losing an arm, cracking a leg, or being chewed on by an animal, they do not, in the vast majority of these narratives, physically suffer those losses as a human would suffer them (that includes all the fire, water, and worldly damage that is thrust upon Pinocchio).

Nevertheless, violence is not the only reading to be found in a child's act of transgressing the boundaries of the doll form especially in how this act is represented in literary texts and images. In fact, I would argue that curiosity, as it relates to an understanding of the doll's layers of construction, is the actual impetus for such acts. For it is in such "violent" actions that a child challenges and digests the stable forms of construction (the science of the form's body, its material make-up) in order to gain an understanding as to the construction of the doll as an experience for itself as well as for the child (the aesthetic experience of play, of imagination, of soul-searching). Yet unlike the box which offers itself up to more of an emotional distance due to its indifferent shape, it is the fault of the doll's resemblance to the human form which too easily informs a reading of a child's investigation of its interior self to be about a type of human on human aggression rather than that of a performance of curiosity which is, like us, constructed of and through both recognizable materials and abstract sensations.

³ Aside from Rachel Field's "Hitty" and "Tottie" from Rumer Godden's The Doll's House (1962), see the dolls in the children's book trilogy created by Ann M. Martin and Laura Godwin, and illustrated by Brian Selznick: The Doll People (2000), The Meanest Doll in the World (2003) and The Runaway Dolls (2008).

Curiosity and Investigation:

In childhood, many children investigate dolls as they investigate mechanical toys, the insides of teddy bears, and clock radios. They open them up, take them apart, and look to answer the question: How does it work?

Lacan argued that, in the mirror stage, even though as infants we soon recognize our bodies as whole, it is the memory of a fragmented pre-mirror stage body which continues to haunt us:

This fragmented body ... is regularly manifested in dreams when the movement of an analysis reaches a certain level of aggressive disintegration of the individual. It then appears in the form of disconnected limbs or of organs exoscopically represented, growing wings and taking up arms for internal persecutions ... (Lacan 6)

However, that real and intense search for knowledge, known as curiosity, can also be seen as the thrust behind what reads as a type of violent behavior. Hall noted this tendency in his study with Theodate L. Smith, "Curiosity and Interest" (1903):

Curiosity as to the cause of sound and motion, and desire to see the inside of things, were the chief motives which influenced the youthful investigators. They wanted to find out what made the noise, why dolly opened and shut her eyes, what made the cow moo, and what was inside tops, marbles, and thermometers, and grief at the loss of some valued toy was aggravated by a keen disappointment at non-success in finding the noise of the drum or the tick of the watch. Cherished dolls were sacrificed to the overwhelming desire to find out what made the eyes move, or why pressing the body caused a cry. ("Curiosity" 129-30)

Hall and Smith address a child's desire for knowledge in his or her wanting to know the mechanical workings of a toy, but some of the children's specific responses are more telling. They note that one five-year-old girl: "Cut her doll's body open 'to see what kind of blood it had.' Said it was something like sugar" ("Curiosity" 131). An eight-year-old girl, Hall writes: "Had a doll, and one day knocked its eye in. She broke the head to find out what had become of the eye, and then cried as if her heart would break" ("Curiosity" 132). And an eight-year-old boy "Cut the hair of his sister's doll to see if it would grow again" (Ibid). Although, in this particular work, Hall and Smith are addressing toys in general, what is striking is that the children's responses pertaining to dolls seemed to be more about their desire to find something deeper than the mechanical source of eye movement or a voice box. In their "Study of Dolls," Hall and Ellis wrote:

Discussions with skeptical brothers who assert the doll is nothing but wood, rubber, wax, etc., are often met with a resentment as keen as that vented upon missionaries who declare that idols are but sticks and stones, or, to come near home, upon those who assert cerebral, automatic, or necessitarian theories of the soul. ("Dolls" 164).

The children that Hall and Ellis observed seemed to reflect what Charles Baudelaire wrote in his "A Philosophy of Toys": "The overriding desire of most children is to get at and see the soul of their toys" (Baudelaire 203). In other words, when taking apart a doll, a child is seeking to identify the real power that is of and belongs to the doll. The idea of an aggressive impulse toward the doll would imply that the child is looking to destroy that power while seeking it out suggests that the child wishes to experience or know that power on a more real and intimate level.

In Toni Morrison's The Bluest Eye (1970), the depiction of a white doll in the hands of an African-American girl's hands captures this intense desire for knowledge about the toy's soul that drives the digging (and breaking) hands of curiosity:

I could not love it. But I could examine it to see what it was that all the world said was lovable. Break off the tiny fingers, bend the flat feet, loosen the hair, twist the head around, and the thing made one sound – a sound they said was the sweet and plaintive cry “Mama,” but which sounded to me like the bleat of a dying lamb, or more precisely, our icebox door opening on rusty hinges in July. Remove the cold and stupid eyeball, it would bleat still, “Ahhhhhh,” take off the head, shake out the sawdust, crack the back against the brass bed rail, it would bleat still. The gauze back would split, and I could see the disk with six holes, the secret of the sound. A mere metal roundness. (21)

The child's hatred of the doll, and the desire for its destruction, reflects a tension of difference and identity, the oppressiveness of a hegemonic white American culture, and a desire for the oppressed to challenge the power of the oppressor.⁴ And yet, this protagonist is also performing a very typical act in childhood. The taking apart of the doll and investigating

⁴ For readings of Morrison's novel that explore this scene with the doll or inform a reading of it, see: a collection of essays from “Bloom's Modern Critical Interpretations” series titled Toni Morrison's The Bluest Eye. Harold Bloom, Ed. New York: Bloom's Literary Criticism, 2007.

Frever, Trinna S. ““Oh! You Beautiful Doll!”: Icon, Image, and Culture in Works by Alvarez, Cisneros, and Morrison” Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature. 28.1 (spring 2009): 121-139.

Fultz, Lucille. Toni Morrison: Playing with Difference. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003.

Furman, Jan. Toni Morrison's Fiction. South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1996.

Grayson, Deborah R. “Is it Fake?: Black Women's Hair as Spectacle and Spec(tac)ular.” Camera Obscura. 36. 3 (1995): 12-31.

Scott, Lynn. “Beauty, Virtue and Disciplinary Power: A Foucauldian Reading of Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*.” Midwestern Miscellany XXIV: being a variety of essays on the works of Toni Morrison by the members of The Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature. Ed. Marilyn J. Atlas. East Lansing, MI: The Midwestern Press, 1996. 9-23

Simpson, Ritashona. Black Looks & Black Acts: The Language of Toni Morrison in *The Bluest Eye* and *Beloved*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2007.

what may be its central power can occur even outside of political, racial, or sexual dynamics between the doll and its child. In fact, to examine narratives where the tensions between doll and human are not symbolic of cultural dynamics is to still find the doll to be profoundly powerful, both when intact and in pieces. This is the very power that Claude Lévi-Strauss suggests in his classic work, The Savage Mind (published in French in 1962, English translation published in 1966), when he asks (and then answers):

What is the virtue of reduction either of scale or in the number of properties? It seems to result from a sort of reversal in the process of understanding. To understand a real object in its totality we always tend to work from its parts. Reduction in scales reverses this situation. Being smaller, the object as a whole seems less formidable. By being quantitatively diminished, it seems to us qualitatively simplified. More exactly, this quantitative transposition extends and diversifies our power over a homologue of the thing, and by means of it the latter can be grasped, assessed and apprehended at a glance. A child's doll is no longer an enemy, a rival or even an interlocutor. In it and through it a person is made into a subject (23).

Therefore, even after Morrison's protagonist broke her doll down, the fact that it continued to bleat like a dying lamb seems to vocalize that it still held on to its secret, its soul, and still held a real power over the girl and, us, even in its fragmentation.

Children, in their investigation of the doll, often do seem to be looking for things that imply the existence of a living soul, or simply humanness, like blood or growing hair. But for a child like the eight-year-old girl who went on a supposed hunt to look behind the doll's eye, there is often devastation at her discovery that there is nothing behind the eyes but doll matter. Yet it is devastation worthy of knowing because it is knowledge gained through *real*

experience or, as Elaine Scarry writes in her work The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World (1985): “to have great pain is to have certainty; to hear that another person has pain is to have doubt” (7).

The Power in Doll Parts:

Whether broken by a child or simply found by one, finding doll parts (the marble eye, the hairless skull, the isolated limb) is unlike stumbling upon the spring from a broken battery-operated toy or the stuffing once stuffed inside a bear.

Like psychologist/object relations theorist Melanie Klein’s idea of “part-object”⁵ (where the infant identifies or experiences the whole mother through her parts, specifically the breast) or synecdoche (the figure of speech where the name of a part is substituted for the whole), doll parts echo the whole. Though limbs and eyes and hair may become *literally* separated from a whole doll body, doll parts, however, do not hold the same figurative separation from the perceived whole as other objects and playthings might have from their original “bodies.” When taken apart, a teddy bear becomes other things or even non-things: pieces of material, clumps of stuffing, lost buttons, loose thread. Those objects away from the *un-stuffed* bear body do not necessarily echo the toy body in the same visceral way in which an isolated hand or limbless torso is able to remember and remind us of the doll body.

And it is this quality of mirroring that begins to address the power of the doll as an exemplary image of the uncanny. In terms of Brown’s “Thing Theory,” we also see the doll

⁵ Klein, Melanie. Contributions to Psycho-analysis 1921-1945. London: Hogarth Press, 1950.

both working and “not working” away from theories of capitalist power.⁶ By its very nature, the doll “works” because its form is a material echo to the human body. Yet when that form “stops working” (the doll has been damaged or broken) the echo, nevertheless, persists. That is why finding a lone doll limb away from the original is a much more fearful experience than finding the stuffed bear unstuffed. Consider, for example, how troubling such an experience is for even a “real” and intact toy like Woody from the 1995 Pixar film Toy Story when the cowboy reacts with complete and utter terror upon meeting the deconstructed and then jury-rigged toy known as “Baby Face” (or “Spider Baby”) that emerges from under the bed of Sid, the child sadist. At first, because the light from Woody’s flashlight only falls upon the seemingly intact and recognizable face of Baby Face, the toy protagonist expresses a sigh of relief and greets this new friend with a soothing: “Hi there, little fella” (Toy Story). However, once Baby Face and its bald head is better lit, it turns to reveal its missing eye, and rises on its foreign spider-like body made from Erector set pieces, Woody and his movie audience, express a collective gasp of fear because the recognizable part of the doll, its head, is no longer “working” as expected. That is to say, this doll form becomes a terrifying monster because it is no longer whole and intact with its original home body. That encounter with the unexpected form then becomes a jarring experience for the viewer.

Ardyce Masters succinctly noted in her 1986 essay, “The Doll as Delegate and Disguise,” that though both dolls and stuffed bears “represented juveniles”... “the bears disguised their doll qualities behind an animal mask” (300). In other words, though toys like teddy bears and rocking horses can be thoroughly loved, there is an additional layer, a distance, existing between these playthings and their players. That additional element is an

⁶ Thought-provoking texts which specifically engage with the production, consumption, and economic history of dolls are listed in the first footnote of the introduction of this dissertation.

association to another “other.” As Masters indicates, a stuffed animal may be loved like a doll, but it is also wearing the mask, the association, of being an animal. We can go a step further and agree that even toys less pliable to anthropomorphization, like model cars, can too be treasured, but those objects wear masks as well and the “doll qualities” of these miniatures are hidden behind associations to their larger and less life-like counterparts. In other words, as Colette remarked: “There is nothing that gives more assurance than a mask” (Jouve 35). What then makes the attachment to dolls unmatched as well as more apt to bring on an uncanny experience is that there is no *apparent* disguise for the doll to wear. A child’s fervor for his or her doll cannot be diluted by pointing to the doll’s other connection, other identity in the world. This lack of a direct outside reference then turns the doll into a magic mirror – one which wears only the mask of reflection. Therefore, it seems as if the doll’s only “other” is the child. The only “other” is the self and in that exchange the doll becomes the uncanny double mirror.

In his concept of “The Uncanny Valley,” Japanese roboticist Masahiro Mori engaged with this double mirroring when he theorized that humans begin to feel revulsion and fear when they encounter certain manifestations of robots that are too similar in appearance or movement to the human.⁷ In fact, Mori charted human visceral responses in correlation to how much a robot acted or looked to be living (see figure 2).

⁷ See Masahiro Mori’s “The Uncanny Valley.” Trans. K. MacDorman and T. Minato. Energy. Vol. 7. Issue 4. 1970. Also see Mori’s The Buddha in the Robot. Tokyo: Kosei Publishing Company, 1981.

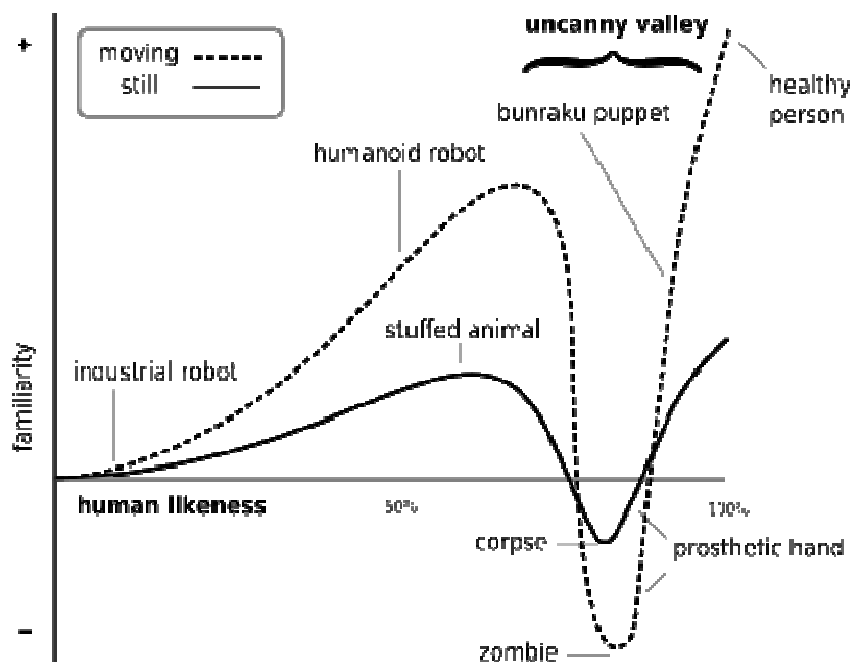


Fig. 2. Mori's graph of the "Uncanny Valley" is taken from Mori's 1970 publication in Energy.

As the chart indicates, an encounter with a corpse dips one deep into the experience of the uncanny because it is clearly a reflection of the fear of one's own death. The prosthetic hand is also tied to death, but also to brutality, as the disfigurement or mutilation of the robot body can also resonate with a human fear of dismemberment (MacDorman).

Coupled with a deep attachment to the doll, it is also not surprising that children react in horror and fear when finding disassembled dolls. Hall and Ellis, in the "Maimed dolls" section of their "A Study of Dolls," observed this to be true:

If dolls lose their heads, eyes, or get otherwise deformed, little children are often afraid of them. Some are horrified if the wig comes off; some little children fear everything in human shape, perhaps, till they make the acquaintance of a new baby and then love dolls. Some suddenly conceive lifelike wax dolls as real dead persons

and have sudden aversions for them. Some like to maim dolls, pulling off their limbs, perhaps killing them, in order to have a funeral. Sometimes it is thought rather disgraceful to both doll and owner to have new heads, limbs, etc. Accidents to dolls sometimes cause sensitive children to faint. (Hall, "Dolls" 183-84)

Doll fragmentation reflects the possibility of a child's own fragmentation; these toy parts then, both consciously and subconsciously, seem to foretell a possible future.

And yet, as Jacques Lacan's theoretical work implies, dolls, and their parts, can also echo a past. In his articulation of a pre-mirror stage, Lacan states that the infant perceives its body as fragmented before the mirror stage indicates its wholeness. According to his "Aggressiveness in Psychoanalysis" (1948), the memory of this fragmentation resurfaces in "the images of castration, emasculation, mutilation, dismemberment, dislocation, evisceration, devouring, and bursting open of the body..." (Lacan 13). We can then also claim that the unsettling reaction to the fragmentation of dolls has, for a Lacanian, a clear relationship to the subconscious memory of experiencing our own human fragmentation. Lacan himself uses the doll to highlight this point:

One need but listen to the stories and games made up by two to five year olds, alone or together, to know that pulling off heads and cutting open bellies are spontaneous themes of their imagination, which the experience of a busted-up doll merely fulfills. (Ibid)

And so, as both the work of Lacan and Masahiro Mori suggest, what is startling about happening upon the doll appendage is that it hints at the possibility of a child's (or our own) fragmentation or it acts as reminder of a fragmentation already experienced. However, to see

the doll merely as a reflection of the human experience is to return to the limitation of the magic mirror and a denial of otherness.

The Uncanny Corpse:

With an eye on the body of the broken doll, one can quickly and easily find its reflection in the image of the whole human corpse as can be found in Morrison's description of the breakdown of the doll in The Bluest Eye, or in how Rilke describes his childhood doll, in his essay "Some Reflections on Dolls," as "the externally painted watery corpse" (X). In her work, Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection, Julia Kristeva relates her concept of the abject in terms of the corpse because the human cadaver...

...seen without God and outside of science, is the utmost of abjection. It is death infecting life. Abject. It is something rejected from which one does not part, from which one does not protect oneself as from an object. Imaginary uncanniness and real threat, it beckons to us and ends up engulfing us. (4)

In addition to reflecting human beauty and loveliness, the doll can also exemplify Kristeva's notion of the abject as a corpse because the doll, like the corpse, can break down the relationship between death and life, which then collapses and conflates the supposedly secure relationships of which is self and which is other, which is alive and which is dead (which is me? which is it?) and swallows us up in that chasm. But if the doll body, in its intact form, can be experienced as a reflection of a breaking down between two distinct spaces, death and life (or the space of the corpse), then what are we to make of the further physical breaking down of the doll body if that single form is already identified as a manifestation of a psychological breakdown since it is so often equated with the human cadaver? In other

words, if the doll body is already a corpse – what is then the aesthetic or psychological purpose of breaking *this* corpse up into its smaller parts? Although the body of the doll appears to easily mirror the body of the dead (open unblinking eyes, a stiffness of limbs, a form which can seem to house both death and life), post-doll fragments cannot be as easily equated with the post-corpse fragments of skin, bone, and blood. First, the corpse is already, in a sense, a fragment of the body since it is what is left once “life” is removed from it. The body doll does not have that same relationship to the living form since nothing is taken from it for it to become abject. Secondly, the fragmentation of the post-doll body results in a collection of “things” like crumpled up pieces of a jigsaw puzzle – the image is broken, but still recognizable.

Furthermore, there is no decay in the fragmentation of the doll body whereas the breaking of the corpse is more of a breaking down of matter, of decomposition, and then of disappearance. As Kristeva writes in Powers of Horror, in encountering the corpse she recognizes that:

There, I am at the border of my condition as a living being. My body extricates itself, as being alive, from that border. Such wastes drop so that I might live, until, from loss to loss, nothing remains in me and my entire body falls beyond the limit – *cadere*, cadaver. If dung signifies the other side of the border, the place where I am not and which permits me to be, the corpse, the most sickening of wastes, is a border that has encroached upon everything. It is no longer I who expel, “I” is expelled. (3-4)

For Kristeva, in its living form, I (without quotes) is that which is able to do the expelling, but once the “I” (the soul, the spirit) within the I of the living form is expelled from the body then what remains is the corpse – itself a piece of waste which then continues to cast out and

break down in decay because, as Kristeva states: “No, as in true theater, without makeup or masks, refuse and corpses show me what I permanently thrust aside in order to live” (3).

