



THE BLACK WOMAN HAS HER EYES ON YOU

A performance analysis of the character Angelica Schuyler in *Hamilton* through the Oppositional Gaze

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Front page

Figure 1. Town & Country. "Who Were the Schuyler Sisters in Real Life?." Accessed on January 18, 2021. <https://www.townandcountrymag.com/leisure/arts-and-culture/a33014949/angelica-eliza-peggy-schuyler-sisters-hamilton-real-life/> .

Summary

In this research, I perform an analysis of black womanhood in *Hamilton's* character Angelica Schuyler. The musical recounts the life of Founding Father Alexander Hamilton and is applauded for its multi-ethnic casting of white historical figures, thereby communicating a message of racial equivalence. My research question is: how can the concept of the Oppositional Gaze be utilized to unveil representations of black womanhood in Angelica Schuyler from *Hamilton*? The Oppositional Gaze was introduced by bell hooks as black women's critical spectatorship to resist and interrogate white patriarchal cinema. Theory on the Oppositional Gaze, its intersectional fundament and stage representation literature are discussed in my theoretical framework. I utilize Mieke Bal's work on concept analysis to manifest a concept-based performance analysis to analyze *Hamilton* through the Oppositional Gaze. To properly answer my research question, I propose three sub-questions to constitute the following chapters.

In my first chapter, I elaborate on the Oppositional Gaze's relation to its predecessors, centralizing authors grounded in gaze studies. Laura Mulvey's work proposes the Male Gaze from a psychoanalytic perspective regarding the position of the universal woman. Next, Manthia Diawara discusses the black male spectator's resisting spectatorship in relation to misrepresentations in white mainstream cinema. Finally, I discuss how both works compare to hooks' Oppositional Gaze, highlighting correspondences and differences.

I then progress to musical theatre studies in Chapter 2, where I situate hooks' Oppositional Gaze in (musical) theatre theory to modify the Gaze to analyze *Hamilton*. First, I introduce the Oppositional Gaze to musical conventions derived from Millie Taylor and Dominique Symonds and incorporate the Oppositional Gaze into musical narrativity. Next, I discuss Maaïke Bleeker's work on absorption and theatricality as strategies of spectatorship and clarify how these strategies function in relation to the Oppositional Gaze when spectating theatre.

Adding the above-mentioned theory as tools to my analytic belt, I move on to my analysis in Chapter 3. Here, I present black womanhood in Angelica Schuyler by elaborating on three identity types categories through which her role is manifested, constructed by visual, musical and lyrical signs. In the first category, I show how Angelica is positioned as an Other due to her role as a hardworking intellectual. Subsequently, I discuss Angelica's role as a progressive feminist, which results in discrimination in *Hamilton's* story world. Thirdly, I attest to how Angelica's supportive and self-denying role brings her to a subordinated position.

Concluding, these results fashion an answer to my research question: *Hamilton* constitutes black womanhood in the role of Angelica Schuyler through three identity types that narratively position her as Other. The production admittedly does not

negatively represent the black woman yet ultimately perpetuates white patriarchal structures in the story world by Othering the black woman. In theatrical moments, one's Oppositional Gaze can deduct Angelica's Othered position constituted in this positive representation. The initially valued absence of identity-based oppression in *Hamilton* is invalidated by the white supremacist discrimination Angelica experiences. *Hamilton* opens a dialogue about race with good intentions yet does not fulfill its inclusive values.

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Introduction

The year is 2015: a new musical opens on Broadway and is praised by fans and critics alike, as shown by the record-setting sixteen Tony nominations.¹ The production recounts the biographic story of Alexander Hamilton in the constitution of the United States.² With its unique hip-hop-style revival of the traditional story, the musical production quickly gains a large following both in and outside the musical theatre world. Arguably one of the most praised aspects, however, is *Hamilton's* so-called "race-conscious" multi-ethnic casting of white historical figures like George Washington and Angelica Schuyler.³ Angelica Schuyler, who I centralize in this analysis, is a lead female character in *Hamilton* and sister to Peggy and Eliza Schuyler, whom she both loves dearly. Angelica is the "oldest and wittiest" of the Schuyler Sisters, the unacclaimed muse of Alexander Hamilton and a supporter of female agency.

However, some critics have remarked how this color-conscious casting results in the erasure of historical slavery in *Hamilton*, as the originally white characters' participation in racist misdeeds remains unmentioned.⁴ Black rights movements have emphasized how the absent representation of racial power dynamics in popular media like *Hamilton* eliminates the black community's suffering.⁵ Especially black women are harmed by the missing white patriarchal wrongdoings because the both racist and sexist oppression becomes silenced altogether. For instance, the role of enslaved women in the development of the United States, while suffering from racial and gendered subordination, is eliminated from *Hamilton's* fictional world. Characters like Angelica Schuyler are consequently detached from any racial role in the story world, even though the actress's black identity in Angelica's representation exists in the spectator's gaze. In *Hamilton's* lack of acknowledgment of individuality, the oppression that has become part of black female culture appears discarded to the spectator.

Despite the evasion of racial individuality in *Hamilton's* fictional world, I argue in my research that black womanhood is represented in Angelica Schuyler, even rather positively. However, the connected oppression is concealed by the musical's normalized racial power structures. This black female discrimination can nevertheless become visible

¹ "Tony Awards: Hip-hop musical Hamilton dominates with 11 prizes," BBC News, accessed on 11 October, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-36511848>.

² *Hamilton: An American Musical*, music by Lin-Manuel Miranda, book and lyrics by Lin-Manuel Miranda (2016).

³ Catherine Allgor, Lyra D. Monteiro and Renee C. Romano, *Historians on Hamilton: How a Blockbuster Musical is Restaging America's Past*, ed. Renee C. Romano and Claire Bond Potter, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2018), 4.

⁴ "Hamilton – the diverse musical with representation problems," The Conversation, accessed on 15 October, 2020, <https://theconversation.com/hamilton-the-diverse-musical-with-representation-problems-141473>.

⁵ Henrika McCoy, "Black Lives Matter, and Yes, You are Racist: The Parallelism of the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries," *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, no. 37 (2020): 463–475, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10560-020-00690-4>.

by utilizing bell hooks' notion of the Oppositional Gaze.⁶ By analyzing black womanhood in *Hamilton's* Angelica Schuyler, my research can provide more acknowledgment of black women's history of misery in both musical theatre and Western society.

In 1992, hooks coined the Oppositional Gaze as a mode of spectatorship that empowers specifically black women to critically perceive (the absence of) representations of black womanhood constructed by white hegemonic patriarchal principles.⁷ In addition, hooks' Gaze enables the black woman to have her eye on white phallogocentric cinema without having to identify with either the victim or perpetrator. The Oppositional Gaze is considered a valuable research perspective in cinema to dissect representations of black womanhood. However, an academic adaptation for theatre has not yet happened, even though the concept could be equally of help in the (musical) theatre domain. From a perspective of academic relevance, my research seeks to close this gap by producing more knowledge on how the Oppositional Gaze can be utilized in musical theatre.

I commence my research by elaborating on my theoretical framework, located at the crossroads of gender, cultural and theatre studies. From gender studies, my research is supported by hooks' Oppositional Gaze and Kimberlé Crenshaw's work on intersectionality.⁸ Focusing on representation in *Hamilton*, I gain support from literature by Stuart Hall on representation and Stacy Wolf's work on semiotic referentiality in musical theatre.⁹ From there, I move on to my methodology in which I discuss Mieke Bal's concept analysis, after which I start my research.

