

**The Compulsory Act in Jumanji (2017) Movie:
Demonstration of Gender Performativity Fluidity**

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*“There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free,
nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”*

— Galatians 3:28 (NIV)

ABSTRACT

This research analyzes the film *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle (2017)* to understand that gender is a repeated action rather than a fixed biological identity, using Judith Butler's theory of *Gender Performativity* (1990). By using a qualitative method to focus on the narratives and dialogues, this study examines through the body-swaps of character between the four main characters, also the challenges that the characters face on the new avatar's body. The findings show: **1)** Bethany's transformation serves as a deconstruction gender as a biological and fixed identity; **2)** Martha's struggle with her role that demonstrates gender is a set of compulsory, subversive repetition; and **3)** The character's adaptation reveals that identity is fluid and created by personal choice, not rigid social rules. This study concludes that the film serves as a powerful illustration for gender fluidity. This research is significant as it highlights that a fun, and popular movie may help people understand complex ideas about identity and gender while encouraging audiences to think critically about the stereotypes in everyday life. It is hoped that future researchers will apply similar critical lenses to other narratives to further explore how media influences the fluid construction of gender identity.

Keyword: *Gender, Character Development, Feminine, Identity, Rigid*

INTRODUCTION

There are a lot of types of literature: novels, films, poetry, comics, and many more. While they all have different structures and content, they share the same fundamental function. The literature is used to share someone's idea by providing knowledge, entertainment, moral values, and cultural insights. Nowadays, films often appeal to the hearts of people around the world. It has a powerful impact in creating people's perspective and identity, especially during their teenage years. Tita, Gusti Ayu (2024) argued that films are not just entertainment, but an enriching visual that shapes young people's perceptions of the world around them. It is essential to critically analyze the issue and hidden messages within films, to empower young people to prevent potentially harmful content. As what often happens these days, people are categorized from their biological gender, which makes it look weird if someone acts differently from their gender. It really affects people's

mental health when they are not able to fulfill the society's will on expressing their gender. Birmingham City University said "*Gender stereotypes can affect every part of life, contributing towards poor mental health in young people, higher male suicide rates, low self-esteem in girls and issues with body image.*" This argument supports that gender is not the fundamental key on deciding people's path.

The main issue found in the movie is about the enforced body-swap that places Bethany into a middle-aged male avatar, named Professor Sheldon. At first, Bethany panics about her appearance, and even the shock of using a male anatomy. As the film continues, her character critiques how society enforces rigid expectations of gender identity. In Bethany's real life, she represents femininity, through beauty, vanity, and her dependence of validation through social media, which mirrors how women are suggested to represent a specific or rigid version of femininity. However, when Bethany realizes herself being in a male avatar, she breaks the characteristics and fights through the challenges with a different gender embodiment, suggesting that gender is something performed through repeated acts, gestures, and behaviors. This issue correlates with today's real world issues of gender and identity. In today's world, individuals often face expectations to follow the rigid understanding and characteristics of masculinity and femininity. Behavior and careers are often tied to certain gender and societal understandings. For example, women are often encouraged to prioritize beauty, while men are expected to embody strength.

Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle, directed by Jake Kasdan, is an action movie that serves a classic story of adventure. It was released on December 20th 2017 and published by Sony Pictures Entertainment. This film was made with the help of a big team, the screenplay was written by Chris McKenna, Erik Sommers, Scott Rosenberg, and Jeff Pinkner. Nonetheless, there are four main characters that play a crucial role in this film: Karen Gillan, Jack Black, Kevin Hart, and a famous actor, Dwayne Johnson. With the rating age 13+ and categorized as adventure-action, this movie successfully creates tension while watching the film and good core memory with the interesting plot that was made. This film also achieved an achievement by winning the Kids' Choice Award for favorite movie in 2018, competing with the other seven great movies. It was followed by the achievement of Dwayne Johnson being the winner of favorite movie actor. Meanwhile, this successful movie also has hidden messages that criticize the traditional gender norms.

The story begins with four high school students who discover an old video game console during their detention. When they start the console game, they are sucked into the world of Jumanji. They transformed into avatars they chose that are different from their real life personalities. As they are stranded in the jungle, a guide named Nigel informs them that they are trapped in a cursed land

and must complete a quest which is to restore a magical jewel to its sacred statue. As they try to complete the mission, the group realizes they must rely on each other's strengths. Spencer was required to be a confident leader, while Martha turns into a brave fighter, Fridge learns humility due to his physical weakness, and Bethany who was trapped in the body of a man gains perspective on identity and empathy. Even though they are trapped on a character with a very different personality, through teamwork and growth, they managed to overcome the game's challenges, defeat the antagonist, and return the jewel. When they are transported back into the real world, the obstacles and challenges change their friendship. They became genuine friends, carrying the lessons of cooperation and self-acceptance.

