

## Introduction to Humanities II



# Introduction to Humanities II

*LORIBETH LARSEN*



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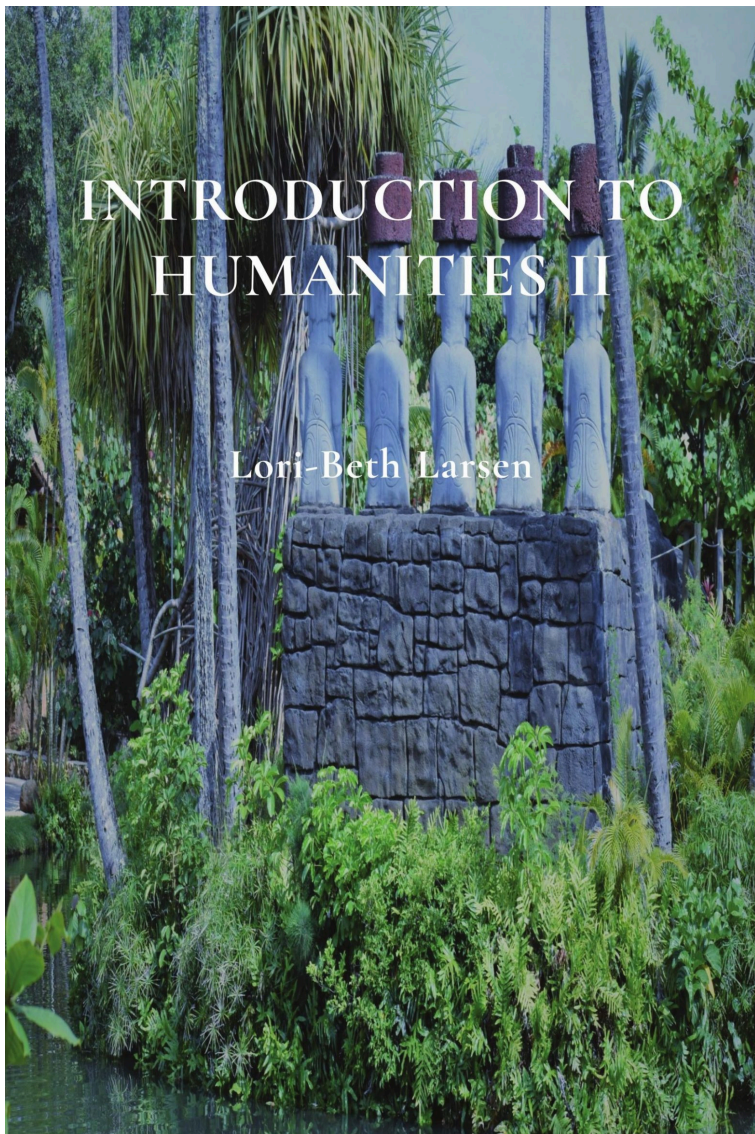
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## I. Cover



# 2. Table Of Contents --

## Introduction to Humanities II

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# 4. Introduction to Humanities Overview

This course is an introductory survey of the genres and themes of the humanities. Readings, lectures, and class discussions will focus on genres such as music, the visual arts, drama, literature, and philosophy. As themes, the ideas of freedom, love, happiness, death, nature, and myth may be explored from a western and non-western point of view.

### **Chris Abani: On Humanity**

Chris Abani tells stories of people: People standing up to soldiers. People being compassionate. People being human and reclaiming their humanity. It's "ubuntu," he says: the only way for me to be human is for you to reflect my humanity back at me.



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here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=28#oembed-1>

# 5. Humanities Sites

## Resources

**The following are websites with excellent resources for teaching humanities.**

Description of Humanities on Wikipedia: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humanities>

Outline of the Humanities from Wikipedia: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Outline\\_of\\_the\\_humanities](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Outline_of_the_humanities)

Minnesota Humanities Center: <https://mnhum.org/>

What are the Humanities and Why are they important? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ytR3wxwVBd0>

Lumen Learning Introduction to Humanities: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/worldcivilization1/>

## 6. Goal Areas for Introduction to Humanities

# Goal Areas for Introduction to Humanities

## **Goal Area: Humanities and Fine Arts**

To expand students' knowledge of the human condition and human cultures, especially in relation to behavior, ideas and values expressed in works of human imagination and thought. Through study in disciplines such as literature, philosophy and the fine arts, students will engage in critical analysis, form aesthetic judgments and develop an appreciation of the arts and humanities as fundamental to the health and survival of any society. Students should have experiences in both the arts and humanities.

Take some time in a notebook or in a digital document, write down some answers to these questions. As you do, think about your experiences and thoughts. Write down some examples of humanity. You'll return back to these questions throughout the course, so make sure you save them and add to them as we progress through the class.

- What do you know about the human condition and human cultures?
- What do you want to know about the human condition and human cultures?
- What are the behaviors, ideas and values expressed in works of human imagination and thought?
- Is it important to engage in critical analysis and form aesthetic judgments about the arts?
- How do we develop an appreciation of the arts and humanities as fundamental to the health and survival of any society?

## **Goal Area: Global Perspective**

To increase students' understanding of the growing interdependence of nations and peoples and develop their ability to

apply a comparative perspective to cross-cultural social, economic and political experiences.

- What do cultures around the world contribute to humanity?
- What do we see that comes from where?
- How can I expand what I value?
- What makes these contributions strong?



# 7. Essential Questions and Reflective Learning Journal



This course is organized around questions instead of answers. I hope, as you answer these questions, you will learn to think critically and your learning will be deep. Primarily, in this class you'll need to rely on your curiosity. Being curious will be important..

### **Reflective Learning Journal**

Each week as you progress through the lessons, take notes. As you read, listen, and talk about the stuff you're learning, write down what you're learning and thinking. You can use these notes to write a reflective learning journal at the end of each week. You might want to take notes on a class discussion as well. You might also be loading a Prezi, a photo of your own art, a video, an essay, or a podcast in this blog.

The **reflective journal** summarizes the week and should tell about the tasks, learning experiences, activities and opportunities you have been involved in during the week of the report.

### **Reflective Journal Rubric (30 points)**

<b>Criteria/ Levels</b>	<b>0-7 points each</b>	<b>8 points each</b>	<b>9 points each</b>	<b>10 points each</b>
<b>Journal entries meet criteria for length, writing quality</b>	Several or most entries are not long enough or there are more than 5 grammatical or other writing errors	One or two entries are not long enough or there are 3-5 grammatical or other writing errors	Entries are long enough; no more than 2 grammatical or other writing errors	Entries are long enough to fully address the components of the journal; have a high standard of writing quality with no grammatical or other writing errors
<b>Journal entries relate to topics covered and/or knowledge gained from coursework</b>	Entries usually do not relate to topics covered and/or knowledge gained from coursework	Entries sometimes relate to topics covered and/or knowledge gained from coursework	Entries usually relate to topics covered and/or knowledge gained from coursework	Entries consistently relate to topics covered and/or knowledge gained from coursework

<b>Journal entries contain a reflective component</b>	Entries usually do not reflect an understanding on the part of the student as to their ability to carry out activities in the LMC, character traits needed to be successful, and how the LMS fits into the overall educational program.	Entries sometimes reflect an understanding on the part of the student as to their ability to carry out activities in the LMC, character traits needed to be successful, and how the LMS fits into the overall educational program.	Entries usually reflect an understanding on the part of the student as to their ability to carry out activities in the LMC, character traits needed to be successful, and how the LMS fits into the overall educational program.	Entries consistently reflect an understanding on the part of the student as to their ability to carry out activities in the practicum, character traits needed to be successful, and how the practicum fits into the overall educational program.
<b>Total</b>				

Some of the chapters have Essential Questions to guide your learning. Other times, you might want to rely on the following questions for your journal entries.

### **Self-Reflection Questions for Learning**

What were some of the most interesting discoveries I made? About myself? About others?

What were some of my most challenging moments and what made them so?

What were some of my most powerful learning moments and what made them so?

What is the most important thing I learned personally?

What most got in the way of my progress, if anything?

What did I learn were my greatest strengths? My biggest areas for improvement?

What moments was I most proud of my efforts?

What could I do differently the next time?

What's the one thing about myself above all others I would like to work to improve?

How will I use what I've learned in the future?

## 8. What makes us Human?







Image by [PixxlTeufel](#) from [Pixabay](#)

Let's start here. What makes us human?

Photographer, Yan Arthus-Bertrand, asked these questions as he collected stories from more than 2,000 people from 60 countries. Do we all have the same thirst for love, freedom and recognition? In a world torn between tradition and modernity, do our fundamental needs remain the same? Deep down, what does it mean to be human today? What is the meaning of life? Are our differences so great? Do we, in fact, share more values than we might have imagined? And if so, why can we not manage to understand one another? What was the toughest trial you had to face, and what did you learn from it?

There are three parts to this film. Each part is about an hour and

a half. Take notes as you watch it. What do you see in this film that answers the question, what makes us human? Here are the links:

[HUMAN Extended version VOL.1](#)

[HUMAN Extended version VOL.2](#)

[HUMAN Extended version VOL.3](#)

The film recounts many of these interviews, interspersed with stunning portraits and the sort of aerial imagery he is famous for, depicting the human condition and our interactions with the Earth. Arthus-Bertrand has shared some of the photos with The Atlantic. You can view them by clicking on this link: [What It Means to Be Human, by Yann Arthus-Bertrand](#)

There are three parts to this film. Each part is about an hour and a half. Take notes as you watch it. What do you see in this film that answers the question, what makes us human?



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<https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=34#h5p-1>

*All Yann Arthus-Bertrand's movies are free for the teachers if they use the movie inside their classroom.*

*You can even add a link to our YouTube pages on your website.*

*I just need to know the name and the address of the school/university and a confirmation that it will be only for education purpose, and no commercial.*

If you want to organize a public screening, you have to confirm that the entrance will be free (no entrance fee). The rights are free (=nothing to pay). I will send you an authorization form.

For your information, you can add the links to the YouTube pages, but I also can send you links to download the movies in order to make educational or public screenings.

This is the link to download the poster of Human <https://cloud.goodplanet.org:8080/index.php/s/cET3ko3r1425TLE>

You may insert our logo to your webpage. If you want it let me know. (GoodPlanet Foundation)

If you have any question do not hesitate to ask.

All my best.

**Jacqueline GOFFART**

Chargée des films

HOME Project Manager

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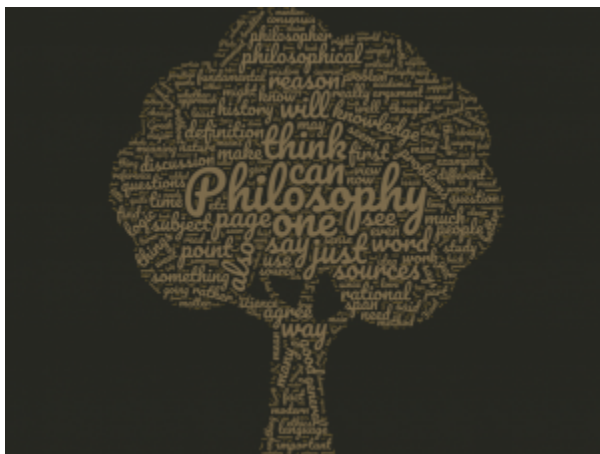
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## 9. Philosophy

# Philosophy



Let's move into this idea of philosophy.

Philosophy (from Greek: φιλοσοφία, philosophia, 'love of wisdom' is the study of general and fundamental questions about existence, knowledge, values, reason, mind, and language. Such questions are often posed as problems to be studied or resolved. The term was probably coined by Pythagoras (c. 570 – 495 BCE). Philosophical methods include questioning, critical discussion, rational argument, and systematic presentation.

Classic western philosophical questions include: "Is it possible to know anything?", and if so, "Can we prove it?" Philosophers also pose more practical and concrete questions such as: "Is there a best way to live?", "Is it better to be just, even if one could get away with being unjust?", 'do humans have free will?'

Major subfields of academic philosophy include metaphysics, which is concerned with the fundamental nature of existence and reality; epistemology, which studies the nature of knowledge and belief; ethics, which is concerned with moral value; and logic, which

studies the rules of inference that allow one to deduce conclusions from true premises. Other notable subfields include philosophy of science, political philosophy, aesthetics, philosophy of language, and philosophy of mind. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy>

*Some of the questions that we'll be thinking about are: (Jot down some of your thoughts as you read through these questions)*

- How do we know what we know?
- What is changeable within ourselves?
- How does what we know about the world shape the way we view ourselves?
- How do our personal experiences shape our view of others?
- What does it mean to be an insider or an outsider?
- What does it mean to “grow up”?
- Where do our definitions of good and evil come from?
- What is the relevance of studying multicultural texts?
- How does the media shape our view of the world and ourselves?
- What turning points determine our individual pathways to adulthood?
- What is changeable within ourselves?

Let's begin here with this question, Who am I? A philosophical inquiry.

At the age of 21, Simone de Beauvoir became the youngest person to take the philosophy exams at France's most esteemed university. But as soon as she mastered the rules of philosophy, she wanted to break them. Her desire to explore the physical world to its fullest would shape her life, and eventually, inspire radical new philosophies. Iseult Gillespie explores the life of the revolutionary thinker.



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<https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=39#h5p-1>

For Simone De Beauvoir, **philosophy was a way of understanding our place in the world and determining our direction**. As a pioneering [existential](#) philosopher, she dedicated her life to mining human experience for meaning and action; making some radical arguments about what needed to change along the way. For a crash course in existentialism, read [10 Reasons to be an Existentialist](#).

A core belief of existentialism is the idea that [“existence precedes essence”](#), in the words of De Beauvoir's intellectual and romantic life partner Jean-Paul Sartre. This means that humans do not possess our traits “naturally,” but adapt to the social and cultural world we're born into.

De Beauvoir applies this idea to gender in *The Second Sex*, which she summarizes in the trailblazing statement: “one is not born, but rather becomes, woman.” Here she makes a crucial distinction that revolutionized the way we think about bodies and behavior: gender is socially and culturally constructed. To learn more about why you should read *The Second Sex*, visit [this page](#); then take a look at this visual essay about [De Beauvoir's](#) life and work. You can access the introduction to *The Second Sex* [here](#).

De Beauvoir insisted that systems of oppression and exclusion can never be taken to be natural – rather, we must all understand ourselves as molded by society. Thus *The Second Sex* is not solely about the plight of women. Rather, it is De Beauvoir's attempt to reveal the power structures that govern our perception of the world. As she states in [this interview](#), “I’m against all forms of oppression.” You can listen to a detailed discussion of her legacy and ideas in this [radio documentary](#).

Her argument resonated with many readers who struggled to untangle social, sexual and political hierarchies. In its first week of publication alone, the book sold 22,000 copies. While many readers admired her candor and rigorous intellectual standards, others were dismissive of her anger or scandalized by her frank discussion of women's bodies. De Beauvoir lambasted numerous myths that many believed to be hard facts about women – that they have an inherent maternal instinct, for instance, or that they are more emotional than men. She argued that women can only escape these narrow roles by pursuing her own version of freedom, independently.

As [this essay](#) argues, the importance of pursuing concrete, livable versions of freedom is one of De Beauvoir's biggest contributions to a philosophy that was often abstract. Visit this page for an exploration of De Beauvoir's radical thoughts on [happiness as an important form of freedom](#).

De Beauvoir knew that the pursuit of freedom was by no means easy: her own refusal of social norms was a life-long process. Although she had wanted to be a nun as a child, she rejected her strict Catholic upbringing and studied math, philosophy and literature at university. She led a [long open relationship](#) with Sartre, which involved editing each other's work and collaborating on intellectual projects such as the journal *Les Temps modernes*. Read [this article](#) to learn more about her colorful life and social circles at university.

Despite being a prolific philosopher, memoirist, and accomplished editor, De Beauvoir became embroiled in a publishing debacle which



ironically involved the sort of suppression of female thought she resisted in her work. Soon after *The Second Sex* was published, the wife of the New York publisher Alfred Knopf, Blanche, was traveling through France. Initially under the impression that the book everyone was talking about was a sex manual, Knopf purchased the rights and enlisted Howard M. Parshley to translate it from French. But Parshley was a zoologist with little knowledge of existential feminist philosophy, who dismissed De Beauvoir's deep analysis as "verbal diarrhea." He cut or paraphrased swathes of the original text, and De Beauvoir could do nothing to stop the translation's release. Read more about [this controversy here](#).

Subsequent editions have since reversed many of these errors, and De Beauvoir's language and ideology continue to ignite curiosity and debate. Many of the ideas expressed in *The Second Sex* became crucial reference points in feminist theory, literature and activism. Over time, people have [grappled](#) with concepts proposed by De Beauvoir as the project of [intersectional feminism continues](#). For an interactive overview of intersectional feminism (and consideration of De Beauvoir's role in it), [click here](#). As key texts of radical feminism and philosophy, the work of Simone De Beauvoir never becomes static – rather it's a living archive to return to, dispute and discuss.

Let's take another look at this philosophical question. How do you know what's true?



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<https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=39#h5p-3>

So, we've taken a look at several philosophical questions. Let's take a look at How the World Thinks according to Juliana Baggini. He has traveled around the world looking at different ways the world

thinks. There are two videos on his page. You'll want to follow this link to listen to both videos. You may also want to listen to the podcast on the same page. (Note – his book is quite interesting as well.) [How the World Thinks link](#).

Complete the following activity while you listen to the lecture on the website. It is the second video.



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So, next let's take a closer look at The Philosophy of The Buddha



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here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=39#oembed-1>

According to the video, wisdom and enlightenment are habits, or “practices,” not moments of realization. Can you think of other aspects of your life that grow healthier through habits, not single moments of success?

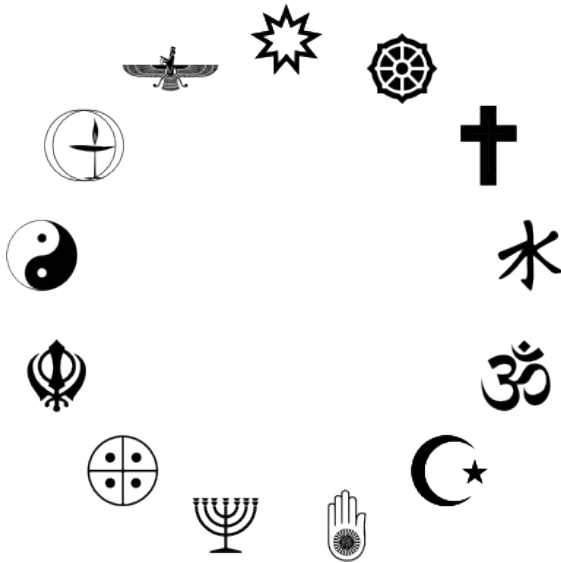
Think of three aspects of your life that cause you to feel anger or dissatisfaction. For each example, think of a way you could focus on changing your outlook, rather than your circumstances.

After some brainstorming and discussion, write some answers to these questions. You may want to do a little research as you write.

- How do we form and shape our identities?

- In a culture where we are bombarded with ideas and images of “what we should be,” how does one form an identity that remains true and authentic for her/himself?
- What turning points determine our individual pathways to adulthood?
- In a culture where we are bombarded with other people trying to define us, how do we make decisions for ourselves?

# 10. Religion



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Let's first take a look at the Origins of Religion

Take notes on this video by answering these questions. You can download your answers when you finish.



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<https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=44#h5p-6>

You'll need to head over to YouTube to view this next video lecture. [How Do We Understand Religion?](#) Michael Kilman speaks about how we understand religion in anthropology.

It's perfectly human to grapple with questions, like 'Where do we come from?' and 'How do I live a life of meaning?' These existential questions are central to the five major world religions — and that's not all that connects these faiths. John Bellaimey explains the intertwined histories and cultures of Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam. **The five major world religions – John Bellaimey**



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## Why are people religious?



*A Buddhist monk prays before casting krathongs into a pond in a public park during the Loy Krathong festival which is held as a symbolic apology to the goddess of the river in Bangkok, Thailand Image: REUTERS/Jorge Silva*

The quick and easy answer to why people are religious is that God – in whichever form you believe he/she/they take(s) – is real and people believe because they communicate with it and perceive evidence of its involvement in the world. Only [16% of people worldwide](#) are not religious, but this still equates to approximately 1.2 billion individuals who find it difficult to reconcile the ideas of religion with what they know about the world.

Why people believe is a question that has plagued great thinkers for many centuries. Karl Marx, for example, called religion the “[opium of the people](#)”. Sigmund Freud felt that

god was an illusion and worshippers were reverting to the childhood needs of security and forgiveness.

