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"It Just Don't Do" (What You Think It Does): The Periperformative Possibilities of Julie Harris's Face

Rachel Walerstein

Abstract: The last decade has seen a shift in the kinds of LGBTQ representation available to viewers of television, film, and other time-based media, especially representations of intimacy between women. That shift has not, however, necessarily moved beyond the trope of lesbian desire as signified by a shared look. The essay takes a comparative approach to two mid-century films, *The Member of the Wedding* and *I am a Camera*, in consideration of their own invocations of the lesbian look of longing. In particular, I trace the similarities of Julie Harris's performances across the two films in order to demonstrate the way such a look need not always bespeak a failed longing, so much as a possibility of looking elsewhere. The essay thus argues that instead of placing the burden of proof for lesbian visibility on the shoulders (and in the imaginations of) viewers, we turn our attention to Harris's face for a lesson in undoing the metonymic invocation of queerness as a mere look. Using Eve Sedgwick's under-explored theory of the periperformative, the essay is an attempt to offer a more hopeful orientation towards LGBTQ representation that, rather than stopping short following concerns about audience expectations or genre conventions, instead looks to generate the conditions for the continual sharing of stories which celebrate what happens when one simply turns the other way.

Love in the Visual Field: Cinephiliac Moment, Truth-Event, Movement of Thought

Jeremy De Chavez

Abstract: Cinematic attention solicited by particular moments in film has predominantly been theorized within the terms of desire. Indeed, psychoanalytically-inflected theories of spectatorship often assume that the force of visual pleasure thoroughly defines the cinematic experience, portraying spectators as ideologically vulnerable to the seductive powers of visual pleasure. But might it be possible to imagine alternative ways of looking that do not always presume an ideologically vulnerable spectator who is so easily coerced by the pleasures of looking? In addition, do ways of (cinematic) looking have to presume that such an encounter is one that is framed within the terms of (visual) pleasure? Instead of desire and pleasure is it not possible that the cinematic experience solicits love and thought? Towards a response to those questions I conceptualize a mode of amorous looking that eschews logics of desire and seductions of pleasure in favor of a response to the ethical demands of thought. Drawing on the thought of Alain Badiou and Roland Barthes, I suggest that amorous disruptions occur during certain moments in the film that solicits an amorous look, which is an invitation to think outside and beyond the ideologically regulative structures of the cinematic situation.

Hedonistic Responsibility: Pain, Pleasure, Experiment, and Empathy in Lily Hoang's *Parabola*

Michele Janette

Abstract: This essay traces two arcs through Lily Hoang's first novel, *Parabola*, to argue that *Parabola* intervenes in representations that proffer exotic consumable identity or spectacles of sexual assault, through its formal experiments and affective displeasures, and that *Parabola* also reimagines modes of reading pleasure through its formal experiments and invitations to play. Intervening in a culture that consumes narratives of difference as commodities, and in a literary critical culture that separates aesthetic experimentalism from sociopolitical critique, Hoang writes an Asian American experimental novel that resists racialized consumption and mimetic coercion. Intervening in a culture where representations of rape serve as entertaining spectacles and plot engines for hypermasculinity, Hoang writes sexual assault in ways that not only center the survivor's point of view, but allow that survivor her own complicated, even voyeuristic and invasive acts. Through aesthetic forms that prompt direct affective and intellectual interaction with the reader, Hoang draws readers into pain and hostility, not vicariously through a protagonist avatar but directly through the practice of interactive reading. Yet just as the novel's chapter structure is parabolically balanced, so too is it affectively double, offering innovative, interactive pleasures as well.

The Poetics of African-American Un/Reality in Edward P. Jones's *The Known World*

Janet Feight

Abstract: This essay examines Edward P. Jones' use of metaphor and metonymy in his Pulitzer-prize-winning novel *The Known World* to explore questions about white historiography and the social power of myth. The essay argues that the novel makes use of a dual narrative mode, a realist/postmodern poetics that forms a historically counter-discursive pattern of meaning. The essay further notes that that Jones' use of metaphor and myth eventually re-historicizes his text in a way that addresses the problematically imbricated religious traditions and racist legacies of the slave South. The novel's narrative voice and presentation of the historical record anchor the text in a realism that is often directly juxtaposed with the mythic or unreal. Drawing on the work of Michel de Certeau, the essay also stresses the critical importance of the text's use of metonymy and the "everyday" counter-practices and counter-visions of the African-American characters, arguing that, in the end, the novel raises questions about the fraught, social nature of truth.

