

## PSC-CUNY Research Awards (Traditional A)

<b>Control No:</b> TRADA-51-325 <b>Rank:</b> Associate Professor <b>Tenured:</b> Yes <b>College:</b> NEW YORK COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY <b>Panel:</b> Art History, Visual Arts, Communication Arts & Sciences <b>Discipline :</b> Art History <b>Co-PI :</b>	<b>Name:</b> Cheng, Sandra <b>Address:</b> 300 Jay Street Humanities Dept, Library 642 BROOKLYN, NY11201 <b>Telephone:</b> 718-782-3194 <b>Email:</b> scheng@citytech.cuny.edu
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**Human Subject Use:** No

**Animal Subject Use:** No

**Supplementary Materials:** Yes (attached to application, 2MB limit)

**List of Supplementary Material:** Project Description, Sample Images, CV

**Will Interviews be Conducted?:** No

**Department:** Humanities

**Title of Proposed Project:** The Ugly Line: Caricature and the Poetics of Drawings in Early Modern Italy

### **Brief Abstract**

I am applying for a PSC-CUNY grant to complete research for a book manuscript and to request funds for reproductions of images for the book. The book, entitled *The Ugly Line: Caricature and the Poetics of Drawings in Early Modern Italy*, examines the development of early caricature and contextualizes the emerging genre within the period's aesthetic, literary, theatrical, and scientific thought. The requested research funds will make it possible to examine drawings stored in the National Gallery of Scotland in Edinburgh and Windsor Castle outside London. In addition, I hope to use the grant to cover select image reproductions from several institutions, which range from approximately \$50-\$260 dependent on size and whether the image is in black and white or color.

### **Relevant Publications & Scholarship**

"Ridiculous Portraits: Comic Ugliness and Early Modern Caricature" in *Rire en images à la Renaissance*, ed. by Francesca Alberti and Diane Bodart, 117-126. Turnhout: Brepols, 2018.

With Philip Kreniske, Karen Goodlad, and Jennifer Sears, "Our Stories of Becoming a College Student: A Digital Writing Project for First Year Students." *Journal of Interactive Technology and Pedagogy*, October 9, 2018.  
<https://jitp.commons.gc.cuny.edu/our-stories-of-becoming-a-college-student-a-digital-writing-project-for-first-year-students/>

With Aida Egues and Gwen Cohen-Brown, "Visualizing Medicine: Mapping Connections with Plague Inc. to Learn in the Interdisciplinary Classroom" in *Interdisciplinary Place-Based Learning in Urban Education: Exploring Virtual*

Worlds, eds. Reneta Lanisquot and Sean Macdonald. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

"Silent Protest and the Art of Paper Folding: The Golden Venture Paper Sculptures at the Museum of the Chinese in the Americas" in *Locating American Art: Finding Art's Meaning in Museums*, ed. by Cynthia Fowler, 239-251. Abingdon: Routledge (formerly Ashgate Publishing), 2016.

Catalogue entries of Bernardo Strozzi's *St. Catherine of Alexandria*, Giovanni Battista Lupicini's *The Muse of Painting*, Giulio Carpioni's *A Bacchanal*, Salvator Rosa's *The Coral Fishermen*, Jusepe de Ribera's *Immaculate Conception*, Guido Cagnacci's *David Holding Goliath's Head* for the Columbia Museum of Art, Columbia, South Carolina. Commission completed and submitted May 2015, entries published on museum website Spring 2016.

Book review of A. Victor Coonin (Rhodes College), *From Marble to Flesh: The Biography of Michelangelo's David*, The Florentine Press, 2014 for the journal *Notes on Early Modern Art*, Volume 2, No. 2 (Fall 2015): 36-39.

## Education

Institution	Degree	Year(s)	Discipline
University of Delaware	PhD	2008	Art History
University of Delaware	MA	2000	Art History
University of Pittsburgh	BA	1989	Art History

## Other Current & Past Funding (last 5 years)

Period	Role	Title	Amount	Funding Source
2012-2013	PI	Drawing Games: Play, Virtuosity, and Draftsmanship in the Carracci Studio	\$3,500.00	PSC CUNY Research Award
2017-2018	PI	Florentine Comic Drawings: Spectacle, Caricature, and the Print Tradition	\$3,500.00	PSC CUNY Research Award

## Attachments

Description	File Name	File Size	Date Attached
Project Description	Sandra_Cheng_PSC_CUNY_51_Project_De	86385	12/10/2019 8:46:13 AM
Supplementary Material	Sandra_Cheng_PSC_CUNY_51_Supplement	2606859	12/10/2019 8:46:23 AM