Again, the fragmentation of the doll cannot be considered entirely equivalent to the decay of the human body because the doll, and the image of the doll, refuses to cross over the border where it can be expelled entirely.

Consider, for example, a description of how the eight-year-old narrator, Josephine, of H. C. Cradock’s children’s book, Josephine and Her Dolls (1916), addresses the fragmentation of her doll as discussed in Margaret R. Higonnet’s “War Toys: Breaking and Remaking in Great War Narratives” (2007):

To introduce us to her family of sixteen dolls, Josephine draws their portraits (little vignettes by Honor Appleton) and details their condition. Thus she becomes author of her own autobiographical story, in which the toys are her active companions. “Some of them are a good deal broken,” she explains, “but you can hide the broken parts by their clothes and hats. Only 3 are *quite* whole” (Cradock 10; emphasis in original). On the one hand, Josephine’s catalog of physical defects is brutally frank, reducing the dolls to their physical constitution. Of “Charlie” she writes: “Pale Blue eyes. Made of celluloid. One eye nearly washed out. Crack in the head, a little hole in his nose, no feet and no arms.” On the other hand, she emphatically reaffirms their humanity: “Of course they are people! Grown-ups sometimes seem to think that dolls are only toys” (11).

Although Higonnet’s reading of this story supports her own argument in how playing with such damaged dolls is to also acknowledge and address real wartime losses, her description of how the child, Josephine, plays with these dolls illustrates the dolls’ refusal to be expelled

in the same manner in which the “I” of the human soul is cast out with the decay of the human form. In other words, how Josephine perceives her dolls suggest that, unlike the human soul which is thought to leave the human body upon its physical death, the doll soul stays in place no matter the broken or corpse-like state of its doll form. In this scene, and Higonet’s discussion of it, although the greatly broken down state of the dolls is expressed in terms of refuse – the text also acknowledges the inability of their souls to be completely expelled as such as is exemplified in Josephine’s own incapability of seeing them as anything other than whole and thus alive. And that is to say, not merely as intact toys, but, for Josephine, as actual living souls.

However, despite the doll’s resistance to being considered refuse, there is a constant desire to rid the doll of its “I” or exorcise it of its soul as permanently as the human soul seems to leave the human body upon death (much like the removal of the eyes from Hoffmann’s Olympia). Consider, as an example, the doll photography of German artist, Hans Bellmer (1902-1975).

The dolls Bellmer created and took photographs of during the 1930s are, according to art historian Therese Lichtenstein and her work Behind Closed Doors: The Art of Hans Bellmer (2001):

...a violent attack on the stereotypes of normalcy evident in Nazi art and culture.

They rebel against images of the ideal female Aryan body found in Nazi high art and mass culture. But more than that, they question the role of representation in the social construction of gender and sexuality in German high art and popular culture in the 1930s. (1)

And these photographs are, indeed, quite disturbing in the ways in which they unsettle the ideas of what is a body with its missing limbs, added body parts, or substitutions.

First, it is important to acknowledge the fact that Bellmer's dolls, for the most part, do *not* look like the other dolls discussed in this paper in that his dolls do not resemble children's toys at all. Instead, they look more womanly and more like traditional mannequin forms. Nevertheless, aside from the argument that Bellmer's dolls are dolls because that is what he chose to call them,⁸ his forms register as dolls in the same way in which the folk artists discussed in the previous chapter, Nellie Mae Rowe, Morton Bartlett, and Calvin and Ruby Black, are working with or creating dolls. For Bellmer, like those artists, the form functions more like a doll than a sculpture because, with a doll, there is both a level of private and physical engagement that occurs between the form, the artist, and its audience that is much more intimate than the experience that occurs with the mannequin form, a form meant to be used for a much more public display of scrutiny and experience. There is, of course, one key distinction between Bellmer's dolls and the dolls created by Rowe, Bartlett, and the Blacks: while those artists focused more on their dolls as intact and whole creations, Bellmer's focus is more on the doll in fragmentation.

Aside from constructing the dolls with his own hands and possessions, there is a greater intimacy present in how he shared these dolls. Bellmer never meant for these images to be displayed on their own or on a large scale, they were only meant to be experienced through the viewing of their (frequently hand-colored) photographic images as if collected for a single self in a small personal photo album:

⁸ The German language does differentiate between the two forms: doll, in German, is "Puppe" while the singular form of mannequin is also "Mannequin" in German, although English "mannequin" also can be translated as "Vorführdame," "Modellpuppe," or "Schaufensterpuppe."

Bellmer's 1934 book, *Die Puppe (The Doll)*, produced and published privately in Karlsruhe by Thomas Eckstein, contains black-and-white photographs of Bellmer's first doll arranged in a series of tableaux vivants. Clearly, this small, handcrafted book was not a mass-produced publication but a *livre de luxe*. A short poetic introduction by the artist, titled "Memories of the Doll Theme," describes his inspirational fantasies for the dolls and their origins: "Pulp writers, magicians, and confectioners used to have that secret something, that beautiful sweet which was called nonsense and that brings joy. They dispensed with that unhappiness normally associated in my experience with useful intentions, and revealed the mysteries of roads less travelled by." (Lichtenstein 22)

The qualities of the book that made it tangible and comprehensible (the book itself was small, could be held in one's own hand, something to easily and readily return to) become challenged with the aspects of the book that are profoundly abstract (the contortion of the bodies within the images, the fantastical settings, the lack of an overt linear narrative). With that, and in addition to Bellmer's interest in the imagination and play, the finished work seems to become more of a highly poetic children's picture book created for a narrow reading audience of individuals rather than something created for the collective experience of a larger public audience.

Hans Bellmer took dozens of photographs of the two dolls that he created from fragments of material, junk, and his own handiwork. The dolls never came to him as whole and intact dolls, but only as parts. And they continued to stay constantly in a state of flux –

being broken and recreated over and over again.⁹ Built from remainder, a Bellmer doll was, in a sense, only recognized as *whole* in each of its new formations of fragmentation. As Lichtenstein observes:

Like a child playing with dolls, Bellmer constantly dismantled and rearranged the appendages of his figure. It is almost as though the doll originally came in fragments, like a puzzle, and had to be put together by someone who was unfamiliar with the human form. (30)

Yet, Bellmer's goal did not seem to be to return to any sort of "human form" through the use of dolls because his images never appeared to mirror the human body enough for the viewer to mistake them for one. In addition, the photographs clearly show the joints, hinges, and framework of the doll. Many of Bellmer's images also take on a surrealist quality by being photographs of headless dolls, or of a doll made up of only a torso plus four legs in knee socks, or a doll's head resting on a sink – held up not by its neck, but by a cluster of breasts. Bellmer seemed to be exploring how the "thingness" of the doll, when broken away from how it is supposed to work, can have such a hold on us rather than examining the abject quality of a human body in decay.

In his interesting little book, Little Anatomy of the Physical Unconscious, or The Anatomy of the Image, Bellmer describes the body "as comparable to a sentence that invites us to disarticulate it" (xii-xiii) which Lichtenstein beautifully connects to Bellmer's dolls when she writes:

⁹ According to Sue Taylor's Hans Bellmer: The Anatomy of Anxiety (2000), the assemblage known as the first doll basically "consisted of a molded torso made of flax fiber, glue, and plaster; a masklike head of the same material with glass eyes and a long unkempt wing; and a pair of legs made from broomsticks or dowel rods" (24).

As a plastic anagram, the doll in the book invites the viewer to decipher a secret or hidden meaning by which its changing physical appearance is symptomatic of unconscious psychosexual and emotional states. (35)

The act of disarticulating the doll to decipher its secret or hidden meaning seems to reflect Kristeva's idea of the shedding of waste – again, “from loss to loss, nothing remains in me.” If then, when a doll is shed of its parts does the doll body fall beyond the limit and become the cadaver? If a doll is all parts then is its “I,” its soul, and the power it holds over the viewer expelled as well?



Fig. 3. On left: Hans Bellmer, Untitled, from *La Poupée* (The Doll), 1936

gelatin silver print; 4 9/16 in. x 3 1/16 in. (11.59 cm x 7.78 cm);

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Purchase;

© Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris. 2011.

On right: Hans Bellmer, Untitled, from *La Poupée* (The Doll), 1936

gelatin silver print; 4 5/8 in. x 3 1/16 in. (11.75 cm x 7.78 cm);

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Purchase;

© Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris. 2011.

Bellmer in his construction and reconstruction of the doll, of course, also deconstructed it, but not only prior to taking its picture. Consider two images which appeared in the original

“Die Puppe” as the fourth and fifth image in the book (see figure 3). As Lichtenstein highlights, the three photographs prior to these two show the construction of the doll in stages and appear to be of a seemingly “linear narrative” (25-9). That narrative is, however, broken with the interruption that is the fourth image where the doll is completely disassembled in what Lichtenstein describes as “various parts pinned like specimens against a blueprint on the wall” (29) (see the image on the left in figure 3). She sees them as lifeless, particularly when compared to the more intact dolls present prior to and following this image. Lichtenstein notes, that “Above all else, this photograph signals the doll’s constructed nature,” (29) but I believe that the insertion of this image echoes what the child in Morrison’s The Bluest Eye was trying to do: to read the doll by removing all its parts in order to see what gave it its true power. Yet, even as Morrison’s protagonist broke her doll down, it would still bleat like a dying lamb as if to vocalize that it still had its secret, some “thing” within itself that held a power over the girl, and us, even in its fragmentation. That same experience is present in the Bellmer images as well. The interruption of the doll narrative with the inventory of parts can be read as an expression of the idea that the taking away of parts is akin to discovering, and then controlling, the secret of its power. Or, in human terms, it would mean that to turn the doll into a cadaver would be to expel the “I,” the spirit, from the doll. And, yet, as Bellmer suggests, such an “I” cannot be expelled from the doll. As those reassembled parts in the following image (the fifth) prove, the doll soul is still present and powerful, even when the doll body is in a state of meticulous fragmentation (see the image on the right in figure 3). That fifth image acts as the visual representation of the deconstructed doll that bleats like a dying lamb in The Bluest Eye – proving that the doll’s power is still present no matter how the body is dissected. Finally, that fact is pushed further

by the position of the doll's own face in the fifth image. Looking over her shoulder, she appears to be "looking back" at the previous image, on the previous page, and that action and expression with peering lowered eyes suggests she is just as haunted by what she sees in those parts as anyone else.

With a seemingly sharp turn away from Bellmer, one can also see how the dissection of the doll body does nothing to really diminish its power as a soul and presence as presented in The Meanest Doll in the World (2003), a children's book written by Ann M. Martin and Laura Godwin, and illustrated by Brian Selznick. The second book in a series of three middle grade novels about a family of dolls, this story focuses on a really terribly mean doll, named "Princess Mimi." Despite the fact that she is a "princess" doll made to look as idealized and wholesome as such a title would suggest, she terrorizes the other dolls and is so reckless in her behavior that she puts other dolls at risk in revealing to humans their greatest secret: that dolls are, indeed, alive. At the book's conclusion, Mimi is, thankfully, stopped, but not because she is taken apart. The reign of the meanest doll in the world finally ends because of her hubristic antics. According to Martin and Godwin's trio of books, dolls can go into "Permanent Doll State" (PDS) if they are ever caught, however slightly, being alive in front of a human being. To go into PDS is to become a complete and permanent object which is what occurs to Mimi when a human character catches the doll jumping off of a bookshelf. The princess's fate is further sealed when she is removed from the world of the dolls she was terrorizing and is not only left in PDS, but also in a school's lost and found box.

With that said, the source of Mimi's meanness is played out in an interesting way in the book's design and the Brian Selznick created illustrations. In the first book in the series, The Doll People (2000), the end pages reflect the old-fashioned catalog from which the main

protagonist, Annabelle Doll, was purchased as a means to establish, in a sense, that where she came from is connected to her character as a doll: traditional, loyal, dependable. In The Meanest Doll in the World, the end pages are reflective of Mimi's origins, an origins of parts (see fig. 4)

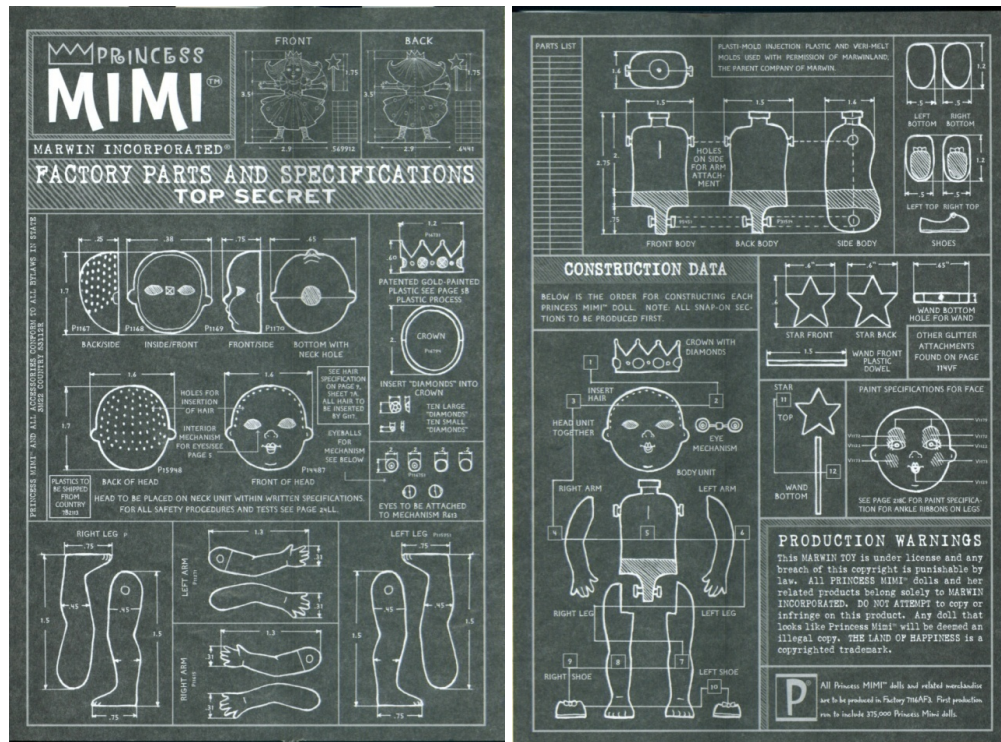


Fig. 4 Illustrated end pages (front end page on left, back end page on right)

from The Meanest Doll in the World by Ann M. Martin & Laura Godwin.

Illustrated by Brian Selznick. Copyright © 2003.

Reprinted by permission of the Disney Book Group. All rights reserved.

In the front matter of the book (image on the left in figure 4), the end pages look like an inventory of Mimi parts while the pages which close the book (image on the right in figure 4) are like a map as to how to assemble her. As a whole, the end pages have the quality and look of a blueprint or x-ray, two forms of examination which artists, especially younger and

contemporary ones, have used to explore the anatomy of dolls.¹⁰ Indeed, as is the case for all three works in this series, this layout is not only striking in that it is reflective of a beautiful and cleverly designed book, but also in how it bookends the narrative itself. After reading this story, one cannot help but “look back” at the opening end pages of Mimi-in-parts as the doll in Bellmer’s photograph looks back at herself in fragmentation. Mimi’s existence, although she is not haunting in the same way a Bellmer doll is haunting, is troubling to the reader. She is so terrible, so mean and yet, there is no identifiable origin to her cruel nature. After completing the story, the closing end pages inform the reader that even with dissection there is either no source to her mean-ness or that it is, in fact, so deeply buried in her “bones” that one cannot find it (this instructional page as to how to assemble Mimi is just as much a reverse blueprint in how to disassemble her too). Mimi’s true ways are only revealed in what is sandwiched between these images of her body – the narrative of her doll soul acting out in the world.

When taken apart, found in states of fragmentation, the doll’s power and unknown soul stays intact though buried deeply. And even in the digging up or decay or deconstruction of the doll – the sense of its power over us, its soul, cannot be inventoried with any listing of limbs, eyes, and hairless skulls. This fact as to, in essence, the doll’s impossible fragmentation adds to a better understanding of why it continues to be a cultural and literary object of real fascination. The doll can still conjure up the uncanny for a reader or viewer of it as an intimate and actual experience – no matter how physically depleted it may or may not appear to be.

¹⁰ Examples of blueprint and x-ray doll art can be found at <http://dollhood.tumblr.com/tagged/x-ray> and <http://dollhood.tumblr.com/tagged/blueprint>.

The Deconstructed Doll: The Human Soul within Parts

What then, aside from being possibly recognized as body-like parts, is it that gives even the doll in parts a power over its viewer? And why, long after childhood, do we continue to want to break her down? Walter Benjamin might suggest that because children see the world as a mirror to themselves that then seeing even the most remote object damaged would, undoubtedly, be troubling. He did write in his “The Lamp” (1933) that “At first, at the moment of birth, it [the child] makes itself similar to the most distant of things in the deepest, most unconscious stratum of its own existence, so as subsequently to enable the objects of the world around to accrete, layer by layer” (692). However, I would argue that for most children chancing upon doll parts is a much more troubling confrontation than stumbling upon another broken object that echoes the self. For one, as James Sully noted in a work responding to Hall’s and Ellis’s study, an essay titled “Dollatry” (1899): “dolls seem to reach a higher degree of reality than other playthings. As objects of passionate attachment, they appear to grow a part of the child’s very self, and so become the least questionable of realities” (68). Though Sully’s essay goes on to acknowledge that children can also have intense attachments to animal toys – it is not quite the same unique attachment they have to dolls and so, one could make the leap that if that attachment is so unique it could be because the child experiences the doll as *being* unique, as being a distinctive and real self, even when fragmented.

Hall’s and Ellis’s “A Study of Dolls” is enlightening as it points to this parallel in the ways in which children perceive a doll *gestalt* in the fragmentation of the toy. As they observe, in many cases a child’s faith in his or her doll is so strong that: “Dolls may lose the head, limbs, or body, and if they are replaced, generally, though not always, retain their

identity” (“Dolls” 163). A song sung by a fairy in Charles Kingsley’s children’s book classic, The Water Babies (1863), further illustrates this *gestalt* quality of the doll:

“I once had a sweet little doll, dears,
The prettiest doll in the world;
Her cheeks were so red and so white, dears,
And her hair so charmingly curled.
But I lost my poor little doll, dears,
As I played in the heath one day;
And I cried for her more than a week, dears;
But I never could find where she lay.