A more recent psychological explanation is the idea that our evolution has created a “[god-shaped hole](#)” or has given us a metaphorical “[god engine](#)” which can drive us to believe in a deity. Essentially this hypothesis is that religion is a by-product of a number of cognitive and social adaptations which have been extremely important in human development.

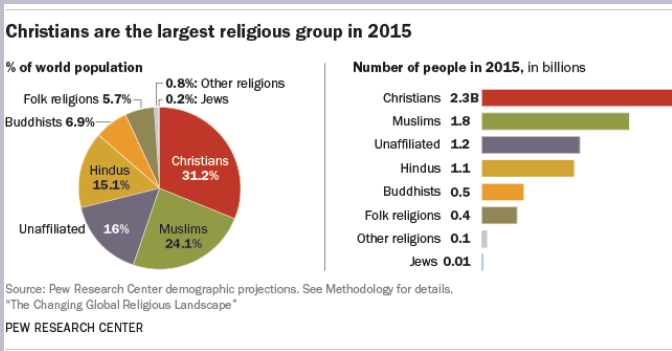


Image: Pew Research Center

### Adapted for faith

We are social creatures who interact and communicate with each other in a co-operative and supportive way. In doing so we inevitably have stronger attachments to some individuals more than others. British psychologist John Bowlby demonstrated [this influence of attachments](#) on children's emotional and social development, and showed how these can suffer when they are threatened through separation or abuse. We continue to rely on these attachments in later life, when falling in love and making



friends, and can even form strong attachments to non-human animals and inanimate objects. It is easy to see that [these strong attachments could transfer](#) to religious deities and their messengers.

Our relationships depend on being able to predict how others will behave across situations and time. But the things that we form attachments to don't necessarily need to be in front of us to predict their actions. We can imagine what they would do or say. This ability – known as [cognitive decoupling](#) – originates in childhood through pretend play. It is a small leap from being able to imagine the mind of someone we know to imagining an [omnipotent, omniscient, human-like mind](#) – especially if we have religious texts which tell of their past actions.

Another key adaptation that may help religious belief derives from our ability to anthropomorphise objects. Have you ever seen the outline of a person only to realise that it is actually a coat hung on the door? This capacity to attribute human forms and behaviours to non-human things shows we also readily endow non-human entities, such as gods, with the same qualities that we possess and, as such, make it easier to connect with them.

### **Behavioural benefits**

In addition to these psychological aspects, the ritual behaviour seen in collective worship makes us enjoy and want to repeat the experience. Dancing, singing and achieving trance-like states were prominent in [many ancestral societies](#) and are still exhibited by some today – including the [Sentinelese people](#), and [Australian aborigines](#).

As well as being acts of social unity, even more formal rituals also [alter brain chemistry](#). They increase levels of serotonin, dopamine, and oxytocin in the brain – chemicals that make us feel good, want to do things again and provide a closeness to others.

These cognitive adaptations are facilitated by educational and household norms which don't tend to dispute religious ideas. While we are encouraged to challenge other ideas presented to us early in childhood that may not have a strong evidence base – such as Father Christmas or the Tooth Fairy – this is not the case with religion. These challenges are often discouraged in religious teachings and [sometimes regarded as sinful](#).

Regardless of your point of view, the impact of religion and religious thinking on human functioning and evolution is a captivating intellectual debate that shows no sign of ending. Of course, one might argue that god creates everything outlined above but then this leads us onto another, bigger question: what is the evidence for god?

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Written by [Nick Perham](#), Senior Lecturer in Psychology, Cardiff Metropolitan University,

This article is published in collaboration with [The Conversation](#).

*The views expressed in this article are those of the author alone and not the World Economic Forum.*

There are many Ted Talks related to this topic of religion. I've listed a few here for further study.

Playlist: [Misconceptions of Islam and Muslim life](#)

[The profound journey of compassion](#)

[It takes a community to eradicate hate](#)

[The technology of the heart](#)

[History's "worst" nun](#)

[The Japanese folktale of the selfish scholar](#)

[The role of faith and belief in modern Africa](#)

[The worldwide web of belief and ritual](#)

#### *Research or Presentation Ideas*

Since we often focus on the world's major religions, let's focus here on learning about the world's ethnic religions. Ethnic religions (also "indigenous religions") are generally defined as religions which are related to a particular ethnic group, and often seen as a defining part of that ethnicity's culture, language, and customs. You should be able to click on any of the below links for a general overview. You might choose one for a research project or presentation. Make sure that you click on and include in your research the Reference links and the External Links at the bottom of each wikipedia page. To help you get started on your project, answer the following questions.



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## Africa

See also: [African traditional religions](#) and [Afro-American religions](#)

- [Ancient Egyptian religion](#)
- [Akan religion](#) ([Akan](#) of the Gold Coast)
- [Bantu religion](#) ([Bantu](#) of Central/Southern Africa)
- [Berber religion](#) ([Berbers](#) of northern Africa)
- [Coptic Christianity](#) ([Copts](#) of Egypt)
- [Mbuti religion](#) ([Mbuti](#) of Congo and central Sudan)
- [Odinani](#) ([Igbo](#) of southeastern Nigeria)
- [Serer religion](#) ([Serer](#) of Senegal and northern West Africa)
- [Vodun](#) ([Fon](#) and [Ewe](#) of Benin and southwestern Nigeria)
- [Waaqeffanna](#) ([Oromo people](#) of [Ethiopia](#) and [Kenya](#))
- [Yoruba religion](#) ([Yoruba](#) of southwestern Nigeria and southern Benin)

## Asia

- [Ahom religion](#) ([Ahom people](#) of the north-east India)
- [Alawites](#) (Alawis of Syria)
- [Armenian mythology](#)
- [Bon](#) ([Tibetans](#))
- [Chinese folk religion](#), [Taoism](#) ([Han Chinese](#))
- [Dongbaism](#) ([Nakhi](#) of the north-western flanks of the Himalayas)
- [Donyi-Polo](#) ([Arunachali](#) of Northeastern India)
- [Dravidian folk religion](#) of southern India
- [Druze](#)<sup>[1][2]</sup>
- [Hinduism](#)
- [Indigenous Philippine folk religions](#)
- [Judaism](#) ([Jewish people](#))
- [Kaharingan](#) ([Dayaks](#) of [Indonesia](#))
- [Kalash religion](#) ([Kalash people](#) of [Pakistan](#))
- [Kejawen](#) ([Javanese people](#) of [Indonesia](#))
- [Kirant Mundhum](#) ([Kirat](#) of the south-western flanks of the Himalayas)
- [Korean shamanism](#) or Muism ([Koreans](#))
- [Mandaism](#) ([Mandaeans](#) of southern Mesopotamia)
- [Maronite Christianity](#) (Maronites of Lebanon)<sup>[3][4]</sup>
- [Muong ethnic religion](#) ([Muong people](#) of [Vietnam](#))
- [Parmalim](#) ([Bataks](#) of [Indonesia](#))
- [Sikhism](#) ([Punjabi people](#))
- [Qiang folk religion](#) ([Qiang people](#))
- [Ryukyuan religion](#), [Ijun](#) ([Ryukyuans](#) of the Ryukyu

Islands near Taiwan)

- [Samaritanism](#) ([Samaritans](#))
- [Sanamahism](#) ([Meitei](#) of Northeastern India)
- [Santhal religion](#) ([Santhals](#) of Eastern India and the Ganges delta)
- [Sarnaism](#) ([Adivasi](#) of [India](#))
- [Shabakism](#) ([Shabaks](#) in Iraq)
- [Shinto](#) ([Japanese](#))
- [Sunda Wiwitan](#) ([Sundanese people](#) of [Indonesia](#))
- [Syriac Christianity](#) ([Assyrian people](#) in Syria, Iraq, Turkey and Iran.<sup>[5]</sup> [Saint Thomas Christians](#) in India)
- [Tai folk religion](#) ([Tai peoples](#) of [Mainland Southeast Asia](#))
- [Tengrism](#) ([Turks](#), [Mongolians](#), [Hungarians](#))
- [Uatsdin](#) ([Ossetians](#))
- [Yahwism](#) (Ancient [Israelites](#))
- [Yazdânism](#) ([Kurds](#) of northern Iraq and eastern Anatolia)
- [Yazidism](#)
- [Yupik religion](#) ([Yupik](#) of Alaska and Eastern Russia)
- [Vietnamese folk religion](#) ([Vietnamese](#))
- Non-specific:
  - [Central Asian folk religions](#)
  - [Iranian religions](#)
  - [Tai folk religion](#) in [Laos](#) [Thailand](#) and some part of [Myanmar](#).
  - [Siberian folk religions](#)
  - [Turco-Mongol religion](#) of Central Asia

## Americas

See also: [Native American religion](#)

- [Anishinaabe traditional beliefs](#) ([Anishinaabe](#))
- [Inuit religion](#) ([Inuit](#) of North America and Greenland)
- [Maya religion](#) ([Maya](#); [Guatemalans](#))
- [Ancient Mexica religion](#), [Santa Muerte](#) worship ([Mestizo](#)/[Mexicans](#) and [Mexican-Americans](#))
- [Guarani religion](#), [San La Muerte](#) worship in [Paraguay](#) and north of [Argentina](#)
- [Yupik religion](#) ([Yupik](#) of Alaska and Eastern Russia)
- [Rastafari](#) ([Jamaican people](#))
- [Hoodoo](#) ([African Americans](#))

## Europe



[Cuman](#) statue, 11th century, Ukraine

- [Adyghe Habze](#) of [Circassia](#) in the Northwestern Caucasus
- [Anglicanism](#) ([English people](#))
- [Ancient Balkan religions](#) ([Dacians](#), [Thracians](#), and [Illyrians](#))
- [Baltic religions](#) of Lithuania, Latvia and Western Russia
- [Basque religion](#) ([Basques](#) of the western end of the Pyrenees)
- [Ancient Celtic religion](#) ([Ancient Britons](#), [Cumbrians](#), [Gael](#)s, [Manx](#), [Picts](#), [Gallaeci](#) of what is now Ireland, Scotland, Wales, the Isle of Man and Galicia)
- [Etruscan religion](#) ([Etruscans](#) of the central Italian peninsula)
- [Finnic religion](#) ([Ludes](#), [Olonets](#), [Veps](#), [Izhorians](#), [Votes](#), [Livonians](#), [Võros](#) and [Setos](#) of eastern Scandinavia and the eastern Baltic)
- [Ancient Georgian religion](#) (pre-Christian [Colchis](#) of the southern Caucasus)
- [Germanic paganism](#) (pre-Christian [Germanic peoples](#))
- [Ancient Greek religion](#) (pre-Christian [Greeks](#))
- [Mari native religion](#) ([Mari people](#))
- [Norse religion](#) (pre-Christian [Norsemen](#) and [Vikings](#) of Scandinavia)
- [Ancient Roman religion](#) (pre-Christian [Romans](#))
- [Sami religion](#) ([Sami people](#) of [Fennoscandia](#))
- [Slavic paganism](#) ([Slavs](#) of Eastern and Southeastern Europe)
- [Vainakh](#) ([Nakhs](#) of the Caucasus)



- Non-specific:
  - [Folk Catholicism](#)

## Oceania

- [Indigenous Australian](#)
- [Māori religion](#) (Māori people)
- [Modekngei](#) (Palauan people)

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## II. Religion 2



### Discussion Questions

1. This chapter describes theories about religion developed by Durkheim, Marx, and Freud. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each theory? Which theory would be the most useful if you were attempting to learn about the religious beliefs of another culture?
2. Rites of passage and rites of intensification are an important part of many religious traditions, but these same rituals also exist in secular (non-religious) contexts. What are some examples of these rituals in your own community? What role do these rituals play in bringing people together?
3. Durkheim argued that a distinction between the sacred and the profane was a key characteristic of religion. Thinking about your own culture, what are some examples of ideas or objects that are considered “sacred”? What are the rules concerning how these objects or ideas should be treated? What are the penalties for people who do not follow these rules?

Humans have always wondered about the meaning of the life,

the nature of the universe, and the forces that shape our lives. While it is impossible to know for sure how the people who lived thousands of years ago answered these kinds of questions, there are some clues. Fifty thousand years ago, human communities buried the dead with stone tools, shells, animal bones, and other objects, a practice that suggests they were preparing the deceased for an afterlife, or a world beyond this one. Thirty thousand years ago, artists entered the Chauvet cave in France and painted dramatic scenes of animals on the cave walls along with abstract symbols that suggest the images were part of a supernatural belief system, possibly one focused on ensuring safety or success in hunting (Figure 1).<sup>1</sup> A few thousand years later, collections of small clay sculptures, known as Venus figurines, began appearing across Eurasia. They seem to express ideas about fertility or motherhood and may have been viewed as magical (Figure 2).<sup>3</sup>

1.<sup>2</sup>

2. [1]

3.<sup>4</sup>

4. [2]



*Figure 1: An image from the Chauvet cave painted about 32,000 years ago. The paintings may have been part of religious ceremonies intended to ensure success in hunting, and 25,000 BC and may have been associated with spiritual beliefs about motherhood or fertility.*



*Figure 2: The Venus of Willendorf figurine was made between 28,000 and 25,000 BC and may have been associated with spiritual beliefs about motherhood or fertility.*

## DEFINING RELIGION

Because ideas about the supernatural are part of every human culture, understanding these beliefs is important to anthropologists. However, studying supernatural beliefs is challenging for several reasons. The first difficulty arises from the challenge of defining the topic itself. The word “religion,” which is commonly used in the United States to refer to participation in a distinct form of faith such as Christianity, Islam, or Judaism, is not a universally recognized idea. Many cultures have no word for “religion” at all and many societies do not make a clear distinction between beliefs or practices that are “religious,” or “spiritual” and other habits that are an ordinary part of daily life. For instance,



leaving an incense offering in a household shrine dedicated to the spirits of the ancestors may be viewed as a simple part of the daily routine rather than a “religious” practice. There are societies that believe in supernatural beings, but do not call them “gods.” Some societies do not see a distinction between the natural and the supernatural observing, instead, that the spirits share the same physical world as humans. Concepts like “heaven,” “hell,” or even “prayer” do not exist in many societies. The divide between “religion” and related ideas like “spirituality” or even “magic” is also murky in some cultural contexts.

To study supernatural beliefs, anthropologists must cultivate a perspective of cultural relativism and strive to understand beliefs from an emic or insider’s perspective. Imposing the definitions or assumptions from one culture on another is likely to lead to misunderstandings. One example of this problem can be found in the early anthropological research of Sir James Frazer who attempted to compose the first comprehensive study of the world’s major magical and religious belief systems. Frazer was part of early generation of anthropologists whose work was based on reading and questionnaires mailed to missionaries and colonial officials rather than travel and participant-observation. As a result, he had only minimal information about the beliefs he wrote about and he was quick to apply his own opinions. In *The Golden Bough* (1890) he dismissed many of the spiritual beliefs he documented: “I look upon [them] not merely as false but as preposterous and absurd.”<sup>5</sup> His contemporary, Sir E.B. Tylor, was less dismissive of unfamiliar belief systems, but he defined religion minimally and, for some, in overly narrow terms as “the belief in supernatural beings.” This definition excludes much of what people around the world actually believe.<sup>7</sup> As researchers gained more information about other

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6. [3]

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cultures, their ideas about religion became more complex. The sociologist Emile Durkheim recognized that religion was not simply a belief in “supernatural beings,” but a set of practices and social institutions that brought members of a community together. Religion, he said, was “a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set aside and forbidden—beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them.”<sup>9</sup>

Durkheim’s analysis of religion emphasized the significance of spiritual beliefs for relationships between people. Subsequent anthropological research in communities around the world has confirmed that rituals associated with beliefs in the supernatural play a significant role in structuring community life, providing rules or guidelines for behavior, and bonding members of a community to one another. Interestingly, religious “beings,” such as gods or spirits, also demonstrate social qualities. Most of the time, these beings are imagined in familiar terms as entities with personalities, desires, and “agency,” an ability to make decisions and take action. Supernatural beings, in other words, are not so different from people.<sup>11</sup> In keeping with this idea, **religion** can be defined as “the means by which human society and culture is extended to include the nonhuman.”<sup>13</sup> This definition is deliberately broad and can be used to encompass many different kinds of belief systems.

Many religions involve ideas or rituals that could be described as “magical” and the relationship between religion and magic is complex. In his book *A General Theory of Magic* (1902), Marcel Mauss

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14. [7]

suggested that religion and magic were two opposite poles on a spectrum of spiritual beliefs. Magic was at one end of the spectrum; it was private, secret, and individual. Religion was at the opposite end of the spectrum; it was public and oriented toward bringing the community together.<sup>15</sup> Although Mauss' formulation presented religion and magic as part of the same general way of thinking, many contemporary anthropologists are convinced that making a distinction between religion and magic is artificial and usually not particularly useful. With this caution in mind, **magic** can be defined as practices intended to bring supernatural forces under one's personal control. **Sorcerers** are individuals who seek to use magic for their own purposes. It is important to remember that both magic and sorcery are labels that have historically been used by outsiders, including anthropologists, to describe spiritual beliefs with which they are unfamiliar. Words from the local language are almost always preferable for representing how people think about themselves.

## THEORIES OF RELIGION

Sir James Frazer's effort to interpret religious mythology was the first of many attempts to understand the reasons why cultures develop various kinds of spiritual beliefs. In the early twentieth century, many anthropologists applied a functional approach to this problem by focusing on the ways religion addressed human needs. Bronislaw Malinowski (1931), who conducted research in the Trobriand Islands located near Papua New Guinea, believed that religious beliefs met psychological needs. He observed that religion

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“is not born out of speculation or reflection, still less out of illusion or apprehension, but rather, out of the real tragedies of human life, out of the conflict between human plans and realities.”<sup>17</sup>

At the time of Malinowski's research, the Trobriand Islanders participated in an event called the kula ring, a tradition that required men to build canoes and sail on long and dangerous journeys between neighboring islands to exchange ritual items. Malinowski noticed that before these dangerous trips several complex rituals had to be performed, but ordinary sailing for fishing trips required no special preparations. What was the difference? Malinowski concluded that the longer trips were not only more dangerous, but also provoked more anxiety because the men felt they had less control over what might happen. On long voyages, there were many things that could go wrong, few of which could be planned for or avoided. He argued that religious rituals provided a way to reduce or control anxiety when anticipating these conditions.<sup>19</sup> The use of rituals to reduce anxiety has been documented in many other settings. George Gmelch (1971) documented forms of “baseball magic” among professional athletes. Baseball players, for instance, have rituals related to how they eat, dress, and even drive to the ballpark, rituals they believe contribute to good luck.<sup>21</sup>

As a functionalist, Malinowski believed that religion provided shared values and behavioral norms that created solidarity between people. The sociologist Emile Durkheim also believed that religion played an important role in building connections between people by creating shared definitions of the sacred and

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22. [11]

profane. **Sacred** objects or ideas are set apart from the ordinary and treated with great respect or care while **profane** objects or ideas are ordinary and can be treated with disregard or contempt. Sacred things could include a God or gods, a natural phenomenon, an animal or many other things. Religion, Durkheim concluded, was “a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden—beliefs and practices that unite, into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them.”<sup>23</sup> Once a person or a thing was designated as sacred, Durkheim believed that celebrating it through ritual was a powerful way to unite communities around shared values.<sup>25</sup> In addition, celebrating the sacred can create an intense emotional experience Durkheim referred to as **collective effervescence**, a passion or energy that arises when groups of people share the same thoughts and emotions. The experience of collective effervescence magnifies the emotional impact of an event and can create a sense of awe or wonder.<sup>27</sup>

Following Durkheim, many anthropologists, including Dame Mary Douglas, have found it useful to explore the ways in which definitions of sacred and profane structure religious beliefs. In her book *Purity and Danger* (1966), Douglas analyzed the way in which cultural ideas about things that were “dirty” or “impure” influenced religious beliefs. The kosher dietary rules observed by Jews were one prominent example of the application of this kind of thinking.<sup>29</sup>

The philosopher and historian Karl Marx famously called religion

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30. [15]

“the opium of the people.”<sup>31</sup> He viewed religion as an ideology, a way of thinking that attempts to justify inequalities in power and status. In his view, religion created an illusion of happiness that helped people cope with the economic difficulties of life under capitalism. As an institution, Marx believed that the Christian church helped to legitimize and support the political and economic inequality of the working class by encouraging ordinary people to orient themselves toward the afterlife, where they could expect to receive comfort and happiness. He argued that the obedience and conformity advocated by religious leaders as a means of reaching heaven also persuaded people not to fight for better economic or social conditions in their current lives. Numerous examples of the use of religion to legitimize or justify power differences have been documented cross-culturally including the existence of divine rulers, who were believed to be empowered by the Gods themselves, in ancient Egyptian and Incan societies. A glimpse of the legitimizing role of religion is also seen in the U.S. practice of having elected officials take an oath of office using the Bible or another holy book.