This analysis lies in *Gender Performativity* (1990) by Judith Butler, her book *Gender Trouble*. Butler's central argument is that gender is not a natural fact or a stable identity that exists inside of us, but is instead a social construct that is created through our repeated actions. To fully understand this, it is essential to understand the key terminology Butler uses, specifically the difference between performance and performativity. A "performance" is a conscious act, like an actor on a stage who plays a role that is different from their real self. "Performativity," on the other hand, is a much deeper and often unconscious process. It is the way our identity is shaped by the constant repetition of socially accepted behaviors, gestures, and styles that are associated with being a man or woman. Over time, this "stylized repetition of acts" creates the powerful illusion that we have a fixed, internal gender identity, when in reality, that identity is built from the outside in through these repeated actions. "*Performativity is not a matter of a single act, but a reiteration of a series of acts that are sanctioned by a social system.*" (Butler, 1993, p. 165). In essence, Butler argues that we do not have a gender that we then express; rather, the very "doing" of these gendered acts is what created and sustains our gender.

In a recent study titled "*Gender Trouble in Language Models: An Empirical Audit Guided by Gender Performativity Theory*", authored by Franziska Sofia Hafner, Ana Valdivia, and Luc Rocher, was published in May 2025. They use Judith Butler's Gender Performativity Theory to examine the ways language models shape and perpetuate binary ideas of gender. It explains that most earlier studies mostly examined surface challenges and gender stereotypes through the body-swap experience of Bethany, such as "woman = nurse" or "man = engineer", ignoring the deeper issue about gender itself, which involves many conspiracies. Therefore, the research gap lies in the difference between how digital systems reproduce gender norms and how popular media reinterprets these norms. Few studies have examined how technology and film construct gender. Over time, these performances make gender roles such as "*masculine*" or "*feminine*" seem natural, even though they

are actually created by culture and language. Because gender is something that is performed, it can also be changed or challenged when people act outside traditional norms. In this journal, this theory helps explore how *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle (2017)* shows the dynamic and flexible nature of gender, revealing that identity is something that is performed and negotiated by individuals, not something that is fixed or predetermined.

While the film's body swap concepts as a comedy, it provides a significant way for deeper analysis. The importance of this research is to show how films can make complex ideas about identity for a wide range of audience. By comparing gender roles to roles inside the video game, the film suggests that the rigid gender roles in society can be challenged. Therefore, this paper argues that *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle*, particularly through the character of Bethany Walker, serves as a powerful example of Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity. The film deconstructs the notion of gender as a fixed to biology, by separating Bethany's identity from her body, showing that gender is not an inborn trait but is instead a series of repeated actions and behaviors that are learned and can be changed. Meanwhile, the other characters also supported this analysis by providing the different personalities that they face in the *Jumanji* world.

Binary Opposition

Biological Sex	Performed Gender
<p>Refers to the fixed and natural foundation of human categorization based on physical, biological, and anatomical features. The biological sex represents the avatar's outward body that they inhabit, which is based on their biological sex, innate social, and psychological identity. <i>"The category of 'sex' is, from the start, a category of gender. That is to say, it is already a normatively construed category that sets the stage for the performance of gender."</i> (Butler, 1993, p. 7)</p>	<p>Gender performance related to the in-game body and persona, the avatar. The players must play with the roles and gender of their avatars, irrespective of their biological sex and identity. The contrast between the players and the avatar they played contradicts. This is a repetitive action performance, the only way that they survive the game. <i>"The gendered body is performative in the sense that its' a's' are always the ones to be repeated, and that repetition is what makes it appear to be natural."</i> (Butler, 1990, p. 270).</p>

METHOD

This study provided a critical analysis of the film *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle* with an emphasis on how the plot of the movie investigated, confronted, and challenged traditional ideas of gender identity. To enable the exploration, the study used a qualitative method based on a descriptive approach. This method is best defined by this kind of study since it can be carried out with a rich and interpretive analysis of a cultural text that went beyond a plot summary on the more complex level to

the exploration of the symbolism within the visual and narrative components of the text. The key theoretical approach that supports and frames this whole analysis is the theory of Gender Performativity by Judith Butler (1990) as presented in her best selling book, *Gender Trouble*. Besides, the conducted analysis of the characters used dialogues, and the plot to reveal how the characters in the movie demonstrate these concepts of gender.