I found my poor little doll, dears,
As I played in the heath one day:
Folks say she is terribly changed, dears,
For her paint is all washed away,
And her arm trodden off by the cows, dear,
And her hair not the least bit curled:
Yet for old sakes’ sake she is still, dears,
The prettiest doll in the world.” (Kingsley 193)

The structure of this song with its rhyming and line-mirroring further highlights the child’s almost willful insistence on keeping the identity of her doll intact despite its fragmentation. The poem begins with a claim of having owned the “prettiest doll in the world” so that the reader/listener is primed to anticipate that some kind of disappearance or disaster has befallen

the doll which is then followed by an inventory of its beauty (red cheeks, hair curled), its loss in the heath, the child's mourning of it and then, in the second stanza, there is a turn (and return) to the heath where the doll is found, an inventory of its lack of beauty (red cheeks washed away, missing arm, no curl) and then the reclaiming of owning "the prettiest doll in the world." The penultimate line sung by the speaker, a fairy (a presumably adult figure), acts as a critique of the experience, the memory, of having once lost this doll, but *not* of the child's own conscious thinking when finding that damaged toy. The "for old sakes' sake" indicates that the speaker, as adult, is reflecting back on the experience and recognizing why the doll, for her child self, retained the quality of being that which the poem began with: "the prettiest doll in the world."

Hall and Ellis's work further emphasizes this demand for wholeness despite an awareness of fragmentation in the section of their study titled "Material of which Dolls are Made, Substitutes, and Proxies." As mentioned in the introduction of this dissertation, children will often ascribe "more or less psychic qualities" to a variety of mundane objects like pillows, flowers, "salt bag stuffed," stools, jugs, and turnips in order to claim them as dolls ("Dolls" 159, 160). James Sully in his reading of this collection of untraditional dolls conjectures that "of these 'substitutes,' one may see a tendency to select what is rudely suggestive to the child of the human form" ("Dollatry" 61). He sees the reoccurring shapes of these replacement dolls as being suggestive of a child's rudimentary drawing of the human body: "Here we see the value for the child's imagination of the circular or oval, and allied forms for head and for body, and of forked lines for the biped's shanks" (Ibid). Sully then points to the pillow as echoing the roundness and ovalness of the body, the legginess of stools, the faces in flowers, and the logic of dollifying the turnip when "hair is apt to appear

in glorious abundance in nursery drawings” (Ibid). Art historian James Elkins in his book, The Object Stares Back: On the Nature of Seeing (1996), sees this act of substitution as a type of “contour completion”:

We instinctively repair fragments into wholes and search for continuous contours and closed curves. ... Psychoneurologists call the phenomenon subjective contour completion, and it helps explain how we routinely see a single building instead of disjunct pieces. On a deeper level, subjective contour completion answers to a desire for wholeness over dissection and form over shapelessness. (125)

The gestalt principle of closure also points to the child’s way of “doll making” or “doll becoming” since it addresses the mind’s reaction to familiar patterns and the desire to complete patterns where they are incomplete. However, it is not only a pattern that is being completed in these substitution acts, but a body. Elkins writes:

When we are confronted with an unfamiliar object -- a blot, a funny smear, a strange configuration of paint, a mirage, a frightening apparition, a wild landscape, a brass microscope, a building made of brick and rock – we seek a body in it; we try to see something like ourselves, a reflection or an other, a doppelganger or a twin, or even just a part of us – a face, a hand or a foot, an eye, even a hair or a scrap of tissue. In other words, we try to understand strange forms by thinking back to bodies. Even odd bodies, things that are manifestly not human, get referred back to human bodies when we try to understand them. (129)

This desire for closing and completing, especially in forms of the body, calls for a return to Lacan’s work as well and how this idea of being both whole and divided in the same “body”

is akin to how Elizabeth Grosz, in her Jacques Lacan: A Feminist Introduction (2001), negotiates Lacan's idea of child identity:

The child sees itself as a unified totality, a *gestalt* in the mirror: it experiences itself in a schism, as a site of fragmentation. The children's identification with its specular image impels it nostalgically to seek out a past symbiotic completeness, even if such a state never existed and is retrospectively imposed on the pre-mirror phase; and to seek an anticipatory or desired (ideal or future) identity in the coherence of the totalized specular image. Lacan claims that the child is now enmeshed in a system of confused recognition/misrecognition: it sees an image of itself that is both accurate (since it is an inverted reflection, the presence of light rays emanating from the child; the image as icon); as well as delusory (since the image prefigures a unity and mastery that the child still lacks). It is the dual, ambivalent relation to its own image that is central to Lacan's account of subjectivity. (39)

For the child this duality is an internal negotiation of being self and other at the same time, but through the doll it can also function as a reflection of this "system of confused recognition/misrecognition."

Once again Hall and Ellis's work is informative because it shows how the child's engagement with the doll points toward the child's own confusion over identity in terms of what is seen and what is desired: "Children are often under a long-continued delusion concerning the material of which dolls are made. Even long after it is *known* that they are wood, wax, etc., it is *felt* that they are of skin, flesh, etc" ("Dolls" 164).

The Deconstructed Doll: The Non-Human Soul within Parts

Nevertheless, aside from how doll fragments echo the human body or suggest a human soul, doll parts can also be experienced as uncanny as they are associated to the soul of the unknown, of the other.

In Brown's use of the word, there is the doll's very single "thingness" as a whole and intact object in addition to the things (cloth, wood, stuffing, paint, porcelain) that make up the one thing – the doll body. Therefore, obviously, in the very creation of its whole body, before the whole, the doll is made up of fragments. And this pre-body fragmentation often does "assert itself" as many narratives will include a story of origins which is often also a story of becoming a commodity (a product of human labor) because it includes where a doll came from, what it was made out of, and how the things that the doll body is made out of influences the "life" the doll has at the moment (Brown, "Thing Theory" 4). The story of Pinocchio begins with him as an ordinary "piece of wood," but other doll stories will talk of their origins in Cleveland factories or at the hands of English doll makers, as breakable china or indestructible plastic (Collodi 83).¹¹

For instance, Tottie, the main "doll" character in Rumer Godden's children's book The Doll's House (1962), is aware that she is made of "good wood" which she thinks has, indeed, provided her with certain strength of character:

How strange that a little farthing doll should last so long. Tottie was made of wood and it was good wood. She liked to think sometimes of the tree of whose wood she was made, of its strength and of the sap that ran through it and made it bud and put

¹¹ For example, the aforementioned trilogy of doll novels for children by Ann M. Martin and Laura Godwin, illustrated by Brian Selznick address the many differences between "living as" older, handmade and breakable dolls and being modern, Cleveland-made plastic dolls: The Doll People (2000), The Meanest Doll in the World (2003) and The Runaway Dolls (2008).

out leaves every spring and summer, that kept it standing through the winter storms and wind. “A little, a very little of that tree is in me,” said Tottie. “I am a little of that tree.” She liked to think of it. (2)

Tottie’s recognition that she is “a little of that tree” points to the fact that there is a “thingness” about her that not only provides her with a type of permanence (as she may live as long as the tree did to “put out leaves every spring and summer...”), but also a sense of wholeness in relationship to *something* else. Through reciprocity, she is like the tree as the tree is like her. As eloquently expressed by Tottie, this pre-body fragmentation easily fits into the argument that pieces can give strength to the whole. However, at the same time, the pre-body of the doll is actually less of a fragmentation than a cultivation of parts. Wood, glass, cloth, tree, sand, plant – these are the things which existed before the body and, therefore, are not fragments of it. What is more interesting is the fragmentation that occurs *after* the body is created and how that state of broken-ness reflects more profoundly on the fixed place of the doll in our cultural imagination. Tottie is an example of power located in origins, a traditional site or recognition of authority, but post-body fragmentation presents a new place of power.

The Deconstructed Doll as a Soul in Action:

This new place of power can be located in Foucault’s idea of power relations. From his work “The Subject and Power,” Foucault notes that power is “a mode of action which does not act directly and immediately on others. Instead it acts upon their actions” (789). In other words, power may seem to be about a relationship between individuals (the boss to a worker) where one (the boss) holds exclusive power over another (the worker), but, for Foucault, it is more about the struggle within that relationship of free subjects where power is

a "mode of action which does not act directly and immediately on others" (Ibid). As he states: "Power exists only when it is put into action" (Foucault 788). The word "action" is central in Foucault's definition of power because if all subjects are free and have opportunities for implementing knowledge then the play for power begins with the ability to act and, perhaps, react.

Dolls, in their very definition, are children's playthings, are subject to the whims of the hands that grip or hold or cradle them. They have no power in play. However, in doll narratives, there is often a depiction of power relations which does not equate human with boss and doll with worker. Power, instead, belongs to the one (human *or* object) which has a knowledge greater than the other and expresses that knowledge through action. Brown's idea that "we begin to confront the thingness of objects when they stop working for us" and that "the story of objects asserting themselves as things" then becomes the "story of the changing relation to the human subject" is often acted out through power relations in doll narratives ("Thing Theory" 4). Therefore, if the "thing" (the doll in this case) no longer "works" for us because it no longer functions how we have known it to function in the past, then the relationship between us and the doll changes. If the doll asserts itself or, for Foucault, "acts" in a way in which is unknown to us in our prior engagement with the thing then the relationship of power has shifted. Further, if a thing stops working for us – that does not mean it stops "working." It may, in fact, continue to work and act in a way which is not as a pre-conceived notion to us or in a way that that we are familiar with, but then that is how the doll may, in a sense, gain a certain power over us because it then becomes unknowable *to* us.

Consider, for example, the taking apart of the doll in "The Dolls" by Ian McEwan. This stand-alone short story is actually a chapter from his children's book The Daydreamer

(1994) about a ten-year-old boy named Peter and his vivid imagination. Peter, having shared a room with his seven-year-old sister, Kate, and her sixty dolls, is finally given his own room. Months pass, but due to boredom on an Easter afternoon, Peter decides to head to his sister's room where, while distracted by "trying to remember his ignorant younger self of six months before," he notices a "figure making its ways across the carpet toward him" (McEwan 30). The figure is one of Kate's dolls, called "Bad Doll":

It was a pink that no human had ever been. Long ago its left leg and its right arm had been wrenched from their sockets, and from the top of its pitted skull grew one thick hank of black hair. Its makers had wanted to give it a sweet little smile, but something must have gone wrong with the mold, because the Bad Doll always curled its lips in scorn and frowned, as if trying to remember the nastiest thing in the world.

Of all the dolls, only the Bad Doll was neither boy nor girl. The Bad Doll was simply 'it.' (25) (see figure 5)

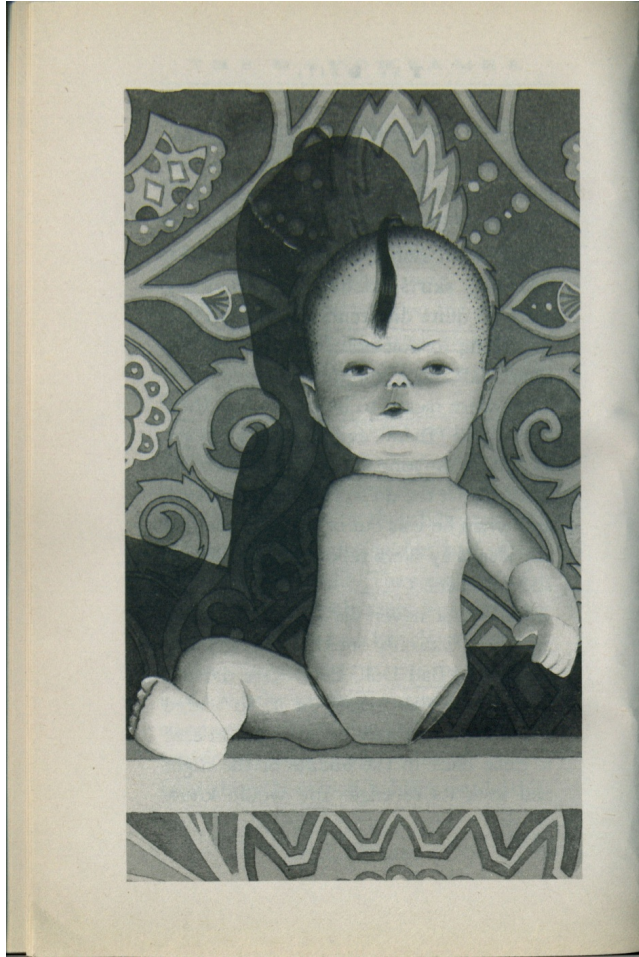


Fig. 5. Illustration of “Bad Doll” by Anthony Browne from Ian McEwan’s The Daydreamer. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2003) 24.

Illustration copyright © 1994 by Anthony Browne.

Used by permission of HarperCollins Publishers.

Soon the other dolls, some walking, some stumbling, come toward him – roaring at him over the fact that he had been given his own room which they thought they rightfully deserved.

Bad Doll, sweaty and limping, leads the dolls in ripping off Peter’s leg and arm and inserting his limbs into the absent spaces of its own body and then ripping out the boy’s hair to resemble “its” own ravaged scalp:

And then a strange thing happened. Peter's leg came off. It came right off. He looked down at where his leg used to be, and instead of blood there was a little coiled spring poking out through his torn trousers.

"That's funny," he thought, "I never would have guessed..."

But he did not have time to think about how funny it was because now the dolls had grabbed his right arm and were pulling yo-ho heave-hoing, and his arm was off too, and sticking out from his shoulder was another little spring.

"Hey! Peter shouted. "Give me back my arm and leg."

But it was no use. The arm and leg were being passed over the heads in the crowd, back toward the Bad Doll. It took the leg and slotted it on. A perfect fit. Now it was putting the arm in place. That arm could have been made specially, it fit so well.

"Odd," Peter thought. "I'm sure my arm and leg would be too big."

Even as he was thinking this, the dolls were on him again, and this time they were scrambling up his chest, pulling his hair, ripping at his clothes.

"Get off," Peter shouted. "Ouch! That hurts."

The dolls laughed as they yanked out nearly all his hair. They left one long hank sticking out of the middle of his head. (McEwan 38-40)

The scene ends when Kate enters the room and finds her brother covered with dolls.

Apparently, as Kate's mild reaction reveals ("...Kate laughed to see her brother with sixty dolls piled on top of him" (41)) this was a boy swept up in a game of imaginative play. This story essentially appears to end here, with an interruption that wakes Peter up out of his play. However, in the concluding paragraphs of the story, when Peter puts Bad Doll back in "its"

place, “he was sure he heard it say, ‘One day, my friend, that room will be mine’” (McEwan 42).

Narratives about whole dolls, intact dolls, can be haunting. Kate, in this story, owns a world of dolls, but the narration notes that:

They were all quite different, but they all had one thing in common: they all had the same wide, mad, unblinking angry stare. They were meant to be babies, but their eyes gave them away. Babies never looked at anyone like that. When he walked past the dolls, Peter felt watched, and when he was out of the room, he had the idea they were talking about him, all sixty of them. (McEwan 23)

They, collectively, held a knowledge unknown to Peter, but – again – returning to Foucault – they did not, for a time, act on that knowledge. Yet the doll that does finally assert itself into action and has power over Peter is the broken, fragmented one with the pitted skull where one thick piece of black hair grew. What is key about this descriptive choice is that this doll did not only stop “working” by no longer being a doll that sat, knowingly but silent, in its place until it turned on Peter. It also stopped working well before it advanced toward Peter because of how it appeared to be different from other dolls. The fact that Bad Doll is physically, visually, more distant from the other dolls in its state of fragmentation also contributes to its assertion of power over Peter (see figure 5). Considering the illustration of Bad Doll, the reader is further drawn into the doll’s power in producing a feeling of the uncanny in how it is even depicted on the page. As the large shadow behind the doll suggests, the doll is lit as if in a spotlight and yet lit slightly lower in order to create an unsettling darkness around the eyes. Furthermore, Bad Doll, unlike Hoffmann’s Olympia in his story “The Sandman,” would not be mistaken for human by anyone since, aside from the

absent limbs, it still does not look human or child-like. As depicted in its shadowy portrait: “Its makers had wanted to give it a sweet little smile, but something must have gone wrong with the mold...” (McEwan 25). Finally, the doll appears to be sitting on a shelf and so the viewer, like the child, is positioned as if having to look up at it in awe, reverence, and fear of the unknown.

Additionally, the multifaceted notion of the uncanny relates to Bad Doll in more than the doll’s mere unexpected animation or physical representation. Freud wrote that: “Severed limbs, a severed head, a hand detached from the arm ... feet that dance by themselves ... – all of these have something highly uncanny about them, especially when they are credited, as in the last instance, with independent activity” (“Uncanny” 150). As the chart of the “Uncanny Valley” indicates (see figure 2), the zombie is assessed to be a more disturbing thing to encounter than any other type of familiar object because, as Mori argues, it is the zombie’s act of movement that intensifies the eeriness of the uncanny. Fear of the zombies, like the corpse, is clearly tied to a fear of death, but it is the animation of the zombie (the most macabre image of dead man walking) that is more terrifying because its movement is a sign of life, of still having a soul. In discussing the uncanniness of body parts, Mori observes that such improvements have been made to “simulate veins, muscles, tendons, finger nails, and finger prints” as well as color in prosthetics that a man-made limb can be mistaken for a real one (Mori, “Uncanny” 33). However, Mori stresses that if “this kind of prosthetic hand is too real and when we notice it is prosthetic, we have a sense of strangeness” (Mori, “Uncanny” 34). With the prosthetic there too is the element of movement in a supposedly inanimate thing which not only results in feeling unsettled, but also brings in the aspect of surprise. Mori writes “if we shake the hand, we are surprised by the lack of soft tissue and

cold temperature. In this case, there is no longer a sense of familiarity. It is uncanny” (Mori, “Uncanny” 35). Therefore, for the larger hidden nature of the strange to be revealed, one must also be willing to have an intimate if not physical engagement with that which just may initially appear to be only somewhat unfamiliar.

Returning to McEwan’s story, *Bad Doll*’s power of uncanniness is therefore not only that which comes from encountering disengaged and animated body parts, but also in that very real engagement with said body parts. In other words, a feeling of uncanniness is also produced from that fact that the fragmentation of the doll body allows it to become interchangeable with the boy’s. In “The Uncanny,” Freud writes that a sense of the uncanny is also created when:

...a person may identify himself with another and so become unsure of his true self; or he may substitute the other’s self for his own. The self may thus be duplicated, divided and interchanged. Finally there is the constant recurrence of the same thing, the repetition of the same facial features, the same characters, the same destinies, the same misdeeds, even the same names, through successive generations. (“Uncanny” 142)

We see this repetition of self resulting in an instability of “true self” not only when the dolls take the boy’s arm and leg, causing him to mirror the missing limbs of *Bad Doll*, but also in the fact that when these are taken from him – what is left in that space is not blood, but “a little coiled spring,” while the arm and leg once belonging to him are now slotted perfectly onto *Bad Doll*’s body: “A perfect fit” (McEwan 39). Here the identity of who is, in fact, the human and who is the doll is clearly a destabilizing experience, a fact emphasized by Peter’s

own utterance of “That’s funny ... I never would have guessed” (39).¹² Yet this “funny” moment also begs to make the connection as to how children are apt to see the dollness in themselves and not just the humanness of their toys. Hall and Ellis also write in their observations of dolls and children that:

To find a doll’s head hollow or that it is sawdust, while it suggests to very young children the same as contents of their own body, is with older children a frequent source of disenchantment and sometimes marks the sudden end of the doll period. ... It is singular how slow and late children learn what the “hard things” under their own skin (bones) are, and how easily, after a trifling injury, they think the body a bag of blood, or somehow get the impression that they are blown up and grown by inflation, or are themselves full of sawdust or of stomach, which fills even arms and legs (“Dolls” 164)

Indeed, the identity of the “true self” is troubled in this moment between this boy and this doll, but, as Freud writes, the confusion over identity through acts of duplication, division, and interchangeability occurs “through successive generations” (“Uncanny” 142). In other words, this does not occur simply like a clean swap of identity for identity, but becomes piecemeal as well as successive as textual elements also play with the instability. One such example of instability created through confusion over identity is found in choosing to name the protagonist, “Peter,” a name already associated with a famously half boy/half other creature (Peter Pan), not to mention also the name of the doll featured in the Life photo essay

¹² This “That’s funny” is actually working in the same way in which the speaker in Robert Louis Stevenson’s “My Shadow” expresses anxiety when he notices how the his shadow’s movement is not only different from him but different from what he recognizes to be human movement: “The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to grow—” (Stevenson 22). In both instances the pause to not something as different, as “funny” initially appears rather mild, but it actually expresses a deeper sensation of the beginning of anxiety.

discussed in the previous chapter. In addition, in choosing to not only set this narrative on a Sunday, the most “betwixt and between” day of the week, but Easter Sunday, a holiday which, in many ways, encapsulates and celebrates many of these aspects of the uncanny, is telling as well as intriguing as to the real instability of not only this story, but our own trust in what is real and what is play, what is fact and what is storytelling.

