Anybodys "in and out of the Shadows": The Threshold of Visibility and Queer Orientation in *West Side Story*

Daniel Belgrad and Ying Zhu

This essay explores the constructions of sexuality and gender in the film *West Side Story* through a close reading of its choreography. In particular we focus on the choreography assigned to Anybodys, whom literary critic David LaFontaine has identified as "Broadway's first transgender youth" (La Fontaine 2017). In keeping with LaFontaine's reading and to underscore the difference that it makes, throughout this piece we refer to Anybodys by using they/them/their pronouns, except in instances of a direct quotation from other sources.

Although scholar and filmmaker Frances Negrón-Muntaner contends that for the makers of *West Side Story* Anybodys was a figure of "scorn for the potential lesbian who struggles for a place among men… the misogyny of her representation is not far from the surface" (2000: 99), Anybodys is not really coded in the musical as a lesbian. They are not interested in sex with girls. Their desire to fight alongside the boys positions them more as a gay transgender man.

More accurately, perhaps, Anybodys is, like Peter Pan, a boyish but genderqueer boy-lover. Anybodys beams at Ice when, having taken over leadership of the Jets (one of two all-male youth gangs in the musical), he tacitly accepts them into the gang and calls them "buddy boy." The stage directions assert then that Anybodys "has fallen in love" (Lehman 2003: 108); and in response to being called "buddy boy," they call Ice "Daddy-O" (107). In this crucial moment of subject formation, Anybodys is thus positioned as a boy in love with an older boy, while Ice is positioned

0026-3079/2020/5904-023$2.50/0 American Studies, 61.4 (2023)

as in a triangulate relationship with both the "boy" Anybodys and his female sexual partner, Velma. Both of these subject positions reproduce aspects of choreographer Jerome Robbins's own sexuality.

A dance musical conceived and choreographed by Robbins and scored by Leonard Bernstein, *West Side Story* is a classic of American musical theater. The original Broadway production premiered in 1957; its 1961 film version garnered eleven Academy Award nominations and won ten, including Best Picture. A retelling of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, the film has entered our national consciousness as a cautionary tale about ethnic hatred.[1] Dance scholars Anna B. Scott, Rachel Duerden, and Bonnie Rowell have described how an imaginary of ethnic difference structures much of the choreography (Scott 2010: 83; Duerden and Rowell 2013: 135). But Jerome Robbins intended the musical as a complex portrait of a subversive youth culture, undermining Cold War truisms about the importance of "responsible adulthood" and a family-centered social structure (Zhu and Belgrad 2017). In this context, its choreography offers a subtle subversion of Cold War America's ideological investment in heteronormative sexuality, challenging the general belief that gender conformity and heterosexual romance were the necessary signs of social health and personal well-being.

As a method of cultural analysis, dance studies has demonstrated a unique ability to contribute to the emerging interpretive "revolution from below": a radical reassessment of the politics of cultural texts based on a recovery of the embodied subject as the center of meaning making (Altieri 2003; McCormack 2014). Dance studies investigates bodily orientations and articulations as essential to how human beings create and decipher meaning. Recently, the field has seen an explosion of the conventional notions of "dance" and "choreography," broadening these terms to include all moves and postures that constitute deliberately designed action (Gere 2004: 9). Correspondingly, in her book *Queer Phenomenology*, feminist theorist Sara Ahmed explores the implications of "orientation" as a descriptor of "how we come to find our way" in the world (Ahmed 2006). Ahmed uses this term to entangle movement styles with the issue of sexuality, suggesting that "if orientation is a matter of how we reside in space, then sexual orientation might also be a matter of residence; of how we inhabit space" (Ahmed 2006: 1-2).

Conceptualizing meaning-making as a bodily experience demands by implication a close attention to the evocation and display of affect in works of art. Affect is the physiological "feeling" response of the human organism to experience. Because ideologies (such as Cold War America's commitment to heteronormativity) are never primarily conscious or rational, they inhere in what Marxist theorist Raymond Williams called the "structure of feeling" through which one organizes and makes sense of one's affective experiences (Williams 1961: 64). Works of art reinforce

or subvert the dominant ideology via affective strategies by which they engage the viewer’s or listener’s psychological processes of subject formation (Kristeva 1982). As Negrón-Muntaner has observed, *West Side Story* offered “a space for pre-Stonewall gay structures of feeling” (2000: 97).

An interpretive approach that shifts attention away from the plotline of *West Side Story* to focus on the ways that the musical shapes and channels affect fundamentally revises our sense of the importance of various scenes. Plot-wise, the central scene is an after-dark rumble between the movie’s two all-male youth gangs (the Jets and the Sharks), in which Tony kills Maria’s older brother Bernardo. But the film’s most disturbing moment—the most impactful, affectively—is not this homicide. Instead, it comes later that night, when Bernardo’s girlfriend Anita arrives at Doc’s candy store (the Jets’ headquarters) with a message from Maria for Tony. The Jets, resenting her alien presence, attempt to gang rape her.

The scene is carefully choreographed to progressively engage the viewer in a complex range of emotions. Early in this scene, as Anita insists on delivering her message from Maria and steps forward into the space of the candy store, the Jet named Action, intent on protecting Tony, stands up to block her and send her away. Spying the guarded inner door to Doc’s cellar, however, Anita suspects correctly that Tony is hiding behind it, and instead of leaving she begins to move toward it. Action then kicks out his foot to place it against the counter at crotch level, forcing her to a halt by creating a physical barrier and at the same time suggesting sexual aggression by displaying his genital area and threatening hers. Anita tries to move around him, but the three Jets now standing in front of her (Action, A-Rab, and Anybodys) shift their bodies in unison to block her path. Encouraged by this support, Action escalates the sexual tension by mockingly commanding Anita to say “please” in order to get past them. He draws the word out slowly, almost moaning it, lading it with sexual meaning. Meanwhile, two more Jets closest to the door move to surround Anita from behind and cut off her escape. When she accedes to Action’s demand, however, instead of relenting, he blows smoke in her face to compound her submission and humiliation. The other Jets snicker and leer. (A handwritten note on a draft of the script in the Jerome Robbins archives offers this motivation for the actors: “o.k. if you want to stay I’ll f[uck] ya.”[2])

Significantly, it is precisely when Anita insists that she is “trying to help” Tony by delivering a message from Maria that the Jets’ taunting turns physical. “She wants to help *get Tony*!” Anybodys exclaims. Then Action and A-Rab explicitly display contempt for Anita’s sexuality, calling her “Bernardo’s tramp” and “Bernardo’s pig.” They pull at her shawl, uncovering her and, emboldened by one another’s behavior, shout more

sexually charged insults, which escalate to physical intrusions. "Pierced ear!" yells Snowboy, grabbing her earlobe and twisting it hard. Action pulls her shawl down to her waist and starts rubbing it back and forth across her backside, shouting "cha cha!" At this point Anita's formerly neat self-presentation has become disheveled. She attempts to escape but is thrown back into the melee and passed roughly from hand to hand. Finally she is pinned to the floor while two Jets lift the gang's youngest member, Baby John, into the air and prepare to drop him on top of her. Anita screams desperately, and from off camera Doc's voice cries, "Stop it!", arresting the action and restoring social order. The viewer must ask of Jerome Robbins, as Doc then does of the Jets, "What are you doing there?!"