My main research question is: how can the Oppositional Gaze be utilized to unveil representations of black womanhood in Angelica Schuyler from *Hamilton*? My first sub-question is: how is the Oppositional Gaze situated in its original fields of film and gender studies? This first chapter embeds hooks' concept in its sociohistorical discourse and accompanying theories by Laura Mulvey and Manthia Diawara, all concerning what could be named *gaze studies*.¹⁰ Following is my second sub-question: how can the Oppositional Gaze be constituted in the realm of musical theatre? Here, I transport and accommodate

⁶ bell hooks, "The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators," in *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*, ed. Reina Lewis and Sara Mills (New York and London: Routledge, 2003), 261-280, Adobe Digital Editions.

⁷ hooks, "The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators," 269.

⁸ hooks, "The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators," 261-280.

Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics," *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, iss. 1 (1989): 139-167, <http://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/uclf/vol1989/iss1/8>.

⁹ Stuart Hall, "Introduction," in *Representation*, ed. Jessica Evans and Sean Nixon (United Kingdom: The Open University, 2013), xvii-xxvi.

Stacy Wolf, "The 1990s–2000s: 'I'm Beautiful and I'm Here,'" in *Changed for Good: A Feminist History of the Broadway Musical*, (Oxford: Oxford University, 2011), 161-196.

¹⁰ Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasures and Narrative Cinema," in *Visual and Other Pleasures*, (United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989), 14-26.

Manthia Diawara, "Black Spectatorship: Problems of Identification and Resistance," *Screen 29*, no. 4 (autumn 1988): 66–79, <https://doi.org/10.1093/screen/29.4.66>.

the Oppositional Gaze to the live continuum of musical theatre with Maaïke Bleeker's and Millie Taylor and Dominique Symonds' work and augment the gaze to make it suitable for my corpus.¹¹ After giving shape to the Oppositional Gaze in Chapters 1 and 2, I then commence my analysis in Chapter 3: how can the intersection of womanhood and blackness be found in structures of the visual, musical and lyrical representation of Angelica Schuyler? In this chapter, I use Hall's work to dissect representations in *Hamilton*.¹² Furthermore, Catherine Allgor's work and hooks' work provide the sociohistorical context in which *Hamilton*'s representations are situated.¹³ Together, these sub-questions construct an answer to my research question in my conclusion.

Theoretical framework

Intersectional spectatorship and representation

To fully comprehend the Oppositional Gaze as my concept of analysis, I start by studying hooks' work. hooks argues how black female spectators have always been disabled to view cinema comfortably, as the incorrect or missing representations constructed in white patriarchal structures made viewing film too confrontational.¹⁴ Prior to hooks, white patriarchal modes of looking have been challenged by Laura Mulvey's work on the Male Gaze and Manthia Diawara's concept of resisting spectatorship.¹⁵ Crucial in the Oppositional Gaze, however, is how black women's position in spectatorship differs from both white women and black men. After all, neither one of them experiences the combined effects of misrepresentation of womanhood and blackness in film. I return to the Oppositional Gaze and preceding theories by Mulvey and Diawara in Chapter 1.

For now, I focus on hooks, as she argues how black women can develop an Oppositional Gaze when one is not only aware of racism, but actively rejects and interrogates cinematic dominant looking mechanisms. Taking the film *Passion of Remembrance* as an example, hooks describes how the two black female protagonists gaze upon their bodies in the mirror when dressing for a party.¹⁶ Here, the women demonstrate their Oppositional Gaze through their agency to see and display their bodies as representations of black female beauty without needing to fulfill hegemonic scopophilic

¹¹ Maaïke Bleeker, *Visuality in the Theatre. The Locus of Looking*, ed. Elaine Aston and Bryan Reynolds, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 1-198.

Millie Taylor and Dominique Symonds, "'A Tale as Old as Time': Narrative Theory," in *Studying Musical Theatre: Theory and Practice*, (England: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 9-25.

¹² Hall, "Introduction," xvii-xxvi.

Wolf, "The 1990s–2000s: 'I'm Beautiful and I'm Here,'" 161-196.

¹³ Allgor, "'Remember . . . I'm Your Man': Masculinity, Marriage, and Gender in Hamilton," 94-116.

Monteiro, "Race-Conscious Casting and the Erasure of the Black Past in Hamilton," 58-70.

¹⁴ hooks, "The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators," 269.

¹⁵ Mulvey, "Visual pleasure and narrative cinema," 14-26.

Diawara, "Black Spectatorship: Problems of Identification and Resistance," 66–79.

¹⁶ hooks, "The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators," 276.

and colonial standards. The Gaze of the women emerges through their resistance to accept and conform to the discriminatory white patriarchal representations of black womanhood, questioning these misrepresentations instead. The two women thus no longer serve the white male's gaze but prioritize the eyes of the black woman.

As the above-mentioned and other examples in hooks' work concentrate on black women's agency in looking, the Oppositional Gaze appears exclusively attainable by black women at first. However, hooks does mention how white women too examined race and gender in the phallogentric cinematic gaze to oppose white patriarchal structures.¹⁷ This remark by hooks then implies non-black women can also develop an Oppositional Gaze yet one that lacks the original motive of black women's oppression. In my research, I utilize hooks' Gaze to reject *Hamilton's* white supremacist dynamics and to deconstruct black womanhood represented in Angelica Schuyler, while recognizing that my gaze differs from black women's gaze.

The cumulative race- and sex-based discrimination in cinema that hooks describes in her work finds its origins in Kimberlé Crenshaw's notion of intersectionality. In 1989, the concept was introduced by Crenshaw to illustrate how oppression depends on one's personal axes of identity, such as gender, race, sexuality, class, age and more.¹⁸ Crenshaw's work states how the existing idea of universal gender discrimination implicitly refers to white women only, as discrimination for black women differs from white women.¹⁹ Black women are confronted with a unique, intersected oppression because of the intersection of their blackness and womanhood. Neither black men nor white women would ever experience that subordination due to not sharing both the black race and the female gender, Crenshaw argues.²⁰ As hooks further relates this unique oppression to cinema, Crenshaw's intersectionality forms the foundation of the Oppositional Gaze as a multifaceted understanding of discrimination based on crossing identity axes in Chapter 1. Moreover, intersectionality is featured in Chapter 3 to analyze the intersection of womanhood and blackness in Angelica Schuyler.

Representation in Hamilton

As I analyze a specific representation of Angelica Schuyler in Chapter 3, it is worthwhile to discuss how visual objects like *Hamilton* can be dissected to be critically gazed upon. To do so, I use Stuart Hall's notion of representation: the production of meaning through language, in which language is a signifying practice.²¹ Hall argues meaning as knowledge

¹⁷ hooks, "The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators," 266.

¹⁸ Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex," 140.

¹⁹ Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex," 144-145.

²⁰ Crenshaw "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex," 148.

²¹ Hall, "Introduction," xxi.

is constructed through a specific sociocultural discourse.²² Consequently, a sign is constructed to refer to this meaning - sounds in spoken language, notes in music and gestures made by the body. This signifying practice makes currently absent yet desirably communicated knowledge present by depicting or symbolizing it. The matter of meaning production through separate discourses is crucial here: black female representations constructed by white men communicate widely different knowledge than representations built by and for black women. Following this in Chapter 3, Halls' representation theory deconstructs the seen on stage and offers me signs as concrete handles to see. I then utilize the Oppositional Gaze to critically perceive the separated signs that constitute this representation of Angelica Schuyler, aiming to unveil patriarchally constructed black womanhood.