Finally, though the story ends in a seemingly tidy ending of an almost “and then he woke up” when Kate walks into the room and breaks the spell of play, the story still ends with Peter thinking he hears Bad Doll threaten him. Therefore, with the repetition of the engagement to the doll in and out of play, we are unsure as to which is “true” and so we are left with a feeling of the uncanny.

In The Savage Mind, Lévi-Strauss wrote that the bricoleur is someone who uses his hands to create, much like a craftsman or storyteller:

The ‘bricoleur’ is adept at performing a large number of diverse tasks, but, unlike the engineer, he does not subordinate each of them to the availability of raw materials and tools conceived and procured for the purpose of the project. His universe of instruments is closed and the rules of his game are always to make do with ‘whatever is at hand’, that is to say with a set of tools and materials which is always finite and is also heterogeneous because what it contains bears no relation to the current project, or indeed to any particular project, but is the contingent result of all the occasions there have been to renew or enrich the stock or to maintain it with previous constructions or destructions. (17)

In the narrative of play as well as in narratives about play, the child is like a bricoleur. Offered only those tools “at hand” (the doll, the box), he or she must make do with

constructing and deconstructing these familiar forms in order to achieve the desired resolution of knowing what it is (and if there is) *something* inside the material thing. And, in that, the child's ability to understand his own consciousness (or the unique consciousness of another) is developed and explored in how he negotiates with those parts which his hands touched, found, or broke.

CHAPTER 3

THE DOLL IS A SHADOW BOX

“Untitled (Bébé Marie), Early 1940s”

The chubby doll in a forest of twigs. Her eyes are open and her lips and cheeks are red. While her mother was busy with other things, she went to her purse, took out the makeup, and painted her face in front of a mirror. Now she's to be punished.

A spoiled little girl wearing a straw hat about to be burnt at the stake. One can already see the flames in her long hair entangled with the twigs. Her eyes are wide open so she can watch us watching her.

All this is vaguely erotic and sinister.

poem by Charles Simic from his poetry collection inspired by the artwork of Joseph Cornell: Dime-Store Alchemy: The Art of Joseph Cornell (1992), 47.



Fig. 1. Art © The Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY
 Cornell, Joseph (1903-1972)
 Untitled (Bébé Marie). Early 1940s.
 Papered and painted wood box, with painted corrugated cardboard floor, containing doll in cloth dress and straw hat with cloth flowers, dried flowers, and twigs, flecked with paint, 23 ½ x 12 3/8 x 5 1/4" (59.7 x 31.5 x 13.3 cm).
 Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest.
 Location: The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, U.S.A.
 Photo Credit: Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY

Introduction:

Engaging with the qualities of both the shadow and the box, as outlined and discussed in the previous two chapters, the image of the “shadow box” literally brings together these

two metaphors to illustrate one of the defining ways that the doll is a distinctly unique liminal figure: it can move with fluidity and ease between being an object which is looked upon and a subject that does the looking. Furthermore, when encountered in such a liminal state of constant flux, the doll becomes a profound figure of the uncanny. As its identity can enigmatically and swiftly oscillate between being comprehended as a physical object and soul-filled subject, the doll in dollhood becomes impenetrable to organizing principles of logic. Instead, the doll becomes an experience that the metaphor of the “shadow box” only begins to articulate.

This chapter will begin with a close reading of two different artworks with a slight variation of the same name, “Untitled (Bébé Marie),”¹ in order to extract the distinct qualities of the shadow and the box as expressed in the doll found in Joseph Cornell’s shadow box and the one located in Charles Simic’s poem. Following this analysis, however, this chapter will present how both the qualities of the shadow and the box are working in a much more profound way as an expression of the liminal when left intertwined, like a Möbius strip, in these same two works. Then a reading of Rainer Maria Rilke’s essay “Some Reflections on Dolls: Occasioned by the Wax Dolls of Lotte Pritzel” is introduced in order to articulate just how the doll is able to occupy the space of both a subject (and spectator) and an object (or spectacle) and how that liminal state is unique to the doll and thus unsettling for the human to experience. This chapter then focuses on Dare Wright’s children’s book The Lonely Doll (1957) in order to illustrate how the experience of the uncanny emerges from a text that plays with and manipulates a doll’s identity as being both, as well as neither, a subject and an

¹ Cornell’s shadow box is known as “Untitled (Bébé Marie)” while Simic’s poem is named “Untitled (Bébé Marie), Early 1940s.”

object. Finally, Bolesław Leśmian's poem "Lalka" ("The/A Doll") is introduced to express how the doll can even address and embrace itself as living in that in-between space of being a subject/spectator as well as object/spectacle.

The "Shadow Box" in Cornell's Shadow Box:

Looking at the Joseph Cornell shadow box which opens this chapter, "Untitled (Bébé Marie)," one could attempt to dissect the power of its impact on the viewer in terms of its shadow and box qualities (see figure 1).

As an image representing a three-dimensional artwork, it is, of course, only a shadow of the original self. This is not the actual artwork, but a shadow, a photographic reproduction, of that original. The art piece is also a shadow because of the content within its actual box, specifically the doll itself. Although the artwork was created in the early 1940s, the doll is not of its time as both its porcelain face and anachronistic attire are more a reflection of the Victorian time period than the American mid-century. Furthermore, the doll not only performs as a shadow cast from another time period in general, but also as a shadowy remainder of Cornell's own personal past. Lindsay Blair in her book, Joseph Cornell's Vision of Spiritual Order (1998), points to the quality of personal nostalgia in Cornell's use of this particular doll as he, as an adult, stole it from his cousin Ethel in order to use it in his own art (110). This act reinforces the idea that Cornell "was attempting to fashion his art from the stuff from his grandmother's attic," making art from his own personal shadows (Ibid). Finally, there is the frequency with which the image of Bébé Marie appeared in photographs before she was "boxed" in this box. Blair writes that "Cornell did not enjoy being photographed" and so he "used her ... as a prop for portrait photographs" (Ibid) and so

likenesses, photographic shadows, have also been made of her away from and before the box as well.

As a box, “Bébé Marie” is more than the “box” which frames and holds its contents. It is also a box in that it “boxes” its contents as recognizable and tangible artifacts. As the image and the description of the image correspond to one another, there appears to be no complexity in what it is filled with: “Papered and painted wood box, with painted corrugated cardboard floor, containing doll in cloth dress and straw hat with cloth flowers, dried flowers, and twigs, flecked with paint...” (MoMA). In addition, this artwork is also clearly a box because, if permitted to, one could physically parse out its contents and investigate them as well as the interiority and shape of the box itself, never mind the body of the doll within that box. However, aside from all the measureable ways in which Cornell’s “Bébé Marie” is both a “shadow” and a “box,” how those two qualities are working when intertwined with one another is an entirely new assemblage of liminal power, a liminality which the poet Charles Simic captures in his own poem titled “Untitled (Bébé Marie), Early 1940s.”

In Simic’s brief poem about Cornell’s own “Untitled (Bébé Marie), Early 1940s” (the poem appears on the second page of this chapter), there exists a Möbius strip-like movement in the relationship between the shadow and box that, when each image is isolated outside of that relationship to the other, loses its potency.

Without a doubt, one can take an inventory of the qualities of “shadow” and “box” in this poem. The shadow exists, first, in the very title of the poem as it is a duplicate to how the artwork is referenced. The shadow is also present in the form of the poem as one stanza is mirrored by the next not merely in line count (five each), but also in structure. Like a play on the form and structure of John Hollander’s “Swan and Shadow,” the first stanza of Simic’s

own “Bébé Marie” begins with a description of the real object in the Cornell box, the “chubby doll,” while the second stanza begins with a description of the doll’s shadow, a “spoiled little girl.” And in addition to structure, qualities of the shadow are suggested in the presence of the mirror, the doll’s other double – the mother, the use of makeup, the repetition of “twigs” and the doubling of the image (and language) of both the doll’s and the girl’s eyes being open.

The values of the box are present in this poem in a number of ways as well. There is the investigative quality present in how the poem moves as well as the action within it. Both stanzas begin with a line which seems to be making a claim as to meaning based on the contents of the box: “The chubby doll in a forest of twigs” or “A spoiled little girl wearing a straw hat about to be burnt at the stake.” Then the action imagined within the box is imagined through and because of an understanding of the box’s contents.

The rosy lip and cheek of the Victorian doll may have prompted the imagining of the doll stealing her mother’s makeup as the doll’s stiff and direct stance may have brought to the poet’s mind an image of looking into a mirror or being punished. And the girl, like the actual doll, is wearing a straw hat, and although the twigs are twigs and not flames – her position in them, the way they rise up as if devouring her, suggests that, yes, she is about to be burnt at the stake.

However, the power of Cornell’s “Bébé Marie” is not actually conveyed in the sorting out of what elements are “shadow” and which are “box” in this poem (and artwork). This is because the impact of the artwork is not found in the act of isolating the “shadow” from the “box,” but rather in how both are moving into and from one another like a Möbius strip.

In truth, the actual impact of Cornell's "Bébé Marie" is located in how those qualities of the shadow are able to move into those of the box (and vice versa), a perpetual movement that Elizabeth Grosz articulates as being the Möbius strip quality of the "shadow box" as it shows "the inflection of mind into body and body into mind" ("Volatile" xii). Its power, for example, is not in recognizing the twigs as twigs but in being able to imagine that those "twigs" are, as Simic poses, a forest which imprisons a misbehaving doll, flames which engulf a spoiled girl, or something else entirely. As Simic suggests, the artwork is a Möbius strip which will not yield, will not stop, and will not provide a single meaning. This fact is reinforced by the firmness of the doll's gaze, which, again, Simic emphasizes twice in his poem when he writes: "Her eyes are open" and then "Her eyes are wide / open so she can watch us watching her" as if her face is as indifferent to giving away any stable meaning as is the Möbius strip. In the isolating of "shadow" from "box," each concept was experienced as if on the receiving end of a subjective action or engagement, but now, when amalgamated, "shadow box" appears to be able to participate in the subjective experience. The doll/girl is an object which not only does not look away but also looks back with indifference. She also makes the viewer her object by how she appears to be unblinkingly "watching" the viewer in his or her attempt to dissect the toy's meaning in terms of her relationship to everything from Sleeping Beauty to Joan of Arc. This is why Cornell's shadow box is a "shadow box" – because it stays, after one experiences it and tries to pin it down as being, what Simic calls, "vaguely erotic and sinister." In other words, for the state of dollhood, this shadow box as a "shadow box" illustrates how the doll can now not only be the nuanced object but also that which gazes upon the object like a subject. The doll can be both the object of the subject's

gaze and also fully capable of being that subject that gazes upon its viewer as if the viewer is, in fact, the real object.

The Doll as Object and Subject:

Toys, in general, but the doll, in particular, are objects that seem to have been created solely in order to be on the receiving end of experience. Dolls are gazed upon and admired, but they do not look. Dolls are handled in play and in their creation,² but they do not touch. Yet, the doll is much more than an object that can be used as a screen to project our experiences upon. More interestingly, the doll is, in many ways, not only a fully realized and experienced object of the gaze, but it may also be considered a richly complex and very real gazing subject as well. This distinction between doll as object and doll as subject becomes more complicated in works where the division between these two states is unclear and where the doll is capable of being both subject and object in the same liminal moment.

By naming the ways in which the doll is able to embrace and, yes, embody the qualities of an object and a subject, we can see how both a poem like “Lalka” (“The/A Doll” in English), by Polish poet, Bolesław Leśmian (1878-1937) and a picture book like The Lonely Doll by Dare Wright (published in 1957) can express how the doll is both an object of experience and the subject who experiences, the spectacle and the spectator – the doll is the thing that, unlike the human, *can* exist on the line between life and art.

² “Of course, such toys were not originally the invention of toy manufacturers, but were produced in the workshops of wood carvers, pewterers, and so forth. Not until the nineteenth century did toymaking become the province of a branch-industry of its own. The particular style and beauty of toys of the older kind can be understood only if we realize that toys used to be a by-product of the many handicrafts that were all subject to the rules and regulations of the guilds, so that each member could manufacture only products that fell within the definition of his own trade” (Benjamin, “Cultural” 113-14).

First, it must be noted that the idea of a “living” doll can not only be transposed to those supposed living people (fictional or otherwise) who, it can be argued, act as dolls or become like dolls in the hands of their creators like Oscar Wilde’s (or Lord Henry’s) Dorian Gray or Vladimir Nabokov’s (or Humbert Humbert’s) Lolita. In addition to that type of living doll, there is the actual doll, the plaything made of objects or assembled from physical materials, which can be perceived, in certain works, as also living or having a human-like soul. It is a concept that Baudelaire acknowledges when he writes in his essay, “A Philosophy of Toys,” that “The overriding desire for most children is to get at and *see the soul* of their toys” and that once, at last, the child opens the toy he wonders “But *where is the soul?* This is the beginning of melancholy and gloom” (203-04). In his essay, “The Cultural History of Toys,” Benjamin also sees the plaything as belonging to a more living space because it acts more purposefully than a mere object. He writes:

...children do not constitute a community cut off from everything else. They belong to the nation and the class they come from. This means that their toys cannot bear witness to any autonomous separate existence, but rather are a silent signifying dialogue between them and their nation. (“Cultural” 116)

In his essay “Some Reflections on Dolls: Occasioned by the Wax Dolls of Lotte Pritzel,” Rilke wonders where these dolls exist when there are no children in their lives:

...this would be, in a certain sense, the condition of their origin, that the world of children was past and over. In these figures the doll has at last outgrown the understanding, the sympathy, the pleasure, and the sorrow of the child, it has become independent, grown-up, prematurely old, it has entered upon all the unrealities of its own life. (43)

He refers to dolls as being “unchanging” and of “being impenetrable and incapable of absorbing, at any point, even a drop of water in their extreme state of well-enough known solidity” (Ibid). Yet this deadness of being a doll is not its only quality. He admits to a consciousness belonging to the dolls as well. As addressed in Chapter One of this dissertation, Kittie Carriker notes in her book, Created in Our Image, that as “Rilke’s essay and the fictional narratives treated here illustrate, the body of the doll is often invested with a ‘truth-bearing function,’ perhaps even with a soul,” which implies that the doll soul may also be a unique consciousness separate and different from that which is recognized as human (172). Even Heinrich von Kleist, in his essay “On the Puppet Theater,” notes how the marionette, the puppet doll, exists on this unnatural border between existence and non-existence. The puppet exists and has a soul because out of the dead things that are its limbs it is able to create art, the dance. However, at the same time, it does not exist because, not only are its strings being pulled by something larger, but the puppet creates a dance that is more beautiful than one that any human dancer can create. Yet, what is striking is that Kleist also shows how the human dancer exists on that same border of life and art as well. The dancer is living and creating art, but his dance can be too affected, too *unnatural*, as if manipulated by awkward strings. Therefore the puppet, controlled by a puppeteer, is more natural and life-like than the dancer who controls himself. The answer then becomes muddled as to who is the real object, who is the real subject and which dance is the true act:

“And the advantages of such a puppet over living dancers?”

“The advantage? First of all, my good friend, a negative one; namely that it would be incapable of affectation. For affectation, as you know, appears when the soul (*vis motrix*) is located at any point other than the center of gravity of a

movement. Now because, with his wires and strings, it is this very point and no other that the puppeteer controls, all remaining members are, as they should be, dead, pure pendulums, which follow the basic law of gravity – a marvelous quality, which we look for in vain in most of our dancers” (Kleist 213)

For Rilke, however, although the doll is a “half object” which is unlike objects which moved him “deeply by their beautiful participation in human living” like the “sewing clamp, a spinning-wheel, a domestic loom,” it is still very much a live, active object even though he says that the doll-soul is “not made by God” (Rilke 45, 49). However, his choice to talk about the doll in terms of death and decay re-affirms its existence because he discusses it in terms of *human* decay and not the decay or breakdown of material, of objects. Imagining the anger he would feel at finding one of his old dolls, he writes:

... it would almost anger us with its frightful obese forgetfulness, the hatred, which undoubtedly has always been a part of our relationship to it unconsciously, would break out, it would lie before us unmasked as the horrible foreign body on which we had wasted our purest ardour; as the eternally painted watery corpse, which floated and swam on the flood-tides of our affection, until we were on dry land again and left it lying forgotten in some undergrowth. (Rilke 45)

It is at this point that the doll in Rilke’s essay is revealing itself to be both the spectacle and the spectator. We see that it is the spectacle, the material doll, that is “dead” outside of the individual’s, the child’s, pleasure of not only playing with it, but also when applying pleasurable ideas and concepts upon it (like Humbert Humbert to his Dolores Haze). Yet Rilke’s hostility seems to not stem from the fact that the doll is the spectacle, but that the doll also seems to be asserting itself through its non-assertion. That is to say that it is also the

spectator, a subject – watching the individual react to its choice to *not* overtly give direction. The doll is very much the flâneur – a voyeur, who is the center of this world (the anger and focus of Rilke’s thoughts) and wants to see (as it does with its “disproportionate, mobile eyes open, scarcely capable, indeed, of distinguishing whether it was the mechanical lid or that other thing, the air, which lay upon them”) but does not want to be seen for all that it is seeing (Rilke 43-44). However, what is strikingly unique about the doll’s subjectivity is that its unblinking eyes and unchanging self also reveal that it is “nil admirari” and it admires nothing with its fixed doll face of boredom. Here is where its objecthood makes its presence known in the doll as a subject. The doll, because it is still an object, is able to express an intense type of indifferent judgment that is unfamiliar to human subjectivity. This is an expression of the state of the doll’s liminality that the human cannot enter, and yet it is a state which terrifies the human to experience. Rilke, for one, is hostile at this distinctive spectator-like existence of the doll (again, existence here supported through the description of its human deadness and decay, and the doll’s rudimentary “idea” of falling and its ability to “allow itself” to be dreamed about). He is hostile not merely because the doll forced him to assert himself, but the fact that the doll:

...made no response whatever, so that we were put in the position of having to take over the part it should have played, of having to split our gradually enlarging personality into part and counterpart; in a sense, through it to keep the world, which was entering into us on all sides, at a distance. The things which were happening to us incomprehensibly we mixed in the doll, as in a test tube, and saw them there change colour and boil up. That is to say, we *invented* that also, it was so abysmally devoid of phantasy, that our imagination became inexhaustible in dealing with it. (Rilke 45-46)

It is as if the doll's power lies in its indifference. The choice of that indifference is so unsettling for Rilke because it takes the power away from Rilke and forces him to act, to be the spectacle for the spectator which is the doll's natural double position.

