

On Personal Space,
the Traversable Self,
and the *Happily Ever*
Experience

On Personal Space, the Traversable Self, and the *Happily Ever* Experience:

Cinderella's Strapping

By

Lisa Pavlik-Malone

**Cambridge
Scholars
Publishing**



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This book first published 2022

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

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ISBN (10): 1-5275-7829-1

ISBN (13): 978-1-5275-7829-6

*For my brother Bill & his family–
Linda, Chris & Tyler–with love*

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank the editors and administrators at Cambridge Scholars Publishing for their continued interest in my work, and for their help in preparing this book.

I thank Maya Berger and Elanor Harris for their help with the proofreading of my manuscript.

I thank John Sweeney for showing me the visual images from the antique book, *The Wonderful Story of Cinderella—Rhymed and Retold*, by Henry Altemus, Co., 1921.

And I thank my husband Peter for his continued support of my writing endeavours.

INTRODUCTION

HER SHOE *FOR* HER SHOE (A META-FAIRY TALE)

Aubrey Beardsley's 1897 image of Cinderella in her slippers (see cover image) seems to portray an interesting metonym – that her footwear is intended to symbolically represent her current (private) situation or psychological state. She now wears what appears to be a pair of *ballet-like flats* – that everyday kind of 'comfy' shoe, with the flexible strap holding or fastening itself horizontally across the centre of her foot (not unlike the two bunches of red flowers fastened or held together, also in the image). Interestingly, this kind of shoe is in stark contrast to the regal and rigid feel of a glass heeled one. Also, these flats, which are presumably black in colour, blend perfectly into a background of black camouflage which, again, is in stark contrast to the scintillating, captivating glow of the glass. The image suggests a young woman who, although in a dress of vibrant red that matches the redness of the flowers behind her, wants to be inconspicuous as least as much as physically comfortable, allowing her to effortlessly blend into the background of her own (personal) garden space.

One can assume that she is now the princess, married to the prince who, once upon a time, brought to her that glass shoe or slipper to try on – the one that fitted her small, delicate foot ever-so perfectly, sealing her fate to a happily ever after. At some point down the line, however, Cinderella '*changed her shoe*'. Not symbolically, in terms of replacing her original prince with a new one; rather, in terms of her needing to continue to have cherished private moments, such as the ones that made her previous arduous life worth living, before it took a turn for the best, so to speak. These moments included, for instance, those sitting and resting by the fireplace in the kitchen of her father and stepmother's house; sitting on a bed (in one of several bedrooms) and proceeding to focus on only her breath for a while; and even the moments she had at the ball that second time while gazing at the clock, just before she ran down that long, winding staircase when one of her glass shoes slipped off. Perhaps, in the autobiographical sense, this dramatic happening was highly personal and

symbolic for Cinderella, in terms of her deep desire to simultaneously wear, what she felt at some time in her past to be two very different, although personally suitable, kinds of shoes. Thus, within her ever-flowing complex thoughts and emotions, an internal ‘cognitive bootstrapping’ could have taken place, out of which emerged her deeply connected phenomenological tie to two characteristically different kinds of shoes.

(Lisa Pavlik-Malone, 2019)

CHAPTER ONE

PERSONAL SPACE AS (CINDERELLA'S) CONUNDRUM

In her essay, “Cinderella: Queen, Empress and Tsarina of Fairy Tales,” Heidi Anne Heiner states, “[...] the general consensus is that well over 1,000 variants have been recorded as part of literary folklore [...] around the world” (2012, 48). In the ever-popular fairy-tale *Cinderella*, the ideas of privacy and alone time seem as essential to Cinderella’s biographical life as a developing young woman as their opposite, namely, being out there among those persons, happenings, and experiences that come to have an indelible effect on her increasing ability to construe, and emotionally connect with, the personal particulars of who she is. (Image 2-1 illustrates a social Cinderella front and centre.)

