

# Defying Gravity: Femininity and Societal Expectations in *Wicked* (2024) Through an Intersectional Feminist Lens

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**Abstract**—This study analyzes gender intersection and social roles in *Wicked* (2024). This study displays the film's take on feminist themes and social expectations. It examines Elphaba's identity as a minority who experiences discrimination. It examines how the film depicts the oppression experienced by the female character and how society expects the female character to be. This study fills the gap by using intersectional theory to examine Elphaba's struggles facing power, beauty standards, and self-acceptance. This study applies a qualitative approach to analyze key scenes and dialogue that portray the biases female characters face. *Wicked* shakes up traditional ideas about feminism by pointing out the social pressures that lead women to take on roles that are often seen as forbidden. At the same time, it tells stories of enablement and standing up for oneself. This piece looks at how gender is represented in today's fantasy films and emphasizes why it's important to take a feminist, intersectional approach.

**Index Terms**—femininity, intersectional feminism, social expectations, gender representation, film analysis

## I. INTRODUCTION

Jon M. Chu adapted a stage show into a movie titled *Wicked* (2024). It is a musical fantasy film about two female characters who have distinctive characteristics. Elphaba Thropp (Cynthia Erivo) is a female character with supernatural powers and green skin but a minority in society. In contrast, Glinda Upland (Ariana Grande) is a young woman who can

fulfil societal expectations since she meets the social beauty standard. This film received a positive response from its audience. It gained some achievements, including the Best Film of 2024 by the American Film Institute. On the other hand, the National Board of Review awarded *Wicked* the Best Film. In the Academy Awards, this film received ten nominations, including Best Picture, Best Actress for Erivo, and Best Supporting Actress for Grande.

Erivo's performance brought Elphaba to life and made her find her voice and purpose (Lowry, 2024). *Wicked* depicts the suppression and silencing of minorities conducted by a charismatic evil force, a leader who mistreats a woman of color. This film succeeds in bringing relevant messages to today's conditions (Lemire, 2024; Levy, 2024). The film talks about women who face challenges in meeting social norms, such as how Elphaba struggles to be acknowledged by her society due to her strange appearance and skills (Huff, 2024). It dives into how power can be misused and how people can manipulate others. Plus, it shows how society often messes up when dealing with those who are different or seen as outsiders. It also explores how social oppression and perceived differences differentiate women (Quintana, 2025).

*Wicked* portrays gender discrimination, traditional gender roles, and societal expectations in a patriarchal society. These norms shaped how society values women. Personal beliefs, conventional gender stereotypes, and outdated ideas of society become the causes of gender discrimination (Dwivedi & Tripathi, 2020). Society prioritizes men over women. Men dominate and become the central figure in society (Sugiarti et al., 2022). Women have no choices and must obey and support their men (Sikdar & Mitra, 2012). Koenig (Sumarsono et al., 2023) stated that patriarchal society demands that women conform to societal expectations, such as physical beauty, elegance, innocence, and dependence on men (Budidarma et al., 2023). This condition strengthens gender discrimination, where society oppresses women to be subordinate to men's superiority. Women are marginalized, silenced, and have fewer opportunities to develop than men.

Elphaba is depicted as the "Wicked Witch" because she has a superpower and a different skin color. It contrasts with Glinda, who is portrayed as a "Good Witch" because she can conform to societal expectations. She can conform to society's standard of beauty, but Elphaba cannot. Elphaba experiences gender discrimination since her power can put society, specifically the authority, in a dangerous position.

This study explores the themes of societal expectations, femininity, and power abuse portrayed in the film. This study uses the intersectional theory to analyze Elphaba's identity in facing these conditions. The study uses theory to disclose Elphaba's struggle with gender discrimination, societal beauty standards, and self-acceptance. The contribution of this study lies in a new perspective of femininity representation in media. It examines how women deal with societal pressure and encourages them to stand up for themselves. This study underlines the importance of an intersectional point of view in comprehending femininity in contemporary movies.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This study took a closer look at how gender, looks, and society's expectations come together in *Wicked* by using intersectionality theory as our main perspective. According to Kimberle Crenshaw, the intersectional theory refers to how various identities, such as gender, race, and sexual identities, overlap in influencing gender discrimination and privilege (Van Belle et al., 2023). This idea shows how race ties into different parts of who we are as individuals (Johnson, 2021). According to this theory, an individual's identity relates to how society treats them and how they face life (Carastathis, 2014), especially regarding femininity and societal expectations. The theory sees power as a system where privilege and oppression affect each other while recognizing and producing differences and gaps in social communities (Cseby, 2023).