The psychologist Sigmund Freud believed that religion is the institution that prevents us from acting upon our deepest and most awful desires. One of his most famous examples is the Oedipal complex, the story of Oedipus who (unknowingly) had a sexual relationship with his mother and, once he discovered this, ripped out his own eyes in a violent and gory death. One possible interpretation of this story is that there is an unconscious sexual desire among males for their mothers and among females their fathers. These desires can never be acknowledged, let alone acted on, because of the damage they would cause to society.<sup>33</sup> In one of his most well-known works, *Totem and Taboo*, Freud proposes

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32. [16]

33. <sup>34</sup>

34. [17]

that religious beliefs provide rules or restrictions that keep the worst anti-social instincts, like the Oedipal complex, suppressed. He developed the idea of “totemic religions,” belief systems based on the worship of a particular animal or object, and suggested that the purpose of these religions was to regulate interactions with socially significant and potentially disruptive objects and relationships.<sup>35</sup>

One interesting interpretation of religious beliefs that builds on the work of Durkheim, Marx, and Freud is Marvin Harris’ analysis of the Hindu prohibition against killing cows. In Hinduism, the cow is honored and treated with respect because of its fertility, gentle nature, and association with some Hindu deities. In his book *Cow, Pigs, Wars, and Witches* (1974), Harris suggested that these religious ideas about the cow were actually based in an economic reality. In India, cows are more valuable alive as a source of milk or for doing work in the fields than they are dead as meat. For this reason, he argued, cows were defined as sacred and set apart from other kinds of animals that could be killed and eaten. The subsequent development of religious explanations for cows’ specialness reinforced and legitimated the special treatment.<sup>37</sup>

A symbolic approach to the study of religion developed in the mid-twentieth century and presented new ways of analyzing supernatural beliefs. Clifford Geertz, one of the anthropologists responsible for creating the symbolic approach, defined religion as “a system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, persuasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations.... by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic.”<sup>39</sup> Geertz suggested that

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religious practices were a way to enact or make visible important cultural ideas. The symbols used in any religion, such as a cross or even a cow, can be interpreted or “read” by anthropologists to discern important cultural values. At the same time, religious symbols reinforce values or aspirations in members of the religious community. The Christian cross, which is associated with both death and resurrection, demonstrates ideas about sacrifice and putting the needs of others in the community first. The cross also symbolizes deeper ideas about the nature of life itself: that suffering can have positive outcomes and that there is something beyond the current reality.

A symbolic approach to religion treats religious beliefs as a kind of “text” or “performance” that can be interpreted by outsiders. Like the other theories described in this section, symbolic approaches present some risk of misinterpretation. Religious beliefs involve complex combinations of personal and social values as well as embodied or visceral feelings that cannot always be appreciated or even recognized by outsiders. The persistently large gap between emic (insider) and etic (outsider) explanations for religious beliefs and practices makes the study of religion one of the most challenging topics in cultural anthropology.

## ELEMENTS OF RELIGION

Despite the wide variety of supernatural beliefs found in cultures around the world, most belief systems do share some common elements. The first of these characteristic is **cosmology**, an explanation for the origin or history of the world. Religious cosmologies provide “big picture” explanations for how human life



was created and provide a perspective on the forces or powers at work in the world. A second characteristic of religion is a belief in the **supernatural**, a realm beyond direct human experience. This belief could include a God or gods, but this is not a requirement. Quite a few religious beliefs, as discussed below, involve more abstract ideas about supernatural forces. Most religions also share a third characteristic: **rules governing behavior**. These rules define proper conduct for individuals and for society as a whole and are oriented toward bringing individual actions into harmony with spiritual beliefs. A fourth element is **ritual**, practices or ceremonies that serve a religious purpose and are usually supervised by religious specialists. Rituals may be oriented toward the supernatural, such as rituals designed to please the gods, but at the same time they address the needs of individuals or the community as a whole. Funeral rituals, for instance, may be designed to ensure the passage of a deceased person to the afterlife, but also simultaneously provide emotional comfort to those who are grieving and provide an outlet for the community to express care and support.

## Religious Cosmologies

Religious cosmologies are ways of explaining the origin of the universe and the principles or “order” that governs reality. In its simplest form, a cosmology can be an origin story, an explanation for the history, present state, and possible futures of the world and the origins of the people, spirits, divinities, and forces that populate it. The ancient Greeks had an origin story that began with an act of creation from Chaos, the first thing to exist. The deities Erebus, representing darkness, and Nyx, representing night, were born from Chaos. Nyx gave birth to Aether (light) and Hemera (day). Hemera and Nyx took turns exiting the underworld, creating the phenomenon of day and night. Aether and Hemera next created

Gaia (Earth), the mother of all life, who gave birth to the sky, the mountains, the sea, and eventually to a pantheon of gods. One of these gods, Prometheus, shaped humans out of mud and gave them the gift of fire. This origin story reflects many significant cultural ideas. One of these is the depiction of a world organized into a hierarchy with gods at the top and humans obligated to honor them.

Traditional Navajo origin stories provide a different view of the organization of the universe. These stories suggested that the world is a set of fourteen stacked “plates” or “platters.” Creation began at the lowest levels and gradually spread to the top. The lower levels contained animals like insects as well as animal-people and bird-people who lived in their own fully-formed worlds with distinct cultures and societies. At the top level, First Man and First Woman eventually emerged and began making preparations for other humans, creating a sweat lodge, hoghan (traditional house), and preparing sacred medicine bundles. During a special ceremony, the first human men and women were formed and they created those who followed.<sup>41</sup> Like the Greek origin story, the Navajo cosmology explains human identity and emphasizes the debt humans owe to their supernatural ancestors.

The first two chapters of the Biblical Book of Genesis, which is the foundation for both Judaism and Christianity, describe the creation of the world and all living creatures. The exact words vary in different translations, but describe a God responsible for creating the world and everything in it: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” The six-day process began with the division of light from darkness, land from water, and heaven from earth. On the fifth day, “God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind; and God saw that it

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42. [21]

was good.”<sup>43</sup> On the sixth day, “God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”<sup>45</sup> This cosmology differs from the others in describing an act of creation by a single deity, God, but shares with the Greek and Navajo versions a description of creation that emphasizes the relationship between people and their creator.

Reading these cosmologies also raises the question of how they should be interpreted. Are these origin stories regarded as literal truth in the cultures in which they originated? Or, are the stories metaphorical and symbolic? There is no simple answer to this question. Within any culture, individuals may disagree about the nature of their own religious traditions. Christians, for instance, differ in the extent to which they view the contents of the Bible as fact. Cultural relativism requires that anthropologists avoid making judgments about whether any cultural idea, including religious beliefs, is “correct” or “true.” Instead, a more useful approach is to try to understand the multiple ways people interpret or make sense of their religious beliefs. In addition it is important to consider the function a religious cosmology has in the wider society. As Bronislaw Malinowski observed, a myth or origin story is not an “idle tale, but a hard-worked active force.”<sup>47</sup>

## Belief in the Supernatural

Another characteristic shared by most religions is a concept of

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46. [23]

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48. [24]

the supernatural, spirits, divinities, or forces not governed by natural laws. The supernatural can take many forms. Some supernatural entities are **anthropomorphic**, having human characteristics. Other supernatural forces are more generalized, seen in phenomena like the power of the wind. The amount of involvement that supernatural forces or entities have in the lives of humans varies cross-culturally.

## *Abstract Forces*

Many cultures are organized around belief in an impersonal supernatural force, a type of religion known as **animatism**. The idea of *mana* is one example. The word itself comes from Oceania and may originally have meant “powerful wind,” “lightning” or “storm.” Today, it still refers to power, but in a more general sense. Aram Oroi, a pastor from the Solomon Islands, has compared *mana* to turning on a flashlight: “You sense something powerful but unseen, and then—*click*—its power is made manifest in the world.”<sup>49</sup> Traditionally, the ability to accumulate *mana* in certain locations, or in one’s own body, was to become potent or successful.<sup>51</sup> Certain locations such as mountains or ancient sites (*marae*) have particularly strong *mana*. Likewise, individual behaviors, including sexual or violent acts, were traditionally viewed as ways to accumulate *mana* for oneself.

Interestingly, the idea of *mana* has spread far beyond its original cultural context. In 1993, Richard Garfield incorporated the idea in

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<sup>51.</sup>

52. [26]

the card game Magic: The Gathering. Players of the game, which has sold millions of copies since its introduction, use mana as a source of power to battle wizards and magical creatures. Mana is also a source of power in the immensely popular computer game World of Warcraft.<sup>53</sup> These examples do show **cultural appropriation**, the act of copying an idea from another culture and in the process distorting its meaning. However, they also demonstrate how compelling animist ideas about abstract supernatural power are across cultures. Another well-known example of animatism in popular culture is “the Force” depicted in the George Lucas *Star Wars* films. The Force is depicted as flowing through everything and is used by Luke Skywalker as a source of potency and insight when he destroys the Death Star.

## *Spirits*

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<sup>54.</sup> [27]



Figure 3: A spirit house in Thailand. The houses provide shelter for local spirits that could trouble humans if they become displeased.

The line between the natural and the supernatural can be blurry. Many people believe that humans have a supernatural or spiritual element that coexists within their natural bodies. In Christianity, this element is called the soul. In Hinduism, it is the *atman*.<sup>55</sup> The Tausūg, a group who live in the Philippines, believe that the soul has four parts: a transcendent soul that stays in the spiritual realm even when a person is alive; a life-soul that is attached to the body, but can move through dreams; the breath, which is always attached to the body, and the spirit-soul, which is like a person's shadow.<sup>57</sup>

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56. [28]

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Many people believe that the spirit survives after an individual dies, sometimes remaining on Earth and sometimes departing for a supernatural realm. Spirits, or “ghosts,” who remain on Earth may continue to play an active role in the lives of their families and communities. Some will be well-intentioned and others will be malevolent. Almost universally, spirits of the deceased are assumed to be needy and to make demands on the living. For this reason, many cultures have traditions for the veneration of the dead, rituals intended to honor the deceased, or to win their favor or cooperation. When treated properly, ancestor spirits can be messengers to gods, and can act on behalf of the living after receiving prayers or requests. If they are displeased, ancestor spirits can become aggravated and wreak havoc on the living through illness and suffering. To avoid these problems, offerings in the form of favorite foods, drinks, and gifts are made to appease the spirits. In China, as well as in many other countries, **filial piety** requires that the living continue to care for the ancestors.<sup>59</sup> In Madagascar, where bad luck and misfortune can be attributed to spirits of the dead who believe they have been neglected, a body may be repeatedly exhumed and shown respect by cleaning the bones.<sup>61</sup>

If humans contain a supernatural spirit, essence, or soul, it is logical to think that non-human entities may have their own sparks of the divine. Religions based on the idea that plants, animals, inanimate objects, and even natural phenomena like weather have a spiritual or supernatural element are called **animism**. The first anthropological description of animism came from Sir Edward Burnett Tylor, who believed it was the earliest type of religious

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62. [31]

practice to develop in human societies.<sup>63</sup> Tylor suggested that ordinary parts of the human experience, such as dreaming, formed the basis for spiritual beliefs. When people dream, they may perceive that they have traveled to another place, or may be able to communicate with deceased members of their families. This sense of altered consciousness gives rise to ideas that the world is more than it seems. Tylor suggested that these experiences, combined with a pressing need to answer questions about the meaning of life, were the basis for all religious systems.<sup>65</sup> He also assumed that animist religions evolved into what he viewed as more sophisticated religious systems involving a God or gods.



Figure 4: The first torii at the entrance to Nikkō Tōshō-gū, Tochigi Prefecture, Japan.

63. <sup>64</sup>

64. [32]

65. <sup>66</sup>

66. [33]



Today, Tylor's views about the evolution of religion are considered misguided. No belief system is inherently more sophisticated than another. Several animist religions exist today and have millions of adherents. One of the most well-known is Shintoism, the traditional religion of Japan. Shintoism recognizes spirits known as *kami* that exist in plants, animals, rocks, places and sometimes people. Certain locations have particularly strong connections to the *kami*, including mountains, forests, waterfalls, and shrines. Shinto shrines in Japan are marked by *torii* gates that mark the separation between ordinary reality and sacred space (Figure 4).

## *Gods*

The most powerful non-human spirits are gods, though in practice there is no universal definition of a “god” that would be recognized by all people. In general, gods are extremely powerful and not part of nature—not human, or animal. Despite their unnaturalness, many gods have personalities or qualities that are recognizable and relatable to humans. They are often anthropomorphic, imagined in human form, or **zoomorphic**, imagined in animal form. In some religions, gods interact directly with humans while in others they are more remote.

Anthropologists categorize belief systems organized around a God or gods using the terms monotheism and polytheism. **Monotheistic** religions recognize a single supreme God. The largest monotheistic religions in the world today are Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. Together these religions have more than 3.8 billion adherents worldwide.<sup>67</sup> **Polytheistic** religions

67.<sup>68</sup>

68. [34]

include several gods. Hinduism, one of the world's largest polytheistic religions with more than 1 billion practitioners, has a pantheon of deities each with different capabilities and concerns.<sup>69</sup>

## Rules of Behavior

Religious beliefs are an important element of social control because these beliefs help to define acceptable behaviors as well as punishments, including supernatural consequences, for misbehavior. One well-known example are the ideas expressed in the Ten Commandments, which are incorporated in the teachings of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism and prohibit behaviors such as theft, murder, adultery, dishonesty, and jealousy while also emphasizing the need for honor and respect between people. Behavior that violates the commandments brings both social disapproval from other members of the religious community and potential punishment from God.

Buddhism, the world's fourth largest religion, demonstrates the strong connection between spiritual beliefs and rules for everyday behavior. Buddhists follow the teachings of Buddha, who was an ordinary human who achieved wisdom through study and discipline. There is no God or gods in some forms of Buddhism. Instead, individuals who practice Buddhism use techniques like meditation to achieve the insight necessary to lead a meaningful life and ultimately, after many lifetimes, to achieve the goal of *nirvana*, release from suffering.

Although Buddhism defies easy categorization into any anthropological category, there is an element of animatism represented by *karma*, a moral force in the universe. Individual

<sup>69.</sup>

70. [35]

actions have effects on one's karma. Kindness toward others, for instance, yields positive karma while acts that are disapproved in Buddhist teachings, such as killing an animal, create negative karma. The amount of positive karma a person builds-up in a lifetime is important because it will determine how the individual will be reborn. **Reincarnation**, the idea that a living being can begin another life in a new body after death, is a feature of several religions. In Buddhism, the form of a human's reincarnation depends on the quality of the karma developed during life. Rebirth in a human form is considered good fortune because humans have the ability to control their own thoughts and behaviors. They can follow the Noble Eightfold Path, rules based on the teachings of Buddha that emphasize the need for discipline, restraint, humility, and kindness in every aspect of life.<sup>71</sup>

## Rituals and Religious Practitioners

The most easily observed elements of any religious belief system are rituals. Victor Turner (1972) defined ritual as “a stereotyped sequence of activities ... performed in a sequestered place, and designed to influence preternatural entities or forces on behalf of the actors' goals and interests.”<sup>73</sup> Rituals have a concrete purpose or goal, such as a wedding ritual that results in a religiously sanctioned union between people, but rituals are also symbolic. The objects and activities involved in rituals “stand in for” or mean more than what they actually are. In a wedding ceremony in the United States, the white color of the wedding dress is a traditional symbol of purity.

71.<sup>72</sup>

72. [36]

73.<sup>74</sup>

74. [37]

A large amount of anthropological research has focused on identifying and interpreting religious rituals in a wide variety of communities. Although the details of these practices differ in various cultural settings, it is possible to categorize them into types based on their goals. One type of ritual is a **rite of passage**, a ceremony designed to transition individuals between life stages.<sup>75</sup> A second type of ritual is a **rite of intensification**, actions designed to bring a community together, often following a period of crisis.<sup>77</sup> **Revitalization rituals**, which also often follow periods of crisis in a community, are ambitious attempts to resolve serious problems, such as war, famine, or poverty through a spiritual or supernatural intervention.<sup>79</sup>

## *Rites of Passage*

In his original description of rites of passage, Arnold Van Gennep (1909) noted that these rituals were carried out in three distinct stages: separation, liminality, and incorporation. During the first stage, individuals are removed from their current social identity and begin preparations to enter the next stage of life. The liminal period that follows is a time in which individuals often undergo tests, trials, or activities designed to prepare them for their new social roles. In the final stage of incorporation, individuals return to the community with a new socially recognized status.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>. [38]

<sup>77</sup>.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>78</sup>. [39]

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<sup>80</sup>. [40]

<sup>81</sup>.<sup>82</sup>

Rites of passage that transition children into a new status as adults are common around the world. In Xhosa communities in South Africa, teenage boys were traditionally transitioned to manhood using a series of acts that moved them through each of the three ritual stages. In the separation stage, the boys leave their homes and are circumcised; they cannot express distress or signs of pain during the procedure. Following the circumcision, they live in isolation while their wounds heal, a liminal phase during which they do not talk to anyone other than boys who are also undergoing the rite of passage. This stressful time helps to build bonds between the boys that will follow them through their lives as adult men. Before their journey home, the isolated living quarters are burned to the ground, symbolizing the loss of childhood. When the participants return to their community, the incorporation phase, they are recognized as men and allowed to learn the secret stories of the community.<sup>83</sup>

### *Rites of Intensification*

82. [41]

83. <sup>84</sup>

84. [42]



*Figure 5: Land Diving on Pentecost Island, Vanuatu.*

Rites of intensification are also extremely common in communities worldwide. These rituals are used to bind members of the community together, to create a sense of **communitas** or unity that encourages people to see themselves as members of community. One particularly dramatic example of this ritual is the Nagol [land diving](#) ceremony held each spring on the island of Pentecost in Vanuatu in the South Pacific. Like many rituals, land diving has several goals. One of these is to help ensure a good harvest by impressing the spirits with a dramatic display of bravery. To accomplish this, men from the community construct wooden towers sixty to eighty feet high, tie ropes made from tree vines around their ankles, and jump head-first toward the ground (Figure 5). Preparations for the land diving involve almost every member of the community. Men spend a month or more working together to build the tower and collect the vines. The women of the community prepare special costumes and dances for the occasion and everyone takes care of land divers who may be injured during the dive. Both the preparations for the land diving and the festivities that follow are a powerful rite of intensification. Interestingly, the ritual is simultaneously a rite of passage; boys can be recognized as men by

jumping from high portions of the tower witnessed by elders of the community.<sup>85</sup>

## *Rites of Revitalization*

All rites of revitalization originate in difficult or even catastrophic circumstances. One notable example is a ritual that developed on the island of Tanna in the South Pacific. During World War II, many islands in the South Pacific were used by the U.S. military as temporary bases. Tanna was one of these locations and this formerly isolated community experienced an extremely rapid transformation as the U.S. military introduced modern conveniences such as electricity and automobiles. In an attempt to make sense of these developments, the island's residents developed a variety of theories about the reason for these changes. One possible explanation was that the foreign materials had been given to the islanders by a powerful deity or ancestral spirit, an entity who eventually acquired the name John Frum. The name may be based on a common name the islanders would have encountered while the military base was in operation: "John from America."

When the war ended and the U.S. military departed, the residents of Tanna experienced a kind of trauma as the material goods they had enjoyed disappeared and the [John Frum ritual began](#). Each year on February fifteenth, many of the island's residents construct copies of U.S. airplanes, runways, or towers and march in military formation with replicas of military rifles and American blue jeans. The ritual is intended to attract John Frum, and the material wealth he controls, back to the island. Although the ritual has not yet

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86. [43]

had its intended transformative effect, the participants continue the ritual. When asked to explain his continued faith, one village elder explained: “You Christians have been waiting 2,000 years for Jesus to return to Earth, and you haven’t given up hope.”<sup>87</sup> This John Frum custom is sometimes called a **cargo cult**, a term used to describe rituals that seek to attract material prosperity. Although the John Frum ritual is focused on commodities, or “cargo,” the term cargo cult is generally not preferred by anthropologists because it oversimplifies the complex motivations involved in the ritual. The word “cult” also has connotations with fringe or dangerous beliefs and this association also distorts understanding of the practice.

## *Religious Practitioners*

Since rituals can be extremely complicated and the outcome is of vital importance to the community, specialist practitioners are often charged with responsibility for supervising the details. In many settings, religious specialists have a high social status and are treated with great respect. Some may become relatively wealthy by charging for their services while others may be impoverished, sometimes deliberately as a rejection of the material world. There is no universal terminology for religious practitioners, but there are three important categories: priests, prophets, and shamans.