In his 2013 book titled, *Sleeping Beauties, Awakened Women*, developmental paediatrician Dr Tim Jordan states:

Joan Gould’s book, *Spinning Straw Into Gold*, turned me onto reading the original versions of stories like Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, Snow White, Rapunzel [...] These stories were written for adolescent girls and boys as a way to guide them through their teen years [...] The common thread in these original stories is that at the time of puberty, girls require time for growth and transformation. ‘Sleep’ for Snow White and Sleeping Beauty is a metaphor for going inward, retreating from the pressures and challenges of the world [...] They don’t awaken until they have developed the confidence and knowledge to face their fears and challenges (21-22).



Image 2-1 *Cinderella at the Prince's Ball* by Gustave Dore, 1867.

For Cinderella, such private moments facilitating her growth and transformation include, for example, her many periods sitting alone by the fireplace, as well as the many times when she would briefly stop' for some minutes in the middle of performing her many household chores and fulfilling her many obligations to her stepmother and stepsisters. Image 2-2 is an illustration of an idle Cinderella who seems inwardly focused.



Image 2-2 *Cinderella and the Little Glass Slipper* by White & Allen, Co., 1889.

Although Cinderella, as a fairy-tale character, differs, to some extent, from both a doll and a human being (she is not a physical object, nor is she a living, breathing individual), her symbolic capacity for giving meaning to each of these kinds of an embodiment is undeniable. Cinderella dolls, as toys to cuddle, play, and pretend with, as well as works of doll art (created in porcelain, for example) to be displayed and to help stir one's imagination, are certainly not uncommon. Aside from both of these instances, what is grand, or profound is the very human-like construct referred to as Cinderella, which has popularly included such defining characteristics as 'being good', 'being kind', 'the potential existence of a happily ever after, and the potential existence of fairness or justice in the universe. Indeed, such (human) understandings, (which can be quite rich in detail) are not necessarily easy to tweak or modify. (For this thesis, this author adds at least two more psychological qualities to the human-like Cinderella construct –such qualities include having a strong tendency

toward being open or having open-mindedness, as well as having a strong capacity for self-reflection).

A compelling example of the psychological impressiveness of such understandings comes from the 1966 film *Mademoiselle* directed by Tony Richardson and starring Jean Moreau. Moreau plays a young, unmarried schoolteacher referred to simply as “Mademoiselle,” who is new to a European farming village. She feels intense sexual frustration and suppressed desire – even one of the women in the village expresses to her husband that she feels sorry for the young female teacher because she is not married, implying that under such circumstances, she cannot have sex. Her frustration is dramatically channelled into committing periodic devilishly aggressive acts; dressing up very femininely and seductively, donning lace, thickly coated lipstick and black high-heeled shoes, on certain evenings, and then going to start a fire in a certain part of the village; opening floodgates so the townspeople and their animals become drenched and drowning in water, and even putting poison in the water to kill the animals. Her nasty aggression also becomes directed toward a particular student from her class whose name is Bruno, whom she picks on repeatedly for relatively petty reasons, e.g., for wearing shorts to school instead of trousers. This boy of about 12 years old is the son of a ruggedly handsome Italian lumberjack who recently travelled to the town (with his son and his friend a co-lumberjack) to cut and collect wood in the forest. In general, the people do not like these men living on the fringe of their town and are quite suspicious of Bruno’s father, in particular, and his possible involvement in the destructive goings-on on a regular basis. In response the teacher also voraciously defends the man, pointing out that he is always on-site during these crises to help and even save the people, and on one occasion states “It’s as if the fire was made for him”. However, many of the townsmen in charge come to believe with greater and greater certainty that the lumberjack is responsible for the repeated heinous goings-on in the town. In the meantime, Mademoiselle starts to take walks in the woods during the day to watch the boy’s father working, and she even takes naps on the ground nearby. As time goes on, she starts to leer at him, flirt with him, and eventually seduces him. On one subsequent occasion, the two intensely (and illicitly) make love in the tall grass of the plain, as well as in the earth and mud of the forest floor. Afterwards, she runs back into the town glassy eyed with tangled hair and mud on her face, looking as if she has been attacked; a few of the townswomen, in their concern for her condition, ask if it was ‘him’ (referring to the lumberjack), and she swiftly turns to them and says “yes”. Subsequently, the boy’s father is murdered for his supposed devilish acts, and so the boy is left

without a father. He seems to intuitively grasp that this is his teacher's fault. Thus, in the end, Mademoiselle's acts have killed the town's scapegoat, so to speak.