Feminist theorist Judith Butler has described how the members of any patriarchal society live in a system of compulsory heterosexuality enforced by the strict punishment of abnormal gender identities (Butler 1997). But the dynamics of this scene work oppositely: we witness the spectacle of a closeted gay subculture avenging itself against the dominant heteronormativity.

The 1950s were an era in which the gender binary was exaggeratedly enforced. After the social dislocations of the Depression era and the Second World War, Americans were eager for a return to normalcy, and their ideal of it tended to take an extreme form. Dad was to be the breadwinner and Mom the homemaker. Deviations from this sentimental norm were diagnosed as psychological pathologies. Popular media outlets and political leaders alike also linked American democracy with the stereotypical suburban family in rhetorical celebrations of the "American way." Gender conformity and heteronormativity were the ideological mainstays of this linkage (Weiss 2000: 4–5; D'Emilio 1992: 64–68). According to American Studies scholars Matthew Jacobson and Gaspar Gonzalez in *What Have They Built You to Do? The Manchurian Candidate and Cold War America* (2006),

> Public figures such as McCarthy and J. Edgar Hoover quite openly expressed the political importance of "normal" gender and sexual arrangements, especially patriarchal authority and heterosexual coupling. If communists were "made and not born," as most supposed, then the "normal" family would be among the nation's most important and jealously guarded assets, just as gender or sexual "deviance" would be a fairly reliable symptom of political trouble (Jacobson and Gonzalez 2006: 4).

Behind the veil of its main plotline featuring Tony's and Maria's ill-fated romance, *West Side Story* challenged this heteronormative ideology.

As is made clear by the taunting of Anita, however, what the musical offers in place of the dominant heteronormativity is not an uncomplicated vindication of gay homoeroticism. Rather, it is a different social vision that we can characterize as queer. In keeping with this orientation, the musical’s perspective does not simply celebrate a masculinity that is eroticized for the male gaze.[3] Instead, its gendering work echoes the gender-fluid, “bisexual” orientation of two of its primary creators, Jerome Robbins and Leonard Bernstein.[4]

In this connection, the character artfully named “Anybodys”—a teenage “tomboy” who strives to become accepted as one of the Jets—is a key figure. Anybodys is excluded both from the heteronormative order of the mainstream culture and from the exclusively homoerotic social order of the Jets gang. Yet they embody, in their queerness, the gender-nonconformist implications of the musical that its creators were keen to champion—as well as to hide. A close analysis of Anybodys’ queer performance is therefore key to grasping *West Side Story*’s “hidden transcript”—a phrase that historian James C. Scott has coined to describe the means by which politically disempowered subjects articulate evasive critiques of the social world that they perforce inhabit (Scott 1990: 4).

The common tendency among scholarly critics, contemporaneous reviewers, and casual viewers alike to overlook Anybodys as marginal to the musical’s main themes (Negrón-Muntaner 2000: 99) has been abetted by their lack of prominence in its major dance numbers. Jerome Robbins’s choreography is the foremost medium of expression in *West Side Story*, and problematically, if Anybodys is included in the dance numbers at all, they typically do not dance them “right” (Butler 1997: 405). They are awkward in their female body, and their attempts at integrating themselves into the musical’s gender-coded dance numbers often result in conspicuous rejections. Superficially, then, the musical appears to legitimate Anybodys’ exclusion. But on closer examination, Anybodys can be seen to perform a unique choreography that is central both to their queerness and to their significance in the film. And their role in the Jets’ metaphorical rape of Anita is also key to understanding the underlying meaning of that scene.

The parameters of Anybodys’ exclusion from the social spaces of the film are exemplified by the choreography in “Dance at the Gym,” a big dance number. In the first shots of this scene, the camera shows us heterosexual pairs dancing as couples. Significantly, Jets and Sharks are dancing the same steps to the same music (Lehman 2003: 27). The implication is that the social prescription for heteronormativity is more powerful even than the requirement of ethnic solidarity: the dancing couples’ stable gender and sexual identities provide a unifying force

for the scene, overriding the difference in their ethnicities. After these initial establishing shots, the camera tightens in on a specific instance of boy-girl activity: Velma (a Jets girl) is dancing with Action, improvising on the common motif. There is a sexual urgency to their dancing. With her eyes closed, Velma pumps the flats of her hands in front of her, shaking her hips and twisting her legs. Opening her eyes to look pointedly at Action, she hitches up the skirt of her dress and jerks her hips. Action reciprocates with a spin around his own center, his left leg extended and lifted to the level of her thighs (a sexually suggestive move later echoed in his taunting of Anita), as Velma saws the air frenetically with her fists and elbows. She answers Action's spin with a tighter spin of her own. Then they both jump into the air.

This is not the only dance that is showcased, however. Among the Jets who have paused to watch Action's and Velma's intense partnering, Anybodys can be seen for an instant on the periphery of the frame. Then the camera cuts slightly right, and suddenly Anybodys takes center stage. In one of their few moments of physical expressivity, we see them leap in behind the Jet named Mouthpiece, who is dancing solo, to perform what quickly evolves into a line dance of three as A-Rab jumps in front of Anybodys. It is a stag dance: in marked contrast to the previous focus on complementary coupling, these three dancers dance in unison.

Whereas Velma's and Action's dance emphasized heterosexual partnering, the theme of this dance is "making room." The dancers step sideways and spread their arms wide. Bouncing onto their toes, they flip right, and walk backward on tiptoe until they are crowded back against the wall of the gym. Next, swinging their arms low and hunching parallel to the floor, they take loping, dragging steps forward, reclaiming the space as they turn their upper bodies left and then right, snapping their fingers. Finally, they plant their feet widely in preparation for another spin with one leg outstretched (a repeated element in Robbins's choreography that typically implies masculine sexual assertiveness). But A-Rab, dancing to Anybodys' right, spins around prematurely, while Anybodys' spin is late, and as a result his outstretched leg kicks them squarely in the backside. This brings the stag dance to a sudden end. As Mouthpiece melts back into the crowd of dancing couples, Anybodys circles warily backward away from A-Rab, who doubles down on the implications of his accidental kick with a spiteful glare and a verbal "Get outa here!" Significantly, although it is A-Rab who jumped in last, crowding the dance space, he can assert priority over Anybodys in claiming the space, because Anybodys is farther out of gender conformity. As if to reinforce this yardstick, the camera cuts back to the sex kitten Velma, who is now couples dancing with Ice, as they spin in tandem into a sensual slow grind.