**Priests**, who may be of any gender, are full-time religious practitioners. The position of priest emerges only in societies with substantial occupational specialization. Priests are the intermediaries between God (or the gods) and humans. Religious traditions vary in terms of the qualifications required for individuals

87.<sup>88</sup>

88. [44]



entering the priesthood. In Christian traditions, it is common for priests to complete a program of formal higher education. Hindu priests, known as *pujari*, must learn the sacred language Sanskrit and spend many years becoming proficient in Hindu ceremonies. They must also follow strict lifestyle restrictions such as a vegetarian diet. Traditionally, only men from the Brahmin caste were eligible to become *pujari*, but this is changing. Today, people from other castes, as well as women, are joining the priesthood. One notable feature of societies that utilize full-time spiritual practitioners is a separation between ordinary believers and the God or gods. As intermediaries, priests have substantial authority to set the rules associated with worship practice and to control access to religious rites.<sup>89</sup>

The term **shaman** has been used for hundreds of years to refer to a part time religious practitioner. Shamans carry out religious rituals when needed, but also participate in the normal work of the community. A shaman's religious practice depends on an ability to engage in direct communication with the spirits, gods, or supernatural realm. An important quality of a shaman is the ability to transcend normal reality in order to communicate with and perhaps even manipulate supernatural forces in an alternate world. This ability can be inherited or learned.<sup>91</sup> Transcending from the ordinary to the spiritual realm gives shamans the ability to do many things such as locate lost people or animals or heal the sick by identifying the spiritual cause of illness.

Among the Chukchi, who live in northern Russia, the role of the shaman is thought to be a special calling, one that may be especially appropriate for people whose personality traits seem abnormal in the context of the community. Young people who suffer from

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90. [45]

91.<sup>92</sup>

92. [46]

nervousness, anxiety, or moodiness, for example may feel a call to take up shamanistic practice.<sup>93</sup> There has been some research suggesting that shamanism may be a culturally accepted way to deal with conditions like schizophrenia.<sup>95</sup> If true, this might be because achieving an altered state of consciousness is essential for shamanic work. Entering an altered state, which can be achieved through dreams, hallucinogenic drugs, rhythmic music, exhaustion through dance, or other means, makes it possible for shamans to directly engage with the supernatural realm.

Shamans of the upper Amazon in South America have been using *ayahuasca*, a drink made from plants that have hallucinogenic effects, for centuries. The effects of *ayahuasca* start with the nervous system:

One under the control of the narcotic sees unroll before him quite a spectacle: most lovely landscapes, monstrous animals, vipers which approach and wind down his body or are entwined like rolls of thick cable, at a few centimeters distance; as well, one sees who are true friends and those who betray him or who have done him ill; he observes the cause of the illness which he sustains, at the same time being presented with the most advantageous remedy; he takes part in fantastic hunts; the things which he most dearly loves or abhors acquire in these moments extraordinary vividness and color, and the scenes in which his life normally develop adopt the most beautiful and emotional expression.<sup>97</sup>

Among the Shipibo people of Peru, *ayahuasca* is thought to be the substance that allows the soul of a shaman to leave his body in order to retrieve a soul that has been lost or stolen. In many cultures, soul

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94. [47]

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loss is the predominant explanation for illness. The Shipibo believe that the soul is a separate entity from the body, one that is capable of leaving and returning at will. Shamans can also steal souls. The community shaman, under the influence of ayahuasca, is able to find and retrieve a soul, perhaps even killing the enemy as revenge.<sup>99</sup>

Anthropologist Scott Hutson (2000) has described similarities between the altered state of consciousness achieved by shamans and the mental states induced during a rave, a large dance party characterized by loud music with repetitive patterns. In a rave, bright lights, exhausting dance, and sometimes the use of hallucinogenic drugs, induce similar psychological effects to shamanic trancing. Hutson argues that through the rave individuals are able to enter altered states of consciousness characterized by a “self-forgetfulness” and an ability to transcend the ordinary self. The DJ at these events is often called a “techno-shaman,” an interesting allusion to the guiding role traditional shamans play in their cultures.<sup>101</sup>

A **prophet** is a person who claims to have direct communication with the supernatural realm and who can communicate divine messages to others. Many religious communities originated with prophecies, including Islam which is based on teachings revealed to the prophet Muhammad by God. In Christianity and Judaism, Moses is an example of a prophet who received direct revelations from God. Another example of a historically significant prophet is Joseph Smith who founded the Church of Latter Day Saints, after receiving a prophecy from an angel named Moroni who guided him to the location of a buried set of golden plates. The information from the golden plates became the basis for the Book of Mormon.

The major distinction between a priest and the prophet is the

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102. [51]

source of their authority. A priest gets his or her authority from the scripture and occupational position in a formally organized religious institution. A prophet derives authority from his or her direct connection to the divine and ability to convince others of his or her legitimacy through charisma. The kind of insight and guidance prophets offer can be extremely compelling, particularly in times of social upheaval or suffering.

One prophet who had enormous influence was David Koresh, the leader of the Branch Davidians, a schism of the Seventh Day Adventist Church. The Branch Davidians were **millenarians**, people who believe that major transformations of the world are imminent. David Koresh was extremely charismatic; he was handsome and an eloquent speaker. He offered refuge and solace to people in need and in the process he preached about the coming of an apocalypse, which he believed would be caused by the intrusion of the United States government on the Branch Davidian's lifestyle. Koresh was so influential that when the United States government did eventually try to enter the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas in 1993 to search for illegal weapons, members of the group resisted and exchanged gunfire with federal agents. Eventually, under circumstances that are still disputed, a fire erupted in the compound and eighty-six people, including Koresh, were killed.<sup>103</sup> Ultimately, the U.S. government helped to fulfill the apocalyptic vision of the group and David Koresh became a martyr. The Branch Davidians evolved into a new group, "Branch, Lord our Righteousness," and today many await Koresh's return.<sup>105</sup>

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104. [52]

105.<sup>106</sup>

106. [53]

# CONCLUSION

Religion is of central importance to the lives of people in the majority of the world’s cultures; more than eight-in-ten people worldwide identify with a religious group.<sup>107</sup> However, it is also true that the number of people who say that they have no religious affiliation is growing. There are now about as many people in the world who consider themselves religiously “unaffiliated” as there are Roman Catholics.<sup>109</sup> This is an important reminder that religions, like culture itself, are highly dynamic and subject to constant changes in interpretation and allegiance. Anthropology offers a unique perspective for the study of religious beliefs, the way people think about the supernatural, and how the values and behaviors these beliefs inspire contribute to the lives of individuals and communities. No single set of theories or vocabulary can completely capture the richness of the religious diversity that exists in the world today, but cultural anthropology provides a toolkit for understanding the emotional, social, and spiritual contributions that religion makes to the human experience.

**Attribution:**

107.<sup>108</sup>

108. [54]

109.<sup>110</sup>

110. [55]



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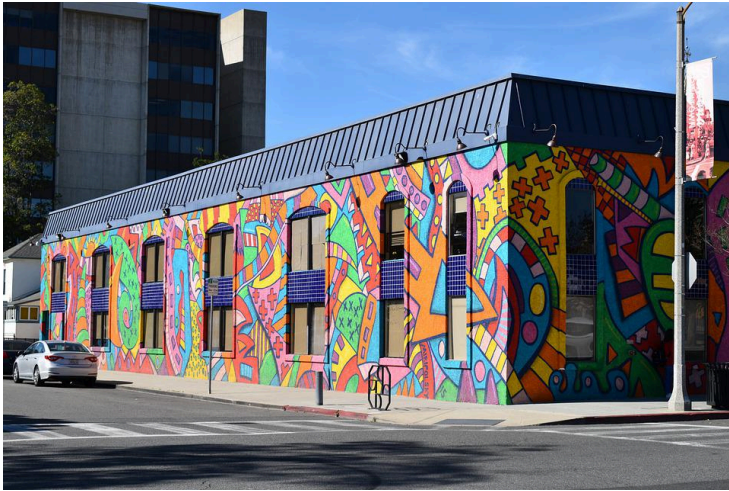
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## 12. The Arts





“The arts” refers to the theory, human application and physical expression of creativity found in human cultures and societies through skills and imagination in order to produce objects, environments and experiences. Major constituents of the arts include visual arts (including architecture, ceramics, drawing, filmmaking, painting, photography, and sculpting), literature (including fiction, drama, poetry, and prose), performing arts (including dance, music, and theatre), and culinary arts (including cooking, chocolate making and winemaking).

Some art forms combine a visual element with performance (e.g. cinematography), or artwork with the written word (e.g. comics). From prehistoric cave paintings to modern-day films, art serves as a vessel for storytelling and conveying humankind’s relationship with the environment. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_arts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_arts)

- Use Menti.com (your instructor will give you a code for this

question.) **What would the world be like if we weren't able to artistically express ourselves?**

Here are the essential questions for this part of this course.

### *Essential Questions*

- What is the purpose of literature, performing arts, visual art, culinary arts....
- How does a song, piece of art, or a dance communicate with us?
- What is “art” and why do individual cultures place so much value on its continuing evolution?
- What inner and outer factors influence how we express ourselves artistically?
- What kinds of responsibilities does an artist have to an audience or a consumer?
- Do audiences and consumers have any responsibility towards artists? If so, what are they?
- How can we use the arts to inspire positive action?
- What can the art forms of cultures other than our own teach us about ourselves and about life?
- Why should I care about the arts?
- How does creating and performing in the arts differ from viewing the arts?
- Does art have boundaries?
- Does art define culture or does culture define art?
- Do audiences and consumers have any responsibility towards artists? If so, what are they?
- What can the art forms of all cultures teach us



about ourselves and about life?

## 13. Language



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*It seems appropriate that after taking a look at who we are, what makes us human, how we think about ourselves, and the world that we take a look at how we communicate. Take a few minutes and jot down some of your ideas about these questions.*

- How is our understanding of culture and society constructed through and by language?
- How can language be powerful?
- How can you use language to empower yourself?
- How is language used to manipulate us?
- In what ways are language and power inseparable?
- What is the relationship between thinking and language? How close or far are they apart?

- How does language influence the way we think, act, and perceive the world?
- How do authors use the resources of language to impact an audience?

Where did language come from? A question that never gets answered.

The origin of language and its evolutionary emergence in the human species have been subjects of speculation for several centuries. The topic is difficult to study because of the lack of direct evidence. Consequently, scholars wishing to study the origins of language must draw inferences from other kinds of evidence such as the fossil record, archaeological evidence, contemporary language diversity, studies of language acquisition and comparisons between human language and systems of communication existing among animals (particularly other primates). Many argue that the origins of language probably relate closely to the origins of modern human behavior, but there is little agreement about the implications and directionality of this connection.

This shortage of empirical evidence has caused many scholars to regard the entire topic as unsuitable for serious study. In 1866, the Linguistic Society of Paris banned any existing or future debates on the subject, a prohibition which remained influential across much of the Western world until late in the twentieth century.[1][2] Today, there are various hypotheses about how, why, when, and where language might have emerged.[3] Despite this, there is scarcely more agreement today than a hundred years ago, when Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection provoked a rash of armchair speculation on the topic.[4] Since the early 1990s, however, a number of linguists, archaeologists, psychologists, anthropologists, and others have attempted to address with new

methods what some consider one of the hardest problems in science.[5] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Origin\\_of\\_language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Origin_of_language)

Read the article, [“How Did Language Begin?: by Ray Jackendoff](#)



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=61#h5p-10>

### **Mark Pagel: How language transformed humanity**

Biologist Mark Pagel shares an intriguing theory about why humans evolved our complex system of language. He suggests that language is a piece of “social technology” that allowed early human tribes to access a powerful new tool: cooperation.



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the

text. You can view it online here: <https://mlpp.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=126>

What about Indigenous Languages? Why are they disappearing? Why does it matter?

Read through this short article on [The World's Indigenous Languages In Context](#).

Then in this short video, meet [Indigenous Speakers and Learn How They're Keeping Their Languages Alive](#)

### **Celebrating Indigenous Languages**

A shared language is one of the most important connections among groups of people. Not only does it create a sense of kinship, but it promotes a shared worldview through unique vocabulary and traditional sayings and songs. Yet many of the world's 7,000 languages are in danger of disappearing; according to the United Nations 2,680 Indigenous languages are at risk.

Indigenous communities around the globe are working to preserve and revitalize their languages by teaching them to future generations and sharing them with non-Indigenous speakers. Here we've collaborated with Indigenous language speakers to share traditional greetings, favorite sayings and meaningful songs.

Read this article first. [The World's Indigenous Languages In Context](#)

Take the [Google Earth Tour](#) around the world.



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<https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=61#h5p-11>

## 14. Literature (including fiction, drama, poetry, and prose)







### *Essential Questions for Literature*

- How is literature like life?
- What is literature supposed to do?
- What influences a writer to create?
- How does literature reveal the values of a given culture or time period?
- How does the study of fiction and nonfiction texts help individuals construct their understanding of reality?
- In what ways are all narratives influenced by bias and perspective?
- Where does the meaning of a text reside? Within the text, within the reader, or in the transaction that occurs between them?

- What can a reader know about an author's intentions based only on a reading of the text?
- What are enduring questions and conflicts that writers (and their cultures) grappled with hundreds of years ago and are still relevant today?
- How do we gauge the optimism or pessimism of a particular time period or particular group of writers?
- Why are there universal themes in literature—that is, themes that are of interest or concern to all cultures and societies?
- What are the characteristics or elements that cause a piece of literature to endure?
- What is the purpose of: science fiction? satire? historical novels, etc.?
- How do novels, short stories, poetry, etc. relate to the larger questions of philosophy and humanity?
- How can we use literature to explain or clarify our own ideas about the world?
- How does what we know about the world shape the stories we tell?
- How do the stories we tell about the world shape the way we view ourselves?
- How do our personal experiences shape our view of others?
- What does it mean to be an insider or an outsider?
- Are there universal themes in literature that are of interest or concern to all cultures and societies?
- What are the characteristics or elements that cause a piece of literature to endure?
- What is creativity and what is its importance for the individual / the culture?
- What are the limits, if any, of freedom of speech?

## **Defining Literature**

Literature, in its broadest sense, is any written work. Etymologically, the term derives from Latin *litaritura/litteratura* “writing formed with letters,” although some definitions include spoken or sung texts. More restrictively, it is writing that possesses literary merit. Literature can be classified according to whether it is fiction or non-fiction and whether it is poetry or prose. It can be further distinguished according to major forms such as the novel, short story or drama, and works are often categorized according to historical periods or their adherence to certain aesthetic features or expectations (genre).

Taken to mean only written works, literature was first produced by some of the world’s earliest civilizations—those of Ancient Egypt and Sumeria—as early as the 4th millennium BC; taken to include spoken or sung texts, it originated even earlier, and some of the first written works may have been based on a pre-existing oral tradition. As urban cultures and societies developed, there was a proliferation in the forms of literature. Developments in print technology allowed for literature to be distributed and experienced on an unprecedented scale, which has culminated in the twenty-first century in electronic literature.

### **Definition**

Definitions of literature have varied over time. In Western Europe prior to the eighteenth century, literature as a term indicated all books and writing.<sup>[1]</sup> A more restricted sense of the term emerged during the Romantic period, in which it began to demarcate “imaginative” literature.<sup>[2]</sup>

Contemporary debates over what constitutes literature can be seen as returning to the older, more inclusive notion of what constitutes literature. Cultural studies, for instance, takes as its subject of analysis both popular and minority genres, in addition to canonical works.<sup>[3]</sup>

### **Major Forms**

#### **Poetry**



A calligram by Guillaume Apollinaire. These are a type of poem in which the written words are arranged in such a way to produce a visual image.

Poetry is a form of literary art that uses aesthetic and rhythmic qualities of language to evoke meanings in addition to, or in place of, prosaic ostensible meaning (ordinary intended meaning). Poetry has traditionally been distinguished from prose by its being set in verse;<sup>[4]</sup> prose is cast in sentences, poetry in lines;

the syntax of prose is dictated by meaning, whereas that of poetry is held across metre or the visual aspects of the poem.<sup>[5]</sup>

Prior to the nineteenth century, poetry was commonly understood to be something set in metrical lines; accordingly, in 1658 a definition of poetry is “any kind of subject consisting of Rythm or Verses”.<sup>[6]</sup> Possibly as a result of Aristotle’s influence (his *Poetics*), “poetry” before the nineteenth century was usually less a technical designation for verse than a normative category of fictive or rhetorical art.<sup>[7]</sup> As a form it may pre-date literacy, with the earliest works being composed within and sustained by an oral tradition;<sup>[8]</sup> hence it constitutes the earliest example of literature.

### **Prose**

Prose is a form of language that possesses ordinary syntax and natural speech rather than rhythmic structure; in which regard, along with its measurement in sentences rather than lines, it differs from poetry.<sup>[9]</sup> On the historical development of prose, Richard Graff notes that ”

**Novel:** a long fictional prose narrative.

**Novella:** The novella exists between the novel and short story; the publisher Melville House classifies it as “too short to be a novel, too long to be a short story.”<sup>[10]</sup>

**Short story:** a dilemma in defining the “short story” as a literary form is how to, or whether one should, distinguish it from any short narrative. Apart from its distinct size, various theorists have suggested that the short story has a characteristic subject matter or structure;<sup>[11]</sup> these discussions often position the form in some relation to the novel.<sup>[12]</sup>

### **Drama**

Drama is literature intended for performance.<sup>[13]</sup>

Leitch et al., *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*,  
28 ↵ Ross, “The Emergence of “Literature”: Making and Reading

the English Canon in the Eighteenth Century," 406  
 & Eagleton, *Literary theory: an introduction*, 16 [Leitch et al.](#), *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, 28 ["POETRY, N."](#). OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY. OUP. RETRIEVED 13 FEBRUARY 2014. (subscription required) [Preminger](#), *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, 938–9 ["POETRY, N."](#). OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY. OUP. RETRIEVED 13 FEBRUARY 2014. (subscription required) [Ross](#), "The Emergence of "Literature": Making and Reading the English Canon in the Eighteenth Century", 398 [FINNEGAN, RUTH H.](#) (1977). ORAL POETRY: ITS NATURE, SIGNIFICANCE, AND SOCIAL CONTEXT. INDIANA UNIVERSITY PRESS. P. 66. & MAGOUN, JR., FRANCIS P. (1953). "ORAL-FORMULAIC CHARACTER OF ANGLO-SAXON NARRATIVE POETRY". *SPECULUM* 28 (3): 446–67. DOI:10.2307/2847021 [Preminger](#), *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, 938–9 & Alison Booth; Kelly J. Mays. "Glossary: P". *LitWeb, the Norton Introduction to Literature Studyspace*. Retrieved 15 February 2014. [Antrim](#), Taylor (2010). "In Praise of Short". *The Daily Beast*. Retrieved 15 February 2014. [ROHRBERGER, MARY; DAN E. BURNS](#) (1982). "SHORT FICTION AND THE NUMINOUS REALM: ANOTHER ATTEMPT AT DEFINITION". *MODERN FICTION STUDIES*. XXVIII (6). & MAY, CHARLES (1995). *THE SHORT STORY. THE REALITY OF ARTIFICE*. NEW YORK: TWIN. [Marie Louise Pratt](#) (1994). Charles May, ed. *The Short Story: The Long and the Short of It*. Athens: Ohio UP. [Elam, Kier](#) (1980). *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*. London and New York: Methuen. p. 98. ISBN 0-416-72060-9. [LICENSES AND ATTRIBUTIONS](#) CC LICENSED CONTENT, SHARED PREVIOUSLY Literature. Provided by: Wikipedia. Located

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## Poetry

Listen to this [Discussion of the poetry of Harris Khalique](#). You might want to take a look at the transcript as you listen.

The first half of a 2008 reading featuring four Latino poets, as part of the American Perspectives series at the Art Institute of Chicago.

Listen to [poetry reading of Francisco Aragón and Brenda Cárdenas](#)

Listen to this conversation with [Allison Hedge Coke, Linda Hogan and Sherwin Bitsui](#). You might want to look at the transcript as you listen. In this program, we hear a conversation among three Native American poets: Allison Hedge Coke, Linda Hogan and Sherwin Bitsui. Allison Hedge Coke grew up listening to her Father's traditional stories as she moved from Texas to North Carolina to Canada and the Great Plains. She is the author of several collections of poetry and the memoir, *Rock, Ghost, Willow, Deer*. She has worked as a mentor with Native Americans and at-risk youth, and is currently a Professor of Poetry and Writing at the University of Nebraska, Kearney. Linda Hogan is a prolific poet, novelist and essayist. Her work is imbued with an indigenous sense of history and place, while it explores environmental, feminist and spiritual themes. A former professor at the University of Colorado, she is currently the Chickasaw Nation's Writer in Residence. She lives in Oklahoma, where she researches and writes about Chickasaw

history, mythology and ways of life. Sherwin Bitsui grew up on the Navajo reservation in Arizona. He speaks Dine, the Navajo language and participates in ceremonial activities. His poetry has a sense of the surreal, combining images of the contemporary urban culture, with Native ritual and myth.