This film is, essentially, an intensive study of one woman's cruel, idiosyncratic, insane-like behaviour, and the harsh and destructive repercussions of it. Indeed, the disturbing and astonishing things Mademoiselle gets away with, over and over again, are a dramatic testament to her name "Mademoiselle", and the psychological power and influence of its conceptual characterization, i.e. being young, good, and ladylike or genteel. These narrative (cinematic) images portray a lack of psychological integration of this female character's private realm (what will be characterised here as a radical constructivist) with the thoughts or notions of the public realm (what will be characterised here as a social constructivist) in which she physically resides.

Cinderella as 'herself' is a characterisation; Pavlik-Malone relates the intricate self-metaphor as explained by Lakoff and Johnson in their 1999 book *Philosophy in the Flesh*, to a doll being a subject versus being an object, as follows:

Lakoff and Johnson have described 'the self' in terms of essence, also referred to as the Essential Self Metaphor. These authors explain this metaphor as deriving from the Folk Theory of Essences whereby "every object has an essence that makes it the kind of thing it is and that is the causal source of its natural behaviour" (1999: 282). The Essential Self metaphor refers to any person rather than object and includes at least three cases. In each case, the self is understood as having intent or control over its incarnation of that particular self. One, is *the Inner Self* – which the individual refrains from expressing in public because it is 'fragile' and 'ashamed', and which takes refuge within the *Outer Self* which functions as a facade who keeps the inner self from being expressed; two, is *the External Real self* – which the individual shows the world, but which is also compatible with who the individual really is; and three, *the True Self* – which is who the individual really is deep down, both inside (the Inner Self) and outside (the External Real Self). Indeed, at each dimension, the self is aware of its 'aura' if you will and is the principal operative of its particular dynamic. Interestingly, under certain psychical conditions, these dimensions of self may become re-aligned [...] when doll is a subject having volition and intent, there is a self-present. However, when 'doll' is either a physical object or treated as an object, then little or no True Self is operative, only the self (or selves) that are projected into it. Under these conditions, the Outer Self becomes the True Self and the core, which includes the Inner Self and External Real Self, is 'hollowed out' like a

piece of plastic, as self goes from ‘doll as subject’ to ‘doll as object’.
(2011, 46-47)

In this current study, the essential self-metaphor is partially re-interpreted in both definition and re-alignment. Firstly, the inner self is not necessarily fragile nor is it always ashamed. Cinderella is not a ‘damsel in distress’, but is confident and self-assured; in other words, as one’s understanding of oneself grows in terms of the amount of detail, as well as in the degree of and strength of neurocognitive inter-connections among such details, fragility might be replaced by a more solidified (or less readily rattled or frayed) phenomenological experience of whom one (currently) is. In turn, shame might be lessened or replaced by having confidence or self-assuredness (without feeling the need to put on airs’ when with others). Second, through such a cognitive-developmental process, the inner self and the external real self psychologically merge to become the kind of true self that transcends having a rather discrete (or even disjointed) experience of ‘inner real’ and ‘outer real’ behavioural tendencies or patterns. Here, the inner real and the outer real have become much more intra-subjectively dialectical (intermingling the inner personal experience of self and outer personal experience of self, on a fluid and continuous basis, to form the traversable self, if you will, that is ever-dynamically present and psychologically situated in both the private realm and the public realm simultaneously).

Two realms: the private and the public. The pioneering cognitive-developmental theorist Jean Piaget and others have studied inner experience from an individual constructivist perspective. This perspective assumes, among other things, that certain (more-or-less universal and innate) cognitive developmental processes and knowledge, such as object permanence and reversibility, enable the young mind to essentially teach itself how the world out there works. Taken further in this paradigmatic approach is radical constructivism which “Consists of replacing one construction with another that better explains the person’s current perception of reality” (Hennessey et al., 2012) and “[...] when pushed to the extreme of relativism, all knowledge and all beliefs are equal because they are all valid individual perceptions (Woolfolk, 2019)”.