This dance floor confrontation between A-Rab and Anybodys, bookended by shots that emphasize the contrast between Anybodys'

gender-bending performance and Velma's heteronormative one, encapsulates Anybodys' social position. They cannot, as Tony later commands them to, "be a girl" (Lehman 2003: 123). Nor can they find belonging in the boy-on-boy culture of the Jets gang. A-Rab's kick and his spoken vituperation are suggestive of a generally expressed demand—always resisted—that Anybodys remove themselves from the musical's social topography altogether. "Dance at the Gym" is only one of numerous scenes in which this demand is reiterated (11, 52). And yet Anybodys persists in joining in.

As a result, in key dance scenes they are neither absent nor integrated. Instead, they constitute an insistently awkward physical presence. And while it is true that Anybodys almost never dances in the expansive style of Robbins's typical choreography, it can be seen that they do nevertheless dance. They perform what might be called a "deep choreography" of marginality, characterized by two repeated motifs: an almost tidal pattern of advance and retreat and an awkward stasis.

The deep choreography of advance and retreat is evident when we look at "Dance at the Gym" as a whole piece, rather than focusing on the few key moments that highlight Anybodys' exclusion. When A-Rab's foot connects with their backside, Anybodys circles away from him watchfully, their thumbs reaching for their pants pockets. After this humiliation, they disappear from the film for approximately one minute. But when Bernardo, the leader of the Sharks, arrives at the gym, the Jets stop dancing and the boys mill around in a cluster while their girls stand off to one side; then Anybodys is back in the frame again, in the middle of the male mix, and conspicuously in the front row as the Jets move to confront the Sharks. When the school social worker Glad Hand intercedes to prevent this confrontation, Anybodys turns and, with ducked head, strides back into the crowd and disappears. In the next shot, nevertheless, they are back in the front row of youths as Glad Hand makes a short speech of welcome. When the combative aspect of the dance trumps its previous romantic function, this clearly offers Anybodys a broader license to be visibly present. In the heterosexual mambo dance-off, they are at first nowhere visible—until they run out to notify Ice, who is occupied in twirling with Velma, that the Puerto Ricans are taking over the dance floor. Then, as the Jets advance to reclaim the space, Anybodys advances with them; and they again appear alongside Ice, seemingly out of nowhere, as he and Velma burst into the circle of Puerto Rican spectators around Bernardo and Anita to clear a path for Riff and Graziella. Then, alongside the other Jets, Anybodys follows this dancing Jets couple across the floor, joining enthusiastically in the general clapping, pumping their fists and flinging their arms into the air.

This cyclical pattern of advance and retreat, appearing and disappearing, is one of Anybodys' persistent choreographies; the other

is an awkward stasis or near-stasis that is almost—but never quite—unobtrusive (Lepecki 2006: 2). We can see this choreography in the introductory shot for "Dance at the Gym," which is a high-angle long shot of the gymnasium. Anybodys is out on the dance floor, though they are not performing the exuberant couples choreography in which all the others are engaged. Nearly always partially or fully obscured by a dancing couple, they are nevertheless visibly present in the far right corner of the room, dancing solo. The content and quality of their dance might not be perceived as a dance at all. They are barely in motion. Staring at the floor near their feet, with their arms hanging passively at their sides, they face one way, step back, then face at a right angle to their earlier orientation and step back again. In the next shot, we see a version of their dance from closer up. Off to the right and back of where the camera is centered on Ice and Velma, amid the couples who are energetically stepping to the beat of the music, Anybodys stands motionless with their head ducked and their feet splayed. Then, as everyone else throws their hands in the air, Anybodys lifts their head to watch and takes their thumbs from their pockets as if embarking on a venture. Partially obscured from the camera by the dancing of Riff and Graziella, they step forward with the heel of their right foot, then shift their weight and bend their knees in time to the music. This is the epitome of their second choreographic presence: they will not dance like the others, but neither will they leave the dance floor. As James Scott argues, in the context of oppressive social norms, the "refusal to reproduce hegemonic appearances…pierces the smooth surface of apparent consent" and offers resistance to the hegemonic social order (1990: 203).

The dialectic between Anybodys' persistent efforts to assert their presence and their repeated exclusion from social arrangements is key to their place in the cultural work of the musical. This dynamic is emphasized not only through moments of action and dialogue as in "Dance at the Gym," but also formally, through camerawork and editing. Reinforcing the choreography, these cinematographic devices make Anybodys disappear and reappear, so that they are constantly both implicitly present and apparently absent. In the movie's closing scene, for example, as Tony is dying in Maria's arms, we see Anybodys in the front row of Jets, between Action and Ice, watching the melodrama. Then the camera cuts to a shot of the Sharks and a close-up on Maria; and when it cuts back to the Jets, Anybodys is not there. Half a dozen shots later, however, as Maria launches into her monologue, they are present again. It is as if Anybodys is haunting the musical's central romantic narrative, ironizing it. Such discontinuities and interferences are too pervasive in this otherwise perfectionistic film to support the possibility that they are careless errors. Repeatedly, Anybodys hovers at an indefinite location,

on the periphery but persistently present. Like the theme of queerness itself, they are both there and not there: at the threshold of visibility.

The importance attached by the musical’s creators to keeping Anybodys hovering on this threshold of visibility for the audience is evidenced by the multitude of strategies that they employ to achieve it. These include not only the choreography and the editing but also scenes purposely designed to insist on and yet obfuscate Anybodys’ presence. In the initial melee between the Jets and the Sharks on the playground, for example, Anybodys may or may not be seen as they twirl in from the right side of the screen and disappear into the throng.

