

CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY
University Honors Program
One University Drive
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HON 373 The Puppet Metaphor Across Media
Spring 2017



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COURSE SYLLABUS

This course investigates the theoretical and historical significance of the myth of the puppet by examining its cultural history and its life across media boundaries. The coursework traces the evolution of influential European, and especially Italian, puppets and puppeteering traditions comparatively with other types of theatre of animation around the world, from Renaissance theatre to avant-garde literature, film, and digital media. This course also addresses the archetype of the transformation from animate to inanimate in literature and cinema, including the theme of the cyborg. Readings and lectures provide historical background and dialogue with recent theories of theatricality, intermediality, and the post-human. Through class discussions, presentations and critical papers, students will analyze a number of literary, cinematographic and digital texts that intersect with puppetry in various ways.



Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon completing this course students will be able to:

- discuss important traits of the historical, cultural, and technical nature of different forms of puppet theatre in Italy and elsewhere,
- discuss and research philosophic, cultural and aesthetic influences of various traditions of puppetry in film, literature, art, and other media.
- discuss and research the modernist conceptions of the human being (especially Pirandello, Bontempelli, De Chirico, and the Italian futurists).
- discuss and research Pinocchio as a fictional character as well as a myth linked to the idea of the cyborg,
- understand and apply concepts such as: theatricality, intermediality, intermedial reference, remediation, and the post-human,
- present and discuss arguments, creative work, and complex issues in writing and public speaking.

Honors Program Learning Outcomes:

Upon completing a course in the University Honors Program students will have:

- a. obtained a starting point for integrative exploration of the development of cultures and intellectual achievements through a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives;
- b. sharpened their ability to critically analyze and synthesize a broad range of knowledge through the study of primary texts and through engagement in active learning with fellow students, faculty, and texts (broadly understood);
- c. understood how to apply more integrative and interdisciplinary forms of understanding in the advancement of knowledge and in addressing complex challenges shaping the world;
- d. developed effective communication skills.

Content

- Psychological theories of the puppet as a phenomenon (social simulation, the animate/inanimate archetype, the trickster)
- Concepts and notions of intermediality
- Puppeteering traditions around the world (forms, repertoires)
- Focus on the case study of Italy (various traditions and their associations)
- Pinocchio (the novel and its adaptations)
- Modernism and puppets (avant-garde literature)
- A brief history of the puppet as special effect (baroque theatre, stop-motion, cartoon, digital animation and blending)
- The cyborg as puppet

Current Required Texts:

McCormick, John, Alfonso Cipolla, and Alessandro Napoli. *The Italian Puppet Theater: A History*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Company, 2010. Print.

Collodi, Carlo, and Nicolas J. Perella. *The Adventures of Pinocchio: Story of a Puppet*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005. Print.

Instructional strategies:

- The lessons will build on the student's own understanding of assigned readings and screenings, and their research of and creative engagement with the subject matter, and present contextual background and interpretative models through interactive and multi-media lectures.

Methods of Evaluation

Participation

A student receives an outstanding participation grade (A) when he or she: is on time, brings readings and necessary materials to class, avoids distractive use of technology, contributes regularly and in an informed manner to the class discussions, successfully collaborates with others, participates in all class activities, manifests professional behavior (also in email exchanges), and helps others to do all of the above.

- * Students can demonstrate their participation also online by commenting to the classmates' journal blog posts.
- * Students are encouraged to purchase a binder portfolio to organize and archive their work and notes, including the following note sections: readings, screenings, in-class work, creative project, research paper. The instructor might ask students to show their portfolio during the semester.

Absences and Punctuality

You are allowed 1 unexcused absence. Each additional unexcused absence lowers your grade of 2 percentage points. Two late arrivals count as one unexcused absence. In order to be granted an excused absence, you will need to provide evidence that you were unable to attend for causes beyond your control (illness, accidents, death in family, etc). Assignments submitted late or make-up examinations will be granted full credit only in connection to with excused absences. You should contact your instructor with any questions.

Language coursework for students of Italian

Students of Italian have some opportunities during the course to integrate practice with Italian. According to their level of proficiency, they are highly encouraged to complete the reading of *Pinocchio* in Italian. Students who have completed 201 are required to write the essay on *Pinocchio* in Italian and are encourage to practice writing in Italian whenever possible during the semester, especially in connection to Italian texts and films.