Individual/Radical constructivism can be distinguished from Social constructivism:

Learning means individually possessing knowledge...but in social constructivism, learning means belonging to a group or participating with that group in the social construction of knowledge (Dohn, 2016; Mason,

2007)... Vygotsky emphasized... that social interaction, cultural tools, and activity shape individual development and learning... By participating in the broad range of activities with others, learners appropriate the outcomes produced by working together... Appropriating means being able to reason, act, and participate using cultural tools—for example, using concepts such as “force” and “acceleration” to reason in physics (Mason, 2007). Vygotsky’s theory relies heavily on social interaction and the cultural context to explain learning... (Woolfolk, 2019, 384)

In this study, the author will refer to the private realm and radical constructivism as one and the same concept, as well as the public realm and social constructivism as one and the same concept. When radical constructivism and social constructivism are in the midst of becoming psychologically or cognitively entwined (in the mind and the brain as well as within and outside the body) one can say that the traversable self is in the midst of developing or forming. This self may, in essence, be couched within the more general autobiographical self, which is a narrative understanding of oneself that incorporates the time and place of more-or-less emotionally vivid events in one’s life (illustration 2-2). As part of her contemplative experience, Cinderella may be re-counting an emotionally uncomfortable tiff she has had with one of her stepsisters – when and where it occurred as well as what was said to whom and in what order. Indeed, the basic difference between these two (personal) levels of memory-about-self – the autobiographical self and the traversable self – may be the extent to which intra-subjective and idiosyncratic ideas, memories and understandings become part of conscious experiences of whom one is at any point in time. With regard to the former or autobiographical self, specific sensory and motor characteristics such as the colour of one’s cheeks and one’s rapid gesticulation, as well as rather salient emotional details such as a definitive feeling of urgency (which pre-empted one’s hand-and-arm by a few minutes), become part-and-parcel of one’s content of autobiographical memory. However, with regard to the latter or traversable self (couched within the autobiographical self) one might have, upon performing the hand-and-arm gesticulation, briefly envisioned oneself as ‘Vlad-the-Impaler ordering a kill’ or ‘a ballet dancer in the midst of performing a self-choreographed piece titled *Anger*’ or ‘a human butterfly forcefully retracting one of her wings’ or something else altogether. Furthermore, as the ballet dancer, for instance, one later begins to associate oneself with floating on anger whenever one is angry, which helps one to deal better or more adaptively with this emotion, by tempering its potential to overtake one’s rational thought processes. Indeed, in such a case, one’s intra-subjective experience, laced with subtle

(or nuanced) imagery, has become intimately tied to oneself and intertwined as part of one's developing an intricate web of traversable self-understanding or inner experience of self.

And two realms entwined

An example of how constructing a conceptual understanding in the public realm might indulge more varied narrative interpretations, to some extent, from the private realm, comes from the essay by Kathleen Llewellyn titled "Beauty and Belief: Attitudes Towards Female Beauty in Early Modern French Discourse" (2015). There, the author of the essay concludes that the ambiguous meaning of the concept referred to as female beauty comes from "difficulty negotiating descriptions of female beauty." (ibid., 121). Thus, what was collectively (or social constructivist-ly) considered to be female beauty among many French writers and moral and religious authorities, could not help but awkwardly juxtapose the mundane with the divine. Llewellyn writes:

One of the most important attributes an early modern Frenchwoman could possess was beauty. A beautiful woman might acquire admiration, financial security (for she could likely make a better marital match than her plain sister), and even a certain measure of power because of her beauty. Virtue might help a woman find her way to heaven, but for success on earth, nothing was quite so potent as beauty. Indeed, beauty and virtue were closely associated in the early modern mentality [...] The deepening association of physical beauty with moral worth meant that the pursuit of the former became mandatory for women. (ibid., 106)

She continues:

And yet, according to moral authorities of the era, virtuous women were neither to seek beauty nor flaunt it and certainly not to intentionally enhance their appearance. Attitudes toward female beauty in early modern France were complex and often contradictory [...] highly desirable but potentially dangerous [...] The perplexed attitude toward beauty is pervasive in [the] literature of the era, from the most [...] didactic texts to the most ribald tales. In sermons and other moral literature of the era, female beauty is sometimes criticized, but also sometimes valorized [...] Preachers are generally critical of female beauty, particularly, of beauty deliberately enhanced through makeup, jewellery, and dress. Efforts to dissuade women from trying to make themselves look more beautiful sometimes focus on the danger to the soul, one's own as well as those of the poor men ensnared by female beauty, but, at other times, those efforts focus on the danger to one's earthly happiness; deceitful appearances lead

to deplorable marriages, according to moral authorities of the time. Beautiful female characters frequently appear in modern French fiction, and at times the direction of the narrative unfolds precisely because of their beauty and the reactions of others to it. But sometimes the protagonists' physical charms are mentioned only in passing, and the beauty of those women can be utterly irrelevant to the plot. (ibid., 121)

Indeed, one can argue that a continued lack of social negotiation in the understanding of what female beauty essentially was, might have led to a kind of social-cognitive disjointedness between various individual members of (male) society, i.e., between some of the clergy and some of the fiction writers. In her essay, Llewellyn also mentions how, "As Nancy J. Vickers contends, 'the canonical legacy of descriptions in praise of beauty is ... a legacy shaped predominantly by the male imagination for the male imagination; it is in large part, men talking to men about women'" (2015, 121). Thus, no matter how various individual men of the time may have characterised female beauty, in more of a mundane or earthly carnal way or in more of an ethereal or spiritual kind of way, the phrase 'more of a/an' is used in both instances, since where the (average) individual – as neither a preacher nor a fiction writer – was concerned, he had his own developing understandings or notions of the nature of female beauty. And while these understandings and notions were most definitely influenced to some degree by the public discourses of the time, he could have easily possessed details of 'the idea' more socially constructed which, over time, became neurocognitively entwined with his own more private or intra-subjective, mental components – his memories and personal experiences, e.g. his visual images and feelings for his own wife or mistress, which he may or may not have ever expressed outwardly to anyone. Thus, taking into consideration the mercurial nature of, in this case, the male imagination, especially as it is formed with pieces of the public and the private combined and re-combined in detailed and complex ways, a myriad of conceptual possibilities may have come to exist.

The Fairy-Tale & The Meta-Fairy Tale

In this study, this author attempts to characterise some of the possible cognitive dynamics involved in Cinderella's ability or natural desire to create for herself an autobiographical dimension to her life that is highly relativistic, rather idiosyncratic, and intra-subjectively significant. Such a life is not ultimately out there in the world, interpreted in the biographical form by someone else, nor has it been edited or formalized in the autobiographical sense by Cinderella herself. Instead, this author explores

Cinderella's highly personal becoming, if you will, principally from within her own mind's eye, through her simultaneous literal-to-symbolic and symbolic-back-to-literal donning of certain footwear. In attempting to do so, the author discusses instances of certain moments in the existing biographical story (through Charles Perrault's telling), which centres around some details of Cinderella's experience at the ball with her stepsisters and, of course, with the prince. Also, Cinderella's strength of character and personality, in terms of her kindness, graciousness and self-assuredness for example, will be characterised as integral to her developing a richness of understanding between shoe and self. Here, her mental repertoire –her thoughts, feelings, memories, emotions and imagination – 'bootstraps' itself from within, leading to her growing (inner) experience of who she is. In his book, *The Private Self* (1993), psychiatrist Arthur Modell states:

In emphasizing the vital significance of the private self, I am striving to correct a current bias that views the self nearly exclusively as a social self.