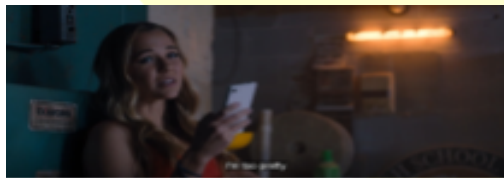
The data that were needed in this analysis was gathered in a systematic and observational manner on the basis of the film itself. It was carried out with several watchings of *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle* in order to carefully define, record, and categorize core instances, character relationships, and individual moments that are closely tied to the issue of the study on gender. All the data obtained is in three main forms, visual, dialog, and cinematography. The visual expression will incorporate non-verbal expressions like character movements, physical mannerism, expressions and physical comedy which occurs out of the bodies of the avatars. The dialogic data include certain lines of speech, the contents of conversation between characters and the verbal scripts that they are spoken. This thorough collection and analysis of these interwoven layers of evidence with a specific emphasis on the transformative changes of the character Bethany this paper explains why the mechanics of the narrative in the film can be viewed as a striking and easy to understand example of gender as performance.

DISCUSSION

1. Deconstructing Gender as a Biological and Fixed Identity

The narrative of *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle* critiques the societal expectation that gender is a fixed identity tied to biology by using Bethany's body-swap. Before the film can challenge the idea of a fixed gender, it first presents a character who fully represents the rigid social expectation.

"...an account [of the world] without edge or boundary, [an] account [without limit,] all of whose



**Picture 1. Bethany
refuses to do the works**

visible space is but some border of itself" (Derrida, as cited in Ward, 2014, p. 24578). In the real world, Bethany's identity is defined by actions that align with the feminine stereotype. Bethany is the popular teenager who relies on her appearance and uses her femininity beauty to obtain validation through social media. This is captured in

the detention scene where she complains she is "too pretty" to do manual labor, which reflects that her identity and self worth are determined by her appearance. *"The center also closes off the freeplay it opens up and makes possible. Qua center, it is the point at which the substitution of contents,*

elements, or terms is no longer possible." (Derrida, 1978, p. 352). Every narrative or structure is built around a "center" that limits the "freeplay" of meaning. Bethany's identity was based on what she showed to the world on the outside, like a project she had to work on, instead of being about who she truly was on the inside. This aligns with Judith Butler's theory that "*Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being.*" (Butler, 1990, p. 43). Bethany's constant phone use and being "pretty" are the "repeated acts" that construct her feminine identity. The cinematography of this scene uses the medium close-up to focus on her self-absorbed expression and her attachment to her phone, visually making her the center of her own world. The dim lighting of the basement contrasts with how she sees herself, showing that her actions are mostly artificially made to show femininity and not natural.

The central critique of this film is delivered through the transformation of Bethany into the game and forced into the body of Professor Shelly Oberon, an "overweight, middle-aged man". This scene shows a direct shocking break between who she feels she is on the inside and what her body looks like on the outside. Her horrified reaction, captured in her line, "*I look like a living garden gnome. Where is my phone?*" is deeply meaningful. The "garden gnome" comment shows her identity is still tied to appearance, but her desperate need for her phone reveals that her sense of self was built on the performance of femininity through social media. When Bethany loses her feminine body, the first thing she thought of doing is look for her phone that she used to perform femininity through her social media. This illustrated Butler's argument that "*There is no gender identity behind the*



Picture 2. Bethany realizing that she is in a man's body



Picture 3. Bethany making sure of her appearance

expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results." (Butler, 1990, p. 25). The film removes the physical "expression" but leaves her personality and the way she thinks. The cinematography in this scene uses medium shots, using the other character's shoulder while showing the panic in Bethany's action and expression. This

shot is wide enough to capture Jack Black's, the actor, full actions which helps the audience to understand that a teenage girl is stuck in this body. Furthermore, the shot places her modern,

superficial concerns against the wild jungle background, creating a visual contrast that emphasizes how out of place her old identity is in this new world.