This theory explains how social and cultural expectations influence the societal perception of women, affecting how women must conform to or resist their defined societal roles. Historically, societal expectations internalized different gender roles on men and women. It dictated their behavior, interests, and life choices (Tshweneyagae, 2019); for example, women are encouraged to handle domestic work in the household economy, while men are free in their direction of subject-related knowledge. The societal expectations have been passed down from generation to generation. It becomes embedded in society, and gender roles are seen as normal and natural (Monteiro, 2015).

Feminists shape the film industry by pointing out and speaking out against gender discrimination in movies and TV shows (Zhou et al., 2023). They noted that an urge to have sensationalized content, such as excessive emotionality, stereotyping of genders, and unexpected plot twists, has a likelihood of promoting gender inequalities and stereotyping. The feminists call for creating content that guarantees equal genders, pressuring filmmakers towards adopting a harmonious presentation of gender roles on the big screen. Feminism has changed the way women are shown in the media. It pushed out those negative stereotypes and helped create more positive and enabling images of women (Scanlan, 2023).

Several previous studies have analyzed films and literary works using intersectionality theory. The first study, called *Moonlight*, looks at how race, sexual identity, and economic status connect with each other. The study reveals that the film depicts the effects of intersecting identities on the main character's development (Allen, 2017). Allen used the theory of intersectionality to analyze how these identities intersect. He found that the film illustrates how individuals with various identities are marginalized in their communities. Black men, for example, marginalize others by gender and sexual orientation. *Moonlight* provides a valuable opportunity to discuss Kimberle Crenshaw's theory and deepen knowledge of intersectionality as a theory to use to examine identity and oppression.

*Margarita With A Straw* explores how different parts of our identities come together and shape our personal experiences (Jacob, 2021). This study reveals that the film criticizes stereotypical representations of women with disabilities and emphasizes the effects of cultural and social intersectionality. It used the theoretical framework to show various women's oppression and resilience.

There is another study called "Intersectionality and Fourth-Wave Feminism in Bernardine Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other*" that looks at how the novel uses the concept of intersectionality. It shows how different forms of discrimination related to race, gender, and class are all connected. The twelfth narrative of Black women, spanning different generations and stages of life, exposes the practice of discrimination and sexism throughout the historical and social context (Strauss, 2023). This research emphasizes the intertwined novel; an intersectional perspective exposes structural discrimination and challenges the postfeminist narrative.

The study, using intersectionality to analyze Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, focuses on how African American women experience discrimination because of skin color, race, gender, class, and ability (EddineNefnouf, 2020). This study shows that shadism, as depicted in the novel, goes beyond racism, intersecting with other identity factors to reinforce oppression. This approach offers a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of shadism on marginalized individuals.

These previous studies differ from this one, focusing on intersectionality in terms of race, gender, disability, and other identity factors. They analyzed intersectionality in general terms and concentrated on marginal identities such as race, sexual identities, and disabilities. This study focuses on the portrayal of female characters in contemporary fantasy films that relate to standards of beauty, power, and self-acceptance. This study combines intersectional feminism with qualitative scene analysis and dialogue. This study takes a look at how Elphaba's green skin color ties into gender and social roles. It discovers interesting ideas about how society's expectations around gender can keep people down, but it also tells a story of enablement.

By focusing on *Wicked* (2024) and analyzing it through the theory of intersectional feminism, this study fills a gap in the literature by exploring the representation of femininity in contemporary fantasy films and a topic rarely explored in intersectional film criticism. This study offers a fresh take on how we see femininity, self-assertion, and enablement in a male-dominated world. It adds a new layer to the conversation about how gender is represented in the media.

### III. METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative descriptive approach combined with the intersectional theory to analyze the portrayal of femininity and societal expectations in *Wicked*. It used the theory to examine the influences of gender, physical appearance, and social status on female characters. The study used the theory to analyze how Elphaba navigated her life to face the societal expectations that marginalized her. This idea clarified how society treated her unfairly and showed how beauty standards, power plays, and social norms played a role in oppressing women.