Reading the Mesh of Metonymy in *Bleak House*

Michael Lesiuk

Abstract: George Gissing called the London of Charles Dickens's *Bleak House* (1852-53) "a great gloomy city, webbed and meshed." This essay borrows some of the vocabulary of cognitive linguistics and ecocriticism in order to argue that Dickens's novel uses metonymy to reveal the depth of interconnection and interdependence in the Victorian urban world, as well as the weird, unsettling implications of this interconnection. Although often associated with conventional or pre-existent referential knowledge, in this reading of Dickens's novel narrative metonymy is capable of generating new knowledge. The novel shows how all living and non-living beings in the urban world can never be fully understood or defined in themselves; rather, they must be understood in relation to other entities, life forms or beings. That is, metonymically.

Reviving and Revising Cuchulain: W. B. Yeats's Struggle to Create a Postcolonial Culture Hero

Heather McCracken

Abstract: This article offers a postcolonial reading of W.B. Yeats's Cuchulain cycle that focuses on the author's deliberate attempts to shape Cuchulain into an Irish culture hero. These plays—*On Baile's Strand* (1906), *The Green Helmet* (1908), *At the Hawk's Well* (1917), *The Only Jealousy of Emer* (1919), and *The Death of Cuchulain* (1939)—are imaginative revisions promoting an Irish culture, but they are inconsistent in their representation. Using Ato Quayson's theory of the culture hero, I show how Cuchulain is a stand-in for Irish national identity and a metonymical representation of Yeats's political frustrations in the plays. I argue that, because Yeats authored his public identity in these plays in unique and complicated ways—raising questions about his role as an artist/citizen—examining Cuchulain as a culture hero and role model for the nation illuminates the various struggles that Yeats faced as a postcolonial author.

Tramping with Jack London: Poverty, Performance, and Social Critique in *The Road*

Kevin Swafford

Abstract: This article analyzes Jack London's autobiographical book *The Road* as a critical, reflexive narrative that is concerned with ideology and social performances (both in narrative and in everyday life). At the core of the book is a fundamental artistic concern with problems of poverty, personal struggle, and systemic forms of violence and injustice; but London's approach to and representation of these things draws attention to the ideological implications and critical aspects of his generic narrative framing. *How* experience is communicated and the fashioning of perspective through generic convention are very much a part of London's project. Ultimately, the article illustrates how—through the image of "tramp" life and the blending of autobiographical realism and adventure narration—*The Road* disrupts its generic categorization, in part, to draw attention to it. Through the movement of generic forms (foremost between adventure narration and realism), London signals the performative essence of his writing.

Mrs. Oedipa Maas: Motherhood, Originality, and Meaning in *The Crying of Lot 49*

Constance Beitzel

Abstract: *The Crying of Lot 49* overlays its obsession with delivery systems, cycles, and inheritance on its choice of protagonist, a young married woman propelled forward by a history that seems unreal into a future marked by simulacra. This lens allows for a reading of *Crying* wherein the search for meaning is gendered by Oedipa's bodily potentiality and her interactions with the world around her. Beginning with her return from the Tupperware party, her sexual gamble with Metzger, the novel's names, and its cyclic movement, *Crying* points to changing birth control technology and the ideological shifts this change both highlighted and circumvented. In this article, I use gender as a lens through which to examine Oedipa's historical and social position in *Crying's* Californian circuit. Furthermore, I argue that the text is driven by an anxiety over reproduction and replication. Internal and external, social factors at flux surround Oedipa with representations of meanings, institutional and structural meanings, and reproductive meanings that operate internally and externally, driving Oedipa along in her attempt to trace origins, track codes, and understand her own identity in a world of shifting reproductive choice. In this grammatical cacophony, the motifs of pregnancy and contraception, and themes, both economic and postal, highlight the way meaning refuses to mean, particularly in regard to Oedipa's identity in *The Crying of Lot 49*. (210)