The film delivers a critique through the comedy generated by Jack Black's performance. The humor is visible through Bethany's feminine behaviors and her new male body. When Professor Oberon uses a "popular girl" tone of voice, waves his hands dramatically, and obsesses about his looks, it becomes funny because those behaviors look completely out of place. This funny scene serves as a parody. A key scene is after Bethany successfully teaches Martha how to flirt and then, forgetting her new body, asks, "I'm still an old fat guy, right?". This moment is significant because it shows how Bethany recognizes that her performance of femininity is entirely the opposite from her physical male form, proving that gendered behaviors are a repeated actions, not a biological essence. This aligns with Butler's idea of *"As the effects of a subtle and politically enforced performativity, gender is an 'act,' as it were, that is open to splittings, self-parody, self-criticism, and those hyperbolic exhibitions of 'the natural' that, in their very exaggeration, reveal its fundamentally phantasmatic status."* (Butler, 1990, p. 187). Jack Black's performance shows how gender is something we act out, not something limited only to our biological appearance. Butler says that this scene helps audiences understand that gender is a performance we learn, not something we are born with. The medium close-up on Jack Black's face during this moment of confusion is vital. This focus on his confused and concerned expression is crucial because it allows the audience to see the internal conflict of Bethany inside the "Professor Oberon" avatar. It makes this scene as a theoretical point about the separation between performance and physical appearance feel like a personal and comedic moment of confusion of the character.

2. Compulsory Acts and Subversive Repetition

Gender is always considered from its biological appearances. But the gender is not that simple. The traditional gender norms stated that gender is what is dictated by the anatomical body, asserting a fixed relationship between biological sex and social performance. Judith Butler's concept of performativity, that gender is not a core substance, but a constant of doing repeated. The film *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle* provides a literary theoretical framework, where the game mechanism forces them to act as a new character that is entirely disconnected from their internal self. These things are shown by both of the female characters, Bethany and Martha. They have a hard



Picture 4. Ruby Roundhouse's outfit

time being totally different characters from their real life. Bethany was changed into a man avatar in the game, and her experience is really against the traditional gender perspective supported by Butler's theory.

The experience of Martha as Ruby Roundhouse serves as the primary evidence of gender as a compulsory act. Martha is depicted as a shy and quiet kid in school. She does not have any friends which make her alone and separate from society. After entering the video game, Martha is instantly bound by her avatar's sexual costume and role. Her core conflict is pictured by her outfit with a really short pants and tight t-shirt. "*Why am I wearing this outfit in a jungle? Tiny, little shorts and a leather halter top.*" It shows the key dialogue as a turning point of Martha's personality. "*There is nothing outside of the text [il n'y a pas de hors-texte].*" (Derrida, 1976, p. 158). She is forced to be more feminine and challenge her own identity. This line literalizes Butler's argument, the body dictates the action, showing the performance of femininity against the self's will. Martha's act of questioning her appearance is a defense of the moment switching identities. "*The body is not a 'being,' but a variable boundary, a surface whose permeability is politically regulated, a signifying practice within a cultural field.*" (Butler, 1993, p. 139). The gender is not only determined by the biological gender, but it can be changed as time goes by. Martha and Ruby Roundhouse have a completely different personality. By Martha being stuck on Ruby's body, it goes against the social norm about gender. Even though she is stuck on the avatar with the same gender as her, their behavior is very different. It really challenges Martha on how to perform her new character, which shows the gender is not a solid form.

The most crucial part of Martha's different act is on the dance fighting. Her strengthness helps her survive in the Jumanji world, but it makes her struggle to adapt to her new version. The dance is not an expression of Martha's personality, but a repetition of stylized femininity by the game rules. Through the training by Bethany, Martha is forced to tease the guard with her feminine appearance. After a lot of repetition, Martha ultimately mastered her avatar, which shows the continuous performance of gendered roles will create a new sense of self, with the help of her outfit and gender as a woman. But, since it was not her real identity to flirt with people, she attempted an awkward moment in front of the guard. Then a radio nearby her on, triggering her ability, the dance fighting. She then actively shows her skill, using the combination of martial arts and dance to unconscious the guard. This scene shows the shy Martha



Picture 5. Dance fighting scene

significantly beginning to embrace the confidence and power of her in-game character. It used the wide shot technique for this part, where it really strengthened and captured the full scope of Martha's fluidity movement on fighting the guard. It effectively showcases the spectacle and physicality of her unique movement.