Puppet History Exploratory Reports

The first part of the course will be devoted to developing a firm grasp of the history of the Italian puppet theater. In preparation for each class, students are required to send an email to the professor containing: a) an outline of the patterns found in the historical readings (recurring traits among puppetry traditions, repertoires, regional differences, watershed events, etc.) and b) links to photographs, video or sites that they explored while reading the historical chapter. The email must be received at least one hour before class. This material might be shared during class to enrich the discussion.

Pinocchio Essay

A number of lessons will be dedicated to an in-depth analysis of Collodi's original novel Pinocchio. During this time, students will be organizing their notes and drafting a 5-6 page thesis-driven analytical essay. The essay must demonstrate a close reading of the novel, engage at least 3 scholarly sources, and 1 retelling of the novel. An assessment rubric will be provided.

■ ■ *Students who have completed ITAL 201 are required to write this essay in Italian (3-4 pages).*

Case Study Expansion Presentations

As a way to demonstrate acquisition of theoretical frameworks studied, each student will prepare a presentation introducing and interpreting a specific text beyond those listed in the syllabus (a focus on puppets in American culture is especially welcome). The presentation lasts a maximum of 10 minutes. I suggest the following format: identify your text, move swiftly to pointing to and exemplifying 1 or 2 connections with previous class discussions (if you can, make it interactive, but it might not always be possible). I don't think you need a lot of slides for this, but if you have slides/clips come early to set your presentation up (it's best if you can open it from a flash drive). It is the students' responsibility to sign-up for one of the available time slots.

Final Project

Students can choose to develop a research paper OR a scholarly/creative project. In any case, students will develop their project during the entire semester and adhere to specific guidelines. Individual students might also apply for a combined scholarly/creative project.

- Research project. Students develop an essay which points to an original contribution to the field of cultural studies either by introducing new sources, proposing an innovative method, or presenting an original perspective. The final paper needs to focus on one or more of the texts listed in the syllabus, and engage in dialogue with at least 10 related scholarly sources (such as: scholarly articles, book chapters, books). Format: 12-15 pages, Times 12, double-spaced, MLA style. The project is organized in phases:
 - Thesis: Students engage in a conversation with the professor to identify a thesis and to develop it during the entire arc of the semester.
 - Development: While the project is a self-directed assignment, students are required to report on and develop their idea through the blog-journal (see entry below).
 - Final presentation. The student leads an interactive lesson based on his/her research project by introducing the topic, preparing conversation questions, assembling lesson materials (handout and images). Heavy text slides must be avoided.
 - Deadlines: Blog entries deadlines are listed in the syllabus. Students have till finals week to turn in the final copy of the project (see deadline below).
- Scholarly/Creative Project. Students develop a project involving both a research and a creative component. This project requires a thorough integration between the research and creative component, where the former supports the latter and the latter fuels the former.
 - Development: While the project is a self-directed assignment, students are required to report on and develop their idea through the blog-journal (see entry below).
 - Research paper: 8-10 pages with integration of at least 6 related scholarly sources (such as: scholarly articles, book chapters, books). Times 12, double-spaced, MLA style.

- Final presentation. The student leads an interactive presentation based on his/her research/creative project by sharing product, elaborating the topic, preparing conversation questions, assembling lesson materials (handout and images). Heavy text slides must be avoided.
- Deadlines: Blog entries deadlines are listed in the syllabus. Students have till finals week to turn in the final copy of the project (see deadline below).

Blog Journal

Students will report on the evolution of the final project and develop their ideas through a journal in blog form. The blog can be published openly or kept private, though access must be given to professor and classmates and the comment feature turned on. Students need to publish at least **six** 500-word weekly posts, starting from the date listed in the calendar below.