## Budgets

Description			Requested Amount
Research Staff	Fringe Benefit Expense MTA Payroll Tax	0.00 0.00	0.00
Clerical Staff	Fringe Benefit Expense MTA Payroll Tax	0.00 0.00	0.00
Summer Salary (Principal Investigator)	Fringe Benefit Expense	0.00 0.00	0.00
General Office Supplies/Xeroxing		0.00 0.00	0.00
Research Supplies		0.00 0.00	0.00
Domestic Travel		0.00 0.00	0.00
Independent Contractors		0.00 0.00	0.00
Subject Payments		0.00 0.00	0.00
Laboratory Fees		0.00 0.00	0.00
Equipment		0.00 0.00	0.00

Manuscript Preparation/ Publication Costs Image Reproductions for approximately 8-10 images \$940.00		940.00 0.00	940.00
Foreign Travel Research Travel Roundtrip airfare New York City-London \$700.00 Roundtrip airfare London-Edinburgh (EasyJet) \$110.00 7 days lodging in Edinburgh and London (200/night for 7 nights) \$1400.00 Food, local transport (50/day for 7 days) \$350.00 (My projected daily budget of \$250 for Edinburgh and London is below the U.S. Govt. per diem maximum of \$276/day for winter months, which increases to \$706/day for summer months) Travel Total: \$2,560.00 The budget is derived from Expedia.com.		2560.00 0.00	2560.00
		<b>Total</b>	<b>3,500.00</b>

## **Project Description:**

### **The Ugly Line: Caricature and the Poetics of Drawings in Early Modern Italy**

I am applying for a PSC-CUNY grant to complete research for a book manuscript and to request funds for reproductions of images for the book. The book, entitled *The Ugly Line: Caricature and the Poetics of Drawings in Early Modern Italy*, examines the development of early caricature and contextualizes the emerging genre within the period's aesthetic, literary, theatrical, and scientific thought. The requested research funds will make it possible to examine drawings stored in the National Gallery of Scotland in Edinburgh and Windsor Castle outside London. These drawings by the Carracci, Guercino, and other Italian artists are key works to several chapters of the book. For example, Annibale Carracci's sketch of a *spazzacamino* (chimney sweep) is the sole surviving drawing from a print series of 80 studies after Bolognese tradesmen, which are better known as the *Arti di Bologna*. The drawings and later prints are critical to the reception of the Carracci and their theorization of caricature. At the writing of this proposal, the first two chapters are nearing completion with some sections put on hold until after research in Scotland and Windsor. The research will also help provide material for chapters three, four, and six. In addition, I hope to use the grant to cover select image reproductions from several institutions, which range from approximately \$50-\$260 dependent on size and whether the image is in black and white or color.

### **Introduction**

The word *caricatura* (caricature) first appeared in print in 1646, a sign of the emergence of a new genre of graphic art in Italy. My book considers how caricature developed from the innovative curriculum of arts instruction in the Carracci Academy (c.1580) and then transformed into a visual form of social satire practiced by clever draftsmen, such as Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680), Giovanni Francesco Barbieri better known as Guercino (1591-1666), and Pier Francesco Mola (1612-1666). Late seventeenth-century sources located the origins of caricature in the early years of the century, a period strongly affected by the aesthetics of academic classicism, a tradition often assumed to be antagonistic towards the production of distorted images. Yet, the inherent paradoxes of caricature appealed to the Seicento's love of wit.

The spirit of *lusus* (play) gave rise to caricature—its sense of play, its graphic form, and the act of ugly drawing. "Playfulness," an essential quality of visual jokes, was evident when skilled draftsmen deliberately drew in a child-like manner to poke fun at the idea of artistic proficiency. Further, caricature was a display of intellectual wit, in which artists toyed with tropes of the ugly that existed in the sciences and literary arts. Prints and publications on physiognomy and medical pathology helped cultivate the fascination with monsters and monstrosity. Renaissance satirical writing produced verbal caricatures long before the emergence of a visual counterpart on the stage or on paper. The graphic economy of a seventeenth-century caricature belied the complexity of the drawing's cultural references, which demanded a sophisticated viewer to be fully appreciated.

Histories of caricature are a relatively recent phenomenon and the earliest accounts date to the nineteenth century. These survey texts generally credit the origins of caricature to the Carracci but there exists little scholarship on the development of the genre, resulting in an under-explored area of artistic practice in Early Modern Art. Seicento caricature presents an unmined source for exploring the shifting attitudes of the first half of the seventeenth century—the changing status of naturalism, the concepts of originality and imitation, and the role of humor in Baroque art.

