

## GENDER PERFORMANCES IN MARGARET ATWOOD'S *THE EDIBLE WOMAN*

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### ABSTRACT

Power and its effects on the body is a recurrent theme in many of Margaret Atwood's novels. Atwood's female characters are mostly concerned with the issue of the body: wounded bodies, masquerade, pregnancy, fashion standards, beauty practices. Their habitual obsession with gender performances related to their bodies maintains their gender identity imposed by the male society. Atwood's *The Edible Woman* is in line with Butler's gender performance theory. The present paper attempts to observe to what extent Butlerian performance theory is discernible in Atwood's female characters' performances related to their bodies marking female gender in the society of *The Edible Woman*. The present paper's discussion is developed through Butlerian concept of gender performativity. Focusing on the subject of body, Atwood attempts to show the effects of the disciplinary power on the female characters, particularly, Marian. The paper shows that there are passages in *The Edible Woman* which portray how the disciplinary practices and regulatory norms imposed by the patriarchal society on the female body produce gender performances.

**KEYWORDS:** Atwood, Disciplinary Practices, Disciplined Body, Gender, Performance