The Lonely Doll Looking:

Turning to Dare Wright's picture book, The Lonely Doll, one can see that this work expresses similar key qualities of the object as subject, but it also performs this state by playing with a number of liminal qualities already present in the children's book. First, this is a kitschy, photographic, and very minor work of art. It was also the creation of a woman who used the concept of copying and mirroring to really re-create something new out of things that are not. Wright created an artwork, the doll, Edith, that looks just like the author (blond ponytail, gold hoop earrings), is named after the author's mother (who is called "Edie"), and plays dress up in the story (the play act of copying). If we just look at the cover of the book, it appears that Wright created this image to already look like a piece of art in not only the way in which the pink gingham pattern and very title of the book suggest the quality of portraiture, but also in the choice to photograph the doll in a pose typical of the art form of portraiture: in a staged moment of intimate repose and reflection with an open book in her lap (see figure 2). And yet by exploring the history of this image and Dare Wright herself, one discovers how the photograph is not merely mimicking portraiture as a style but is actually mimicking an already created piece of artwork, as the cover of the book looks strikingly similar to the painting that Wright's own mother, "Edie" (Edith Stevenson Wright), a successful portrait painter, painted of Wright as a child (see figure 3). In both images we see a girlish subject in solitude, positioned in profile, and with arms encircling an open book held

close to her body. In addition, whether lost in thought, reflection, or distraction, neither the painted girl nor the photographed doll meets the viewer's gaze.



Fig. 2. On left: the original photograph that later appeared as the cover of The Lonely Doll.™

Image courtesy of Brook Ashley and The Estate of Dare Wright.

© Dare Wright Media / The Lonely Doll™

Fig. 3. On right: portrait of Dare Wright at age six painted by her mother Edith Stevenson Wright.

Image courtesy of Brook Ashley and The Estate of Dare Wright.

© Dare Wright Media / The Lonely Doll™



Fig. 4: Original author photo of Dare Wright taken by Dare Wright.

Image courtesy of Brook Ashley and The Estate of Dare Wright.

© Dare Wright Media / The Lonely Doll™

This idea of mirror-image portraits produces the experience of the *mise-en-abyme* as even the author photo of Dare Wright is strikingly similar to the images she herself created of her doll as well as of the image her mother created of Wright as a child (see figure 4). And although this image is flipped (Wright's body is facing left rather than right) and she holds a camera in her hands rather than a book – the pose, lighting, mood, and look of concentration all reflect the look and feel of “her” other two portraits.

The Edith doll, as an object, is dead, yet its art is in how it is constantly referring and associating outside of itself as often as it is absorbing the attention. This doll, as art work, is moving, enacting the Möbius strip quality of the “shadow box.” Aside from the aforementioned doublings and reflections – the doll itself plays dress up in the story (the play

act of copying) (see figure 5) and this book as well as all of Wright's books are literally full of mirrors upon mirrors, glassy reflections, and reflections in water that offer repetition as an entrance way to depth as well as abstract images of reflection as Edith and her bears are prone to slipping into liminal states like sleeping, wishing, and reading.



Fig. 5. On left: original photograph used in Dare Wright's The Lonely Doll.TM

Image courtesy of Brook Ashley and The Estate of Dare Wright.

© Dare Wright Media / The Lonely DollTM

Fig. 6. On right: original photograph used as title page for Dare Wright's The Lonely Doll.TM

Image courtesy of Brook Ashley and The Estate of Dare Wright.

© Dare Wright Media / The Lonely DollTM

Edith, the doll, is also very much an image of spectacle and spectator. She is the spectacle, the material doll posed for photographs in the minor artwork that is this picture book. She seems to be very much a type of “dead” artwork because she is so unchanging. Her expression never alters and she, like Rilke’s doll, does not close her eyes. Even on the title page when the doll is depicted covering her eyes to, perhaps, count to ten before playing hide-and-seek – we can see that her eyes are not really covered or closed at all (see figure 6).

However, Wright’s doll is very much a conscious figure as well. David Colman writes in his 2004 New York Times article, “The Unsettling Stories of Two Lonely Dolls,” that there are many reactions to the book. Some found the still posed photography and the blank doll face “disturbing,” the spanking by the father bear as upsetting and yet others found the doll to be “haunting.” He also notes that, for children, the reaction is quite different:

Its power is also due to its novel format, narration of a story through photography.

The artist Laurie Simmons, who has explored the strangeness of dolls through photographs, said the images lend a heightened sense of realism to the story that is intoxicating to a child’s eyes. Moreover, she said, the doll’s expression never changes, and that makes it a potent blank screen upon which a child can project feelings. (Colman)

What makes this depiction of a doll a depiction of an object with a soul *is* that unchanging face. Its watchfulness and, as with Rilke’s doll and Cornell’s “Bébé Marie,” its non-assertion as an observer or voyeur is how it turns its own experience into something that it is a witness to rather than a thing on the receiving end of experience. This position of a voyeur is further highlighted because of the fact that the artist depicts the doll frequently looking at mirrors, through mirrors, out windows or even, on the cover, where the doll is reading, but not

reading a text. Her eyes or, more precisely, her line of vision is never in the moment, but in another space – watching something other.

Looking at the page depicting the infamous spanking scene (see figure 7) one can see that the doll is as detached and voyeuristic as she is in the beginning of the book, when she is posed to be waiting for friends or, in later parts of the book, when she is supposed to represent a figure enjoying herself.



Fig. 7. Original photograph used in Dare Wright's The Lonely Doll.TM

Image courtesy of Brook Ashley and The Estate of Dare Wright.

© Dare Wright Media / The Lonely DollTM

The doll is maintaining a gaze of superficiality because she is experiencing the pleasure (play) and the perversity (spanking) of being an artwork as well as always being able to watch these experiences with her blank face. Therefore, in the same moment, she is existing

on and in the liminal line between life and art and watching her watch us creates a very real moment of uncanny experience for us, the human readers.

How Leśmian's "Lalka" Looks:

In Leśmian's "Lalka" (in English, "The/A Doll"³) we also see how the doll is both alive as the spectator and dead as the spectacle in the same space. The poem begins with the doll acknowledging herself as an artwork, a thing of pleasure:

Jam - lalka. W mych kolczykach szkli się zaświat dżdżysty,

Suknia jawą atłasu ze snem się kojarzy.

Lubię fajans mych oczu i zapach kleisty

Farby, rumieńcem śmierci młodzącej mat twarzy. (Leśmian)

I am – (the/a) doll. In my earrings shines the drizzly world,

My dress, like a daydream of satin, is reminiscent of dreaming.

I like the delft of my eyes and the gluey smell

Of the paint that with a blush of death makes my matte face young.

From this first stanza, seemingly opposing claims are being made as to whether the doll is seen (or sees itself) as an object or a subject. First, the description is of a surface – the exterior of the doll. Yet, the doll is not merely noting its own surface details, but it is enjoying those very feminine attributes (the sparkling earrings, the blue eyes, blushed

³ Polish does not have articles and so translating "Lalka" into "The Doll" or "A Doll" becomes a linguistic choice which informs the reading of this poem especially in the context of this analysis. Of course, a third choice is to merely call the poem "Doll" since English does not require that a noun be accompanied by an article. Also, please note that the entirety of the poem is included in the appendix as well as my working translation of it. Thank you to Dr. Madeline G. Levine and my own mother, Anna T. Panszczyk, for assisting me in the translation of this very difficult Polish poem.

cheeks) and perverse qualities (smelling like glue, red paint blushing its face as if bringing life back into a dead face) by detailing them, which emphasizes their importance, the importance of that surface. The description is also a constant and eager observation as the doll's own gaze admires and acknowledges its own self, in the first stanza, then moves into gazing at the space around itself, in the second stanza, and then moves to seeing the girl in the third stanza. The movement away from the doll and to the girl shifts the gaze from one focus to the next, but that movement is still very much superficial because it moves, across three stanzas, from the surface of the doll to the surface of the room and then to the girl.

The beginning of the poem easily presents the ways in which the doll is clearly an object in terms of valuing the feminine and perverse surface qualities of the doll. At the same time the poem is also setting up the doll as a much more complicated conscious subject with a soul by the mere fact that the doll is, yes, the spectacle, but it is also the spectator, by its first person narration, which is admiring itself as an art object. Moreover, its liminal quality opens up to yet another level because the doll as the spectator, although acknowledging itself as a spectacle, an artwork, is also acknowledging the spectacle of the self as spectator (spectacle -> spectator -> spectacle). The poem becomes a house of mirrors when, in the third stanza, the doll claims (in its own words) that it is a "non-being" and that the girl "says everything for me" and "pretends that she believes that I am alive."⁴ Roland Barthes wrote in his work Roland Barthes (1977) that while listening to a recording of himself playing he shifts from:

⁴ "... gdy w dłonie mój niebyt porywa / I mówi za mnie wszystko, różowa natchnieniem, / I udaje, że wierzy w to, iż jestem żywa."

...imitation (from description) and entrust myself to nomination. Do I not know that, *in the field of the subject, there is no referent?* The fact (whether biographical or textual) is abolished in the signifier, because it immediately *coincides* with it: *writing myself*, I merely repeat the extreme operation by which Balzac, in *Sarrasine*, has made castration and castrature “coincide”: I myself am my own symbol, I am the story which happens to me.... (Barthes 56)

This same movement of coinciding is occurring to the doll within this poem because the doll is the symbol, the artwork, happening to itself as it moves from describing itself as a spectacle to forcing itself, and naming itself, to actually become a spectacle. At the same time the doll, as the narrator, as a spectator, is disappearing, and becoming non-existent because it *is* the story that it *is* telling. Consider another passage from Roland Barthes in terms of the doll in this poem:

Chance has produced that rare moment in which the whole *symbolic* accumulates and forces the body to yield. He had received in a single gust all the divisions of which he is the object, as if, suddenly, it was the very *being* of exclusion with which he had been bludgeoned: dense and hard. For to the simple exclusions which this episode represented for him was added a final alienation: that of his language: he could not assume his distress in the very code of distress, i.e.: *express it*: he felt more than excluded: *detached*: forever assigned the place of the *witness*, whose discourse can only be, of course, subject to codes of detachment: either narrative, or explicative, or challenging, or ironic: never *lyrical*, never homogenous with the pathos outside of which he must seek his place. (Barthes 86)

Barthes wrote this passage about a feeling of exclusion, of difference, and how a particular moment was the symbolic accumulation of all of his differences and outsideness. The collected alienation was heightened by his inability to express his distress over his exclusion, pushing him further into the role of witness and making him feel that the only way to talk about such a position is through the discourse of detachment. Barthes is establishing a position here where the language of the voyeur seems to be the only language he permits himself to use in terms of his own isolation. He knows only to talk about his self as if he is watching the image of that self and is not necessarily experiencing it in his own body. Seeing the self as excluded and putting that position into a discourse is presenting the object as subject ideal whereas one sees the self, at a distance, as an image, and yet that image, that voice, is also the witness to its position as an image. It is an example of being one's own object. The difference, however, between Barthes' experience of this liminality and the doll's is that the doll exists comfortably in this space while the human not only does not fully experience it in himself but also perceives it as alienating.

Consider, for example, how the dichotomy of the subjective experience and the existence as an object is presented as a naturally negotiated space in "Lalka." The doll watches itself, and presents itself, as excluded, as an image that is a "non-being" that, as stated in the sixth stanza, has "a permanent expression" on its face "like the Laughing Man"⁵ and as an image that can be read by an outsider. The doll shows how, in the fourth stanza, the girl reads its palm to tell it its future, but the doll also reads itself at a distance. Looking at the image of the doll, the doll writes a story about another doll, and wonders if that second doll would even exist since it is an image within an image, within that first doll:

⁵ "Mam stały wyraz twarzy, niby Człowiek Śmiechu."

Mam zamiar pisać powieść, której bohaterką
Jest Praścieżka, wiodąca urwiskami w Pralas,
Gdzie ukryła się lalka - i nikt jej nie znalazł!
Duszę ma z macierzanki i patrzy w lusterko.

Mówi tylko dwa słowa: Papa albo Mama. (Leśmian)

I intend to write a story whose heroine
Is the Ur-path, leading along precipices into the Ur-forest,
Where the doll was hiding—and no one found her!
She has a soul of thyme and she looks into a mirror.

She says only two words: Papa or Mama.

In this poem, the voice of the doll as spectator and the image of the doll as spectacle become almost like Russian nesting dolls because both sides (the spectator and spectacle, the witness and the image, the life and the art) get stacked within each other and hidden until all of the “dolls” are folded into one another and disappear as the doll claims occur at the end of its story: “The world is dying... The laughing doll disappears with her parents. / There is nothing left except a mirror and thyme.”⁶ Although this line implies that this secondary doll, this “laughing doll,” is only the spectacle that the primary doll watches in its position as observer, this secondary doll also reveals itself as having its own consciousness. However, the Polish word “śmieszka,” though translated here as “laughing doll,” does not convey all of the

⁶ “Ginie świat... Z rodzicami znika lalka śmieszka. /Nic nie ma prócz lusterka i prócz macierzanki.”

connotations of the original word which actually offers a much more complicated reading of this line. In Polish, “śmieszka” is not an adjective, but a noun used to refer to a grown woman who does not merely laugh or joke, but who uses her ability to joke and laugh as a persona that draws the attention of others to her. A “śmieszka” is aware of how she can manipulate a situation with her charm. With this expanded definition in mind, the apparent passivity implied when this doll “disappears with her parents” is challenged because this plaything is not merely tittering on like an automatic toy or a silly, flirtatious woman. Rather, despite her disappearance into the world of that story, this doll makes her presence known by deciding to act in a certain manner, by choosing to manipulate those around her so that they are drawn to her not as one would be to any doll, but a doll capable of making choices as to her own behavior. The concluding line of that stanza (“There is nothing left except a mirror and thyme”) reinforces this idea that this doll is more than a mere object of reflection. This doll is also a mirror that reflects the consciousness of the observer and, in the symbolism of thyme, a reminder of what is magical, mystical, and also unknown in the world.⁷

The rest of the poem addresses the doll-spectator’s concern about also being a spectacle and how such doubling up of positions seems to add up to a broken or “not working” doll. The doll, though now sent to the doll hospital to be properly made into an art

⁷ According to Gretchen Schoble and Ann Field’s The Meaning of Herbs: Myth, Language and Lore (2001), thyme has not only become a symbol of bravery, but is “also considered a death herb. In England there was a legend that the souls of murdered men rest in thyme flowers, and in Wales the herb is planted on graves. More cheerfully, thyme was a charm for seeing fairies, You simply collected thyme flowers from a hillside where the fairies were known to gather and laid the flowers upon your eyelids. Then you would have the power to see any fairy who happened to be nearby” (44). With such associations, it is no wonder that Shakespeare referenced thyme when describing the fairies in his A Midsummer Night’s Dream (see Jessica Kerr’s book Shakespeare’s Flowers (1997) for a fuller discussion of this topic).

One cannot claim that the Polish poet Leśmian was aware of this exact Western European symbolic understanding of thyme, but it is worth noting that, according to Sophie Hodorowicz Knab’s Polish Customs, Traditions, & Folklore (1993), thyme, like many herbs, was also valued in Polish traditional folklore for having magical powers.

object again with a new hip, a mouth set to smile and positioned in the window to be seen, continues to be the object of its own voyeurism as it watches itself extend its hands “rigid and cupped like spoons”⁸ to God. The doll though reaching up is also acknowledging that God did not die on the cross for it, for an image, but the doll still sees itself, like God, pretending to be immortal. This convergence with God is something that Kleist also noted when he wrote about puppets:

—But just as two intersecting lines, converging on one side of a point, reappear on the other after their passage through infinity, and just as our image, as we approach a concave mirror, vanishes to infinity only to reappear before our very eyes, so will grace, having likewise traversed the infinite, return to us once more, and so appear most purely in that bodily form that has either no consciousness at all or infinite one, which is to say, either in the puppet or a god. (Kleist 216)

Bolesław Leśmian’s “Lalka” and Dare Wright’s The Lonely Doll are two very different works that represent the profound way that the doll can perform the roles of both object and subject. As an object that is seen as both alive and dead, always observing, admiring nothing and being a thing that is interested in the cult of the self at the same time that it is not a self, the doll can hold that space of spectacle and spectator, of being an object experienced by a subject as well as being a subject that views us as its object. As impossible as it may seem for a person to do, perhaps one can claim that the doll, in the liminal state of dollhood, can exist successfully and fully on this line between life and art.

⁸ “ściśle i wklęsłe jak łyżki”

CONCLUSION

THE DOLL IN DOLLHOOD

Every secret is a collective assemblage. The secret is not at all an immobilized or static notion. Only becomings are secrets; the secret has a becoming.

from Deleuze and Guattari's A Thousand Plateaus (1987), 317

Introduction:

In this dissertation, the liminality of the doll was explored through its quality as a “shadow,” as a “box,” and as a “shadow box.” The “shadow” highlighted how dynamic the visual experience of the doll soul is to the viewer. The “box” provided a reading of the depth of that doll soul through its physicality and tangibility. And through the “shadow box,” a concept which bridges the “shadow” with the “box,” the complexity and power of the doll consciousness is articulated as something that registers beyond being simply read as a representation of soul or form, but is actually a moving and fluctuating assemblage of both that is unique to the doll itself. Recognizing the doll as such an assemblage results in pushing the toy beyond our own subjective experiences and into a field of experience that the doll embraces and epitomizes: that state of liminality where it can be both the observed object and the observing subject at – and in – the same moment.

However, the reason to examine, compare, and then articulate the richness of the doll's identity in such disparate and various works of twentieth-century literature and art is not merely because the doll, as an image, is a tantalizing and engaging thing to explore. Rather, the value in investigating how the doll has been represented in such a variety of texts

grants us a new entrance into understanding the anxiety that was present in the relationship between human beings and their possessions in the twentieth century as well as how it may continue to exist into the twenty-first century. The culmination of this anxiety, and thus the height of the uncanny experience associated with this toy, is that the liminal nature of the doll can and does overwhelm and eclipse that of the human when the two identities are placed on the same stage as equals.

Therefore, in this concluding chapter, in addition to referencing Susan Stewart's On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection (1984) and Jane Bennett's "The Force of Things: Steps toward an Ecology of Matter" (2004), I employ Sylvia Cassedy's children's book, Lucie Babbidge's House (1989) as a type of summary text that captures how the full existence and capacity of the doll in dollhood is able to confront, unsettle, and usurp human identity. In other words, the goal of this chapter is to call attention to the fullest expression of the doll's power in the liminal state of dollhood to the human existence.

