

HOOSIER WOMEN AT WORK

STUDIES IN INDIANA WOMEN'S HISTORY

Session 3

April 2018

More than Shadows: Women in Puppetry in Indiana

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The art of puppetry is often overlooked and underestimated. Much of what is known of the history of puppetry has literally been pulled from the margins of history and what is known of the practitioners of the art is even sparser. The nature of puppetry to reduce the presence of the artist while intentionally cultivating, manipulating and enhancing the vitality of the puppet may contribute to the marginalization of the art. This presentation will attempt to pull Indiana women in puppetry from the shadows and into the spotlight for some much deserved and overdue recognition and celebration.

Indiana has a rich history of women puppeteers and their contribution to puppetry which has had an impact on the art nationally and internationally. The combined experience of families, companies and performance troupes exceeds 100 years. The contributions and impact of women in traditional puppet troupes (such as The Stevens Marionettes, Mousetrap Puppets, Peewinkle's Puppet Studio, Melchior Marionettes, Adzooks Puppets, and Heiken Puppets) are many and varied from performance to marketing to support. This paper will include a special look at women involved in puppetry in television and film (such as Peggy Mitchell, *Prancer* and *Time for Timothy*). Indiana has been a locus for the exchange of puppetry ideas over the last and women from both in and out of state have contributed to these opportunities for puppeteers to develop their skills. In reviewing these women and important events attendees will be given a brief glimpse into the world of puppeteers and the special place Indiana and it's women have played in this special art form.

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