### **Chris Abani: Stories from Africa**

In this deeply personal talk, Nigerian writer Chris Abani says that “what we know about how to be who we are” comes from stories. He searches for the heart of Africa through its poems and narrative, including his own.



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here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=77#oembed-1>

### **Listen to Isabel Allende's Ted Talk**

As a novelist and memoirist, Isabel Allende writes of passionate lives, including her own. Born into a Chilean family with political ties, she went into exile in the United States in the 1970s—an event that, she believes, created her as a writer. Her voice blends sweeping narrative with touches of magical realism; her stories are romantic, in the very best sense of the word. Her novels include *The House of the Spirits*, *Eva Luna* and *The Stories of Eva Luna*, and her latest, *Maya's Notebook* and *Ripper*. And don't forget her adventure trilogy for young readers—*City of the Beasts*, *Kingdom of the Golden Dragon* and *Forest of the Pygmies*.

As a memoirist, she has written about her vision of her lost Chile, in *My Invented Country*, and movingly tells the story of her life to her own daughter, in *Paula*. Her book *Aphrodite: A Memoir of the Senses* memorably linked two sections of the bookstore that



don't see much crossover: Erotica and Cookbooks. Just as vital is her community work: The Isabel Allende Foundation works with nonprofits in the San Francisco Bay Area and Chile to empower and protect women and girls—understanding that empowering women is the only true route to social and economic justice.

You can read excerpts of her books online here:  
<https://www.isabelallende.com/en/books>

Read her musings. Why does she write?  
<https://www.isabelallende.com/en/musings>

You might choose to read one of her novels.



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Listen to Novelist **Chimamanda Adichie**. She speaks about how our lives, our cultures, are composed of many overlapping stories. She tells the story of how she found her authentic cultural voice — and warns that if we hear only a single story about another person or country, we risk a critical misunderstanding.



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## One Hundred Years of Solitude

Gabriel García Márquez's novel "One Hundred Years of Solitude"

brought Latin American literature to the forefront of the global imagination and earned García Márquez the 1982 Nobel Prize for Literature. What makes the novel so remarkable? Francisco Díez-Buzo investigates.

Gabriel García Márquez was a writer and journalist who recorded the haphazard political history of Latin American life through his fiction. He was a part of a literary movement called the [Latin American “boom,”](#) which included writers like Peru’s Mario Vargas Llosa, Argentina’s Julio Cortázar, and Mexico’s Carlos Fuentes. Almost all of these writers [incorporated aspects of magical realism in their work.](#) Later authors, such as Isabel Allende and Salman Rushdie, would carry on and adapt the genre to the cultural and historical experiences of other countries and continents.

García Márquez hadn’t always planned on being a writer, but a pivotal moment in Colombia’s—and Latin America’s—history changed all that. In 1948, when García Márquez was a law student in Bogotá, [Jorge Eliécer Gaitán](#), a prominent radical populist leader of Colombia’s Liberal Party, was assassinated. This happened while the U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall brought together leaders from across the Americas to create the [Organization of American States](#) (OAS) and to build a hemisphere-wide effort against communism. In the days after the assassination, massive riots, now called the [bogotazo](#), occurred. The worst Colombian civil war to date, known as [La Violencia](#), also broke out. Another law student, visiting from Cuba, was deeply affected by Eliécer Gaitán’s death. This student’s name was Fidel Castro. Interestingly, García Márquez and Castro—both socialists—would [become close friends later on in life](#), despite not meeting during these tumultuous events.

*One Hundred Years of Solitude*’s success almost didn’t happen, but this [article](#) from *Vanity Fair* helps explain how a long-simmering idea became an international sensation.

When Gabriel García Márquez won the Nobel Prize in 1982, he

gave a [lecture](#) that helped illuminate the plights that many Latin Americans faced on a daily basis. Since then, that lecture has also helped explain the political and social critiques deeply embedded in his novels. It was famous for being an indigenous overview of how political violence became entrenched in Latin America during the Cold War. In an [interview](#) with the *New Left Review*, he discussed a lot of the inspirations for his work, as well as his political beliefs.



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## Don Quixote

Mounting his skinny steed, Don Quixote charges an army of giants. It is his duty to vanquish these behemoths in the name of his beloved lady, Dulcinea. There's only one problem: the giants are merely windmills. What is it about this tale of the clumsy yet valiant knight that makes it so beloved? Ilan Stavans investigates.

Interested in exploring the world of Don Quixote? Check out [this translation](#) of the thrill-seeking classic.

To learn more about Don Quixote's rich cultural history, click [here](#). In [this interview](#), the educator shares his inspiration behind his book *Quixote: The Novel and the World*.

The travails of Don Quixote's protagonist were heavily shaped by real-world events in 17th-century Spain. This [article](#) provides detailed research on what, exactly, happened during that time.



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## Midnight's Children

It begins with a countdown. A woman goes into labor as the clock ticks towards midnight. Across India, people wait for the declaration of independence after nearly 200 years of British rule. At the stroke of midnight, an infant and two new nations are born in perfect synchronicity. These events form the foundation of “Midnight's Children.” Iseult Gillespie explores Salman Rushdie's dazzling novel.

At the stroke of midnight, the first gasp of a newborn syncs with the birth of two new nations. These simultaneous events are at the center of *Midnight's Children*, a dazzling novel about the state of modern India by the British-Indian author [Salman Rushdie](#). You can listen to an interview with Rushdie discussing the novel [here](#).

The chosen baby is Saleem Sinai, who narrates the novel from a pickle factory in 1977. As [this article](#) argues, much of the beauty of the narrative lies in Rushdie's ability to weave the personal into the political in surprising ways.

Saleem's narrative leaps back in time, to trace his family history from 1915 on. The family tree is blossoming with bizarre scenes, including clandestine courtships, babies swapped at birth, and cryptic prophecies. For a detailed interactive timeline of the historical and personal events threaded through the novel, [click here](#).

However, there's one trait that can't be explained by genes alone – Saleem has magic powers, and they're somehow related to the time of his birth. For an overview of the use of magical realism and

astonishing powers in *Midnight's Children*, [click here](#).

Saleem recounts a new nation, flourishing and founding after almost a century of British rule. For more information on the dark history of British occupation of India, [visit this page](#).

The vast historical frame is one reason why *Midnight's Children* is considered one of the most illuminating works of [postcolonial literature](#) ever written. This genre typically addresses life in formerly colonized countries, and explores the fallout through themes like revolution, migration, and identity.

Postcolonial literature also deals with the search for agency and authenticity in the wake of imposed foreign rule. *Midnight's Children* reflects these concerns with its explosive combination of Eastern and Western references. On the one hand, it's been compared to the sprawling novels of Charles Dickens or George Eliot, which also offer a panoramic vision of society paired with tales of personal development. But Rushdie radically disrupts this formula by adding Indian cultural references, magic and myth.

Saleem writes the story by night, and narrates it back to his love interest, Padma. This echoes the frame for [1001 Nights](#), a collection of Middle Eastern folktales told by Scheherazade every night to her lover – and as Saleem reminds us, 1001 is “the number of night, of magic, of alternative realities.”

Saleem spends a lot of the novel attempting to account for the unexpected. But he often gets thoroughly distracted and goes on astonishing tangents, telling dirty jokes or mocking his enemies. With his own powers of telepathy, Saleem forges connections between other children of midnight; including a boy who can step through time and mirrors, and a child who changes their gender when immersed in water. There's other flashes of magic throughout, from a mother who can see into dreams to witchdoctors,

shapeshifters, and many more. For an overview of the dazzling reference points of the novel, [visit this page](#).

Sometimes, all this is like reading a rollercoaster: Saleem sometimes narrates separate events all at once, refers to himself in the first and third person in the space of a single sentence, or uses different names for one person. And Padma is always interrupting, urging him to get to the point or exclaiming at his story's twists and turns.

This mind-bending approach has garnered continuing fascination and praise. Not only did *Midnight's Children* win the prestigious Man Booker prize in its year of publication, [but it was named the best of all the winners in 2008](#). For an interview about Rushdie's outlook and processed, [click here](#).

All this gives the narrative a breathless quality, and brings to life an entire society surging through political upheaval without losing sight of the marvels of individual lives. But even as he depicts the cosmological consequences of a single life, Rushdie questions the idea that we can ever condense history into a single narrative.

### **Tom Elemas: The Inspiring Truth in Fiction**

What do we lose by choosing non-fiction over fiction? For Tomas Elemans, there's an important side effect of reading fiction: empathy – a possible antidote to a desensitized world filled with tragic news and headlines.

What is empathy? How does story-telling create empathy? What stories trigger empathy in you? What is narrative immersion? Are we experiencing an age of narcissism? What might be some examples of narcissism? What connection does Tom Elemans make to individualism?



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### **Ann Morgan: My year reading a book from every country in the world**

Ann Morgan considered herself well read — until she discovered the “massive blindspot” on her bookshelf. Amid a multitude of English and American authors, there were very few books from beyond the English-speaking world. So she set an ambitious goal: to read one book from every country in the world over the course of a year. Now she’s urging other Anglophiles to read translated works so that publishers will work harder to bring foreign literary gems back to their shores. Explore interactive maps of her reading journey here: [go.ted.com/readtheworld](https://go.ted.com/readtheworld)

Check out her blog: [A year of reading the world](#) where you can find a complete list of the books I read, and what I learned along the way.



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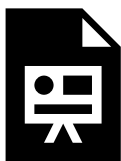
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## 15. The Tale of Hong Gil-Dong (A Korean Novel)





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<https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=78#h5p-7> .

## The Tale of Hong Gil-Dong (A Korean Novel)

Heo Gyun (1569-1618 C.E.) [License: Public Domain 9 CC0 "No Rights Reserved"](#)

### **[The Tale of Hong Gil-Dong](#)**

First published in 1612 C.E. Korea

The Tale of Hong Gil-Dong (also spelled “Hong Kil Tong” and pronounced as such), one of the earliest novels in Korean, was written by Heo Gyun (also spelled “Hō Kyun” or “Huh Kyun”) during the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1897). Although the novel, first published in 1612, is set during the reign of King Sejong (1418- 1450), it is inspired by an actual robber named Hong Gil-Dong during the reign of King Yeonsan-gun (1494-1506) and is also seen as partially

inspired by *The Water Margin*, a Chinese classic generally attributed to Shi Nai'an (ca. 1296–1372). Heo Gyun was an unorthodox thinker. Despite the Confucian state ideology of the Joseon Dynasty, he developed interests in Buddhism, Taoism, and possibly even Catholicism. He criticized social and governmental corruption and contradiction, and he argued for equal employment opportunities that would not discriminate against the children of concubines. This novel is noted for its social criticism.

Medical missionary and diplomat Horace Newton Allen's (1858-1932 C.E.) translation of this story, published in 1889 by the Knickerbocker Press, has some typos and errors, but is historically significant in that it is the first Korean novel (not a "folktale," although the translator seemed to consider it one) to be translated in English though the eyes of one of the earliest Westerners to reside in Korea.

Written by Kyounghye Kwon

**Hong Gil-Dong or The Adventures of an Abused Boy Heo Gyun,**

Translated by H. N. Allen

### **Part 1**

During the reign of the third king in Korea there lived a noble of high rank and noted family, by name Hong. His title was Ye Cho Pansa. He had two sons by his wife and one by one of his concubines. The latter son was very remarkable from his birth to his death, and he it is who forms the subject of this history.

When Hong Pansa was the father of but two sons, he dreamed by night on one occasion that he heard the noise of thunder, and looking up he saw a huge dragon entering his apartment, which seemed too small to contain the whole of his enormous body. The dream was so startling as to awaken the sleeper, who at once saw that it was a good omen, and a token to him of a blessing about to be conferred. He hoped the blessing might prove to be another son, and went to impart the good news to his wife. She would not see him, however, as she was offended by his taking a concubine from the class of "dancing girls." The great man was sad, and went away. Within the year, however, a son of marvelous beauty was born to

one concubine, much to the annoyance of his wife and to himself, for he would have been glad to have the beautiful boy a full son, and eligible to office. The child was named Gil-Dong, or Hong Gil-Dong. He grew fast, and became more and more beautiful. He learned rapidly, and surprised every one by his remarkable ability. As he grew up he rebelled at being placed with the slaves, and at not being allowed to call his parent, father. The other children laughed and jeered at him, and made life very miserable. He refused longer to study of the duties of children to their parents. He upset his table in school, and declared he was going to be a soldier. One bright moonlight night Hong Pansa saw his son in the courtyard practicing the arts of the soldier, and he asked him what it meant. Gil-Dong answered that he was fitting himself to become a man that people should respect and fear. He said he knew that heaven had made all things for the use of men, if they found themselves capable of using them, and that the laws of men were only made to assist a few that could not otherwise do as they would; but that he was not inclined to submit to any such tyranny, but would become a great man in spite of his evil surroundings. "This is a most remarkable boy," mused Hong Pansa.

"What a pity that he is not my proper and legitimate son, that he might be an honor to my name. As it is, I fear he will cause me serious trouble." He urged the boy to go to bed and sleep, but Gil-Dong said it was useless, that if he went to bed he would think of his troubles till the tears washed sleep away from his eyes, and caused him to get up.

The wife of Hong Pansa and his other concubine (the dancing girl), seeing how much their lord and master thought of Gil-Dong, grew to hate the latter intensely, and began to lay plans for ridding themselves of him. They called some mootang, or sorceresses, and explained to them that their happiness was disturbed by this son of a rival, and that peace could only be restored to their hearts by the death of this youth. The witches laughed and said: "Never mind. There is an old woman who lives by the east gate, tell her to come

and prejudice the father. She can do it, and he will then look after his son."

The old hag came as requested. Hong Pansa was then in the women's apartments, telling them of the wonderful boy, much to their annoyance. A visitor was announced, and the old woman made a low bow outside. Hong Pansa asked her what her business was, and she stated that she had heard of his wonderful son, and came to see him, to foretell what his future was to be.

Gil-Dong came as called, and on seeing him the hag bowed and said: "Send out all of the people." She then stated: "This will be a very great man; if not a king, he will be greater than the king, and will avenge his early wrongs by killing all his family." At this the father called to her to stop, and enjoined strict secrecy upon her. He sent Gil-Dong at once to a strong room, and had him locked in for safe keeping.

The boy was very sad at this new state of affairs, but as his father let him have books, he got down to hard study, and learned the Chinese works on astronomy. He could not see his mother, and his unnatural father was too afraid to come near him. He made up his mind, however, that as soon as he could get out he would go to some far-off country, where he was not known, and make his true power felt.

Meanwhile, the unnatural father was kept in a state of continual excitement by his wicked concubine, who was bent on the destruction of the son of her rival, and kept constantly before her master the great dangers that would come to him from being the parent of such a man as Gil-Dong was destined to be, if allowed to live. She showed him that such power as the boy was destined to possess, would eventually result in his overthrow, and with him his father's house would be in disgrace, and, doubtless, would be abolished. While if this did not happen, the son was sure to kill his family, so that, in either case, it was the father's clear duty to prevent any further trouble by putting the boy out of the way. Hong Pansa was finally persuaded that his concubine was right, and sent for the assassins to come and kill his son. But a spirit filled the father

with disease, and he told the men to stay their work. Medicines failed to cure the disease, and the mootang women were called in by the concubine. They beat their drums and danced about the room, conjuring the spirit to leave, but it would not obey. At last they said, at the suggestion of the concubine, that Gil-Dong was the cause of the disorder, and that with his death the spirit would cease troubling the father.

Again, the assassins were sent for, and came with their swords, accompanied by the old hag from the east gate. While they were meditating on the death of Gil-Dong, he was musing on the unjust laws of men who allowed sons to be born of concubines, but denied them rights that were enjoyed by other men.

## **Part 2**

While thus musing in the darkness of the night, he heard a crow caw three times and fly away. "This means something ill to me," thought he; and Just then his window was thrown open, and in stepped the assassins. They made at the boy, but he was not there. In their rage they wounded each other, and killed the old woman who was their guide. To their amazement the room had disappeared, and they were surrounded by high mountains. A mighty storm arose, and rocks flew through the air. They could not escape, and, in their terror, were about to give up, when music was heard, and a boy came riding by on a donkey, playing a flute. He took away their weapons, and showed himself to be Gil-Dong. He promised not to kill them, as they begged for their lives, but only on condition that they should never try to kill another man. He told them that he would know if the promise was broken, and, in that event, he would instantly kill them.

Gil-Dong went by night to see his father, who thought him a spirit, and was very much afraid. He gave his father medicine, which instantly cured him; and sending for his mother, bade her good-by, and started for an unknown country.

His father was very glad that the boy had escaped, and lost his affection for his wicked concubine. But the latter, with her mistress,

was very angry, and tried in vain to devise some means to accomplish their evil purposes.

Gil-Dong, free at last journeyed to the south, and began to ascend the lonely mountains. Tigers were abundant, but he feared them not, and they seemed to avoid molesting him. After many days, he found himself high up on a barren peat enveloped by the clouds and enjoyed the remoteness of the place, and the absence of men and obnoxious laws. He now felt himself a free man, and the equal of any, while he knew that heaven was smiling upon him and giving him powers not accorded to other men.

Through the clouds at some distance he thought he espied a huge stone door in the bare wall of rock. Going up to it, he found it to be indeed a movable door, and, opening it, he stepped inside, when, to his amazement, he found himself in an open plain, surrounded by high and inaccessible mountains. He saw before him over two hundred good houses, and many men, who, when they had somewhat recovered from their own surprise, came rushing upon him, apparently with evil intent. Laying hold upon him they asked him who he was, and why he came trespassing upon their ground. He said: "I am surprised to find myself in the presence of men. I am but the son of a concubine, and men, with their laws, are obnoxious to me. Therefore, I thought to get away from man entirely, and, for that reason, I wandered alone into these wild regions. But who are you, and why do you live in this lone spot? Perhaps we may have a kindred feeling."

"We are called thieves," was answered; "but we only despoil the hated official class of some of their ill-gotten gains. We are willing to help the poor unbeknown, but no man can enter our stronghold and depart alive, unless he has become one of us. To do so, however, he must prove himself to be strong in body and mind. If you can pass the examination and wish to join our party, well and good; otherwise you die."

This suited Gil-Dong immensely, and he consented to the conditions. They gave him various trials of strength, but he chose his own. Going up to a huge rock on which several men were seated,



he laid hold of it and hurled it to some distance, to the dismay of the men, who fell from their seat, and to the surprised delight of all. He was at once installed a member, and a feast was ordered. The contract was sealed by mingling blood from the lips of all the members with blood similarly supplied by Gil-Dong. He was then given a prominent seat and served to wine and food.

Gil-Dong soon became desirous of giving to his comrades some manifestation of his courage. An opportunity presently offered. He heard the men bemoaning their inability to despoil a large and strong Buddhist temple not far distant. As was the rule, this temple in the mountains was well patronized by officials, who made it a place of retirement for pleasure and debauch, and in return the lazy, licentious priests were allowed to collect tribute from the poor people about, till they had become rich and powerful. The several attempts made by the robber band had proved unsuccessful, by virtue of the number and vigilance of the priests, together with the strength of their enclosure. Gil-Dong agreed to assist them to accomplish their design or perish in the attempt, and such was their faith in him that they readily agreed to his plans.

On a given day Gil-Dong, dressed in the red gown of a youth, just betrothed, covered himself with the dust of travel, and mounted on a donkey, with one robber disguised as a servant, made his way to the temple. He asked on arrival to be shown to the head priest, to whom he stated that he was the son of Hong Pansa, that his noble father having heard of the greatness of this temple, and the wisdom of its many priests, had decided to send him with a letter, which he produced, to be educated among their numbers. He also stated that a train of one hundred ponies loaded with rice had been sent as a present from his father to the priest, and he expected they would arrive before dark, as they did not wish to stop alone in the mountains, even though every pony was attended by a groom, who was armed for defense. The priests were delighted, and having read the letter, they never for a moment suspected that all was not right. A great feast was ordered in honor of their noble scholar, and all sat down before the tables, which were filled so high that one could

hardly see his neighbor on the opposite side. They had scarcely seated themselves and indulged in the generous wine, when it was announced that the train of ponies laden with rice had arrived. Servants were sent to look after the tribute, and the eating and drinking went on. Suddenly Gil-Dong clapped his hand, over his cheek with a cry of pain, which drew the attention of all. When, to the great mortification of the priests, he produced from his month a pebble, previously introduced on the sly, and exclaimed: "Is it to feed on stones that my father sent me to this place? What do you mean by setting such rice before a gentleman?"