The study used intersectionality because it can give an in-depth understanding of how the film represents traditional feminism, contributes to the privilege of characters like Glinda, and marginalizes Elphaba. This study examined how gender is portrayed in movies and pointed out the need to recognize different kinds of discrimination.

The primary data comes from the movie scenes and dialogues that portray the discrimination experienced by Elphaba. Data was collected through a careful analysis of scenes, focusing on depicting gender intersection, appearance, and social roles. The focus of data collection is the scenes that portray Elphaba's struggle to face the societal standard of beauty, power dynamics, and her disagreement with traditional femininity. It also focused on scenes depicting Glinda's character adhering to conventional beauty standards and gender roles that contrasted with Elphaba's. The writers then identified the expressions of societal expectations and gender discrimination portrayed in the movie. The writers coded the collected scenes and dialogues to reveal how the film builds femininity, and the theory played its role in internalizing or challenging the construction.

### IV. FINDING AND RESULT

As conceived by Crenshaw, intersectionality argues that identities such as gender, race, sexuality, and other markers of distinction intersect and reflect broad social structures of oppression and privilege, such as sexism, racism, and heteronormativity (Carastathis, 2014; Eaton et al., 2020; Kelly et al., 2021). This theory seeks to understand how different forms of oppression work together and affect lives to make social change (Masquelier, 2023). This theory shows how layers different from their shared identities create discrimination that challenges Oz's norms and social structures. Oppression results from systems of racism, sexism, classism, and other forms of social inequality that are interrelated and cooperate, as described by Collins as the concept of an "interlocking matrix of domination" (Wesp et al., 2018). This approach allows for a deep understanding of how the intersection between race, gender, and social expectations affects marginalized individuals, as happened to Elphaba in *Wicked*.

The study analyzes how *Wicked* portrays the conflict between Elphaba's identity as an outsider and the discrimination she faces because of her green skin and gender. The findings were obtained from a qualitative analysis of the scenes and dialogues in the film, exploring how social bias and gender expectations affect Elphaba's struggle. This study explores

how *Wicked* takes a hard look at widespread oppression, questions traditional views on gender roles, and explains the impacts of societal bias.

There are four dominant themes in this study: Elphaba's outsider status, gender discrimination, the aggravated nature of her oppression, and power abuse by misrepresentation. These findings show the challenges faced by marginalized people and how the film can be used to address women's issues like power, bias, and enablement today. The following in-depth section describes how *Wicked* conducts a narrative that goes against social norms and promotes solidarity in oppression.

#### A. *Elphaba's Identity as an Outsider*

Elphaba's green color is symbolic of her identity as an outsider, and she does not resemble the ordinary woman and hence becomes a victim of bullying and rejection. From the time she steps in at Shiz University, she is confronted by ridicule, name-calling, and bullying, which signifies social fear among people who are deviating from what is expected in society. Her physical self-triggers this rejection psychologically because the rejection isolates her from other students and deepens her feelings of different social norms.

Through scenes and dialogues at Shiz University, the film depicts the social prejudice that Elphaba experiences, emphasizing how superficial differences can be used to justify exclusion and undue treatment. This session analyzes moments that describe how experiences reflect on social themes of bias and marginalization by providing insight into the challenges of intersectionality faced by individuals who cannot meet social standards.

The bullying and rejection that Elphaba has endured since childhood, as shown in this scene, highlight the bullying she receives due to her green skin. The cruel actions of her peers, ridiculing her physical appearance and challenging her place in society, show discrimination based on the differences in physical appearance that happened in her childhood. This ridicule is compounded by the response of Elphaba's father, who always blames her for causing her younger sister to be depressed and cry instead of blaming her for causing her to suffer from bullying. This moment shows the intersection between discrimination caused by appearance and patriarchal family dynamics, where Elphaba's uniqueness becomes a negative value personally and socially. With the intersectionality theory, this discussion analyzes how social beauty standards, conformity pressures, and family expectations marginalize Elphaba, affecting her isolation and resilience.



Figure 1.  
Children Bullying Little Elphaba

Children: Elphaba Thropp, green on top. Someone runs and tell her that everyone can smell her. Ew, green and ugly? She is so green. Where did you come from? You don't belong here. She's as green as the trees! I do not like that. So green.

Elphaba: Stop!