When zooming in on Hall's representation theory in theatre, I turn to Stacy Wolf's work on semiotic referentiality.²³ One could describe semiotic referentiality as a signifying performance communicating culturally bound knowledge to the spectator. If an actor represents signs resembling a certain race, the spectator will identify the actor as an authentic representation of that racial group, whether that actor truly descends from that race or merely mirrors physical qualities. Even in *Hamilton*, semiotic referentiality illustrates how one's gaze constitutes meaning. Though the story world does not acknowledge Angelica Schuyler's black womanhood, the actress's blackness gains recognition and meaning in the relation between the spectator and performance. More a theoretical augmentation of the Oppositional Gaze than a pragmatic tool, Wolf's work demonstrates how meaning can emerge in the interrogation of representations through one's Oppositional Gaze.

Methodology

In my research, I utilize the Disney+ registration of *Hamilton: An American Musical* in the Richard Rodgers Theatre from 2016 by Lin-Manuel Miranda as my corpus.²⁴ Contrary to one's spectatorship from the auditorium, this recording includes video close-ups through which small-scale signs become more accessible, which benefits my analysis of Angelica's eye movements and gaze. I focus on Renée Elise Goldsberry's performance as Angelica Schuyler in three sequences that display the character's personality and relationships. I analyze Angelica by dissecting visual, musical and lyrical signs like embodied acting, choreography, music, vocals, lyrics and spoken text. The first sequence and song, "The Schuyler Sisters," introduces the spectator to Angelica, her personality traits and her family relationships. Following up is Angelica's solo song "Satisfied," which reveals more

²² Hall, "Introduction," xxi.

²³ Wolf, "The 1990s–2000s: "I'm Beautiful and I'm Here," 165.

²⁴ *Hamilton: An American Musical*, (2016).

character details and her feelings towards both her sister Eliza and their shared crush Alexander Hamilton. Finally, the sequence in "The Reynolds Pamphlet" showcases Angelica's progressed feelings regarding Hamilton. Though Angelica makes a few more appearances in the show, these three sequences provide me with a thorough understanding of Angelica's personality for me to perform my analysis.

For my analytical approach, I perform a concept-based performance analysis. This means that I utilize the Oppositional Gaze as my main concept to analyze the visual, musical and lyrical aspects of Angelica Schuyler. The fundament of my methodological approach relies on Mieke Bal's work, who argues that concepts provide miniature theories to aid in the analysis of an object.²⁵ Furthermore, she states concepts can become the link in the interaction between critic and object. When applied by the analyst to the object, concepts are assigned a function that exists at the intersection of theory and practice and can therefore analyze the cultural text of the object.²⁶ As I steer my concept analysis towards theatre, Bleeker provides meticulous demonstrations as to how a concept-based analysis can be utilized to gain insights into a performance's underlying cultural practice.²⁷

While utilizing the Oppositional Gaze, I do want to acknowledge how my whiteness separates my gaze from hooks' original concept, as this gaze was founded both by and for black women. As a white woman, I have never experienced any race-based or race-intersected oppression in cinematic or theatrical representation, nor in any other aspect of life. Therefore, I want to address that this analysis is not grounded in any personal experiences and does not aim to appropriate any aspects of black female culture. The one integral aspect of the Oppositional Gaze in hooks' work I believe I can execute, however, is an active refusal of white patriarchal power dynamics. Consequently, this refusal allows one to dissect the (black) male gaze and white womanhood in Western society. In my analysis, this is then what I use and refer to as the Oppositional Gaze, while realizing that my gaze differs from a black woman's gaze.

²⁵ Mieke Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide*, ed. Sharry Marx-Macdonald (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2012), 29.

²⁶ Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities*, 15.

²⁷ Bleeker, *Visuality in the Theatre*, 19-40.

Chapter 1: Laying out the Gaze

Prior to the Oppositional Gaze, other academics put the spectator's perspective on the silver screen into words. Each writer related the notion of gazing to its own field of interest, very much so in line with principles of individuality and diversity. In hooks' work, Laura Mulvey and Manthia Diawara are mentioned as notable scholars within gaze studies, as their studies involve gazing from identity-based discriminated spectatorship.²⁸ As they wrote on gazing prior to hooks' work, I argue the Oppositional Gaze belongs to a chronology of academic works that I refer to as gaze studies. To understand the development of gazing and to build the groundwork for my analysis, I go into detail about those who laid the Oppositional Gaze's fundament and how those authors are interconnected.

The Male Gaze

Stepping into the field of gaze studies, I first turn to Laura Mulvey's work on the Male Gaze, as she analyzed female representation in classic Hollywood cinema through a psychoanalytic lens.²⁹ In a psychoanalytic dissection of cinema, Mulvey posited how pleasure in looking, or scopophilia, is named a primordial drive that cinema fulfills. What is more, the pleasure in looking has a narcissistic aim to constitute the ego through identification with the seen.³⁰ Scopophilia and the constitution of the Self are, however, realized only for those most dominant in Western society, the male. As the active male subject experiences scopophilia and constructs his ego through identification, the passive female object becomes both looked at by and displayed for the heteronormative male protagonist and spectator.³¹ Therefore, the dominant white patriarchal Hollywood productions address specifically the white male spectator to identify with the male protagonist's gaze by producing the film from his perspective. The representation of women in film, Mulvey argued, signifies the passive, silent Other to the active male.³² In this way, Mulvey initiated a movement of critical spectatorship in gaze studies.

What emerged as most significant from Mulvey's work, is how gendered power dynamics in looking are grounded in a psychoanalytic fundament.³³ Western patriarchal society invites the man to look and act, whereas the woman functions to complete the man's act of looking. Not only do classic Hollywood films represent Western society's power dynamics, cinema production exclusively supports the heterosexual white male

²⁸ Mulvey, "Visual Pleasures and Narrative Cinema," 14-26.

Diawara, "Black Spectatorship: Problems of Identification and Resistance," 66-79.

²⁹ Mulvey, "Visual Pleasures and Narrative Cinema," 16.

³⁰ Mulvey, "Visual Pleasures and Narrative Cinema," 18.

³¹ Mulvey, "Visual Pleasures and Narrative Cinema," 20.

³² Mulvey, "Visual Pleasures and Narrative Cinema," 19.

³³ Mulvey, "Visual Pleasures and Narrative Cinema," 17.

spectator's scopophilic identification with the heterosexual white male protagonist. Moreover, cinema's female character becomes an oversexualized, weak, passive, gazed upon object that is not supposed to gaze herself. Therefore, Mulvey stated how the female spectator is not addressed to gaze, let alone identify with the film on screen.³⁴ Concluding, Mulvey's notion of the Male Gaze emphasized how the female spectator either does not spectate at all or is forced to identify with a misrepresentation constructed in patriarchy.

While the Male Gaze approached cinema from a generally marginalized female perspective, critical response subsequently argued how Mulvey's work disregarded the spectrum of marginalized diversity within that same female perspective. In her work, hooks criticizes Mulvey for her monolithic notion of women in cinema, as any specific race or color remained undefined.³⁵ Since Mulvey did not address the racial component of the woman's identity and gaze in cinema, her work seemed to imply how the notion of the woman cannot be racially Othered. Therefore, this image of women profits from a sense of naturalized whiteness, curating a universal stereotype exclusively applicable to white women. Contrary to white women's stereotype as weak and passive, Gloria Wekker argues how black women are reduced to an animalistically strong and primitive image.³⁶ In this light, Mulvey's work did not acknowledge the intersected diversity within women. Later on, hooks would define a gaze that disregards the notion of a universal woman and that takes crossing discriminated identity markers into account: the Oppositional Gaze.

Resisting spectatorship

Following Mulvey's direction in defining a marginalized group's spectatorship within Western patriarchal society, Manthia Diawara too can be named a predecessor to hooks' Oppositional Gaze. In his work from 1985, Diawara introduces the term resisting spectatorship, referring to the resistance to spectate and identify with white patriarchy's cinematic representation of black men.³⁷ These representations, Diawara argues, were incorrect to the extent that no Afro-American spectator could recognize black characters as "credible personalities", therefore denying this group pleasure through identification in looking.³⁸ Similar to women, the black male spectator cannot identify with the cinematic subject, as components of difference trouble the immersion, and thus he resists identification with the discriminatory representation of the racial Other. Alternatively, the

³⁴ Mulvey, "Visual Pleasures and Narrative Cinema," 21.