Screenings in the library: Students can watch DVDs on reserve directly in the library. There are six media rooms that can be used for this purpose. It is highly recommended that students create a room booking account and reserve a room in advance, as they can fill up quite quickly. This can be done here: <http://www1.chapman.edu/library/info/roombooking.html>

Grade Breakdown¹

10%: Participation (including comments on classmates' blogs)

6%: Puppet history exploration emails (notes) (x2)

14%: Pinocchio essay

10%: Case study expansion presentation

60% Final project, 2 options below:

A) Research Project

10%: abstract workshop

10%: blog journal

15%: interactive presentation

25%: final essay

B) Scholarly/Creative Project

10% prospectus workshop

10% Blog journal

15% Interactive presentation

10% reflection paper

15% final product

PROGRAM

January 31. Introduction to the course, historical and theoretical framework, objectives and assignments.

Assignments: Read syllabus.

February 2. Overview of World Puppetry: West and East

Assignments: Read Tilakasiri, selection from *The Puppet Theater of Asia* (PDF).

Part 1: The Western Art of Puppetry: The Great Italian Case Study and Beyond

February 7. Historical overview of Italian puppetry

Assignments: Read McCormick, *The Italian Puppet Theater* (introduction and chapter 1).

¹ A 100-94; A- 93-90; B+ 89-87; B 86-84; B- 83-80; C+ 79-77; C 76-74; C- 73-70; D+ 69-67; D 66-64; D- 63-60; F 59-0

February 9. The Italian Glove Puppet Tradition

Assignments: McCormick, *The Italian Puppet Theater* (chapter 2). Puppet history exploration email #1 due before class.

February 14. The Italian Marionettes and Pupi

Assignments: Read McCormick, *The Italian Puppet Theater* (chapter 3). Puppet history exploration email #2 due before class.

February 16. Modern Puppetry in Italy and Beyond

Assignments: Read McCormick, *The Italian Puppet Theater* (chapter 8) and selections from John Bell, *Strings, Hands, Shadows* (PDF).

Part 2: Pinocchio

February 21.

Assignments: Read Carlo Collodi, *Pinocchio* (ch. 1-15).

February 23.

Assignments: Read Carlo Collodi, *Pinocchio* (ch. 16-23) and C. Klopp, “Frankenstein' and Pinocchio, Nineteenth-Century Humanoids” (PDF).

February 28.

Assignments: Read Carlo Collodi, *Pinocchio* (ch. 24-31) and Suzanne Stewart-Steinberg, “The Pinocchio Effect: On Autonomy and Influence” from *The Pinocchio Effect* (PDF 21-63).

March 2.

Assignments: Read Carlo Collodi, *Pinocchio* (ch. 32-36). Bring your current plan or first draft of the Pinocchio essay for in-class workshop.

—> March 5, 11:59pm: Pinocchio Essay due via email

Part 3: Romanticism, Modernism, and Intermediality

March 7. The Romantic Puppet

Assignments: Read Heinrich Von Kleist, “The Marionette Theatre,” and Edward Gordon Craig, selections from “On the Art of Theater” (PDF).

March 9. The Modernist Puppet

Assignments: See De Chirico’s paintings (PDF) and record your own impressions to them. Read the selections from Massimo Bontempelli’s novel *The Last Eve* (PDF) and consider the nature of character of Bululù (PDF). Outline Mirfendereski’s essay “Puppetry Elements in the Works of European Surrealists” (PDF).

March 14. Puppetry and Intermediality

Assignments: Read Wolf’s encyclopedia entry on “Intermediality” (PDF) and Bolter and

Grusin's selection from *Remediation* and note down key notions. Screen *The War and Dream of Momi* ("La guerra e il sogno di Momi", 1917, Dropbox) and consider the function of the toy in this interpretation of WWI. * Blog training session

March 16. Pinocchio, AI, and Cyborgs: An Introduction by Georgia Panteli
Assignments: Begin final project email brainstorming with professor.

****Spring Break****

Part 3: Matters of Essence

March 28. Puppetry and Perception, a video-conference with [Pia Banzhaf](#).
Assignments: Pia Banzhaf, "The Ontology of the Puppet" (PDF). Blog entry #1 due.

March 30. The Alchemical Puppet
Assignments: Read Victoria Nelson, "Early Adventures of Earthly Gods" and "The Puppet Tractates" (from *The Secret Lives of Puppets*, PDF) and prepare questions for discussion.