Why Dolls at All?:

Susan Stewart notes in her work, On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection (1984), that the concept of the miniature encourages and expresses an idea of the "within within within." She writes:

A house within a house, the dollhouse not only presents the house's articulation of the tension between inner and outer spheres, of exteriority and interiority – it also represents the tension between two modes of interiority. Occupying a space with an enclosed space, the dollhouse's aptest analogy is the locket of the secret recesses of

the heart: center within center, within within within. The dollhouse is dollhouse is a materialized secret; what we look for is the dollhouse within the dollhouse and its promise of an infinitely profound interiority. (61)

In play, this concept is expressed when children engage with miniature objects (also known as toys, dolls), imagine the actions those objects will perform, and then provide those miniatures with a narrative which, in turn, gives the miniature objects a secret history.

According to Stewart, the miniature creates a constant pull into interiority (the within within the within). She uses the example of the dollhouse to express this idea as a type of mise-en-abyme. The dollhouse is the miniature of the “real” house, but the doll maker’s interest is not as much in the construction of the outside of the dollhouse as he is focused on the interiors, the withins (the miniatures within the miniatures, the secrets within the secret). Dolls, those residents of dollhouses, also express that type of infinite interiority. A child engages with dolls, plays out stories for dolls, projects fantasies onto dolls, creates families and pasts for dolls, and so shapes the idea that dolls have their own secrets, histories, and identities. In other words, (to use another doll image as an example) the pull into interiority can also be simplified in the image of Russian nesting dolls, but where there is no final doll at its center. Furthermore, the dolls’ resemblance to the human reinforces the idea that dolls, unlike other miniatures and toys, have a consciousness as profound as that of the humans who play with them. In the unblinking acknowledgment of past-ness and secret history which is imagined by children and feared by adults as well as their “likeness” to ourselves, dolls thus reflect the Freudian idea of the uncanny because they close and muddy the space between our “real” identities and their “imagined” ones. They are therefore the definition and first experience of the ensouled object in dollhood.

The Doll on the Human Stage:

But what then if this enlivened assemblage known as the doll is put on the same stage as the complex human identity? The result is an expression of the full power of the doll's real uncanniness and profound liminality because even though it, unlike us, can be both a subject and an object in a way that is unique to its own existence – it, with us, can also be indistinguishable from us.

The immaterial shadow inside the material form is of interest to Jane Bennett who, in her “The Force of Things: Steps toward an Ecology of Matter” (2004), breaks away from seeing things as mirrors or “faces” in her conceptualization of a material “thing-power” in which she seeks to describe “a materialism of lively matter, to be placed in conversation with the historical materialism of Marx and the body materialism of feminist and cultural studies” (347). Bennett wishes to discuss the possibility of ecological¹ implications when the power of the thing is not only recognized but also is seen as sharing top billing with the human:

I want to give voice to a *less specifically human* kind of materiality, to make manifest what I call “thing-power.” I do so in order to explore the possibility that attentiveness to (nonhuman) things and their powers can have a laudable effect on humans. (I am not utterly uninterested in humans.) In particular, might, as Thoreau suggested, sensitivity to thing-power induce a stronger ecological sense? (Bennett, “Force of Things” 248)

¹ To clarify her use of this term, Bennett claims that “to call something ecological is to draw attention to its necessary implication in a network of relations, to mark its persistent tendency to enter a working system” (“Force of Things” 365). For further clarification on Bennett’s understanding of the modern use of the term “ecology” as a network of relationships and interactions that “came from Darwin through Ernst Haeckel,” see her endnote 66 (“Force of Things” 372).

Engaging in a conversation about “things” with a number of theorists, most significantly Theodor Adorno’s idea of “nonidentity” as defined in his Negative Dialectics (1966), Bennett draws on Manuel De Landa’s view that the power of nonhuman materiality can be recognized in the ability to “self-organize,”² Bruno Latour’s term for a material agency (“actant”³), and, most fully, Gilles Deleuze’s and Félix Guattari’s concept of assemblage,⁴ as well as “the Spinozist idea that bodies have a propensity to form collectives” (“Force of Things” 349). Bennett suggests that “thing-power, as a kind of agency, is the property of an assemblage”:

Thing-power materialism is a (necessarily speculative) onto-theory that presumes that matter has an inclination to make connections and form networks of relations with varying degrees of stability. Here, then, is an affinity between thing-power materialism and ecological things: both advocate the cultivation of an enhanced sense of the extent to which all things are spun together in a dense web, and both warn of

² As quoted in Bennett’s article, De Landa claims in his A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History (2000) that “inorganic matter-energy has a wider range of alternatives for the generation of structure than just simple phase transitions.... In other words, even the humblest forms of matter and energy have the potential for *self-organization*” (“Force of Things” 351).

³ “Unlike the term ‘actor,’ an actant can be either human or nonhuman: it is that which *does* something, has sufficient coherence to perform actions, produce effects, and alter situations” (Bennett, “Force of Things” 355). For Latour’s use of this term, see his Pandora’s Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies (1999) (specifically the definition of “Actor, Actant” as noted in the glossary section of that work).

⁴ Bennett is using the term “assemblage” as illustrated in Deleuze and Guattari’s A Thousand Plateaus (1987). In the second footnote in her essay, “The Agency of Assemblages and the North American Blackout” (2005), Bennett defines the concept:

“An assemblage is, first, an ad hoc grouping, a collectivity whose origins are historical and circumstantial, though its contingent status says nothing about its efficacy, which can be quite strong. An assemblage is, second, a living, throbbing grouping whose coherence coexists with energies and countercultures that exceed and confound it. An assemblage is, third, a web with an uneven topography: some of the points at which the trajectories of actants cross each other are more heavily trafficked than others, and thus power is not equally distributed across the assemblage. An assemblage is, fourth, not governed by a central power: no one member has sufficient competence to fully determine the consequences of the activities of the assemblage. An assemblage, finally, is made up of many types of actants: humans and nonhumans; animals, vegetables, and minerals; nature, culture, and technology.” (Bennett, “Agency of Assemblages” 445)

the self-destructive character of human actions that are reckless with regard to the other nodes of the web. (“Force of Things” 354)

Clearly, Bennett’s argument that “Thing-power entails the ability to shift or vibrate between states of being, to go from trash/inanimate/resting to treasure/animate/alert” (Ibid) does not deviate much from Bill Brown’s theory that “misuse value” acts as the shifting force between the state of being an “object” to the state of being a “thing” (Brown, “Sense of Things” 74-5). However, where Bennett pushes thing theory is by first proposing that both the human and nonhuman equally engage and work in a moving assemblage of matter. Neither priority nor superiority is granted to the human. Both human and object share the same stage:

For a thing-power materialist, humans are always in composition with nonhumanity, never outside of a sticky web of connections or an *ecology*.

Thing-power is the lively energy and/or resistant pressure that issues from one material assemblage and is received by others. Thing-power, in other words, is immanent in collectives that include humans, the beings best able to recount the experience of the force of things. Thing-power materialism emphasizes the closeness, the intimacy, of humans and nonhumans. (“Force of Things” 365)

However, even more arresting is Bennett’s implication that the human and the thing can exchange and change states of being not merely through a corporeal interchange (a mechanical arm on a human body as was the case for Peter in Ian McEwan’s The Daydreamer or real eyes for Hoffmann’s mechanical girl) but also through an immaterial one akin to, perhaps, the child’s idea of claiming another’s shadow. Bennett argues for such an exchange when she states that “thing-power” materialism “is a dynamic flow of matter-energy that tends to settle into various bodies, bodies that often join forces, make

connections, form alliances...”(Ibid). She further suggests that the distinction between subject and object is erased because “humans are always in composition with nonhumanity, never outside of a sticky web of connections” (Ibid). In other words, for Bennett, to recognize “things” as having power (or, for Brown, to see an object as a “thing”) is to not only recognize *them* as having a resemblance to *us* but also to acknowledge that, like us, each “thing” is a subject; that each object too has its own existence.

Being a Doll (or a Human?) in Lucie Babbidge’s House:

Sylvia Cassedy’s Lucie Babbidge’s House (published in 1989) is a middle grade novel which captures this closing in of identity (between imagined/doll and real/human) through the use of the endless representation of mise-en-abyme and the pull of interiority in not only the story structure, but also in the very body of its protagonist, Lucie Babbidge. More than presenting the fear of life in the artifice or representing depth of interiority, this use of mise-en-abyme creates a feeling of uncanniness as layers of identity are presented as being both recognizably separate and disturbingly merged in Lucie. Lucie is not a simple little nesting doll, but a surrealist’s depiction of one as identities within her do not elegantly overlap each other in the neatness of a Venn diagram, but overlap haphazardly and randomly as coins thrown in a fountain. At the end of the novel, a sense of the fantastic also erupts as no clear answer is given as to which of the Lucie identities the reader can trust as real and which as imagined, but also whether the reader can even recognize the difference at all. The fantastic then also enters into the questions as to whether there even was a “real” Lucie and whether that should (or can) even matter in the understanding of the text.

Lucie, a lonely and ill-treated schoolgirl, lives at Norwood Hall where she is victimized by not only her fellow classmates for her shyness and insecurity, but also by her teacher, Miss Pimm. She finds solace by playing with an old dollhouse she finds hidden away in the school's basement and the dolls she finds within it and the dolls she herself makes for it. With this dollhouse, she not only plays out her own fantasies as to what she would wish her life to be like, but she also plays out the events that are going on around her and includes those whom she knows in her present life, like her classmates and teacher. The members of the dollhouse include a Lucie, Mumma, Dada, Emmett, Maude, Olive, and a Mr. Broome. The family, their maid, and live-in piano teacher are all kind to their daughter, Lucie (the doll), as the doll tells them all the things she learned in school that day, how she got along with her friends, and how she eagerly responded correctly to her kind teacher's, Miss Pimm's, questions.

However, initially, as Lois Rostow Kuznets notes in her book, Narratives of Animation, Metamorphosis, and Development, only toward the end of chapter two does the reader realize that the actions within the dollhouse are the actions of Lucie's imagination and not what is "really" occurring in her life (126). Before that moment in the story, the reader is led to believe that the narration about the doll is actually about the real Lucie. Cassedy's choice in organizing her narrative and use of perspective clearly reveals that she wants her reader to confuse the life of the doll with the actual girl. Lucie, in fact, never leaves her school and has no family; she is also neither popular nor outspoken. Once the relationship between the doll and the girl is understood, the reader is directed to see that the way in which Lucie plays with the dolls is actually a simple game of projecting as the doll becomes representative of Lucie's own familial desires – where she has a loving home, is popular at

school, and even that she has the comfort of a repeated and familiar pattern (the one which she plays out with the dolls again and again – of coming home from school, having the same snack, and listening to her brother, Emmett, make the same type of bad puns every day.⁵

Although the doubleness of the Lucies may be reasoned out in the first few chapters, those same chapters also hint to the more profound representation of the multiplicity of identity that is the core of this story. In other words, not only is the doll Lucie a double for the girl Lucie's imagined life, but other, subtler, interiorities exist as well. There is the within-ness of sounds and spellings in names like Mumma, Dada and Emmett; the doubleness of identity with object (aside from child Lucie with Lucie the doll) – Olive is named for an olive, Mr. Broome for a broom as well as the fact that both those dolls are actually clothes pins that keep falling down, as Lucy notes, like clothes pins. Even the baby, Maude, is named from a song that Lucie is incapable of singing in class, but knows all the lyrics to when doll Lucie sings it to her family.

Nevertheless, the dolls and dollhouse, as representation for Lucie's loneliness, do not hold steady on that one level of "within-ness," discovered early on by the reader in chapter two, of doll Lucie living the life that girl Lucie wishes she lived. Nor is the clever doubling of sounds, dialog, and actions that take place within the dollhouse the only example of an unstable multiplicity of identity in this children's classic. Girl Lucie's (as I will refer to her for the sake of clarity) class is assigned to write a letter to someone, "a personage" as Miss Pimm says, in order to learn the rules of formal correspondence (Cassedy, "Lucie" 20). Lucie

⁵ An example of Emmett's punning would be the following exchange:

"I want to go to school, too," Emmett said to the ceiling, "and plant a jungle bean."

"You will, Emmett," Mumma told him. "When you've grown some more."

"How much more?"

"At least another foot."

"Grow another foot!" Emmett raised his heels above his head and examined them. "But Mumma, two are all I need." (Cassedy, "Lucie" 15)

knows no one to write to, but finds a name, “Delia Hornsby” and an address, in England, on the back of the dollhouse. The back of the dollhouse also has written the year, 1885, as the year in which Delia Hornsby died. Knowing this, girl Lucie still writes to the address and this deceased Delia only to, surprisingly, receive a letter from a girl, also named Delia Hornsby, who claims to be the great-great granddaughter of the “original” Delia Hornsby. This younger Delia, as she tells girl Lucie in the letter, is also living in the real house that her great-great grandmother once lived in and that her house is the very house that the dollhouse was made to replicate.

Girl Lucie does not write back, but Delia continues to write to Lucie whom she calls “her best friend” and for a vast part of the novel, the reader is led to believe that Delia is a real girl who is reaching out and connecting with girl Lucie. As the end of the novel begins to reveal relationships, the reader realizes that not only does young Delia Hornsby not exist, but there is neither a name nor an address written on the back of the dollhouse and thus there never existed an original Delia Hornsby who died in 1885 or an original house in which she lived. Unlike understanding the difference between girl and doll Lucie, this discovery is revealed subtly as the story progresses. The reader first begins to see too many similarities between Delia’s life and the events that are occurring around girl Lucie. The adventures that she begins to play out with doll Lucie exist in eerie parallel with the adventures that Delia is having in England and describing to Lucie in her letters. In addition, girl Lucie’s as well as doll Lucie’s teacher is reading, to her class, a collection of stories about a family called the Pendletons and the adventures that those characters are having are also occurring to Delia (also, to note, both are taking place in England). Delia, throughout most of the novel, is a pen pal that is first presented to the reader as “real” but is actually an imagined girl who lives in

the imagined “original” of the dollhouse. Now, not only is girl Lucie mixing her identity with doll Lucie, but Delia is also an identity within girl Lucie and within Delia is another Delia, another house and another family’s, a fictional family’s, story.

Representation is constantly at odds with permanence as ideas of identity continue to escape labels and limitations in this novel. The reader must continually attempt to untangle the relationship between human and doll characters in order to assign certain ones the title of “imagined,” others “real,” and to unpack what is “really” happening and what is not. The story, however, grandly frustrates the reader’s desire to make such frames within the mise-en-abyme clearly delineated. Cassedy does not only express the idea of a within within within interiority (like nesting dolls), but also shows how those “withins” are identities connected with and to each other and other “withins” in more than a controlled image of circle within circle within circle. In fact, to describe what Cassedy is doing is to visualize overlapping, haphazardly thrown circles because there is no identity that exists, and touches, only one other identity at a time. Consider Delia again. Her identity, by the end of the story, overlaps with an imagined great grandmother, the house in which she lives, the adventures that she shares with a fictional family, the parallel situations she falls into with doll Lucie and, of course, girl Lucie and her imagination in which Delia seems to exist exclusively as “imagined,” for us, but is also entirely “real” for girl Lucie and for us for a great part of the story. Another example of the text’s resistance to creating a linear intertextuality is the way girl Lucie infuses her actions, dreams, and play with her own “real” memories of a day at the beach with her deceased parents. However, these “real” moments now have the haze of memory (which is already a medley of all sorts of ideas of what is or was real and what is or was imagined) that is also mixed with non-memories or imaginings as to what happened on

that same day at the beach and what she wished happened or could have happened in that day. All of these unstable spaces build to the culmination of the experience of reading a dollhood narrative. What seems to have existed in any sort of measurable reality was made unsteady by that initial presence of, and then engagement with, a doll in a dollhouse. It was that encounter in play, as seeing the doll as a true self equal to that of the human self, that led to a complicated disintegration of identities (human or otherwise) as well as a truly uncanny experience for the reader.

The novel continues on with these multiple layers of representation within representation. Not a single surface of identity is represented with a single within-ness, but it all seems to get deeper and wider mixing memory, made-up memory, daydream, play, stories, correspondence, and mirroring into the body and mind of one large symbol: the shy and isolated girl Lucie. She then seems to be what Roland Barthes says about himself in his work, Roland Barthes: “I myself my own symbol, I am the story which happens to me...” (56).

Finally, at the end of the novel (after her dolls are stolen by her classmates, her pen pal, Delia, is kidnapped, and she is able to sort out what has happened to all and to understand some of the connections between them), girl Lucie seems to gain a sense of identity and power. She stands up for herself, for the first time, in class, leading the reader to believe that the only way to come to terms or comprehend the representations of interiority presented throughout the story is to understand them as being held, simply, within the larger frame that is the body of girl Lucie herself. Supporting this reading is the fact that this single strong identity not only feels empowered enough to respond to her teacher but also finally confident enough to respond to Delia’s letters and write Delia about her own life. At this

point, the reader feels as if, at least, the frame of the mise-en-abyme is understood. We began with girl Lucie and within her, of her, are copies which recur into infinity (doll Lucie, the Delias, the Pendletons, her stories, her dreams, her memories), but those copies are not simulacra because the original is known. Girl Lucie is the original even though a complex web of circles exists within her.

However, the very end of Lucie Babbidge's House jars the reader again and presents girl Lucie as part of the Möbius strip of infinite identity and not as its starting point or original. In class, when she finally stakes an identity, has a voice – she uses, surprisingly, *another* voice. Throughout the novel, “Emmett,” the boy/brother/doll keeps saying bad puns. This is an act that is singularly his. No other doll or character speaks in this way. Yet, a pun is the very last thing that Lucie says in this book which is supposed to be her moment of independence and strength. Her teacher tells her to “pick up your head” and Lucie replies: “How can I, Miss Pimm?” and adds: “How can I, when it never fell off in the first place?” (Cassedy, “Lucie” 242).

The fact that Lucie speaks so to the teacher is startling not only for the reader, but also for her classmates, who stop what they are doing and look up in surprise. They are surprised because this response is so unlike her, but the reader is surprised because it seems as if she has become a doll, the doll identity has claimed her. The language of doubling which we associate with Emmett is now coming out of her mouth. It is not a voice or a tone that the reader thinks of as belonging to her. The reader clearly sees this voice as belonging to Emmett and Cassedy's decision to use it, instead of inventing a new voice to represent girl Lucie's independence, is telling. It is as if she wants us to see Emmett as bursting through

and breaking the supposedly fixed frame of identity that is Lucie. In addition, the choice to use punning is interesting because, as Lois Rostow Kuznets writes:

...the nature of verbal play in toy dialogue ... frequently depends on 'naïve' punning or literal misreadings of figurative language, significant in calling into question conventional notions of the relation between language and "reality," signifier and signified. (2)

That understanding of pun and the use of it here thus contributes to the collapsing of the simple truth that the reader may have established up to this point – that though the identities within identities within identities may not be as clearly delineated as nesting dolls, they all inhabit one real thing, the girl Lucie. Yet, now, how is that true if not only is another's distinctive voice coming out of her mouth, breaking through the *mise-en-abyme* frame, but that *that* voice is the voice of a toy as well as a voice which uses puns, language which confuses its relationship to reality? Is the reader so sure that Lucie is real if a miniature is talking for her as if she were actually the doll?