³⁵ hooks, "The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators," 271.

³⁶ Gloria Wekker, "'Suppose She Brings a Big Negro Home' Case Studies of Everyday Racism," in *White Innocence. Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race*, (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2016), 45, Adobe Digital Editions.

³⁷ Diawara, "Black Spectatorship: Problems of Identification and Resistance," 67.

³⁸ Diawara, "Black Spectatorship: Problems of Identification and Resistance," 72.

black spectator is awarded pleasure in spectating credible black characters in black independent productions, which in turn enhances the critical spectatorship towards misrepresentations in Western mainstream cinema.³⁹ Resisting spectatorship thus converts the problematic looking of passive identification into an active critical gaze, taking a new turn in gaze studies.

In comparison to Mulvey's work, the power of looking is once again very much present in Diawara's writings yet now centered around race. However, whereas Mulvey noted women's weak and passive stereotype, Diawara concentrates on black men's depiction as hostile and dangerous, through which white patriarchy rationalizes the black man's death as the solution to the film's conflict.⁴⁰ Distancing further from Mulvey, who did not mention an alternative female gaze, Diawara proposes alternative spectatorship in which the black spectator is offered pleasure through identification with accurate representations in black independent cinema. Mulvey's and Diawara's works, however, depart from the same core principle. Classic Hollywood represents both black men and women as the Other to award pleasure in looking to white men, thereby perpetuating Western white patriarchal systems. In contrast, the awareness of an intersection between gender and race is precisely what lacks in both Mulvey's and Diawara's works. Granted, Crenshaw introduced intersectionality years after both authors, but my point remains that the crossing matters of female gender and black racial identity were not included in early gaze studies.⁴¹ Here, it becomes clear how the Oppositional Gaze was constituted in succession to Mulvey and Diawara.

Following the above-mentioned relation between Diawara and hooks, the lack of focus on womanhood intersected with blackness is then hooks' main point of critique on his work. In fact, hooks argues how black male spectatorship differs radically from black women's gaze: cinema offers black men an imaginative space where they could look to white womanhood from phallogocentric dominance without white supremacist punishment.⁴² Even though identification with men in film was impossible, black (heterosexual) men could still be sexually satisfied. Black women could not, hooks argues, as they were disabled to either be sexually satisfied from gazing towards men in film or identify with women in film. Therefore, hooks remarks the difference between resisting spectatorship and the Oppositional Gaze: rather than solely discarding the cinematic misrepresentation, black women create alternative meaning by interrogating and reinventing the cinematic text.⁴³ Resistance, hooks thus argues, helps emerging black women's critical eye to white patriarchal cinematic structures, though the

³⁹ Diawara, "Black Spectatorship: Problems of Identification and Resistance," 76.

⁴⁰ Diawara, "Black Spectatorship: Problems of Identification and Resistance," 75.

⁴¹ Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex," 140.

⁴² hooks, "The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators," 266.

⁴³ hooks, "The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators," 276.

Oppositional Gaze can be utilized to spectate film without resisting any dominant ways of looking. For this matter, hooks' concept can be separated from both Mulvey and Diawara.

Female and black: the intersected Oppositional Gaze

In this chapter, I have laid out how the Oppositional Gaze came into existence influenced by Mulvey's and Diawara's works. Simultaneously, I highlighted how hooks' work can be read in contrast to her predecessors. A most notable difference is located in the very core of their work: Mulvey and Diawara centralize their research on one aspect of the spectator's identity. Consequently, their works neglect the possibility that a spectator's ability to gaze is influenced by multiple identity markers. In brief, Crenshaw's concept does not or hardly return in Mulvey's and Diawara's work, while hooks' Oppositional Gaze relies on the spectator's intersectionality and thus functions as the crossover sequel to Mulvey and Diawara.

Chapter 2: Situating the Gaze in musical theatre

In the previous chapter, I have situated the Oppositional Gaze in preceding theory to illustrate the exact qualities and purpose of hooks' concept. In my analysis of *Hamilton* through the Oppositional Gaze, however, hooks' original object of analysis shifts from cinema to musical theatre. This unprecedented switch requires a redefinition of the Gaze in the theatrical context. Cinema and (musical) theatre vary widely, after all: cinema scholars note classic Hollywood cinema's aim for invisibility of the medium, whereas (musical) theatre more often explores its boundaries to show the explicit medium to the spectator.⁴⁴ To prepare the Gaze for my performance-based concept analysis in Chapter 3, I am aided by Taylor and Symonds' musical theatre conventions and Bleeker's modes of spectatorship. From there, I transport the Oppositional Gaze from its cinematic world to the universe of musical theatre in this chapter.

Musical theatre narratives

To commence this chapter and to steer the Oppositional Gaze specifically towards musical theatre, I turn to Millie Taylor and Dominique Symonds' work to gain insights on musical theatre theory and narrative conventions. A narrative is, to put it rather simply, the exact manner and style in which a story is recounted.⁴⁵ According to Taylor and Symonds, narratives commonly yet not exclusively found in musical theatre are the *boy-meets-girl*-narrative, the quest narrative, the *rags-to-riches*-narrative and *the deus ex machina*.⁴⁶ The narrative and its progress are both introduced and stimulated by the "I want/I am"-song: a number sung by a lead character that reveals the character's deepest secrets and desires, influencing the musical's story progression.⁴⁷ All combined, Taylor and Symonds' work aids me in situating my analysis of black womanhood in Angelica Schuyler in aspects of musical theatre in Chapter 3.

Focusing on the relation of the Oppositional Gaze and black womanhood, it is then worthwhile to review how the black female intersection is reinstated through musical theatre narration. As seen both in Taylor and Symonds' work and in Stacy Wolf's historiography of women in musical theatre, the protagonist roles, centralized in conventional narratives, were mainly constructed for and represented by white actors on Broadway.⁴⁸ When Third Wave feminism emerged in the 1990s, women of color articulated the need for the inclusion of race consciousness, amongst other aspects of

⁴⁴ David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film History. An Introduction. Third Edition*. (New York: McGraw and Hill, 2010), 312, 731.

⁴⁵ Taylor and Symonds, "'A Tale as Old as Time': Narrative Theory," 10.

⁴⁶ Taylor and Symonds, "'A Tale as Old as Time': Narrative Theory," 13, 16, 19, 22.

⁴⁷ Taylor and Symonds, "'A Tale as Old as Time': Narrative Theory," 13.

⁴⁸ Taylor and Symonds, "'A Tale as Old as Time': Narrative Theory," 12-21.
Wolf, "The 1990s–2000s: 'I'm Beautiful and I'm Here,'" 162-163.

identity, in a gendered critique in popular culture. Consequently, women of color were cast to play protagonists in existing and new musicals, but the classical musical narratives did not apply as well to them. The white supremacist perception of black women as hardworking yet animalized, as noted by Wekker, does not accord with white women's stereotype as rather passive and weak, which is featured in the *boy-meets-girl-narrative*.⁴⁹ By not conforming to normalized whiteness in narrative power structures, black women were positioned as the Other in musical theatre narrativity. Following this in *Hamilton*, I argue Angelica Schuyler's part can be defined as rather ambiguous; she plays a large role in the progression of various narratives alongside fellow lead roles Alexander Hamilton and Eliza Schuyler, both non-black. However, whereas Hamilton and Eliza end up starring in these narratives, Angelica is awarded an inferior, supporting position.⁵⁰ In my analysis in Chapter 3, I look further into the relation of musical theatre narrativity to Angelica Schuyler's black womanhood.