With the exception of a few European publications, including Giacomo Berra's article on the early practice of the genre (2011), the scholarship on early modern caricature remains scarce. The humor of early caricature engages a range of contemporary matters, thus reflecting a multiplicity of sources that most scholarship until recently has failed to address. Too often, scholars and drawings specialists have focused on questions of attribution. The "sorting of hands" and the debate over whether Agostino or Annibale Carracci invented caricature have generated the most pages in current art historical scholarship. Frequently, caricatures are relegated to entries in drawings or exhibition catalogues, resulting in an effective silencing of the early development of the genre, a category of graphic art that retains its relevancy in modern times. Recent publications by Xavier Vert, Diane Bodart, and other scholars in the anthology, *Rire en images à la Renaissance* (2018) reveal expanding interest in the study of comic drawings.

My work seeks to fill this void in the history of drawings and caricature studies with a full assessment of the origins and early development of the genre. In the Seicento, caricatures were produced for exclusive audiences and not for public consumption as caricature drawings are now. Modern caricature is typically satirical in nature yet no scholars have analyzed how the current art of caricature reflects manifestations of the courtly society of early modern Italy, which revealed in the satirical potential of *ritratti caricati* (loaded portraits).

## **Chapter Outlines**

### *Chapter 1-Caricature before caricatura*

The introductory chapter presents my framework of the book as a cultural study of the origins of caricature, which combines a social-historical approach with elements of connoisseurship. The chapter also reviews the historiography of caricature, and wrestles with problematic terms associated with the genre, such as grotesque, and examines the concept of the ugly in key literary and art theoretical texts to provide a better understanding of Seicento caricature. Beyond the historiography, this chapter also considers the history of collecting caricatures, including an assessment of Leonardo's grotesque heads in relation to the genre.

### *Chapter 2- The Carracci Academy: Innovation, Disegno, and Caricature*

Following the extensive introduction, chapter two examines the role of caricature in artistic training promoted by the Carracci Academy. This chapter discusses how caricature originated as a studio game within their unique curriculum as well as the Carracci's emphasis on the performative act of drawing. Drawings by the Carracci and their school are presented as the "incunabula of modern caricature," a phrase I have borrowed from the art historian Rudolf Wittkower to explore the earliest manifestations of caricature practice.

### *Chapter 3-Alterity and the Ugly Body*

Chapter three explores caricature within the framework of the natural sciences, in particular comparative physiognomy, anatomical study, and monster treatises. Although I have published on the relationship between caricature and monstrosity, the chapter is expanded to demonstrate connections between caricature and the broader context of anatomical study in the late-sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries.

### *Chapter 4-Performing Ugliness*

Chapter four places the development of caricature within the contexts of ugliness in comic theory, and burlesque literature and theater. I explore the Bolognese tradition of burlesque poetry exemplified by Giulio Cesare Croce (1550-1609), whose publications were

contemporary with the beginning of caricature production in the Carracci Academy. A small section on antique precedents in comic theory is published in an anthology of essays on laughter in Renaissance art. This chapter also includes research of caricatures by the Tuscan artist, Baccio del Bianco (1604-1657) in connection to the *commedia dell'arte*, on which I have published some material. The rest of the chapter is devoted to Guercino's comic drawings of *contadini* (peasants) in relation to Croce's writings. Within the book manuscript, this chapter functions as a study of the transitional period from the earlier naturalistic imagery of the Carracci to the more socially sophisticated caricatures of Bernini and Mola.

*Chapter 5-Caricature as Social Satire*

The fifth chapter focuses on caricature's later expression as a form of social satire, which expands upon Irving Lavin's pioneering scholarship on Bernini's caricatures to include the contemporary activity of Mola, Salvator Rosa (1615-1673), and the obscure Pietro de' Rossi (active 1670-1685). The chapter demonstrates how artists exploited the satirical potential of caricature to address issues of patronage, social status, and artistic performance. The case studies of Bernini, Mola, Rosa, and de' Rossi represent the culmination of caricature's early development, prior to the emergence of professional caricaturists in the eighteenth century, as in the case of Pier Leone Ghezzi (1674-1755).

