

# Animation and Puppetry: Gathering Voices in the Theater of Attraction

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## Abstract

"Sharing in the trickery of the automaton is merely another way to define ourselves as human...." (Jean-Claude Beaune, "The Classical Age of Automata: An Impressionistic Survey from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century")

*This presentation explores the intersections of character animation, European automata, and Japanese Bunraku puppetry as mechanisms of simulation, moral introspection and theaters of attraction. These stand-ins employ attraction and illusion to suspend the viewer between belief and disbelief, desire and repulsion. They also allow the viewer to indulge in that which is forbidden and unspeakable; ghosts, monsters, death, loss of boundaries, and magic.*

*Through borrowing and altering dialogues from chat rooms related to infanticide, crime, punishment and retribution, my work investigates how the Internet can become a site of social determination and regulation. Character animations which speak these dialogues embody the contradictions of identity found between the real and the represented body. The public space of electronic society becomes a form of "Orai".*

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## Rules of Puppets

1. When a puppet calls out another's name it points at the skies with its hand.
2. To walk softly the body should be bent and the thighs lifted; to walk in darkness the hands are extended.
3. When asking a question a puppet steps forward; in making a refusal it steps back. To show fear the face looks right and left.
4. The female puppet wipes away her tears by moving her face, the male by moving his hand.
5. Tears may be wiped away with the left hand once in every three times, but if the puppet has its back turned to the audience, the left hand may only be used once during the course of a play.
6. To express understanding the head must be bent; for astonishment, it is raised upwards.
7. A puppet leans backward to relate a story, and to listen to one, bends forward.
8. A male puppet moves his shoulders in laughter; a female puppet bends her head with her sleeve before her mouth.
9. A great master does not move his puppet if there is no reason to do so.

10. It is bad for a puppet to stand idle after speaking, but it is worse for it to move unnaturally.

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## The Dialogue

A: I don't think it is fair to call this woman or what she did evil. It's obvious that she has some severe mental problems.

B: Of course, when women kill, somehow excuses are made. This time, it's post partum depression. Next week it'll be something else. Katie Couric and Rosie O'Donnell will sympathize and empathize...empathize?

A: This doesn't excuse her actions, but it can help to explain what was going on in her mind. Let's shed some light on this disorder so that it doesn't happen again.

B: She belongs in jail, away from society for the rest of her miserable life. What she did doesn't even compare to her husband. He killed NO ONE...get it NOW members? Screw you and your agenda.

C: Just like her, I am a parent. I can't imagine anyone systematically killing his or her children. It makes my heartsick when I see those pictures of those kids lined up with their trick or treat costumes on. But let's wait and see what we can learn.

B: Let's stop looking for excuses. It makes me feel better to know she is going to straight to hell.

D: You must find yourself a morally superior person with a close "in" with God to know he sending her to hell. God will certainly grant you the heavenly immunity necklace as on the TV show, Survivor.