Oppositional theatricality and absorption

To connect hooks' Oppositional Gaze to live performance spectatorship, I refer to Maaïke Bleeker's work on absorption and theatricality: two alternating modes that can be utilized in theatre performances' invite towards the spectator. Absorption is noted by Bleeker as an effect in which one does not question what is directly seen on stage, but immediately accepts the invite that the performance offers.⁵¹ For absorption to succeed, the seen must be presented as natural and self-evident, after which the spectator forgets to reflect upon its own positionality and can be steered by the performance. The remaining aspect integral to absorption is its reliance on the spectator's sociocultural background: to perceive the seen as natural, Bleeker states the spectator needs to be already familiar with the seen.⁵² Theatricality, on the other side of the spectrum, represents a mode of looking in which the performance reminds the spectator that the seen is a constructed, inauthentic performance, according to Bleeker.⁵³ This inauthenticity allows spectators to remain conscious of their own position in order to reflect upon the performance. Together, absorption and theatricality can aid the Oppositional Gaze in analyzing musical theatre.

Prior to my analysis in Chapter 3, it is rewarding to define how performative modes of spectatorship can be incorporated into my Oppositional Gaze. As covered above, hooks' gaze enables the spectator to resist identification and to remain critical to

⁴⁹ Wekker, "“Suppose She Brings a Big Negro Home” Case Studies of Everyday Racism,” 45.

⁵⁰ *Hamilton: An American Musical*, (2016).

⁵¹ Bleeker, *Visuality in the Theatre*, 15.

⁵² Bleeker, *Visuality in the Theatre*, 35.

⁵³ Bleeker, *Visuality in the Theatre*, 3.

interrogate the visual object.⁵⁴ In comparison, Bleeker's notion of theatricality shares theoretical common grounds with principles of the Oppositional gaze, as both establish a critical and personal perception of the seen, staying conscious of societal issues.⁵⁵ Having stated their similarities, their difference lies within the matter of agency. Theatricality is an address towards the spectator evoked by the performance through exposing the construction of theatre, whereas the Oppositional Gaze emerges in the spectator to critically interrogate the seen. Still, the Oppositional Gaze can be utilized by the spectator when addressed in an explicit theatrical manner by the performance, as this address empowers the deconstructive practice of the Gaze. In this matter, a theatrical address by *Hamilton* invites the spectator to critically examine what is directly presented and to thus execute an Oppositional Gaze, making theatrical moments ideal for my analytic purposes.

In comparison, absorption conflicts with core elements of theatricality and, simultaneously, the Oppositional Gaze. The absorbing effect convinces spectators to abandon their critical position and be fully immersed in the seen, while hooks' gaze maintains a personal perspective on the seen to dismantle its dominant structures. In theory, successful absorption could thus trouble the Oppositional Gaze's critical interrogation of a performance. Nevertheless, one crucial condition of absorption cannot be neglected; for this effect to succeed, Bleeker deems it integral that the spectator recognizes the seen as natural and is culturally familiar with the seen.⁵⁶ When the seen cannot be recognized from one's own cultural background, however, the spectator can reject forced absorption and dissect misrepresentations through the Oppositional Gaze. In my analysis in Chapter 3, I utilize the Gaze to resist and define *Hamilton's* invitation to absorption.

Coexistence

Having discussed narrativity and both performative strategies of looking in relation to the Oppositional Gaze, the Gaze has been augmented to perform a concept-based performance analysis of *Hamilton*. Connecting the Oppositional Gaze to narrative power structures enables me to dissect Angelica Schuyler's position from a musical theatre perspective. In reference to absorption and theatricality as augmentations of the Oppositional Gaze, the performance aids the critical spectator in interrogating the deconstructed visual on stage during a theatrical approach. During an attempt to absorb the spectator, the Oppositional Gaze can acknowledge the absorbing effect yet resist if unfamiliar with the performed white patriarchal structures. Now that hooks' concept has

⁵⁴ hooks, "The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators," 266.

⁵⁵ Bleeker, *Visuality in the Theatre*, 7.

⁵⁶ Bleeker, *Visuality in the Theatre*, 35.

been successfully rooted in musical theatre studies, I move on to the analysis of Angelica Schuyler in *Hamilton*.

Chapter 3: Performing the Gaze

In this chapter, I present my analysis of black womanhood in Angelica Schuyler by defining her character through three different identifications of Angelica: the hardworking intellectual, the progressive feminist and the self-denying supporter. By utilizing the Oppositional Gaze as my main analytic concept, I show the black womanhood in Angelica Schuyler through my resistance and interrogation of white patriarchal structures perpetuated by visual, musical and lyrical signs in her identity types. Per identity type, I utilize visual, musical and lyrical signs that somehow reference power dynamics based on gender, race, or both to demonstrate how these signs silently contribute to white patriarchy. Furthermore, I take into account performative elements as theatricality, absorption or conventional musical narratives that possibly influence the Oppositional Gaze and the perception of white supremacist structures. Finally, I do not aim to per se signal a damaging stereotype of black womanhood; I emphasize the presence of black womanhood to indicate how oppressing white patriarchal structures function in *Hamilton*. In short, I apply the Oppositional Gaze to reject and counter white patriarchal representations of Angelica Schuyler by elaborating on how signs construct a subordinated image of black womanhood in *Hamilton*.



Figure 1. Angelica (right) in discussion with Aaron Burr (left), backed up by Eliza and Peggy Hamilton.

The hardworking intellectual

I start off my analysis by focusing on *Hamilton's* portrayal of Angelica Schuyler as an intelligent, active and hardworking woman. In "The Schuyler Sisters", the three sisters are gazed upon by working men, to which Eliza and Peggy Schuyler respond positively.⁵⁷ Contrary to her male-fixated sisters, Angelica specifically sings she is "looking for a mind at work" rather than a man at work.⁵⁸ After being hit on by the rapping Founding Father Aaron Burr, Angelica alternates singing for rapping and counters his compliments by presenting her intelligence through her knowledge of Thomas Paine's and Thomas Jefferson's works (Figure 1).⁵⁹ Subsequently in "Satisfied", Angelica shares her amorous interest in Alexander Hamilton, as he appears to equally match her intelligence and work drive. Reflecting on these remarks altogether in my analysis, Angelica Schuyler might be the "oldest and wittiest" of not just the Schuyler Sisters but perhaps the entire show.

When analyzing Angelica's racial identity through the Oppositional Gaze here, it can be argued that Angelica is separated from the white patriarchal structures that most characters respond to positively. The passive and objectified image of white women described by Mulvey in Chapter 1 does not harmonize well with Angelica's character, as nearly all actions designate her active state of mind as the subject.⁶⁰ Moreover, Angelica's Otherness becomes more explicit in comparison to her sisters: Eliza and Peggy appropriate a passive, singing role that never interferes with the male-dominated governing. Additionally, as both sisters are mainly concerned with male attention, they do in fact accord virtually flawlessly with Mulvey's notion of women. Catherine Allgor argues how *Hamilton's* women mainly concern storylines of family and love, which fall subordinate to the male-dominated domains of war and politics in *Hamilton*.⁶¹ Compared to both Mulvey's work and her sisters, Angelica's role depicts more correspondence to Wekker's stereotype of black women's nearly animalistic strength, though Angelica does obviously contrast the primitive cognition Wekker also implies here.⁶² In a crowd of (only) four female characters, Angelica's role can be defined as a racial Other to Mulvey's notion of the universal woman that is integral to *Hamilton's* white patriarchy.

On top of differing within women due to race, Angelica endures a second-hand position within male-controlled domains based on gender. For an upper-class person

⁵⁷ *Hamilton: An American Musical*, (2016).