To further support this idea that girl Lucie is not even the one *real* that the reader can count on, consider how Cassedy describes Lucie after Miss Pimm tells her to pick up her head:

For a long, long moment, Lucie didn't answer or even move. Then, suddenly, she stood straight up and tall, and, with her eyes on Miss Pimm, spoke in a voice both strong and clear. (Cassedy, "Lucie" 243)

Robotic? Possessed? Uncanny? There were many instances of uncanniness and dolls in this middle-grade novel, but by presenting Lucie as a doll – is that the final moment of the uncanny? This is the moment in which the reader realizes that perhaps, yes, girl Lucie is not

a girl at all, but a doll herself (this idea is further supported by Cassedy herself if one is to also consider her other children's book, Behind the Attic Wall (1983), in which what we think of as people turn out to be dolls when they "die"). At the very least, girl Lucie is part of the author's identity (she is, after all, Cassedy's creation), but also the reader's doll (molded in each of the story readers' imaginations). A great part of the uncanniness in Lucie Babbidge's House and its liminality is that it makes the reader doubt what is reality and what is imagination, what is the past and what is the present. Part of the sense of fantastic of this novel's articulation of dollhood is the fact that it leaves the reader with a sense of overall confusion – wondering if anything, in fact, is to be trusted in any of the houses, in any of the identities, built by Sylvia Cassedy or by ourselves as readers. Even after the sorting out of the inter-textuality and infinity of Lucie's identities, can one, after all, even believe that there is a first real frame, a real "Lucie," at all?

As in all the texts discussed in this dissertation, the profound experience of the uncanny is set into motion in this text because of the unique liminal nature of the doll. The doll is not only the emblem, but also the inventor of this interstructural state where boundaries of identity, imagination, and the object collapse and become redefined. A seemingly innocuous plaything, this child's toy can bring to light the troubling and challenging relationship we have to our things – those objects that we think we possess, but secretly fear may possess us too.

APPENDIX

Original version of "Lalka" by Bolesław Leśmian followed by the English translation.

"Lalka"

by Bolesław Leśmian

Jam - lalka. W mych kolczykach szkli się zaświat dżdżysty,
Suknia jawą atłasu ze snem się kojarzy.
Lubię fajans mych oczu i zapach kleisty
Farby, rumieńcem śmierci młodzącej mat twarzy.

Lubię leżeć, gdy pokój słonecznieje czynnie,
Na strojnego dywanu narożnej purpurze,
Gdzie irys obok sarny kwitnie bezroślinnie,
A z wieczności pluszowej unoszą się kurze.

Dziewczynce, co się moim bawi nieistnieniem,
Wdzięczna jestem, gdy w dłonie mój niebyt porywa
I mówi za mnie wszystko, różowa natchnieniem,
I udaje, że wierzy w to, iż jestem żywa.

Pilnie wróży mi z ręki, że w najbliższym maju
W świat wyruszę, a w drogę wezmę chleb i zorze,
By piechtami wędrując po Znaszlitymkraju,
W ustach chłopca włóczęgi całować bezdroże.

Ubezdrożyć się muszę na ziemi i w niebie,
By w chwili, kiedy najmniej spodobam się losom,
Znaleźć się niespodzianie, na przekór niebiosom,
W położeniu - bez wyjścia - bez śmierci - bez siebie.

Mam stały wyraz twarzy, niby Człowiek Śmiechu.
Znam tę powieść i inne... Ta sama dziewczynka
Uczyła mnie czytania, jak się uczy grzechu,
I jestem pełna wiedzy, jak do listów skrzynka.

Mam zamiar pisać powieść, której bohaterką
Jest Praścieżka, wiodąca urwiskami w Pralas,
Gdzie ukryła się lalka - i nikt jej nie znalazł!
Duszę ma z macierzanki i patrzy w lusterko.

Mówi tylko dwa słowa: Papa albo Mama.
Mama - mówi do śmierci, a Papa - do grobu
I śmieje się... Sen chwieje łbem u próżni żłobu,

A ona śmiechu swego nasłuchuje sama.

Koniec mojej powieści jest ten, że Praścieżka
Odbiera sobie życie... W mgle są o tym wzmianki...
Ginie świat... Z rodzicami znika lalka śmieszka.
Nic nie ma prócz lusterka i prócz macierzanki.

Wartoż pisać tę powieść? Baśń wyszła już z mody,
Jak krynolina z tęczy!... Módl się do korala
O wiersz barwny!... Zszarzały dusze i ogrody,
A mnie wkrótce do lalek poniosą szpitala.

Wyrwę w biodrach zasklepią, brew wznowią nad okiem,
Wargom uśmiech narzucą taki, że aż zbrzydnie,
I na pokaz wystawią, abym się bezwstydnie
Do przechodniów łatanym mizdrzyła urokiem.

Stracę wartość. Nastąpią cen spadki i zniżki.
I wówczas, gdy już mroki poczuję w pobliżu,
Wyciągnę dłonie ściśle i wklęśte jak łyżki,
Do Boga, co nie za mnie umierał na krzyżu!

On, wiedząc, jak mi trudno, choć sen się snem łąta,
Grać rolę siebie samej na świata arenie,
Dla prób nieśmiertelności, po niższej cenie
Nabędzie mnie - za jedną łzę z tamtego świata!

“(The/A) Doll”

I am – (the/a) doll. In my earrings shines the drizzly world,
My dress, like a daydream of satin, is reminiscent of dreaming.
I like the delft of my eyes and the gluey smell
Of the paint that with a blush of death makes my matte face young.

When the room fills with sun, I like to lie
On the corner of an elegant purple rug
Where an iris beside a deer blooms lifelessly,
And dust rises up from plush eternity.

To the girl who plays with my non-existence,
I am grateful when she grasps my non-being in her hands
And says everything for me, rosy with inspiration,
And pretends that she believes that I am alive.

She carefully foretells from my palm that next May
I will set out into the world, taking bread and dawns for my journey,
So that, traveling on foot through TheLandYouMayKnow,¹
I might kiss roadlessness on the lips of a vagabond boy.

I must make myself roadless on the earth and in heaven
So that in the moment when I am least pleasing to the facts
I shall find myself, unexpectedly, to spite the heavens,
In a position—without exit—without death—without myself.

I have a permanent expression on my face, like the Laughing Man,
I know that story² and others... This same girl
Taught me how to read and how to learn sin,
And I am full of knowledge, like a mailbox.

¹ “TheLandYouMayKnow” is an attempt to translate the neologism “Znaszlitymkraju” which can be more literally translated as “DoYouKnowThisLand.” A reference to the Adam Mickiewicz poem, “Do H... Wezwanie do Neapolu (naśladowanie z Goethego)” (“To H... Invitation to Naples (An Imitation of Goethe)”), Leśmian has turned the Mickiewicz culturally important and popular phrase/question “Znasz li ten kraj...?” (“Do you know this land? (Or “country of origin”)) into a single word, declined it like a noun, and, as Dr. Madeline G. Levine notes, “imbued it with the dreamy sentiment of the entire love lyric in which the past is recalled as a beautiful landscape.”

² The reference to “that story” is a reference to “Człowiek Śmiechu” (“Laughing Man”) the Polish translation of Victor Hugo's novel, “L'Homme qui rit” (thanks again to Dr. Madeline G. Levine for making this connection). In Hugo's story, an English boy, born of noble birth, is kidnapped as a baby and, in order to be sold as a carnival freak, his face is mutilated into a disturbing permanent grin.

I intend to write a story whose heroine
Is the Ur-path, leading along precipices into the Ur-forest,
Where the doll was hiding—and no one found her!
She has a soul of thyme and she looks into a mirror.

She says only two words: Papa or Mama.
Mama—she says to death, and Papa—to the grave.
And laughs... dream sways its head near the void of the gully,
And she listens intently to her laughter alone.

The end of my story is this, that the Ur-path
Takes her own life... There are mentions of this in the fog...
The world is dying... The laughing doll disappears with her parents.
There is nothing left except a mirror and thyme.

Is it worth it to write this story? Fairy tales are out of fashion,
Like rainbow-colored crinolines!... Pray to coral
For colorful verse!... Souls and gardens have grown gray,
And as for me, they'll soon take me to a hospital for dolls.

They will seal the gap in my hips, renew the brow above my eye,
Afix a smile to my lips until it turns ugly,
And put me on display so I can shamelessly
Wink to those passersby with my mended charm.

I will lose value. There will be sales and price reductions.
And then, when I already feel darkness nearby,
I will extend my hands, rigid and cupped like spoons
To God, who did not die on the cross for me!

He, knowing how hard it is for me, though my dreams do intertwine,
To play the role of myself in the world's arena,
For tests of immortality, at a reduced price,
Will acquire me—for a single tear from the other world!

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ades, Dawn. "The Transcendental Surrealism of Joseph Cornell." Joseph Cornell. Ed. Kynaston McShine. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1980. 15-41.
- Agamben , Giorgio. Stanzas: Word and Phantasm in Western Culture. Trans. Ronald L. Martinez. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993.
- Alcott, Louisa May. "A Christmas Dream, And How it Came True." Louisa May Alcott's Fairy Tales and Fantasy Stories. Ed. Daniel Shealy. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1992. 255-67.
- Alexander, Judith. Nellie Mae Rowe: Visionary Artist, 1900–1982. Atlanta, GA: Southern Arts Federation, 1983. (1983).
- Alma. 2009. Dir. and Writ. Rodrigo Blaas. 20 May 2011. <<http://almashortfilm.com/>>.
- Andersen, Hans Christian. "The Shadow." Folk-lore and Fable: Aesop, Jacob Grimm, Wilhelm Grimm, Hans Christian Andersen. New York: P. F. Collier & Son Company, 1909. 318-29.
- Arnups, Katherine. "Mothering the Dionne Quintuplets: Women's Stories." Framing Our Past: Canadian Women's History in the Twentieth Century. Ed. Sharon Anne Cook, Lorna R. McLean, and Kate O'Rourke. Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001.134-38.
- Bachelard, Gaston. The Poetics of Space. Boston: Beacon Press, 1994.
- Balio, Tino. Grand Design: Hollywood as a Modern Enterprise: 1930-1939. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1995.
- Barrie, J.M. Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens and Peter and Wendy. Ed. Peter Hollindale. New York: Oxford UP, 1999.
- Barthes, Roland. Roland Barthes. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1977.

Baudelaire, Charles. "The Philosophy of Toys." The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays. Ed. Jonathan Mayne. London: Phaidon Press Limited, 2005.

Benjamin, Walter. "The Cultural History of Toys." Selected Writings: Volume 2: 1927-1934. Ed. Michael W. Jennings. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999. 113-16.

---. "A Glimpse into the World of Children's Books." The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility, and Other Writings on Media. Ed. Michael W. Jennings, Brigid Doherty, and Thomas Y. Levin. Trans. Edmund Jephcott, Rodney Livingstone, Howard Eiland, etc. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2008. 226-35.

---. "The Lamp." Selected Writings: Volume 2: 1927-1934. Ed. Michael W. Jennings. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999. 692-93.

---. "Little History of Photography." The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility, and Other Writings on Media. Ed. Michael W. Jennings, Brigid Doherty, and Thomas Y. Levin. Trans. Edmund Jephcott, Rodney Livingstone, Howard Eiland, etc. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2008. 274-98.

---. "The Storyteller: Reflections on the Works of Nikolai Leskov." Illuminations. Ed. Hannah Arendt. Trans. Harry Zohn. New York: Schocken Books, 1969. 83-109.

---. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." Illuminations. Ed. Hannah Arendt. Trans. Harry Zohn. New York: Schocken Books, 1969. 217-51.

Bellmer, Hans. Little Anatomy of the Physical Unconscious, or The Anatomy of the Image. Trans. Jon Graham. Waterbury Center, VT: Dominion, 2004.

Bennett, Jane. "The Agency of Assemblages and the North American Blackout." Public Culture. 17.3 (2005): 445-65.

---. "The Force of Things: Steps toward an Ecology of Matter." Political Theory. 32.3 (June 2004) 347-72.

Bettini, Maurizio. The Portrait of the Lover. Trans. Laura Gibbs. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.

- Bishop, Robert and Jacqueline M. Atkins. Folk Art in American Life. New York: Viking Studio Books in association with the Museum of American Folk Art, 1995.
- Black, Shirley Temple. Child Star: Autobiography. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1988.
- Blair, Lindsay. Joseph Cornell's Vision of Spiritual Order. London: Reaktion Books, Ltd, 1998.
- Bloom, Harold. Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*. New York: Bloom's Literary Criticism, 2007.
- Boehn, Max von. Dolls and Puppets. London: G. G. Harrap & Company Ltd, 1932.
- Booth, Allyson. "Battered Dolls." Images of the Child. Ed. Harry Eiss. Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1994. 143-52.
- Bosmajian, Hamida. "Psychoanalytical Criticism." International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature. Ed. Peter Hunt. London: Routledge, 1996. 86-97.
- "box, n.1," "box, n.2," box, n.3," "box, v.1," and "box, v.2." OED Online. November 2010. Oxford University Press. 15 March 2011
<<http://www.oed.com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/search?searchType=dictionary&q=box&searchBtn=Search>>.
- Bride of Chucky. Dir. Ronny Yu. Perfs. Jennifer Tilly, Katherine Heigl. Midwinter Productions, Inc., 1998.
- Brough, James. We Were Five: The Dionne Quintuplets' Story from Birth Through Girlhood to Womanhood. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1963.
- Brown, Bill, Ed. "How to Do Things with Things (A Toy Story)." Critical Inquiry 24 (summer 1998): 935-64.

- . The Material Unconscious: American Amusement, Stephen Crane, and the Economies of Play. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996.
- . "Reification, Reanimation, and the American Uncanny." Critical Inquiry 32.2. (winter 2006): 175-207.
- . "The Secret Life of Things: Virginia Woolf and the Matter of Modernism." Modernism/Modernity 6.2 (1999): 1-28.
- . A Sense of Things: The Object Matter of American Literature. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003.
- . "Thing Theory." Critical Inquiry. 28.1 (autumn 2001): 1-22.
- . Things. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2004.
- Burke, Kelly. "Goodbye dolly, hello Nintendo." 12 April 2009. The Sydney Morning Herald. 20 May 2011. <<http://www.smh.com.au/news/home/technology/goodbye-dolly-hello-nintendo/2009/04/11/1239474788961.html>>.
- Canepa, Barbara. Sky Doll, Vol. III. Alessandro Barbucci. New York: Marvel, 2008.
- Carriker, Kitt. Created in Our Image: The Miniature Body of the Doll as Subject and Object. Bethlehem, PA: LeHigh University Press, 1998.
- Cassedy, Sylvia. Behind the Attic Wall. New York: Avon Camelot Book, 1983.
- . Lucie Babbidge's House. New York: Avon Camelot Book, 1989.
- Cerny, Jaroslav. "Organization of Ushabi-Figures." Journal of Egyptian Archaeology. 34. 1949. 121.

Chapman, Robert L., Ed. New Dictionary of American Slang. New York: Harper & Row, 1986.

Chekhov, Anton. "The Crooked Mirror (A Christmas Story)." Doubles, Dummies and Dolls: 21 Terror Tales of Replication. Ed. Leonard Wolf. New York: Newmarket Press, 1995. 50-2.

Child's Play. Dir. Tom Holland. Perfs. Catherine Hicks, Chris Sarandon. United Artists, 1988.

Child's Play 2: Chucky's Back. Dir. John Lafia. Perfs. Alex Vincent, Jenny Agutter. Universal Pictures, 1990.

Child's Play 3: Look Who's Stalking. Dir. Jack Bender. Perfs. Justin Whalin, Perrey Reeves. Universal Pictures, 1991.

Chudacoff, Howard P. Children at Play: An American History. New York: NYU Press, 2007.

Cixous, Hélène. "Fiction and Its Phantoms: A Reading of Freud's Das Unheimliche (The "Uncanny")." New Literary History. 7.3 (spring 1976): 525-48.

Collodi, Carlo. The Adventures of Pinocchio / Le Avventure di Pinocchio: The Complete Text in a Bilingual Edition with the Original Illustrations. Trans., Intro., Notes. Nicolas J. Perella. Berkeley: The Regents of the University of California, 1986.

Colman, David. "The Unsettling Stories of Two Lonely Dolls." The New York Times. 17 Oct. 2004. 20 May 2011
<<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/10/17/fashion/17DARE.html>>.

Cradock, H. C. Josephine and Her Dolls. Ill. Honor C. Appleton. London: Blackie and Son, 1916.

Crawford, Susan Hoy. Beyond Dolls & Guns: 101 Ways to Help Children Avoid Gender Bias. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1996.

“Cursed.” Ghost Whisperer. writ. Laurie McCarthy, dir. Kim Moses. CBS. Season 4, episode 21. May 2009.

Davies, Douglas. Child Development: A Practitioner’s Guide. New York: The Guilford Press, 2004.

Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. A Thousand Plateaus. London and New York: Continuum, 1987.

Dubas, Rita. Letter. Liberty. Autumn (1975). 5.

Dundes, Alan. “The Number Three in American Culture.” Interpreting Folklore. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1980. 134-59.

Dusinberre, Juliet. Alice to the Lighthouse: Children’s Books and Radical Experiments in Art. New York: St. Martin's, 198

During, Simon. Modern Enchantments: The Cultural Power of Secular Magic. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002.

Elkins, James. The Object Stares Back: On the Nature of Seeing. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.

Epstein, Robert. The Case Against Adolescence: Rediscovering the Adult in Every Teen. Sanger, CA: Quill Driver Books / Word Dancer Press, Inc., 2007.

Field, Rachel. Hitty: Her First Hundred Years. Ill. Dorothy P. Lathrop. New York: Aladdin Paperbacks, 1998.

Fanthorpe, Lionel and Patricia. Mysteries and Secrets of Voodoo, Santeria, and Obeah. Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2008.

- Feldman, Carol Fleisher. "Mimesis: Where Play and Narrative Meet." Cognitive Development 20.4. (2005): 503-13.
- Fernández-Armesto, Felipe. Truth: A History and a Guide for the Perplexed. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997.
- Fineberg, Jonathan. Discovering Child Art: Essays on Childhood, Primitivism, and Modernism. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998.
- www.folkartmuseum.org. "Possum Trot Figures: Helen, Blond Girl, and Genny." 20 May 2011. <<http://www.folkartmuseum.org/?p=folk&t=images&id=3524>>
- Formanek-Brunell, Miriam. Girlhood in America: An Encyclopedia. Oxford, UK: ABC-CLIO, 2001.
- . Made to Play House: Dolls and the Commercialization of American Girlhood, 1830-1930. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993.
- . "The Politics of Dollhood in Nineteenth-Century America." The Children's Culture Reader. Ed. Henry Jenkins. New York and London: New York University Press, 1998. 363-81.
- Fox, Margalit. "Philip B. Kunhardt Jr., 78, Writer and Producer of Documentaries, Is Dead." 24 March 2006. 20 May 2011
<<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/24/arts/24kunhardt.html?emc=eta1>>
- Foucault, Michel. "The Subject and Power." Critical Inquiry. 8.4 (summer 1982): 777-795.
- Frazer, Sir James George. The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion. New York: Cosimo Books, 2009.
- Freud, Sigmund. The Uncanny. Trans. David McLintock. New York: Penguin Books, 2003.