*Chapter 6-Caricature in Print, Prints in Caricature*

The final chapter examines the dialogue between early caricature and prints to highlight how the changing definitions of caricature finally stimulated its production and ultimate dissemination via the print medium. This section connects the caricature print to precedents in comic drawings and *capricci* by Jacques Callot (1592-1635) and Stefano della Bella (1610-1664). The chapter examines the first caricature prints by de' Rossi and Giuseppe Maria Mitelli (1634-1718) and concludes with a later series of drawings adapted from Jacques Callot's *Gobbi* print series.

**Conclusion**

Teaching at City Tech is rewarding yet a challenge to preparing a manuscript for publication because of heavy service demands as well as large class sizes. As I prepare to submit book proposals to potential publishers, it would be beneficial to receive PSC-CUNY support to continue making progress on the manuscript during the summer writing months.

**Proposed Budget**

**Research Travel**

Roundtrip airfare New York City-London	\$700.00
Roundtrip airfare London-Edinburgh (EasyJet)	\$110.00
7 days lodging in Edinburgh and London (200/night for 7 nights)	\$1400.00
Food, local transport (50/day for 7 days)	\$350.00

The budget is derived from Expedia.com. My projected daily budget of \$250 for Edinburgh and London is below the U.S. Govt. per diem maximum of \$276/day for winter months, which increases to \$706/day for summer months.

Travel Total:     \$2,560.00

**Reproductions**

Image Reproductions for approximately 8-10 images	\$940.00
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**Total Grant Request** **\$3,500.00**

### Sample Images and Bibliography

This file features illustrations by Agostino and Annibale Carracci, draftsmen who were important to the early development of caricature. Other artists include Guercino, Bernini, Mola, and Baccio del Bianco. Drawings by the Carracci are critical for the study of early modern caricature because the genre emerges as artistic practice within their academy. The drawings are important to several chapters, especially chapter two on drawing practice in the Carracci Academy.

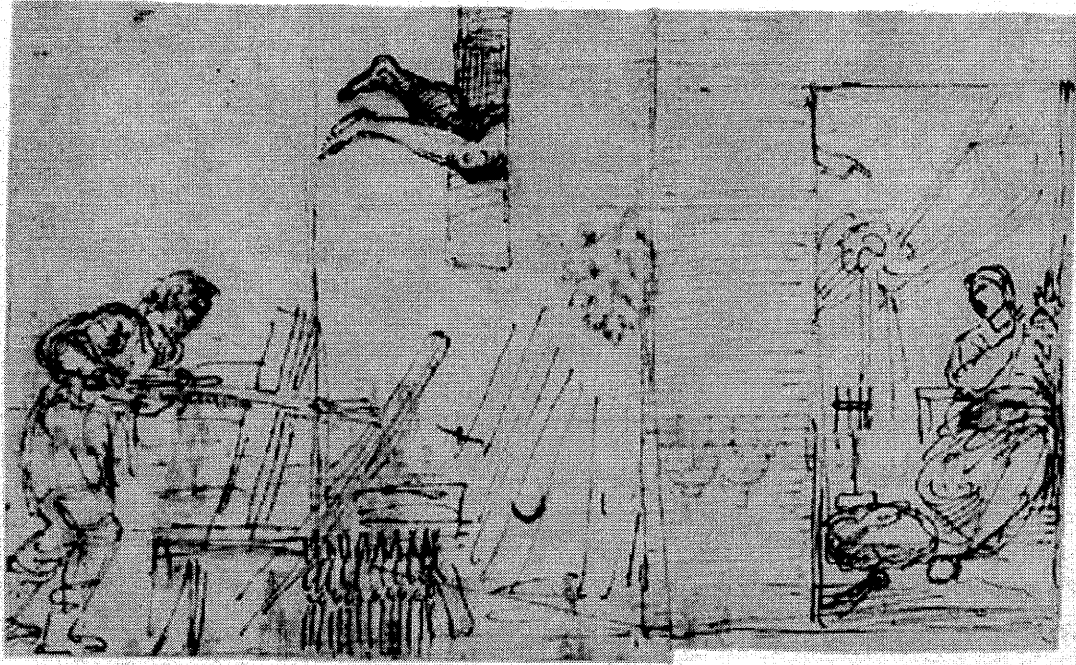


Annibale Carracci, *Spazzacamino (chimney-sweep)*, pen and brown ink and wash with white brightening on yellowish-brown ground, 276 x 167 mm, National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh.

This drawing is the sole surviving sheet for a series of 80 studies after Bolognese tradesmen. The drawings appeared to have been used as study material in the Carracci studio in Bologna. Several decades later, Simon Guillain produced prints after the Carracci drawings, which were published in 1646.

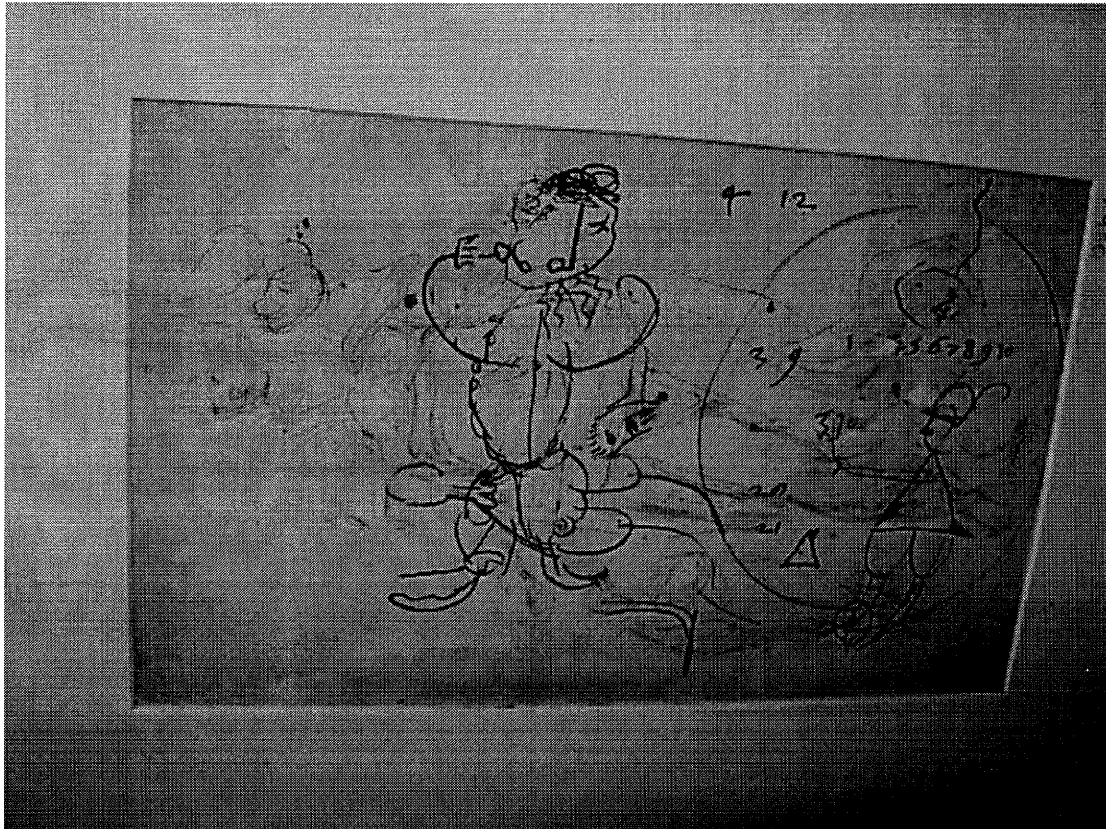


The Carracci used humor in the studio and in their visual production. In this parody of Tintoretto's *Annunciation* in the Scuola di San Rocco in Venice, Annibale adjusted the perspective to make the archangel Gabriel appear stuck in a window with only his pointing hand visible in the interior space.



Annibale Carracci, *Parody of Tintoretto's Annunciation*, pen and ink, 115 x 188 mm, Windsor Castle.

The Carracci developed innovative drawing exercises to help students explore *disegno* in creative and amusing ways. Some exercises made use of minimal lines or stick figures, including this sheet with the figures reduced to simple geometric design. This image was provided as a snapshot from the curator and it would need to be photographed properly to be used as an illustration in a book.



Agostino Carracci, *Caricatures of two men*, pen and brown ink, 261 x 163 mm, laid down on mount, Windsor Castle.

Issues of attribution have dominated much of the early scholarship on caricature in the Carracci studio. The recent re-attribution to the Annibale reveals interest in a comprehensive study of the Carracci's oeuvre, including drawings that are not directly connected a painting or print. Although scholars have addressed drawing practice in the Carracci studio, few have explored the role of humor in draftsmanship.



Now attributed to Annibale Carracci (formerly, student of Agostino Carracci), *Young man drawing a caricature*, red chalk, 278 x 234 mm, damaged on left, mounted on separate sheet, Windsor Castle.

## Select Bibliography for Proposed Project

### Primary Sources

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### Secondary Sources

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