Far from presenting a realistic portrayal of gang violence, the choreography of this first large fight on the playground is charged with male homoeroticism. The gangs bait and dare each other in the course of the conflict in a manner very like the way that the Sharks and their girls later taunt and tease each other in the “America” dance, even down to the use of similar hand gestures. The brawl also begins with a scene that is symmetrical to the Jets’ later attempted rape of Anita, as Baby John is outnumbered by a group of Sharks who pin his body against the ground while Bernardo pierces his ear, marking him as a sexual “bottom.” (In the play, this is much more explicit than in the film, for Snowboy—the same character who in the film initiates the physical violence against Anita while calling her a “pierced ear”—tells Baby John, “That makes you a Puerto Rican tomato. Cha-cha-cha senorita?” (Laurents 1958: 8; Negrón-Muntaner 2000: 98)) As the Jets arrive in response to Baby John’s yells, Jets and Sharks brawl, hurling and leaping into piles of two, three, and four. Their youthful bodies collide in intimate embraces that are simultaneously violent and sensuous as they tussle with knees bent, grounding their weight downward and forward, their pelvises and hips locked against each other. When Detective Schrank and Officer Krupke, as the representatives of social authority, disrupt the fight, they are restoring the heteronormative social order by countermanding this homoerotic performance.

In this gay male context, just as in the context of the heteronormative “Dance at the Gym,” Anybodys is neither visible nor invisible. In the standoff that ensues between Detective Schrank and the members of both gangs, Anybodys’ genderqueer presence is overlooked by the adult authority figures. They can be glimpsed, however, by the attentive viewer, hiding in plain sight on the playground’s seesaw, intermittently obscured by other bodies [Figure 1]. Their partial profile from behind occupies the shot’s left foreground, even as Schrank’s monologue pulls the viewer’s attention to the medium distance. In the original play version of the musical, even the stage directions that introduce Anybodys one scene later reinforce the uncertainty of their presence here via the use of

Figure 1: Anybodys hides in plain sight. *West Side Story* DVD. 1998 [1961]. Santa Monica, CA: MGM Home Entertainment. Screenshot by authors.

the qualifier "perhaps": "Pushing through the gang comes [Anybodys]… *Perhaps* we have glimpsed her in the fracas before the police came in" (Laurents 1958: 9). The implication is that Anybodys' presence or absence is less an objective fact than a phenomenon of the viewer's perception.

This perceptual threshold of visibility is the realm of "passing," of asserting oneself under the gaze of those who would judge you harshly if they perceived you accurately. Originally, "passing" referred to a process by which African Americans of mixed ancestry who were more European in features and skin tone would escape the stigma attached to blackness by passing for white, assuming the privileges and status afforded to the unmarked white body. However, by the 1950s the term also included intentional performances that disguised nonconformities of gender and sexual identity (Schlossberg 2001: 3). Cultural historian Gayle Wald argues in *Crossing the Line* that racial passing was possible "because race is more liquid and dynamic, more variable and random, than it is conventionally represented to be" (2000: 6). Anybodys' passing likewise reminded the viewers of *West Side Story* that gender is more liquid and dynamic than it was ideologically expected to be.

The question of whether and how to pass is the underlying problematic that explains the structure of Anybodys' deep choreography. Their comings and goings mark the vicissitudes of their success in making themselves both visible and acceptable—that is, in claiming physical and psychological space for their aberrant subjectivity. Their disappearances as a rule follow moments of unusual assertiveness that have the effect of compromising their acceptability. In Doc's candy store before the "war council," for instance, they duck their head immediately

after delivering their single line, which is to tell Doc, "Aw, get with it, Buster!" The attention demanded by this moment of assertiveness exists in tension with their subsequent actions, as they try unsuccessfully to remain invisible in order to be allowed to stay. Seeing the Sharks come in, Anybodys sneaks out of sight behind the pinball machine; but eventually Riff discovers them and forces them to leave.

Anybodys' character is built almost entirely around this problematic of other peoples' attention: the conflicted state of both wanting and not wanting it. The stage directions in the screenplay for the scene outside Doc's candy store in the moments before the war council note that "Anybodys is shinnying up a light pole, *to show* how tough…[they are], *in case anyone is looking*" (Lehman 2003: 49). They yearn to be acknowledged. But the possibility of being noticed is double-edged: Will they be welcomed or judged as a freak? After every rejection Anybodys retreats into the shadows or hides in plain sight following the flow of the crowd. As they boast, "I'm very large with shadows, ya know. I can slip in and out of 'em like wind through a fence" (106).

To be disowned and yet present, as Anybodys is, is the essence of abjection, as feminist philosopher Julia Kristeva theorizes. Anybodys' choreography of awkwardly standing around represents a physical embodiment of that abjection, which Kristeva associates with German phenomenologist Edmund Husserl's idea of the "thetic threshold" (Kristeva 1986: 105). This describes a liminal state of subjectivity in which the processes of abjection predominate as a person hovers in the throes of subject formation. Not fully constituted in the present moment as a coherent psychological entity, they are thus unable to assert themselves in the social world, either verbally or locomotorically (Kristeva 1982: 204). This ambiguous state motivates Anybodys' awkward stances in the moments of stillness or near stillness that they perform. One of the most prominent of these postures is a slouch, with their hands in their pockets or nervously adjusting the bottom hem of their shirt. In "Dance at the Gym," for example, they adopt this posture at least three times: in the opening sequence before willing themselves to start dancing; after being kicked in the rear by A-Rab; and when Glad Hand calls for a Circle Dance with "boys on the outside, girls on the inside" (Lehman 2003: 28). At this direction, Anybodys hitches their thumbs awkwardly in their jeans pockets and stares at the ground as they search inwardly for their place in a world constructed through the prism of Glad Hand's gender binary.

Youth, Sex, Play

Anybodys' positioning as a figure of gender ambiguity in *West Side Story* developed over time through the collaboration between Jerome Robbins, Arthur Laurents (the librettist), Stephen Sondheim (the lyricist) and Leonard Bernstein. Early drafts of the play attributed

Anybodys' "tomboy" nature to a fear of femininity. In one of the earliest drafts in which Anybodys appears, for example, Baby John mocks them by taunting, "Go wear a skirt,"[5] and Anybodys' telling reply is "pants is protection." The draft thus attributes their cross-dressing to a fear of the vulnerability that they associate with femininity. The songwriting of Bernstein and Sondheim had at least some hand in bringing forth the gender-bending qualities of Anybodys' character, expanding on its possibilities as a performance of gender ambiguity. In a song that was later cut, titled "Like Everybody Else" and sung by Anybodys, A-Rab, and Baby John, all three characters share their preoccupation with the question of how to emulate masculinity performatively, learning "from the outside" as it were, how to be a "real boy" by watching the boys. The three characters articulate their three different ways of not "measuring up" as an ideal man: A-Rab is too short; Baby John is too young; and Anybodys is female. Anybodys sings, "I swear and I smoke and I get Hell, / why can't I be male?"

The character as it finally appeared onstage and onscreen can be understood as a figure of the queerness embraced as a life principle by both Jerome Robbins and Leonard Bernstein. While Sondheim and Laurents identified as gay, Robbins and Bernstein both identified as bisexual. Both also vested their divergent sexuality with meaning, perceiving it as a transcendence of social norms linked to their creative genius.