Frever, Trinna S. ““Oh! You Beautiful Doll!”: Icon, Image, and Culture in Works by Alvarez, Cisneros, and Morrison.” Tulsa Studies in Women’s Literature. 28.1 (spring 2009): 121-139.

Fuentes, Carlos. “Chac-Mool.” Burnt Water: Stories. Trans. Margaret Sayers Peden. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1980.

---. “La Desdichada.” Constancia and Other Stories for Virgins. Trans. Thomas Christensen. New York: 1991.

---. “The Doll Queen.” Burnt Water: Stories. Trans. Margaret Sayers Peden. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1980.

Fultz, Lucille. Toni Morrison: Playing with Difference. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003.

Furman, Jan. Toni Morrison’s Fiction. South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1996.

Giles, Gretchen. “Small Idols: ‘Art of the Doll’ opens in Petaluma.” 14 July 2010. bohemian.com. 20 May 2011. <<http://www.bohemian.com/bohemian/07.14.10/arts-1028.html>>.

Godden, Rumer. The Doll’s House. Illus. Tasha Tudor. New York: Viking Press, 1966.

---. Four Dolls: “Impunity Jane,” “Fairy Doll,” “Story of Holly and Ivy” and Candy Floss.” Ill. Pauline Baynes. New York: Macmillan, 1983.

---. Impunity Jane: The Story of a Pocket Doll. New York: Viking Press, 1954.

Goldman, Laurence. Child’s Play: Myth, Mimesis and Make-Believe. Oxford, UK: Berg Publishers, 1998.

Gombrich, E.H. "Meditations on a Hobby Horse or the Roots of Artistic Form." Art Theory and Criticism: An Anthology of Formalist, Avant-Garde, Contextualist and Post-Modernist Thought. Ed. Sally Everett. North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 1995. 41-54.

Grayson, Deborah R. "Is it Fake?: Black Women's Hair as Spectacle and Spec(tac)ular." Camera Obscura. 36. 3 (1995): 12-31.

Grosz, Elizabeth. Jacques Lacan: A Feminist Introduction. London and New York: Routledge, 2001.

---. Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994.

Grudzinska, Madam Anna. "A Study of Dolls Among Polish Children." The Pedagogical Seminary. XIV. 1 (1907): 384-90.

Hall, Granville Stanley. Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion, and Education. Vol. I and II. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1904.

Hall, G. Stanley and A. C. Ellis. "A Study of Dolls." Aspects of Child Life and Education. New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1921. 157-204.

Hall, G. Stanley and Theodate L. Smith. "Curiosity and Interest." Aspects of Child Life and Education. New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1921. 84-141.

Hanssen, Beatrice. "Introduction: Physiognomy of a Flâneur: Walter Benjamin's Peregrinations Through Paris in Search of a New Imaginary." Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project. Ed. Beatrice Hanssen. New York and London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2006.

Haraway, Donna. "A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century." Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature. New York: Routledge, 1991. 149-81.

Harris, Marion and Graham Ovenden. Family Found: The Lifetime Obsession of Morton Bartlett. New York: Marion Harris, 1994.

Heritage Auction Galleries. Heritage Vintage Movie Photography & Stills. March 20-22, 2009. Dallas, Texas.

Heritage Plantation of Sandwich. Is She or Isn't He? Identifying Gender in Folk Portraits of Children. Sandwich, MA: Heritage Plantation, 1995.

Hersey, George L. Falling in Love with Statues: Artificial Humans from Pygmalion to the Present. Chicago: The University of Chicago, 2009.

Higonnet, Margaret R. "War Toys: Breaking and Remaking in Great War Narratives." The Lion and the Unicorn. 31.2 (April 2007): 116-31.

Hoffmann, E. T. A. Nutcracker and Mouse King. Trans. Joachim Neugroschel. New York: Penguin Books, 2007.

---. "The Sandman." Tales. Trans. Victor Lange. New York: Continuum, 1982. 277-309.

"-hood, suffix.". OED Online. November 2010. Oxford University Press. 15 March 2011
<<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/88251?rskey=a1OWqm&result=5&isAdvanced=false>>.

Ibsen, Henrik. A Doll's House. Trans. Michael Meyer. London: Methuen Drama, 2008.

Jackson, Kathy Merlock. "Dolls." The Guide to United States Popular Culture. Ed. Ray B. Browne and Pat Browne. Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2001. 242-44.

James, Henry. "The Jolly Corner." Doubles, Dummies and Dolls: 21 Terror Tales of Replication. Ed. Leonard Wolf. New York: Newmarket Press, 1995. 60-84.

- Jones, Elizabeth Orton. Big Susan. Kentucky: Purple House Press, 2002.
- Jouve, Nicole Ward. Colette. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987.
- Keller, Helen. The Story of My Life. New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1921.
- Kelly, Donna Darling. Uncovering the History of Children's Drawing and Art. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2004.
- Kerr, Jessica. Shakespeare's Flowers. Boulder, CO: Johnson Books, 1997.
- Kidd, Kenneth B. "Psychoanalysis and Children's Literature: The Case for Complementarity." The Lion and the Unicorn. 28.1 (Jan. 2004): 109-130.
- Kingsley, Charles. The Water-Babies: Fairy Tale for a Land-Baby. Boston: O. S. Felt, 1864.
- Klein, Melanie. Contributions to Psycho-analysis 1921-1945. London: Hogarth Press, 1950.
- Kleist, Heinrich von. "On the Puppet Theater." An Abyss Deep Enough. Ed. Philip B. Miller. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1982.
- Knab, Sophie Hodorowicz. Polish Customs, Traditions, & Folklore. New York: Hippocrene Books, 1993.
- Knowlton, Eloise. Joyce, Joyceans, and the Rhetoric of Citation. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998.
- Kogan, Lee. Art of Nellie Mae Rowe: Ninety-Nine and a Half Won't Do. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1998.
- . "Bartlett, Morton." Encyclopedia of American Folk Art. Ed. Gerard C. Wertkin. New York: Routledge. 2004. 42-3.

- . "Nellie Mae Rowe: Multiple Contexts, Multiple Meanings." Sacred and Profane: Voice and Vision in Southern Self-Taught Art. Ed. Carol Crown and Charles Russell. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2007. 111-27.
- Kraus-Mancuso, Suzanne. Shirley Temple: Identification and Price Guide to Shirley Temple Collectibles. Vol. 1 and 2. MD: Hobby House, 2002 and 2003.
- Kristeva, Julia. Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection. Trans. Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982.
- Kunhardt, Dorothy Meserve. Pat the Bunny. New York: Golden Books, 1940.
- Kuznets, Lois Rostow. When Toys Come Alive: Narratives of Animation, Metamorphosis and Development. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994.
- Lacan, Jacques. Écrits: A Selection. Trans. Bruce Fink. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2002.
- Lander, Sarah West. "The Brandenburg Gate." Spectacles for Young Eyes: Berlin. New York: Sheldon & Company, 1865. 17-29.
- Latour, Bruno. Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999.
- Lawler, Ray. Summer of the Seventeenth Doll, a New Play. New York: Random House, 1957.
- Leslie, Mitchell. "The Man Who Stopped Time: Photographer Eadward Muybridge stunned the world when he caught a horse in the act of flying." 2001. Stanford Magazine. 20 May 2011.
<<http://www.stanfordalumni.org/news/magazine/2001/mayjun/features/muybridge.html>>.
- Leśmian, Bolesław. Poezje Wybrane. Ed. Jacek Trznadel. Wrocław, Poland: Biblioteka Narodowa, 1974.

Lesnik-Oberstein, Karín. Children's Literature: Criticism and the Fictional Child. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.

Lévi-Strauss, Claude. The Savage Mind. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1966.

Lichtenstein, Therese. Behind Closed Doors: The Art of Hans Bellmer. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.

Life. "A Girl Named Sandra is a Doll Named Peter." Life Magazine. Photographer: George Silk. 19 May 1961: 8-9.
<<http://books.google.com/books?id=rE8EAAAAMBAJ&lpg=PA2&dq=titled%20%E2%80%9CA%20Girl%20Named%20Sandra%20is%20a%20Doll%20Named%20Peter%E2%80%9D&pg=PP1#v=onepage&q&f=false>>.

Lindon, Jennie. Understanding Children's Play. Cheltenham, UK: Nelson Thornes, 2001.

"Living Doll." The Twilight Zone. writ. Jerry Sohl, dir. Richard C. Sarafian. Season 5, episode 6. November 1, 1965.

Lord, M.G. Forever Barbie: The Unauthorized Biography of a Real Doll. New York: Walker & Company, 2004.

MacDorman, Karl F. and Hiroshi Ishiguro. "The Uncanny Advantage of Using Androids in Cognitive and Social Science Research." Interaction Studies. 7.3 (2006): 297-337.

Manley, Seon and Gogo Lewis, Eds. The Haunted Dolls: An Anthology. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1980.

Marcus, Joyce. Women's Ritual in Formative Oaxaca. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2008.

Margolis, Eric and Stephen Laurence, Eds. Concepts: Core Readings. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999.

Masters, Ardyce. "The Doll as Delegate and Disguise." The Journal of Psychohistory. 13.3 (winter 1986): 293-307.

Martin, Ann M. and Laura Godwin. The Doll People. Ill. Brian Selznick. New York: Hyperion Children's Books, 2000.

---. The Meanest Doll in the World. Ill. Brian Selznick. New York: Hyperion Children's Books, 2003.

---. The Runaway Dolls. Ill. Brian Selznick. New York: Hyperion Children's Books, 2008.

McDonough, Yona Zeldis, Ed. The Barbie Chronicles: A Living Doll Turns Forty. New York: Touchstone, 1999.

McEwan, Ian. The Daydreamer. Ill. Anthony Browne. New York: Joanna Cotler Books, HarperCollins Publishers, 1994.

Meltzer, Françoise. "The Uncanny Rendered Canny: Freud's Blind Spot in Reading Hoffmann's 'Sandman.'" Introducing Psychoanalytic Theory. Ed. Sander L. Gilman. New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1982. 218-39.

Mitchell, W. J. T. What do pictures want?: The Lives and Loves of Images. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.

MoMa (Museum of Modern Art). "Joseph Cornell. Untitled (Bébé Marie). early 1940s." www.moma.org. 20 May 2011.
<http://www.moma.org/collection/browse_results.php?object_id=81784>.

Mori, Masahiro. The Buddha in the Robot. Tokyo: Kosei Publishing Company, 1981.

---. "The Uncanny Valley." Trans. K. MacDorman and T. Minato. Energy. 7.4 (1970): 33-35.

Morrison, Toni. The Bluest Eye. New York: Washington Square Press, 1972.

- Mulvey, Laura. Fetishism and Curiosity. London, UK and Bloomington, IN: British Film Institute and Indiana University Press, 1996.
- Nathan, Jean. The Secret Life of the Lonely Doll: The Search for Dare Wright. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2004.
- Nead, Lynda. The Haunted Galley: Painting, Photography, Film around 1900. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007.
- Neils, Jennifer, John Howard Oakley, Katherine Hart, Lesley A. Beaumont. Coming of Age in Ancient Greece. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.
- Oates, Joyce Carol. "The Doll." Doubles, Dummies and Dolls: 21 Terror Tales of Replication. Ed. Leonard Wolf. New York: Newmarket Press, 1995. 184-200.
- O'Reilly, Edmund B. Sobering Tales: Narratives of Alcoholism and Recovery. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997.
- Paley, Vivian Gussin. Bad Guys Don't Have Birthdays: Fantasy Play at Four. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988.
- . The Boy Who Would be a Helicopter: The Uses of Storytelling in the Classroom. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991.
- . Boys and Girls: Superheroes in the Doll Corner. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984.
- Peers, Juliette. The Fashion Doll: From Béb  Jumeau to Barbie. Oxford, UK: Berg Publishers, 2004.
- . "Mattel." Girl Culture: Studying Girl Culture. Ed. Claudia A. Mitchell and Jacqueline Reid-Walsh. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2008. 424-26.
- Piaget, Jean. The Child's Conception of Physical Causality. Intro. Jaan Valsiner. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2001.

Poe, Edgar Allan. "William Wilson." Doubles, Dummies and Dolls: 21 Terror Tales of Replication. Ed. Leonard Wolf. New York: Newmarket Press, 1995. 35-49.

"portrait, v.". OED Online. November 2010. Oxford University Press. 15 March 2011
<<http://www.oed.com/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/148231>>.

Possum Trot: The Life and Work of Calvin Black, 1903-1972. Dir. Allie Light and Irving Saraf. Pro. Patricia Ferrero, Allie Light, and Irving Saraf. Possum Trot Productions. Light-Saraf Films. 1977.

Prus, Bolesław. The Doll. Trans. David Welsh. Revised by Dariusz Tołczyk and Anna Zaranko. Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 1996.

Random House. "Pat the Bunny: The Story of Pat the Bunny." www.randomhouse.com. 2005. 20 May 2011 <http://www.randomhouse.com/golden/patthebunny/story.html>.

Reinhard, Leslie. "Serious Daughters: Dolls, Dress, and Female Virtue in the Eighteenth Century." American Art. 20.2 (summer 2006): 32-55.

Rilke, Rainer Maria. "Some Reflections on Dolls." Selected Works, Prose I. Trans. G. Craig Houston. Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions, 1960.

Robertson, A. F. Life Like Dolls: The Collector Doll Phenomenon and the Lives of the Women Who Love Them. New York and London: Routledge, 2004.

Rogers, Mary F. Barbie Culture. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 1999.

Rose, Jacqueline. The Case of Peter Pan or The Impossibility of Children's Fiction. New York: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1984.

Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer. Nar. Burl Ives. Writ. Robert May and Romeo Muller. Dir. Kizo Nagashima and Larry Roemer. CBS. 6 Dec. 1964.

Rushdie, Salman. Fury: A Novel. New York: Random House, 2001.

- Scarry, Elaine. The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Schwenger, Peter. "The Dream Narratives of Debris." SubStance. 32.1. (2003): 75-89.
- Scoble, Gretchen and Ann Field. The Meaning of Herbs: Myth, Language & Lore. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2001.
- Scott, Lynn. "Beauty, Virtue and Disciplinary Power: A Foucauldian Reading of Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*." Midwestern Miscellany XXIV: being a variety of essays on the works of Toni Morrison by the members of The Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature. Ed. Marilyn J. Atlas. East Lansing, MI: The Midwestern Press, 1996. 9-23
- Shaw, George Bernard. Pygmalion. Forgotten Books, 2008.
- Shepard, Alan B. "The Astronaut's Story of the Thrust into Space." Life Magazine. 19 May 1961: 24-33.
- Shikibu, Murasaki. Tale of Genji. Trans. Kencho Suematsu. Hong Kong: Tuttle Publishing, 1974.
- Siegel, Michael. Knowing Children: Experiments in Conversation and Cognition. East Sussex, UK: Psychology Press Ltd., 1997.
- Simic, Charles. Dime-Store Alchemy: The Art of Joseph Cornell. Hopewell, NJ: Ecco Press, 1992.
- Simms, Eva-Maria. "Uncanny Dolls: Images of Death in Rilke and Freud." New Literary History. 27.4 (autumn 1996): 663-77.
- Simpson, Ritashona. Black Looks & Black Acts: The Language of Toni Morrison in *The Bluest Eye* and *Beloved*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2007.

- Skorpen, Liesel Moak. Elizabeth. Ill. Martha Alexander. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1970.
- Sleator, William. Among the Dolls. New York: Starscape, 1975.
- Smith, Roberta. "Doll, You Oughta Be in Pictures." 8 August 2007. New York Times. 20 May 2011. <<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/08/arts/design/08bart.html>>.
- Sontag, Susan. "The Dummy." Doubles, Dummies and Dolls: 21 Terror Tales of Replication. Ed. Leonard Wolf. New York: Newmarket Press, 1995. 201-06.
- . On Photography. New York: Macmillan, 1977.
- Soucy, Jean-Yves, Annette Dionne, Cecile Dionne, and Yvonne Dionne. Family Secrets: The Dionne Quintuplets' Autobiography. New York: Berkley, 1997.
- Spitz, Ellen Handler. "Primary Art Objects: Psychoanalytic Reflections on Picture Books for Children." Psychoanalysis & Culture at the Millennium. Ed. Nancy Ginsburg and Roy Ginsburg. New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1999. 239-67.
- Steedman, Carolyn. Strange Dislocations: Childhood and the Idea of Human Interiority, 1780-1930. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995.
- Stevenson, Robert Louis. "My Shadow." A Child's Garden of Verses. London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1885. 22.
- Stewart, Susan. On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection. Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1984.
- Stoichita, Victor I. The Pygmalion Effect: From Ovid to Hitchcock. Trans. Alison Anderson. Chicago: The University of Chicago, 2008.
- . A Short History of the Shadow. Trans. Anne-Marie Glasheen. London: Reaktion Books, 1997.

- Sully, James. "Dollatry." The Contemporary Review. 75 (Jan. - June 1899): 58-72.
- . Studies of Childhood. London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1896.
- Talbot, Margaret. "Little Hotties: Barbie's New Rivals." The New Yorker. Dec. 5. 2006.
- Taylor, Sue. Hans Bellmer: The Anatomy of Anxiety. Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2000.
- Tchaikovsky, Peter Ilich. Shchelkunchik. Suite. Originally published: Hamburg: D. Rahter, 1892?
- Thomas, Jeannie B. Naked Barbies, Warrior Joes, and Other Forms of Visible Gender. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003.
- Toy Story. Dir. John Lasseter. Perfs. Tom Hanks, Tim Allen. Pixar, 1995.
- Tudor, Tasha. The Dolls' Christmas. New York: Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, 1999.
- Turner, Victor. The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967.
- Walton, Kendall L. Mimesis as Make-Believe: On the Foundations of the Representational Arts. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990.
- Waugh, Sylvia. The Mennyns. New York: Avon Books, 1993.
- . Mennyns in the Wilderness. New York: Avon Books, 1994.
- . Mennyns Under Siege. New York: Avon Books, 1995.
- . Mennyns Alone. New York: Avon Books, 1996.

---. Mennynms Alive. New York: Avon Books, 1996.

Weissman, Kristin Noelle. Barbie: The Icon, the Image, the Ideal. An Analytical Interpretation of the Barbie Doll in Popular Culture. Boca Raton, FL: Universal Publishers, 1999.

Wertkin, Gerard C., Ed. Encyclopedia of American Folk Art. New York: Routledge, 2004.

West, Shearer. Portraiture. Oxford and NY: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Williamsons, Alan Bacher. Almost a Girl: Male Writers and Identification. VA: The University of Virginia Press, 2001.

Wolf, Leonard, Ed. Doubles, Dummies and Dolls: 21 Terror Tales of Replication. New York: Newmarket Press, 1995.

Wood, Gaby. Living Dolls: A Magical History of the Quest for Mechanical Life. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002.

Wright, Dare. The Lonely Doll. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1985.

Zeller, Joan M. and Suzanne L. McFarland. "Selecting Appropriate Materials for Very Young Children." Early Childhood Education Journal. 8.4 (summer 1981): 7-13.

Zipes, Jack. When Dreams Came True: Classical Fairy Tales and Their Tradition. New York: Routledge, 2007.