Most contemporary authors have exaggerated the significance of this social aspect of the self, minimizing or neglecting the self's capacity to "bootstrap" itself from within. As many life experiences attest, there are individuals who have been able to "create" themselves and maintain a sense of continuity and coherence. (ibid., 4)

In the meta-fairy tale *Her Shoe for Her Shoe*, Cinderella seems to be at a point in her psychological development in which she is (imaginatively) masterful at returning to her own inner life; one marked, to a profound degree, by her symbolic donning of certain footwear. Indeed, for her, the black flat one (for privacy, and physical and emotional comfort) and the glass heeled one (for public display, and as a social sign of princess-ly courtship and public identity) may now comprise a complex and nuanced intertwining symbolism that is highly personally relevant or intra-subjectively resonant. This detailed and dynamic kind of mental representation can be characterised as part and parcel of the psychological content – thoughts, feelings, and learned behaviours – which comprise her personal space. This space includes various areas of Cinderella's brain working together and in parallel with quantum patterns of (electromagnetic) energy flow, enabling her to create, for herself a psyche resonant with subtle and complex privately meaningful experiences. Dr Edgar Mitchell, the founder of the Institute of Noetic Sciences, uses the term "quantum hologram" which could be said to refer to, among other kinds of things, resonant patterns that are intra-subjectively laden, and which contain within them information that is intimately linked to the individual. This occurs when her or his own created configurations (and repeated re-configurations) of

thought, feeling and behaviour, which form in the quantum space (which encompasses the physical space both inside and outside the individual's body) as they live out their terrestrial life. According to Mitchell, "There is a unique evolutionary history associated with each quantum hologram [...]" (from Mitchell's lecture entitled "The Quantum Hologram and ESP". Thus, as similar as any two or more individuals may be in thought, feeling, and behaviour (thus, containing similar resonant energy flows, also known as synchronized vibrational energy flows, in their quantum spaces), each one is also unique in its resonant energy patterns or constellations in quantum space. In other words, encoded in such space is personal symbolism where Cinderella's thoughts, feelings and memories tweak, over and over again, traversing or inter-connecting information which, at one point in her (quantum) evolutionary history was cognitively processed by her in a rather separate way as of the private realm and of the public realm (to a great extent, before she meets and marries the prince – before it did not personally matter so much, what kind of shoe she wore, both literally and figuratively).

(Her) Inner-to-Outer Experience as Space

In their article titled "What is Space", Jorge Cham and Daniel Whiteson (2020) explore the distinct possibility that "space is a physical thing – not a backdrop or frame" for solid (and not so solid) things, objects and bodies. In their view, the dynamic properties of physical space include, but are not necessarily limited to, stretching, bending and rippling (expanding and contracting synergistically). Of space, they say:

To think about modern ideas of space, you have to give up the idea of space as an abstract stage and accept that it is a *physical thing*. You have to imagine that space has properties and behaviours, and that it reacts to the matter in the universe. You can pinch it, squeeze it, and, yes, even fill it with cilantro. (Cham and Whiteson. 2020, 4)

Like air, perhaps it has different states and phases. Under extreme conditions, maybe it can arrange itself in very unexpected ways or have weird, unexpected properties in the same way that air behaves differently whether it's in liquid, gas, or solid form. Perhaps the space we know [...] and occupy [...] is only one rare type of space and there are other types of space out there in the universe just waiting for us to figure out how to create and manipulate them. (ibid., 18)

Also, in the spirit of strange (though highly personal) experience, Jeffrey Kripal, in his 2014 essay titled “Visions of the Impossible”, asks us to consider the idea of how so-called ‘fantastic’ stories in literature may be, at least in some cases, actual recounts of human experiences, such as the literary character Albinus who loses his physical sight as a result of his struggle to keep his ideal woman alive within him. Kripal states:

The answer to why robust events like those of Twain, the widowed wife, and the Stockholm fire do not appear in the lab is simple: There is no trauma, love, or loss there. No one is in danger of dying. Your neighbourhood is not on fire [...] (2014, 63)

Context matters: [...] We know this only by exposing water to extreme conditions, by traumatizing it, and then by detecting and measuring the gases with technology that no ordinary person possesses or understands. The situation is eerily analogous with impossible scenarios like those of Twain, his wife, and the Swedish seer. They are generally available only in traumatic situations, when the human being is being “boiled” in illness, stroke, coma, danger, or death (ibid., 63-64)

Image 2-3 shows Cinderella’s strange experience of seeing an image of her want-to-be fairy godmother morphing from within the physical energy of the fire. Here, her strongly present emotional energy driving her wish to attend the ball, may have facilitated a phenomenological change in her body-to-out-of-body-and-back traversable extension of personal space.