"Bisexuality" itself, as a concept, has historically been unstable, inviting multiple and contesting characterizations, as queer studies scholar Alexander Doty writes in *Flaming Classics: Queering the Film Canon* (2000):

> Some people, working within conventional binaries, understand [bisexuality] as a movement between, or a combination of, heterosexuality and homosexuality and the straight and lesbian or gay identities that are usually attached to these desires and practices. Others find their bisexuality works itself out as a desire for both the same sex and the opposite sex in tandem with a social or political identification with either gayness, lesbianism, or straightness. Still others see it as having desires for both the same sex and the opposite sex within bisexual identities that don't reference straight or lesbian or gay ones, but may reference less binarily defined queer or non-straight identities. (131)

To inhabit a bisexual subjectivity as Robbins and Bernstein did implied a refusal to assume a fixed sexual identity. Even identifying oneself as a homosexual in 1950s America affirmed an unambiguous, though deviant, sexuality. Bisexuality, on the other hand, signified for them the socially liberating potential of queerness.[6]

Robbins later wrote that he was eighteen years old when he "realize[d] that [he] was queer" (Vaill 2006: 35). Between 1945 and 1950, he tried half-heartedly to "cure" his sexuality through psychoanalysis (Jowitt 2004: 100, 178). Yet he simultaneously pursued the complex romantic possibilities that his bisexual orientation made possible. In the summer of 1938, when he was nineteen, he engaged in a three-way relationship with dancers Meta Mata and Otto Hari. (Vaill 2006: 46–47). Thereafter, he settled into of pattern of maintaining "triangulate" relationships, in which he was romantically involved simultaneously with one man and one woman (52, 56).

In 1945, at the age of twenty-six, Robbins was living on 10th Street in Greenwich Village and socializing primarily with other bisexuals, including Leonard Bernstein and Paul and Jane Bowles (121). The following year, he choreographed a dance titled *Facsimile*, which represented a triangulate relationship between two men and one woman. Robbins asked Bernstein to compose the score, which Bernstein dedicated to him (130). Robbins later described *Facsimile* as being about "a situation in my own life [in which] I found myself involved with two other people" (129–30), most likely actors Montgomery Clift and Lois Wheeler (138, 140). His biographer Amanda Vaill has pointed out the similarities between this dance and a dream that Robbins wrote down at the time ("Rooftop"), which pitted heterosexual attraction against homoerotic longings (131–2).[7] The following spring (1947), Robbins choreographed another dance, *Pas de Trois*, which recast the love triangle of *Facsimile* in a comedic vein (Jowitt 2004: 127).

As with *Facsmile* and *Pas de Trois*, Robbins often made two choreographic passes at a single theme, one "serious" and one "playful." Entries in his diary from 1945 shed light on how he imagined the serious/playful dichotomy in relation to his creativity. There he wrote of committing himself seriously to dance as a profession. The other words that he used in association with this seriousness were "purpose," "regulation," "firm," "straight," "cruel," and "faithful" (Vaill 2006: 57). While he willed himself to be serious about his dancing, he celebrated playfulness in other aspects of his creative life, and he returned repeatedly to the playfulness of youth as the subject of his choreography. In the fall of 1945, he choreographed *Interplay*, a dance described by his biographer Deborah Jowitt as "a lighthearted view of American teenagers, or rather of American dancers *as* teenagers; the games they play" (2004: 104-5). The dancers in *Interplay* are cast as "perpetual adolescents." Robbins associated such perpetually youthful playfulness with his queerness. According to Jowitt, he gloried in his Greenwich Village circle and their capacity to "behav[e] like kids," which for him meant a playfulness that included having sexual "affairs with both men and women" (107). *Interplay* includes movements with the titles "Free Play," "Horseplay," "Byplay" and "Team Play." Like the

opening scene of *West Side Story*, it is set in a park with playground equipment (Vaill 2006: 120).

West Side Story explores the same teenage games but in a serious, tragic tone. The adults in *West Side Story* work persistently to force the Jets and Sharks into one of two binary subject positions: that of serious and mature (heterosexual) adults, or of innocent and victimized children. But the youths themselves make common cause in resisting and exceeding those categories, through forms of horseplay that sprawl from the playground into the streets, and that move beyond children's games to adolescent brawling and balling (Zhu and Belgrad 2017).

Robbins himself was actively bisexual during the staging of *West Side Story* on Broadway in 1957. According to Vaill, "he became involved in one of his triangulated romances with two other cast members: Tommy Abbott, a fair-haired boy with a square all-American jaw who played Gee-Tar (one of the Jets) and Lee Becker, the wistful, waiflike Anybodys" (2006: 286).

In Leonard Bernstein, Robbins found a musical collaborator who shared his faith in the socially disruptive potential of youthful play, including bisexuality. The two men began working together in 1943 and collaborated on several projects before *West Side Story*. Bernstein, like Robbins, by then had a long history of gender-bending behavior (Swan 1999: 6; Secrest 1994: 33). Although musicologist Nadine Hubbs in her book *The Queer Composition of American Sound* asserts that Bernstein was "aligned more with homo- than hetero- or bisexuality" (2004: 108), there is considerable evidence that his sexuality was more fluid than that. Bernstein's friend, pianist Mildred Spiegel, described him when he graduated from Harvard in 1939 as someone for whom "the pendulum was swinging back and forth" between heterosexual and homosexual relations (Secrest 1994: 36). According to his fellow composer Marc Blitztein, Bernstein "had…no sense of limitation" (56) regarding his sexuality. Vera Tilson, who was a student along with Bernstein at Tanglewood in the 1940s, described him in those years as "sexuality incarnate…he liked anything that was moving" (80). Like Robbins, Bernstein had a "tendency to vacillate" between lovers gendered masculine and feminine (114-5, 95). He told pianist Claudio Arrau that he didn't know whether he should marry Felicia Montealegre because she "would never know who he was in bed with, man, woman, or child" (161). He got engaged to her nevertheless in 1946, then broke off the engagement within a year, then married her suddenly in 1951, at the height of McCarthyism. As composer Noel Farrand remembered, "he told me that where sex was concerned he had always been very adaptable, but…marriage had saved him from a homosexual lifestyle" (178-9). Still, after his marriage Bernstein continued to seek male sexual partners; in the mid-1950s, he was known to proposition male students

at Tanglewood and Catholic University (319; Negrón-Muntaner 2000: 101). In 1963, two years after the release of the film version of *West Side Story*, he referred to himself as "half man, half woman" (Secrest 1994: 320)—an Anybodys figure.

