Handout for *Ghost in the Shell*

a. *Ghost in the Shell* (1995) as a meditation on body, spirit, and identity through the cyborg body.

"Just as there are many parts needed to make a human a human, there are a remarkable number of things needed to make an individual what they are. A face to distinguish yourself from others. A voice you aren't aware of yourself. The hand you see when you awaken. The memories of childhood, the feelings for the future. That's not all. There's the expanse of the data net my cyber-brain can access. All of that goes into making me what I am. Giving rise to the consciousness that I call 'me.' And simultaneously confining 'me' within its set limits."
—Major Kusanagi Motoko

b. Technological violence to the human body

    • Constructing, deconstructing, reconstructing bodies

c. Technological violence to the human spirit

    • The ghost-hack

    "There's nothing sadder than a puppet without a ghost. Especially the kind with red blood running through them."   —Batou

d. The Puppet Master ("life form that was born in the sea of information")

    • Represents posthuman challenge to the essentialist human subject, and so must be contained or destroyed to preserve "humanity"
    (but it/he/she isn't contained or destroyed; it/he/she escapes by merging with Kusanagi)

    "By that argument, I submit the DNA you carry is nothing more than a self-preserving program itself. Life is like a node which is born within the flow of information. As a species of life that carries DNA as its memory system, man gains his individuality from the memories he carries. While memories may as well be the same as fantasy, it is by these memories that mankind exists. When computers made it possible to externalize memory, you should have considered all the implications that held."
    —The Puppet Master

e. The merging and "evolution"

    • the human-generated (Kusanagi) and machine-generated (the Puppet Master) results in the creation of something new. But what is it?