Extreme conditions that include having unexpected arrangements and weird, unexpected properties may also characterise, at least to some extent, the psychological bootstrapping (Modell, 1993) involved in creating a private or intra-subjective, and even aura-generated self. Within this context, what one refers to as personal space in general, and iteratively couched within it the traversable self in particular, may be, more essentially, a potentially ever-modifying flow of resonant energy patterns from both within and surrounding an individual’s body, immersing her or him in unique and spontaneous, although not surprising, experiences of self.



Image 2-3 *Cinderella and the Fairy Godmother* by Robert Ambrose Dudley, 1920.

In his book, *The Created Self: Reinventing Body, Persona, and Spirit* (2000), psychologist Robert Weber discusses how self-concepts and understandings can be created and re-created. His thesis includes the notion that the self expands and contracts – by the expansive self he means the stretching of one's conscious and unconscious understanding of whom one is; by the contractive self he means the simplification of this understanding. Interestingly, these internal processes seem quite similar to the stretching and rippling of physical space described by Cham and

Whiteson (2020). Taking such similarities into consideration, could it be that the flow of resonant energies both within and around the human body also stretch as well as expand and contract? Furthermore, according to Modell, “The web associations may be enlarged or constricted by metaphor or metonymy, so that perception comes to interpret sensation [...] we think of sensations as internal signs that can be cognitively transformed by interpretation [...]” (1993, 148). Thus, could a current psychological pattern of associations produce new symbolic or figurative understandings through expanding and/or contracting (and/or even bending, whatever this may cognitively look like) within one’s personal space? Additionally, might it be that in producing more unusual, private or idiosyncratically meaningful thought-feeling patterns or associations within this space, one is iteratively upgrading the resonant state of one’s internal experience of selfness in consciousness, both internal to and more-or-less immediately around one’s body? Here, we have what Pavlik-Malone describes as “the personal within the personal”. In her 2011 book, *Dolls & Clowns & Things: Essays for a Symbolic Self*, she writes:

There seems to be a “subset” of mental processes, structures, and abilities that exists within the subjective realm. This “subset” can be referred to as *the intra-subjective*. They are at times more present than at other times, and enable the individual to create very personal understandings of objects from deep within. Intra-subjectivity is special because it enables the mind to weave, more as well as less consciously, strategically tangled webs of semantic [...] complexity, as well as precisely shaded groves of subtle or nuanced meaning. And, even though this subset may be both meta-cognitively less controllable and not so easily relied upon for understanding the object [...] its nature as “the personal within the personal” has the power [...] to produce understandings of things or objects which are nothing less than transformative for the self. (Pavlik-Malone, 2011a, xvi)

An artwork titled *Splice Baby* (2009) by pop surrealist artist Kukula, can be used to creatively characterise the personal within the personal as rather uniquely depicted within this individual creator’s thought process. There is an iterative quality to this image; in it, a little doll seems to be couched within the left arm of a much bigger doll; with both having, essentially, the same face. The bigger doll is representative of, let us say, the personal space that is more generally subjective, since it reflects, for this artist, her own understanding of herself as ‘doll’ – a cognitive process referred to as ‘dollification’; (Ellis and Hall, 1896). This includes, at the same time, the generally accepted idea of what the body of a human being looks like, namely, having human-looking legs, a human-looking clothed torso and a

human-looking interrelationship between the two, as part of her personal (mental) representation of self. However, the little doll basically has the same (doll) face as the bigger doll, but this face is attached to a body of a marine, octopus-like creature – an unusual or idiosyncratic (mental) representation that symbolises the artist's deeply personal or intra-subjective dimension. What this rather unreal, strange, or surreal image of a 'doll-octopus' means for this artist may possibly be associated with a resonant expansion of whom she is or currently understands herself to be. Thus it may have a hyperreal quality for her, which means that it is even more psychologically real or phenomenologically accurate for her than her normal or stereotypical understanding of the interrelationship between her human-looking legs and her human-looking clothed torso.