### **Part 3**

The priests were filled with mortification and dismay, and bowed their shaven heads to the floor in humiliation. When at a sign from Gil-Dong, a portion of the robbers, who had entered the court as grooms to the ponies, seized the bending priests and bound them as they were. The latter shouted for help, but the other robbers, who had been concealed in the bags, which were supposed to contain rice, seized the servants, while others were loading the ponies with jewels, rice, cash and whatever of value they could lay hands upon.

An old priest who was attending to the fires, seeing the uproar, made off quietly to the yamen near by and called for soldiers. The soldiers were sent after some delay, and Gil-Dong, disguised as a priest, called to them to follow him down a by-path after the robbers. While he conveyed the soldiers over this rough path, the robbers made good their escape by the main road, and were soon joined in their stronghold by their youthful leader, who had left the soldiers groping helplessly in the dark among the rocks and trees in a direction opposite that taken by the robbers.

The priests soon found out that they had lost almost all their riches, and were at no loss in determining how the skilful affair had been planned and carried out. Gil-Dong's name was noised abroad, and it was soon known that he was heading a band of robbers, who, through his assistance, were able to do many marvelous things. The robber band was delighted at the success of his first undertaking, and made him their chief, with the consent of all. After sufficient

time had elapsed for the full enjoyment of their last and greatest success, Gil-Dong planned a new raid.

The Governor of a neighboring province was noted for his overbearing ways and the heavy burdens that he laid upon his subjects. He was very rich, but universally hated, and Gil-Dong decided to avenge the people and humiliate the Governor, knowing that his work would be appreciated by the people, as were indeed his acts at the temple. He instructed his band to proceed singly to the Governor's city—the local capital—at the time of a fair, when their coming would not cause comment. At a given time a portion of them were to set fire to a lot of straw-thatched huts outside the city gates, while the others repaired in a body to the Governor's yamen. They did so. The Governor was borne in his chair to a place where he could witness the conflagration, which also drew away the most of the inhabitants. The robbers bound the remaining servants, and while some were securing money, jewels, and weapons, Gil-Dong wrote on the walls: "The wicked Governor that robs the people is relieved of his ill-gotten gains by GilDong—the people's avenger."

Again the thieves made good their escape, and Gil-Dong's name became known everywhere.

The Governor offered a great reward for his capture, but no one seemed desirous of encountering a robber of such boldness. At last the King offered a reward after consulting with his officers. When one of them said he would capture the thief alone, the King was astonished at his boldness and courage, and bade him be off and make the attempt. The officer was called the Pochang; he had charge of the prisons, and was a man of great courage.

The Pochang started on his search, disguised as a traveler. He took a donkey and servant, and after travelling many days he put up at a little inn, at the same time that another man on a donkey rode up. The latter was Gil-Dong in disguise, and he soon entered into conversation with the man, whose mission was known to him.

"I goo" said Gil-Dong, as he sat down to eat, "this is a dangerous country. I have just been chased by the robber Gil-Dong till the life is about gone out of me."

"Gil-Dong, did yon say?" remarked Pochang. "I wish he would chase me. I am anxious to see the man of whom we hear so much."

"Well, if you see him once you will be satisfied," replied Gil-Dong.

"Why?" asked the Pochang. "Is he such a fearful-looking man as to frighten one by his aspect alone?"

"No; on the contrary he looks much as do ordinary mortals. But we know he is different, you see."

"Exactly," said the Pochang. "That is just the trouble. You are afraid of him before you see him. Just let me get a glimpse of him, and matters will be different, I think."

"Well," said Gil-Dong, "you can be easily pleased, if that is all, for I dare say if you go back into the mountains here you will see him, and get acquainted with him too."

"That is good. Will you show me the place?"

"Not I. I have seen enough of him to please me. I can tell you where to go, however, if you persist in your curiosity," said the robber.

"Agreed!" exclaimed the officer. "Let us be off at once lest he escapes. And if you succeed in showing him to me, I will reward you for your work and protect you from the thief."

After some objection by Gil-Dong, who appeared to be reluctant to go, and insisted on at least finishing his dinner, they started off, with their servants, into the mountains. Night overtook them, much to the apparent dismay of the guide, who pretended to be very anxious to give up the quest. At length, however, they came to the stone door, which was open. Having entered the robber's stronghold, the door closed behind them, and the guide disappeared, leaving the dismayed officer surrounded by the thieves. His courage had now left him, and he regretted his rashness. The robbers bound him securely and led him past their miniature city into an enclosure surrounded by houses which, by their bright colors, seemed to be the abode of royalty. He was conveyed into a large audience-

chamber occupying the most extensive building of the collection, and there, on a sort of throne, in royal style, sat his guide. The Pochang saw his mistake, and fell on his face, begging for mercy. Gil-Dong upbraided him for his impudence and arrogance and promised to let him off this time, Wine was brought, and all partook of it. That given to the officer was drugged, and he fell into a stupor soon after drinking it. While in this condition he was put into a bag and conveyed in a marvelous manner to a high mountain overlooking the capital. Here he found himself upon recovering from the effects of his potion; and not daring to face his sovereign with such a fabulous tale, he cast himself down from the high mountain, and was picked up dead, by passers-by, in the morning. Almost at the same time that His Majesty received word of the death of his officer, and was marveling at the audacity of the murderer in bringing the body almost to the palace doors, came simultaneous reports of great depredations in each of the eight provinces. The trouble was in each case attributed to Gil-Dong, and the fact that he was reported as being in eight far removed places at the same time caused great consternation.

#### **Part 4**

Official orders were issued to each of the eight governors to catch and bring to the city, at once, the robber Gil-Dong. These orders were so well obeyed that upon a certain day soon after, a guard came from each province bringing Gil-Dong, and there in a line stood eight men alike in every respect.

The King on inquiry found that Gil-Dong was the son of Hong Pansa, and the father was ordered into the royal presence. He came with his legitimate son, and bowed his head in shame to the ground. When asked what he meant by having a son who would cause such general misery and distress, he swooned away, and would have died had not one of the Gil-Dongs produced some medicine which cured him. The son, however, acted as spokesman, and informed the King that Gil-Dong was but the son of his father's slave, that he was utterly incorrigible, and had fled from home when a mere boy. When asked to decide as to which was his true son, the father stated

that his son had a scar on the left thigh. Instantly each of the eight men pulled up the baggy trousers and displayed a scar. The guard was commanded to remove the men and kill all of them: but when they attempted to do so the life had disappeared, and the men were found to be only figures in straw and wax.

Soon after this a letter was seen posted on the Palace gate, announcing that if the government would confer upon Gil-Dong the rank of Pansa, as held by his father, and thus remove from him the stigma attaching to him as the son of a slave, he would stop his depredations. This proposition could not be entertained at first, but one of the counsel suggested that it might offer a solution of the vexed question, and they could yet be spared the disgrace of having an officer with such a record. For, as he proposed, men could be so stationed that when the newly-appointed officer came to make his bow before His Majesty, they could fall upon him and kill him before he arose. This plan was greeted with applause, and a decree was issued conferring the desired rank; proclamations to that effect being posted in public places, so that the news would reach Gil-Dong. It did reach him, and he soon appeared at the city gate. A great crowd attended him as he rode to the Palace gates; but knowing the plans laid for him, as he passed through the gates and came near enough to be seen of the King, he was caught up in a cloud and borne away amid strange music; wholly discomfiting his enemies.

Some time after this occurrence the King was walking with a few eunuchs and attendants in the royal gardens. It was evening time, but the full moon furnished ample light. The atmosphere was tempered just to suit; it was neither cold nor warm, while it lacked nothing of the bracing character of a Korean autumn. The leaves were blood-red on the maples; the heavy cloak of climbing vines that enshrouded the great wall near by was also beautifully colored. These effects could even be seen by the bright moonlight, and seated on a hill-side the royal party were enjoying the tranquility of the scene, when all were astonished by the sound of a flute played by some one up above them. Looking up among the tree-

tops a man was seen descending toward them, seated upon the back of a gracefully moving stork. The King imagined it must be some heavenly being, and ordered the chief eunuch to make some proper salutation. But before this could be done, a voice was heard saying: "Fear not, O King. I am simply Hong Pansa (Gil-Dong's new title). I have come to make my obeisance before your august presence and be confirmed in my rank."

This he did, and no one attempted to molest him; seeing which, the King, feeling that it was useless longer to attempt to destroy a man who could read the unspoken thoughts of men, said:

"Why do you persist in troubling the country? I have removed from you now the stigma attached to your birth. What more will you have?"

"I wish," said Gil-Dong, with due humility, "to go to a distant land, and settle down to the pursuit of peace and happiness. If I may be granted three thousand bags of rice I will gladly go and trouble you no longer."

"But how will you transport such an enormous quantity of rice?" asked the King.

"That can be arranged," said Gil-Dong. "If I may be but granted the order, I will remove the rice at daybreak."

The order was given. Gil-Dong went away as he came, and in the early morning a fleet of junks appeared off the royal granaries, took on the rice, and made away before the people were well aware of their presence.

Gil-Dong now sailed for an island off the west coast. He found one uninhabited, and with his few followers he stored his riches, and brought many articles of value from his former hiding-places. His people he taught to till the soil, and all went well on the little island till the master made a trip to a neighboring island, which was famous for its deadly mineral poison—a thing much prized for tipping the arrows with. Gil-Dong wanted to get some of this poison, and made a visit to the island. While passing through the settled districts he casually noticed that many copies of a proclamation were posted up, offering a large reward to any one

who would succeed in restoring to her father a young lady who had been stolen by a band of savage people who lived in the mountains.

Gil-Dong journeyed on all day, and at night he found himself high up in the wild mountain regions, where the poison was abundant. Gazing about in making some preparations for passing the night in this place, he saw a light, and following it, he came to a house built below him on a ledge of rocks, and in an almost inaccessible position. He could see the interior of a large hall, where were gathered many hairy, shaggy-looking men, eating, drinking, and smoking. One old fellow, who seemed to be chief, was tormenting a young lady by trying to tear away her veil and expose her to the gaze of the barbarians assembled. Gil-Dong could not stand this sight, and, taking a poisoned arrow, he sent it direct for the heart of the villain, but the distance was so great that he missed his mark sufficiently to only wound the arm. All one of them threw aside her veil and implored for mercy. Then it was that Gil-Dong recognized the maiden whom he had rescued the previous evening. She was marvelously beautiful, and already he was deeply smitten with her maidenly charms. Her voice seemed like that of an angel of peace sent to quiet the hearts of rough men. As she modestly begged for her life, she told the story of her capture by the robbers, and how she had been dragged away to their den, and was only saved from insult by the interposition of some heavenly being, who had in pity smote the arm of her tormentor.

Great was Gil-Dong's joy at being able to explain his own part in the matter, and the maiden heart, already won by the manly beauty of her rescuer, now overflowed with gratitude and love. Remembering herself, however, she quickly veiled her face, but the mischief had been done; each had seen the other, and they could henceforth know no peace, except in each other's presence.

The proclamations had made but little impression upon Gil-Dong, and it was not till the lady had told her story that he remembered reading them. He at once took steps to remove the beautiful girl and her companion in distress, and not knowing but that other of the savages might return, he did not dare to make search for a



chair and bearers, but mounting donkeys the little party set out for the home of the distressed parents, which they reached safely in due time. The father's delight knew no bounds. He was a subject of Korea's King, yet he possessed this island and ruled its people in his own right. And calling his subjects, he explained to them publicly the wonderful works of the stranger, to whom he betrothed his daughter, and to whom he gave his official position.

The people indulged in all manner of gay festivities in honor of the return of the lost daughter of their chief; in respect to the bravery of Gil-Dong; and to celebrate his advent as their ruler.

In due season the marriage ceremonies were celebrated, and the impatient lovers were given to each other's embrace. Their lives were full of happiness and prosperity. Other outlying islands were united under Gil-Dong's rule, and no desire or ambition remained ungratified. Yet there came a time when the husband grew sad, and tears swelled the heart of the young wife as she tried in vain to comfort him. He explained at last that he had a presentiment that his father was either dead or dying, and that it was his duty to go and mourn at the grave. With anguish at the thought of parting, the wife urged him to go. Taking a junk laden with handsome marble slabs for the grave and statuary to surround it, and followed by junks bearing three thousand bags of rice, he set out for the capital. Arriving, he cut off his hair, and repaired to his old Louie, where a servant admitted him on the supposition that he was a priest. He found his father was no more; but the body yet remained, because a suitable place could not be found for the burial. Thinking him to be a priest, Gil-Dong was allowed to select the spot, and the burial took place with due ceremony. Then it was that the son revealed himself, and took his place with the mourners. The stone images and monuments were erected upon the nicely sodded grounds. Gil-Dong sent the rice he had brought, to the government granaries in return for the King's loan to him, and regretted that mourning would prevent his paying his respects to his King; he set out for his home with his true mother and his father's legal wife. The latter did not survive long after the death of her husband, but the poor slave-

mother of the bright boy was spared many years to enjoy the peace and quiet of her son's bright home, and to be ministered to by her dutiful, loving children and their numerous offspring.

# 16. The Hero's (or Sheroe's) Journey

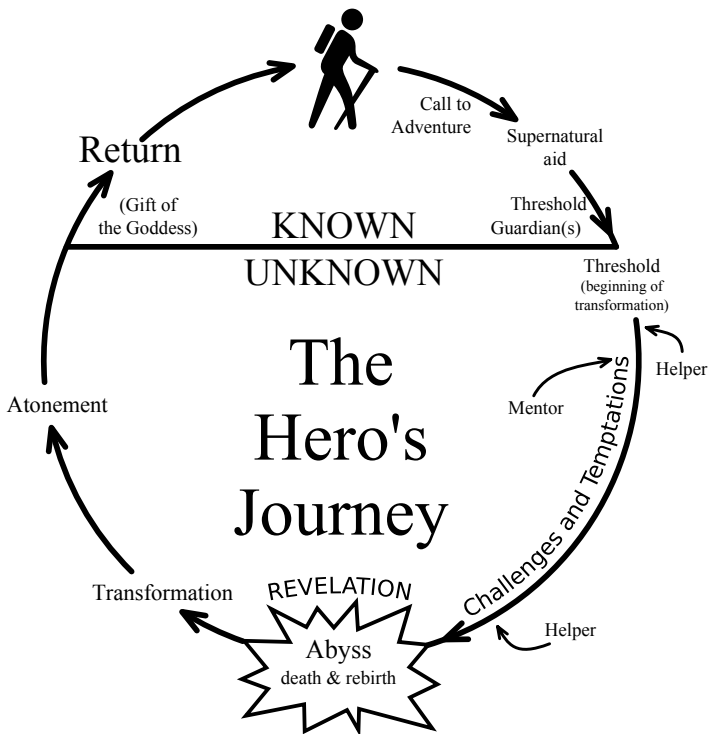


Respond to the following questions.

“How do you define hero?”

“Do you think fame is an important component of heroism, or do you think most heroes are unknown?”

“Is there anyone you know personally whom you consider a hero?”



[“Heroesjourney” \(Links to an external site.\)](#) by [Slashme \(Links to an external site.\)](#) is in the [Public Domain](#)

### Essential Questions

- Do the attributes of a hero remain the same over time?
- When does a positive personality trait become a tragic flaw?
- What is the role of a hero or “she-roe” (coined by Maya Angelou) in a culture?
- How do various cultures reward / recognize their heroes and “she-ros”?
- Why is it important for people and cultures to construct narratives about their experience?



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

[https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/  
introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=83#h5p-16](https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=83#h5p-16)

Before taking a look at a few more hero or sheroe journeys, let's look at little bit more at the theory of [The Hero's Journey and the Monomyth: Crash Course World Mythology #25](#)

### Try it yourself

Read through the events that occur on a hero's journey here: [Campbell's 'Hero's Journey' Monomyth](#)

You'll want to take notes on these events.

As you read this ancient Korean novel, how many events of Campbell's 'Hero's Journey' can you find? Name them and describe them.

## 17. Visual Arts



blue, child art, art, painting, visual arts, electric blue,  
modern art, paint

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ource=pxhere](https://pxhere.com/en/photo/1515275?utm_content=shareClip&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=pxhere)

### *Essential Questions for Visual Arts*

- What conditions, attitudes, & behaviors support creativity & innovative thinking?
- What factors prevent or encourage people to take creative risks?
- How does collaboration expand the creative process?
- How does knowing the contexts, histories, & traditions of art forms help us create works of art & design?
- Why do artists follow or break from established traditions?
- What responsibilities come with the freedom to create?
- How do objects, places, & design shape lives & communities?
- How do artists & designers determine goals for designing or redesigning objects, places, or systems?
- How do artists & designers create works of art or design that effectively communicate?

- How does collaboratively reflecting on a work help us experience it more completely?
- How are artworks cared for & by whom?
- Why do people value objects, artifacts, & artworks, & select them for presentation?
- How does the presenting & sharing of objects, artifacts, & artworks influence & shape ideas, beliefs, & experiences?
- How do objects, artifacts, & artworks collected, preserved, or presented, cultivate appreciation & understanding?
- How do life experiences influence the way you relate to art?
- How does learning about art impact how we perceive the world?
- What can we learn from our responses to art?
- Where & how do we encounter images in our world?
- How do images influence our views of the world?
- How can the viewer “read” a work of art as text?
- How is a personal preference different from an evaluation?
- How does engaging in creating art enrich people’s lives?
- How does making art attune people to their surroundings?
- How do people contribute to awareness and understanding of their lives and the lives of their communities through art-making?
- How does art help us understand the lives of people of different times, places, and cultures?
- How is art used to impact the views of a society?

- How does art preserve aspects of life?

The visual arts are art forms such as painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, photography, video, filmmaking, design, crafts, and architecture. Many artistic disciplines such as performing arts, conceptual art, textile arts also involve aspects of visual arts as well as arts of other types. Also included within the visual arts are the applied arts such as industrial design, graphic design, fashion design, interior design and decorative art.

Current usage of the term “visual arts” includes fine art as well as the applied or decorative arts and crafts, but this was not always the case. Before the Arts and Crafts Movement in Britain and elsewhere at the turn of the 20th century, the term ‘artist’ had for some centuries often been restricted to a person working in the fine arts (such as painting, sculpture, or printmaking) and not the decorative arts, craft, or applied Visual arts media. The distinction was emphasized by artists of the Arts and Crafts Movement, who valued vernacular art forms as much as high forms.[4] Art schools made a distinction between the fine arts and the crafts, maintaining that a craftsperson could not be considered a practitioner of the arts.

The increasing tendency to privilege painting, and to a lesser degree sculpture, above other arts has been a feature of Western art as well as East Asian art. In both regions painting has been seen as relying to the highest degree on the imagination of the artist, and the furthest removed from manual labour – in Chinese painting the most highly valued styles were those of “scholar-painting”, at least in theory practiced by gentleman amateurs. The Western hierarchy of genres reflected similar attitudes.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visual\\_arts#:~:text=The%20visual%20arts%20are%20art,as%20arts%20of%20other%20types.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visual_arts#:~:text=The%20visual%20arts%20are%20art,as%20arts%20of%20other%20types.)

Study the world of visual arts in the beautiful course Lesson 24: Conv Lesson 24: [Converging Histories – The Global Art World](#) by Marie Porterfield Barry

Study the descriptions of each artist. Start on page 5. Make sure you listen to the video of each artist's interview.

*Consider these questions as you study the artists in [Converging Histories – The Global Art World](#)*

- How are culture and art linked?
- What are the methods and techniques of each of the featured artists?

### **Titus Kaphar: Can art amend history?**

Artist Titus Kaphar makes paintings and sculptures that wrestle with the struggles of the past while speaking to the diversity and advances of the present. In an unforgettable live workshop, Kaphar takes a brush full of white paint to a replica of a 17th-century Frans Hals painting, obscuring parts of the composition and bringing its hidden story into view. There's a narrative coded in art like this,

Kaphar says. What happens when we shift our focus and confront unspoken truths?



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online

here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=98#oembed-1>

### **LaToya Ruby Frazier: A visual history of inequality in industrial America**

For the last 12 years, LaToya Ruby Frazier has photographed friends, neighbors and family in Braddock, Pennsylvania. But though the steel town has lately been hailed as a posterchild of “rustbelt revitalization,” Frazier’s pictures tell a different story, of the real impact of inequality and environmental toxicity. In this short, powerful talk, the TED Fellow shares a deeply personal glimpse of an often-unseen world.