Like Robbins, Bernstein associated his bisexuality with creativity and youthful rebellion. He understood it as part of a playful inventiveness that was necessarily indecorous, like his mixing of boogie-woogie and Bach in a demonstration of orchestral conducting (117, 137). In an essay titled "'Fun' in Art," published in *Dance Magazine* in June 1946, Bernstein defended his statement that at any point in his career he "wanted to do the thing which seemed most like fun at the time." He explained that "fun" connoted a "sense of rightness" and "balance" enabling "expressivity," "creativity," and "energy release" (1982: 104). Its requirements did not always conform to the dictates of the existing social order. But the purpose of art, Bernstein wrote, was in "deepening the experiential values" of fun. From that point, he segued into a discussion of love that comprised an elliptical defense of his own sexuality:

> Analogously, construe the difference between Love on the Run and Love Eternal. They are not opposed to each other, as some would have us think. They are separate manifestations of the same phenomenon, with different motivations, and different results. And they can both be fun (106).

He concluded, "We musicians and dancers have this to say to ourselves: Relax. Invent. Perform. Have fun" (107).

In the spring of 1948, Bernstein's poem "Life is Juicy" appeared in the little magazine *Neurotica*. The poem associates vitality with youth and liminality, while maturity, like death, is characterized as "clean" and "spermless" (Bernstein 1948: 40). *Neurotica* was published from 1948 through 1951, and its contributors included many poets, artists, and intellectuals whose work would later figure prominently in the articulation of a 1950s-60s "youth counterculture." Among these were Allen Ginsberg, Marshall McLuhan (whose article "The Psychopathology of *Time* and *Life*" first appeared in *Neurotica*'s Autumn 1949 issue), and Judith Malina.

Neurotica's editor was Gershon Legman, whose editorial premise was that America's Cold War social norms were pathological—a "social neurosis"—because they demanded a kind of adulthood that sacrificed personal vitality to achieve conformity. By this logic, the outsider whom mainstream society treated as pathological actually belonged to a sane and healthy minority. Evincing the same attitude, Paul Goodman, a psychologist and political theorist who also identified as bisexual, wrote in 1951 that "maturity," though taken as a sign of successful socialization, was actually pathological in that it "is conceived in the interest of an

unnecessarily tight adjustment to a dubiously valuable workaday society, regimented to pay its debts and duties." Goodman therefore suggested the redemptive possibility of embracing "other cultures, gaudier in dress, greedier in physical pleasures, dirtier in manners, more disorderly in governance, more brawling and adventurous in behavior" (Perls et al. 1994: 79-80; Goodman 2011: 262). Such is the culture of the youth gangs in *West Side Story*.

Reichian psychology is the common thread that runs through these various articulations of the 1950s "social neurosis" discourse. In his argument for a sexual revolution, published in the United States in 1949, Marxist psychoanalyst Wilhelm Reich wrote of the embodied dimension of this social neurosis, which he called "muscular armor."[8] In lieu of authentic contact with the physical environment, according to Reich, the well-socialized individual in modern society was physically and sexually walled off from others. This fostered widespread anomie and sadism (Reich 1949). The alternative that Reich promoted was a freer sexuality that he argued would be the embodied dimension of a well-rounded social revolution.

In the same vein, in an essay called "Being Queer," Paul Goodman praised queer sexuality in particular for its promotion of "a more elementary humanity," one that is "wilder, less structured, more variegated, and where people pay attention to each other" (Goodman 1977: 219). For Goodman, then, as for Robbins and Bernstein, queerness constituted a form of resistance against pathological (because unnecessarily stifling of personal energy, originality, and relatedness) social norms. Film historian Gerald Mast associates this attitude with the queer aesthetic of theatrical and movie musicals generally, in that they

> adopt a deliberate pose of frivolousness, covertly engaging our culture in a debate about "earnestness," the very term underlying Oscar Wilde's comic monument…. The extravagant excess of musicals is simultaneously an act of rebellion, a burst of joy, and a cry of desperation (1987: 37-38).

In identifying their bisexuality with both youthful playfulness and a defiance of the social norms of subject formation, Robbins and Bernstein embraced the image of Peter Pan. Bernstein wrote the music for the 1950 Broadway musical *Peter Pan*, in which a woman, Jean Arthur, played the boy who would never grow up. Robbins choreographed and directed the 1954 Broadway version, in which another woman, Mary Martin, played Pan. And Martin later explained, "[Jerry] was the one and only one to choreograph AND direct *Peter*. You see, Jerry IS Peter Pan" (Jowitt 2004: 244).

West Side Story pits society's investment in a "mature" heterosexuality, represented by the romance of Tony and Maria,

against the boy-gang's embrace of "youthful" homoerotic desire. Instead of celebrating the transition to adulthood, as it appears to on the surface, the storyline shows us that "maturity" is linked to anomie (Doc), sadism (Schrank and Krupke), or death. Tony, Riff, and Bernardo, the three adolescent male characters most committed to monogamous heterosexual relationships, are the only ones to be killed. When Tony and Maria meet in the dress shop and plan their wedding, the choreography of the scene emphasizes how disproportionately focused the young lovers are on familial and social approval: they even get down on their knees, in symbolic submission to the authority of church and state. In the film's hidden transcript, Tony becomes a traitor to the youth culture by embracing maturity, essentializing gender, and enforcing heteronormativity.[9] In the final scene, he tells Anybodys: "It's not playing anymore!…You're a girl: *be a girl!*" (Lehman 2003: 123)—that is, be "serious" and perform your gender as an expression of your biology (Butler 1997).

The Jets and Maria fight over Tony, pitting the homoerotic attractions of their youth gang against her offer of heterosexual union. In keeping with this dynamic, the creators of *West Side Story* assign to the Jets the role of expressing a collective rage against the Cold War American social order for its enforced truncation of "mature" men's lives. The targeting of Anita as the object of this rage is consistent with her characterization, throughout the film, as the epitome of the mature heterosexual female and an apostle of heteronormativity.[10] It is she who fosters Maria's romance with Tony, encouraging it in the prelude to the "America" dance and later enabling the lovers' meeting at the dress shop. Despite the death of her brother Bernardo at Tony's hands, she objects only briefly to the continuation of the romance before heading over to Doc's candy store to help Maria, as Anybodys says, "get Tony"—not for the Sharks, but for heterosexuality.

The Jets' aggression against Anita grows as their sense of her presence as an emissary of heteronormativity subsumes their initial focus on her connection to the Sharks. We can see that the violence of the scene escalates as they make an associative leap from Anita's ethnicity to her sexuality, until they decide "to make a whore of [her]."[11] The spectacle of her rape presents the audience with a gothic inversion of the sentimental romance between Tony and Maria, with the two participants in this case (Anita and Baby John) both shown to be unwilling and manipulated victims.