Unreal-ness & more than real-ness. Generally speaking, surreal imagery is considered unreal. This phenomenological quality has been described as "having the disorientating, hallucinatory quality of a dream" (Dictionary.com). Also "Something is surreal when it makes you feel as if you must be dreaming because you cannot imagine it to be true. For example, if you were watching a recorded video, and the person on the screen spoke directly to you, that would be surreal". (ell.stackexchange.com). Third, the definition of surrealism from Merriam-Webster dictionary is "the principles, ideals, or practice of producing fantastic or incongruous imagery or effects in art, literature, film or theatre by means of unnatural or irrational juxtapositions and combinations" (Merriam-Webster).

In contrast, hyperreal imagery is generally considered more than real. According to sociologist Jean Baudrillard, a hyperreal (mental) representation of a thing, person or experience is its own referent or its own original, rather than an exact copy of what is physically real or what physically took place. In addition:

Hyperreality, some sources point out, may provide insights into the postmodern moment by analyzing how simulations disrupt the binary opposition between reality and illusion but does not address or resolve the contradictions inherent to this tension. (Baudrillard, 2011a, 3)

Simulation is characterised by a blending of 'reality' and representation, where there is no clear indication of where the former stops and the latter begins [...] It is the generation of models of a real without origins or reality [...] Baudrillard suggests that simulation no longer takes place in a physical realm; it takes place within a space not categorized by physical limits, i.e. within ourselves, technological simulations, etc. (ibid., 4)

Presumably, a simulation may be part of what psychologically characterises personal space in general, and traversable space in particular; and it may serve a visceral, highly nuanced and deeply emotional purpose as an internal, self-made model of self-understanding.

In her book, *Dolls & Clowns & Things*, Pavlik-Malone quotes anthropologist A.F. Robertson from his 2004 book, *Life Like Dolls: The Collector Doll Phenomenon and the Lives of the Women Who Love Them*:

As Robertson suggests, hyper-reality is like creating a blueprint for something after the thing already exists; in the blueprint, one is free to incorporate properties and qualities that one wants or desires or ‘needs’ the thing to have had in the first place. In essence, the blueprint is *more real* because it takes on a certain psychological realism for its creator that the thing itself does not possess. Here, the doll functions as ‘more than real’ in a way that only a self-made, human-like figure can, by acting as a metaphoric ‘mirror image’ of whom one really is. This kind of realism does not appeal to the visual brain and the visual sense in a straightforward perceptual way (i.e. a sigh is just a sigh), but is heavily laced with nuance strung together by desires and emotions that inhabit the subconscious mind, also known as the emotional brain. In describing the motivations of porcelain doll collectors, Robertson writes, “The dolls are locked into the bodies and lives of the collectors in ways that the women *feel* even if they cannot find the words to describe it” (Pavlik-Malone, 2011A, 186).

Indeed, being “locked into the bodies and lives of the collectors that the women feel” may refer to the psycho-physical parameters of each one’s personal space; since, in general, each woman possesses the same thing – the capacity for an essentially private, intra-subjective web of inner experience in which the inter-subjectively felt ideas of doll and family may be the norm. However, for each individual woman, her inner reality may be a simulation that is more nuanced. And while nuanced simulation may have an oxymoronic ring to it, from the perspective of the existence of one’s traversable self (couched within one’s personal space), this may be where there is no clear indication of where reality stops and representation begins, namely those areas of personal space where the content of the traversable self exists. Here, (personal) experiences, scenarios or autobiographical memory-contents can potentially be hyperreal for one woman and surreal for another. For instance, one woman treating her doll as a human little girl whom she refers to as “my daughter, Lydia [...] who I take shopping for a new Christmas dress each year” versus another woman, who would see taking one’s doll out to the shop to buy her a dress, as one would one’s little girl, as bizarre or unreal. In the former more than real or hyperreal case, the woman feels the act of