⁵⁸ *Hamilton: An American Musical*, (2016).

⁵⁹ Genius, "The Schuyler Sisters. Phillipa Soo, Jasmine Cephas-Jones, Leslie Odom, Jr., Original Broadway Cast of "Hamilton" & Renée Elise Goldsberry," accessed on 17 January, 2021, <https://genius.com/Phillipa-soo-jasmine-cephas-jones-leslie-odom-jr-original-broadway-cast-of-hamilton-and-renee-elise-goldsberry-the-schuyler-sisters-lyrics>.

⁶⁰ Mulvey, "Visual Pleasures and Narrative Cinema," 19.

⁶¹ Allgor, "'Remember . . . I'm Your Man': Masculinity, Marriage, and Gender in *Hamilton*," 97-98.

⁶² Mulvey, "Visual Pleasures and Narrative Cinema," 19.
Wekker, "'Suppose She Brings a Big Negro Home,'" 45.

acknowledged by men as remarkably intelligent, the Schuyler sister has little function in the US Constitution. Even more, it is significant how her Othering is not alleviated but in fact dramatized by her high status. Nonetheless, Angelica is *Hamilton's* one woman who, due to her intelligence and hard work, shows the capacities and motivation to participate in male-dominated politics. Angelica's fluctuation between women's and men's domains is symbolized by her being the only woman to alternate in *Hamilton's* gendered dichotomy between singing (female, family-/love-centered) and rapping (male, politics-centered). Additionally, this proposed dichotomy gains support by the character King George III: Allgor mentions how he is the only man who exclusively sings, appears relatively feminine and is a failing, therefore ridiculed politician.⁶³ This dichotomy is no coincidence; it proves how anyone associated with passive femininity is deemed ineligible to aid in white patriarchy's constitution, even though Angelica possesses equal or superior intellectual capabilities compared to all male characters. Despite depicting positive qualities in this black female representation, Angelica's character is once again distanced from her intellectual peers, now due to gender identity.

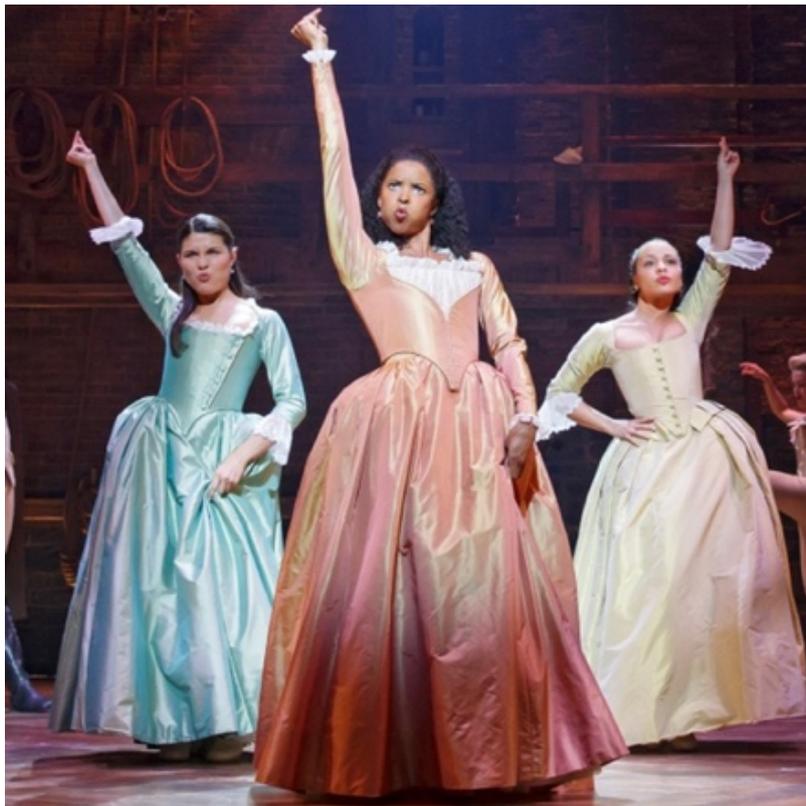


Figure 2. The Schuyler Sisters after Angelica's (middle) critique on the Declaration of Independence.

The progressive feminist

In this second category, I lay out how black womanhood is included in the representation of Angelica through her progressive attitude and feminist ideals. In "The Schuyler

⁶³ Allgor, "'Remember . . . I'm Your Man': Masculinity, Marriage, and Gender in *Hamilton*," 99.

Sisters”, Angelica admires how “a revolution’s happening in New York” and she counters her sister Peggy’s fear for violence with the optimistic “new ideas in the air”.⁶⁴ Later, Angelica critically dissects the Declaration of Independence while breaking the fourth wall, after which she plans to compel Thomas Jefferson to include women in the sequel (Figure 2).⁶⁵ Moving on to her “I want/I am”-song “Satisfied”, Angelica mentions women’s normative duty to marry an economically wealthy man yet proves to be willing to discard this norm by favoring Hamilton: “I’m a girl in a world in which / My only job is to marry rich / My father has no sons so I’m the one / Who has to social climb for one [...] And Alexander is penniless / Ha! That doesn’t mean I want him any less.”⁶⁶ As showcased by these two examples, Angelica’s repeated progressive and feminist behavior makes her character stand out in the musical.

First, Angelica’s Othered gender identity becomes unveiled through the Oppositional Gaze’s dissection of her progressive and feminist attitude, qualities that can actually be celebrated in a black woman’s representation. Simultaneously, her identity type as a progressive feminist indicates a sentiment of black womanhood in Angelica and, additionally, conflicts vigorously with her identity as an upper-class woman. As Allgor argues how stereotypically male-dominated domains of war and politics are celebrated in *Hamilton*, Miranda subconsciously defined the male social role as ideal in the story world.⁶⁷ By claiming a grasp of agency in politics through her Declaration of Independence-critique, Angelica’s lyric “some men say I’m intense or I’m insane” designates gender-based discrimination due to her progressive move to participate in male-dominated discourse.⁶⁸ The Schuyler woman challenges her social role as a woman again when she highlights both her duty and her refusal to marry a rich man in “Satisfied”. Angelica asks for comprehension as to why she would discard white patriarchy’s marital normativity while directly facing the audience. In doing so, she stimulates recognition and appreciation for her position as a black woman both within *Hamilton* and within the spectator’s society. Angelica’s independent mindset here contrasts the 18th-century female social role, in which the law of “coverture” denied women their independent legal identity and bound them to men for economic survival.⁶⁹ Whereas Angelica’s intellect initially marks her role as different in *Hamilton*’s story world, it is her progressive and feminist mindset that sparks her revolt against Western society’s

⁶⁴ *Hamilton: An American Musical*, (2016).

⁶⁵ Theatermania, “Hamilton’s Original Schuyler Sisters to Reunite for Super Bowl Performance,” accessed on 17 January, 2021, <https://www.theatermania.com/houston-theater/news/hamilton-schuyler-sisters-reunite-for-super-bowl-79850.html>.

⁶⁶ *Hamilton: An American Musical*, (2016).

⁶⁷ Allgor, ““Remember . . . I’m Your Man”: Masculinity, Marriage, and Gender in *Hamilton*,” 97-98.

⁶⁸ *Hamilton: An American Musical*, (2016).

⁶⁹ Allgor, ““Remember . . . I’m Your Man”: Masculinity, Marriage, and Gender in *Hamilton*,” 104.

female role. Angelica's rebellion amplifies her likability for the 21st-century spectator yet triggers *Hamilton's* men to deem her an insane Other.