April 4. The Human Puppet: Psychoanalysis and Spiritualism
Assignments: Read Sigmund Freud, "Introduction" to *The Ego and the Id* (PDF) and F. W. H. Myers, "Introduction" to *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death* (PDF) and consider their applications to the puppet metaphor. Blog entry #2 due.

April 6. The Robotic Puppet
Assignments: Read Victoria Nelson, "The Great Twentieth Century Puppet Upgrade" (from *The Secret Lives of Puppets*, PDF), Masahiro Mori "Uncanny Valley" and prepare questions for discussion. Screen video presentation of the [Museum of Automata in York](#) (Youtube) and register your thoughts.

April 11. The Virtual Puppet: The Avatar
Assignments: Read Paul Manning, "Can the avatar speak?" (PDF) and prepare questions for discussion. Blog entry #3 due.

April 13. The Virtual Puppet: Animation
Assignments: Read Steve Tillis, "The Art of Puppetry in the Age of Media Production" (PDF) and Teri Silvio, "Animation the New Performance?" (PDF) and prepare questions for discussion.

Part 3: Ancient Puppets on Modern Screens

April 18. Case Study Expansion: German Expressionism
Assignments: Screen *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (Robert Weiner, 1920) or *Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, 1927) and organize your notes and questions in preparation for discussion. Blog entry #4 due. *Case Study Expansion Presentations.

April 20 *Professor away for conference

April 25. Case Study Expansion: Czech Puppetry Filmmaking

Assignments: Screen *The Hand* (Jiri Trnka, 1965, Youtube) and organize your notes and questions in preparation for discussion. Read Proschan, “The Semiotic Study of Puppets, Masks, and Performing Objects” (PDF). Blog entry #5 due.

April 27. Case Study Expansion: Pirandello, Pasolini and the Stage of History

Assignments: Screen *What Are the Clouds?* (Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1967, Dropbox) and organize your notes and questions in preparation for discussion. **Case Study Expansion Presentations.*

May 2. Case Study Expansion: Jonze/Kaufman and the Puppet

Assignments: Screen *Being John Malkovich* (Spike Jonze, 1999, DVD reserve) or *Anomalisa* (Duke Johnson and Charlie Kaufman, 2015, DVD) and organize your notes and questions in preparation for discussion. Blog entry #6 due. **Case Study Expansion Presentations.*

May 4. Case Study Expansion: Tactile Animation

Assignments: Screen *Jack and the Cuckoo-Clock Heart* (Stéphane Berla and Mathias Malzieu, 2013 DVD reserve) or *Kubo and the Two Strings* (Travis Knight, 2016 DVD reserve) and organize your notes and questions in preparation for discussion. **Case Study Expansion Presentations.*

Part 4: Sharing and Discussion of Final Projects (harvesting and celebrating work)

May 9. Presentation and discussion of final projects.

May 11. Presentation and discussion of final projects.

Hand in final project on: _____



ADDITIONAL UNIVERSITY POLICY

Chapman University's Academic Integrity Policy: "Chapman University is a community of scholars that emphasizes the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work and academic dishonesty of any kind will be subject to sanction by the instructor/administrator and referral to the university Academic Integrity Committee, which may impose additional sanctions including expulsion. Please see the full description of Chapman University's policy on Academic Integrity at www.chapman.edu/academics/academicintegrity/index.aspx."

Chapman University's Students with Disabilities Policy. "In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Services Office. If you will need to utilize your approved accommodations in this class, please follow the proper notification procedure for informing your professor(s). This notification process must occur more than a week before any accommodation can be utilized. Please contact Disability Services at (714) 516-4520 or visit www.chapman.edu/students/student-health-services/disability-services if you have questions regarding this procedure or for information or to make an appointment to discuss and/or request potential accommodations based on documentation of your disability. Once formal approval of your need for an accommodation has been granted, you are encouraged to talk with your professor(s) about your accommodation options. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course."

Chapman University's Equity and Diversity Policy. "Chapman University is committed to ensuring equality and valuing diversity. Students and professors are reminded to show respect at all times as outlined in Chapman's Harassment and Discrimination Policy. Please see the full description of this policy at <http://www.chapman.edu/faculty-staff/human-resources/eoo.aspx>. Any violations of this policy should be discussed with the professor, the dean of students and/or otherwise reported in accordance with this policy."