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here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=98#oembed-2>

### **Sanford Biggers: An Artist’s unflinching look at racial violence**

Conceptual artist and TED Fellow Sanford Biggers uses painting, sculpture, video and performance to spark challenging conversations about the history and trauma of black America. Join him as he details two compelling works and shares the motivation behind his art. “Only through more thoughtful dialogue about

history and race can we evolve as individuals and society,” Biggers says.



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here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=98#oembed-3>

### **eL Seed: A project of peace, painted across 50 buildings**

eL Seed fuses Arabic calligraphy with graffiti to paint colorful, swirling messages of hope and peace on buildings from Tunisia to Paris. The artist and TED Fellow shares the story of his most ambitious project yet: a mural painted across 50 buildings in Manshiyat Naser, a district of Cairo, Egypt, that can only be fully seen from a nearby mountain.



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### **Sethembile Msezane: Living sculptures that stand for history’s truths**

In the century-old statues that occupy Cape Town, Sethembile Mzesane didn’t see anything that looked like her own reality. So she became a living sculpture herself, standing for hours on end in public spaces dressed in symbolic costumes, to reclaim the city and its public spaces for her community. In this powerful, tour-de-force

talk, she shares the stories and motivation behind her mesmerizing performance art.



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here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=98#oembed-5>

### **Dustin Yellin: A journey through the mind of an artist**

Dustin Yellin makes mesmerizing artwork that tells complex, myth-inspired stories. How did he develop his style? In this disarming talk, he shares the journey of an artist — starting from age 8 — and his idiosyncratic way of thinking and seeing. Follow the path that leads him up to his latest major work (or two).



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### **Kayla Briet: Why do I make art? To build time capsules for my heritage**

Kayla Briët creates art that explores identity and self-discovery — and the fear that her culture may someday be forgotten. She shares how she found her creative voice and reclaimed the stories of her Dutch-Indonesian, Chinese and Native American heritage by infusing them into film and music time capsules.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online

here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=98#oembed-7>

### **Christoph Niemann: You are fluent in this language (and don't even know it)**

Without realizing it, we're fluent in the language of pictures, says illustrator Christoph Niemann. In a charming talk packed with witty, whimsical drawings, Niemann takes us on a hilarious visual tour that shows how artists tap into our emotions and minds — all without words.



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here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=98#oembed-8>

### **Wanuri Kahiu: Fun, Fierce and fantastical African art**

We're so used to narratives out of Africa being about war, poverty and devastation, says TED Fellow Wanuri Kahiu. Where's the fun? Introducing "AfroBubbleGum" — African art that's vibrant, lighthearted and without a political agenda. Rethink the value of all that is unserious as Kahiu explains why we need art that captures the full range of human experiences to tell the stories of Africa.





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### **eL Seed: Street art with a message of hope and peace**

What does this gorgeous street art say? It's Arabic poetry, inspired by bold graffiti and placed where a message of hope and peace can do the most good. In this quietly passionate talk, artist and TED Fellow eL Seed describes his ambition: to create art so beautiful it needs no translation



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### **Frida Kahlo: The woman behind the legend**



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### **Amit Sood: Every piece of art you've every wanted to see – up close and searchable**

What does a cultural Big Bang look like? For Amit Sood, director of Google's Cultural Institute and Art Project, it's an online platform where anyone can explore the world's greatest collections of art and artifacts in vivid, lifelike detail. Join Sood and Google artist in residence Cyril Diagne in a mind-bending demo of experiments from the Cultural Institute and glimpse the exciting future of accessibility to arts and culture.



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here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=98#oembed-11>

#### *For Further Research*

The following are the best resources I found so far on Visual Arts. There are a variety of resources from the Smithsonian. I've chosen just a few. I've also included links to several open resources on Art Appreciation. You might take a look at choose one or two to expand on the Visual Arts.

Smithsonian Educator Resources (so many open resources here, I've chosen just a few)

### **China's Calligraphic Arts**

<https://asia.si.edu/learn/chinas-calligraphic-arts/>

### **Discovering Babur's Gardens**

The Elizabeth Moynihan Collection in the Freer and Sackler Archives

Travel back to sixteenth-century Central Asia with architectural historian Elizabeth Moynihan. Follow in the footsteps of Babur, the first Mughal emperor, as he carves lush and fragrant gardens into the landscape of India, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

<https://asia.si.edu/learn/discovering-baburs-gardens/>

### **How to Look at a Quran**

<https://asia.si.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/how-to-look-at-a-quran.pdf>

### **How to Identify a Buddha**

<https://education.asianart.org/resources/how-to-identify-a-buddha/>

### **An open resource for Art Appreciation.**

<https://dc.etsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1025&context=art-appreciation-oer>

### **Another good art appreciation resource to pull from**

<https://www.oercommons.org/courses/art-appreciation-and-techniques-3/view>

### **Ted Ed on Visual Art**

<https://ed.ted.com/search?q=visual+art>

### **Architecture**

Explore this Chinese House: <http://yinyutang.pem.org/index.html>



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<https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=98#h5p-19>

# 18. Culinary Arts





Culinary arts, in which culinary means “related to cooking”, are the cuisine arts of food preparation, cooking, and presentation of food, usually in the form of meals. People working in this field – especially in establishments such as restaurants – are commonly called “chefs” or “cooks”, although, at its most general, the terms “culinary artist” and “culinarian” are also used. Table manners (“the table arts”) are sometimes referred to as a culinary art.

Expert chefs are required to have knowledge of food science, nutrition and diet and are responsible for preparing meals that are as pleasing to the eye as they are to the palate. After restaurants, their primary places of work include delicatessens and relatively large institutions such as hotels and hospitals.  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culinary\\_arts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culinary_arts)

So, why include culinary arts in an Introduction to Humanities course? If we look back at our essential questions, maybe we can find an answer. Who are we? What makes us human? Can we find culinary arts in this? The food we eat makes us human. It is a important to our culture.

Let's take a look at Food around the World  
<http://www.foodbycountry.com/>

*Choose one that you would never have tried and try it. Follow*

*the recipe and make a new kind of food!*

### **Taste the Nation**

The trailer for this amazing show: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OzN76UMkT\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OzN76UMkT_w)

Padma Lakshmi's New Food Show Is a Trojan Horse: Taste the Nation is breezy in tone, but it exposes the betrayals at the heart of "American" cuisine.

This is a show on Hulu, so it isn't available to everyone. However, if there is a way to use this, it is a wonderful introduction to the culinary arts of America.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/culture/archive/2020/07/padma-lakshmi-hulu-taste-nation-american-cuisine/613915/>

Listen to 'Taste The Nation': Padma Lakshmi Explores The American Palate on NPR

<https://www.npr.org/2020/07/09/889351610/taste-the-nation-padma-lakshmi-explores-the-american-palate>

### **Special Issue "Food, Culture, and Heritage. Identity Formation through Eating Customs"**

Dr. Francesca Muccini

[https://www.mdpi.com/journal/humanities/special\\_issues/eatingcustoms](https://www.mdpi.com/journal/humanities/special_issues/eatingcustoms)

### **How Food Shaped Humanity**

By Lisa Bramen SMITHSONIANMAG.COM MARCH 26, 2010

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/how-food-shaped-humanity-83840262/>

### **19 Amazing Culinary Traditions Around the World**

<https://wander-lush.org/food-culture-unesco/>

### **The Role of Food in Human Culture**

<https://globalgastros.com/food-culture/role-of-food-in-human-culture>

### **5 times food has changed the course of history**

<https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/5-times-food-has-changed-the-course-of-history/#::~:~:text=More%20than%20just%20snacks%2C%20food,st>



[ories%20than%20you%20might%20think!&text=The%20history%20of%20food%20is,transform%20the%20way%20we%20live.](#)

### **How food helped shape history**

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/03/how-food-helped-shape-history/>

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/foodfeatures/joy-of-food/>

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/foodfeatures/communal-table/>

### **Culinary Arts of Asia**

Chang, K. C. “[Food in Chinese Culture](#).” Asia Society Blog.

Cooper, E. “[Chinese Table Manners: You Are How You Eat](#).” (PDF) *Human Organization* 45, no. 2 (1986): 179–84.

Ohnuki-Tierney, Emiko. “[Rice As Self: Japanese Identities through Time](#).” *Education about Asia* 9, no. 3 (2004): 4–9.

Kushner, Barak. “[Food History & National Myths](#).” Japan Society, January 14, 2008. [On Ramen in Japan]

Chung, Haekyung. “Introduction.” In [Korean Cuisine: A Cultural Journey](#). Translated by Yoojin Lee. 2009.

Watson, James. “[Prosperity Versus Pathology: A Social History of Obesity in China](#).” (PDF) *Harvard Asia Pacific Review*, 2000.

北海道グルメ動画【GouTube北海道】. “[Edo Sushi Video](#).” August 19, 2013. YouTube.

The Culinary Institute of America. “[Medicinal Food in Hong Kong](#)” February 20, 2013. YouTube.

Arirang. “[Globalizing Korean Food](#).” February 7, 2014. YouTube.

Arirang Culture. “[Tales of Hansik – Kimchee](#).” September 26, 2013. YouTube.

The Fishy Channel. “[Tsukiji Fish Market](#).” November 4, 2014. YouTube.

A History of Kimchi

<https://zenkimchi.com/top-posts/kimchi-1-short-history/>

# 19. The Performing Arts



### **Why the live arts matter – Ben Cameron**

How can the magic of live theater, live music, live dance compete with the always-on Internet? Ben Cameron offers a bold look forward to a world where live arts matter more than ever – to link humans together at a primal level of shared experience.

Arts administrator and live-theater fan Ben Cameron looks at the state of the live arts – asking: How can the magic of live theater, live music, live dance compete with the always-on Internet? In his talk, he offers a bold look forward. (Filmed at TEDxYYC.)



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here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=105#oembed-1>

## 20. Dance



*Younger girl is dancing Rwandan traditional dance called AMARABA, and while dancing she has a basket called AGASEKE on her head.*

Dance is a performing art form consisting of purposefully selected sequences of human movement. This movement has aesthetic and symbolic value, and is acknowledged as dance by performers and observers within a particular culture. Dance can be categorized and described by its choreography, by its repertoire of movements, or by its historical period or place of origin.

An important distinction is to be drawn between the contexts of theatrical and participatory dance, although these two categories are not always completely separate; both may have special functions, whether social, ceremonial, competitive, erotic, martial, or sacred/liturgical. Other forms of human movement are sometimes said to have a dance-like quality, including martial arts, gymnastics, cheerleading, figure skating, synchronized swimming, marching bands, and many other forms of athletics.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dance>

**Read the following three articles. Why do humans dance?**

**[Why Do Humans Dance?](#)** By Denise Chow – Assistant Managing Editor March 22, 2010

**[Why Do Humans Dance?](#)** Kimerer L LaMothe Ph.D.

Reflections on a quintessential human experience

**Why do we like to dance—And move to the beat?**

Columbia University neurologist John Krakauer busts a move and rolls out an answer to this query: September 26, 2008

There are various reasons people dance. Dance has three purposes:

Ceremonial

Recreational

Artistic

Dance is created and performed with a specific purpose.

As we take a look at various dance performances on the [Ted Playlist](#), we can answer the following questions.

*Essential Questions*

- Why do people dance?
- What are the characteristics of a ceremonial dance?
- What are the characteristics of a recreational dance?
- What are the characteristics of a dance created for the purpose of artistic expression?
- Can a dance or style have more than one purpose?
- To what extent does kinesthetic communication differ from other disciplines?
- How is dance present in everyday life?
- How is dance used to solve problems?
- What can best be communicated through dance?
- To what extent is dance creative and to what extent is it deliberately ritualized?

## [Ted Dance Playlist](#)

Here are a few to start:



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One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=123#oembed-3>

## 2I. Music





So, we move from language and literature to another similar communication, music. Before we begin, what is your favorite song or piece of music? Take 5 minutes and listen to it.

Here's mine. [Pharrell Williams – Happy \(Official Music Video\)](#)

*Let's begin with these questions. We won't know the answers right away, but as we work through this unit, maybe we can add to our understanding of what makes us human.*

- What do we mean when we refer to music as the universal language?
- What is music? How is this different from sound?
- Why do people listen to music?
- How is music structured?
- What is a rhythm and melody?
- How is rhythm different from a beat?
- What is a timbre, and how are instruments different from each other?
- Why do some things sound harmonious and others don't?
- How and why is music central to a culture and community?
- How are music and arts related?
- How has music influenced history? And how has history influenced music?
- Why is music so important to humans?
- What is the purpose (or purposes) of music?
- How does music transcend language?
- Why is music split into notes and measures?
- Why is the human voice particularly powerful in music?

In this next Ted lecture, Victor Wooten talks about music as a powerful communication tool. He says that it causes us to laugh, cry, think, and question. He is a Bassist and five-time Grammy winner.



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version of the text. You can view it online here:

[https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/  
introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=121#h5p-20](https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=121#h5p-20)

So, you may have learned about how to classify musical instruments in a music theory class. Typically, in western music classes we talk about wind instruments, woodwind instruments, brass instruments, stringed instruments, and percussion instruments. Can you name one of each of these?

Read through this wonderful article on the [Didgeridoo](#). Does it help you answer any of the essential questions at the beginning of this chapter?

Take a look at this film. Is this ‘sound’ or ‘music’? Is it ‘poetry’, ‘language’, or something else?

#### [\*\*El Silbo by Angello Faccini\*\*](#)

Let’s watch a film about a [Colombian flamenco guitarist living in Seville, Spain](#). As you watch this film, consider the following:

- What draws you to a type of music?
- What is the most important to you, the lyrics, the rhythm, the experience or feeling?
- As you watch, pay attention to the elements of this music, the singing, the guitar, the dance, and the handclaps.
- What kind of story does flamenco tell? Why are these stories important?
- How can doing what you love ‘feed’ you? What are some examples from your own life where art, language, dance, music or sport ‘feed’ you?

**The Man is the Music by Maris Curran** (Length: 19 min. Place: Atlanta, GA)

The Man is the Music draws us into Atlanta-based artist and musician Lonnie Holley's imaginative and captivating world. Prolific artist, musician and lover of Mother Earth, Holley treasures the discarded. Nurturing the neglected, he finds healing in the transformative power of art. This short documentary is not so much a portrait of the prolific artist and musician, as an experiential reflection on art as a way of life. Holley's work is a product of the environment in which he was raised —Jim Crow Alabama—and reflects the impact of being socially discarded. Holley compulsively creates and his work is a means to deal with loss. It's through his unique perspective and the process of creating beauty that Lonnie draws us into an imaginative and captivating world.

Create a piece of art from garbage. What lyrics might accompany your art?

### **Vincent Moon and Nana Vasconcelos: Hidden Music Rituals Around the World**



*One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online*

here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=121#oembed-1>

Vincent Moon travels the world with a backpack and a camera, filming astonishing music and ritual the world rarely sees — from a powerful Sufi ritual in Chechnya to an ayahuasca journey in Peru. He hopes his films can help people see their own cultures in a new way, to make young people say: “Whoa, my grandfather is as cool as Beyoncé.” Followed by a mesmerizing performance by jazz icon Naná Vasconcelos.

A soundscape is the acoustic environment as perceived by

humans, in context. The term was originally coined by Michael Southworth[1], and popularised by R. Murray Schafer.[2] There is a varied history of the use of soundscape depending on discipline, ranging from urban design to wildlife ecology to computer science.[3] An important distinction is to separate soundscape from the broader acoustic environment. The acoustic environment is the combination of all the acoustic resources, natural and artificial, within a given area as modified by the environment. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standardized these definitions in 2014.(ISO 12913-1:2014)

A soundscape is a sound or combination of sounds that forms or arises from an immersive environment. The study of soundscape is the subject of acoustic ecology or soundscape ecology. The idea of soundscape refers to both the natural acoustic environment, consisting of natural sounds, including animal vocalizations, the collective habitat expression of which is now referred to as the biophony, and, for instance, the sounds of weather and other natural elements, now referred to as the geophony; and environmental sounds created by humans, the anthropophony through a sub-set called controlled sound, such as musical composition, sound design, and language, work, and sounds of mechanical origin resulting from use of industrial technology. Crucially, the term soundscape also includes the listener's perception of sounds heard as an environment: "how that environment is understood by those living within it"[4] and therefore mediates their relations. The disruption of these acoustic environments results in noise pollution.[5]

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soundscape>

<https://www.vincentmoon.com/map.php>

Here are several Ted Talks from a playlist that may answer some of those questions.

**Robert Gupta: Between music and medicine.**



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here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=121#oembed-2>

When Robert Gupta was caught between a career as a doctor and as a violinist, he realized his place was in the middle, with a bow in his hand and a sense of social justice in his heart. He tells a moving story of society's marginalized and the power of music therapy, which can succeed where conventional medicine fails.

### **Tod Machover and Dan Ellsey: Inventing instruments that unlock new music**

Tod Machover of MIT's Media Lab is devoted to extending musical expression to everyone, from virtuosos to amateurs, and in the most diverse forms, from opera to video games. He and composer Dan Ellsey shed light on what's next.



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here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=121#oembed-3>

### **Ji-Hae Park: The violin, and my dark night of the soul**

In her quest to become a world-famous violinist, Ji-Hae Park fell into a severe depression. Only music was able to lift her out again — showing her that her goal needn't be to play lofty concert halls, but instead to bring the wonder of the instrument to as many people as possible



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here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=121#oembed-4>

### **Benjamin Zander: The transformative power of classical music**

Benjamin Zander has two infectious passions: classical music, and helping us all realize our untapped love for it – and by extension, our untapped love for all new possibilities, new experiences, new connections.



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here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=121#oembed-5>

### **Evelyn Glennie: How to truly listen**

In this soaring demonstration, deaf percussionist Evelyn Glennie illustrates how listening to music involves much more than simply letting sound waves hit your eardrums.



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here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=121#oembed-6>

### **Michael Tilson Thomas: Music and emotion through time.**

In this epic overview, Michael Tilson Thomas traces the development of classical music through the development of written notation, the record, and the re-mix.



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### **When we listen or perform music, how do we critique or categorize or study music?**

Let's go back again to our essential questions. As you listen to these videos of music from around the world, which questions can you answer?

[https://www.ted.com/playlists/396/music\\_around\\_the\\_world](https://www.ted.com/playlists/396/music_around_the_world)



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## 22. Theater





Image by [Gerd Altmann](#) from [Pixabay](#)

*As we take a look at theater can we find the answer to these questions?*

- How does theater reflect and influence society?  
How does an audience communicate with actors?
- What life skills can we learn from theater?
- How does culture affect drama through history?
- How does drama bridge cultural diversity?
- How have the events in history molded drama?

### **Pasty Rodenburg: Why I do theater**

Patsy Rodenburg says the world needs actors more than ever. In this talk at Michael Howard Studios, she tells the story of a profound encounter that reveals the deeper role theater can play in people's lives.

Theatre or theater[a] is a collaborative form of performing art that uses live performers, typically actors or actresses, to present the experience of a real or imagined event before a live audience in a specific place, often a stage. The performers may communicate this experience to the audience through combinations of gesture, speech, song, music, and dance. Elements of art, such as painted scenery and stagecraft such as lighting are used to enhance the physicality, presence and immediacy of the experience. The specific place of the performance is also named by the word "theatre" as derived from the Ancient Greek θέατρον (théatron, "a place for viewing"), itself from θεάομαι (theáomai, "to see", "to watch", "to observe").

Modern Western theatre comes, in large measure, from the theatre of ancient Greece, from which it borrows technical terminology, classification into genres, and many of its themes, stock characters, and plot elements. Theatre artist Patrice Pavis defines theatricality, theatrical language, stage writing and the specificity of theatre as synonymous expressions that differentiate theatre from the other performing arts, literature and the arts in general.

Modern theatre includes performances of plays and musical theatre. The art forms of ballet and opera are also theatre and use many conventions such as acting, costumes and staging. They were influential to the development of musical theatre; see those articles for more information. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theatre>

### **Kabuki: The people's dramatic art – Amanda Mattes**

The Japanese dance and theater art of kabuki, derived from the word kabuku, meaning "out of the ordinary," can be traced back to the streets of seventeenth-century Kyoto. Kabuki became a dramatic art for the common people, with its use of makeup and

facial expressions rather than masks, as well as a playful take on current events. Amanda Mattes tracks the evolution of kabuki and its place in Japan's rich cultural heritage.