Elphaba's father: Elphaba Thropp. What have you done this time?, and now you've made your sister cry. (Chu, 2024: 0:09:40-0:10:22)

The intersectionality theory sees the bullying Elphaba experienced in her childhood as caused by multiple discriminations she faces since she is a minority in her society. Her different physical appearance, skin color, and gender attracted children in her environment who bullied her. According to the intersectionality theory, the discrimination that occurs to Elphaba cannot be understood as the only consequence of the distinct color of her skin, but it involves some other social identity. As a young girl, she intersects with societal expectations and prejudices. As a

child, she was ridiculed for her physical appearance and opposition to traditional femininity. Conventional femininity demands her to conform to the standard beauty and gender roles. Society judges her as unable to conform to the traditional gender roles and the societal standard of beauty. Her green skin becomes the marker of her 'otherness' that makes her a target of bullying and cruelty to her peers and even her family members, such as her father, who always treats her differently from the way he does her younger sister. According to the intersectionality, there is the role of power dynamics in bullying. Society has marginalized her, and as a result, she does not have any power to challenge the social norms that label her as an inferior and strange child. This discrimination affects its identity and durability, forming the foundation that represents an interconnected system of oppression that marginalizes anyone who cannot meet the dominant ideals of appearance, behavior, and identity.

The scene at Shiz University depicts an intersection of physical appearance and femininity, as Elphaba gets ridiculed by other students for her green skin and is considered to fail to meet social beauty standards, particularly when she is compared to other female students who are admired and conform to traditional feminine norms, such as Glinda. This scene reflects social expectations for Elphaba to be able to meet conventional beauty standards and femininity and be liked by everyone. Her green skin goes against the norm, causing her to experience rejection and insults. Elphaba, who has supernatural powers such as her ability and green skin, in the eyes of her society, is considered to fail in conforming to societal expectations. She cannot fulfill her society's expectation to have a physically attractive body and beautiful face like Glinda. Society suppresses her unique abilities and individuality to meet the acceptance and conformity that society sets.



Figure 2.

Elphaba and Glinda Received Different Receptions Based on Their Skin Color. Elphaba Is Mocked and Ostracized at Shiz University for Her Green Skin. <https://www.lookmovie2.to/movies/play/1262426-wicked-2024>

Elphaba: What? What are you staring at? Do I have something in my teeth?

Glinda: No, it's just You're green.

Elphaba: I am? Fine. Let's get this over with. No, I am not seasick. No, I did not eat grass as a child. And, yes, I've always been green.

Glinda: I, for one, am so sorry that you have been forced to live with this. And it is my intention to major in sorcery, so, if at some point, you want to address the, um, problem. Maybe I can help.

Students: She's so good. She's so good.

Students: You're so good. We love you. (Chu, 2024, 0:15:38-0:16:43)

According to the intersectionality theory, this scene depicts the discrimination Elphaba experiences due to her skin color, which society sees as her abnormality, and her marginalization in the patriarchal society where women must conform to conventional beauty. The defensive response Elphaba gives to Glinda symbolizes her concern for her physical appearance, which does not conform to societal norms, indicating that she needs to protect herself from further oppression.

Glinda's comments on Elphaba describe patron behavior, where Elphaba's differences are framed as a problem that needs to be fixed rather than seen as an aspect of her identity. Glinda's offer to help her exacerbates Elphaba's notion of a natural state that must be corrected, positioning her as a benevolent figure who can save Elphaba from her shortcomings. Praise from other students on Glinda shows how society's beauty standards and conformity are appreciated, reinforcing the idea that anyone who can meet society's expectations, like Glinda, will be adored and glorified. In contrast, anyone like Elphaba, who cannot meet society's beauty standards and norms, will be ostracized.

This dynamic shows how intersectionality works in individual contexts and larger social structures, where race, physical appearance, and gender intersect to influence the status and treatment of a person.



Figure 3.  
Miss Coddle is Mocking Elphaba.