Shifting my Gaze to Angelica's racial identity in her progressive and feminist stance, it is striking how Angelica is the only (female) character concerned with female rights. Surely her Declaration of Women's Independence eventually gains support from Eliza and Peggy, but it is Angelica stating she will convince Jefferson to write a women's rights-focused sequel.⁷⁰ By simultaneously answering Burr and addressing the audience, Angelica theatrically invites the spectators to critically reflect upon her feminist ideology from their own social position. Moreover, Angelica's theatrical approach proposes a question to both the fictional characters and the critical spectator, for if more women have familiarized themselves with the Declaration of Independence, why does only Angelica disobey *Hamilton's* white patriarchal systemic structures? The Oppositional Gaze's answer is clear: as the sole woman who contradicts Mulvey's notion of the universal woman and therefore endures discrimination, Angelica's need for change in white patriarchy is rooted in her black womanhood.⁷¹ However, Angelica's invites to think critically in her solo's become muted when most other (white) lead roles maintain dramatic rules that evoke authenticity, as displayed by Eliza's and Hamilton's integrated, unaware-of-the-spectator-dialogues in "Satisfied". By hiding the theatrical construction, *Hamilton* creates absorption that reduces Angelica to a one-dimensional likable black woman, thereby simultaneously concealing the oppression that motivates her rebellion. Only through theatricalized empowerment of the spectator's Oppositional Gaze, it becomes clear that Angelica's progressive and feminist mindset is not just a natural likability but a needed activist stance against white patriarchal racial and gendered oppression.

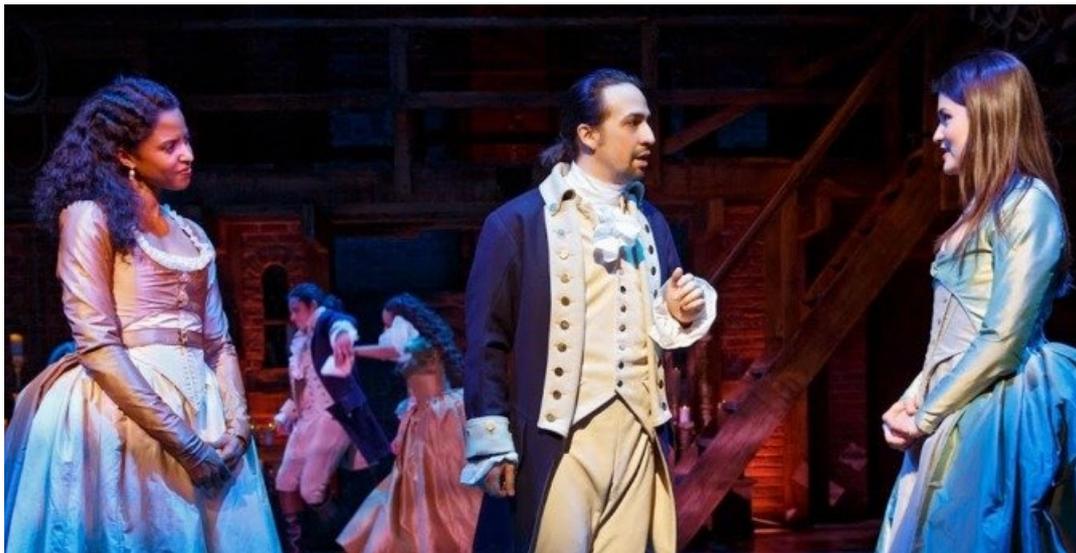


Figure 3. Angelica (left) introducing Hamilton to her sister Eliza in "Satisfied".

⁷⁰ *Hamilton: An American Musical*, (2016).

⁷¹ Mulvey, "Visual Pleasures and Narrative Cinema," 19.

The self-denying supporter

Lastly, I reveal how black womanhood in Angelica Schuyler can be deducted by taking a closer look at her supporting and self-denying attitude, two characteristics perhaps most relevant for plot progression in *Hamilton*. As *Hamilton* first shows how Eliza meets Alexander through Angelica's assistance in "Helpless", Angelica then theatrically rewinds the story from her own narrative in "Satisfied" (Figure 3).⁷² Here, Angelica confesses she sacrificed her own desires to satisfy Eliza yet consoles herself with her sister's happiness and Hamilton at least becoming her brother-in-law: "He's after me cuz I'm a Schuyler Sister / Have to be naïve to set that aside / Maybe that is why I introduce him to Eliza [...] But when I fantasize at night / It's Alexander's eyes [...] At least my dear Eliza's his wife; At least I keep his eyes in my life..."⁷³ Subsequently, Angelica consistently advises Hamilton on political matters by letter. When Hamilton publicly announces his adultery on Eliza, he is relieved when Angelica arrives, expecting her to understand his choices. Standing face-to-face, Angelica reiterates a sequence from "Satisfied" through which she disowns her loyalty to Hamilton to stand at Eliza's side. In regard to these observations, supportive and self-denying are qualities strongly associated with Angelica's role in my analysis.

Looking at Angelica's racial identity as self-denier through the Oppositional Gaze, Angelica's unconditional support of Eliza results in a rather subordinate position in relation to her sister. Eliza, portrayed by an actress of Asian descent who reads as white due to semiotic referentiality, appears destined to fulfill *Hamilton's boy-meets-girl-narrative*, referring back to the narrative's white normativity I deducted in Chapter 2.⁷⁴ As in most of *Hamilton's* narratives, Angelica merely fulfills a supporting role in the love-related narratives. For instance, her own marriage remains only spoken of, despite the exclusive relation between *Hamilton's* women and themes of love and family as Allgor describes.⁷⁵ Had Angelica's role been constructed as helpless and male-dependent as Eliza's, shown in both "Satisfied" as in her solo song "Helpless", the character would conform to Mulvey's stereotype of white female passivity in the *boy-meets-girl-narrative*. Consequently, Angelica even could have been a contestant for the main male protagonist's love. Though supporting and self-denying can read similar to white female passivity, Angelica's role attests to prioritize and support both men and white women over herself, therefore constituting distance from Mulvey's stereotype. Hence, *Hamilton*

⁷² *Hamilton: An American Musical*, (2016).

Genius, "Satisfied. Original Broadway Cast of "Hamilton" & Renée Elise Goldsberry," accessed on 17 January, 2021, <https://genius.com/Original-broadway-cast-of-hamilton-and-renee-elise-goldsberry-satisfied-lyrics> .

⁷³ *Hamilton: An American Musical*, (2016).

⁷⁴ Wolf, "The 1990s–2000s: "I'm Beautiful and I'm Here," 165.

Taylor and Symonds, "'A Tale as Old as Time': Narrative Theory," 13.

⁷⁵ Allgor, "'Remember . . . I'm Your Man": Masculinity, Marriage, and Gender in *Hamilton*," 97-98.

validates Mulvey's passive, made-for-loving stereotype of the white woman as the universal woman and defines Angelica as a racially Othered woman by constructing her subordinate role to detach her from the *boy-meets-girl*-narrative.

Zooming in on Angelica's womanhood, her gender identity too enforces her supportive role, as becomes evident in Taylor and Symonds' *rags-to-riches*-narrative through which Hamilton evolves from a "bastard orphan" to a rich politician.⁷⁶ As Angelica sustains his political career by providing consistent advice, Hamilton relies on her as his intellectual mutual to understand and as a black woman to support his publicly announced adultery. Though Angelica objects to *Hamilton*, it is significant that she does not meet Hamilton's eyes, thereby signaling Hamilton's Male Gaze that follows white patriarchy's expectation of women to not look upon the man. Angelica's subordinate position becomes painfully apparent by not meeting his gaze during her objection, which is simultaneously purely motivated to realize another white woman's success instead of her own. Moreover, the show here stays alarmingly true to time-appropriate practices of slavery in the 1700s, as hooks writes in her work how enslaved black people were punished for gazing upon white slave-owners.⁷⁷ Angelica not daring to look upon Hamilton now also indicates a historical phenomenon augmenting her subordination, enforcing Hamilton's superior position and subconsciously connoting the production to a mirrored reality of normalized slavery. Following Angelica's subordinated black womanhood, *Hamilton* thus endorses a power dynamic in which white men are represented in a naturalized superior manner.