Despite its tragic moment on the Jumanji world, this film also serves a comedic part through the response of Bethany, as she is turned into a man avatar. She needs to adapt on how to act just as a man, which is difficult for her because she used to be very feminine in her real life. It is a comedic but crucial moment where Bethany, as Professor Shelly Oberon, must learn basic biological function that she never used, urinating as a male. Fridge, as Franklin Finbar, has to teach her how to do the man routines, "You unzip, take it out, fire away." Her shock and curiosity shows that the gender people have is not a solid form, but shaped by a routine activity that each gender always does. This scene is captured with tight close-up shots to focus on Bethany's expression on discovering new things. It shows her internal reaction to a new personal experience. Gender behavior is not instinctually, but a set of practice actions that must be learned to operate a body. As Butler said, "*Gender is what we do rather than what we are.*" (Butler, 1990, p. 272). When people are born into the world, they do not know anything. But as they grow, they are taught several habits based on their biological appearance, which shape the gender. Bethany's experience on being a man really supports this theory. Even though Bethany's biological body is a man, her behavior still stuck being a woman. So even when people look like a man physically and biologically, the behavior of man is built by a routine activity that they always do.



Picture 6. Bethany's reaction on discovering new thing

Spencer and Fridge also face the same problem as Bethany and Martha, even though they still turn into male avatars. But, they went through different personalities. Spencer is a calm kid that does not often have courage in facing his daily life. But in the game, he was forced to be strong, supported by his body character. His attempt to repair the helicopter during flight represents Spencer's brave act



Picture 7. Spencer's act on repairing helicopter

that is different from his real personality. This pivotal action is when the characters are attempting to escape the villain, Van Pelt, on the crowd of aggressive rhinos. It showcases the extreme danger of the Jumanji game, and also shows the immediate

act of Spencer. The camera is placed low to the ground and makes the helicopter look enormous, imposing immediate danger of chasing rhinos. This scene implies a fast cut and motion blur from one scene to another, to establish chaotic movement of the team. His bravery was also shown on the scene at the market. The scene is a key moment of Spencer's character development. As a nerdy and anxious student, he now controls a muscular avatar. His line, "*I have to warn you, I think I'm a very strong puncher,*" is comedic because it goes against his real-world personality, but contrasts with the powerful body he is in. This is the first time Spencer tries to perform the courage of his avatar, marking a significant step in his journey toward becoming more confident. Finbar, as a zoologist, has a weird weakness in this game. Fridge as a powerful school athlete has learned that speed and strength has to be his weaknesses. This reinforces the video game logic where identities can be stripped down to set on some rules. It forces characters to adapt to roles that are completely opposite of their real world selves. Their experience shows that even if they are in the same gender, people can have different actions in life. "*The body is itself a site of cultural inscription, not a natural or pre-social entity.*" (Butler, 1990, p. 8). The character of someone does not come naturally, but it is shaped through society and through repeated action.

3. Liberation and Fluidity of Identity

Gender is not natural or biological. It is developed by repetitive actions that society requires people to follow. "*The gendered body is performative in the sense that its' a's' are always the ones to be repeated, and that repetition is what makes it appear to be natural.*" (Butler, 1990, p. 270). This is shown through the character resolution of Bethany in Jumanji: Welcome to the jungle. At the beginning, Bethany understands femininity as acting. She explains her worth in beauty, popularity, and also internet validation. Such actions are repeated by her to continue with her feminine image. Her separation with her familiar female body is what interferes with this performance when she becomes Professor Shelly Oberon. This is when the question arises as to whether she was who she was or it was the social imperatives that created her identity.

The moment when the gender performance of Bethany fails is when she enters the game. Her first reaction to finding herself in the body of Professor Shelly Oberon, an older male avatar, makes her panic, which demonstrates the extent to which her identity was tied to appearance and performance of femininity. She cannot accept the body that does not match the one that she was keeping up her image of. This scene is a visual



Picture 8. Bethany reacts to her new appearance.

representation of the break between inner self and physical appearance. Medium shots at eye level are employed in the scene to record her horrified expression, where there is an expressive contrast between the male body of Professor Shelly and the teenage feminine mannerisms of Bethany. The jungle natural lighting eliminates the unnatural glamour of her previous social media life, highlighting the denudation of her identity founded on beauty. The confusion of Bethany indicates that in the absence of the familiar body and recurring feminine behaviors which she was used to practicing, her sense of self outweighs. This scene raises the question of whether or not her femininity was ever an authentic self or a performance socially constructed to respond to outer expectations.

