

Little Girl Lost: Sylvia Plath and the Puella Aeternus

(appears in the book, *Perpetual Adolescence*, Suny Press, 2009)

<http://www.sunypress.edu/details.asp?id=61850>

Abstract:

Although the Puella character can form within the psyche in various ways, this perspective focuses on the effect of the absent father, the absorbing mother who is emotionally distant and Puella who is without sufficient connection to her ground of being, especially the feminine aspects.. Descriptions of Puella are particularly clear in the work of poet Sylvia Plath, who killed herself in the early 1960's. Plath, who herself went through analysis, is used here as an extreme example of Puella. Her poignant and violent psychological struggle illustrates the cultural and trans-generational shadows of the Puella archetype. Like many poets, her work reveals the shadow life within an individual and a culture, in both personal and archetypal dimensions.