The black female Other

All in all, I have argued how Angelica is consistently separated from both white women and (black) men based on intersecting gendered and racial discrimination as a black woman, represented through identity-constructing signs. Through the Oppositional Gaze, I have resisted and interrogated *Hamilton's* white patriarchal systems to unveil how black womanhood is represented. First, I argued how her intellect and work drive distance Angelica from both white women's passive stereotype and men's powerful political dominance. Next as a progressive feminist, Angelica actively defies her female social role while directly including the spectator, thereby contrasting the absorbing white patriarchal structures that aim to veil her Othered position. Thirdly, her self-denying, unconditional support of beloved ones results in a subordinate position, bearing similarities to times of slavery. Unexpectedly yet influentially, Angelica's high social status conflicts with and, therefore, dramatizes her Othering: even in the prestigious upper class, Angelica becomes a racial and gendered Other to the poor and low-status white male protagonist.

⁷⁶ Taylor and Symonds, "'A Tale as Old as Time': Narrative Theory," 13.

⁷⁷ hooks, "The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators," 264.

Combined, Angelica's unique identity types designate her strong individuality in *Hamilton's* story world, coinciding with Crenshaw's and hooks' individualizing intersectional approach of black women. Furthermore, her broad display of identity types – intelligent, feminist, self-denying – position Angelica as perhaps the most outstanding character in *Hamilton* yet also work to cover her black female oppressed position in white patriarchal structures.

Conclusion: The outstanding black woman in *Hamilton's* white patriarchy

In this research, bell hooks' Oppositional Gaze has functioned as my magnifying glass to critically zoom in on the concealment of black womanhood in the musical *Hamilton*, specifically regarding Angelica Schuyler.⁷⁸ By performing a concept-based performance analysis, I utilized the Oppositional gaze to analyze white patriarchal structures in musical theatre and thereby close the knowledge gap. I answered the following research question: how can the Oppositional Gaze be utilized to unveil representations of black womanhood in Angelica Schuyler from *Hamilton*?

Since its debut, *Hamilton* has been deemed revolutionary by fans and critics. The musical presents a story and characters originally situated in racial power dynamics now reenacted by historically marginalized actors of color, therefore implying that the original racial power structures are out of order. If a black actress can convincingly represent a white historical figurine, then inevitably race no longer signifies difference, let alone oppression in the story world, is it not? Though Miranda's efforts are to be applauded, racial power dynamics remain intact, while black female culture historically formed under white patriarchy's oppression is eliminated.

Black womanhood as constructed in Angelica Schuyler's role is partly represented; she is noticeably a bright, progressive and helpful black woman, yet her Othered position is normalized to an invisible extent. Even class as an axis of Angelica's identity intersects with her position as a black woman, influencing her subordination more than anticipated prior to analysis. Consequently, the black female Other perpetuates the discriminatory white patriarchal gaze in *Hamilton's* story world yet is concealed through displaying solely positive qualities for the spectator to enjoy. The musical invites the spectator to be absorbed and to marvel at the brilliant, kind, black Angelica, thereby destabilizing one's critical gaze that notices how black womanhood signifies concealed oppression. Though the black female representation constructed through positive identity types invites the spectator to admire the character, Angelica remains an Othered black woman serving the hegemonic oppressing white patriarchy at work in *Hamilton*. In the end, Angelica will never be satisfied.

Yet if *Hamilton* is a biographical musical based on historical figures, does that not imply a lack of agency in the story's construction due to its innate connection to the real-life counterpart? Such thoughts often occurred to me during my research and are credible critical responses to my constructivist approach in analyzing *Hamilton*. Be that as it may, the musical version has made various alterations to the original story. These alterations range from eliminating ten of the thirteen Schuyler children to removing Alexander Hamilton's actual slavery-related actions and integrating sporadic abolitionist

⁷⁸ hooks, "The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators," 261-280.

lyrical references.⁷⁹ In this light, the modifiable attitude of this adaptation demonstrates how the seemingly authentic nature of a biographical role is, to a certain extent, constructed. If the erasure of real-life slavery through adaptation is as simple as it appears in *Hamilton*, surely white patriarchal structures causing intersectional subordination regarding Angelica's role and, consequently, black female culture too could have been abolished.

However, extensive study on the adaptive form of *Hamilton* was not centralized in my research, as my purpose was not to compare the musical to history but to analyze black womanhood. Though above-mentioned small details have been noted to support my research, theory on musical theatre adaptation has not yet been utilized to define how a historical adaptation can abolish minority-specified discrimination. Moreover, as recent musicals like *SIX* seem to mimic *Hamilton's* "diverse historical retelling through modern music"-format, Miranda's work most likely initiated a new musical theatre subgenre that has yet to be studied by academics.⁸⁰ Considering a new musical category could mirror *Hamilton's* naturalization of white supremacy, it would add to the field of musical studies to research how a historical musical can adapt a story embedded in hegemonic power structures differently.

All in all, *Hamilton* appears striving to free itself from historical identity-based oppression with its race-conscious casting of white historical figures, yet Miranda's work reiterates white supremacist power dynamics perpetuated by black womanhood. Even though Angelica's admirable qualities represent the black woman predominantly positively, *Hamilton* steers the spectator's gaze to remain fixated on likability and to miss the character's underlying oppression. Altogether, the musical receives praise for its inclusive values to incorporate race- and gender-equivalence, while Angelica's role attests to how identity-based oppression maintains inherent to the musical's narrativity and contrasts the show's own selling points. Instead of naturalizing racial and gendered power dynamics to aim for race-conscious storytelling of America's revolution, a revelation of white patriarchy's visual structures could have freed the remarkable black woman from oppression.

⁷⁹ Monteiro, "Race-Conscious Casting and the Erasure of the Black Past in *Hamilton*," 64.

⁸⁰ *SIX*, music by Toby Marlow and Lucy Moss, book and lyrics by Toby Marlow and Lucy Moss (2017).

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- het knippen en plakken van teksten van het internet zonder aanhalingstekens en verwijzing;
- het overnemen van gedrukt materiaal zoals boeken, tijdschriften of encyclopedieën zonder aanhalingstekens of verwijzing;
- het opnemen van een vertaling van teksten van anderen zonder aanhalingstekens en verwijzing (zogenaamd "vertaalplagiaat");
- het parafraseren van teksten van anderen zonder verwijzing. Een parafrase mag nooit bestaan uit louter vervangen van enkele woorden door synoniemen;
- het overnemen van beeld-, geluids- of testmateriaal van anderen zonder verwijzing en zodoende laten doorgaan voor eigen werk;
- het overnemen van werk van andere studenten en dit laten doorgaan voor eigen werk. Indien dit gebeurt met toestemming van de andere student is de laatste medeplichtig aan plagiaat;
- het indienen van werkstukken die verworven zijn van een commerciële instelling (zoals een internetsite met uittreksels of papers) of die al dan niet tegen betaling door iemand anders zijn geschreven.

Ik heb bovenstaande definitie van plagiaat zorgvuldig gelezen en verklaar hierbij dat ik mij in het aangehechte BA-eindwerkstuk niet schuldig gemaakt heb aan plagiaat.

Tevens verklaar ik dat dit werkstuk niet ingeleverd is/zal worden voor een andere cursus, in de huidige of in aangepaste vorm.

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Handtekening:

