

“DEFYING GRAVITY”:

QUEERING THE  
WITCHES OF OZ

by

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A THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts  
in the Department of Communication Studies  
in the Graduate School of  
The University of Alabama

TUSCALOOSA, ALABAMA

2013

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## ABSTRACT

The American theater has long been a venue for social commentary. From shows like *South Pacific* and *Rent* to *Bye, Bye, Birdie* and *Hair*, stage productions have made significant contributions to the discussions and understandings of American experiences, the ways in which people struggle through their hardships, and the relationships that publics develop throughout their lives. In particular, the American theater opens a discursive space for sexuality. The musical *Wicked* is and continues to be one of the most popular productions of the past decade as it holds strong in his home at the Gershwin Theatre in New York City and sells out touring locations across America and internationally, earning over one million dollars per week. This study, using the musical *Wicked* as a fragmented text and ideological cluster criticism as a rhetorical lens, first establishes a queer romantic storyline between Glinda the Good and Elphaba, who later becomes The Wicked Witch of the West. Then, in response to the driving research query, how does passing function within the musical *Wicked*, this project accesses traditional and ambiguous strategies of passing to understand the construction and maintenance of Glinda's heterosexual passing identity before providing some implications for rhetorical criticism and examinations of culture.

## DEDICATION

To the memory of my grandfather, "Papa Tee Gees", Thomas (T.J.) Maye, Sr. whose constant words of encouragement and motivation I dearly miss. Luckily for me, I carry them all in my heart.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For me this thesis writing process has been called many things, a labor of love, a marathon not a sprint, and the bane of my existence. I was only able to bring this project to fruition through the efforts of many people that I must thank. First, I must thank my wonderfully talented thesis committee. Your encouragement, support, and recommendations have kept me motivated throughout this process. My sincere thanks to Dr. Kristen Warner for serving on my thesis committee and suggesting resources that expanded and improved this project. To Dr. Robin Boylorn, your intense love and support for me and this project has brought me from the ledge many a time. I must thank Dr. Jason Edward Black for fostering this project from its inception. Your passion equaled, and at times surpassed, my own keeping me inspired. Thank you for giving me the strength to recognize the rhetorical abilities of texts that I am so passionate about and the power to write about them. To the Department of Communication Studies at The University of Alabama, thank you for the learning opportunities you provided through classes and conversations with wonderful and inspiring faculty and students. My journey down this yellow brick road would not have been possible without each of you.

I must express my gratitude to my friends who tried to keep me sane throughout this process. To the “fab five,” the “inner sanctum,” and the countless others who have made this Longhorns fan enjoy living in Tuscaloosa and MOST of what comes with it. Thank you for dinners, drinks, shopping breaks, slumber parties, conversations, movie nights, game watching parties, and the promise of even more drinks. In these past two years I have experienced more

than I thought possible and have grown so close to all of you. Though I am sure you will not read this thesis, just know that I will truly miss you all and by knowing each of you I have definitely been changed for good. To my family, thank you for pushing me through this and keeping me in your thoughts and prayers. Dad, I know how much you asked Mom about my process and my well-being. Thomas, thank you for being the best big-little brother and roommate, checking in on every late night in the library or office. Finally, there are not enough words to ever thank you enough Mom, but I will try. Thank you for listening to me cry, talking me through my moments, constantly encouraging me, and loving me enough to talk to me as I walked to my car and drove. I know I did not express it then, but it meant the world to me. Throughout my life, you have all inspired me to become my best self and have shown me, through your lives, that defying gravity is truly possible.

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## CHAPTER 1

### WELCOME TO OZ

#### *Introduction*

Television and movies are some of the most visible outlets for emotional expression, and are some of the most recognizable and identifiable products of American cultural creativity. While these media outlets have held a significant place in the minds of Americans (and citizens of other countries) for nearly sixty years, the American musical has been a site of cultural significance since its evolution from the vaudeville shows of the 1880s to 1930s (Wolf *A Problem Like Maria* 27). Broadway musicals have been understood to be “a total art form for the masses” and generative of what remains in the cultural imaginary (Grant 5). Mark Grant writes that the influence of musicals is so far reaching and ingrained in our culture that what has survived in the cultural imaginary about showboats, for example, rests not in textbooks or novels, but from Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein II’s 1927 musical *Showboat* (Grant 6). Through revivals of older shows, television and film versions of stage shows, and productions by universities, high schools, and community theaters across the country and around the world, the American musical has solidified its place in the milieu of culture (Wolf *A Problem Like Maria* 9).

At the same time, the American theater has long been a venue for social commentary. From shows like *South Pacific* and *Rent* to *Bye, Bye Birdie* and *Hair*<sup>1</sup>, stage productions have made significant contributions to discussions and understandings of American experiences, the

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<sup>1</sup>For a summary of all referenced musicals see Appendix B

ways in which people struggle through their hardships, and the relationships that publics develop throughout their lives. In particular, the American theater opens and creates a discursive space for racial issues and concerns about sexuality. Musicals provide teaching points for their characters on racial tolerance (*South Pacific*), acceptance of our growing multicultural world (*The King & I*), and that class and status can be overcome to find happiness and success (*Cinderella, Once, Newsies*). The musical is one of the most publicly accessible formats to demonstrate shifts in attitudes regarding race, sexuality and a host of other “taboo” topics (Vierra and Hammers 4). Musicals, as a part of mainstream culture, work to construct a reality that parallels or contradicts, reflects or shapes, but always comments on, the society outside the theater doors (Wolf *A Problem Like Maria* 8). These strengths and contributions of musical theater, social commentary, reflection, critique, and creation of discursive spaces, establish the field as a repository of rhetorical texts and artifacts worthy of analysis. These texts and artifacts are available to the public in their Broadway and off-Broadway theaters, touring reproductions, film adaptations, and cultural memory.

Much of the scholarship done regarding musicals takes a nostalgic tone, reminiscing about how influential the theater was in its “golden age,” from around 1940-1960 (Clum 2). These writings urge us to look back to this time and to revisit the themes that made productions such as *Oklahoma!*, *The King & I*, *My Fair Lady*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, and others successful and lasting. However, by privileging this “better time” in the American musical, naming it the “golden age,” and assigning these shows a central role in presenting the ideal function of theater, such authors are also validating the cultural practices of that time. Some of these cultural practices prolonged racial pigeonholing in the dressing room and on stage, limited the representations of women, and kept the closet doors locked, preventing on-stage expressions of

sexuality that went against the heteronormative grain. Broadway and American musical communities have always relied, to a degree, on the contributions of LGBTQ individuals. From the many gay writers, lyricists, composers, costume and set designers, and performers, the “golden age of musicals” was surrounded by a culture that kept gay men in their place, essential but invisible (Clum 2). Not only did the community of “golden age” musicals maintain keep slammed the closet, the structure of these musicals prevented representations of non-heterosexual sexualities and relationships from seeing the light beyond the closet door. This thesis takes the much needed step out of the spotlight of musicals’ past to focus on the construction of LGBTQ individuals in a modern show, *Wicked*.

#### *Justification for Wicked*

The presence of sexuality in the American musical is by no means limited to the musical *Wicked*, and there are arguably more visible examples of sexuality in the books and lyrics of musicals. However, I argue that it is necessary to discuss the presence of sexuality, especially a queer reading of such sexuality, in shows that are not typically understood to address the topic. Some musical productions discuss sexualities *overtly*, addressing homosexual and bisexual identities; however, most musicals are not thought of as constructions or reflections of ideologies surrounding nondominant sexualities. For example, of the five longest running shows on Broadway, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Cats*, *Les Misérables*, *Chicago*, and *The Lion King*<sup>2</sup>, all present love stories between heterosexual male and female characters (Brown 1). By reading presentations of sexuality into and through the musical *Wicked*, this thesis continues the work of analyzing messages on taboo topics such as sexuality, race, politics, and religion in venues of

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<sup>2</sup> For a summary of these musicals see Appendix B

entertainment across the spectrum. While I have chosen *Wicked* as my site of analysis, it is important to understand why this production warrants my analysis over more obvious choices.

*Avenue Q*, though addressing taboo subjects such as race, class and sexuality, does so by use of parody. The musical is a coming-of-age story of the main character, Princeton, a puppet. Princeton and his neighbors are all in search of ways to improve their positions in life. The portrayal of life on Avenue Q is different from many other musicals because of the presence of human characters and puppets that interact with the human characters with the assistance of their puppeteer handlers. This interaction makes any of the struggles discussed, financial distress, racism, and discovery of one's sexuality, comical. One of the puppet neighbors, Rod, is suspected as being gay ("If You Were Gay") but denies this identity and creates an imaginary girlfriend in Canada ("My Girlfriend Who Lives in Canada"). Currently, *Avenue Q* has joined forces with LOGO TV, a television network that self-identifies as one that "celebrates one-of-a-kind personalities, unconventional storylines and discovering what's next," in a HIV/AIDS awareness campaign featuring three of the shows characters ("Puppet Service Announcement").

Moving away from the parody genre, *Spring Awakening* focuses on the turmoil that arises as young nineteenth century German men and women discover their sexuality. The storyline, based on the German play of the same name, presents the dilemma that many young people experience as they become sexually attracted to others. The show attempts to answer questions of how young people navigate their sexual awakening and what it means to be sexually attracted and sexually active. In particular, this show focuses on Wendla Bergmann and Melchior Gabor, whose affair leads to Wendla's pregnancy and from an underground abortion. Also a part of the story is Moritz Stiefel who commits suicide due to his inability to rationalize his erotic dreams and desire for intimacy. Moritz is unable to process and rationalize his journey through puberty

to existing as a sexual person. His struggle is not with identifying as a particular sexuality, but rather sexuality in general. A side story concerns Ernst and Hänschen. These characters perform a reprise (“The Word of Your Body”) of a song that Wendla and Melchior sing earlier. Because of their lack of presence as characters in the show and their one song together and about one another, these characters cannot be examined alone or in the context of the musical.

*Rent* is one of the more popular musicals of the early twenty-first century as evidenced by the \$5.3 million the 2005 movie earned the day of its release, and the \$10.7 million earned in the first weekend. (Gans 1). This storyline centers on the lives of a group of Bohemians as they battle the harshness of everyday life in the Alphabet City of New York City. Their relationships with one another and their experiences with the characters’ battle with HIV/AIDS become the central plotline of the musical. The primarily story line concerns living with HIV/AIDS, drug abuse and the effects of those conditions on the body, friendships and romantic relationships. In a story centered on the effects of HIV/AIDS, the presentation of homosexual relationships is not surprising and possibly even expected when the musical was debuted in 1994. These relationships include Tom Collins and Angel Dumott Shunard, his HIV positive drag queen partner and Maureen Johnson, an aspiring artist, and Joanne Jefferson, her lawyer partner. Because of the centrality of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the characters are not constructed in ways that lend themselves to this analysis. Further, the clarity and overt expression of the characters’ sexuality keeps this show from being fit for critique.

While there are many musicals in the history of Broadway that have addressed issues of sexual discovery and exploration, *Wicked* holds a special connection to the LGBTQ community that warrants its study from a queer perspective. As the prequel and alternative storyline to *The Wizard of Oz* in many ways, this show takes the spectator back, or introduces her or him for the

first time, to the Land of Oz, complete with all the characters we remember from our first experiences there. John M. Clum, in his book, *Something for the Boys: Musical Theater and Gay Culture*, claims that “musicals are trips to Oz, that place celebrated in the 1939 film that had such metaphoric power for gay men” and reminds his readers that “the gay national anthem is still ‘Over the Rainbow’” (6, 10). These connections between the gay communities and Oz become even more significant when thinking of *The Wizard of Oz* as an allegory of gay experience (Clum 153). That is, the Land of Oz provides an alternate reality from the real world oppressions, violence, and threats that many LGBTQ people face, where a “queer lot of people” live, work, and play together (Baum, 196).

The connection between stories of Oz and the gay communities cannot be complete without a discussion of the importance of Judy Garland, *The Wizard of Oz*'s<sup>3</sup> Dorothy. Author Robert Plunkett wrote that part of the appeal of Garland for many gay men was that her “turbulent life, with its manic behavior and its glamorization of the role of the victim, struck a chord” (1). At a time when homosexuality was viewed as a mental illness and a crime, struggling with one's identity and one's place within the larger public became a point of contention in many individual's lives. Charles Kaiser connects Garland's role with her bisexuality, saying that “Garland loved men – and women – of all persuasions... she also got a kick out of seducing gay and bisexual men” (192). If her sexuality was known through the subculture of gay men and lesbians, then this would have been an obvious area to identify with this star of stage and screen. Garland's influence on the gay communities lives on as the expression “friend of Dorothy” is still used as slang to refer to gay men and lesbians. These

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<sup>3</sup> Here, and in any other use of the title *The Wizard of Oz*, I am referring to the 1939 film produced by Metro-Goldwyn Mayer and directed by Victor Fleming.

connections between stories about the Land of Oz and the LGBTQ communities make *Wicked's* narrative of Oz a significant place for a queer reading.

As a note, my use of the term “queer” stems from Judith Butler and Sue Ellen Case’s argument that “queerness” originates from a place “not concerned with, or limited by notions of a binary opposition of male and female or heterosexual versus homosexual paradigm” (quoted in Doty *xv*). By standing outside of the binary that views gender performance and sexuality in one of two ways that is in constant opposition to the other option, queer perspectives are able to critique systems of power and provide alternatives to this two-party system. Alexander Doty uses queer(ness) to describe performances, behaviors, and ways of being that can be viewed or identified as “contra-, non-, or anti-straight” (*xvi*). He furthers his understandings of queer by arguing that this queerness “gets its critical edge through defining itself against the normalcy that is associated with heterosexuality and being cisgendered, or having a gender performance that coincides with one’s biological sex (Doty 7). With this understanding of queer(ness), I undertake a journey of queer world-making that recognizes the ways that queer culture constructs and solidifies itself without the access to “privatized forms [of identity constitution] normally associated with sexuality” (Warner 558). Queer world making calls for the creation of forms of intimacy outside of those associated with domestic space, familial relations, two person relationships, property, or the nation but that are closely related to queer culture’s identity as a counterpublic (Warner 558). Queer readings that stand apart from and in opposition to heteronormative understandings of cultural texts are a part of this queer world making by their interest and dedication to solidifying the counterculture using these nondominant readings.

My first experience with *Wicked* came in the fall of 2008, when the touring schedule brought it to Birmingham, Alabama. Two of my best friends and I piled into my 2008 Hyundai



Tiburon and made our way from our dorm room at Huntingdon College in Montgomery, Alabama, to the Birmingham Jefferson Convention Center. The show, with its heightened theatricality, rousing musical numbers, and familiar storyline left me in awe and with a renewed passion and appreciation for the arts. My friends and I had listened to the soundtrack for months before we saw the show, and seeing them performed on stage gave them new meaning. They were not just beautiful orchestrations with extremely talented people lending their voices to a storyline that has influenced our friendship to this day.

In 2008, these songs told nothing more than the story of two women, one an outcast and the other beloved, who would develop a friendship as strong as any we had seen. Three years later, in 2011, we played the final ballad “For Good<sup>4</sup>” at our college graduation party. When I saw *Wicked* again, in the spring of 2012, I saw the show through new eyes that had accessed and internalized queer theory and transgressive readings of popular texts. It was not until weeks later that I decided to unite my passions with my academic studies. However, I needed to experience the show once more with my arguments in mind. So, in January 2013, I flew to New York City to see the show on Broadway. The Broadway production was grander, partially because of Broadway’s reputation and because the actors and actresses on stage were arguably the best for those roles at the time. The Broadway performances of musicals and plays can also be thought of as the standard or official versions of those shows, revised prior to and during their Broadway run before the shows begin their tours.

Using the script, soundtrack lyrics, a February 18, 2012, Birmingham, Alabama performance, and a January 12, 2013, Broadway performance of the musical *Wicked* as text, this analysis examines – accessing Helene Shugart’s strategies of passing as a part of queer theory –

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<sup>4</sup> For lyrics to this song, and other songs from *Wicked*, refer to Appendix A

how Glinda the good witch of the North constructs and maintains her complicated and disingenuous or, in the least, complicated heterosexual identity. By analyzing the construction of the characters, musical performances, and the verbally performed script, this thesis asks the question, how does passing function within the context of the show *Wicked*? Hiding a character's sexuality is an interesting area for study in a section of the larger culture that has been known to be accepting of and presenting messages of gay communities for decades.

Analyzing these acts of passing becomes increasingly important when LGBTQ youth are recipients of messages that encourage passing as a way to make it through the difficulties of middle and high school. Movies like 2010's *Easy A* feature characters who are encouraged to "play it straight" in high school as to avoid harassment from their classmates and school administrators. Even television shows that are celebrated, or at least recognized, for their positive representation of LGBTQ people are perpetrators of encouraging passing. Season three of *Glee*, the 2012 nominee for, and 2011 and 2010 winner of, GLAAD's Outstanding Comedy introduced audiences to a cross-dressing student named Wade "Unique" Adams. As students, teachers, and audience members attempted to understand this character, he was encouraged by his parents and principal to be Wade at school and only perform with the glee club as "Unique." Encouraging these characters to pass and avoid drawing attention to themselves for their uniqueness and individuality sends the same harmful message to LGBTQ youth in the real world. As a result of these messages from so many sources, both mediated and from their peers, many young people are pressured to hide parts of themselves and struggle with those identity factors they feel forced to hide.

With this in mind, I state plainly the interests and goals of this thesis for the reader in order to avoid hiding any aspect of this research. Stacy Wolf described her book, *A Problem*

*Like Maria: Gender and Sexuality in the American Theater* as one that is not concerned with the intentions of the producers, writers, and directors involved with the construction of musicals. Rather her reading of the Golden Age's leading ladies, centers on what can be seen through lesbian and feminist lenses (3-4). Similarly, this project is not concerned with what advertisers, marketing executives, producers, investors, and others who promote the musical say the *Wicked* storyline tells. This project is, however, interested in the ways that "musicals generate queer meanings and offer queer pleasures for audiences" (Wolf *A Problem Like Maria* 4).

For this analysis, I access Shugart's strategies of passing to show how Glinda manipulates aspects of her surroundings to pass as heterosexual. As a student of Shiz University and as a member of the Ozian government, Glinda must hide her romantic feelings for her roommate and friend Elphaba. As I read the story, to maintain the status she has gained through her association with high-ranking officials like Madame Morrible and the Wizard, Glinda must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that her romance is not exposed. It is important to note at this point that I am not claiming that Glinda (or Elphaba) is a lesbian, or that these women have some sort of sexual relationship that exists outside of what is shown on stage. Rather, I am prospectively arguing that working within the stage performance is a story of romance outside of the typically assumed male-female dynamic at play in many television shows, movies, books, and musicals.

The distinction between sex, the physical act, and sexual identity, orientation, or attraction can be seen in educational researchers Margaret Sinkinson and Lisette Burrows's research on New Zealand's sexuality education program. While sex education programs, like those found in the United States, focus on "physical dimensions of sexuality" i.e. sex and the consequences of not protecting oneself, New Zealand's sexuality education program teaches that

human sexuality is “an inherent and positive tenet of the whole person” (Sinkinson and Burrows 422). Sinkinson and Burrows emphasize the distinction between sex and sexuality further citing that sexuality education includes conversations about relational well-being and the socially constructed meanings associated with particular sexualities (423). To be forced into a discussion of sexual orientation or attraction that demands the inclusion of sex acts ignores a deal of human experience and interaction. As indicated in explanations and discussions of the Kinsey Reports, the majority of people, even those who consider themselves to be exclusively heterosexual or exclusively homosexual, reported thoughts and attractions that are considered mixed (Marinucci 21-23).

There are other sites of discourse that question the relationship between Glinda and Elphaba, and express individual’s desires for an alternative storyline. Various authors on fan fiction websites and blogs have penned pieces that feature Glinda and Elphaba as reuniting after the musical’s ending, in alternative storylines during their time at school, and in a romantic relationship outside of *Wicked’s* script. These works are named “Gelphe” because of their focus on the two women. While these public documents discuss the possibility of a homosexual relationship, they do not provide any reasoning for the focus of their writing. Other than the personal opinion and desires of these authors, there is nothing in these stories for readers to understand these alterations in the story that they know. This analysis stands apart from those pieces of fan fiction by discussing, using the text, how and why theater goers can view the relationship as being more than the friendship presented.

#### *Identification of Critical Framework*

To conduct an analysis of this type, I believe that a combination of ideological criticism and cluster criticism will allow me to further explore the ways that passing is performed and how

it functions within this space. Through these forms of rhetorical criticism, I will be able to see, question, and explain the techniques that are presented within the mosaic of texts that comprise the performance. However, before explaining the ways that ideological and cluster criticism have and will continue to influence this research, it is important to note that this text that I have called the show or the performance *Wicked* is comprised of many fragments. Rhetorical theorist Michael Calvin McGee argues that we, as rhetorical critics, form and shape the “texts” that we analyze from the fragments that influence what we have chosen (279). In selecting a piece of discourse – a speech, movie, television show, social movement, or musical – for analysis, we choose the point where various influencing factors unite to create a message. The script and song lyrics along with the visions that the writers, directors, producers, audience members, and each actress and actor for the presentation of the characters coalesce to create what we understand to be *Wicked* (McGee 279, Schrader “Defying Gravity” 65). These fragments must be viewed together in order to provide a critique of *Wicked* as they all have and will continue an influence on the way the musical is performed in each place it is performed in, both at the Gershwin Theatre in New York, on West End, and in its touring locations across the country.

This thesis proceeds as follows. Chapter one introduces the reader to the rhetorical nature of musical theater, the artifact for analysis, *Wicked*, and to the framework used to view and critique the musical and to discuss the relationship between Glinda and Elphaba. Chapter two reviews previous rhetorical scholarship on ideological and cluster criticism, musical theater, *Wicked*, and passing. Chapter three provides a full summary of *Wicked*'s storyline, context that is necessary for readers who have never witnessed this show or whose memory of the show has faded.

Chapter four begins to analyze *Wicked* by offering the transgressive reading of the story. Using the song lyrics, script, and staging I argue for the possibility of an alternative and romantic storyline between Glinda and Elphaba. While others have proposed interpretations similar to mine, none have provided a rhetorical base for such claims. Therefore, this chapter argues for queer romance in *Wicked* using the rhetoric provided on stage.