Miss Coddle: Owh!  
 Elphaba: I'm the other daughter. I'm beautifully tragic.  
 Miss Coddle: The other daughter?... Well...I wasn't made aware.  
 Elphaba: I know. I was just...  
 Miss Coddle: Not to fret. Just a slight gulch. We'll find someplace to hide you. I mean, house you.  
 Elphaba: That won't be necessary. I'm not enrolled.  
 Miss Coddle: Oh, good. (Chu, 2024, 0:22:21-0:22:50)

Intersectionality theory analyzes this scene by highlighting how Elphaba's identity as 'the other daughter' intersects with societal norms around gender, beauty, and values. Elphaba's sarcastic phrase, 'I'm beautifully tragic,' shows her awareness of being exiled as 'the other daughter' and explains how women are often compared and judged by the standards of society, where a sister may be more accepted and liked because she has qualities that meet expectations of femininity and beauty, while other siblings are marginalized.

Miss Coddle's reactions, including her reluctance and patronizing tone, implicitly describe discrimination. Her sentence that she will find a place to hide Elphaba shows the difference between Elphaba and the color of her skin, and it is considered 'the otherness,' something that should be accepted rather than hidden. It aligns with society's expectations that women must be accepted by specific standards, such as attractiveness and not problematic.

From the perspective of intersectionality, this scene criticizes how women who do not conform to rigid norms are often not considered or seen. Elphaba's rejection as 'the other daughter' symbolizes the marginalization of women who oppose traditional roles or fail to meet superficial expectations, illustrating the dual effects of gender, physical appearance, and social status in determining women's position in society.

### *B. Gender Expectation and Discrimination*

Elphaba's magical talent is seen as a threat and an anomaly on the Oz campus, where women are expected to meet societal standards of having a passive or supporting role, not as active, let alone ambitious individuals. Her ability in the field of magic shows that she has the strength, independence, and potential to be a leader. This quality departs from the traditional stereotype of women, who are expected to be passive and surrender to patriarchy. Elphaba demonstrates her magical powers and talents early in her time at the university when she conflicts with one of the faculty members, Miss Coddle, who forces herself to help Nessarose find her room, while Elphaba promises to always take care of her. Instead of getting praise, she gets unpleasant treatment because everyone, both students and faculty, looks at her with wary gazes and whispers, explaining how society feels uncomfortable with women who have advantages and strengths.



Figure 4.

Nessarose, in Her Wheelchair, Is Portrayed as Overly Dependent and Incapable of Leadership.

Nessarose: Elphaba, why are still here?

Elphaba: I'm sorry, Nessa. Father insisted...

Miss Coddle: Oh, the Governor made his concern for your sister quite apparent. Please assure him, that I'm honored to help her. She doesn't need your help.

Nessarose: Stop. I just need to find my room.

Miss Coddle: I'll bring you there myself

Elphaba: Miss Coddle, I...

Miss Coddle: Now, you have an entire staff...

Elphaba: Miss Coddle, I promised my father. Just stop, Miss Coddle. Stop! Let her go! (Chu, 2024, 0:22:48-0:23: 18)

Miss Coddle is the representative of society who sees the notion of fragility and dependency as consistently associated with women, especially those with disabilities. As a minority, she is expected to be silent and inactive. She must conform to the hierarchical norms practiced by Miss Coddle and her father. Elphaba does not want to keep quiet as society expects her. Instead, she resists challenging society. She does not want to be marginalized, so she uses her magical power to show her society, existence, and agency. The power she uses is her response to the discrimination and oppression she experiences. Instead of treating them fairly after using her magical power, society increases her isolation because it sees her ability as unnatural and threatening the position of authority. After this incident, she becomes the target of society to be marginalized and isolated. The faculty members try to find ways to use her for their interests and benefit.

Morrible: So, how long have you had this talent?

Elphaba: Something just takes over me, and something I can't control. And when it does, bad things happen.

Morrible: If you can learn to use your powers in the right way. Many years, I have waited for a gift like yours to appear. I predict the Wizard might make you His Magic Grand Vizier. I'll write at once to the Wizard. Tell him of you in advance. With a talent like yours. There is a definish chance if you work as you should. You'll be making good. (Chu, 2024, 0:26:07-0:27:12)

With her extraordinary abilities, Elphaba cannot escape marginalization and societal expectations. She must face the burden of the expectations and discrimination that interplay with her identity. Her extraordinary abilities attract Morrible to take advantage of her. She uses Elphaba's abilities as a tool to exploit her for the benefit of the regime. What Morrible does reflects society's expectation that Elphaba's power becomes the authority's interest for their sake, not her agency. Morrible knows that Elphaba's power can be a threat to her position. She wants to tame and use it for the benefit of the rulers. It reflects societal norms for women, where independence and talent are undesirable unless they follow society's standards. Morrible promises to give Elphaba a position if she can give the rulers benefits, but as a marginalized individual, she is denied genuine autonomy. This moment highlights how the rulers exploit differences and uniqueness while oppressing individuality by creating a dynamic where individuals, in this case, Elphaba, struggle between subservience and resistance.