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=130#h5p-21>

### **Oskar Eustis: Why theater is essential to democracy (What do you think?)**

Truth comes from the collision of different ideas, and theater plays an essential role in showing us that truth, says legendary artistic director Oskar Eustis. In this powerful talk, Eustis outlines his plan to reach (and listen to) people in places across the US where the theater, like many other institutions, has turned its back — like the deindustrialized Rust Belt. “Our job is to try to hold up a vision to America that shows not only who all of us are individually, but that welds us back into the commonality that we need to be,” Eustis says. “That’s what the theater is supposed to do.”



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online

here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=130#oembed-1>

### **Adong Judith: How I use art to bridge misunderstanding**

Director and playwright Adong Judith creates provocative art that sparks dialogue on issues from LGBTQ rights to war crimes. In this

quick but powerful talk, the TED Fellow details her work – including the play “Silent Voices,” which brought victims of the Northern Ugandan war against Joseph Kony’s rebel group together with political, religious and cultural leaders for transformative talks. “Listening to one another will not magically solve all problems,” Judith says. “But it will give a chance to create avenues to start to work together to solve many of humanity’s problems.”



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=130#oembed-2>

(Other videos on Theater)

<https://www.ted.com/search?cat=videos&q=theater>



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://minnstate.pressbooks.pub/introductiontohumanitiesv2/?p=130#h5p-22>

## 23. Film





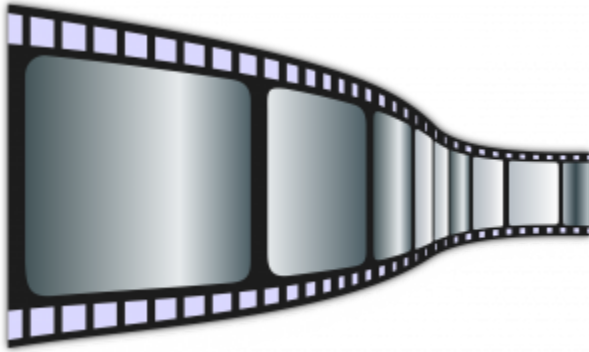


Image by [OpenClipart-Vectors](#) from [Pixabay](#)

Films have been widely regarded as a magical experience for many people. Although films have undergone significant transformations over the last one hundred plus years and will continue to do so as society progresses and technology becomes more advanced, one thing remains certain. That certainty is that films will go down in history as one of the most cherished and sought out forms of entertainment.

#### *Essential Questions*

- How does film reflect the beliefs and values of society?
- How do films make us think?
- What is the relationship between the viewer and

## the film

Since the industry's inception, films have become one of the most prominent forms of entertainment in history. Films have captured the imagination and interest of the entire planet with timeless classics such as *The Wizard of Oz*, *Jurassic Park*, *The Godfather*, *Rocky* and countless others to name. Over the last century, movies of all types have allowed audiences to witness, respect and enjoy the magic and creativity of film producers, directors and actors. Films, like much of society, have undergone a complete digital transformation and have become more advanced as new technologies have emerged. Even as technology has expanded and new forms of entertainment have emerged, the legacy of film has remained intact and this phenomenal element will go down in history as one of the most popular forms of entertainment ever created.

### **Film History: The Early Years through Contemporary Time**

Films and movies are commonly referred to as Motion Pictures, which are a compilation of moving images that are displayed on screen. However, before films reached the level of sophistication that has been established as the status quo in contemporary time, films started off in a primitive phase. Dating back to the 19th Century, there have been many devices and public figures that were instrumental in the early years of film. In the 1860's, Peep Shows were made available to the public. Peep Shows were multiple pictures that were linked to a crank in a box that people individually operated which allowed the pictures to move as a form of entertainment. One of the most prominent figures in the development of the early stages of film was Thomas Edison. Although Edison is remembered as the individual who invented the light bulb, unbeknownst to many people, Edison was also responsible for the creation of the Kinetoscope. This creation was

one of the early motion picture devices that allowed society to watch short films individually and person by person as opposed to watching them simultaneously as one whole group. Other notable figures included Auguste and Louis Lumiere who were French inventor brothers that are remembered as two of the earliest movie makers who presented films to the public for the first time. As the 20th Century was unfolding and new technologies were emerging, D.W. Griffith produced and directed the first ever major full-length film entitled, *Birth of a Nation* which was released in 1915. From the beginning of film history, various types of films have existed. Some of these types included Silent Films which were films that had no sound at all, including character voices and special effects. In contemporary time, Independent Films, which are films that are not produced by a major film studio and not as expensive or time consuming to make, are gaining more attention and obtaining more appeal with young actors and up-and-coming film directors. With the rise in new technologies such as Social Media and YouTube, many members of society, particularly those who are both younger and inexperienced, are taking on the title of Self-Proclaimed Independent Film Maker since, with a camera or an I-phone, these individuals can upload footage for the entire world to view in a matter of seconds. However, many experienced actors and producers create Independent Films as well. Tim Reid, who starred on the television shows *WKRP in Cincinnati* and *Sister, Sister*, is regarded in contemporary time as an accomplished Independent Filmmaker. Reid operates and owns a film studio in Virginia and in late 2013 presented an International Film Festival at Norfolk State University, an HBCU located in Norfolk, Virginia. Hollywood was not always the way it is depicted in society today nor has it always been located in California. Back during the early part of the 20th Century, many of the nation's major film companies were located in New York, however this began to change. According to Biagi (2005), "In 1903, Harry Chandler owned the Los Angeles Times, but he also invested in Los Angeles real estate. Chandler and his friends courted the movie business, offering cheap land, moderate weather

and inexpensive labor (p. 134)<sup>[1]</sup>. Within a short amount of time, Hollywood became what the world views it as in contemporary time.

### **Film Genres and Movie Ratings**

Films have come a long way since the early days of their existence. Today, there are a vast amount of Film Genres, various types of films, which include Comedy, Horror, Mystery/Suspense, Fantasies, Drama/Musicals, Science Fiction, Westerns and Action/Adventure. When thinking about these various types of films and the amount of entertainment they have brought to audiences, many people often feel a sense of nostalgia. Many films come to mind when thinking of comedy in the 21st Century. Recent comedies like *The Hangover* and *Tropic Thunder* were popular hits with audiences because of the balanced mixture of creativity and originality. However, there were many great comedies that came long before these films were even conceptualized and offered up a substantial amount of comic relief. Films such as *Blazing Saddles* and *National Lampoon's Vacation* were both critically acclaimed comedies that appealed greatly to the public and became classics that are still admired to this day. Horror films, as well as films in the Mystery and Suspense genre, have evolved significantly. When horror and suspense films were first released it was during an era of limited, and primitive, special effects. However, in contemporary time these types of films rely heavily on digital technology and graphic makeup for scares and thrills. Unlike with today's films, notable films of these two genres of the 20th Century did not rely heavily on digital effects. Instead, what made films scary back during that time frame were the character's emotions, dialogue, the occasional dark moments on screen and limited special effects. Some memorable horror and suspense films of the 20th Century were *The Shining*, *Halloween*, Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho*, and Stephen King's *It*. Fantasy films, many of which start out as a novel series, have both established and expanded their creativity with imaginative story lines and compelling special effects, especially within the last two decades. As a result, many fantasy film franchises have dominated media headlines, garnered a strong following among fans and have

amassed significant revenue globally. Some of these films include the *Harry Potter* franchise, the *Twilight* series and the newest, and ongoing addition, *The Hunger Games*. Films that fall into the Drama and Musical genre not only receive generally critical acclaim but they also resonate deeply with the viewer's hearts and minds. Many dramas tell stories that can be historical or fictional. Often times, dramas can appeal to an individual's personal life, ongoing issues in society and can also be viewed as coming-of-age films for many young people. Some outstanding drama films and musicals over the last few decades have included *Lincoln*, *On Golden Pond*, *Stand By Me*, *Brokeback Mountain*, *Lean on Me*, *The Sound of Music* and *Dream Girls*.

Science Fiction films have expanded their popularity in the last few years, especially with the rapid rise in advanced special effects and cutting edge technology. The newly rebooted *Star Trek* franchise starring Chris Pine, Zachary Quinto and Zoe Saldana, when compared to the 20th Century version starring William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy and DeForest Kelley, offers a stark contrast in terms of the use of special effects and models. The older franchise had a heavier reliance on models and stage props whereas digital effects are heavily used with the new franchise. Although Western Films are a dying film genre and are no longer viewed, or even produced, as much in the 21st Century, this genre does still maintain its place in history. One actor in particular, according to West (1971), "Gilbert M. Anderson, is remembered by many as the first Western movie star with his famous role of 'Broncho Billy' a character that he portrayed in over 300 short films" [2]. Action films have had a long and popular history with the public. When moviegoers think of action films they often think about prominent action stars of the last twenty to thirty years such as Arnold Schwarzenegger, Sylvester Stallone, Chuck Norris, Steven Seagal, Harrison Ford, Wesley Snipes, Bruce Willis and Jet Li. Often times in action films the typically seen plot is one involving one individual (the hero) against a group of villains. One of the earlier films that really set this standard for action films was 1988's *Die Hard* starring Bruce Willis as a cop from

New York up against a terrorist group led by Alan Rickman in an L.A. skyscraper.

Any movie that is created by a major film studio and then distributed to the public is subjected to a certain movie rating. The movie ratings are assigned based off the content that is viewed, the language used and any nudity that may occur in the film. The Motion Picture Association of America, MPAA, is known for creating the movie rating system which rates every major film as 'G', 'PG', 'PG-13', 'R', or 'NC-17'. Many films that are rated 'G', 'PG' often times pertain to a younger audience. In particular, animated films tend to fall into one of these two movie ratings. In comparison, 'PG-13', 'R' and 'NC-17' rated movies generally pertain to a more mature audience and typically contain more adult themed situations and language. Unknown to many of the current generation of moviegoers, the 'PG-13' rating was not in the original movie rating system. According to Ratings-History (n.d.), "It was not added until 1984 and it broadened the movie rating system and serves as a method of cautioning parents about allowing their children to view these types of movies" [3].

### **Minority Involvement in Films**

Similar to how African Americans and minorities were, at one point, segregated when it came to restrooms and schools, the same concept applied to movie theaters as well. African Americans were not granted admission into white theaters so therefore black theaters emerged around all black neighborhoods which featured all-black casts. NAACP History: Oscar Micheaux (n.d.) stated "Oscar Micheaux, known for producing, directing and distributing multiple race movies was one of the best known African American filmmakers of the time. He has gone down in history as the first African American to produce a black film and have it viewed in white theaters" [4]. When thinking about prominent African American's in film, most people in today's society would think about actors such as Denzel Washington, Morgan Freeman, Will Smith, Samuel L. Jackson and Eddie Murphy. Although these actors are popular and respected figures in the entertainment society, there were other important

figures that came before them and paved the way for these stars as well as other minorities. Some of these early figures included Paul Robeson who was one of the first African American male actors in film during the early part of the 20th Century. Robeson was best known for leading roles in *The Emperor Jones* and *Show Boat*. Even outside of film, Paul Robeson-About the Actor (2006) found that, “he was one of the first black men to play serious roles in the primarily white American theater” [5]. Other important figures included Sidney Poitier who, to the current generation of film watchers, is remembered as the first African American to win an Academy Award for Best Actor and for the portrayal as the father in, *A Raisin in the Sun*. However, Poitier is also remembered, according to Rodman (2009) as, “one of the first mainstream black stars, in movies such as *Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner* (1967) and *In the Heat of the Night* (1967), which dealt with themes of racial intolerance (p. 186)” [6].

In contemporary time, Will Smith is regarded by many as one of the most successful African American blockbuster film stars. Building upon the success of the 1990’s popular sit com *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*, Smith is idolized for box office hits such as *Independence Day*, *Bad Boys*, *Men in Black* and *I am Legend*. Morgan Freeman, being a critically acclaimed and highly respected actor with the unique ability to portray any character in a position of authority, such as ‘God’ in *Bruce Almighty* and ‘The President of the United States’ in *Deep Impact*, has become one of the few African American actors to be constantly sought out for national voice over work. Although there are many iconic African American film actors today, there are also many talented African American film makers such as John Singleton, who is known for directing the popular coming-of-age African American film, *Boyz in the Hood* and in recent years, *Four Brothers*. Unlike Singleton and other respected African American film makers like Spike Lee and Antoine Fuqua, Tyler Perry’s work in the entertainment field has received an overall mixed reception from audiences. Perry is often criticized by some in the African American community, as well as by various film critics,

for stereotyping the African American race in a negative way. However, Perry's rise to fame is an example of a rags to riches story of a highly successful African American entertainer who came from absolutely nothing. Perry, who had minimum finances and struggled for years to obtain a career break, is currently one of the few African American film makers to independently operate a major film and television studio. Perry is also known to not only cast many African Americans in films, stage productions and television shows, but is also an individual who gives African Americans jobs behind the camera as well.

### **Movie Moguls and Major Film Studios**

With every great film comes the great mind(s) who conceived the concept. George Lucas is one of the most world renowned film makers in history who is known for breaking down creative barriers and starting a new frontier in sci-fi films. Lucas is well known for the creation of the original *Star Wars* movies as well as the contemporary prequels. In the beginning, Lucas' original *Star Wars* movies almost did not become reality. Orellana (2012) stated that, "When Lucas wrote the first movie back in the 1970's and presented it to various studio executives they all rejected it" [\[7\]](#). Fortunately for Lucas, as history has shown, the movie did in fact come into production and soon morphed into a trilogy and then became a saga years later when Lucas concluded the story with three prequel films. The Walt Disney Company recently acquired the rights from Lucas' film company, Lucasfilm, and is now on track to create three new *Star Wars* films over the next several years. Steven Spielberg is also an individual with many film credits under his belt. Some of these credits include *E.T. the Extra Terrestrial*, *Jaws*, *The Color Purple* and teaming up with colleague and friend George Lucas to create *The Indiana Jones* franchise. Spielberg, like Lucas, is consistently praised by both movie critics and fans, for the unique ability to blend a creative story with powerful special effects. James Cameron is highly regarded by many as one of the most successful film makers of all time. Cameron, known for making movies with substantial length to them, is responsible for classic



films such as *Avatar*, *Titanic*, *Aliens*, and the first two *Terminator* movies. Aside from the fact that Cameron is a creative genius when it comes to movies, Cameron is also very much involved in the creation of the films. According to Goodyear (2009), “Cameron inserts himself into every aspect of the film making process. With the virtual camera, he is both cinematographer and camera operator, working in his favorite style, handheld, for what he calls ‘an edgy, subjective quality’” [8].

Aside from the film directors, there are other major players and organizations when it comes to the creation and distribution of a film. The aforementioned MPAA is one of the most widely known organizations in film development due to the organization’s representation of the six major film studios in the United States. These six major film studios, as stated by About Us (n.d.) are, “Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures; Paramount Pictures Corporation; Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc.; Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation; Universal City Studios LLC; and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.” [9]. Pixar Animation Studios as well Dream Works Studio have been established individually as powerful forces in the movie making business over the last two decades, especially in light of the vast creation of animation films. Animation film hits, according to Baute (2013) like, “the *Shrek* franchise, *Madagascar*, *Finding Nemo*, *Wall-E*, *Monsters Inc.*, *The Incredibles* and *How to Train Your Dragon* were all made by these two studios, even as these two corporations are both locked in a movie competition with one another” [10].

### **Production/Film Development**

Similar to how numerous individuals are required in order to successfully operate a company, the same concept applies to the film industry. Aside from the actors, some of the key players behind the scenes who assist in the creation and navigation of a film include the producer, the director, the screenwriter and the cinematographer. A producer is an individual(s) who is responsible for organizing and supervising the creation of the film. Once the film has been completed it is sent off to a film distributor. The director is

the leading figure who is responsible for the overall direction of the film and instructs and guides the cast and crew to create the picture that has been envisioned for the film. A screenwriter is also known as a scriptwriter for a film. These individuals are one of the figures who take an idea(s) and seek to have them made into a full movie. The cinematographer is a member of the production team on a film that is responsible for overseeing the lighting and camera work. The three key phases in the creation of a film are pre-production, production and post- production. Wild (2013) found that, "During the pre-production phase all of the key organizational factors are taken care of. The script for the movie is written, the shooting schedule is established and all of the necessary arrangements are taken care of. The production stage is when the film is shooting all of the scenes at the necessary locations and the director is ensuring that everything is clear and precise. Finally, in the post-production stage is the editing. In this phase all of the special effects such as the music and the computerized backgrounds are added in, the film shots are all molded together and the director puts all of the final touches on the film before it is considered complete" <sup>[11]</sup>.

Many people do not realize that one reason why movies are so expensive to make is because there are so many individuals and external factors involved. Despite the fact that extensive labor and time is required to create a film, like with many other professions, individuals associated with a film who stand out, such as the actors or a member of the production crew, are recognized for hard work and achievements with prestigious awards entitled Academy Awards. An Academy Award, also referred to as an Oscar, is the highest award any figure involved in the creation of a film can receive. As it currently stands, as stated by Schurman (2013), "Katherine Hepburn, who was known for playing strong female leads, holds the record for most Academy Awards won by both male and female actors. However, Walt Disney holds the ultimate and thus far unbeatable record of 64 Academy Award nominations and 24 wins" <sup>[12]</sup>.

### **CGI and Technological Advances in Film**

As technology became more advanced with cellphones, televisions and computers, it was incorporated into films as well. In the early years of film, props and models were often used and with certain scenes involving a specific desired background, the timing of the film shoot had to be perfectly executed. This caused many problems and delays when creating a film. However, with the creation of Computer Generated Imagery (CGI), an advanced form of computer technology that creates shapes and characters in a film, this not only eliminated many problems and allowed films to be created in a more time efficient manner, but it also created a new era in film making. An element of this new era has been 3-D Films which are movies that contain advanced features that are designed to make the audience feel like they are inside of the film. Although 3-D films have been around for decades, with the rise of new technology and cutting edge special effects, just in the last few years alone 3-D is viewed as far more realistic and engaging than ever before. An example of 3-D films at its finest is James Cameron's 2009 film *Avatar*. Aside from becoming the highest grossing film of all time, including surpassing Cameron's 1997 film *Titanic*, the film *Avatar* is well known for groundbreaking special effects. Thompson (2010) found that, "Unknown to many fans, the film was actually conceived by Cameron back during the mid-1990's, however he didn't believe that the technology at the time was advanced enough to complete his vision so he waited for more than ten more years until he felt that the time was right to move the project into production" [13]. Back in 1995 *Toy Story*, one of the most successful animated film franchises ever created, became the first movie to be produced entirely on computers. Although this was not the first film to have animation features in it, it has gone down in history as one of the milestone movies that paved the way for CGI movies of today. With the creative and digital evolution that films, especially ones that are animated, are going through and with the way films are produced and viewed in contemporary time, Scott (2011) stated that "the machinery of production and distribution is

in the midst of an epochal change, part of the rapid and convulsive digitization of everything under the sun” [14].

### **Home Entertainment: VCR, DVD and Netflix**

Films move into the field of home entertainment systems once the cycle run at the movie theater is complete. Two of the most popular systems in home entertainment have been the VCR & DVD which stand for Video Cassette Recorder & Digital Versatile Disc, respectively. Although the VCR was a popular device dating back to the 1970's, in contemporary time, the VCR is obsolete and for the most part no longer in production, with the exception of the joint VCR/DVD systems. Over the last ten plus years DVD's have taken the role of the standard movie watching device in many homes, similar to the way VCR's were for the last few decades. However, DVD's are slowly becoming replaced by the new and popular advanced movie player Blu-Ray, which delivers an even sharper image as well as more enhanced audio features. With the eminent rise of YouTube, online video game rental sites and Netflix, digital technology has greatly diminished movie and video game renting industries such as Blockbuster. Long gone are the days of individuals going to Blockbuster and finding out that the movie or the game that was sought had been rented out and there were no more copies available. With YouTube and particularly Netflix, the digital era has now consumed the globe. Society now has the ability to stream movies right into a household at a reduced cost and in some cases for free. Although Netflix has not overtaken the movie theater industry, it does seem as though that idea may soon become a reality. Netflix now releases television shows on the company's website. A similar idea is being floated around with the movie industry. Netflix is considering the idea of releasing new movies on the organization's website the same day that the movie opens in theaters. According to Kafka (2013) “Why not premiere movies on Netflix, the same day they're opening in theaters? And not little movies...Why not big movies? Why not follow the consumers' desire to watch things when they want” [15]?

Films have been widely regarded as a magical experience for many

people. Although films have undergone significant transformations over the last one hundred plus years and will continue to do so as society progresses and technology becomes more advanced, one thing remains certain. That certainty is that films will go down in history as one of the most cherished and sought out forms of entertainment.

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3. ↑ [2], Ratings-History
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6. ↑ Rodman
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