In the game, the liberation of Bethany is reflected in her decisions and behaviors, the departure of the femininity being enacted by her to do something that conforms to the value of her faith and conscience. She ceases to pay attention to beauty, social status, and internet popularity and starts to behave basing herself on empathy, bravery, and knowledge of other people. One such



Picture 9. The group helps Alex

situation is when she endangers her safety and surrenders one of her lives to save Alex in true interest, not in self-interest. She also makes it her duty to lead her fellow teammates, she takes the initiative to stand up and to serve them in a manner that has never been a worry of her in the real world.

Even her clumsy errors, humorous difficulties, and hesitations help her to emphasize that the process of personal development is slow and legitimate, and it cannot happen immediately and without flaws. Her adaptation to her new male body and her struggle to survive in the world of the game, which is both physical and social, underscores that identities are constructed by choice and experience and not by following social norms of what it means to be a woman. The character of Bethany reveals that selfhood is dynamically constructed rather than static, emerging from purposeful action, moral responsibility, and compassionate engagement with others. The experience of her journey brings to light that gendered behavior is not an imprinted characteristic but learned and practiced and that the way out is to go against these scripts so that she can rebrand herself through her daring, selflessness, and being able to prioritize values over appearance or recognition by other



Picture 10. Bethany reunites with her real body.

people. The character development of Bethany demonstrates that identity is fluid and individual, shaped by experience and will instead of social norms, and that empowerment can really come when one prefers to be herself instead of performative.

After completing the game, they all return to the original bodies. Bethany's reaction really highlights their experience. "*Oh, I missed you.*" A short dialogue but represents the real reaction. Having time on being Professor Shelly Oberon is a mixed journey. The camera uses a medium shot to focus on Bethany's emotional reunion with her body. It successfully captures her expression of joy and relief. Bethany's development shows that our identities are shaped by our choices and actions rather than being preset. She begins to live according to her own values, and responsibility rather than her outward look or social standing. Her moments of uncertainty demonstrate that self-improvement is real, and slow. She shows how one's sense of self evolves through lived experiences by facing challenges, supporting her teammates, and making decisions based on moral conviction rather than outside pressure. From Bethany's experience, gender-related behaviour is learnt and performed rather than innate, and true self-determination happens when people create their own identities independent of social norms, developing a flexible sense of self that is based on genuine purpose.

CONCLUSION

Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle (2017), is not only an action-comedy movie, but also a representation of how gender, identity, and self-perception are created and put to the test in society. The film relooks into the conventional gender expectations through the characters of Spencer, Martha, Fridge, and Bethany, offering the symbolic experience of transformation. The characters come into the game with a predetermined sense of self created by the rules of societal norms, yet they are required to remake themselves outside these confines as they journey through the perils of Jumanji. The movie turns into a metaphor of the self-liberation process in which identity is not being formed by gendered expectations, but rather made by choice, empathy, and experience.

The main example of the identity fluidity is the figure of Bethany Walker, who at the beginning of the film is a stereotypical femininity, built on beauty and validation. Having been turned into Professor Oberon, she is compelled to lose connection to performative beauty and acquire empathy, bravery, and humility. Bethany defies the stereotype that femininity has any connection to physical attractiveness or popularity by behaving and loving herself in a way that goes against the common beliefs on femininity. In the meantime, the transformation of an insecure and self-conscious girl into a confident and competent character of Ruby Roundhouse redefines the female strength in

both inner and physical forms, showing that empowerment has nothing to do with the need to fit into the male gaze. Spencer and Fridge too are transformed into questioning masculine ideals: Spencer finds out that it is not the lack of fear that makes a person brave but the capacity to act despite the fear, and Fridge finds that being a good co-worker, one can be emotional as well as be a dominant person. Their experiences combined portray that gender behavior is acquired and is reversible through experience and reflection.

Through the Butlerian lens, the paper has found that *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle* dismantles established gender binaries, and that it represents identity as something dynamic and performative. Body-swapping is also employed to highlight that gender roles are not natural, but rather created and taught. Cinematography, dialogue and character interactions also contribute to this point highlighting the difference between real-world actions and in-game identities that show that selfhood is developed through empathy, bravery and cooperation. Humor comes in as a mediator that reveals the vulnerable nature of gender expectations as characters are forced to depend on each other without considering their gendered bodies. This movie shows that identity, including gender, is not something that is fixed by social norms, but can change through experience. The transformation of the characters Spencer, Martha, Fridge, and Bethany demonstrate that gender roles are performative and can be challenged when individuals step outside the limitations of their physical forms and societal stereotypes.

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