### C. Abuse of Power and Misrepresentation

*Wicked's* themes include misrepresentation and abuse of power, mainly through the Wizard's propaganda and manipulation of Elphaba to paint her as a villain. The Wizard presents Elphaba as a dangerous outsider threatening Oz's stability to uphold his authority. This misrepresentation reflects the misuse of systemic power.

Madame: Citizens of Oz, there is an enemy who must be found and captured. Believe nothing, she says. She has stolen our Grimmerie. She is evil and responsible for the mutilation of these poor, innocent monkeys. Her green skin is but an outward manifestation of her twisted nature. This distortion, this repulsion, this Wicked Wick. (Chu, 2024; 2:17:14-2:17:59)

This scene demonstrates how misrepresentation and power abuse contribute to the repression of dissent, particularly from women who oppose the patriarchal and hierarchical system. Madame Morrible, a woman of power, imposed this oppressive structure. She becomes a Regime Wizard's tool, ensuring systemic discrimination persists. This narrative depicts a systemic tendency to pit women against other women and demonize those who defy the expectations of society. Elphaba's independence and resistance to the ruler make her a threat to the Wizard regime, which relies on Madame Morrible propaganda to maintain control.

This scene symbolizes the abuse of power and misrepresentation by showing how the forces of society and the systemic distort the truth to maintain oppressive structures. The demonization of Elphaba as the 'Wicked Witch' is an act of propaganda strategy that reflects the real-world practice of silencing and marginalizing individuals who challenge the system of power. Through Madame Morrible's manipulative speech, this narrative explains the dangers of unsupervised authority and the impact of systemic misrepresentation.

Elphaba's declaration that she is independent and defies society's expectations represents an act of resistance to propaganda and manipulation that seeks to control her narrative, symbolizing her success in controlling her agency and rejecting her oppression. It aligns with feminist and intersectionality theories that explore resistance to patriarchal and systemic norms. Elphaba decides to take control of her narrative and resist the social pressures that limit her. It marks a resistance to gender roles that expect women to be compliant, docile, and subservient rather than active and autonomous. Her internal transformation defies the traditional notion of femininity that often limits women's expression of social expectations. By rejecting these restrictions, Elphaba gains a new sense of agency, symbolized by her desire to be free from oppression.

Galinda: Listen to me. Just say you're sorry. You can still with the Wizard. What you've worked and waited for. You can have all you ever wanted.

Elphaba: But I don't want it. I can't want it anymore. Something has changed within me. 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. I'm through accepting limits. Cause someone says they're so. Some things I cannot change. (Chu, 2024, 2:18:26-2:20:49).

According to Intersectionality, Elphaba's resistance represents a confrontation with the intersection of her marginal identity as a woman with green skin and a rejection of gendered societal expectations. She defies the conventional, white-centric, and normative framework that governs women's behavior because of her physical differences and racialized expectations and is a feminist act. Her decision to leave the Wizard exemplifies empowering the oppressed, particularly women who are constantly told to stay within their bounds.



Figure 5.

People Want to Kill the Witch, Elphaba, Because She Is Seen as a Threat and Is Defiant Against the Oppressive System. Citizens of Oz Idolize Glinda for Her Beauty and Charm While Demonizing Elphaba for Being Different.

Crowded: The Wicked dies alone. She died alone. Woe to those. No one mourns the Wicked. Good news. No one mourns the Wicked. Wicked. Wicked. (Chu, 2024, 0:11:12-0:12:10).

The Elphaba rebellion, muffled and distorted by Madame Morrible, earns her the label 'Wicked Witch,' and society believes the false story. Madame Morrible's strategy of stirring up propaganda by making Elphaba an evil wick makes her a threat to the existing order, and this manipulation shapes public opinion. This scene illustrates how cruel the impact of manipulation is. The ruler creates an evil image to marginalize and eliminate her because she opposes the power structure. Society rejects her humanity as an effect of her evil image. This scene portrays how society condemns and marginalizes those who challenge the status quo through manipulation and misinformation. Women like Elphaba,

who fight against the domination of patriarchy and question their gender roles and power, will be slandered and stripped of their honor and left to die unseen and unappreciated.