Chapter five continues the discussion of this alternative storyline by applying Shugart's strategies for passing to Glinda. This chapter directly addresses the question posed above. This heteronormative identity is particularly interesting because of musical theater and stories of Oz have with nondominant identities. What is meant here is that if there was a place where presenting outwardly queer storylines and characters, Broadway or stories of Oz would be some of the most fitting places for them. In addition, understanding how acts of passing are created and maintained within the idyllic and structured scenes of the theater provides interesting implication for how those acts are performed in the world. Chapter six concludes the thesis by summarizing its primary argument and by discussing the limitations and implications of this research. This chapter also offers some directions for future research on passing, musical theater, or *Wicked*.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This review of literature begins with a discussion of the critical framework that guides the analysis of *Wicked*'s textual field. Understanding how this combination of ideological and cluster criticism operates to uncover, explore, and discuss themes in the show guides the first section of this chapter. The chapter then continues with a review of literature regarding musical theater as a topical area, literature examining *Wicked* as a case-based area, and finally the literature of passing as a thematic area.

#### *Ideological Criticism*

Rhetorical studies boasts a long history rooted in Aristotelian ideals of finding the best available means of persuasion in order to address a public in the agora (Aristotle 70). However, with development of a more inclusive rhetoric, moving from public address toward including media, art, music, dance, architecture, etc., came an expansion of the ways that critics approach texts. Rhetorical critic Raymie McKerrow acknowledges rhetorician Robert Scott's role in establishing rhetoric as "a unique entity with its own internal power to create knowledge" ("Research Rhetoric" 199). With a new role for rhetoric as epistemic versus as a conduit and new sources of rhetorical artifacts, critics in the last third of the twentieth century needed new techniques and vocabularies for approaching and interacting with their texts, and rhetorical theorists and critics met that need by arguing for criticism that leaned toward ideological grounding.

Rhetorical critic Jim Kuypers re-examines this notion by considering how the ideological turn could reshape the ways that we look at how criticism should be applied. Kuypers argues that prior to the ideological turn, traditional critics focused their attentions to “artistic excellence” and appreciation. These critics, Herbert Wichelns included, were concerned with appreciating and understanding the “method of imparting his message to his hearers” (225). However, turning toward the ideological, criticism began to focus on the ways the information and arguments presented through the rhetoric connected to the ideas they were rooted in (Kuypers 352). From this shift in rhetorical focus, “ideology” can be understood in two ways, creating a dialectical opposition that sees criticism as producing knowledge or as performing rhetorical knowledge. These explanations of ideology can fit within traditional understandings of rhetoric, ideology as neutral, and can offer a new lens of rhetorical criticism, ideology as false consciousness.

If we are to understand ideology as a neutral position, then we see ideology as the collection of a society’s belief systems that can then be analyzed and examined (Kuypers 352). Kuypers cites rhetorical critic Michael Calvin McGee’s work with ideographs as evidence for this understanding of ideology. For McGee, ideographs are one-word summations of a society’s belief system like “liberty,” “equality,” and “freedom.” These terms signify and remind audiences of the history of a set of ideas. However, if we are to understand ideology as a type of false consciousness, then we place it in a space of “negative influence that distorts one’s ability to think and to perceive the world” (Kuypers 353). These ideas of false consciousness, derived from the works of Marx, Engels, and Lenin, argue that the ideologies presented within pieces of discourse work to obscure the individual’s ability to reason and lead to the domination and oppression of the public. Each of these understandings of ideologies places rhetorical critics’



positions that explore the ways that ideologies work to express cultural values and how they can be used to oppress marginalized identities.

These understandings of are expanded from the theoretical explanations of ideologies to ways that critics can see ideological influence in rhetorical artifacts. In McKerrow's article "Critical Rhetoric: Theory and Praxis," he "articulates the concept of critical rhetoric" that addresses the presence and relationship of domination and freedom (91). His "critique of domination" and "critique of freedom" allow the critic to analyze what opportunities for social change exist, if any, when knowledge and power are combined to continue the oppression of subaltern groups (McKerrow "Critical Rhetoric" 92). This relationship is important to ideological criticism because as we focus on the ways in which individuals or groups of people are marginalized and oppressed, we have a responsibility to become active participants in their liberation. McKerrow also recognizes sociologist Vincent Mosco's suggestion that critical rhetoric presents the connections between "seemingly unrelated forces in society" (239). As ideological critics, we are tasked with exposing and demystifying expressions of power, many times in places that an average observer would not consider.

A major proponent of ideological criticism, Philip Wander articulates what ideological rhetoric has the reach and ability to address and discuss. He claims that because ideological work focuses on humanity as a whole, and not just a particular group or identity, critics with this lens are tuned in to the voices and concerns of the disenfranchised, marginalized, otherwise muted voices. These critics are also free from the limitations that being bound to the academy places on what can be examined and studied (Wander 199). These liberties of ideological criticism allow for rhetorical critics to focus on a broader spectrum of texts that address social issues. Wander also makes a point that is vital to my approach in this analysis. To wit, it is

important to understand that ideological criticism does not constitute a “method” for analyzing text; however, it “indicates the ground on which research, scholarship, and criticism can be conducted” (Wander 199). Rhetorical critic Sharon Crowley understands Wander’s explanation of ideological criticism to incorporate “any criticism that is primarily motivated by ethical or political concerns [...] criticism that begins with motivational warrants” (452) This analysis does not simply assert that accepting an ideological positionality constitutes the establishment of a method for analysis, but rather, this positionality influences the ways in which I approach my method and my text.

Having an ideological positionality does not create a strategy with which I can approach my text in the hopes of examining passing. To find the ways that passing strategies are constructed and shaped throughout the case study, I will be using cluster criticism. This form of rhetorical criticism, significantly influenced by Kenneth Burke, suggests that the relationships between themes within a piece of discourse are significant in the meaning-making process (Foss 137). When considering how clusters are formed, it is important to refer to Burke’s understanding of clusters as the idea of “what goes with what” (Schrader “Defying Gravity: Social Movements” 20). With this understanding we are able to examine a discourse for the similar themes, arguments, and ideas that present themselves to critics. In order to engage in such criticism, Sonja Foss has provided three steps that rhetorical critics should follow. The first of these steps is to identify the concepts or terms within the text. Once these concepts or terms are identified, critics are to search for additional ideas associated with the previously identified concepts and terms. Finally, critics are to examine how these additional ideas represent the concepts and terms identified in the first step (Foss 137). These steps are aligned with the use of Cicero’s rhetorical canon of invention and arrangement in developing a piece of discourse.

Using the canon, orators might identify the *topoi*, or topics, appropriate for a given situation and the search for themes related to the chosen topic.

Much of the scholarship using cluster criticism has been focused on public address, and rightfully so. The public address format, typically a political speech delivered by one speaker, usually male, to a situated audience, lends itself to an analysis of this type because the presence or emergence of related concepts and terms can be traced through the message of a single speaker. For example, Carol Berthold analyzed the rhetoric of President John F. Kennedy using cluster criticism and found that many of his speeches focused on “peace” and “strength” and the more incendiary and provocative “communism” (303). By identifying these key terms, relating other terms and ideas to these to create clusters and drawing meaning from these clusters, Berthold provides an exemplar for future scholars to follow when conducting cluster criticism on public addresses. However, this analysis cannot replicate the example set by Berthold because of the importance that song lyrics, performance, and the audience have as meaning-constructors. For this reason, I must expand cluster criticism to include not only key terms and concepts as presented in the spoken message of the text at hand, but also in the sung messages and bodily performance presented on stage. This textual field may seem monolithic, the lyrics, script, and performance all unite to tell one larger story. However, as rhetorical critic Jason Edward Black understands that memory fields surrounding American Indian museums and memorials contain fragments that fuse together to form the larger narrative (207-8), These fragments harmonize to create the textual field surrounding musical theater.

In her dissertation, “Defying Gravity, Silence, and Societal Expectations: Social Movement Leadership and Hegemony in the musical ‘Wicked’,” Valerie Schrader extends cluster criticism to account for the textual fragmentation that exists in musicals by identifying the

terms that emerged from her reading of the fragmented show, allowing examples and concepts to emerge through analysis. Her reading exposed clusters of hegemony, Elphaba's militant social leadership, and Glinda's leadership style to form ("Defying Gravity: Social Movements" 72). By accounting for the textual fragmentation that exists within discourse, Schrader and McGee expand cluster criticism, allowing this form of rhetorical criticism to be compatible with post structural ideas of rhetoric and criticism (ideas that supported and advanced the authority of single texts)<sup>5</sup>.

This analysis also recognizes fragmentation and the textual web surrounding musical theater as a significant part of the meaning-making process, and therefore attempts to use cluster criticism in a way that is harmonious with the ideological lens described previously. After listening to the cast recording, admittedly mostly for pleasure, and viewing a performance of the show, some terms emerged that influenced the arguments made in this thesis. Femininity, romantic relationship, and platonic relationships were concepts that became evident and examples or additional concepts for each of these key terms/phrases will be provided throughout the analysis of the musical and the relationships it presents. Through a discussion of these clusters, I have structured the arguments and meanings presented in following sections.

### *Musical Theater*

Though little attention has been paid to the rhetoric of theatrical performance, some significant studies have occurred, though on a limited range of productions. One musical that has drawn relatively high attention is the 1943 Broadway production *Oklahoma!*. Andrea Most focuses on the performance associated with Jewish assimilation into (traditionally) Judeo-

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<sup>5</sup> Schrader cites Michael Calvin McGee's analysis of Henry Kissinger's *Foreign Affairs*, a text in which Kissinger authored only about 800 words. In his analysis, McGee decenters the position of intentionality that is rooted in cluster criticism.

Christian, white America within the show. She argues that Jewish writers<sup>6</sup> created an ideal America that was accepting and tolerant of them (Most 77). In her analysis of the musical, she argues that Ali, an immigrant merchant, can be read as a Jewish immigrant because of his occupation, most peddlers on the frontier were Jewish, his non-threatening sexuality, and his attempts at assimilating into the community by participating in the songs and dances with the other characters (Most 81-83). Most's analysis also advocates a reading of Jud, a hired hand on the farm, that portrays him as "stereotypically black" because of his heightened sexuality, his description in the stage notes as being "bullet colored," the stage directions that say Jud sings "like a Negro at a revivalist meeting," and his inability to assimilate into the community (Most 81-83). These presentations of racial identities, and that Ali becomes a part of the community by marrying into it, signify the ways that Jewish writers constructed a tolerant America in the 1940's. In Susan Cook's race and gender analysis of *Oklahoma!*, she finds that Laurey and Curley, the female and male lead characters, are representations of "gender and racialized class ideals" – while Ado Annie is more representative of working class women and ideals (38). Her conclusions are drawn from Laurey and Curley's relationship and Annie's sexuality and her use of profane language.

Finally, two musicals from the late twentieth century have also drawn critical attention from scholars. First, the rock musical based on Puccini's *La bohème*, *Rent*, has also been a site for critique from scholars. Judith Sebesta's 2006 essay focuses on Michel Bahktin's carnival, lower class critique on upper classes behaviors and taste for high culture, by focusing on the interactions of the characters and the music. She notes that the cast sings their critique of the upper middle and high classes in their mock eulogy for Bohemia, "La Vie Boheme." These

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<sup>6</sup> In examining *Oklahoma!*, Most is referring to Richard Rodgers who orchestrated the music and Oscar Hammerstein II, who penned the lyrics.

characters are extremely critical of one of their former friends, Benny, who has left the alphabet jungle to marry a wealthy woman and becomes his former roommates' landlord (Sebesta109).

Second, the musical *Miss Saigon* and its casting practices was analyzed by Angela Pao. Through her criticism, she found that because of the racial and gendered stereotypes of Asian women as “the object of romantic interest and sexual desire, the female lead, Kim, could not be cast across racial lines while the male lead could be played by a White man (Pao 22). These analyses have significantly contributed to the understandings of how musical theater, as a part of American culture, is influenced by and influences the larger public's understanding of themselves and the world they are engaging in daily.

Though each of these analyses uses musicals as texts to show how society is reflected in cultural artifacts and how these artifacts comment on that culture, few provide a discussion of the process of using musicals as text. However, they do explore what elements of musicals contain the messages to which critics must lend their ears, the libretto or script and the lyrics. Though many of these critiques do not specify whether or not the movie version or the actual staged production was used as text, Most points out some differences between the staged and movie versions of *Oklahoma!*, a movie version of each of these musicals exists. When conducting a critique of musicals like *Oklahoma!*, *Rent*, and *Miss Saigon* the songs and script are more easily available through a filmic representation. However, cases such as this with musicals such as *Wicked*, where no movie version, only the cast recording, exists and the construction of a script is difficult. For example, in Valerie Schrader's investigation of the use of Burkean identification in the 1937 musical *Pins and Needles*, she hints that no script or production could be used as a text (Schrader “Connecting and Persuading” 4-5). In revival productions the script, staging, and other important elements of the show were changed to adapt to the times, and there is no

documentation of the original performance leaving only the original songs for interested researchers.

To conduct an analysis of a musical such as *Wicked*, it is important to construct a script from the fragments of the script that exist. These fragments are positioned in a myriad of places ranging from full scripts on blogging websites to partial scripts included in souvenir books sold through licensed distributors of *Wicked* memorabilia. In the case of this analysis, the fan produced scripts that contributed to the construction of the script used as text here had to be verified using video recordings of performances posted online.

The theater has been connected with aspects of the LGBTQ communities by the playwrights, lyricists, costume designers, directors, actors, and audiences involved in the construction of meaning of musical stories. In other forms of media, television and film especially, knowledge of musicals and the world of theater has been an identifier of a gay man's sexuality (Wolf *A Problem Like Maria* 21). D.A. Miller argues that nearly all 1950's musicals have a gay subtext, and that the Broadway musical makes up a "somehow gay genre" (68). If we accept the presence of this gay subtext in the musicals of the "golden age," then we can assume that the musicals rooted in the golden age also have a gay subtext worthy of analysis. Some scholars have accepted the task of analyzing this gay subtext in their work.

For example, musical theater scholar Stacy Wolf examines the gay subtext in musicals, not by focusing on the storylines of musicals or the lyrics performed by characters, but by focusing on four Broadway actresses. She advocates for musicals to be viewed and understood as places that queer the traditional understanding of storylines. Musical can serve as spaces for transgression from the traditional focus on heteronormativity because of the genre's historical relationship with LGBTQ communities and its ability to reflect, comment on, and contradict

societal values and expectations. This exposure of discursive space is what cultural critic Kendall Phillips calls a “space of dissention” (329). These spaces emerge when “gaps within the lines of understanding” or inconsistencies become “spaces from which resistant acts emerge to disturb relations of power” (Phillips 331). Rhetorician Barbara Biesecker encourages critical rhetoric, and by extension critical rhetoricians, to attend to these spaces inherent within cultural texts by attending to the open discursive space as well as the resistant text or artifact (Phillips 331).

Musical productions tend to place their emphases on the female lead character. In these shows, “the show is built around her, and the songs are written for her as solo presentations” while the male lead functions as adornment for the diva’s story (Wolf *A Problem Like Maria* 22). In the queer world of musicals, typically women stand center stage and belt their songs while men stand in the wings as less important characters. Wolf also makes note of the introduction to Rodgers and Hammerstein’s *The Sound of Music*. When the nuns express their concern for Maria’s presence in the abbey (Wolf *A Problem Like Maria* 4), they understand that this is not the life for her. Maria is destined to be a wife and mother, not a nun, and ought to be out in the world engaging in a heterosexual life (Wolf *A Problem Like Maria* 4). From this perspective, *The Sound of Music* can be read as a story of pushing a young woman from her current identity toward a heterosexual life, eventually with Captain von Trapp. This does not necessitate that we read the nuns as lesbians, but as a group of desexualized women who reject the heteronormative expectation of women to get married and become mothers. By staying at the abbey, Maria would have continued to reject society’s expectations of her and stay on a path that diverts from the traditional path.



Alexander Doty's book *Making Things Perfectly Queer* undertakes a project of advancing queer scholarship and perspectives by discussing the importance of queer texts, readings, and pleasures. Early on, Doty notes that discussions of queer texts and positions easily and seamlessly become discussion of musical theater and its stars (14) strengthening the connections between LGBTQ communities and individuals and this genre of mediated entertainment. While noticing that musical theater is an artistic form whose heterosexual romantic storylines lend themselves to heteronormative readings, there is a great need for queer readings to "express this cultural history" (14). In an attempt to meet this need, Doty discusses the "male trio musicals" of the mid to late 1940's, *On the Town*, *Take Me Out to the Ballgame*, and *It's Always Fair Weather*. In each of these films, the male trios are comprised of "two conventionally handsome men and a comic, less attractive 'buffer' who is meant to diffuse the sexual energy generated between the two male leads as they sing and dance together" (Doty 11). This reading, and readings like it, contributes to the validation of queer transgressive readings of popular texts and musicals more specifically.

Doty continues, arguing that the American theater holds a special connection to the LGBTQ movement, but especially the gay male communities, because of the feminine aesthetic of camp. Doty also writes of the importance of queer readings of popular culture products arguing that queer marks "a flexible space for the expression of non- (anti-, contra-) straight cultural productions and receptions" (3). Queer readings of cultural forms of entertainment are necessary to destabilize heteronormativity, and queer readings of cultural texts are no less real or legitimate than the dominant readings that reify heteronormative stories (Doty xi). In order to demystify the ways in which something as simple and "harmless" as television, movies, books, musicals, etc. promote heteronormative and marginalizing ideologies, queer readings of popular

texts become vital. We, as identifiers and examiners of cultural productions, have a responsibility and a duty to expose such structuring agents so that we might achieve what Doty calls the goal of queer readings and what is at the theoretical core of queer theory. We are to take the “queerness” that exists within these cultural products from the wings of speculation and implication and place them center stage alongside dominant readings (xi) It is only then that we can begin to combat simplistic and normative readings that exist for the artifacts and texts used as evidentiary support for the continued marginalization of non-dominant groups of people.

### *Wicked*

Though some scholars have begun to examine the musical *Wicked*, their analyses have not addressed this alternative romance using rhetorical approaches. Leadership Development specialists Sharon D. Kruse and Sandra Spickard Prettyman began their examination of *Wicked* by analyzing the leadership styles that the women in the show are exhibiting. They designate Madame Morrible, the school’s headmistress, as having a masculine leadership style, Glinda as having a feminine style, and Elphaba as having a style that rejects both the masculine and feminine leadership styles (Kruse and Prettyman 455-7). Following this, communication scholar Ileana Lane explored the ways that the main characters, Elphaba and Glinda, develop and grow individually. Using relational-cultural theory, the theory that states that individuals develop through their relationships with others as opposed to individually, Kruse and Prettyman focus on how the Glinda and Elphaba’s relationship impacts their development. They argue that this relationship, many times a client-counselor relationship, is the driving force in each character’s development throughout the show (458).

In a comparative analysis of L. Frank Baum’s novel *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* and the many adaptations that followed, including the novel and musical *Wicked* literary critic Alissa

Burger examined the ways that dominant American identities are thematically presented throughout time and space in adaptations of the central storyline. Focusing on the roles of race, gender, home and magic Burger analyzes the portrayal of American identities throughout the various stories of Oz. Through her examination, Burger advances the idea that myths are fluid and ever changing (154).

Theologian Carol Schnabl Schweitzer uses the relationship between Glinda and Elphaba as a teaching moment encouraging young girls to be their own person and find their unique voice in the face of pressures to be popular. Examining the song lyrics as text, Schweitzer argues that *Wicked* can be understood as a modern day parable for individuality similar to the parable of the “pearl of great price” in Matthew chapter thirteen of the Holy Bible (499). In her conversation, she cites the multiple realities within Elphaba’s identity as a social outcast and her individual identity as an advocate for the cause she believes in. In Schweitzer’s words, Elphaba’s journey of self-discovery leads her to becoming the unique and individual character that young girls can look to for inspiration, even as she is feared and hated throughout Oz (510-511).

Schrader, in her dissertation on *Wicked*, uses cluster criticism to examine the ways that hegemony is enacted in Oz and the ways that both Glinda and Elphaba are social movement leaders in their own right. Schrader examines Glinda and Elphaba’s involvement in the Animal Liberation movement and classifies Glinda as a conservative social movement leader and Elphaba as a militant social movement leader. Her clusters show two categories that show the function of hegemony in Oz, the tools used by hegemony and the strategies they practice (Schrader 108). These strategies include naming, contextualizing, hiding weakness, scapegoating, silencing, and creating fear and spreading false rumors and show how the Wizard

is constructed as a fearful leader while Madame Morrible is a power hungry leader (Schrader 110, 130).

In her analysis of the witches as social movement leaders, Schrader notes that Elphaba's outspokenness, indifference to others' opinion about her, and her belting voice are leadership qualities that help her to be a militant leader of the Animal Rights movement (135). By contrast, Schrader argues that Glinda functions as a conservative social leader by portraying characteristics of both referent leaders and social movement leaders (Schrader 177). Schrader cites Glinda's popularity, both at Shiz University and in the public eye, her opposition to Elphaba's more militant actions, and the slowness with which Glinda becomes a part of the Animal-rights movement (Schrader 186-189). Schrader's analysis contributes many important strategies to my analysis; however, it does not address the research questions I ask of the textual field.

Finally, theater scholar Stacy Wolf analyses the musical focusing first on the role of the diva, and second on the relationship between the witches. Wolf's article on the role of the diva argues that female fans of *Wicked* experience empowerment in their personal lives, not only because of the characters being empowered through the development of their story, but also by the actresses portraying these empowered characters onstage ("Wicked Divas" 52). She analyzes the ways in which "fangirls" identify with the female leads and how those same girls say they express their identification in their everyday lives.

Wolf's analysis of the musical argues that the relationship between Elphaba and Glinda is less a platonic friendship and more a romantic coupling. Her examination of the lead characters argues for this reading of the story by establishing the ways that musicals are structured to communicate messages, in this case romances, to audiences. This structure is cited in musicals

such as *Oklahoma!*, *Guys and Dolls*, *South Pacific*, *The Sound of Music* and *The King and I* (Wolf “Defying Gravity” 2-6).