Watching Anybodys Watching

Because Anybodys experiences Anita's heteronormativity and femininity as a double threat to their own queer subjectivity, they play a key role in instigating the Jets' attack on her. On witnessing the result,

however—a reiteration of male sexual violence against female bodies like their own ("o.k. if you want to stay I'll f[uck] ya")—following their previously established deep choreography of assertiveness followed by retreat, they gravitate away from the Jets' gang culture and once more assume an abject comportment.

When Anita first insists on entering the Jets "headquarters," Anybodys is quick to second A-Rab in confronting her with a bodily barrier. They also join in the jeering laughter when Action, having forced Anita to say "please," blows smoke in her face. While the other Jets at this point persist in identifying Anita's threat primarily with her ethnicity ("She's too dark to pass," "por favor," "no comprende!" "gracias!" they call), Anybodys' taunt shifts to a sexualization of Anita's ethnicity. They shout, "ai ai hey mambo!" snapping their fingers as they shake their hips back-and-forth, their words and dance recalling the stereotypically sexualized mambo dance-off from the "Dance at the Gym" earlier that evening. They are likewise the first to identify Anita as "Bernardo's girl" and to insist that she "wants to help get Tony," after which the Jets begin undressing Anita and manhandling her.

Unlike Anita, who is deemed by the Jets to be unfit to "pass" into their cultural turf, Anybodys has (recently) achieved among them a tenuous acceptability. Ice's welcome has empowered them to emerge from their usual abjection: they talk and move animatedly among the Jets before Anita's entrance. But the latitude of their verbal and locomotoric presence is still clearly limited by the tolerance of their protector, a fact communicated early in the scene when their taunting of Baby John provokes Ice to silence them by yanking them by the arm onto a nearby stool. As a result, Anybodys is sitting at the counter rubbing their sore arm, at once rueful and resentful, when Anita arrives on the scene.

By facilitating the humiliation of Anita, Anybodys tries to distance themselves farther from the ideological construction of femininity that underlies the stigmatization of their own existence, and even to push back against it by asserting their relative masculinity. Standing up from the stool where Ice had forcibly seated them, they join in with A-Rab's mockery of Anita, telling her that Doc "got stuck halfway in" the bank deposit slot. The motion with which they accompany this statement—thrusting their left hand into space and bending their right elbow so their right hand touches the middle of their left arm—forms a sinuous *bras d'honneur* that successfully redeems the rubbing of their sore arm (the mark of their recent silencing) into a gesture of masculine aggressiveness. At the same time, though, their statement is obliquely telling on themselves, because it is they who are "stuck halfway in" a female body they cannot wholly abjure.

When the sexual taunting of Anita gives way to sexual assault, therefore, Anybodys disappears. We glimpse them only in brief moments,

just enough to establish that they have taken refuge alongside the inner door behind which Tony is hidden. They are once more abject in their comportment, watching the boy-on-girl violence with mixed emotions that register in their demeanor: fascination, horror, shock, and sorrow. Not until Doc expels the Jets from the candy store after interrupting the rape does Anybodys again become clearly visible. Then they peel themselves from alongside the basement door, the last Jet to leave. While the boys walk out with visibly slumped shoulders and dragging feet, Anybodys' posture reveals a deeper conflict. They have both gained and lost more than the others from participating in Anita's degradation. Their upper body bent forward, as if in a bow of supplication, they follow the Jets out, their torso misaligned from their pelvis. This bodily contortion is a visible mark of the uneasy knowledge that they bear of the continuing social untenability of the subject position that they inhabit.

Figure 2: Anybodys hovers on the threshold. *West Side Story* DVD. 1998 [1961]. Santa Monica, CA: MGM Home Entertainment. Screenshot by authors.

By displaying and invoking such affects, *West Side Story* communicated to its viewers some of the psychological processes constitutive of the genderqueer subject in Cold War America. In the confined cultural spaces of the era's popular culture, its creators made this ideologically impermissible alternative real.

In the play version of the musical, there is a queer utopian moment that was cut from the film. This is a "dream ballet" that accompanies Tony's and Maria's song, "There's a Place for Us" (Negrón-Muntaner 2000: 101). The stage directions for this dance envision a would-be world in which "boys and girls…begin to dance, to play: no sides, no hostility now; just joy and pleasure and warmth. More and more join, making a world that Tony and Maria want to be in, belong to, share their love with" (Laurents 1958: 107–8). According to Arthur Laurents, in rehearsals for the

Broadway production, Jerome Robbins concentrated "almost entirely" on perfecting this scene (Laurents 2000: 363).

But Anybodys is the only remaining representative of that dream world flitting through the realist spaces of the film. The closest the movie comes to a queer utopian moment is when Anybodys is welcomed into the Jets gang by Ice, who praises them by saying, "Ya done good, buddy boy" and tells them to keep searching "in an' outta the shadows" (Lehman 2003: 106). In the movie, queer utopianism is minimized in favor of representations of the hostility and sadism that Reichian discourse identified as the tragic social effects of "muscular armor." While the tragedy of Tony's and Maria's romance takes center stage, the musical surreptitiously presents us with Anybodys' tragedy as well. They cannot be wholly themselves either in the clubhouse or at the high-school dance. Only out on the streets, half-unseen in the midst of a disruptive drama that suspends the social codes normally regulating such spaces, can they realize their queer orientation. In the end, it is access to that, not membership in the Jets gang, that Anybodys truly fights for.

Notes

1. In *West Side Story*'s retelling of the tragedy, Shakespeare's feuding families are supplanted by two warring gangs of teens: the white immigrant Jets and the Puerto-Rican Sharks. Tony (Romeo) is a former Jet, and Maria (Juliet) is Puerto Rican.

2. Handwritten note on undated typescript of the screenplay. Jerome Robbins Papers, New York Public Library, Lincoln Center. Series 1, box 82, folder 4.

3. For a contemporaneous example of this aesthetic, see the number "Ain't There Anyone Here for Love" from the movie *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1953), choreographed by Jack Cole.

4. The term "bisexual," like the term "tomboy," is retained here as representative of the vocabulary of the era and therefore important for cognizing its structures of feeling.

5. Undated typescript, Jerome Robbins Papers, Box 81, folder 4. This would later be changed to "go walk the streets like ya sister," suggesting that, among women, only whores have access to the streets. See Lehman, *West Side Story*, 51.

6. Aaron Copland, an avowed homosexual, told Bernstein that he was "not one of us." Conductor and composer Dmitri Mitropoulos likewise complained to friends that Bernstein was "silly" in preferring the "boy-girls he finds" to "real men" (Secrest 1994: 180, 148). Laurents considered himself gay, but not Robbins (Rapkin 2010).