#### D. Critique of Patriarchal Power Structure

Cultural The Wizard in *Wicked* represents patriarchal power, using manipulation, fear, and segregation to maintain control and dominance over the citizens of Oz. As a political leader, the Wizard uses a vision of rule that exploits society's horror at differences and strangeness, especially the green skin of Elphaba, to create a state of spurious security. He uses his ability to control the information by narrating propaganda and misinformation to strengthen his position, shapes public opinion through manipulation, and suppresses any resistance to his autonomy. He labels Elphaba as a Wicked Witch to capitalize on her resistance to her traditional gender roles and supernatural power by exploiting society's fear.

As evidenced by the Wizard's manipulation of the populace, the patriarchal system divides people by dividing them into 'us versus them,' which prevents groups of people, especially women, from standing together and resisting social norms. By silencing and labeling women like Elphaba, who dares to fight against patriarchal structures, the Wizard ensures that those in power remain invincible. Elphaba's supernatural abilities and independence are at odds with the expectations of women in society, explaining the threat to women outside the traditional norm. Women who defy society's expectations, whether through their independence, appearance, or refusal to follow accepted norms, will be silenced, marginalized, and eventually eradicated as a result of this dynamic.

*Wicked* critiques the ways patriarchal power structures employ oppression and manipulation to uphold their dominance through the Wizard's manipulation of the story and his use of fear. Women who resist these power structures, such as Elphaba, must face the consequences, reflecting the wider community's tendency to silence those unwilling to take on the roles set. The Wizard's use of division and terror demonstrates how much patriarchy will persuade women to continue being submissive and obedient to the status quo.

*Wicked* is still relevant in today's world because it addresses issues like gender discrimination, systemic oppression of women, and the stifling of marginal voices. Elphaba's story is used in this movie as a metaphor for people who defy social expectations and encounter resistance in return. Labeled as the *Wicked Witch*, she reflects the systemic power structure of manipulating stories to maintain their power and position. It is not unlike how marginalized groups are misrepresented by the media and in politics. The misnaming of Elphaba as evil is the real-world analogy for judging others on the grounds of race, gender, sexuality, or religion and not according to the absolute truth of their character and motivations.

*Wicked's* theme is parallel to the struggle with gender discrimination, precisely how women who have autonomy or resist the leaders are looked at as a threat. Just as Elphaba's intelligence, leadership, and supernatural power make her a dangerous figure in the eyes of the authorities, modern women who bump into traditional gender roles often experience discrimination, whether in the workplace, political resistance, or social stigmatization. The film also highlights how patriarchal systems pit each other, as seen in Elphaba and Glinda. It reflects the fundamental dynamic where societal expectations force women to enter competition with their peers instead of building solidarity for mutual success.

*Wicked* resonates with the broader issue of systemic oppression in which rulers use propaganda to maintain power. The Wizard orchestrates because governments and the media sometimes misrepresent quiet and maintain social hierarchies. The film depicts the ordeal of being quoted, misconstrued, marginalized, and oppressed by society as patriarchal. This film forces the spectator to challenge the powers, endure discrimination and marginalization, and oppose the institution of racism that seeks to expel the diverse.

#### V. CONCLUSION

The study reveals how societal structures, power dynamics, and expectations shape Elphaba's oppression and resistance experience. *Wicked* reveals how patriarchal control and systemic discrimination are used to marginalize people who defy social standards. Elphaba's path from marginalization to identity reflects the difficulties many women and marginalized groups face in everyday life.

The finding contributes to the discourse of femininity by highlighting how power structures silence women who go against authority. *Wicked* depicts the Wizard and Madame Morrible exploiting people's fear to hold onto their power and position. Elphaba and Glinda's relationships illustrate how the patriarchal system pits women against one another and reinforces social norms that demand women submit to authority.

This study implies that future research on gender oppression and resistance might be done by comparing this film to others, such as *The Handmaid's Tale* or *Maleficent*. Examining *Wicked* considering current political and social movements can reveal important details about how movies influence how people view justice, authority, and revolt in modern society.

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