While Wolf and her works inspire and influence the argument that this thesis makes, there is one specific area left unexplored in this research. In Wolf’s argument for the case of a queered romance, she does not address Glinda’s attempts at passing as heterosexual throughout the show. The queer romantic storyline does not overtly communicate to an audience that the developing romance is between the female witches of Oz, as opposed to one of the witches and the leading male character Fiyero Tiggular, meaning that Glinda is continuously shaping the heterosexual identity she presents to the other characters. This analysis will be focused on address that construction and continued shaping of that identity.

### *Passing*

Passing based on sexuality is historically rooted, in an American context, in race-based passing, where people of color – African-Americans, Latinos/as and others – passed as White to receive the benefits that being a part of the dominant culture would afford. However, passing was not relegated to a racial context. Many times women abandoned their gender, if only temporarily, to pass as men in order to “obtain work, freedom, or the opportunity to serve in the military” (Marinucci 22). Randall Kennedy proposes that passing is “a deception that enables a person to adapt certain roles or identities” (3), and Brooke Kroeger extends this definition by saying that passing as heterosexual requires that one presents oneself as something different from “who they understand themselves to be” (2). These definitions accept and promote the idea that the actions taken to pass as something or someone else are decisions that one is conscious they are making. In this case, not only do those who pass attempt to deceive those they interact with, but they also work to convince themselves that their false heterosexual identity is true.

Individuals must first have an understanding of who they understand themselves to be, so that they can act in ways that are contrary to that understanding. In other words, to do something contradictory, one must be grounded in the knowledge of what or whom he or she is acting in contradiction to.

For lesbians and gay men, passing as heterosexual allows individuals to maintain their places within the social structure and potentially keep their jobs, friends, and family members (Lingel 389). These lesbians and gay men are able to avoid stigma, which Goffman defines as “an attribute that is deeply discrediting” (3), and being forced out of jobs and other areas of society. Organizational Leadership scholars Donna Chrobot-Mason, Scott B. Button and Jeannie D. DiClementi argue that “sexual orientation is a stigmatizable characteristic, that may lead to a person being discredited,” and often chastised, when this characteristic is disclosed to a group (322). For these reasons individuals who identify as gay or lesbian may choose to create “a false heterosexual identity [...] carefully avoiding interests or mannerisms that are stereotypically associated with being gay” (Chrobot-Mason, Button, DiClementi 323-4) in order to hide their sexual desires from those around them and, in some cases, from themselves (Marinucci 11). Passing can include acts of “class-jumping, age-faking” and other acts of “adopting or abdicating characteristics of religion, culture, age, class and ethnicity” (Lingel 390). It is important to remember that passing not only addresses a person’s adoption of characteristics of another group’s identity but also the rejection or denial, if only temporarily, of their own culture, religion, and sexuality.

As is the case with Kennedy, Kroeger and Lingel’s conceptions, passing typically is described in negative terms by focusing on how individuals who pass as something or someone else are dishonest and deceptive while concealing their true identity. Rhetorical critic John M.

Sloop acknowledges that acts of deception have extremely negative connotations of betrayal, fraud, and treason (170). Viewing particular gender and sexuality performances as deception, in his case the story of Brandon Teena, re-centers and favors the idea that sex, gender, and sexuality are fixed places while disregarding the notion that these identities are fluid. However, reading these performances as the ways in which individuals express their personal identity privileges the notion of fluidity and individualism.

The idea that an individual's gender identity is comprised of a series of performances is one advocated by communication, gender, and cultural scholars all drawing from the works of philosopher Judith Butler<sup>7</sup>. Throughout her work, Butler advances the idea that gender is not who we are, but rather it is something that everyone does. This idea of gender as "doing" constitutes the everyday performances that we put on for those around us and implicates each of us in the continuation of the hegemonic binary, masculine/feminine, that guides us (Marinucci 79). Butler argues that "if gender is performative, then it follows that the reality of gender is itself produced as an effect of the performance" (*Undoing Gender* 218). In other words, gender performances are not only the result of hegemonic ideals of masculinity and femininity, but are also the means by which these ideas are reinscribed onto human bodies. Also important to these ideas of performativity is the understanding that gender performances are "imitations for which there is no original" (*Gender Trouble* 313). Each gender performance is an imitation of another performance, or group of performances, that is imitating another performance or set of performances. This cycle of art imitating art shows that no gender performance is "real," but rather each of us constructs and performs our gender identity based on the constructions that precede us and light the way.

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<sup>7</sup> Here, I am using Butler's book *Undoing Gender* as a grounding for understanding performativity.

Michael Borgstrom proposes that this is because many instances of passing challenge hegemonic stability, a vital element in queer world making (154). That is, by embracing one's identity, acting in accordance with that identity and in difference to the hegemonic culture individuals reject that dominance. Acts of passing "highlight the relationship between visibility and knowledge" because if we can see what a person's identity is through some physical marker then we can know more about them (Borgstrom 155). For example, identities such as religion and sexuality have no physical or bodily representation making it easier for individuals to pass as belonging to a different religion, faith, or sexual orientation. Identities like race and gender, however, have some forms of physiological – albeit socially constructed distinguishing characteristics – that make it easier for society and others to name and classify them.

Rhetorician Helene Shugart takes the ideas of passing further by reviewing "established, tried-and-true, and relatively straightforward passing strategies" strategies of passing before presenting three techniques of what she calls "ambiguous passing" (48). The first of these established passing strategies is the aesthetic, and the second is disidentification. Shugart explains that individuals attempting to pass as heterosexual use the first technique:

[They are likely to become] hypervigilant about gender signifiers associated with will her or him and thus may go to great lengths to be perceived as (i.e., perform as) 'properly gendered' by exaggerating her/his culturally sanctioned, sex-appropriate traits; concealing or denying any sex-inappropriate traits; or consciously performing sex-appropriate traits that were not previously part of her/his personality. (Shugart 32)

For example, the strategy of the aesthetic may guide lesbians to present the typical and socially acceptable gender identifiers for heterosexual women: make-up, jewelry, dresses, skirts, longer hair, and high heels. (Shugart 35). In the second technique, disidentification, passers will consciously dissociate themselves from the culture, stereotypes of that culture, and individuals who share, or are thought to share, the passer's hidden identity. At the same time she or he is



distancing her/himself from that culture, he/she is also actively associating her/himself with the identity in which she/he is attempting to pass (Shugart 34). For example, in maintaining their heterosexual passing identity, lesbians are likely to avoid being seen or associated with women who are known or suspected to be lesbians and to be seen in social situations with men. Many times these women develop romantic or sexual relationships with these men to further mask their hidden identity (Blinde and Taub 286). These strategies can be seen in the passing of Glinda the good witch of the North, and will be explored further in the analysis.

Shugart also presents three strategies for the ambiguous case of Ellen DeGeneres. Arguing that DeGeneres does not utilize either of the traditional passing strategies, though she is passing as heterosexual or at “least not *not* heterosexual” (Shugart 48) she provides conjecture, deflection, and juxtaposition as alternative strategies. The first of these strategies, conjecture “functions enthymematically with the premise of heterosexist presumption” leading the audience to conclude that the character or individual is heterosexual because of our vast experience with heterosexual people (Shugart 36). Through allusions to heterosexual coupling, like the traditional structure of musical storylines, audiences assume that individuals within those storylines are heterosexual also, even when evidentiary support is insubstantial or absent.

The second strategy of ambiguous passing, deflection, functions similarly to the more “straightforward” strategy of disidentification. Because Shugart rejects the polarizing presence of disidentification, actively distancing oneself from a particular group with actively associating oneself with another group, in her case study, Shugart proposes a third option. This option, deflection, allows a passing individual to deny identification with either homosexuality or heterosexuality<sup>8</sup>. The final strategy for ambiguous passing, juxtaposition, “establishes a foil

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<sup>8</sup> Whether read through a queer lens or through a heteronormative lens, Glinda aligns herself with a sexual identity. Therefore this strategy of passing is not used in the analysis that follows.

against which (the passer) emerges as “normal” and all that is implied by that label in a heterosexist culture (Shugart 41). By juxtaposing the passer with a caricature or exaggeration of gender or sexual identity, the passer remains untarnished by labels of difference and spectacle leaving them with the label “normal.” In a heterosexist culture, the label “normal” comes with a multitude of identities that include able-bodiedness, middle or upper class status, Christianity, cisgender<sup>9</sup> performances, and heterosexuality to identify some.

This review of literature exposes unexamined spaces that the forthcoming analysis aims to fill. First, these examinations of musicals do not provide a technique for constructing a script to be used as text for analysis. Critics could have conducted their analyses by attending to multiple staged performances of a musical, by attending to a staged performance then referring to the movie version after, or by only using the movie version of musicals. However, in the case of *Wicked*, and many other musicals, scripts are not available for purchase and movies do not exist making compiling a script necessary.

Second, though Wolf advances the argument that the musical *Wicked* tells the story of a romance between Glinda and Elphaba, she does this using musical structure. This examination will rhetorically show first that the love story is not between Elphaba and Fiyero, which many might believe *prima facie*, but between the witches. Second, Wolf does not address the initial relationship between Glinda and Fiyero or the ways that Glinda’s heterosexual passing is constructed or how it plays out through the story. This examination specifically addresses this by examining the construction and function of passing in the musical. This literature informs and guides my analysis by providing a grounded understanding of the rhetorical theories and critical practices used to investigate *Wicked*. First, in order to explore the ways that Glinda’s passing

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<sup>9</sup> Cisgendered refers to individuals whose gender performances coincide with the socially approved expectations for their biological sex (Preston 53).

identity is constructed and maintained throughout the musical, the existence of a queer romantic storyline in *Wicked* must be established. In doing this, the application of ideological clustering and the emergent clusters are applied to the reading of the show's script and song lyrics. This reading of *Wicked* exposes a queer romantic storyline that then facilitates a discussion of passing strategies. Second, with the queer romance established, the project moves to inquire and discuss the ways in which a heterosexual passing identity is constructed and maintained throughout the show using both the traditional strategies of passing and Shugart's strategies of ambiguous passing, as well as understandings of gender performativity. Together, ideological clustering and the strategies of passing navigate this trip back to the Land of Oz.

## CHAPTER 3

### THIS STORY OF OZ

#### *Act One*

*Wicked* opens with the citizens of Oz celebrating the death of the Wicked Witch of the West in the song “No One Mourns the Wicked.” As the townspeople sing of their disdain for the Wicked Witch’s actions, and to a degree wickedness in general, Galinda floats down in her trademark bubble to greet the Ozians. While Galinda sings of goodness overcoming evil, the loneliness that the wicked experience, and the power of truth to outlive lies, she is asked how wickedness occurs. In her response, Galinda tells the story of Elphaba’s birth (Elphaba later becomes the Wicked Witch of the West) saying “she had a father [...] she had a mother, as so many do.” Through this story we discover that Elphaba was the product of an affair her mother had with a green coated stranger and his “green elixir.” Upon her birth, both the nurse and her father found Elphaba’s green skin to be unnatural, atrocious, and obscene. As Galinda is preparing to return to Oz after the Wizard’s “unexpected departure” on brave Ozian asks about rumors of her friendship with the Wicked Witch. After Galinda’s sputtering admission that the two were friends at school, the show proceeds as a flashback into their lives.

Our peek into the past begins with the start of a new semester at Shiz University where Elphaba has been sent to care for her sister Nessarose and Galinda has come to learn sorcery from Madame Morrible. Elphaba arrives excited yet cautious of how the other students will react to her. When the other students draw back in fear and disgust, Elphaba angrily informs them that she was born this way. As Elphaba’s father Frexspar bids his daughters farewell he

bestows Nessarose with a pair of glittering silver shoes, and grants Elphaba nothing more than admonition for making a spectacle and a reminder of her duty to her sister. By contrast, Galinda makes her arrival known with a flourishing solo. Already friends with two girls, Shen Shen and Pfannee, Glinda's group becomes the popular group that runs the school. Glinda inquires of Madame Morrible's sorcery seminar that she has applied to and is pushed aside as Morrible only teaches the seminar if someone special comes along. Glinda and Elphaba are brought together as Madame Morrible, the head Shiztress, asks who for a volunteer to be Elphaba's roommate and Glinda raises her hand to ask again about her essay.

Elphaba, who expected to be paired with her sister as roommates, becomes so distraught by their separation that she unknowingly casts a spell that brings Nessarose's wheelchair back to her side. As the students, and Madame Morrible, express their shock and fear at what they have just witnessed, Elphaba admits that sometimes she loses control and things like that happen. To this confession Madame Morrible brings Elphaba under her arm saying that talent like that must be encouraged, and that Elphaba will receive private tutoring in sorcery. She also informs Elphaba that a gift as strong as hers can bring opportunities, like meeting the Wizard and becoming a valued member of his staff. This challenges Elphaba to see herself not as the green-skinned outcast whose powers could do serious harm, but as a potential source of good in the land ("The Wizard and I"<sup>10</sup>).

Elphaba and Glinda's first true interaction comes in the song "What is This Feeling" as they sing of their disgust with one another. The other students join in on Galinda's side citing her goodness, their shared loathing of everything about Elphaba, and naming her a martyr for living with and having to deal with "every little trait, however small" that make Elphaba so intolerable. With this line drawn between Elphaba and every other student at Shiz, the audience

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<sup>10</sup> For lyrics to this song, and other songs from *Wicked*, refer to Appendix A.

is transported to Dr. Dillamond's history class. Today's lesson focuses on the current state of affairs for the Animals of Oz. Animals who had once had the ability and right to speak freely and hold employment are seeing their rights being limited and are subsequently forgetting how to use their voice and speak. As Dr. Dillamond, who is a Goat, turns his chalkboard over the class finds that someone has written "Animals should be seen and not heard" on the board in what appears to be blood. After class is dismissed, Elphaba stays to comfort her professor and they discuss who could have written such harmful words and what they can do to protect Animal rights. Elphaba argues that the Wizard must be ignorant of the Animal's plight and remains confident in his ability to rectify this situation, while Dr. Dillamond seems more skeptical and is unable to keep himself from bleating like a common goat ("Something Bad"<sup>11</sup>).

As Elphaba is leaving Dr. Dillamond, she is almost run over by a cart carrying the handsome slacker Winkie Prince Fiyero Tigelaar. As Fiyero and Elphaba are discussing how little he cares about almost injuring her, Boq, a Munchkin student at Shiz, runs after Galinda to confess his love for her. Galinda, however, has laid eyes on "that handsome Winkie Prince whose reputation is so scandalacious. She places herself into his line of sight and offers her assistance in showing him around. Fiyero begins his journey to corrupt his classmates' focus on school and showing them how to enjoy life by planning a party for that night at the Ozdust Ballroom, the most swankified place in town. In order to ensure that she is asked to the party by Fiyero, Galinda convinces Boq to ask Nessarose leaving her available for Fiyero's attention. The two decide to attend the party together because they're both perfect, making them perfect together.

The scene changes to show Nessarose telling Elphaba about how excited she is to be going to the ball with Boq. When Elphaba hears that Galinda has organized this date she starts

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<sup>11</sup> For lyrics to this song, and other songs from *Wicked*, refer to Appendix A

to protest, but Nessa defends Galinda and her actions. As she is getting ready for the party, Shen and Pfannee find “the most hideous” hat in Galinda’s closet, a present from her grandmother. The girls’ convince Galinda that presenting the hat to Elphaba would make a great prank and give them a good laugh at the party. When Elphaba appears to talk with Galinda about playing match-maker with Nessa and Boq, Galinda offers her the hat to wear to the party. She suggests that Elphaba wear the hat because they’re “both so... smart. You know black is this year’s pink. You deserve each other”.

Galinda and Fiyero arrive at the party and begin to dance the night away with Boq watching Galinda’s every move. While all the guests are dancing and enjoying themselves Madame Morrible arrives presenting Galinda with a training wand and a spot in her sorcery seminar, Elphaba’s idea. Finally, Elphaba makes her appearance with Galinda’s hat firmly on her head and is greeted with laughter, stares, and pointing from everyone in attendance. She makes her way to the center of the dance floor and begins to dance by herself. Fiyero, watching her writhing dance, notes that she must not “give a twig what anyone else thinks.” Galinda, feeling the weight of her actions, knows differently and knows that Elphaba is pretending not to. To assuage her guilt, Galinda leaves Fiyero and begins to dance with Elphaba and the two begin a dance craze that is picked up by their classmates. The dance initiated by these new friends lasts the rest of the party, and sparks their relationship.

After Galinda’s dance with Elphaba, the girls go back to their dorm room for some more bonding time. They agree to share secrets and Galinda “confesses” that she and Fiyero are going to get married although he does not know it yet, and Elphaba admits that she is the reason for Nessarose’s condition. Elphaba blames herself because her mother ate milkflowers throughout her pregnancy in the attempt to ensure that Nessarose came out white and not green, instead she

came out paralyzed from the waist down. In an attempt to make her feel better, Galinda attempts to give Elphaba a make-over, both in her appearance and in her behavior, in the song “Popular.” Galinda shows her roommate how to flirt with boys, do her hair and make-up, and how to be popular like she is. She also attempts to use her new magic wand to transform Elphaba’s dress into a beautiful ball gown but fails miserably. Upon seeing her new hairstyle and make-up Elphaba is overcome with emotion and runs out.

Back in class, Dr. Dillamond announces that he is leaving Shiz University because Animals are no longer permitted to teach. After Dillamond is dragged from the classroom, an Ozian official brings in a Lion Cub in a cage. The trapped, trembling, and scared Cub angers Elphaba to the point that she again casts a spell on all those present, except Fiyero, causing them to lose control of their bodies. In the midst of the confusion, Fiyero and Elphaba steal the Lion’s cage in an attempt to save and protect him. As they find a safe spot for the Animal the two, Elphaba and Fiyero, share a tense moment as they discuss whether or not Fiyero is as shallow and self-absorbed as he appears to be. Fiyero standing firm in his shallowness and Elphaba arguing that were he so self-absorbed he would not be as unhappy as he is. With this accusation, Fiyero leaves taking the Cub to safety and Elphaba sings of her feelings for him, feelings that are not returned to her, but diverted to another girl (“I’m Not That Girl”<sup>12</sup>). Madame Morrible interrupts Elphaba’s song and informs her that she has been invited to the Emerald City to meet the Wizard, an opportunity Elphaba has been awaiting since her arrival at Shiz.

As Elphaba is preparing to leave for the Emerald City, our female characters confess the troubles they are experiencing with the boys in their lives. Nessa confesses her love for Boq knowing he does not feel the same way towards her. Galinda finds Fiyero “modified” and distant, while Elphaba attempts to work through her feelings for him and her friendship with

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<sup>12</sup> For lyrics to this song, and other songs from *Wicked*, refer to Appendix A



Galinda. Fiyero soon appears to bid farewell to Elphaba, and after expressing their concern for Dr. Dillamond's departure from the University, Galinda vows to change her name in support. No longer will she be Galinda, but forever more be "Glinda, the Ga- is silent" since the Goat could never pronounce her name correctly. Fiyero leaves, and to quell Glinda's tears, Elphaba invites her friend to join her in the Emerald City, and Glinda accepts.

The girls arrive in the Emerald City where Elphaba experiences a feeling that she has never felt before, acceptance. She notes that no one is staring, pointing, or laughing at her because everything around them is green ("One Short Day"). They enjoy a show called Wizamania before visiting the Wizard of Oz in his palatial office. As Elphaba and Glinda enter the Wizard's chamber they are frightened by the large floating head and loud booming voice used to impress and intimidate visitors. They soon learn the Wizard is a "Sentimental Man" who has always desired to be a father and claims to want to protect the citizens of Oz. Once Elphaba hears this and pleads the case of the Animals, the Wizard and his new Press Secretary, Madame Morrible, ask Elphaba to prove herself worthy by reading from a book of spells, the Grimmerie. The Wizard says that his monkey Chistery longs to fly and asks Elphaba to cast a simple levitation spell for him. She does and wings painfully spring from Chistery's, and many other monkeys in the castle, back. When Elphaba begins to feel ashamed for what she has done, she overhears Morrible and the Wizard saying that these flying monkeys would make wonderful spies. The Wizard has no power of his own and needs Elphaba's magic to continue his plans of Animal suppression. On this realization, Elphaba takes the Grimmerie, vows to fight the Wizard and his plans, and runs to the highest point she can find in the tower.

Having followed her friend, Glinda attempts to convince Elphaba to return to the Wizard and work with him to help the Animals. Glinda is sure that there is a way for Elphaba to work

for Animal Rights without becoming a fugitive and leaving Oz. However, now that Elphaba knows the Wizard is a fraud, she cannot stand with him or anyone who supports him. She vows to fight the Wizard, the government, and whoever else she must to save the Animals singing “Nobody in all of Oz, no Wizard that there is or was, is ever gonna bring me down!” Elphaba asks Glinda to join her in her rebellion, and she considers the offer before deciding to stay in Oz and remain in everyone’s good graces. The first act of the show concludes with Elphaba flying high above Oz separating herself from the Wizard’s supporters below in a dramatic visual filled with flashing lights and billowing smoke.

### *Act Two*

Act two begins after some time has passed; the citizens of Oz initiate the action by singing of their fear of the newly named “Wicked Witch’s” abilities (“No One Mourns the Wicked Reprise”). Rumors have spread about where the Witch may be hiding, what supernatural powers she can use against the people, and how a bucket of water is all it would take to purge her unclean soul and kill her. However, the citizens have all gathered together to celebrate a surprise engagement party for Glinda, a power player of the Ozian government, and Fiyero, the new Captain of the Guard tasked with capturing the Witch. An engagement that Fiyero was not aware he was a part of. Fiyero and Glinda then argue of the story Madame Morrible tells of Glinda’s rise to power, a story that features Glinda as the Wizard’s invited guest and Elphaba as a jealous party-crasher. When Fiyero suggest they leave, Glinda tells him that she cannot desert her audience when she has been tasked to raise the people’s spirits. She cannot resist the adoration she receives from the crowds through her position. Before he leaves, Fiyero agrees to marry Glinda if that is what would make her happy.

As the scene changes, the audience is transported to Munchkinland where Nessarose has been elected Governor after her father's death. Cared for by Boq, who she treats more like a slave than a friend, servant, or loved one, Nessa has become a strict ruler enacting harsh rules against the Munchkins. When Elphaba surprises her sister in an attempt to have their father, and later her sister, stand in her defense, Nessa expresses her anger at her sister. Nessa has grown bitter because her sister would rather fly around saving Animals she has never met, but will not do anything to help Nessa. At this discovery, Elphaba casts a spell on Nessa's silver shoes that enable her to walk on her own. Nessa calls for Boq to show him her ability to walk thinking he would be excited; however, her plan backfires as Boq interprets this as a sign that Nessa no longer needs him to care for her. He then attempts to leave and pledge his love to Glinda. In an attempt to force him to stay, Nessa tries to read a spell from the Grimmerie that causes Boq's heart to shrink. Elphaba does her part to rectify Nessa's mistake and transforms Boq into the tin man to save his life, a transformation that Boq blames Elphaba for for the remainder of the show.

Elphaba returns to the Emerald City to free the winged monkeys from the Wizard's control when she is discovered by the Wizard. She questions his motivations for everything he has done, and he admits that he had lived a life of mediocrity and upon his arrival in Oz was celebrated, respected, and worship by the people. He had gotten caught up in a life of popularity and excitement, and offers Elphaba an opportunity to have the same lifestyle. After considering his offer, Elphaba refuses seeing that Dr. Dillamond has forgotten how to speak because of the Wizard's program of Animal oppression and rededicates herself to fighting the Wizard. In response, the Wizard calls for his guards led by Fiyero who holds the Wizard hostage freeing Elphaba. Glinda appears to find her long-lost friend alive and discovers that her fiancé has joined Elphaba's rebellion and is breaking up with her. The Wizard offers her a drink from a

small vile in his coat to dull the pain while he and Madame Morrible devise a plan to capture Elphaba. Glinda absentmindedly suggests spreading a rumor that Nessarose is in trouble before excusing herself; Morrible and the Wizard consider Glinda's suggestion, but decide that a rumor is too weak and that the threat must be real. Glinda then sings a reprise of "I'm Not That Girl" expressing her despair and hopelessness at her current situation, no Fiyero and no Elphaba.

As Glinda is lamenting her loss, Elphaba and Fiyero are celebrating their union singing lyrics of love and devotion ("As Long as You're Mine") when she hears her sister's screams carried by the wind. Elphaba must return to help her sister and the two vow to meet at Fiyero's castle in Kiamo Ko. When Elphaba arrives at the scene of her sister's death, the direct result of a house falling on her, Glinda has just sent Dorothy down the Yellow Brick Road to the Wizard. Elphaba and Glinda's argument about the lies that Glinda has perpetuated and Elphaba's apparent inactivity in Animal rights, then turns to a catfight when the Wizard's guard arrives to arrest Elphaba. Fiyero once again swings into action to save Elphaba by pulling a gun on Glinda while Elphaba escapes. Knowing the guard will beat him and possibly kill him, Elphaba searches for a spell that will save his life ("No Good Deed").

Back in the Emerald City, an angry mob has gathered to hunt down the Wicked Witch one last time ("March of the Witch Hunters"). It is in this scene that the audience sees that the Tinman (Boq) and the Cowardly Lion (the Lion Cub saved by Elphaba and Fiyero) from the original *Wizard of Oz* are supporters of this witch hunt. Growing suspicious, Glinda asks Madame Morrible whether the tornado that caused the house to fall on Nessa was an accident or if Morrible was involved. Morrible responds by reminding Glinda that this was all the result of what Glinda wanted to have happen. Glinda may have the people of Oz convinced of her "aren't

I good routine,” but Morrible claims to know better and demands that Glinda keep her suspicions to herself.

As the witch hunters begin their rampage, Elphaba has trapped Dorothy and, sensing that her time is drawing to an end, encourages Chistery to try to speak. Once Glinda has arrived to warn her friend of the witch hunt, Elphaba informs her that they’ve seen Fiyero’s face for the last time. With the angry mob closing in, Glinda vows to tell the people the truth about Elphaba; however, knowing that will turn all of Oz against her friend, Elphaba makes her promise not to try and clear her name. As Elphaba gives her the Grimmerie and leaves her with the legacy to enact change, Elphaba admits that Glinda is the only friend she’s ever had. Glinda responds saying that she has had so many, but only one that mattered and the two sing the show’s only true ballad, “For Good.” This song tells of the impact that each girl has had on the other, causing them both to be changed for good.

Elphaba then sends Glinda to a corner where she cannot be seen by the witch hunters, but where she can see everything that transpires. Glinda watches the witch hunters appear and sees Dorothy throw a bucket of water on Elphaba. As Elphaba melts and Glinda begins to mourn her friend, Chistery picks up a small green bottle, brings it to Glinda and speaks his first words, “Miss Glinda.” On her return to the Emerald City, Glinda confronts the Wizard and Madame Morrible with some new information and questions. She shows the Wizard Elphaba’s mother’s green bottle saying she had only ever seen one like it before, when he offered her a drink. The mysterious man who seduced Elphaba’s mother was the Wizard and Elphaba’s powers were the result of being a child of two worlds. Because of their actions, Glinda demands that the Wizard take an indefinite leave of absence beginning immediately, and sentences Madame Morrible to prison.

As the show has caught up with itself, we are back to the initial celebration of the Wicked Witch's death from the famous scene in the *Wizard of Oz*. As the stage goes dark, the scarecrow appears and knocks on a trap door in the stage. Lifting the door, Elphaba climbs out announcing that their plan has worked. She has saved Fiyero's life by transforming him into a scarecrow, and their plan has saved hers. As they walk into the darkness, Glinda proclaims that she will try to live up to her name, "the Good." Elphaba says how much she wishes Glinda could know that they are both alive and well, knowing that for their safety no one can know. The witches sing their final lines, a reprise of "For Good," in harmony before the lights go down and the curtain closes one last time.

## CHAPTER 4

### *WICKED'S QUEER STORYLINE*

An examination of heterosexual passing under any circumstance requires the existence of an LGBTQ individual passing as heterosexual. To that end, it is necessary for this project to first establish the existence of a queer romantic storyline in *Wicked* through providing a transgressive, alternative reading to the dominant understanding of the show. Dominant readings have read, and are likely to continue reading, *Wicked* as a story of the developing platonic friendship between Glinda the Good, and Elphaba the Wicked Witch of the West. However, remembering Alexander Doty's stance that the queerness seen and read in cultural products is no less real than the straightness seen and read by dominant audiences, the queerness in *Wicked* must be documented. As stated in Chapter Two, this endeavor in queer world making rests on the demystification of the hegemonic power within areas as "purely enjoyable" yet as pervasive as entertainment. Through the musical performances and the scenes surrounding them, the lens used to conduct this reading of the musical *Wicked* sees the show's main romantic storyline as one outside the typically expected male-female couple. The chapter follows the narrative of the show by focusing on the songs and scenes chronologically and sees them through a queer lens that reads *Wicked's* storyline as one centered on the romantic relationship between Glinda and Elphaba.

Stacy Wolf argues that the central focus of golden-age musicals and by extension those formatted similarly like *Wicked* is on the development of a couple's relationship, a relationship that brings the couple from enemies to lovers ("Defying Gravity" 11). These characters, who

will later fall in love, open with a song that places them in direct opposition to each other and that declares their incompatibility as friends or as lovers. Throughout the show, the characters are placed in situations that propel them through coming together and drifting apart before their relationship is eventually solidified. This convention can be seen in musicals such as *Oklahoma!*, *The Sound of Music*, and *South Pacific*. Glinda and Elphaba's journey through these situations and their cemented relationship can be documented through the dialogue and the musical performances.

*"No One Mourns the Wicked"*

The show opens at the end of the story as the citizens of Oz celebrate the death of the Wicked Witch of the West, singing "Good news! She's dead! The Witch of the West is dead" (Schwartz 1). As they sing, Glinda descends in her bubble similar to the one used in the 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz*. She tells the gathered crowd that "good will conquer evil/ the truth we all believe'll by and by outlive a lie" (Schwartz 2) hinting that the stories these citizens believe are filled with inaccuracies that will, in time, give way to the truth. This line also acknowledges Glinda's role as the keeper of those truths, and her hope that all will come to know the truth.

As Glinda exits her bubble, she is immediately met with extended hands and smiling faces, much like fans surround their favorite actors, actresses, athletes, and politicians in our world. These citizens have a deep and overwhelming love for their new leader that we can assume traces itself back to their first experiences with Glinda. They love her, and she loves that they love her. This is the popularity that Glinda experienced at school and throughout her life both personally and politically as will be discussed later.

As the song continues, one citizen asks Glinda how wickedness happens, and she responds with the story of Elphaba's birth. In this introduction to the story's protagonist, the



audience learns that while Elphaba's father, Frexspar the governor of Munchkinland, was away on business her mother, Melena, had an affair with a man traveling through the area. This green coated stranger who never shows his face to the audience gives her an elixir from a small green vile, "Have another drink a green elixir/ And we'll have ourselves a little mixer," which the story implies leads to Elphaba's skin color (Schwartz 3). Glinda uses this story to defend Elphaba's character singing "Are people born wicked? Or, do they have wickedness thrust upon them? After all, she had a father, she had a mother as so many do" (Schwartz 2-4). These lines argue that the wickedness seen in Elphaba was not a part of her character, but rather that wickedness was placed on her by some outside force. Glinda's defense of her former roommate marks her as a sympathizer and is one of the first hints toward their relationship.

After the audience is introduced to Elphaba through this story, another brave Munchkinlander asks, "Glinda, is it true you were her friend?" (Schwartz 6), a question that shocks the citizens. How could Glinda the Good, the new leader of Oz, have been friends with someone so wicked and evil as The Wicked Witch? The only thing that shocks them more than the citizen's question is Glinda's admission:

um ... well ... yes ... that depends on what you mean by friend ... I did know her. That is, our paths did cross, at school. But you must understand it was a long time ago, and we were very young (Schwartz 6).

This question and Glinda's response, though not an admission of any romantic feelings is important to the development of this romantic relationship. First, this admission's qualifiers that "it was a long time ago" and that "we were very young" are also used to excuse or explain experiences that have been socially stigmatized. These excuses place the stigmatizing action, behavior, or identity in the past and attribute it to the naivety of younger days. Also, while this question is not a direct challenge to Glinda's sexuality, it does challenge the presentation of her

relationships with Fiyero and Elphaba. This challenge to her identity presentation causes her to believe that her heterosexual persona is being challenged. The citizens of Oz have heard rumors of a relationship between Glinda and Elphaba that was stronger than they imagined, and are seeking out the true nature of this relationship. If she and Elphaba were not enemies as they have been told, then what type of relationship did they have? These questions lead Glinda to question the effectiveness of her presentations and to strengthen her image as a normative and heterosexual woman who was, just moments before, loved and adored by the citizens of Oz.

This question also sparks the memories that tell the story of *Wicked* and of the development of this relationship. As flashback that tells *Wicked*'s storyline begin to take shape, the audience already sees the clear differences between Glinda and Elphaba. Glinda arrives at Shiz University with a flourishing run<sup>13</sup> to the smiles and excitement of her peers. By contrast, Elphaba's arrival at Shiz is met with frightened faces and fainting. Where Glinda is beautiful, blonde, and popular, Elphaba is green, aggressive, and has no friends. Where Glinda's charisma draws her peers to her, Elphaba's sullen disposition pushes others away. Where Glinda seems to enjoy even crave the attention she receives, Elphaba draws unwanted attention for her green skin. These characters are constructed in direct opposition to one another creating difference comparable to the clear distinction and opposition that exists in many musicals with the male-female pairing.

### *"What Is This Feeling"*

Wolf states that the couple's first duet is one that establishes them as opposites, as incompatible, and as enemies ("Defying Gravity" 13). This can be seen in Glinda and Elphaba's

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<sup>13</sup> A run is defined as a passage of several notes sung to one syllable of text

first duet “What Is This Feeling.” After being assigned as roommates<sup>14</sup>, Glinda and Elphaba begin the song with letters they have written home. In unison they sing, “there’s been some confusion over rooming here at Shiz ... for you see my roommate is,” then separate into solos with Glinda’s “unusually and exceedingly peculiar and altogether quite impossible to describe,” to which Elphaba responds, “blonde” (Schwartz 17).

Even from the first lines we can see the tension that exists between these women as the song builds the emotions each girl feels. This buildup can be experienced in these first lines:

Glinda: What is this feeling/ so sudden and new?  
Elphaba: I felt the moment/ I laid eyes on you.  
Glinda: My pulse is rushing.  
Elphaba: My head is reeling.  
Glinda: My face is flushing.  
Both: What is this feeling/ Fervid as a flame/ does it have a name? Yes!  
(Schwartz 18)

The song’s beginning plays on the relationship that it signals. The emotions expressed are those typically associated with falling in love (Wolf “Defying Gravity” 13). However, as the audience soon hears, this emotional buildup has nothing to do with love, but rather has everything to do with “loathing/ unadulterated loathing/ for your face/ your voice/ your clothing/ let’s just say I loathe it all” (Schwartz 18). The expression of this emotion separates the two witches that have been placed together through their roommate assignments and the images audiences see as they enter the theater and take their seats<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> The term “roommate” has been utilized by LGBTQ individuals as a term for their romantic or sexual partners that conceals the biological sex and/or gender performance of their partner from those they are unfamiliar with or are unprepared to come out to (Ould and Whitlow 1102).

<sup>15</sup> Promotional material on the Gershwin Theater’s marquee, the Playbill or program both in New York and at touring locations, on signs, billboards, commercials, the official *Wicked* website, and on ticketing sites like Ticketmaster® feature an image of the two women together. Because this image presents half of each witch’s face covered and half in light, Stacy Wolf argues that the two must be read as one in order to see a full face (5).

Further separating the characters, the women sing “In such total detestation/ It’s so pure so strong... I will be loathing you my whole life long” (Schwartz 18) before the rest of the students join in on Glinda’s side. The other students serve to reinforce the differences between these new enemies, their incompatibility as friends, roommates, and lovers. The students praise Glinda singing, “Dear Galinda you are just too good/ How do you stand it/ I don’t think I could/ She’s a terror she’s a tartar/ We don’t mean to show a bias/ but Galinda you’re a martyr”.<sup>16</sup> Through their support of Glinda in this challenge to her social status, the students reiterate to the audience that these two characters are in no way to be thought of as similar.

The staging of this number also reinforces the separation of these characters. In the song’s first lines, the women stand downstage, towards the front, on opposing ends. As they sing their lines in response to each other, without singing to or with each other, furthers this visual and auditory separation. Even as the song continues and the other students join in the song, Glinda and Elphaba remain clearly separated. The group of students moves as one with Glinda as their leader, always careful not to come too close to this green-skinned “terror.” It is not until the end of the song when Elphaba gets a laugh out of scaring Glinda that the women are close enough to touch. This eventual unification signals the eventuality of the women’s relationship; no matter what happens, no matter the emotional shifts in their relationship, these characters will come back to one another. Through this song’s lyrics and performance, audiences of the show or those who search for videos on the internet see a clear distinction between Glinda and Elphaba.

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<sup>16</sup> Schwartz 19-20; in Act One, scene ten Galinda changes her name to Glinda, removing the “a,” to show her “solidarity” with the fight for Animal Rights. In this thesis I use the spelling Glinda unless specified in song lyrics as Galinda.

*“Dancing Through Life”*

The audience is soon introduced to a “handsome Winkie<sup>17</sup> prince whose reputation is so scandalacious,” Fiyero Tigulaar. Catching his eye with her signature hair toss, Glinda and Fiyero plan a party for their classmates at the Ozdust Ballroom later that evening. Glinda and Fiyero’s relationship begins in this moment as they realize they are “perfect together” (Schwartz 27). As Glinda is dressing and preparing for the party, she and her friends ShenShen and Pfanee devise a plan to have Elphaba wear a “hideodeous” hat to the party. Glinda convinces her roommate to don the hat singing “It’s really uh sharp don’t you think/ You know black is this year’s pink/ you deserve each other/ This hat and you/ You’re both so... smart/ So here, out of the goodness of my heart” (Schwartz 29). This scene works to further emphasize the differences between the two women. Glinda exists in a position that allows her to dismiss and humiliate those around her, while Elphaba can only be the butt of the joke.

At the party while Glinda and Fiyero are dancing, laughing, and enjoying themselves alongside their peers, head Shiztress Madame Morrible arrives to present Glinda with her training wand.<sup>18</sup> Morrible informs Glinda that it was Elphaba’s idea to include her roommate in the sorcery lessons even though Morrible doubts Glinda’s ability to learn. This moment begins the shift in the women’s relationship as Elphaba’s gesture of kindness and thoughtfulness, we can assume by the sequence of events, is a result of receiving the hat from Glinda.

Soon after, Elphaba arrives at the party wearing her “hideodeous” gift from Glinda, and the music stops. Gathering herself, and her confidence, Elphaba stands in the middle of the dance floor and begins to dance alone. Watching her, Fiyero notes that “she doesn’t give a twig

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<sup>17</sup> “Winkie” is the colloquial term for the Vinkus region of Oz and for natives.

<sup>18</sup> Training wands are presented to students of sorcery as they are learning the skills that will earn them a “real” wand.

about what anyone else thinks,” to which Glinda replies, “Of course she does, she just pretends not to. I feel awful” (Schwartz 32). This becomes another turning point of these characters’ relationship as Glinda leaves her friends, and her date to dance with her roommate. Skeptical of Glinda’s intentions, Elphaba allows her roommate to dance alone before she joins in and their bodies are entwined in a choreographed duet that signals their difference from the other male-female couples. This is significant because we see Glinda stepping away from the person she believed herself to be and who she wanted to become. She walks away, if only temporarily, from her friends, her boyfriend, and her popularity for the positives she sees in her relationship with Elphaba.

Staging also plays an important role in the reading of this scene. As Glinda and Elphaba dance in choreographed movement, their proximity to one another differentiates this couple from the others. These women’s dance places them close to each other than the other couples, even as the remaining couples join in their choreography. Their costuming also signifies their difference as Glinda’s pink cocktail dress and Elphaba’s black dress, pointed hat, and green skin stand out as their dance among their classmates still in their striped school uniforms. The classmates recede into the background visually as the contrasting pink, green, and black hues of Glinda and Elphaba become the focus of this scene. Not only does the color of these characters’ costumes allow them to become the spotlight of the scene, the amount of skin shown by these characters differentiates them from the ensemble. Glinda’s bare shoulders and legs along with Elphaba’s bare arms signify their difference from those around them. The costuming of Glinda and Elphaba also reinforces the character differences between the two women. Glinda’s blue ball gown, white chiffon dress, pink and yellow cocktail dresses, cream and green suit all paint her as a beautiful, stylish, feminine woman while Elphaba’s plain navy dress and jacket, ordinary

black dress, and long sleeved black gown color her simple, unsophisticated, and common. These costuming choices work to emphasize the difference between Glinda and Elphaba being created through *Wicked*'s lyrics and story.

### *“Popular”*

With their friendship just beginning, the girls head back to their dormitory to continue bonding and strengthening their newly formed relationship. Through sharing secrets, a traditional feminine bonding activity, these women grow closer and develop a deep and meaningful connection (Caldwell and Peplau 731). Glinda then embarks on giving Elphaba a make-over so that Elphaba will fit in more at school. She tells her roommate, “Elphie, now that we’re friends, I’ve decided to make you my new project ... That’s what makes me so nice!” (Schwartz 34). We can interpret this as an effort by Glinda to have her “friend” fit into her social group and would allow them to spend more time together without question. Glinda emphasizes the impact that this make-over will have on Elphaba’s social skills singing, “Popular/ I’ll help you be popular ... It’s not about aptitude/ It’s the way you’re viewed/ So it’s very shrewd to be/ Very, very popular like me” (Schwartz 34). A more beautiful, socially acceptable, and popular Elphaba being seen with Glinda does not raise questions from those in her social circle. Through her attempts to expand Elphaba’s presence from her personal life into her social life, Glinda expresses her desire to be involved with her roommate outside of the privacy of their bedroom.

The privacy of the bedroom has long been connected to metaphoric representations of the secrecy and hidden dynamics of homosexual expression inside the closet. From the creation and use of the closet, LGBTQ individuals have stored and practiced both their private and public personas (Edgecomb 1). Closets, both as symbolic representatives of hidden identity and as actual elements of a bedroom, are sites where individuals can browse possibilities and try on

these various presentations. They afford a sense of privacy and secrecy whether people hide their metaphorical or physical dirty laundry, the messes made in their lives or their bedrooms, or those things people strive to keep out of the view of strangers, visitors, or guests in their homes and lives. However, these private spaces are also where people construct and adjust the persona they present to the world (Edgecomb 3). For gay and lesbian individuals, closeting hinges on awareness of same-sex attraction, the recognition that such attraction is socially stigmatized, and that this attraction, if publicized, may cause a negative and even dangerous reaction (Adams 43-55). That this intimate scene between Glinda and Elphaba occurs within the closeted and private space of the bedroom is significant in the establishment of a queer romantic story between them.

*“One Short Day”*

Scene nine closes with Madame Morrible informing Elphaba of Wizard’s invitation to the Emerald City. Elphaba, excited to be the Wizard’s personal guest, suggests that Glinda join this adventure through Oz. As the girls take in the sites, they believe they have “finally found the place where [they] belong” (Schwartz 46). The existence of a place where everyone is wearing shades of green and where buildings, roads, and landmarks are all green allows Elphaba to feel like she belongs. She remarks, “I want to remember this moment always. Nobody’s staring. Nobody’s pointing,” not to mention she is in a place marked by difference with Glinda. In this place, everyone seems to be different, or at least striving for individuality and independence. Citizens of the Emerald City dress in extravagant and eccentric clothing that is predominantly green. Characters wear pointe shoes, green tinted glasses, tall hats, and clothes with intricate and eye catching designs, cuts, and styles that indicate their, and this place’s, difference from the rest of Oz. Glinda and Elphaba’s feelings of belonging and acceptance echo Theater and Performance scholar John M. Clum’s sentiments of Oz as an allegory of gay experience. Oz



represents a space and place free from the violence and oppressions that many LGBTQ individuals face regularly, and a place that would permit even celebrate their difference (Clum 153).

As the song continues, Glinda and Elphaba heighten the intensity of their relationship alternatively singing “We’re just two friends/ Two good friends/ Two best friends,” (Schwartz 47) leaving enough time for another intensity increase and giving a metaphorical wink to those who read the coded and implied message that the relationship is at least a step further. These lines elicit a feeling of competition as the women challenge the other to step closer to a confession of the true nature of this relationship. Though things seem to be perfect between the two, their time in Oz will break up this happy couple.

#### *“Defying Gravity”*

While their opening duet places them in opposition to one another, their brief duet that ends the first act brings them together and places them near enough to each other to be read as one. Upon learning that the Wizard has no powers and has planned to use hers to continue the oppression of the Animals, Elphaba rejects his proposal to help him lead the citizens of Oz (Holtzman 53). Elphaba, followed closely by Glinda, flees to the top tower of the Wizard’s chambers and plans her escape. As she prepares to “defy gravity” and fight against the Wizard’s anti-Animal campaign, she and Glinda share lines that attest to their connection and the strength of their relationship. Glinda’s attempts to convince Elphaba to rejoin the Wizard and “have all (she) ever wanted” are rejected by Elphaba saying that she “can’t want it ... anymore” (Schwartz 55). Though Glinda may seem to be attempting to convince Elphaba to rejoin the Wizard singing “Just say you’re sorry/ You can still be with the Wizard,” it is Glinda who cannot bear to

see Elphie go. Glinda's pleas for Elphaba to apologize for rejecting the Wizard's offer are more for her benefit than for her "friend's."

Because Elphaba will not apologize to the Wizard and work within the system, but does not want to abandon Glinda, she asks Glinda to join her on her crusade to save the Animals singing, "Come with me/Think of what we could do... together/ Together we'll be the greatest team there's ever been" (Schwartz 56). For this moment, as Glinda considers the offer, the relationship becomes the most important thing – more important than Animal rights, more important than the devotion of the citizens of Oz, and more important than Fiyero. While Elphaba considers the limitless possibilities of having Glinda on her side, Glinda imagines the realization of "dreams the way we planned 'em" (Schwartz 56). The dream of being with Elphaba is becoming real, perhaps too real as Glinda chooses staying in the system over leaving. She cannot desert her chances of becoming the adored public figure that staying will soon offer her. However, before Elphaba ascends in spectacular flight, Glinda places a cloak around her shivering friend, showing that no matter the paths their stories take she will always care for her partner. Elphaba's refusal to help the Wizard and her escape from his chamber causes Madame Morrible to label Elphaba the Wicked Witch and authorizes every citizen of Oz to capture her (Holtzman 54).

*"Thank Goodness"*

As the second Act opens, the audience learns that Elphaba has been on the run for months, Fiyero has been appointed Captain of the Gale Force, a team tasked with capturing Elphaba, and that Glinda has joined the Wizard and his new press secretary Madame Morrible. The citizens of Oz have gathered to celebrate, but are not aware what it is they are to celebrate.

Glinda and Madame Morrible then surprise the citizens, the audience, and Fiyero with the news that Glinda and Fiyero are engaged!

Morrible: So Captain, how does it feel?

Fiyero: Frustrating, but I became Captain of the Guard to find her and I will not rest –

Morrible: No, being engaged!

Crowd: Congratulations!

Fiyero: This is an engagement party?

Glinda: Surprised?

Fiyero: Yes!

(Holtzman 61)

This interaction demonstrates the lack of emotional intimacy in this relationship. While most relationships in musicals are structured with the man asking for the girl's hand in marriage, there is at least one instance of the woman asking for the man's hand, *Legally Blonde: The Musical*. However, most romantic stories construct engagement narratives that include both parties' knowledge and awareness of their relationship status. The proposal may come as a surprise, but both characters know they are engaged.

When Fiyero leaves the VIP platform to consider his surprise engagement and the outlandish claims being made about Elphaba, Glinda is forced to cover the departure of her fiancé. Excusing herself, and Fiyero, her loyalty to Elphaba is challenged. Though she claims to hate hearing what the citizens of Oz say about Elphaba she cannot bring herself to leave their presence. Fiyero directs her attention to her need to be worshipped by saying “you can't leave because you can't resist this! And that's the truth” (Holtzman 61). Having always been the center of attention, Glinda finds the spotlight irresistible and has worked to ensure that she remain there, even if it meant losing the most important person to her. Even Elphaba saw Glinda's “need to feed (her) own ambition” when Glinda chose to a life as a political figure over a life with Elphaba (Schwartz 53).

Later, in the song “Thank Goodness,” a song where she should be celebrating her engagement, Glinda sings of losing Elphaba. She contemplates whether or not achieving her dreams, which the audience can assume she has done, has been worth abandoning this relationship and this person important to her life. She sings “There’s a kind of a sort of... cost/ There’s a couple of things get... lost/ There are bridges you crossed you didn’t know you’d crossed until you crossed” (Schwartz 62). Even though she is living the life she had always imagined, loved and adored by all, she cannot help but to think of the cost of it all. She begins to doubt the worth of becoming the face of the Ozian government singing, “Happy is what happens when all your dreams come true/ Isn’t it” (Schwartz 62). But these doubts do not last long as she remembers her duty to enliven and inspire the people of Oz and returns to her previous bubbly and happier persona, thus finishing the song with flourish and excitement.

*“I’m Not That Girl (Reprise)”*

Elphaba soon returns to the Emerald City to free the winged monkeys and her expulsion from Oz, and is surprised when the Wizard agrees to set the monkeys free. However, when she finds her former professor Dr. Dillamond under a blanket and unable to speak, Elphaba reclaims her vow to fight the wizard. The Wizard calls the guard, led by Fiyero, to capture Elphaba but instead of capturing her, Fiyero sets her free and joins in her rebellion. After seeing her ex-fiancé leave with her ex-best friend and love interest, Glinda reprises<sup>19</sup> a song of unrequited love Elphaba sings in the first Act about Fiyero and Glinda. In its original performance, Elphaba sings of not being the right girl for Fiyero, and through a heterosexual lens, this reprise can be read as Glinda singing of not being the right girl for Fiyero. However, through a queer lens and with a queer perspective, the lines “Don’t wish/ Don’t start/ Wishing only wounds the heart/ There’s a girl I know/ He loves her so/ I’m not that girl” (Schwartz 76) can show Glinda’s desire

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<sup>19</sup> A reprise occurs when a song or dance is repeated with some alterations.

to love Elphaba in the same way Fiyero can and does. Because of the acceptance of this heterosexual relationship, Fiyero can love Elphaba openly and publicly. In this scene it is important to remember that not only has Fiyero chosen Elphaba over Glinda, but Elphaba has chosen him also.

*“For Good”*

A show’s finale, and its final song, signals the establishment and solidification of a musical’s couple (Wolf “Defying Gravity” 16). It is the culmination of the experiences of the couple’s journey from enemies to romantic partners, and signifies their union. Even as the angry mob demands her head, Glinda is devoted to ensuring that all of Oz knows the truth of Elphaba, and by extension their relationship. She promises, “I’ll go tell everyone the truth,” and when Elphaba argues against this plan understanding that this would cause the citizens to turn on Glinda and possibly impeach her from her new role as leader of Oz. Knowing her death is imminent, Elphaba forces Glinda to swear not to attempt to clear her name in the public eye. Even at the moment of her death, Glinda and Elphaba work to protect and defend each other.

As the notes to *Wicked’s* final new song, one that is not a reprise, Elphaba admits that Glinda is “the only friend I’ve ever had” (Schwartz 87). Surface reading of this simple line emphasizes the heterosexual reading of these characters, that this relationship is purely platonic and that the women are just friends. However, keeping this queer perspective in mind and with an understanding of how this musical constructs a queer romance, this line holds so much more meaning. This line alone, apart from the song that follows, evidences the existence of the emotional connection and intimacy within this relationship. Not only is Glinda Elphaba’s only friend but she holds a special place as one of the only characters to look past Elphaba’s green skin and confrontational persona to develop an intimate and meaningful relationship with her.

Glinda gave Elphaba things that she had previously not experienced; a sense of belonging, human intimacy, and a caring relationship. This line symbolizes all that these women have experienced and endured along with the ways that they each have changed.

Similarly, Glinda's response, "And I've had so many" (Schwartz 87), while often read as evidence of her air headed performance actually supports Elphaba's sentiments. While Glinda is the first character to truly connect with Elphaba, she has been able to make similar connections with other characters. Her "normal" skin color, blonde hair, charisma, and social status place her in the positions of privilege that allowed her to develop these types of relationships with various characters. Glinda continues saying, "but only one that mattered" (Schwartz 87). Through all the relationships and experiences that Glinda's privilege afforded her, only the relationship with Elphaba has been important and resonant enough to "matter." The significance this relationship has places it above all others in her life, including that with Fiyero.

Glinda's first lines of this ballad set the tone for this reflection on the importance, significance and intimacy of their relationship as she sings "I've heard it said/ That people come into our lives for a reason/ Bringing something we must learn/ And we are led/ To those who help us most to grow" (Schwartz 88). Not only has her relationship with Elphaba been so influential on Glinda's life that it warrants being the last lines to her, but Glinda acknowledges the draw this relationship had for her. This was not a relationship she entered voluntarily. Rather, because of her guilt, Glinda became interested in and drawn toward this other woman. Something about her appealed to Glinda, even though it might mean losing those she was involved with at the time. However, this outpouring of passion and attachment is not one sided. Elphaba engages this joint message of love and adoration singing, "So much of me/ Is made from what I learned from you/ You'll be with me/ Like a handprint on my heart" (Schwartz 88).

While Glinda sings of her personal development through this relationship, Elphaba looks ahead to the everlasting influence on her life. Outside of the musical, this song would work for weddings, engagement parties, and commitment ceremonies. The expression of love, commitment, and intimacy translates past this musical's queer romance to the real life, queer and normative, relationships of couples.

The song's chorus, "Who can say if I've been changed for the better/ But, because I knew you/ I have been changed for good," (Schwartz 89) which the women sing together, places them together "emotionally and musically" (Wolf "Defying Gravity" 16). This musical unification of the two witches announces their final unification. As the story has progressed, their relationship has developed to this moment where, knowing that their next separation will be their last, the women declare their feelings for one another and discuss in song the meaning each has had on the other's life. Each woman has forever been changed by the experiences she has had with the other, and those experiences have brought them together emotionally to create this single emotional expression. This final exchange between these characters articulates the impact that just knowing the other has had.

Staging again plays an integral part in the interpretation of this song. Just as in "Defying Gravity," the women stand close together, holding hands, and singing directly toward one another. This positioning of the women's bodies visually enhances the harmony that the audience hears through the union of the words and notes. Not only do they sing synchronized lines in harmony, but their bodies inform audiences of the unification of the characters. Often through the song the women turn toward each other and sing these emotional and powerful words, and without the presence of another character, they share their last private moment.

### *Finale*

The finale of a musical features the affirmation of the principal couple by the ensemble cast through song and/or dance (Wolf “Defying Gravity” 17). The couple’s marriage is typically a cause for celebration in time for the finale and the heterosexuality of the couple is a synecdoche for the stability and communion of the community. However, because of the queerness of this couple, the “marriage” and its celebration cannot be made public (Wolf “Defying Gravity” 17). The community cannot, or more likely will not, tolerate this union and so the women must forever be parted. As is the case with other scapegoats, one of this pair must be cast out. Elphaba, carrying the blame for those poor monkey’s wings, having been saddled with the responsibility of Oz’s problems, and named the Wicked Witch of the West, makes a better scapegoat and must be removed, or in this case killed, to remove this community’s guilt and restore balance.

As the show completes its circular track, Glinda vows to the citizens that she will work to live up to her title Glinda the Good. Seemingly, this leader of Oz will no longer be wrapped up with the dedication and reverence she received from the people, but rather will work for the betterment of the people. Using her lines from “For Good,” Glinda reminds the audience of the ways she was influenced by a green-skinned girl. This reminder serves to connect those lessons learned from her relationship with Elphaba to her vow to lead the people.

### *Cluster Analysis*

Ideological clustering, as discussed in Chapter Two allows critical scholars to see emergent themes within a text or textual field in order to further explore them. By observing how scenes, songs, and situations gather around particular themes, analysis of these clusters can



provide a deeper understanding of the ways that this musical's story centers the development of a romantic relationship on Glinda and Elphaba. Through this reading, two important types of relationships, platonic and romantic relationships, emerge as clusters. Many of the friendships and interactions of characters can be considered platonic because of their lack of intimacy, the purpose of the interaction, and the nature of the relationship. For example, the status of Elphaba and Glinda's individual relationships with Madame Morrible, ShenShen, Pfanee, Nessarose, and the Wizard as platonic is due, in large part, to the lack of intimacy and the purpose of the interaction(s). These interactions can be attributed, in Glinda's case, to the pressures to fit within a school's social hierarchy and the desire to become a widely known and often celebrated socialite, and in Elphaba's case, they can be attributed to othering strategies used by school children and the drive to become a force for change. However, none of the interactions or relationships is, or can be, attributed to attraction or intimacy. The most substantial platonic relationship is that between Glinda and Fiyero, as he contributes to her complicated heterosexual identity as will be discussed in Chapter Five.

Also significant in the reading of this production is the presence of romantic relationships, and most importantly the one between Glinda and Elphaba. The connection, intimacy, and bond these women share has been cited throughout this Chapter's account of the story and can be attributed to the form and structure of musical narrative. However, should this reading be insufficient in establishing a queer romance, consider the story *Wicked* would tell were either Glinda or Elphaba male and Fiyero not present. This is the story that would follow. A young man and a young woman meet on their first day of school. Because of the social stigmatization of her/his green coloring and the other's popularity, the two become instant enemies ("What Is This Feeling"). However, after one plays a cruel prank on the other at a

school dance, entirely embarrassing her/him before the student body, one begins to feel guilty and ashamed of their actions and attempts to befriend her/him (“Dancing Through Life”). They become friends (“Popular”), and as they grow closer, one chooses a life of political activism while the other chooses to become a social symbol of the government (“Defying Gravity”). They part ways after wishing each other success, and remain parted throughout much of the show. However, as the show comes to a close the man and woman are reunited and sing of their relationship and the importance each has played in the other’s life (“For Good”). Were this *Wicked*’s plot there would be no doubt as to what relationship the story tells. Why then is there doubt when that same story is told using two women as the show’s principal characters?

Though these larger clusters of romantic and platonic relationships emerge through listening to *Wicked*’s songs, other elements of the show converge around themes of intimacy, emotional investment, and character focus. Intimacy, the close personal bond between individuals or groups, is traditionally discussed in the development of relationships, both romantic and platonic. Relational intimacy has been understood to include such qualities as self-disclosure, emotional expressiveness, and support (Monsour 278-80). These qualities are also present within the presentation of Glinda and Elphaba’s queer romantic relationship. Each woman’s most significant instance of self-disclosure, confiding information in a partner that they were not previously aware of (Monsour 278-9), begins as their relationship does in their dorm room at Shiz University. After returning from the party at the Ozdust Ballroom, Glinda suggests that the two women share secrets. Choosing to go first, Glinda “confesses” that she and Fiyero are to be married, although he has not given her any reason to believe this (Holtzman 34). With her “secret” verbalized, Glinda waits impatiently for Elphaba to reciprocate with a secret of her own. Conceding, Elphaba admits her guilt in her sister Nessarose’s condition – she is bound to a

wheelchair (Holtzman 34). Though the depth of each secret is unbalanced, this interaction implies the intimate trust between these women because of their ability to communicate “something (they’ve) never told anyone” (Holtzman 34).

Another element of relational intimacy, emotional expression, also influences the relationship between the women. Elphaba is the only character with which Glinda shares any of her emotions with. When she perceives her relationship with Fiyero to be failing, she expresses a range of emotions with her roommate. From confusion to crying, Glinda admits to Elphaba “I don’t know him either. Not anymore. He’s distant and moodified. And he’s been thinking which really worries me” (Holtzman 43). When Fiyero appears he focuses more on Elphaba than anything else in the scene, including Glinda. During this interaction, Glinda changes her name, omitting the “a” to convey her solidarity with the Animal Rights Movement and her “outrage” at Dr. Dillamond’s firing. However, what this action attempts to do is place audience and character focus back on her. When Fiyero leaves, Glinda begins to cry because she has done all she could, even changed her name, to regain their attention with little success. Through this scene Glinda’s presentation of an emotional rage that spans from excited for Elphaba’s invitation to meet the Wizard, sad to see her leave, confused by Fiyero’s behavior, and upset at losing her partner’s attention. This span of emotional expressions exhibits the intimacy between these two women.

Another cluster present in the formation of this queer romance is character focus. *Wicked*’s storyline focuses on the development of the relationship between Glinda and Elphaba, and Fiyero’s minimal stage time prevents either female character’s relationship with him to be “substantiated through musical theater’s conventions of music or dance” (Wolf “Defying Gravity” 19). The musical, as previously cited, tells the story of a couple’s romance through their vocal and bodily performances as differentiated voices sing in harmony and bodies entwine

in dance. These musical conventions also follow a particular structure that follows the couple's transformation from enemies to romantic partners through song. Neither is the case with Fiyero's relationship with either woman. Fiyero contributes vocally to two songs, "Dancing Through Life" and "As Long As You're Mine." In the first song, his brief vocal and dancing solo, "Dancing through life/ Swaying and sweeping/ And always keeping cool/ Life's more fraughtless/ When you're thoughtless/ So keep dancing through" (Schwartz 25) fades into the background of a scene that foregrounds the ensemble's performance and the initiation of the women's relationship. His second song, a duet with Elphaba after they escape the Emerald City together, focuses on Elphaba's realization that she is worthy of attention and love "I need help believing you're with me tonight/ My wildest dreamings could not foresee/ Lying beside you with you wanting me" (Schwartz 77). This scene is also lost in the story because after their song, Elphaba sees a house flying through the Ozian sky, senses that her sister is in trouble, and leaves to save her meeting up with Glinda once more along the way.

Throughout the show, the focus is placed on Glinda, Elphaba, and the development of their relationship. From their role as principal characters who are central to *Wicked*'s storyline to their featured solo performances in fifteen of the nineteen songs on the cast album, these women carry the narrative of the show. Even *Wicked*'s tagline, "The Untold Story of the Witches of Oz," centers the women as the focus of the show and its driving storyline.

### *Conclusions*

This queer reading of the musical *Wicked* does more than facilitate a conversation and analysis of the heterosexual passing identity constructed and maintained by Glinda the Good, it injects itself into a space of dissension created when normative readings of popular texts chafe against LGBTQ identified people's experience with and understanding of those same texts. In

his book and subsequent documentary, *The Celluloid Closet*, gay rights activist Vito Russo traces the limited presence and depiction of LGBTQ representations in over 300 films spanning eight decades. Through this conversation, Russo shows how LGBTQ individuals see and read themselves into these stories that attempt to tell their story, albeit an often diluted and obscured version of those stories (*The Celluloid Closet*). By aligning ourselves with characters with whom we can identify based on race, gender/sex, class, or sexuality, we read ourselves into the events and situations of those character's stories (Tannenbaum and Gaer 612-13; Turner and Berkowitz 263). Though dominant culture may not see the presence of queer characters and storylines, and though they may work to silence those interpretations, the interpretations endure. Queer perspectives will continue to expose transgressive moments within dominant discourse to trouble the ways that dominant culture sees and is seen as well as troubling the ways that nondominant cultures see and are seen.

This reading, and those by scholars such as D.A. Miller, Alexander Doty, Stacy Wolf, endeavor to strengthen queer readings' place within the academy. The slash fiction works done by bloggers and fan fiction authors such as Emerald-Tranquility, A Lonely Planet, Astarel, and others legitimize these readings by dedicated and creative fans. However, what these popular texts do not, and cannot, achieve is the social connection and commentary prevalent in areas of the academy such as rhetorical and cultural studies. Though these arguments are not directly aimed at fans, queer scholarship providing queer interpretations and readings of popular texts can speak to the real world experiences of these authors and other fans.

Through this endeavor, critics place the attention of academic conversations that address musicals where it can provide the most insight into the ways that culture creates and is created. Instead of considering why musical theater is, has been, and is likely to continue to be a popular

form of entertainment for Americans and those around the world, rhetorical and cultural criticism of musicals undertakes an evaluation of what these musicals tells us about ourselves, our shared pasts, and potentially our futures.

## CHAPTER 5

### GLINDA'S PASSING IDENTITY

As this chapter moves forward to look for the ways in which these characters navigate the pressures in line with the reading of *Wicked*'s romantic storyline becomes an interesting and important endeavor. To that end, this chapter focuses on the ways that Glinda the Good constructs and maintains a heterosexual passing identity throughout the production. As discussed in Chapter Two, passing has been defined and understood as the construction, maintenance, and presentation of a persona that masks or conceals a stigmatized identity factor (Kennedy 3; Blackmer 50; Shugart 1-2). Amy Robinson extends these understandings of passing by positing the triangularity of the pass, or that passing requires three persons: the passer, the dupe, and "the in-group clairvoyant" (716). Robinson also argues that "the successful passer only disappears from view insofar as she appears (to her reader) to be the category into which she has passed" (722). If we accept this understanding of successful passing, then we read Glinda's passing identity as successful since the dominant reading of Glinda's character is that she is a heterosexual woman. However, acceptance of that reading is not sufficient and requires an investigation of the ways in which that passing identity is constructed, maintained, and presented to audiences around the United States and abroad. Using the more widely understood strategies of passing, the aesthetic and disidentification, along with Helene Shugart's strategies for ambiguous passing, this chapter examines Glinda's attempt to convince "certain audiences of an 'acceptable' persona" (Morris "Pink Herring" 230).

First, it is important to understand what social pressures this character would feel that might cause, at least in her understanding, a need to be perceived as heterosexual. Though it does not address sexuality overtly in presentation or through attendant promotion, the world of *Wicked* does provide some social pressures that can be applied to this instance. The Land of Oz has never been one to accept the difference that Elphaba possesses. In *Wicked*, and ostensibly in *The Wizard of Oz*, some part of Elphaba's "wickedness" is related to her green skin. Throughout the musical her peers and those in leadership positions are initially shocked by and wary of her verdigris. For no other apparent reason do the students at Shiz find her terrorizing, "disgustified," and otherwise unacceptable ("What Is This Feeling"). Even as Elphaba vows to fight for Animal rights Madame Morrible uses her green skin as a synecdoche for her evil nature announcing to the citizens of Oz that "Her green skin is but a manifestorium of her twisted nature! This distortion! This repulsion! This Wicked Witch!" (Holtzman 54). Elphaba's green skin marks her as different from all other characters, a difference that is unacceptable to everyone. Because of this, we can draw out that her existence is unacceptable in this world. Even though Elphaba is *Wicked's* protagonist, she boasts more solos and has more onstage singing time than any other character (Boyd 106), her existence in Oz is widely rejected and anyone considered to sympathize with her would be also.

In a world where difference is not celebrated and encouraged, individuals desiring to advance within the social and political structures must find ways to minimize their difference and disappear into the mainstream (Shugart 30-31; Blinde and Taub 286; Blackmer 50; Kennedy 3; Kroeger 2). This is the case with Glinda; her ambitions are to be well-liked and to be positioned towards the top, if not on the top rung, of the social ladder. This can be seen in her first day at Shiz University and at the opening of the Second Act. On her first day at school, Glinda works



to ingratiate herself to Madame Morrible. Asking Morrible about a sorcery seminar, Glinda attempts to prove that she is that “someone special” that would make Morrible to teach the course. Glinda’s goal in this interaction is not to have the opportunity to learn sorcery from this instructor, but rather it is to present herself as someone who desiring advancement within the hierarchy in this school. If Glinda can get her way here with this instructor, then she will have found a way in to the system she wants to advance within.

Similarly, the opening scene of the Second Act provides an example of Glinda’s need to remain in her position of privilege, power, and respect. As Fiyero’s disapproval of the claims made against Elphaba grows, he leaves their “engagement party.” Following after her fiancé to save face, Glinda’s reasons for becoming a public figure are challenged. Glinda tells him that she “can’t leave now. Not when people are looking to (her) to raise their spirits” and Fiyero quickly replies that her reason for staying is because she cannot resist this, and motioning to the crowd surrounding them (Holtzman 61). Even as the citizens spread vicious rumors and lies about Elphaba, the lure of their love and attention draws Glinda in and is something she cannot reject. This is the dream she’s always wanted, as evidenced in the following song “Thank Goodness.” This is what she has been working and striving to achieve from her arrival at Shiz, and in order for her to achieve such status she was pressured to conceal her identity, if only in her perception of what the people of Oz would accept.

### *Passing Aesthetically*

The first way that individuals attempting to pass consider and construct a passing identity is through the aesthetic. Rhetorician Helene Shugart proposes that passing as heterosexual “necessarily entails conformity to conventional gender norms.” She argues:

[B]ecause of the cultural significance attached to gender in terms of sexual orientation, a lesbian or gay man seeking to pass as heterosexual is very likely to be hyper vigilant

about gender signifiers associated with her or him and thus may go to great lengths to be perceived as (i.e. perform as) properly gendered. (32)

In other words, when constructing a heterosexual passing identity, culturally acceptable gender roles, performances, and signifiers play a vital role in that construction. For passing lesbians, important gender signifiers include clothing choices, dresses, skirts, blouses, high heels; longer hair, groomed eyebrows and body hair, make-up, and feminine jewelry (Penelope 130). These performative choices communicate a style of femininity that places the passer inside the confines of “normal” and acceptable identity. Glinda’s use of the aesthetic in her passing identity can be seen through her character’s construction, her costuming, and her attitude.

Glinda is constructed to be the archetype of femininity throughout her performance in *Wicked*. Her feminine self-presentation matches with American ideals of femininity and womanhood. She is physically attractive and her introduction to the audience features her focus on her feminine traits like her hair, voice, and appearance (Holt and Ellis 933, 946; Glibert, Deutsch, and Strahan 768). In the opening and scenes, Glinda appears with her hair in curls that frame her smiling face, a style that enhance her femininity. As the show continues, Glinda’s hair becomes a stronger reminder of her feminine style as she continually tosses over her shoulders to get attention and to emphasize her point. As she is giving Elphaba a make-over, Glinda identifies the relationship between hair and feminine beauty. She demonstrates her signature hair flip saying “toss, toss” to draw the audience’s attention to her flowing blonde locks (Holtzman 35). By teaching Elphaba this lesson in hair tossing during the song “Popular,” which will be further analyzed later, Glinda aligns hair with performances of femininity.

Her wardrobe continues to solidify the audience’s perception of Glinda’s femininity. Her character is always fashionable and well-dressed, even when her peers are not. For example, as Glinda, Elphaba, and their classmates sit in Dr. Dillamond’s history class, everyone is wearing a

school uniform; everyone except Glinda and Elphaba. Each student in the ensemble is wearing a navy blue long skirt or pair of slacks, white button down shirt, and some have a blue and cream striped or solid blue vest or a striped blazer. Elphaba barely stands out in her ankle length blue dress, matching jacket, and blue cap while Glinda's outfit places her in clear difference from the other students. In this scene, and in other classroom scenes, Glinda wears a white knee length dress made out of a soft material like chiffon or organza that starkly contrasts the heavier, wool-like material of her classmate's uniforms. Even in the major performance scene, "Dancing Through Life," Glinda's costuming stands out in the crowd. As the other students twirl in their black and white party outfits, Glinda's bright pink cocktail dress marks her style and feminine fashion sense. Looking at the students as a group, as audiences do in classroom scenes, "What Is This Feeling," and "Dancing Through Life" one cannot help but to recognize the difference between Glinda's feminine wardrobe, and her classmate's more simplistic styling. Glinda's feminine identity does not exist in her appearance alone, but also in the ways that her voice belts out the lines of song and utters each line.

In musical theater, much like in other genres of music, "male and female voices sing in harmony" (Wolf "Defying Gravity" 9) with the female voice traditionally taking the higher pitched notes. Musicals, like operas, have also traditionally written the high voiced sopranos as the heroine of the story (Boyd 109). These heroines are celebrated and remembered because of their courage and bravery, but are distinct because of their femininity. Glinda's vocal performances are written for sopranos with notes that extend into the higher voice register. Her introductory solo in "No One Mourns The Wicked" is the first example of this as her voice soars "up to A<sub>5</sub> (an octave plus a sixth above middle C)" and in the opening to the second act, "Thank Goodness," she sings the highest note of the show (Boyd 109). These high pitched notes place

Glinda's voice literally above all other characters, including the other female characters. The women who have played Glinda on Broadway and in touring productions used their voices to enter these high, sometime operatic, but very feminine vocal ranges.<sup>20</sup>

The song "Popular" also works to reinforce the idea that Glinda is the archetype of femininity in *Wicked*. In Glinda and Elphaba's first duet after their friendship begins, Glinda attempts to give her roommate a make-over. She takes on the role of expert stylist singing, "And when someone needs a make-over/ I simply have to take over/ I know, I know/ Exactly what they need" (Schwartz 34). Her expertise in feminine style, beauty, and behavior identifies her as the exemplar of femininity; an example that other women should model themselves after. The purpose of the make-over is clear, to make Elphaba more beautiful (Schippers 88-9); however, it serves an additional purpose, to make Glinda's cisgender performance, in this case her identity as a feminine woman, on display. She focuses on feminine performative choices throughout the song evidenced through lines such as, "I'll show you what shoes to wear/ How to fix your hair/ Everything that really counts/ To be popular" (Schwartz 35). Even in the song's break, where Glinda attempts to use her new training wand to turn Elphaba's "simple frock into a beautiful ball gown," Glinda is emphasizing what it is that women do and how they are to present themselves. This scene serves to make Elphaba more beautiful, more feminine, more like Glinda.

Glinda's attitude is also distinctly feminine, having been constructed in the same vein as the "mean girls" we see in movies such as *Heathers*, *Mean Girls*, *Sixteen Candles*, *A Cinderella Story*, and other movies situated in high schools and colleges. These "mean girls" use indirect or social aggression to maintain their status within the hierarchical social structure of the school.

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<sup>20</sup> For example, Kristin Chenoweth, who originated the role, Megan Hilty, currently starring in NBC's *Smash*, and Laura Bell Bundy are on the list.

By using bullying techniques such as “gossiping, social exclusion,... not talking to someone” along with “charisma, force, looks, money and manipulation,” the typically upper class Queen Bee is able to control those around her to ensure that her will be done (Ryalls 14; Wiseman 25). As *Wicked* begins Glinda fills in the role of Queen Bee as she navigates the terrain of Shiz University. Her beauty, charisma, and personality draw the other students to her and she uses that popularity to stay atop the social structure. Throughout the show, Glinda continually embarrasses and torment Elphaba calling with comments like, “bright? She’s phosphorescent” and “Well, it seems the artichoke is steamed” (Holtzman 9, 21). These bullying techniques culminate in the prank she plays on Elphaba just before their friendship begins. Convincing her to wear a “hideodeous” hat to a party, Glinda and her friends’ actions reinforce the hierarchy of Shiz University, and the Land of Oz at large, that keeps Elphaba at the bottom and Glinda at the top. Through her behaviors, Glinda reinforces cultural understandings of the ways that girls interact with one another. These physical characteristics and behaviors, her femininity and her attitude, work together to show Elphaba, and the audience the choices women should make and how they should present themselves in order to be considered “normal.” In Glinda’s case, they communicate how female straightness looks, how it sounds, what it focuses on, and what it talks about.

### *Disidentification*

Moving from the aesthetic, the second of these passing strategies, disidentification, is understood as:

[T]he conscious and active dissociation of oneself from the members, community, or trappings associated with one’s hidden identity, in conjunction with the active association with the members of the culture in which one is passing. (Shugart 34)

This technique is comprised of two parts, the first dealing with what passers are likely to avoid and the second dealing with what passers are likely to seek out. First, passing individuals are likely to avoid situations and events that would put them into contact with the community or stereotypes of the community they are seeking to distance themselves from. For example, lesbians seeking to distance themselves from the image of lesbianism are likely to avoid being seen with lesbians or in situations that are stereotypically associated with lesbians, like athletics and athletic women (Blinde and Taub 286). Next, passing individuals are likely to ensure that they are associating themselves with images of straightness. For example, passing lesbians will take actions to appear straight. This may include being seen in social situations with men and even becoming involved in a relationship, or having purely sexual relationships, with men (Blinde and Taub 286). Through her disidentification with lesbianism, Glinda remains unmarked by the stigma of having a questionable sexuality or relationship.

The strongest example of Glinda's use of disidentification lies in her inauthentic relationship with Fiyero Tigelaar. Glinda and Fiyero meet when he arrives at Shiz University in Act One, Scene Five. Spying the handsome man asleep in his cart, Glinda exclaims "That's Fiyero Tigelaar! He's that Winkie prince whose reputation is so scandalacious" (Holtzman 24) and rushes to introduce herself using her signature hair flip. The two plan a party for later that night at the Ozdust Ballroom for their fellow classmates and begin their relationship. However, this relationship is destined for failure because their lines, "You're perfect" "You're perfect" "So we're perfect together," signal their actual imperfection as a couple (Wolf "Defying Gravity" 19).

As the show goes on and the relationship continues, audiences witness the inauthenticity of this couple's relationship. This story triangulates the relationships between Glinda, Elphaba,

and Fiyero throughout *Wicked*. However, each time Glinda and Fiyero's relationship is presented to the audience or develops, the story places the focus back on Glinda and Elphaba (Wolf "Defying Gravity" 19). The beginning of Glinda and Fiyero's relationship, "Dancing Through Life," becomes the catalyst for Glinda and Elphaba's relationship when Glinda feels guilty for embarrassing her roommate and joins her for a dance that serves to expose the romance between the characters. When Glinda and Fiyero get engaged, the story refocuses on Elphaba. Glinda sings of her lost partner when conventions would have her celebrating her engagement to Fiyero. Considering whether or not everything she has achieved – the popularity, the position, the prospective marriage – is worth losing Elphaba she sings:

Simply couldn't be happier/ Well, not simply/ 'Cause getting your dreams, it's strange  
but it seems/ A little well, complicated/ There's a kind of a sort of ... cost/ There's a  
couple of things get ... lost/ There are bridges you crossed you didn't know you'd  
crossed until you crossed. (Holtzman 62)

The remaining two interactions Glinda has with Fiyero occur because of Elphaba. When she sees him in the Wizard's chambers after Elphaba has returned to free the winged monkeys, Fiyero is called in to capture the Wicked Witch (Holtzman 75). Finally, as Glinda and Elphaba fight after the death of Elphaba's sister, Nessarose, the guard arrives to capture Elphaba. Fiyero swings in, literally, to save Elphaba from captivity by holding a gun to Glinda's head (Holtzman 81). Elphaba even exposes the inauthenticity of Glinda and Fiyero's relationship in this scene saying, "He never belonged to you! He never belonged to you! He doesn't love you and he never did! He loves me" (Holtzman 81). These scenes are significant because they highlight the use of Fiyero to tell the story of these two women. Glinda and Fiyero's relationship is never presented without some reference to Elphaba because their relationship is counterfeit and does not contain an emotional investment.

As the second act opens, audiences and the citizens of Oz can see the cracks in the Glinda and Fiyero's relationship, and by extension in her heterosexual façade. The citizens, Madame Morrible, Glinda, and Fiyero have gathered to celebrate, though the cause of this celebration is uncertain. However, soon this ambiguity is dropped as Madame Morrible announces to the citizens, audience, and Fiyero that he and Glinda are engaged. While the citizens celebrate and offer their "congratulations," Fiyero stands surprised to hear this news implying that he was not aware of this development prior to its announcement (Holtzman 61). Glinda's position within the social hierarchy of Oz has pressured her to form a misleading relationship with Fiyero and time has pressured that relationship to advance along a normative track. When Fiyero steps away to consider the outlandish claims being made about Elphaba, Glinda follows and the two briefly discuss the engagement. Fiyero agrees to marry Glinda saying, "and if it'll make you happy, of course I'll marry you" (Holtzman 62). This acquiescence shows the lack of emotional investment and intimacy within this relationship. Fiyero agrees to the marriage not because he loves Glinda, because he wants to marry her, or because it is his choice, rather he agrees in order to make Glinda happy. Moreover, Glinda accepts his reasoning. She asks, "But it'll make you happy too, right" to which Fiyero responds, "You know me, I'm always happy" (Holtzman 62). Though Fiyero claims to always be happy, this is not evidence that the marriage will make or keep him happy.

After Elphaba returns to the Emerald City to free the winged monkeys and is caught by the Wizard, Fiyero and his guard are called in to capture her. Fiyero sends the guards for a bucket of water, in order to melt her, and instead of capturing Elphaba he arranges their escape, but not before Glinda arrives. Running immediately to her former roommate<sup>21</sup>, Glinda soon

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<sup>21</sup> Recall from Chapter Four that the term "roommate" has been historically connected with the masking of homosexual relationships (Ould and Whitlow 1102).



learns that Fiyero is leaving her to be with Elphaba (Holtzman 74-75). Upon learning this, Glinda mentions that Madame Morrible and the Wizard could spread a rumor about Elphaba's sister, Nessarose, to draw the Wicked Witch out and capture her, a plan that they with a slight alteration (Holtzman 75). Although this can be understood as a betrayal of her loyalty to Elphaba there are other interpretations of this scene. This "betrayal" can be read as an attempt to

Fiyero, though important to the trajectory of *Wicked's* story, is not considered a principal role with his two vocal performances (Wolf "Defying Gravity" 17). Musicals, as with other vehicles for storytelling, place romantic relationships as the focus of principal character storylines. Even through a heteronormative lens, *Wicked* tells the story of two women who meet and develop a close and influential bond. Evidence of this elimination of Fiyero as a contender for main character status is present in promotional material for the show. As discussed in Chapter Four, billboards, Playbills and programs, commercials, flyers, and websites that promote the show and sell tickets feature the two women, not Fiyero. The Ozdust Boutique, the official store for *Wicked* souvenirs, does not sell items that include Fiyero or any other peripheral character. Even the men who have played this role understand that the *Wicked's* developing relationship is between the two women. Norbert Leo Butz, who originated the role of Fiyero on Broadway, understands this saying "the real love story is between the two ladies" (Cote 46). Kristin Chenoweth, the original Glinda, writes in her book *A Little Bit Wicked*, that originally *Wicked's* story was centered on the on the love affair of Fiyero and Elphaba using Madame Morrible as antagonist; however, over three years of workshops, Glinda's scenes and songs increased leading Kristin to understand, and audiences to see, that this story is "really about the two witches" (Chenoweth 150). Fiyero, as do the other minor characters, serves as a conduit for *Wicked* to tell the story of Glinda and Elphaba's relationship.

### *Ambiguous Passing*

In addition to her discussions of the widely accepted and understood strategies of passing, Shugart provides three strategies for cases of ambiguous passing: deflection, conjecture, and juxtaposition<sup>22</sup>. Shugart argues that in her case study, Ellen Degeneres and her television show *Ellen*, stands outside of these two strategies of passing therefore needing alternative strategies. While Glinda does utilize both the aesthetic and disidentification to construct and maintain her heterosexual passing identity, her case can be considered ambiguous because of the popularity of dominant readings of this text. As I sat in the Gershwin Theater talking to my fellow theatergoers, and each time I describe this project to others, I am met with opposition to my reading of the show and this character. Even after I provide my argument, many people are unable or unwilling to use this lens and see this story. The case of Ellen Degeneres loses its ambiguity when she, and her character, come out of the closet and announce their sexuality; however, even if the dominant public were to become aware of and accept this reading of *Wicked* there is no individual to come out and make such an announcement. Glinda's case will forever be ambiguous because of the multiple lenses that see her and the various minds that created her and bodies that performed her. To analyze Glinda's passing demands an integration of these widely accepted strategies with these Shugart provides for ambiguous passing.

### *Conjecture*

As a means to explore ambiguous passing, Shugart proposes a strategy of conjecture that “functions enthymematically with the premise of heterosexual presumption” and brings the audience to conclude the individual's heterosexuality (36). Because the assumed heterosexuality of individuals bleeds into audience's reading of characters in musical theater, and in other forms

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<sup>22</sup> This analysis only utilizes conjecture and juxtaposition because I understand disidentification to be inclusive of Shugart's definition and description of deflection.

of entertainment as well, they conclude that this character must be heterosexual as well (Rich 632). Glinda's assumed heterosexuality develops because of audience familiarity with this character and her story, and because of her connection to cultural understandings of "normal."

Glinda the Good Witch has been a part of the cultural imaginary since her introduction to the American people in L. Frank Baum's 1900 novel *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. However, her characterization in the 1939 film, *The Wizard of Oz*, gave Americans the images and perceptions of Glinda that have lasted to today. When Glinda appears in the iconic film in her bubble, her first words to Dorothy, "Are you a good witch, or a bad witch" are met with a response that challenges the audience's opinion of witches and forms our opinions of Glinda. Dorothy answers that she is neither a good nor a bad witch because witches are "old and ugly," not knowing that she is speaking to a witch. This witch is beautiful, kind, gentle, and caring, a far cry from the representations of witch past. Glinda has been understood to represent goodness, not just because of her title in this film "Glinda the Good Witch of the North," but also for her opposition to the Wicked Witches of the East and West. This interaction which, along with Burke's performance, creates the images and memories of Glinda that shape how many theatergoers interpret *Wicked's* Glinda. Almost seventy years later, though she undergoes a make-over herself, *Wicked's* Glinda still represents goodness, beauty, and a character to emulate. Tony Award Winner Kristin Chenoweth, originator of the role, understood the importance of Glinda and *Wicked's* connection to *The Wizard of Oz*. In her memoir, Chenoweth describes how her portrayal of the infamous bubble traveling witch had to be carefully constructed so that audiences would connect *Wicked's* Glinda with the 1939 film (152).

In order to pass, Glinda's identity must parallel current cultural ideals of not only what is heterosexual, but also what is normal. Through this parallelism, audiences relate Glinda to

normality, and in a heterosexist culture that relation to normalcy equates to a relation to assumed heterosexuality (Shugart 36). In *Wicked*, Glinda is not presented as being or belonging to some non-normative or non-dominant identity, and it is this absence of difference that allows audiences to presume her heterosexuality. Visibly, she is able bodied and cisgendered, her gender performance matches her biological sex, and she informs audiences of her upper middle or upper class status, “I am Galinda Upland, of the Upper Uplands,” (Holtzman 10). And even though she uses many malapropisms throughout the show – “outuendo,” “confusifying,” “scandalacious,” “hideodeous” – we can draw from her attendance at Shiz University that she is capable of learning and able to advance socially. These characteristics are present in current cultural norms. Our understandings of “normal” include such things as able bodiedness, middle to upper class status and having the mental ability to remain there, being cisgendered, and heterosexuality. Because of the bonds that connect these “normal” characteristics in this society, audiences conclude that because Glinda’s is and performs these normative qualities then she must also be heterosexual. This can be extended from the assumed heterosexuality to the assumed normativity of characters at large. If we are not provided with any evidence that a character in a musical, television show, movie, etc. is non-normative in some way, audiences are assume that those characters are “normal.” For example, if a character is not presented with some form of visible disability we conclude they are able-bodied, not considering the possibility of an invisible disability such as dyslexia, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, or bi-polar disorder.

### *Juxtaposition*

To complete her analysis of ambiguous passing, Shugart presents a “performative strategy” of juxtaposition that “functions by virtue of establishing a foil against which (the passer) emerges as ‘normal’ and all that is implied by that label in a heterosexist culture” (41).

Through the juxtaposition of the passer with, in the case of Ellen Degeneres, caricatures of heterosexuality, the passer is “legitimized” by virtue of comparison (Shugart 41). These caricatures are typically based in stereotypical representations of people but are extended and expanded to the point of becoming comical; however by positioning a character in opposition to an exemplar of difference and spectacle, that character is also perceived as “normal.” This is the case with the juxtaposition of Glinda and Elphaba throughout *Wicked*.

Although Elphaba’s green skin is the most visible form of difference, it is not the only quality that separates her from her peers; this skin tone that “is a synecdoche for her other differences” (Wolf “Defying Gravity” 9) and a “manifestorium of her twisted nature” (Holtzman 54). Elphaba is “independent, a freethinker, exceedingly intelligent, unafraid to rebel, politically progressive... possesses magic powers and the ability to cast spells” (Wolf “Defying Gravity” 9). Though these differences are used to reinforce Elphaba’s incompatibility with the other characters, they also set her apart from Glinda. In the context of the show, Elphaba’s ability to cast spells label her a threat to the students, she has a gift that she can and does use against them (Holtzman 38-9). This, along with her skin color and other previously mentioned differences, marks her as other and as so extremely different that she is to be feared, loathed, and hunted.

In direct contrast to that position of evilness, fear, and loathing is positioned Glinda the Good. The juxtaposition of these characters and their perception by the ensemble cast creates a dynamic that presents Glinda as the norm or as what the citizens should emulate and revere. As Elphaba learns that the Wizard has no powers of his own and is using the Animals to unite the citizens of Oz, she chooses to rebel and fight him and his policies. Madame Morrible then labels Elphaba evil and wicked in her announcement to the citizens and begins to encourage the hunt for the Wicked Witch (Holtzman 52). However, at the beginning of Act Two, Madame Morrible

narrates the story of Glinda's rise to power and celebrates her goodness. This story, which inaccurately recalls Glinda's introduction to the Wizard, reinforces the appropriateness and normalcy of Glinda through juxtaposition. Morrible asserts that Glinda was summoned to a meeting with the Wizard where he "decreed you'd hence be known/ As Glinda the Good officially" and implies that the Wicked Witch's evilness can be attributed to her jealousy of Glinda's favor with the Wizard (Schwartz 60). In this account of the meeting, the Wicked Witch's jealousy paints her as an evil, wrathful, jealous creature that is to be despised while Glinda is an innocent bystander who is to be loved.

Also, many of Elphaba's performances are spectacular in nature in comparison with Glinda's performances. For example, the discovery of her magical powers comes as she casts a spell on her sister, Nessarose's, wheelchair bringing it back into her grasp (Holtzman 14). The closing song of Act One, "Defying Gravity," concludes with the witch "flying high" above the stage complete with flashing lights and billowing smoke. Arguably, her most significant and important solo performances of the show position her in the category of the extreme and of a spectacle. However, what are read as Glinda's most important solo performances, "Popular" and "Thank Goodness," are performed in her dorm room and the latter is broken up by dialogue, taking away any extravagance it may have had. The juxtaposition of these character's solo performances also places Glinda into a position of normalcy, and through the extension Shugart has proposed heterosexuality. Through the juxtaposition of these characters' construction, perception by the larger cast, and their solo performances, Elphaba is labeled wicked, evil, and constructed as a figure to be feared, hated, and hunted while Glinda remains normal. Her juxtaposition with Elphaba's stained character leaves Glinda clean of any questionable traits aligning her with normality, and by extension heterosexuality.

## *Conclusion*

This examination of Glinda the Good's heterosexual passing identity has blended traditional and widely accepted strategies of passing, the aesthetic and disidentification, with two of Shugart's strategies of ambiguous passing, conjecture and juxtaposition. The combination of these strategies has demonstrated the ways in which the identities of fictional characters can be examined and analyzed for their characteristics and qualities. Using these four strategies together affords critics a fuller and more accurate understanding not only of the ways that fictional characters, politicians, celebrities, or other social figures construct and maintain passing identities but also the ways that passing individuals live their day to day lives. These strategies are not just used in idealized situations or to help celebrities navigate the paparazzi and media frenzy that surround them but can be, and ostensibly are used by individuals in the general public every day.

Through this analysis I have expanded the understanding of ambiguous passing, as acts and performances that do not fit the "established, tried-and-true, and relatively straightforward passing strategies" (Shugart 48), to a category more inclusive of the fictionalized world of movie, television, book, and musical characters. Though Shugart's interpretation stands and remains useful in the examination of acts of passing, this project's application of traditional and new passing strategies contends that utilization of one set of strategies over another limits the potential reach and scope of future studies.

Focusing on the strategies Glinda uses to create and maintain her passing identity is a worthwhile endeavor for scholars and critics because of the real world uses of these same strategies. LGBTQ youth across the country, and internationally, are constantly receiving messages that reinforce the pressure to pass. Hearing that "it gets better" and other similar

messages imply that though this time may be painful, difficult, stressful, dangerous, and frightening, do what you need to do and in time it will get better. These young people are creating and maintaining their heterosexual passing identities the only way they know how to, the ways that they see mediated figures such as Ellen Degeneres and Glinda the Good successfully pass in their communities. The information that individuals get from television, movies, music, art, dance, theater, and elsewhere “help produce the fabric of everyday life... shaping political view and social behavior, and providing the materials out of which people forge their very identities” and in return individuals contribute to the messages that media outlets promote (Keller 1).



## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In October of 2013, *Wicked* will see its tenth year at the Gershwin Theater on Broadway, cementing its place among famous long-running musicals of the past. The show, much as *The Wizard of Oz*, has become a part of our cultural heritage and identity. We use lines, lyrics, and character's experiences to explain our own and to imagine the future. Broadway musicals, as do movies and television shows, have the power to transport us from our surroundings to the idealized worlds that shape each show. These other worlds inside the Gershwin, Neederlander, Eugene O'Neill, and countless other Broadway theaters grow in the minds of theater-goers share their favorite songs, scenes and characters. It is our focus on the numbers of theater-goers that distracts us from listening to their interpretations of each show's message and from solidifying our own readings (Wolf "Defying Gravity" 20). Musical theater has the power to shape the ways that publics view themselves, their experiences, their relationships with each other, and their relationship with the outside world.

Returning to the question that drives this line of research, how does passing function within the musical *Wicked*, some interesting and important conclusions can be draw concerning rhetoric, culture and individuals. First, in addressing the initial question, *Wicked* tells a story not only of two women's relationship with one another but each woman's relationship with also with herself. The personal development of each character allows, in Glinda's case specifically, for the development, creation, and maintenance of her heterosexual passing identity. As she

experiences the pressures to conceal her relationship with Elphaba and present a heteronormative identity before the citizens of Oz, she utilizes both traditional and alternative strategies of passing. Her aesthetic presentation as the archetype of femininity and her disidentification from lesbianism through her relationship with Fiyero signify the importance of these traditional passing techniques. Also, her alignment with normativity, and by extension heterosexuality, and her juxtaposition with Elphaba target the ambiguity of her passing identity. The fusion of these four strategies exemplifies the ways in which Glinda, and many individuals outside the theater, navigate the heterosexist society they are forced to interact with daily.

This analysis has called *Wicked*'s queer romantic storyline from the wings and placed it center stage. Through the exposure of a queer storyline, this thesis promotes and encourages queer readings of other cultural products with one word of caution. A transgressive reading for the sake of identifying queer narratives and characters is insufficient. Rhetorical and cultural critics who endeavor to expose present but perhaps silenced queerness within dominant texts have the responsibility to connect these readings to larger cultural phenomena and lived experiences of individuals. Through these connections, critics can avoid one of the traps that befalls queering dominant culture, the claim that we read what we want to see (Doty 16). The queerness seen and read within dominant is no less real than the straightness seen and read by dominant culture within these same texts (Doty xi). The cycle of influence that exists with text and culture makes such connections discernible and critics have the positionality to make these connections public through academic study and public discussion.

Not only does this reading of *Wicked* trouble and queer the dominant reading of the show, but it also provides some interesting implications for what this show says about American culture. Musical theater conventions hold that musicals present a heterosexual romance between

male and female characters whose ability to overcome their differences to become one is meant to symbolize the unification within American culture (Wolf “Defying Gravity” 19). If this relationship is meant to stand for the unification of the fragmented American existence, but this relationship is not accepted within the community of the show, then *Wicked* can be read as social critique. Unable to celebrate the newly solidified union, which Stacy Wolf argues is the purpose of a musical’s finale (“Defying Gravity” 17-18), the culture is unable to represent our solidarity as one. Here, *Wicked* presents an interesting comment on the future development of American culture that questions our ability to move past those things that separate and differentiate us from one another to join as one. The presence of this commentary on the tolerance and social dynamics of this culture in other musicals could strengthen this interpretation of *Wicked*.

Critical examinations of passing strategies are important implications for individuals who are pressured to enact these strategies in order to resist the stigma of the homosexual label. Through Glinda’s utilization of passing strategies and her success at presenting a heterosexual persona, *Wicked* seems to advance the practice of passing and the cultural ideologies behind it. When societies are unable or unwilling to accept nondominant identities, members of those nondominant groups who are able to pass as belonging to the dominant identity do. The Land of Oz is unwilling or unable, because of heterosexist cultural influences, to accept this queer romance insisting that for Glinda to become a social figure, she must pass. Not only does this society compel Glinda to pass, but it also rewards her passing by naming her Glinda the Good and affording her a position within the Ozian government. Furthermore, Glinda and Elphaba’s relationship is unacceptable to the citizens of Oz, so much so that they are appalled at learning of the existence and a relationship between the women (“No One Mourns the Wicked”) and the two are forced to separate at show’s finale (“For Good”/ Finale). What message does this send to

individuals who struggle to embrace their LGBTQ identity? As do many other sources – movies, television shows, and campaigns targeted at helping LGBTQ youth find their voice – this message is that passing as heterosexual is how we achieve our goals.

This recentering of heterosexuality in a story which, throughout this thesis, has been celebrated for its transgressive qualities is disturbing to say the least. However, some redemptive qualities exist within that same finale. As the ensemble and Glinda sing the final lines of the show, Elphaba emerges from a trapdoor in the stage, alive. She and Fiyero concocted a scheme to create the illusion of her death in order to escape to his castle far away from the critical eyes of the Emerald City. She stands center stage thinking of Glinda and wishing she could let her former roommate know of their plan and that she is safe saying “I only wish... That Glinda could know that we’re alive” (Holtzman 93). Before the curtain falls, Glinda floats high above the citizens of Oz, Elphaba steps away from Fiyero, and the two reprise the last lines of their final duet, “For Good.” In harmony, the women sing “Because I knew you/ I have been changed...” (Schwartz 93). *Wicked*’s final lines remind audiences of the intimate bond and deep connection between these women. While the production may open with the citizens celebrate the “death” of the Wicked Witch of the West, the story begins with a question, “Is it true you were her friend” (Holtzman 5). Audiences spend the two hours and thirty minutes of the show seeing, hearing, and often singing along to the establishment of this relationship. However, it is the show’s finale that answers that brave Ozian’s question; in a simplistic reading of the show, yes they were friends. With a fuller understanding of the interplay between lines and lyrics and a queer perspective that answer expands to include the scope of their relationship. Glinda and Elphaba are not just friends, they are so much more than that.

### *Limitations*

This analysis is also subject to some important limitations, first of which is the process for creating or finding full scripts and then validating those texts. For many musicals, official scripts are not released until decades after their opening on Broadway making the tasks of analyzing current or newly opened shows difficult for researchers. However, fans of these musicals have made contributions that can aid researchers in the construction of a textual field for analysis. Many blogging websites dedicated to musicals and their fans have produced transcribed versions of musical scripts. For example, the text of *Wicked* used for this analysis originates from a script provided by Noah on the popular website Blogspot. Although these fans provide publics with the materials from musicals or plays, they do not provide their method for collecting these texts. For that reason, scripts found on blogging or fan created websites must be verified as similar enough to a staged production to be considered legitimate. It is important to understand, however, that each actor and actress approaches their role, the show will experience subtle performative differences. These performers bring to a role their interpretation of the character's importance in the storyline, personal style, as well as their understanding of previous interpretations of that character. For these reasons, no two individuals interpret and performances are exactly the same. However, the narrative of the script serves as the basis for each individual's realization of characters.

I employed several methods for validating the scripts used as text for this analysis. The first method used for script verification is the comparison of the script to the specific performances included in the textual field. This analysis uses my attendance at a February 18, 2012 Birmingham, Alabama touring production and a January 13, 2013 Broadway performance

as part of the field of analysis. During and immediately after each production I wrote down my memories and thoughts of the show and its story that were later used to confirm the script's authenticity. After attending these performances, I was able to read the script for how it aligned itself with the narrative of the performances I saw. I asked questions such as *is this song introduced with the same story as tonight's performance, are there scenes missing from this script that were included in the story, and is there anything in the script that was not a part of the staged performance* for comparison. Another method for certifying fan created scripts is through comparison with video recordings on sharing websites such as YouTube. Listening to the characters perform the story while following along and making alterations when necessary strengthens the accuracy of these scripts for critical analysis. These are not the only methods by which critics can authenticate the scripts they seek to examine; however, they are two methods that can instill confidence in the legitimacy of a script.

#### *Future Research*

This project can be used as an inspiration and guide for future research on passing, stories of Oz, and critical attention to musical theater. This examination of passing strategies combines the traditional strategies of the aesthetic and disidentification with Helene Shugart's strategies of ambiguous passing. However, forthcoming research on the characteristics of heterosexual passing may find these strategies too limiting or unfit for application. As society inches toward tolerance and acceptance of the representation of many identities, the pressures, identities, and strategies associated with passing change. Times past have seen the pressure for women to pass as men for economic liberation and people of color, mostly African-Americans, passing as white for social equality and freedom. However, we may have transitioned to a situation that demands for the racial and citizenship related passing of undocumented immigrants. For these

undocumented immigrants, the strategies proposed and discussed in current passing literature may not be sufficient or related to the struggles and pressures faced. Each context of passing demands its own exploration for the strategies that will work most effectively for the individuals living out these strategies and passing identities in their communities at work, school, church, interpersonal interactions, and each time they present themselves to others.

Future researchers studying stories set in Oz may be interested in looking back to *The Wizard of Oz* or look forward to the upcoming release of Disney's *Oz: The Great and Powerful*. Examination of these storylines might prove to further the cultural significance of Oz. As new interpretations and focal points in the story of Oz and its beloved and sometime feared characters are released, public interpretation and opinion of that place and those people evolves. Rumors also abound of the possibility of a filmic version of *Wicked*. Though these are merely rumors, and no production company has made any authenticating statement, there is still great demand to see and hear the story of Glinda and Elphaba. Should this rumored production come to fruition, an analysis similar to this on the existence of a queer romantic storyline and the passing strategies utilized to further center the application of queer perspectives on dominant texts. Future researchers might also conduct comparative analyses of *Wicked: A New Musical*, a future *Wicked* movie, and the source novel *Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West* for consistencies between the two versions, structural organizing differences between musicals and films, and potential alterations to character representations.

Musical theater is also a site less examined than its influence on and by popular culture would suggest. Venturing to question the messages within these cultural products may in fact reveal engagements with issues other than sexuality and passing reflected within the text. These musicals are produced as social reproduction and commentary and critical analysis of the

methods used for each. Future examinations of musicals may also further validate the theater as a site for conversation of such taboo topics like race, gender/sex, sexuality, class, and ability oppressions and limitations.

Finally, the application of cluster criticism may prove useful to future studies of musical theater. This form of criticism has allowed for themes to emerge through reading of the script, lyrics, and performances. As a structuring and organizing agent, cluster criticism has the potential to guide researchers' investigation of cultural importance in the textual field that surrounds a given musical. However, there may be alternative theories and methods of criticism that afford analysts similar information and structuring guidance.

As my undergraduate career came to a close, I began to search for ways to merge my personal interests with my scholarship; however, it was not until the 2011 National Communication Association Conference in New Orleans that I found a way. At a poster session I talked with Valerie Schrader about her dissertation on *Wicked*. Through our conversation, I was inspired and encouraged to pursue researching what I was most passionate about, musical theater.

Weeks later, with the decision made that I would write about musicals for a final paper, I was deciding on which musical to analyze when I discovered Stacy Wolf's article "Defying Gravity: Queer Conventions in the Musical *Wicked*." I found her argument about the relationship between Glinda and Elphaba especially compelling since I would be going to see the show again about a month later; at the same time, Wolf's analysis was lacking something. Wolf's argument focused on the conventions of musical theater and failed to attend to the lyrics and dialogue of the show. So when I journeyed back to Birmingham, Alabama to see *Wicked* in February of 2012, I focused on those areas of the production.



I sat between my mother and a stranger and listened to the lyrics and dialogue wondering if I could read the queer romance within the show. With each new song and scene, I could see the formation of this relationship and how it was being constructed as romantic rather than platonic. My mind began to race with the various ways I could advance this reading and how I could address what I saw as the un(der)explored areas in Wolf's analysis. In choosing to expand that class paper into a thesis project, I could read the queer romance through the lyrics and I could adequately address Fiyero's role in the show, but I needed to see *Wicked* again. This time, I would not be limited by touring schedules; I would go directly to the source, Broadway.

My first trip to New York City, in January 2013, allowed me to continue to gather more information and evidence of these characters and their relationships. As I sat in the Gershwin Theater, taking in the extravagance and beauty of my first Broadway show, I felt stronger about my arguments than I had in previous viewings and discussions. That performance gave me confidence in my project and showed me the importance of works like this. I left the theater with my cousin who had attended the show with me and when he asked what I would be writing about the production we had just witnessed I confessed the queerness of my arguments. His disbelief that this relationship could be present and his confusion as to why it was necessary to discuss it was the proof I needed to pursue this line of research. I could see this relationship and felt a responsibility to articulate its contours and the ways that the characters navigated social pressures to grow into the characters that I identified with and loved.

*Wicked*'s tagline, "The Untold Story of the Witches of Oz," gives audiences a glimpse of the multiple untold stories they are about to witness. Not only is it the story of how two young women become Glinda the Good and The Wicked Witch of the West, but it is also the queer story of a romantic relationship between those women. A relationship that, because of a

heterosexist culture's influence, pressures Glinda to construct and maintain a heterosexual passing identity. Glinda's experience is similar to millions of individuals across several continents, and the exploration of her narrative gives legitimacy and understanding to the pressures faced by our fellow citizens. As a cultural artifact worthy of critical rhetorical attention, audiences identify and cling to *Wicked's* story of these women and their relationship. Whether one accepts the queer romance evidenced throughout Chapters Four and Five or not, stories that remain in the public and personal memories and hearts may not leave us "changed for the better," but they do leave us "changed for good."

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## APPENDIX A

### LYRICS TO *WICKED*'S SONGS

No One Mourns the Wicked

OZIANS:

Good news! She's dead!  
The witch of the West is dead!  
The wickedest witch there ever was,  
The enemy of all of us here in Oz is dead!  
Good news!

(SPOKEN) Look it's Glinda!

Glinda:

Fellow Ozians, let us be glad.  
Let us be grateful.  
Let us rejoice that good news could subdue the wicked workings of you know who.

Isn't it nice to know that good will conquer evil.  
The truth we all believe'll by and by outlive a lie.  
For you and...

OZIANS:

No one mourns the wicked!  
No one cries: "They won't return."  
No one lays a lily on their grave!

The good man scorns the wicked!  
Through their lives, our children lean:  
What we miss when we misbehave...

And goodness knows  
The wicked's lives are lonely.  
Goodness knows the wicked die alone.  
It just shows when you're wicked you're left only on your own...

GLINDA:

And goodness knows, the wicked's lives are lonely.  
Goodness knows, the die alone.  
It just shows when you're wicked you're left on your own.

OZIANs:

Yes goodness knows the wicked's lives are lonely  
Goodness knows the wicked die alone  
Nothing grows for the wicked, they reap only what they sow.

GLINDA:

Are people born wicked? Or do they have wickedness thrust upon them?  
After all, she had a father; she had a mother, as so many do.

FATHER (FREX):

How I hate to go and leave you lonely.

MOTHER (MELENA):

That's alright, it's only just one night.

FREX:

But know that you're here in my heart while I'm out of your sight.

GLINDA:

And like every family, they had their secrets.

GREEN STRANGER:

Have another drink my dark eyed beauty.  
I've got one more night left here in town.  
So have another drink, a green elixir, and we'll have ourselves a little mixer.  
Have another little swallow little lady and follow me down.

GLINDA:

And from the time she was born she was, well... different.

NURSE:

It's coming!

FREX:

Now?

NURSE:

The baby's coming.

FREX:

And how...

NURSE:

I see a nose.

FREX:

I see a curl

BOTH:

It's a healthy, perfect, lovely little... AHH

MOTHER:

What is it? What's wrong?

NURSE:

How can it be?

FREX:

What does it mean?

NURSE:

It's atrocious!

FREX:

It's obscene!

BOTH:

Like a froggy ferney cabbage, the baby is unnaturally green!

FREX:

Take it away. Take it away!

GLINDA:

(SPOKEN)

So you see, it couldn't have been easy.

OZIANS:

No one mourns the wicked.

Now at last she's dead and gone.

Now at last there's joy throughout the land.

And goodness knows we know what goodness is

Goodness knows the wicked die alone

Woe to those who spurn what goodness is.

They are shown no one mourns the wicked.

No one mourns the wicked.

GLINDA:

Good news!

OZIANS:

No one mourns the wicked!

GLINDA:

Good news!

OZIANS and GLINDA:

No one mourns the wicked! Wicked!

“What is This Feeling?”

GALINDA:

Dearest, Darlingest Momsie and Popsicle,

ELPHABA:

My Dear Father,

BOTH:

There’s been some confusion here at Shiz.

ELPHABA:

But of course I’ll care for Nessa.

GALINDA:

But of course I’ll rise above it.

BOTH:

For I know that’s how you’d want me to respond, yes.

There’s been some confusion for you see my roommate is...

GALINDA:

Unusually and exceedingly peculiar, and all together quite impossible to describe...

ELPHABA:

Blonde.

GALINDA:

What is this feeling, so sudden and new?

ELPHABA:

I felt the moment I laid eyes on you...

GALINDA:

My pulse is rushing...

ELPHABA:

My head is reeling...

GALINDA:

My face is flushing...

BOTH:

What is this feeling, fervid as a flame?

Does it have a name?

Yes!  
Loathing. Unadulterated loathing...

GALINDA:  
For your face...

ELPHABA:  
Your voice...

GALINDA:  
Your clothing

BOTH:  
Let's just say, I loathe it all.  
Every little trait, however small  
Makes my very flesh begin to crawl  
With simple utter loathing!  
There's a strange exhilaration  
In such total detestation,  
It's so pure! So strong!  
Though I do admit it came on fast,  
Still I do believe that it can last,  
And I will be loathing, loathing you my whole life long!

STUDENTS:  
Dear Galinda, you are just too good.  
How do you stand it? I don't think I could.  
She's a terror, she's a tartar!  
We don't mean to show a bias, but Galinda you're a martyr!

GALINDA:  
Well, these things are sent to try us!

STUDENTS:  
Poor Galinda, forced to reside  
With someone so disgustified  
We just want to tell you, we're all on your side!  
We share your (BACKGROUND) loathing,  
Unadulterated loathing.  
For her face, her voice, her clothing.  
Let's just say – we loath it all  
Every little trait, however small  
Makes our very flesh begin to crawl.  
AHHHH!

BOTH:

What is this feeling, so sudden and new?  
I felt the moment I laid eyes on you.  
My pulse is rushing, my head is reeling.  
Oh, what is this feeling?  
Does it have a name?  
That's our loathing!

STUDENTS:  
Loathing!

BOTH:  
There's a strange exhilaration!

STUDENTS:  
Loathing!

BOTH:  
In such total detestation!

STUDENTS:  
Loathing!

BOTH:  
It's so pure! So strong!

STUDENTS:  
So strong!

BOTH:  
Though I do admit it came on fast,  
Still I do believe that it can last.  
And I will be loathing,  
For forever, loathing.  
Truly deeply loathing you

STUDENTS:  
Loathing you

BOTH:  
My whole life long

STUDENTS:  
Loathing, unadulterated loathing!

ELPHABA:  
BOO!

GALINDA:  
AHH!



“Popular”

GLINDA:

(Spoken)

Elphie, now that we're friends, I've decided to make you my new project!

ELPHABA:

(Spoken)

You really don't have to do that...

GALINDA:

(Spoken)

I know, that's what makes me so nice!

(Sung)

Whenever I see someone less fortunate than I,  
And let's face it, who isn't less fortunate than I?  
My tender heart tends to start to bleed.  
And when someone needs a makeover,  
I simply have to take over!  
I know I know exactly what they need!

And even in your case,  
Though it's the toughest case I've yet to face,  
Don't worry, I'm determined to succeed!  
Follow my lead,  
And yes indeed, you will be...

POPULAR! You're gonna be popular!  
I'll teach you the proper ploys,  
When you talk to boys,  
Little ways to flirt and flounce, ooh!  
I'll show you what shoes to wear!  
How to fix your hair!  
Everthing that really counts to be...

POPULAR! I'll help you be popular!  
You'll hang with the right cohorts,  
You'll be good at sports,  
Know the slang you've got to know.  
So let's start,  
'Cause you've got an awfully long way to go!

Don't be offended by my frank analysis,  
Think of it as personality dialysis,

Now that I've chosen to become a  
Pal, a sister and advisor,  
There's nobody wiser!  
Not when it comes to...

POPULAR! I know about popular.  
And with an assist from me,  
To be who you'll be,  
Instead of dreary who you were...uh, are.  
There's nothing that can stop you,  
From becoming popular... -lar...

La la, la la!  
We're gonna make you pop-u-lar!

When I see depressing creatures,  
With unprepossessing features,  
I remind them on their own behalf  
To think of  
Celebrated heads of state,  
Or specially great communicators!  
Did they have brains or knowledge?  
Don't make me laugh!

They were POPULAR!  
Please! It's all about popular.  
It's not about aptitude,  
It's the way you're viewed,  
So it's very shrewd to be,  
Very very popular like ME!

(Spoken)  
Why, Miss Elphaba, look at you. You're beautiful!

ELPHABA:  
(Spoken)  
I... I have to go.

GALINDA:  
(Spoken)  
You're welcome...

(Sung)  
And though you protest,  
Your disinterest,  
I know clandestinely,

You're gonna' grin and bear it!  
Your new found popularity!  
Ah!

La la, la la!  
You'll be popular!  
Just not quite as popular as ME!

“I’m Not That Girl”

Sung by: Elphaba

Hands touch.  
Eyes meet.  
Sudden silence, sudden heat.  
Hearts leap in a giddy whirl.  
He could be that boy, but I’m not that girl.

Don’t dream too far.  
Don’t lose sight of who you are.  
Don’t remember that rush of joy.  
He could be that boy,, but I’m not that girl.

Every so often we long to steal to the land of what might have been.  
But that doesn’t soften the ache we feel when reality sets back in.

Blithe smile.  
Lithe limb.  
She who’s winsome, she wins him.  
Gold hair with a gentle curl,  
That’s the girl he chose.  
And heaven knows,  
I’m not that girl.

Don’t wish.  
Don’t start.  
Wishing only wounds the heart.  
I wasn’t born for the rose and the pearl.  
There’s a girl I know,  
He loves her so.  
I’m not that girl

“One Short Day”

ELPHABA

(spoken) Come with me. To the Emerald City.

TOURISTS:

One short day  
In the Emerald City

GLINDA:

(spoken) Oh, I've always wanted to see the Emerald City!

TOURISTS:

One short day  
In the Emerald City

One short day:

In the Emerald City  
One short day  
Full of so much to do  
Ev'ry way  
That you look in the city  
There's something exquisite  
You'll want to visit  
Before the day's through

ELPHABA:

There are buildings tall as Quoxwood trees!

GLINDA:

Dress salons!

ELPHABA:

Libraries!

GLINDA:

Palaces!

ELPHABA:

Museums!

BOTH:

A hundred strong  
There are wonders like I've never seen

GLINDA:  
It's all grand

ELPHABA:  
It is all green!

BOTH:  
And I think we've found the place where we belong!  
I wanna be  
In this hoi polloi

ELPHABA:  
So I'll be back for good someday

GLINDA:  
To make my life and make my way

BOTH:  
But for today, we'll wander and enjoy:

ALL:  
One short day  
In the Emerald City  
One short day  
To have a lifetime of fun  
One short day

BOTH:  
And we're warning the city  
Now that we're in here  
You'll know we've been here

ALL  
Before we are done!

GLINDA:  
(spoken) Elphie - come on - we'll be late for Wizomania!

WIZOMANIA CHORUS:  
Who's the mage  
Whose major itinerary  
Is making all Oz merrier?  
Who's the sage  
Who's sagely sailed in to save our posteriors?  
Whose enthuse for hot air ballooning  
Has all of Oz honeymooning?

Woo - oo -oo  
Wizn't he wonderful?  
(Our wonderful Wizard!)

AUDIENCE	WIZOMANIA CHORUS
One short day	Who's the mage
In the Emerald City	Whose major itinerary
One short day	Is making all Oz merrier
To have a lifetime	Whose the sage who
Of fun	Sagely sailed in to save
What a way	Our posteriors
To be seeing the city:	

ELPHABA AND GLINDA  
Where so many roam to  
We'll call it home, too  
And then, just like now  
We can say:  
We're just two friends

ELPHABA  
Two good friends

GLINDA  
Two best friends

TOURISTS  
Sharing one wonderful  
One short...

GUARD  
(spoken) The Wizard will see you now!

ALL:  
Day!

“Defying Gravity”

GLINDA

(Spoken)

Why couldn't you have stayed calm, for once! Instead of flying off the handle!

(Sung)

I hope you're happy

I hope you're happy now

I hope you're happy how you've

Hurt your cause forever

I hope you think you're clever

ELPHABA

I hope you're happy

I hope you're happy too

I hope you're proud how you would

Grovel in submission

To feed your own ambition

GLINDA & ELPHABA

So though I can't imagine how

I hope you're happy

Right now

GLINDA

(Spoken)

Elphie, listen to me. Just say you're sorry!

(Sung)

You can still be with the Wizard

What you've worked and waited for

You can have all you ever wanted -

ELPHABA

(Spoken)

I know

(Sung)

But I don't want it - No!

I can't want it anymore

Something has changed within me

Something is not the same

I'm through with playing by

The rules of someone else's game

Too late for second-guessing



Too late to go back to sleep  
It's time to trust my instincts  
Close my eyes  
And leap...

It's time to try defying gravity  
I think I'll try defying gravity  
And you can't pull me down

GLINDA  
Can't I make you understand  
You're having delusions of grandeur?

ELPHABA  
I'm through accepting limits  
'Cause someone says they're so  
Some things I cannot change  
But till I try I'll never know  
Too long I've been afraid of  
Losing love I guess I've lost  
Well if that's love  
It comes at much too high a cost

I'd sooner buy defying gravity  
Kiss me goodbye, I'm defying gravity  
And you can't pull me down!

(Spoken)  
Glinda, come with me. Think of what we could do together!

(Sung)  
Unlimited  
Together we're unlimited  
Together we'll be the greatest team  
There's ever been - Glinda!  
Dreams the way we planned 'em

GLINDA  
If we work in tandem

GLINDA & ELPHABA  
There's no fight we cannot win  
Just you and I, defying gravity  
With you and I defying gravity

ELPHABA

They'll never bring us down!

(Spoken)

Well, are you coming?

(GLINDA decides to stay behind.)

GLINDA

I hope you're happy

I hope your happy now that your choosing this -

ELPHABA

(Spoken)

You too

(Sung)

I hope it brings you bliss

GLINDA & ELPHABA

I really hope you get it

And you don't live to regret it

I hope you're happy in the end

I hope you're happy my friend

ELPHABA

So if you care to find me

Look to the Western sky!

As someone told me lately

Everyone deserves the chance to fly

And if I'm flying solo

At least I'm flying free

To those who ground me

Take a message back from me!

Tell them how I am defying gravity

I'm flying high, defying gravity

And soon I'll match them in renown

And nobody in all of Oz

No Wizard that there is or was

Is ever gonna bring me down!!

GLINDA

I hope you're happy

CITIZENS OF OZ

Look at her

She's wicked  
Get her!!

ELPHABA  
Bring me down!

CITIZENS OF OZ  
No one mourns the wicked  
So we got to bring her -

ELPHABA  
Ahhhh!

CITIZENS OF OZ  
--Down!

“Thank Goodness”

GLINDA:

(SPOKEN)

Fellow Ozians,

As terrifying as terror is, let us put aside our differences for this one day, and celebrate!

Oh what a celebration we'll have today.

Let's have a celebration the Glinda way!

CROWD:

Thank Goodness!

MADAME MORRIBLE:

Finally, a day that's totally Wicked Witch free.

CROWD:

We couldn't be happier, thank goodness!

GLINDA:

Yes. We couldn't be happier, right dear?

Couldn't be happier, right here.

Look what we've got. A fairytale plot. Our very own happy ending.

Where we couldn't be happier, true dear. Couldn't be happier.

And we're happy to share our ending vicariously with all of you.

He couldn't look handsomer.

I couldn't feel humbler.

We couldn't be happier, because happy is what happens when all your dreams come true.

MADAME MORRIBLE:

(Spoken)

Oh, and Glinda dear we are happy for you.

As Press Secretary, I have striven to ensure that all of Oz knows the story of your braverism.

The day you were first summoned to an audience with Oz,

Ans although he would not tell you why initially.

When you bowed before his throne,

He decreed you'd hence be known, as Glinda the Good officially.

And with a jealous squeal, the Wicked Witch burst from concealment.

Where she had been lurking serruptitally.

CROWD:

I hear she has an extra eye that always remains awake!

I hear that she can shed her skin as easily as a snake!

I hear some rebel Animals are giving her food and shelter!

I hear her soul is so unclean pure water can melt her!

FIYERO:  
What?

CROWD:  
Melt her! Please, somebody go and melt her!

FIYERO:  
(SPOKEN)  
Do you hear that?  
People are so empty-headed they'll believe anything.

GLINDA:  
(SPOKEN)  
Fiyero! Yes. Thanks plenty dearest. He's gone to fetch me a refreshment.  
He's so thoughtful that way.  
(SUNG)  
That's why, I couldn't be happier.  
No. I couldn't be happier.  
Though it is, I admit, the tiniest bit unlike I anticipated.  
But I couldn't be happier. Simply couldn't be happier.  
Well... not simply.  
'Cause getting your dreams, it's strange, but it seems a little... well, complicated.  
There's a kind of a sort of... cost.  
There's a couple of things get... lost.  
There are bridges you cross you didn't know you'd crossed until you've crossed.  
And if that joy, that thrill, doesn't thrill like you think it will...  
Still, with this perfect finale, the cheers and the ballyhoo,  
Who wouldn't be happier?  
So I couldn't be happier.  
Because happy is what happens when all your dreams come true.  
Well, isn't it?  
Happy is what happens when your dreams come true.

CROWD:  
We love you Glinda, if we may be so frank.  
For all this joy we know who we've got to thank, thank goodness!  
That means the Wizard, Glinda

GLINDA:  
And fiancé

CROWD:  
They couldn't be goodlier.  
She couldn't be lovelier.  
We couldn't be luckier.

GLINDA:

I couldn't be happier

CROWD:

Thank goodness! Today! Thank goodness for today!

“For Good”

GLINDA:

I've heard it said that people come into our lives for a reason,  
Bringing something we must learn.  
And we are led to those who help us most to grow if we let them.  
And we help them in return.  
Well, I don't know if I believe that's true.  
But I know I'm who I am today,  
Because I knew you...  
Like a comet pulled from orbit as it passes the sun,  
Like a stream that meets a boulder halfway through the wood.  
Who can say if I've been changed for the better?  
But, because I knew you, I have been changed for good.

ELPHABA:

It well may be that we may never meet again in this lifetime.  
But let me say before we part, so much of me is made from what I learned from you.  
You'll be with me, like a handprint on my heart.  
And now whatever way our stories end,  
I know you have rewritten mine by being my friend.  
Like a ship blown from its mooring by a wind off the sea.  
Like a seed dropped by a sky bird in a distant wood.  
Who can say if I've been changed for the better?  
But, because I knew you...

GLINDA:

Because I knew you...

BOTH:

I have been changed for good.

ELPHABA:

And just to clear the air, I ask forgiveness for the things I've done you blame me for.

GLINDA:

But then, I guess there's blame to share.

BOTH:

But none of it seems to matter anymore.

GLINDA:

Like a comet pulled from orbit as it passes the sun,  
Like a stream that meets a boulder halfway through the wood.

ELPHABA:

Like a ship blown from its mooring by a wind off the sea.  
Like a seed dropped by a sky bird in a distant wood.

BOTH:

Who can say if I've been changed for the better?  
I do believe I have been changed for the better

GLINDA:

And because I knew you...

ELPHABA:

Because I knew you...

BOTH:

Because I knew you, I have been changed for good.



## APPENDIX B

### SUMMARY OF REFERENCED MUSICALS

#### *Oklahoma!*

Set in the Oklahoma territory of the early 1900's, *Oklahoma!* tells the story of the conflicts between the land owning and settled farmers and the more nomadic and free cowboys as they strive to become a state. The show focuses on a pair of love triangles, one involving the shy cowboy Curly McLain, the headstrong farm girl Laurey Williams and the dark and mysterious Judd and the other featuring Will Parker the openly flirtatious Ado Annie, and the Persian peddler Ali Hakim. The show begins with Laurey and Curly singing of their mutual dislike of each other before realizing and admitting their love for one another, creating a structure that many future musicals would follow.

#### *Showboat*

One of the most influential musicals, *Showboat* tells the story of performers and stage hands of the *Cotton Blossom* and the shipyard workers who interacted with the staff. The show features the characters as they performed on this Mississippi River showboat and in their lives ashore. This show revolutionized musical theater, paving the way for musicals to blend their previously distinct lighthearted, jovial, and humorous tone and subject with more serious and real life situations and material. With the development of the book musical, beginning with *Showboat*, musicals began to be more dramatic with songs that were able to evoke responses other than laughter from their audiences.

### *Avenue Q*

Released in 2003, this journey of self-discovery features recent college graduate Princeton as he moves to New York and attempts to find his purpose in life. In his interactions with the residents of his Apartment complex, Trekkie Monster, Nikki, Rod, and Gary Coleman, Princeton finds that his purpose is to help his friend Kate Monster build a school for Monsters. Through the songs and scripts, *Avenue Q* features discussions on race and racism (“Everyone’s A Little Bit Racist”), homosexuality (“If You Were Gay,” “Fantasies Come True”), and pornography (“The Internet is for Porn”). Considered to be *Sesame Street* for adults, *Avenue Q* pokes gentle fun at the anxieties we have about entering adulthood and “the real world.”

### *Rent*

Written by Jonathan Larson, *Rent* tells the story of a group of artists, thinkers, and social activists living the Bohemian life in New York City and their experiences with the stigma and struggle of living with HIV/AIDS. Throughout the show, the characters fall in love, create art, music, and film, fight against the system that wants to hold them down, attend life support meetings, and mourn the pain of losing a friend. Based on Giacomo Puccini’s opera *La Boheme*, *Rent* is narrated by Mark Cohen and is a testament to the bonds that connect a group of friends.

### *Spring Awakening*

Based on the 1891 German play of the same name, Steven Sater and Duncan Sheik tell a story of the sexual discovery and development for a group of young men and women in Nineteenth Century Germany. This rock-and-roll style coming of age musical navigates controversial subjects including teen pregnancy, abortion, suicide, homosexuality, sexual abuse of a child, and rebellion. The winner of eight Tony Awards, including Best Musical, and a

Grammy Award for Best Musical Show Album, *Spring Awakening* played at the Eugene O'Neill Theater from 2006-2009 for 888 performances.

### *South Pacific*

Set in the Pacific Islands during World War II, *South Pacific* is considered to be one of the best musicals of all time. The story centers on an American nurse, Nellie Forbush from Little Rock, Arkansas, as she falls in love with a Frenchman, Emile de Becque. While she comes to love the Frenchman, she struggles to accept his biracial children from his marriage to a Polynesian woman. The secondary storyline in the musical focuses on an American Marine, Lieutenant Joseph Cable, as he falls in love with a young island girl named Liat. Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II center this important and inspiring musical on stories of racial tolerance and acceptance, a story revolutionary for its time, the late 1940's.

### *Miss Saigon*

Fresh from the Broadway success of *Les Miserables*, Alan Boublil and Claude-Michel Schönberg took on the task of adapting Giacomo Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*. The result was a love story between American Marine Chris Scott and Vietnamese nightclub worker Kim. While fighting in the Vietnam war, just before the fall of Saigon, Chris visits a nightclub where he meets Kim and attempts to rescue her from a life of prostitution. His plans, however, are thwarted by her betrothed and Chris is forced to return to America with the imminent return of the Vietcong. He later discovers that Kim is still alive and raising their son and returns to Vietnam. Once Kim sees that her son has been reunited with his father, she commits suicide to ensure that the son will be raised and protected by his father.

### *Bye, Bye Birdie*

Modeled after teenage girls' extreme responses to musical sensations like Elvis Presley and The Beatles, *Bye, Bye Birdie* tells the story of a small town girl and celebrity turned Army soldier Conrad Birdie. As the show begins, Conrad has announced that he has been drafted into the Army and will be reporting for duty. Young girls across the country are devastated and Birdie's agent plans to capitalize on that by having Birdie sing farewell to his fans on *The Ed Sullivan* show and give "One Last Kiss" to one lucky girl. This satirical look on American life in the 1950's and 60's pokes gentle fun at our obsession with celebrities and the intimate connections we create with them with or without ever meeting them.

### *Hair*

Set during the counter culture of the 1960's, the songs of *Hair* have become synonymous with the anti-Vietnam War movement and the counter culture ("Age of Aquarius," "Hashish," "Sodomy," "Good Morning Starshine"). The story centers around a group of young politically-active hippies who are learning to navigate and rebel against the social system that sees them as deviant. One of the main storylines focuses on Claude's decision to become a draft dodger, or adopt his parents' Conservative ideology and fight in Vietnam. With its themes of love, sexual revolution and independence, sexuality, drug use, anti-Vietnam War protest, and parental expectations, *Hair* was controversial during its original run on Broadway in the late 1960's and is still popular.

### *The King and I*

Based on the novel *Anna and the King of Siam*, the musical tells the story of Englishwoman Anna Leonowens who serves as governess to the children of the King of Siam during the late 1800's. The King, in his attempts to modernize and Westernize his country,

consults Anna on many issues such as etiquette, the English language, and Western culture and social values. Anna and the King's relationship is one stained by conflict and opposition as well as a love that neither is willing to admit. Through her time with his family, Anna also discovers that her assumptions and presuppositions of the Siamese people was wrong and that she has grown to love not only the King, but also his children.

### *Cinderella*

The musical *Cinderella* tells the same core story as the 1950 Disney movie and the fairy tale of the same name. A young orphaned girl is raised by her step-mother and two step-sisters who force her to clean, cook, and serve their needs. The handsome Prince throws a ball for all eligible maidens in the land and Cinderella is able to attend through the help of her fairy godmother with the condition that she is home by midnight. As Cinderella is dancing with the Prince, the clock strikes midnight and as she runs home she leaves a shoe on the steps of the palace. The Prince uses the shoe to search throughout the land for this mystery girl, finds and marries her, and the two live happily ever after.

### *Once*

Based on the 2006 film of the same name, *Once* tells the story of an Irish street musician and a Czech woman who becomes interested in his music. Even though each main character is involved in another romantic relationship, the connection between them is so strong that it cannot be ignored. As their romance develops, his music career does as well. However, the story ends with each character returning to their initial relationship, the man with his girlfriend and the woman with her husband. The story emphasizes the importance of music in personal connections and relationships, and the possibility of love in even the smallest of interactions.

### *Newsies*

Opening in 2012, *Newsies* centers on a group of paper boys in New York City as they strike against the newspaper printers who employ them. Based on the 1992 Disney flop of the same name, *Newsies* adapts the historical Newsboy strike of 1899 to showcase the success of these young boys as they unionize and strike. The story also features the development of a relationship between Jack, leader of the newsie's strike, and Katherine, a reporter for the *New York World* newspaper.

### *My Fair Lady*

Based on George Bernard Shaw's play *Pygmalion*, *My Fair Lady* features Henry Higgins, a professor of language and speech, and a Cockney flower girl, Eliza Doolittle. Higgins wagers that he can teach language, phonetics, and speech so well that even a common flower girl, Eliza Doolittle, could pass as elite and upper class lady. Through their lessons on proper speaking and presentation, Eliza learns to act like a well-born and high-class woman and successfully passes as such at the Embassy Ball. The musical ends without any real information of the relationship between Higgins and Eliza, only with Higgins asking for his slippers.

### *Annie Get Your Gun*

Based on the life of Annie Oakley, the show centers around the sharpshooter and her romance with Frank Butler. Producing several popular songs, "There's No Business Like Show Business," "You Can't Get a Man with a Gun," and "Anything You Can Do," *Annie Get Your Gun* spawned film and television versions through the 1950's. The show presents a strong female lead who recognizes and understands the gender inequalities in show business, employment, and in love.

