

# ***Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association*** **Fall 2019, Volume 52, Number 2**

## **Feasts, Family, and Fun: Food in J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* Series**

Alissa Burger

**Abstract:** In the article, the author considers the significance of food in J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series. This analysis focuses on the importance of food in three distinct roles: the Hogwarts feasts, which establish and celebrate communal magical identity; family meals like those with the Weasleys and the Order of the Phoenix that emphasize familial inclusion and belonging; and fun, in the role of treats like magical candies and butterbeer that characterize Rowling's wizarding world.

## **From the Lindy Hop to the Bunny Dip: Hugh Hefner's Jazz Age Redux**

Jessica McKee and Taylor Joy Mitchell

**Abstract:** As a jazz enthusiast, Hugh Hefner transferred the hedonistic dreams of the Jazz Age into a Playboy ethos. Most curious about Hefner's Jazz Age redux, however, is what is missing: the Flapper. This essay compares the Flapper, the Playboy, and his playmate the Bunny, and argues that, in Hefner's re-creation, the figure of the Flapper has been consumed and recast as both the Playboy and the Bunny. We locate our analysis in backlash theory, which helps explain the panic midcentury men experienced as women increased their power in the social, economic, and political realms. Comparing these twentieth-century icons reveals the depths of cultural work done under the guise of mere "entertainment for men."

## **"Unmasking" Culture: Mardi Gras Indians and the Materiality of Re-presentation**

Sarah Hirsch

**Abstract:** The body's interaction with place leads to an embodied rhetoric that is tied to visual-material rhetoric in that it takes into account how the body interacts with the visual and material aspects of culture. With regard to the Mardi Gras Indian, the body is interacting and negotiating an interplay among various visual and material aspects of multiple cultures inherent to the Black experience in New Orleans. The visual-material rhetoric articulated in the act of "masking" or the wearing of the suit—an ornate garment that incorporates intricate beadwork, feathers, sequins, and bold colors—is based on a shared experience of subjugation and the subsequent alliance between Native and African Americans that pushed back against hegemonic systems of power in the 19th century. It is a context that informs the Black Indian identity. This is especially poignant when taking into account the literal enactment of slavery, which determines the

ownership of the body or, inversely, the loss of that ownership. The visual-material rhetoric of the suit constitutes an embodied rhetoric that speaks to the narratives of slavery, genocide, and the concepts of indigeneity. As N. Katherine Hayles notes, “Experiences of embodiment, far from existing apart from culture, are always already imbricated within it.” This article explores Mardi Gras Indian culture and how the suit, in particular, as a visual and material entity disrupts the traditional racial binary, which challenges and recontextualizes social constructs. The material rhetoric of the suit works as a disruptive agent that inserts a different historical narrative into that of the dominant one via visual depictions. The materiality of masking and the actual construction of the suit invoke a purposeful mode of consumption that challenges racial and cultural identifications. It also, however, reestablishes Black Indian identity via an amalgamation of culture that is not simply Native American, African, African American, or Caribbean but distinctly Mardi Gras Indian, a particularized identity inherent to place. The history of multicultural colonial slavery in New Orleans informs the material rhetoric of the suit and the embodied experience of masking.

## **The Literature of Protest and the Consumption of Activism**

Eric Leuschner

**Abstract:** With the recent surge in demonstrations and marches in the United States and around the world, literary representations of protest have started to appear more common. Novels such as Sunil Yapa’s *Your Heart Is a Muscle the Size of a Fist* (2016) and Dana Spiotta’s *Eat the Document* (2006) can be usefully seen as examples of “the literature of protest,” that is, fictional representations of protest, as opposed to literature as protest, although the terms often intertwine. By creating fictional representations as a way to engage both historical and fictional protests, these texts counter the media’s coverage of protests and offer an alternative to how to consume these events.

## **Women at War: WWI, Patriarchy, and Conflict in Wonder Woman**

(2017) Zachary Michael Powell

**Abstract:** The essay starts with a simple premise: Why was Wonder Woman’s twenty-first-century take on this heralded comic book character that originated in 1941 set during the First World War? In collective memory and early popular WWI scholarship, the war has been represented through the stories of male soldiers while women are almost completely absent. In reviewing this memory, feminist scholars have pointed out that it is patriarchy that begets war and that the first step to ending war is to expose this fact. In this analysis, Patty Jenkins’s *Wonder Woman* presents the heroine as an exceptional woman who uses her powers of perception—encoded in the film through a shot/reverse-shot structure—in order to expose and root out the cause of war: male patriarchy, which is narratively represented as the supervillain antagonist, Ares. In doing so, however, the film gives form to the troubling nature of women in

war in the twenty-first century, the incorporation of into the military-industrial complex. Following film genre theorist Thomas Schatz's understanding that the genre film operates around an inherent ideological struggle, I argue that Wonder Woman juxtaposes a superpowered female with the historical setting of WWI in such a way that ignites its core conflict—one that asks how female power is to be negotiated alongside the legacy of patriarchal violence and warfare.

### **Du Silence à la légitimation de soi *Bon petit soldat* de Mazarine Pingeot**

Béatrice Vernier

**Abstract:** This article examines the ways in which Mazarine Pingeot revisits her hidden childhood in her book *Bon petit soldat*, as her mother was the mistress of François Mitterrand, the French President at that time. When Pingeot was 19, the sudden disclosure of her filiation by a journalist drastically changed her relation to the public. She became a renowned person without her will and had to bear her father's political ideas and her situation as an illegitimate child. In her book, she questions her parents' choice to hide her from the public, and she describes the terrible impact that her sudden exposure in the press had on her. We show that her writings aim at renegotiating her relationship to the public sphere. It is a quest for legitimation, for her right to live as Madame Pingeot, a philosophy professor, a writer, and not just as François Mitterrand's daughter.

### **Un italiano en Lima: Relaciones sociales y consumo en Herenciau**

Rocío del Águila

**Abstract:** The importance of consumption for the new bourgeoisie group in urban areas after the War of the Pacific has been overlooked in the works of women writers such as Clorinda Matto de Turner (Peru, 1852– Argentina, 1909), who clearly paid attention to details related to economics at the end of the Nineteenth-Century in Lima, the Peruvian capital. Her proposal for the future of the republic lied upon managing consumerism and giving work a new value within these socioeconomic groups who saw commodities as means of their prosperity. This analysis is structured around the character of an Italian immigrant whose presence is perceived as a disruption and a drain to the economic system, paying particular attention to this portrait of the European newcomer and the strategies used by the author to dehumanize him. The commodification of bodies and the excessive societal anxiety highlight the informality of underground markets, the tensions produced by social mobility, and the instability in this relatively new nation state at the end of the century.