7. See Jerome Robbins Personal Papers, New York Public Library, Lincoln Center. Box 29, Folder 3.

8. After his expulsion in 1934 from the International Psychoanalytical Association for promoting Communism, Reich's thinking deteriorated into

scientism and paranoia. His idea of "muscular armor" dates from before that period.

9. In an early scene in the alley behind the store, Riff attempts to woo Tony back as they engage in a playful, homoerotic wrestling match and repeat the Jets' loyalty pledge: "womb to tomb, sperm to worm" (Laurents 2003: 20).

10. This sexualization of Anita's ethnicity reproduces a persistent popular-culture stereotype of Puerto Rican women as oversexed (Briggs 2002: 164, 173). Anybodys' alacrity to become one of the Jets is multivalent, therefore, as their desire to be not-female is conflated with a desire to be not-Puerto Rican.

11. Handwritten note on undated typescript of the screenplay. Jerome Robbins Papers, New York Public Library, Lincoln Center. Series 1, Box 82, Folder 4

References

Ahmed, Sarah. 2006. *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Object, Others.* Durham: Duke University Press.

Altieri, Charles. 2003. *The Particulars of Rapture: An Aesthetics of the Affects.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Bernstein, Leonard. 1948. "Life is Juicy." *Neurotica* 1, no. 1: 40. Reprinted in Jay Landesman. 1981. *Neurotica 1948-1951*. London: Jay Landesman Ltd.

______________. 1982. *Findings.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Briggs, Laura. 2002. *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Butler, Judith. 1997. "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory." In *Writing on the Body: Female Embodiment and Feminist Theory*, edited by Katie Conboy, Nadia Medina, and Sarah Stanbury, 401–17. New York: Columbia University Press.

D'Emilio, John. 1992. "The Homosexual Menace: The Politics of Sexuality in Cold War America." In *Making Trouble: Essays on Gay History, Politics and the University,* 57–73. New York: Routledge.

Doty, Alexander. 2000. *Flaming Classics: Queering the Film Canon*. New York: Routledge.

Duerden, Rachel, and Bonnie Rowell. "Hierarchical Reversals: The Interplay of Music and Dance in *West Side Story*." In *Bodies of Sound: Studies Across Popular Music and Dance*, edited by Susan Cook and Sherril Dodds, 135–48. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd.

Gere, David. 2004. *How to Make Dances in an Epidemic: Tracking Choreography in the Age of AIDS*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Goodman, Paul. 1977. "The Politics of Being Queer." In *Nature Heals: The Psychological Essays of Paul Goodman*, 2nd ed., edited by Taylor Stoehr, 216–25. Highland: Gestalt Journal.

___________. 2011. *The Paul Goodman Reader*. Edited Taylor Stoehr. Oakland: PM Press.

Hubbs, Nadine. 2004. *The Queer Composition of America's Sound: Gay Modernists, American Music, and National Identity.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Jacobson, Matthew, and Gaspar González. 2006. *What Have They Built You to Do? The Manchurian Candidate and Cold War America*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
Jerome Robbins Papers, New York Public Library, Lincoln Center.
Jerome Robbins Personal Papers, New York Public Library, Lincoln Center.
Jowitt, Deborah. 2004. *Jerome Robbins: His Life, His Theater, His Dance*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
Kristeva, Julia. 1982. *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. Translated by Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia University Press.
_______________. 1986. *The Kristeva Reader.* Edited by Toril Moi. New York: Columbia University Press.
LaFontaine, David. "Inside West Side Story." *The Gay and Lesbian Review Worldwide* 24, no. 6 (2017): 22.
Laurents, Arthur. 2000.*Original Story By: A Memoir of Broadway and Hollywood*. New York: Knopf.
_______________. 1958. *West Side Story: A Musical.* New York: Random House.
Lehman, Ernest. 2003. *West Side Story: Screenplay*. Beverly Hills: MGM Home Entertainment.
Lepecki, Andre. 2006. *Exhausting Dance: Performance and the Politics of Movement.* New York: Routledge, 2006.
Mast, Gerald. 1987. *Can't Help Singin': The American Musical on Stage and Screen.* New York: The Overlook Press.
McCormack, Derek. 2014. *Refrains for Moving Bodies: Experience and Experiment in Affective Spaces*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Negrón-Muntaner, Frances. 2000. "Feeling Pretty: *West Side Story* and Puerto Rican Identity Discourses." *Social Text* 18, no. 2: 83-106.
Perls, Frederick, Ralph F. Hefferline, and Paul Goodman. 1994. *Gestalt Therapy: Excitement and Growth in the Human Personality*. Highland: Gestalt Journal Press.
Rapkin, Micky. "Arthur Laurents Will Not Go Quietly." *Out.* March 16, 2010. https://www.out.com/entertainment/theater/2010/03/16/arthur-laurents-will-not-go-quietly.
Reich, Wilhelm. 1949. *Character Analysis*. Translated by Theodore Wolfe. New York: Noonday Press.
Sandoval-Sanchez, Alberto. 1993. *José Can You See? Latinos On and Off Broadway*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
Schlossberg, Linda. 2001. "Rites of Passing." In *Passing: Identity and Interpretation in Sexuality, Race, and Religion*, edited by Maria C. Sanchez and Linda Schlossberg, 1-12. New York: New York University Press.
Secrest, Meryle. 1994. *Leonard Bernstein: A Life.* New York: Knopf.
Scott, Anna B. 2010. "What's It Worth To Ya? Adaptation and Anachronism: Rennie Harris's PureMovement and Shakespeare." In *The Routledge Dance Studies Reader*, edited by Janet O'Shea and Alexandra Carter, 78-90. New York: Routledge.
Scott, James C. 1990. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts.* New Haven: Yale University Press.
Swan, Claudia. 1999. *Leonard Bernstein: The Harvard years, 1935-1939.* New York: The Eos Orchestra.

Vaill, Amanda. 2006. *Somewhere: The Life of Jerome Robbins*. New York: Broadway Books.

Wald, Gayle. 2000. *Crossing the Line: Racial Passing in Twentieth Century US Literature and Culture*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Weiss, Jessica. 2000. *To Have and to Hold: Marriage, the Baby Boom, and Social Change.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Williams, Raymond. 1961. *The Long Revolution*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Zhu, Ying, and Daniel Belgrad. 2017. "'This Cockeyed City Is THEIRS': Youth at Play in the Dances of West Side Story." *Journal of American Studies* 51, no.1: 67-91. doi: 10.1017/S002187581600061X.